



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Performance Evaluation Report 2013–14

Ceredigion County Council
Social Services

October 2014

This report sets out the key areas of progress and areas for improvement in Ceredigion County Council Social Services for the year 2013–14

Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2013 - 2014

Local Authority: Ceredigion County Council

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Summary

The council continues to make progress with its transformation and modernisation program. This, alongside significant corporate restructuring, the creation of an expanded directorate, and the work on regional collaboration, sets an ambitious agenda for Ceredigion. The council faces what it considers to be a poorer than expected financial settlement and the forthcoming year will be challenging. The council has identified a number of areas of risk which indicates a realistic understanding of its position within the financial and collaborative challenges ahead. Ensuring sufficient capacity in its commissioning and contracting role in order to address a rising number of quality issues in the independent sector, together with securing political support for the changes deemed necessary in its own services, are seen as priorities.

The corporate reorganisation has prepared the way for some elements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act. Work has begun within the new directorate to develop an overarching operating model consistent with this, which will continue into 2014-15.

The council has produced an action plan to meet the Welsh Government strategy to improve services for people who need, or choose to receive their care in Welsh, "More than Just Words" (Mwy Na Geiriau). The requirements of the strategy will now feed into the commissioning and contracting arrangements with service providers

Response to last year's areas of improvement

Area for improvement identified last year	Progress in 2013 – 14
Reviews for people with a learning disability.	The council reports that reviews within learning disability services have improved significantly.
A system of regular auditing of case files.	The council reports that a file audit system is being implemented

The development and implementation of model for transition	The council reports that the model for transition will be included in a broader strategy for learning disability services
The implementation of the reviewed, and revised, policies and procedures within children's services	This is still in the process of completion with some reviewed procedures yet to be finalised. Completed policies and procedures have been placed on the Intranet for access by all staff.
Improving links with education services	Since corporate reorganisation, fortnightly meetings with all heads of service are held. This, together with the filling of the education looked after children officer post should improve those links.
Improved recording of reviews	The council reports an improvement, further work is required, to ensure that those reviews carried out are recorded and captured.
To complete the review of the carers' services from the point of offering an assessment to the take up of a service.	The review is complete. This will enable the council to identify what further work is required to ensure that carers take up of services is further improved.
Ensure senior practitioners across children's services share a consistent approach to setting thresholds within child protection	A risk assessment model has been introduced and embedded into supervision within Children and Families Assessment Team (CFAST), this is now being rolled out to other teams. A "significant harm" auditing tool for staff involved in pre-proceedings work has been introduced.
Addressing the challenges posed by the financial pressures being faced by its partners where integrated services require development and support	The council reports that, through the engagement across the heads of service and service manager group, improved use of data analysis of current and predicted future demands has resulted in the identification of priorities to be included in the 2014-15 budget. This will go some way in informing the budget as legislative changes, the increasingly complex needs of children and families and the rising demand and expectations

	of an ageing population are planned for.
Growing capacity in the domiciliary care market	The council held a 'meet the buyer' event in April 2013, which secured additional providers to work in the area.
The provision of specialist training for staff within children's services	Staff have accessed modules of Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) training locally as well as Public Law Outline training regionally. Some staff have been accredited as IFSS trainers and Parent Assessment Module system (PAMS) assessors.
Reducing staff sickness	For the quarter ending March 2013, on average the department lost 17.5 days per employee (compared with 18.2 the previous year). There has been continuing improvement in reducing sickness in 2013/14 with the average days per employee reducing from 16 days in quarter 1, to 14.3 in quarter 2 and 13.6 in quarter 3.
Progress on the development of an older people's commissioning strategy, especially in the areas of dementia and models of care and accommodation.	A draft service strategy for older people (Care and Wellbeing) has been developed. Work on the learning disability strategy has commenced in 2013-14 with a cabinet report prepared in relation to the learning disability respite service considered in March 2014.
Reviewing the service's capacity to monitor the quality of services it has commissioned and the development of clear quality monitoring standards	The council reports that the regional collaborative has a commissioning work stream. Initial discussion with colleagues highlighted benefit in adopting a regional approach to provide consistency and share expertise. Additional capacity within social services through the employment of service managers to support in house services will assist the work of the commissioning team to develop agreed standards.
Ensuring there is clear strategic vision for Ceredigion County Council social services in the context of wider	The council reports that since the restructure of services earlier in the year there has been a strengthening of the

<p>regional collaboration.</p>	<p>council's strategic leadership and direction. This has evolved from a combination of a clearer strategic policy and priorities, establishing clear strategic and operational roles for the leadership group and heads of service, clearer links between priorities and objectives to improved business planning and performance management frameworks, the introduction of stronger corporate performance arrangements and more effective corporate working across the council.</p>
<p>Ensuring that the varied arrangements for partnership working deliver coherent pattern of services for the people of Ceredigion and ensuring that projects being undertaken in partnership do not impede Ceredigion County Council from addressing immediate priorities.</p>	<p>The council reports that it continues to work in partnership with other agencies to develop and deliver services. The council's governance of Ceredigion – joint programme of work states that: 'any collaboration [with neighbouring authorities and with partners] must have a strong business case that shows it will deliver improved services at a lower cost and will not disadvantage the local economy'. The council states that it is committed to delivering high performing, quality services that meet the needs of service users and communities. The bar is also set high when it comes to delivering against corporate plans and the council is determined to monitor and assess its own performance. As a result the council has developed an approach to self-evaluation and continuous improvement to transform services.</p>

Visits and inspections undertaken during the year

CSSIW has undertaken site visits reviewing learning disability service development, the implementation of the carers' measure, the implementation of the mental health measure, and attended a carers' conference. Meetings with both heads of service and quarterly meetings with the strategic director and the senior management team have been held throughout the year.

In April 2014 CSSIW undertook fieldwork in Ceredigion for the national inspection of the 'safeguarding and care planning of looked after children and care leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours' referred to as the LAC inspection. The council also completed a self evaluation in respect of the national review of commissioning and also returned a survey as part of the national review of the operation of the deprivation of liberty safeguards under the Mental Capacity Act.

CSSIW also undertook an investigation into an allegation made under the Public Interest Disclosure Act ('PIDA investigation') concerning the Independent Management Review completed as part of a Serious Case Review conducted by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

The annual programme of inspections of the council's regulated care services for adults and children has also been completed.

Areas for follow up by CSSIW next year

A number of specific areas for improvement have been identified in the body of this report which will be followed up by CSSIW. The council's progress in relation to these will be discussed with the council during regular engagement meetings, and site visits in the coming year. Other areas for follow up are listed below.

- Progress on the modernisation and integration of adult social care.
- Early years intervention and prevention services.
- Overview and scrutiny arrangements.
- Outcomes and recommendations of the looked after children inspection.
- CSSIW will contribute to a WAO led review to examine whether councils are effectively supporting older people to live independently, including through joined up working across health and social care.

Performance

Shaping services

Adults

Commissioning and contracting services have faced significant challenges in overseeing budgetary efficiencies in both adults and children's services and in addressing the increased demands in provider performance. CSSIW inspectors confirm that the number of safeguarding referrals continues to rise. This will continue to pose a challenge for the council in promoting and achieving consistent quality for service users across both commissioned and directly provided services.

Modernisation of services for older people and integration with health to meet the needs of older people with complex needs has progressed across the county.

Some restructuring, new appointments to managerial posts, service reconfiguration, and the appointment of a new county director for health have assisted these developments. The council is committed to integrating and modernising social care together with health services in residential and community settings. It is investing in a new development in Tregaron.

The council has a system of brokerage to improve the commissioning of services for people using care home and homecare services, the effectiveness of which needs to be evaluated. An increase in demand for homecare services has been evident, outstripping available resource. New providers have been attracted into the county but the challenge will be to ensure that new and existing providers alike have clear expectations about providing quality services. The development of market position statements setting out the council's vision for future service delivery and providing foundations for sustained change and improvement, will guide existing and potential service providers to make informed decisions about developing their business.

The lack of placements for people with dementia requiring nursing care continues to be a problem. While seven beds have been registered in the north of the county, securing acceptable performance and quality of care in this provision has been difficult. Placements have been suspended intermittently throughout the year following intervention with partners in the health board and CSSIW. This will be an area for improvement again this year.

The council recognises the need to reshape services for people with learning disability in the face of financial challenge and the current focus on direct payments, by scoping service demand and user expectation. It is realistic in recognising the additional budgetary pressure on adult services in 2014/15 as a whole, and the risks to maintaining budgetary control. The revised corporate performance monitoring processes will assist in this oversight.

Children

The council, together with its partners within the mid and west wales collaboration project has worked effectively toward the delivery of a national adoption service by setting up the regional adoption service by 1 April 2014. The council is now seeing the benefits of establishing the team around the family approach. The improving performance of the integrated family support team is considered to be having a positive impact for children and families.

Developments in quality assurance continue with one system to be implemented across the department under the head of service. Policies and procedures have been reviewed, however a number remain to be implemented. Progress has been made on an improved induction process for staff which now needs implementation.

The council has clear budgetary plans in place for 2014 -15 which it is anticipated will meet pressure on children's services, whilst supporting the delivery of the changes required.

Areas of progress

- The progress towards the development of a fully integrated community service in Tregaron.
- The strengthening contracting and commissioning function.
- The positive outcomes achieved by the team around the family and the integrated family support team.

Areas for improvement

- Increase the provision of placements for people with dementia requiring nursing care.
- The development of a suite of market position statements.
- The implementation and roll out of the induction process for staff in children's services.

Getting help

Adults

People continue to get help from both adult and children's services through the contact centre. This provides the public with a bi-lingual service which is able to advise, signpost and refer people who are seeking support to the most appropriate service. The success of this service has been recognised over the last few years and its expertise and professionalism in its responses to the public is evident. People who require support from mental health, reablement and assistive technologies can approach these services directly.

The council's work with carers is strong, with an increase in assessments being carried out and a greater number of carers then receiving a service. This shows a significant improvement in the councils support services. In learning disability services, following changes to the management of health staff the consistent oversight of the quality of assessments will need to be monitored, as will the support given to carers. The community team for people with a learning disability is aware of the need to improve the take up of carers' assessments.

The council has seen a significant rise in the number of deprivation of liberty safeguards authorisation requests, following the Cheshire West Supreme Court judgment in March 2014. The impact of this on council's resources to process these and undertake best interest assessments could be significant.

Performance in reducing the rate of delayed transfer of care from hospital for social care reasons per thousand population has improved again this year from 5.76 to 4.15. This represents good performance in light of the closure of Cardigan community hospital. Last year's improvement in carrying out reviews of care and support for older people has dipped slightly from 99.6 % in 2013-14 to 93 % this year.

Children

People are able to get help from children's social care services through the council's contact centre, where appropriate referral will be made to the child & family assessment & support team. The exception to this is where a service is required for a child with a moderate or significant disability, whereupon access to services will be through the Tim Plant Anabl. This service ensures that last year people received good, timely, responses within 24 hours in 98% of cases.

The performance of children's service again shows an overall improvement on last year. Performance in the completion of initial and core assessments fell slightly this year from 80.6% to 75.7%. However, those outside of the time frame were completed more quickly this year. The council has improved its performance in seeing a child and seeing a child alone this year, and in their re-referral rates. Children in need plans were reviewed in 92% of cases (621 of 674) which again shows an improvement compared to last year

The council carries out quality assurance with families they work with and has been well received by those undergoing this assessment work.

The council has been successful in the recruitment of social workers into the looked after children team; however the team does now comprise 25% newly qualified social work staff requiring additional support from the senior practitioners and team managers. Whilst this recruitment is viewed positively the additional pressure on experienced staff must be recognised, and may be reflected in some of the performance indicators concerned with statutory visits. However, significant improvement in the reduction of placement moves for looked after children have been achieved from 25% experiencing three or more moves in 2012-13, to 13% this year.

Areas of progress

- Continued good performance in the carrying out of adult reviews.
- The reduction in placement moves for children.
- The service and support offered to carers in older peoples services.

Areas for improvement

- Improve the take up of carers assessments in learning disability and mental health services.

The services provided

Adults

In service development consultation with users, advocates and carers is well established, and will be vital to help drive the modernisation of its learning disability services. This is now being led by the mid and west Wales collaborative learning disability board, chaired by the strategic director for Ceredigion. The council recognises that the current structure and function of the community team for people with a learning disability needs review. The change to the management arrangements by its health partner, delay in appointing a team manager and the noticeable increase in the number of safeguarding referrals, has affected its ability to carry out this strategic work.

The funding for the COASTAL projects is due to come to an end in 2014. The council is looking to continue the work placements established and the skills of its current workforce. Ceredigion is working in partnership with other councils in south and west Wales. The review of the day services model to better meet the needs of users is being considered. The aim is to provide more social opportunities, extended opening and support across evenings and weekends. The council recognises the need to further develop its transition arrangements with children's services and undertake a review of its accommodation strategy with Tai Ceredigion.

The council recognises that the current structure within the community mental health team also requires review to become a more integrated service with health, but for now, it will concentrate on improving staff support and focusing on more effective delivery of its statutory duties.

In order to respond to an increasing demand for care and support in people's own homes, the work to bring the reablement and domiciliary care services together is nearing completion. These targeted intervention teams will be established in early 2014-15. To meet peoples expressed need for care in their own homes the council commissioned domiciliary care with four new providers. The demand for reablement services remains high and the service continues to struggle to meet this.

The council allocates significant resources from both adult social care and human resources to the oversight and investigation of safeguarding and performance

issues within one of its own residential homes.. The council's response was clearly actioned and focused on the welfare of vulnerable people living in the service to protect and safeguard them. This involved the closure of the home and CSSIW inspectors report that the transfer and support of service users was received positively with people settling well into their new homes. The council should now consider the lessons learned to improve oversight of its directly provided services, and implement robust performance management.

Children

The success of the integrated family support team in achieving positive outcomes for children and families has been evident this year, attributed to closer and more effective team working. The increase in referrals to the team and the associated multi-agency response has led to more families benefitting from the service. An important aspect of the intervention for families has been the emphasis on their strengths. Consequently, families are feeling more valued and empowered. They are more likely to realise their goals, make and sustain changes and provide stability for their children.

The development of a more robust transition service is recognised as a priority in order to address increasing demand and meet the needs of children with mental health and physical disability. The development of a sound model and protocol between children's and adult services should be considered, together with an increase in staffing resources.

The development of the mid and west wales adoption service continues, building on the success of the west wales adoption service which this year were runners up in the National BAAF "Best Adoption Team" award, for their innovative work. Ceredigion's fostering agency is regulated by CSSIW. A focused Inspection found that whilst the recruitment and assessment of carers was sound, there were omissions in putting in place agreements with carers as required by regulation. CSSIW inspectors also commented positively on the 'sitting service' provided through Tim Plant Anabl, for children with a disability.

Whilst not a regulated service the team around the family has come to CSSIW's notice via Estynwhich has recognised the positive work with children and families and its good links with education services.

Areas of progress

- The success of the integrated family support team in achieving positive outcomes for children and families and ensuring closer and more effective team working.
- The 'sitting service' provided through Tim Plant Anabl, for children with a disability.

- The team around the family through its positive work with children and families and its good links with education services.

Areas for improvement

- Review the structure and performance of the community team for people with a learning disability.
- The ongoing performance management of directly provided services.
- The need to progress the development of a more robust transition service, and a sound model and protocol between children's and adult services together with an increase in staffing resources.

Effect on people's lives

Adults

The council has given high priority to its support of carers and has established a dedicated unit to oversee and develop services across the county. Because of the political and corporate support, carers sit at the centre of service development and are recognised for the important role they play in supporting the people of Ceredigion. This, together with the work of the carers' development officer, (and the staff of the unit) has resulted in a strong and continually developing service, fully implementing the Carers (Wales) Measure. The council supports its carers through individual work, events, conferences and consultation. Direct evidence of this engagement and the value of the work undertaken by the carers unit were observed by CSSIW. The work with carers was greatly valued by them but simpler access to advice would be appreciated.

There is now a greater awareness in care management teams of the need to record the offer of assessments to carers. This was as a result of workshops to develop their knowledge and understanding, and this should continue to be developed. The carer aware e- learning package has been developed in conjunction with young carers. The package originated in Ceredigion and is now used in a number of councils across the region. It is now incorporated into staff induction, and has been undertaken by both senior management and the members of the health and care scrutiny committee. Colleagues in health, including those in primary care, have also taken part through the 'Investors in Carers' initiative.

The council's adult safeguarding functions have continued to respond in a timely and effective manner to an increasing number of referrals from both commissioned and in-house services. Balancing the pressures to move people from hospital to care home settings with the need to ensure their safety in an appropriate placement, has proved to be challenging with the use of provider performance measures needed in certain circumstances. CSSIW inspectors are positive about the involvement of contract monitoring and commissioning staff in the process, and

good links with health colleagues are in place. However, the structure and capacity of the current safeguarding model will need to be reviewed in light of the increase in referrals, the pursuit of consistency and the need to respond to the increase in deprivation of liberty safeguard referrals.

The impact of the recent Supreme Court judgement regarding the Cheshire West case has significantly increased the numbers of deprivation of liberty safeguards applications to the council acting as the supervisory body. This will have implications for the workforce in responding to the increased level of demand and conducting best interest assessments. This will be an area for follow up in the coming year.

Children

The council received external scrutiny of its children's safeguarding arrangements, twice in 2013. The Wales Audit Office carried out a national review of arrangements across the council to safeguard children, and ESTYN undertook an inspection of the local education authority which included safeguarding arrangements. In Estyn's report in February 2014, promoting social inclusion and well-being was deemed to be excellent where it stated that "The authority's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and give no cause for concern. It has extremely robust systems for monitoring safeguarding procedures in schools and other settings".

The number of children placed on the child protection register has remained stable across the year, with protection plans proving successful. Good inter-agency working is evident with good attendance from parents and engagement with children.

The PIDA investigation found some examples of good practice, including the prompt commissioning of the independent management review, but also noted shortfalls in relation to interviewing key members of staff and data gathering and analysis.

In response to the requirements for regional safeguarding boards as set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, the council with its partners, Powys, Carmarthenshire, and Pembrokeshire has formed CYSUR as the executive board. This will have regional sub groups for child practice reviews, workforce development and policy and procedural development. Locally, the operations and quality assurance sub group and training will continue to meet in order to ensure local accountability and provide assurance that issues are acted upon and not lost within the bigger regional agenda.

The involvement and consultation with young carers has a high profile within the council. Development work is being carried out in conjunction with Aberystwyth University.

Areas of progress

- Awareness raising of the role of carers within the council.
- Ongoing development of the work with carers.
- Collaborative work around CYSUR .

Areas for improvement

- Review of the adult safeguarding model.

Capacity

Delivering Social Services

Adults

Whilst the council is able to recruit sufficiently qualified staff to deliver a safe and developing service, the recruitment and retention of in some areas is a challenge. Sickness absence levels is reducing year on year, however, the council acknowledges the difficulties in this area. In order to ensure that the modernisation of services is realised with shared vision and commitment it should be a priority to develop an effective workforce plan to ensure that staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to support the changes.

Performance management arrangements have been strengthened this year with heads of service benefiting from regular engagement and analysis of data with performance staff. The support and updating of performance information on a daily basis is valued. The business information team has been involved in meeting with team managers to enhance awareness of performance issues. This has resulted in significant gains in key areas such as carers offered an assessment and the protection of vulnerable adults. Reporting is more robust, management reports are available weekly and there is closer working with the business and information team

Children

Sickness absence levels are reducing year on year. The council reported fewer vacancies in both children's and adult services at the end of year and is benefiting from a partnership arrangement with Swansea University, through which the council recruited seven social workers in 2013-14. However, the number of newly qualified social workers is significant, and requires the supervision and support of

the senior practitioners and team managers to support induction and practice development. Staff training has strengthened this year, building on the established development and training needs analysis. Training is extended to commissioned services in order to deliver on the council's commitment to raise standards.

Improved performance management is having a direct influence on the ability to provide a better service to children and families. Weekly management reports have led to a more timely response in identifying shortfalls, outstanding tasks, and establishing performance against targets. These improvements in internal performance oversight and management has enabled the department to have a fuller understanding of its position on an almost daily basis, giving it the ability to respond quickly to the needs of children.

Areas of progress

- Performance management arrangements.

Areas for improvement

- The establishing of a workforce plan, to aid the delivery a skilled workforce to achieve the developments in service provision identified.

Providing direction

While the work on the collaboration with Powys, with a joint director of social services, continued until July 2013, it did not result in any permanent, formal, integration of structures between the two councils. The director has now taken up the new strategic director role in Ceredigion and works from the corporate centre. The aim of creating the wider directorate was to support service development to benefit people accessing council services. The corporate director role encompasses the role of statutory director of social services in addition to a wider range of responsibilities. The role of the statutory director of social services is pivotal to the council's ability to continue to transform and develop its social care agenda. Within the enlarged directorate the role of the statutory director must continue to be protected to ensure continued direction and leadership in social services and communication with management and staff.

The accountability and expectation of former assistant directors has been made clearer in the recasting of their role as heads of service. There is a greater degree of communication and shared understanding between heads of service across the council and a developing appreciation and understanding of how the various council areas can work more effectively together.

The corporate restructuring of the council's management has led to greater strategic clarity within the organisation. The single integrated plan, corporate strategy and improvement plan, all clearly reflect social services priorities..

Corporate performance management and reporting arrangements have been reviewed, with a new self-evaluation process introduced across the council. The evidence provided by the council to support the director's annual report is testament to a council that is now more aware of its risks, and of what is required to mitigate them in order to provide a quality service to people within the county.

Areas of progress

- Improved performance management.
- Communication across directorates.

Areas for improvement

- To monitor the impact of the change of location of the director of social services and the additional areas of responsibility now delegated.
- To continue to develop the strong corporate and political support to drive modernisation and to respond effectively to the requirements of the new Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act.