



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

Performance Evaluation Report 2014–15

Powys County Council Social Services

October 2015

This report sets out the key areas of progress and areas for improvement in Powys County Council Social Services for the year 2014–15

Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2014 - 2015

Local Authority: Powys County Council

This report sets out CSSIW'S evaluation of Powys County Council's performance in delivering its social services functions.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The council has continued to implement its improvement plans with the restructuring and refocusing of the children's and adult social care workforce, reviewing and strengthening safeguarding, transition arrangements for people with a learning disability, integrating its management structure within mental health services, and the development of its reablement service. Good outcomes are being achieved for people receiving a reablement service in the south of the county, and it is hoped that the service in the north will develop in strength and consistency. The development of the single point of access, operating as 'Powys People Direct', was also established during the year with the launch of the adult services aspect in April 2015, which followed the launch of children's services in October 2014.
- 1.2. Within adult social care the council has achieved the commissioning and retendering of its supported living services during the year. The challenge of stabilising the domiciliary care market has been of paramount importance. This followed the procurement and re-tendering exercise which was implemented in April/May 2014, establishing four main provider agencies, and the subsequent termination of the contract of one of these in September 2014. As a large provider, this had a knock on effect to the other agencies' ability to deliver, and it was followed by the failure of a second provider, and the mutual termination of a third contract. The council acknowledges the significant impact this has had on the people of Powys who receive home care. This left the council with a substantial challenge in taking over a large number of care packages to an in-house service and staff under TUPE arrangements. This transfer was well planned and coordinated.
- 1.3. During the year CSSIW received a considerable number of concerns directly from service users, families and Assembly Members regarding the poor quality of domiciliary care service delivery within Powys. We have been actively involved in the multi-agency response to these concerns ensuring the welfare of people using domiciliary care services. It has monitored the performance of both the provider agencies and the council's ongoing care management, contracting and commissioning of these services. This oversight has culminated in CSSIW's inspection of

Powys adult social care services, specifically its arrangements for the provision of domiciliary care, which was undertaken during March and May 2015.

- 1.4. The full report and findings of that inspection were published in August 2015. The report can be accessed via CSSIW's website at www.cssiw.org.uk. The council has subsequently provided CSSIW with a detailed action plan in response to the recommendations made. These actions will need to be achievable, timely and be clearly targeted at improving outcomes for people currently receiving a domiciliary care service both now and in future. Progress made against those recommendations will be monitored by us throughout 2015/16.
- 1.5. The need to stabilise and shape the domiciliary care market and culture of provision was acknowledged by staff and stakeholders as being necessary for service development. The launch of a single point of access, together with the restructure of adult services in a relatively short timescale, with its inherent anxieties and challenges, has caused additional pressure on care management teams and their ability to embed these changes effectively. This agenda, whilst necessary for the successful implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, is both demanding and ambitious in the context of budget restrictions and capacity. Therefore prospects going forward are uncertain. However, CSSIW recognises there are signs of improvement as the council follows through its internal action plans with regard to carers work, review performance and engagement with the provider sector.
- 1.6. In children's services the strengths and effectiveness of its early intervention and prevention models continues to deliver positive outcomes for children and their families. The impact of staffing changes and absences at all levels in the service has created some fragility and affected the performance of the service in some areas. Participation and engagement with young people remains strong and continues to influence both service and council development in tangible ways.
- 1.7. Progress against last year's areas for improvements has been made by the council, despite it needing to respond to other significant challenges during 2014/15.

2. Response to last year's areas for improvement

Identified improvement last year	Progress in 2014-15
Increase the pace of delivery in developing sound commissioning strategies	A number of commissioning strategies have been developed including learning disabilities, older people's accommodation,

	carers, mental health, physical disabilities and sensory loss.
Develop an effective assistive technology service	The council has continued to find it difficult recruiting into this post. The development of a specific strategy will aim to drive this forward. In light of these difficulties, the local authority took action and this has been addressed early in the year, and through the adult social care restructure.
Deliver an effective workforce plan, which embodies the changes identified	This is still in development. Key workforce development priorities have been identified, for example the recruitment of the domiciliary care workforce.
Children's services plans identify how the early intervention and preventative services will be delivered to improve outcomes for children	This is core to all children's services and is proving very effective in supporting children and families.
To deliver the single point of access for both adults and children's services	The single point of access went live for children's services in October 2014 and for adults in April 2015.
To complete the planned review of the pre- and post-tendering process of the domiciliary care service	An independent review was carried by the Institute of Public Care (IPC) during 2014, and an improvement plan was approved by cabinet to respond to the recommendations.
Timeliness for annual reviews of foster carers	The CSSIW inspection of the fostering service confirmed improvement.
Delayed transfers of care	The domiciliary care re-tendering process has impacted on delayed transfers of care this year leading to a drop in performance.
Launch of the reablement service	The appointment of a second manager overseeing the county-wide delivery of this service means the council now has its reablement service operating in both the south and north.
Outcomes for looked after children	This relates to educational outcomes for children and the council continues to make progress in this area. The development of a co-ordinator role for both looked after

	children and education is being actively considered.
Consider lessons learned from the commissioning and retendering process in domiciliary care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of service users	The IPC review set out a number of recommendations in response to which the council developed an action plan, including a council wide workshop to share the lessons learned.
Adult safeguarding, its structure, processes and delivery	A revised safeguarding structure has been introduced. The successful implementation of its processes and systems will be monitored throughout the year. Appointee, deputyship and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard (DoLS) functions have moved into the safeguarding service.
Direct engagement with carers receiving a service	A consultation has now been completed as part of the carers strategy work. The council continues to commission Powys Carers, Cross Roads and a number of other support services.
Improved communication between adults and children safeguarding to ensure risk is managed appropriately	The council has appointed an overarching safeguarding manager, together with interim children's and adults safeguarding lead.
Timely process for child protection case conferences	Timeliness has and continues to be a priority. Improvements are evidenced.
Risk management of children who present with risk-taking behaviours	The council is involved in the development of regional policies and procedures and has recently signed off its missing children's policy.
Clarity and the consistent application of eligibility criteria	Revised eligibility criteria was introduced in 2014/15. Its implementation and impact will be monitored throughout the coming year.

3. Visits and inspections undertaken during the year

- 3.1. Site visits provide CSSIW with an opportunity to speak with people who use the services, their families and staff who manage and work in the services. During 2014/15, site visits were made to:
- Early intervention and prevention services in children's services
 - The 16 plus team
 - The integrated family support team, together with the Together a New Service team and family group conferencing
 - The youth justice service
 - The reablement service
 - The integrated health and social care centre.
- 3.2. During February to May 2015 CSSIW carried out an inspection of the council's adult social services, specifically its arrangements for the provision of domiciliary care. This report was published in August 2015. Consequently, where appropriate, a number of that report's findings are reflected in this year's performance evaluation report.
- 3.3. During the year the Wales Audit Office (WAO) carried out a national study on council's arrangements for supporting the independence of older people, outside of its social care services. Powys was chosen as part of the fieldwork for this study. WAO also carried out a review of the council's governance arrangements to support the safeguarding of children.
- 3.4. During the year CSSIW followed up our inspection of the council's safeguarding and care planning of looked after children and care leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours. A number of areas of good practice were evidenced and the council was asked to consider further areas for improvement. It responded well, producing a detailed action plan against which good progress was made.
- 3.5. CSSIW also met with senior officers of the council throughout the year to review social services performance, and discuss progress with the areas for improvement identified in last year's performance evaluation. The council were helpful in their engagement with CSSIW and readily facilitated access to enable site visits to take place.

4. Areas for follow up by us next year

- 4.1. 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. Specific areas for follow up will include:
- Progress made on the recommendations of the inspection of adult social services March/May 2015
 - Stabilisation and development of the domiciliary care market
 - Impact of ongoing budget cuts on service delivery
 - Progress in developing and embedding the new single point of access
 - Progress on new safeguarding arrangements for both children and adults.

5. Our inspection and review plan for 2015-16

- 5.1. CSSIW is also undertaking the following thematic inspections and services during the forthcoming year. Powys may be selected for fieldwork:
- National review of domiciliary care
 - National review of services for people with learning disabilities
 - National review of care planning for looked after children.

6. The extent to which the experiences and outcomes for people who need care and support are improving their wellbeing

Adults

Overview

- 6.1. The challenge of stabilising the domiciliary care market has been of paramount importance to the council. Considerable management and front-line resource has been focused on contingencies to minimise the impact on people from multiple provider failure. The council now needs to agree the future of domiciliary care provision, having taken back in-house a large number of care packages and staff in order to ensure a

consistency of care to vulnerable people.

- 6.2. CSSIW received a considerable number of concerns directly from service users, families and Assembly Members during the year with regard to the standard of domiciliary care provision. CSSIW has actively been involved in the multi-agency response to these concerns, ensuring the welfare of people using domiciliary care services, a significant number of which resulted in safeguarding referrals. The inspectorate has, and will continue, to monitor the performance of both the provider agencies and the council's ongoing care management, contracting and commissioning arrangements.
- 6.3. CSSIW undertook an inspection of Powys adult social care services undertaken in March and May 2015, specifically its arrangements for the provision of domiciliary care. The inspection found that the commissioning of domiciliary care services in 2013 and 2014 was *'flawed in concept, design, and delivery, with insufficient senior management oversight of its governance arrangements and decision making. The decisions made during the procurement exercise were not always well thought through, especially in terms of the real costs versus benefits analysis, and therefore sustainability. There was no evidence that the availability of care had improved through the commissioning arrangements; indeed delayed transfers of care from hospital increased during 2014/15. The absence of an overarching commissioning strategy, and market position statement, resulted in the council not being in a position to plan effectively and determine its commissioning and service development priorities. The council acknowledges its failings and regrets that some service users have not received the quality of service that the council would have wanted'*.
- 6.4. Alongside this the council continued to implement its improvement plans with the restructuring and refocusing of its adult social care workforce, strengthening its safeguarding structure, its transition arrangements for people with a learning disability, and integrating its management structure within mental health services. The council plans to develop a joint safeguarding hub with Powys Teaching Health Board which will bring together health and social care safeguarding. However, the need to have in place effective processes, skills and consistency of delivery and response in its own service should be established prior to any merger with health.
- 6.5. The council continues to align itself for the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act in 2016, with elected member development days to ensure that members are kept fully abreast of the new legislation and how the council seeks to enable the independence of people. In February 2015, the cabinet approved a change in adult social care's eligibility criteria to 'substantial' to bring them in line with the majority of other Welsh authorities and to prepare for the

forthcoming national eligibility criteria. The council has also achieved the commissioning and retendering of its supported living services during the year, which led to a major redesign of services, moving to a more outcome focussed and meaningful service, which not only achieved significant financial savings but clearly has improved outcomes for people.

- 6.6. The number of service users receiving a direct payment has increased year on year from 236 in 2012/13, and 287 in 2013/14 to 428 2014/15 towards the end of 2015. The council recognises the importance of promoting direct payments, especially in parts of the county that are often difficult to access by provider services. The creative solution of supporting people through direct payments is one the council is keen to explore.
- 6.7. The volume of adult safeguarding referrals in the year has proved challenging for care management teams, resulting in delays in carrying out and closure of some investigations, the recording of individual protection plans and timely follow up work. Inspectors report that improvements in timeliness, consistency and robustness within adult safeguarding are still required across the county. The council has recognised the need for review and as a result has appointed a joint lead manager for safeguarding bringing together children's and adults' safeguarding.
- 6.8. However, the council is yet to appoint a lead adult safeguarding co-ordinator, having put in place an interim agency worker to fulfil that role in March 2015. This role is pivotal in supporting team managers in their safeguarding role, and in ensuring that consistency in threshold decision-making and having an oversight of adult safeguarding cases is established.
- 6.9. The percentage of reviews completed during the year has increased from 67% in 2013/14 to 74%, but it remains below the council's 80% target. In order to improve this performance, a dedicated review team within older people's services and a reviewing officer within the disabilities team have been put in place. Performance in reducing the rate of delayed transfer of care for social care reasons had declined from 9.17 per 1,000 population of people aged 75 or over in 2013/14, to 15.56, which is well below the council's target of 5.5.
- 6.10. The council has seen a significant rise in Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard (DoLS) applications this year from 22 in 2013/14, to 336. This is consistent with that experienced by the majority of Welsh authorities and is a direct result of the Supreme Court judgement known as the 'Cheshire West Judgement'.

Key National Priorities (adults)

Preventative and early intervention services

- 6.11. The council has in place an integrated health and social care leadership board, comprising representation from the council, health board and the third sector. Alongside its stakeholder partnership boards in physical disability, sensory impairment, mental health, and learning disability together with the integrated care pathway for older people, this continues to drive the integrated agenda for the council.
- 6.12. The development of the single point of access, operating as 'Powys People Direct', was established with the launch of the adult services aspect in April 2015, which followed the implementation for children's services in October 2014. Early initial feedback regarding adult services from users, inspectors, some social work teams and providers of services was mixed. There were clear issues identified regarding the capacity and knowledge of the staff in the service, and poor response times. The council has struggled with recruiting a team manager, and an interim agency worker is currently in place. If it is to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act the council will need to ensure that this essential front-line service is robust and responsive to people's requests for help and advice.
- 6.13. A joint, draft assistive technology strategy has now been produced, and suitable demonstration sites are being sourced. This service will be influential in driving forward the prevention strategy and has been an area for improvement for the council for some years.
- 6.14. CSSIW reviewed the new integrated intermediate care facility in Builth Wells which is registered as a care home. This facility has already been able to evidence positive outcomes for people who are benefiting from the integrated approach to early intervention and prevention. The ability of people to access a range of health and care services on one site has already proved valuable. There is now a need to evaluate its performance in order to ascertain whether this service is meeting its original goals and to ensure that social care support is regularly maintained.
- 6.15. CSSIW also reviewed the council's reablement service during 2014. The team has now become a fully functioning in-take service, and achieved its ISO9001 accreditation for quality service and processes. The service in the south clearly evidenced the positive outcomes it had been achieving for people accessing the service. The wider roll out of reablement services across the county was impacted significantly in the north by the need to provide long term care packages for individuals

following the problems associated with the domiciliary care procurement and tendering exercise, and the end of the contract with a large provider. The move to a full intake model was achieved in the autumn of 2014. In April 2015, the need to respond to providing longer term care when a provider in the south also ceased operation had the potential to impact on the reablement service significantly. However, a well planned and coordinated approach across the council ensured that the reablement service could continue to provide its early intervention and prevention objectives, as well as contributing to the contingencies in the face of domiciliary care provider failure.

- 6.16. The positive delivery of care to people and the effectiveness of the reablement service is evidenced by the percentage of clients age 65 and over who are supported in the community having improved from 81% last year to 86% this year. The rate of older people aged 65 and over helped to live at home per 1,000 population has improved from 71% last year to 73% this year. The percentage of clients receiving no ongoing support following reablement has increased from 64% last year to 69% this year, and the percentage of reablement clients where outcomes have been achieved at 84% at year end is above the 80% target.
- 6.17. The council has made progress with the health board in its integrated response to assessment, and is commencing a single approach to assessing the needs of older people. The single assessment framework undertaken by a jointly trained workforce should streamline access to health and social care support services and improve outcomes for people.

Areas of progress

- The restructuring and refocusing of its adult social care workforce
- Establishment of its emergency duty system
- Implementation of the 'substantial' eligibility criteria
- Reablement service development across the county.

Areas for improvement

- Evaluation and performance of the integrated intermediate care centre and the council's joint working with health
- Establishment of an effective and sustainable domiciliary care service

- Performance in delayed transfers of care
- Permanent recruitment to the safeguarding team
- Permanent recruitment to create a robust and effective first point of contact for the people of Powys.

Children and young people

Overview

- 6.18. Children's services continues to deliver and build upon its strengths in engagement, participation, early intervention and prevention with children and families. The council has strengthened its children's mental health service with the appointment of a psychology post. Access to the service has improved; however, there is still a need to agree threshold criteria for access into the service across teams. Children's services has been impacted upon by a number of staff and management changes and absences this year.
- 6.19. The council's adoption service is now part of the Mid and West Wales regional collaboration. The council is noting some positive indicators from this approach and is monitoring the outcomes for Powys' children carefully. The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) continues to strengthen and develop. The council is using CYPP expertise in supporting procurement and commissioning.
- 6.20. The regional safeguarding board 'Cysur' is now in place, with both regional and local arrangements being embedded. Two child deaths were considered for child practice reviews by the board, neither of which met the threshold for review; however, a management review is being conducted on one case.
- 6.21. The council's engagement and participation with children and young people remains strong and effective with the launch of its junior corporate parenting board in April, which ensures issues affecting young people are fed into the corporate parenting group. Their views have also been sought as part of the council's annual reporting framework challenge process. The junior safeguarding board - 'Eat Carrots Be Safe from Elephants' - continues to grow in strength, and has been instrumental in supporting the development of the regional junior safeguarding approach.
- 6.22. Performance in children's services has dipped in relation to initial assessments from 98% in 2013/14 to 89% this year. The average number of days for overdue initial assessments has increased from last year's 9 days to just less than 14 days this year. The number of core

assessments carried out within 35 days has also reduced from 93% last year to 84% this year, with re-referral rates stable at 22% and looked after children reviews improving slightly at 98%. The council achieved 100% in conducting child protection reviews.

- 6.23. Staffing changes, and absences at manager and social worker level have impacted across children's service leading to an increased reliance on interim and agency staff, and clearly have contributed to the resulting dips in performance. In a number of areas the council acknowledges that the service has fallen outside of the Welsh upper quartile in performance indicators, and is now a matter of priority for the council to address. It acknowledges that the significant pressures facing children's services will make sustaining improvements a challenge.
- 6.24. A very effective participation service offers and supports young people through group work activities and through the new junior corporate parenting group. The participation officer and team are keen to ensure that all aspects of children's services embed participation into its work. The council is ensuring that the National Participation Standards and the achievement of its kite mark is accomplished across children's services.

Key national priorities

Preventative and early intervention services

- 6.25. During the year CSSIW reviewed the council's early intervention and prevention services specifically its integrated family support team (IFST), the 'Together a New Service' team (TANS), family group conferencing, the youth justice service, and the 16 plus team.
- 6.26. The IFST has been limited in its capacity due to staff absences and vacancies, and at the time of the review only had one full time worker. The TANS team and family group conference team are almost to capacity. Despite this, both teams are able to demonstrate flexible and effective services. The approach is beginning to be adopted by other teams in changing their working practice with children and families. Relationships with other service areas is described as good and workers are now beginning to get a better understanding within those teams of the thresholds for referral into IFST/TANS and the need for improved referral information. Raising awareness of the work of this service has increased referrals and the work to build bridges and improve communication is progressing.
- 6.27. The TANS service presents a good, clear risk management approach with positive planning and goal setting. The methods to evaluate the positive work being done and the outcomes families achieve with the support of the team are not yet fully developed. It is also recognised that challenges to service development are currently around capacity,

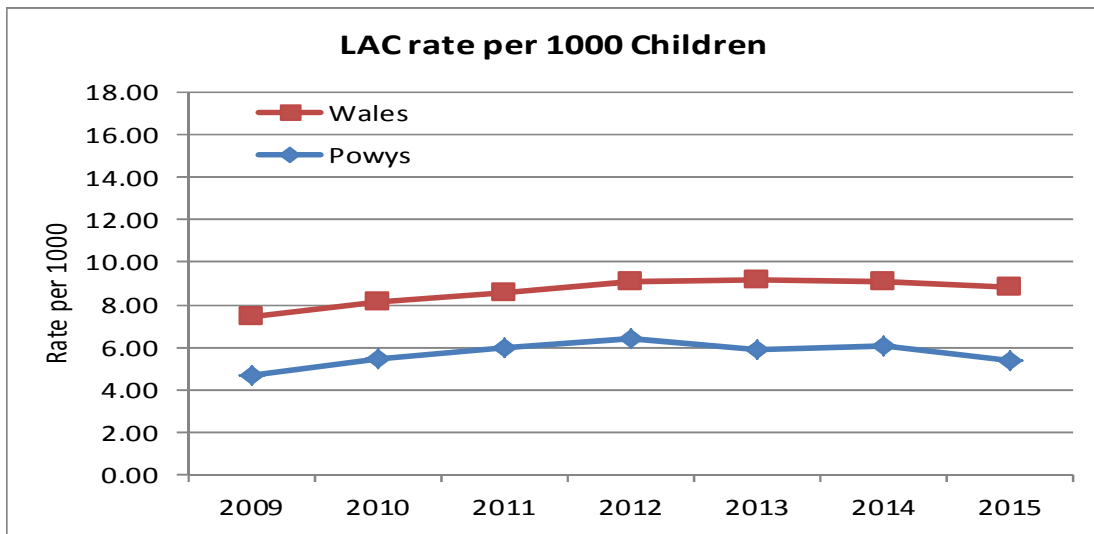
budget pressures, workload and the need to embed the model within teams and social work practice.

- 6.28. The family group conference workers are aware of the need to expand referral routes into the service, and the importance of their role in prevention work and the need to refer earlier into the service. The workers in these teams are clearly motivated and committed to the model they are using, and can see its wider application having significant benefits in other children's teams across the department. The workers demonstrate a high level of skill, knowledge and awareness, and the benefits of using good social work practice is very apparent.
- 6.29. Within the youth justice service, the Powys bureau is working very effectively in providing timely and effective intervention. The multi-agency approach is producing tangible results for young people. Very comprehensive and effective early intervention services are in place.
- 6.30. The numbers of statutory orders continue to fall. However, the impact of children being placed within the county from outside local authorities on the team is significant. A lack of up-to-date assessments from the placing local authority and face-to-face meetings hinders the timeliness and level of support and intervention provided. Good joint working between the probation service and social workers is reported.
- 6.31. The council has provided a good level of resource into the service. Staff training and support is well developed. However, evaluation of the work of the service still requires development. Good links have been established with Aberystwyth University in carrying out research work which supports the developments of the service and the effectiveness of intervention.
- 6.32. The 16 plus team is supported by '@Supporting People' and housing and as such enjoys productive working relationships with those parties, especially in housing where the number of housing related issues for young people has reduced over the years. Particularly successful has been the traineeship scheme for young people, where the council as an employer has supported young people in gaining skills and experience in work situations, as has the work with the corporate learning and development team in securing training placements.
- 6.33. Another significant development to support young people is the 'Nightstop' provision, which is able to provide a home for young people at risk of homelessness, respite care and for emergency situations. This is a vital resource. This runs alongside the well established supported lodgings scheme where host families can provide long term accommodation for young people up to the age of 21. There is a need for this service to increase the number of host families to meet the demand for this provision. During the next year it is hoped further host families will be recruited to the scheme.

- 6.34. Within the new single point of access 'Powys Peoples' Direct', challenges remain around the appointment of a suitably experienced team manager. The current phone system is not considered fit for purpose or sufficiently robust. Cultural changes within staff teams are required to allow the system to work effectively. There is no permanent manager, and a consequent lack of resilience and robustness to meet the demands and expectations. Consistent usage of the single point of access needs to be achieved. These concerns around staffing and systems need to be evaluated and addressed.

Looked after children

- 6.35. Children are being encouraged to have a greater understanding of the risks they face and a say in the strategies that are in place to reduce those risks. The implementation of the Gwynedd risk model supports this process. Further staff training and awareness raising sessions are planned in order to embed and clarify the model for staff.
- 6.36. This year for the first time in three years there has been an increase in the number of children whose names have been placed on the child protection register during 2014/15. The council's initial analysis found that there were several contributory factors to this increase, the largest of which was the increase in the number of domestic abuse referrals from Dyfed-Powys Police. Other councils in the Dyfed-Powys Police region have also seen an increase in domestic abuse referrals, although not to the same extent as Powys. However, the most recent figures for 2015/16 show that child protection registrations have reduced in April 2015.
- 6.37. The council reviewed and restructured its internal foster care network, which has seen targeted recruitment campaigns for children with complex needs, and a revised training programme in order to develop existing carers to also meet the needs of these children. The CSSIW inspection of this service noted many positive outcomes for children and the good support provided to foster carers by the council.



6.38. The looked after children's population has stabilised. The effectiveness of the council's early intervention and prevention services has been instrumental in achieving this. It is pleasing to note the council's commitment to the early intervention and prevention strategy, despite significant pressures. All children who become looked after had a care plan in place and 100% of all reviews had been undertaken within timescale.

Areas of progress

- Junior corporate parenting board
- Continued development of the participation and engagement of children and young people
- The 'Nightstop' provision.

Areas for improvement

- Performance in children's services within assessment
- Stabilisation of the workforce in children's services
- Embedding the new Gwynedd risk model across teams.

7. The extent to which leadership, governance and direction for the council is promoting improvement in outcomes and wellbeing for people who need care and support

- 7.1. CSSIW carried out a review of Powys adult social services in October 2011, and a follow up inspection of the arrangements for adult social services in March 2013. A number of recommendations were made and an increasingly urgent need to modernise the approach taken by the council to the delivery of adult social services was highlighted in these reports. A theme throughout all of these inspections was the turnover in senior management positions and reliance on interim staff in key positions. In addition, the proposed establishment of a single point of access was identified as an area of development in 2013. The financial climate means that the required changes are now more challenging and urgent as Powys needs to reduce its overall budget by £20 million in 2014/15 and £40 million over three years.
- 7.2. In 2014/15 adult social care was required to achieve savings of £2.4 million and achieved the target of £2.36 million of savings. The outstanding savings requirement is to be carried over to 2015/16. These savings have meant that strategic reviews of both services are now taking place. The ongoing reduction of existing services is high risk, as services are inter-dependant across the council. The budget cuts across all council areas impact on neighbouring service areas, especially the ability of both adults and children's services in being able to provide a safe service. As such, a review of which services should and can be provided is now required.
- 7.3. As a result of the problems arising from the implementation of its commissioning exercise, the council commissioned an independent report via the Social Service Improvement Agency for Wales from the Institute of Public Care (IPC), which focused on the chronology of events surrounding the implementation of the commissioning and procurement of domiciliary care services in 2013. A report was published in December 2014 which describes the approach taken by the council and makes a number of recommendations which have been developed into an action plan currently being followed through by the council.
- 7.4. CSSIW has subsequently carried out a further inspection focusing on determining whether the arrangements for commissioning and contracting of domiciliary care by the council provided the framework for effective service delivery. It also considered if care and support outcomes for individuals were adversely affected and if there was any impact on the social services pathway for adults by, for example, increasing delayed transfers of care from hospital.

- 7.5. CSSIW carried out inspections of agencies providing a domiciliary care service in Powys. Whilst these inspections were primarily concerned with the quality of the provision of services to vulnerable people, evidence was gathered in relation to the support, relationship and care management given to both the provider and its service users by the council. Service users were satisfied with the quality of their relationship with social workers and felt involved in decisions surrounding their care and support; providers were frustrated with the inconsistency in the timeliness of receiving assessment and other information necessary for them to provide a quality service to new users. A number of providers and users were similarly disappointed with the performance of the new single point of access in respect of access, response and timeliness, which had been in place since 1st April.
- 7.6. CSSIW recognises that the pace of change has increased since the appointment of the permanent director of social services in July 2013 and heads of service in August and October 2013 respectively. They are facing a very demanding and ambitious schedule to modernise social services in Powys and the failure of the commissioning framework for domiciliary care, together with the efficiency savings required, has made this more difficult. The prospects therefore are uncertain and questions remain about the future arrangements, particularly in the context of budget reductions and in preparing for the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act. However there are signs of improvement and the council is following through on the recommendations within the IPC report.
- 7.7. The children's service has seen significant staffing changes both within the senior management team and also at operational team manager level. This has presented the service with both challenge and opportunity and it is acknowledged that it has created some fragility within the service. One impact of this is reflected in this year's performance indicators.
- 7.8. There are clearly difficulties in recruiting to the social care workforce; alongside the demographic projections, this is unlikely to improve. The council recognises that there is an urgent need to work closely with providers to develop initiatives to attract a workforce to Powys. The importance of its early intervention and prevention services, and specifically re-ablement and the development of an effective and prominent assistive technology provision, will need to be part of any future solution.
- 7.9. Joint commissioning strategies in partnership with Powys Teaching Health Board, in relation to learning disability, older people and carers have been completed and will be subject to consultation from April 2015, prior to their formal adoption. The older people's accommodation strategy, physical disability strategy and substance misuse strategy will

be completed in 2015. The council has a number of its own commissioning strategies in draft, including those relating to children's services, joint assistive technology, older people and integrated care. The council has strengthened its commissioning capacity with the introduction of an interim strategic commissioning manager, supporting the permanent senior strategic commissioning manager who has overseen positive changes and development in the councils approach and commissioning practice. The council will need to ensure that sufficient expertise and capacity is now maintained.

- 7.10. The council is particularly aware of the need to align and develop its service areas ready for the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, and is also planning for the introduction of the Wellbeing and Future Generations legislation. All of its own transformation plans and those designed with its partners are sited on the forthcoming changes. This, together with the council's own population projections, suggests there will be a 140% increase in those aged 85 and over between 2015 and 2035, and a 50% increase over the same period in those aged 75-84. The council's future scoping and planning in response to this will need to recognise the significant challenges that adult services not only face now but in the coming years and how it can deliver its services.
- 7.11. The council has a well developed and established Corporate Parenting Group which continues to deliver development days for elected members which have been well attended and well received.
- 7.12. In its review of the council's arrangements to support the safeguarding of children, carried out between March and May 2014, the Wales Audit Office concluded that the council's governance, accountability and management arrangements in meeting its safeguarding responsibilities, together with its monitoring and evaluating of those responsibilities and the identification and action following evaluation, were found to be adequate, but some improvements could be made.

Areas of progress

- The establishment of a new permanent senior management team within adults and children's services
- The development of a suite of commissioning strategies
- The move to a more consistent and coherent staffing structure across the county.

Areas for improvement

- The development of workforce recruitment initiatives
- The implementation and realisation of the role of assistive technology in supporting people at home
- The formal agreement and roll out of its commissioning strategies.