

## CABINET

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Social Services Director's Annual Report 2023/24 (Final)
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Social Services)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Director of Social Services is required to produce an annual report summarising their view of the local authority's social care functions and priorities for improvement as legislated in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA).

The annual report must evaluate the performance of the local authority in relation to the delivery of its social services functions in respect of the reporting year. It must also set out objectives in relation to promoting the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, for the forthcoming year.

The 2023/24 report highlights positive practice and developments including:

- Social Care Wales' Accolades Awards – Flintshire finalists and winner.
- CIW Performance Evaluation Inspection of Adults' and Children's Services.
- Early Years and Childcare developments and progress on key initiatives.
- Expansion of the local offering of Project Search.
- Progress on the Tŷ Croes Atti development and Maes Gwern hub.
- Positive initiatives overseen by the Dementia Project Board.
- Commissioning of support from Micro Carers.
- Progress for Providers update and examples of the programmes impact.
- Fostering, Foster Bear campaign and Mockingbird updates and positive outcomes.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1	That Cabinet review and approve the Social Services Director's Annual Report 2023/24 and priorities identified for the 2024/25 financial year.
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## REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	<p>The purpose of this annual report is to set out the local authority's improvement journey in providing services to people in Flintshire during 2023/24, including those who access information, advice and assistance, and those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. The annual report also includes the improvement priorities identified for 2024/2025.</p>
1.02	<p>Following on from the Rebalancing Care and Support Consultation in Summer 2023, changes to the reporting process of the Annual Report are coming into force from the end of this financial year, effecting the 2024/25 report.</p> <p>It is proposed that the annual report and the reporting process will now be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Part of the Performance Improvement Framework.</li><li>2) Integral to local authorities' own Social Services planning, scrutiny, and performance improvement actions.</li><li>3) Grounded in a rigorous self-assessment of performance, which includes:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) what has been achieved and done well.</li><li>b) what improvements are needed, informed by feedback from the public, service-users, providers, partners, and other stakeholders.</li><li>c) action planned and taken to achieve identified improvement needs; and</li><li>d) progress made against improvement priorities identified the previous year.</li></ol></li></ol> <p>In readiness for these changes, the 2023/24 report has been compiled using the new format and approach.</p>
1.03	<p>Under the new guidelines, we assess our performance against each of the four areas in the Performance Improvement Framework – People, Prevention, Partnership and Integration, Well-being.</p> <p>In each area we will evaluate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. What do we know about the quality and impact of what we are doing?</b></li><li><b>2. How do we know? e.g. what evidence from research, engagement and the metrics are we using to inform this assessment?</b></li><li><b>3. What are we doing well and how can we do better? What are our priorities for improvement particularly over the coming year.</b></li><li><b>4. What progress did we make on the areas for improvement identified in last year's report? What difference did we make?</b></li></ol> <p>The four areas of the Performance Improvement Framework include eight high-level quality standards as follows:</p>

	<p><b>People</b></p> <p>1.1 All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them.</p> <p>1.2 Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.</p> <p><b>Prevention</b></p> <p>2.1 The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented, whilst ensuring that the best possible outcomes for people are achieved.</p> <p>2.2 Resilience within our communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively encouraging and supporting people who need care and support, including carers, to learn, develop and participate in society.</p> <p><b>Partnerships And Integration</b></p> <p>3.1 Effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people.</p> <p>3.2 People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners.</p> <p><b>Well-being</b></p> <p>4.1 People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect, and any other types of harm.</p> <p>4.2 People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own informed decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible.</p>
1.04	<p>Some of the highlights and developments as a result of last year’s priorities included in the report are as follows:</p> <p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct Payments - Flintshire continue to play a significant role in the development of direct payments initiatives in Wales. Welsh Government are funding the extension of our Personal Assistant Portal to other local authorities and resources are shared and available for the benefit of other LA’s.</li> <li>• Workforce Development – The team continue to maintain a high standard of available training opportunities, and support staff and students through varying career progression and pathways. Support continues around the national safeguarding standards, digital skills, Mwy na Geiriau strategic framework and WeCare Wales.</li> </ul>

## **Prevention**

- Early Years and Childcare - The Flying Start programme has been enhanced to offer all 2-year-olds part time childcare. The Phase 1 Childcare Capital programme was completed in March 2024, with eight new builds and one refurbishment. The new Early Years and Childcare webpage has been developed with parents and has now been launched.
- Special Guardianship Service – There have been a number of developments including launching a dedicated webpage and establishing a support group.
- Progression Service - The Progression Model continues to be expanded across services to promote people's independence skills and to support them to achieve their personal outcomes. The Progression Team is being strengthened to enable a focus on employment to expand the service offering for employment and work opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- Supporting Carers – Uptake of the Young Carers ID card continues to increase, and the range of options for breaks for carers is now larger than ever. To support carers with heating costs, NEWCIS has a number of Winter Warm boxes and courses are being arranged with Scottish Power and Citizens Advice Flintshire to support carers with high energy costs.

## **Partnership and Integration**

- Tŷ Croes Atti – The final design plans have been approved and construction work is underway. Working in partnership with BCUHB, the facility will provide integrated social care and health care services, with one of the floors being dedicated to providing D2RA (Discharge to Assess and Recover) support to approximately 12 residents at any one time.
- Maes Gwern - The development of Maes Gwern will see the existing supported employment projects at Tri Ffordd in Bretton, and Growing Places in Shotton, relocate to Mold. The new purpose-built facility will provide sustainable, high-quality services, working in partnership with HfT and BCUHB, to provide health services and therapies, in addition to learning disability, mental health and autism support services.
- Micro Care – an additional 14 new Micro-Enterprises have been set up this year and Flintshire are now able to commission the enterprises to deliver personal care.
- Advocacy Services – Working in partnership with Wrexham CBC a new North-East Wales Advocacy Service has been created. Individuals looking for advocacy support can call one provider for all

	<p>services, Advocacy Services North-East Wales (ASNEW). We have also re-tendered our Self Advocacy project and Advance Brighter Futures now deliver this in Flintshire and Wrexham.</p> <p><b>Well-Being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s Residential Homes - We now have four of the five new homes successfully registered with CIW. The team in Tŷ Nyth have opened a model of Multi Systemic Therapy, Family Integrated Treatment, Integrated Treatment Model which is an evidence-based model that is widely used throughout America and is the first of its kind in Wales.</li> <li>• Short Term Emergency Accommodation - Flintshire now have four properties available to support people who find themselves homeless, or in need of accommodation urgently.</li> <li>• Flintshire Learning for Well-Being Programme - Leaflets are now being distributed to 50 venues, an increase from 24 venues in 2022/23, and includes a QR code which links directly to their website. This year new sessions such as graffiti and outdoor activities, including paddleboarding and archery, have been successful in engaging more young people.</li> </ul>
1.05	<p>The full Social Services Annual Report 2023/24 can be found in <b><u>appendix 5.01.</u></b></p> <p>The report has been designed by Double Click into an interactive PDF, which will also be available in Welsh and published on Flintshire County Council’s website.</p>
1.06	<p>The Annual Report also outlines the improvement priorities identified for 2024/2025, which include the following:</p> <p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead on direct payments initiatives at a national level.</li> <li>• Sign the pledge and adopt Welsh Government’s Corporate Parenting Charter: A Promise for Wales.</li> <li>• Pilot the workforce development skills matrix (Early Years &amp; Family Support).</li> <li>• Support the implementation of the All-Wales safeguarding standards.</li> <li>• Continue to support the Digital Strategy, WeCare campaign and ‘Mwy na Geiriau’ strategic framework.</li> <li>• Continue to support staff and students with social work and occupational therapy pathways and training.</li> <li>• Continue to deliver the Health &amp; Social Care Core Level 2 and 3 Practice qualifications via our assessment centre.</li> </ul>

## **Prevention**

- Continue to grow our in-house fostering service.
- Continue to develop the Special Guardianship service.
- Develop childcare expansion and seamless childcare provision across programs.
- Achieve the childcare expansion target set by Welsh Government.
- Develop a national, regional, and local approach to Early Years Transformation.
- Pilot an evidence-based volunteer information provision to increase access and availability of information to support families and provide early intervention and prevention.
- Utilise the progression model as a way of promoting people's independence skills.
- Continue to expand the service offering for employment opportunities for disabled people.
- Continue to meet the demands of young people with learning disabilities for accommodation.
- Further development of our work to support young carers in their role.
- Continue to investigate and expand creative respite solutions to meet the needs of carers in bespoke and unique ways.

## **Partnership and Integration**

- Provide additional placements for step down care within our in-house provision (Tŷ Croes Atti).
- Support the building of a new integrated hub (Maes Gwern).
- Continue to grow the Micro-Care market, including access to commissioned care packages.
- Pilot an evidence-based volunteer parenting programme, offering parents an opportunity for peer-to-peer support.
- Investigate how to identify and connect with more carers, make our services more visible and accessible and raise awareness of carers in the local community.
- Recommissioning of carers services to begin in April 2025.

## **Well-Being**

- Implement the "Effective Child Protection" practice model and embed into practice within Childrens' Services, over a 3-year programme.
- Launch and begin the implementation of the NSPCC neglect-graded profile tool (GCP2).
- Continue to grow our in-house homecare service.
- Continue to look at new resources to support carers with the pressures due to the increase in cost of living.
- Explore opportunities to support carers from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Support people to achieve their mental well-being outcomes by promoting personal and community well-being through open access courses delivered by the Learning Partnership

	The full list of agreed priorities are included in the report (appendix 5.01) and are also attached as a separate document in <b>appendix 5.02</b> .
1.07	The report is intended to provide the public, the regulator and wider stakeholders with an honest picture of services in Flintshire and to demonstrate a clear understanding of the strengths and challenges faced.
1.08	The report will form an integral part of Care Inspectorate Wales' (CIW) performance evaluation of Flintshire Social Services. The evaluation also informs the Wales Audit Office's assessment of Flintshire County Council as part of the annual improvement report.
1.09	The Social Services Annual Report has been prepared following an in-depth review of current performance by the Social Services Senior Management Team, Service Managers and Performance Officers. The improvement priorities contained within the report are aligned to the priorities contained within our Portfolio Business Plan and the Council Plan.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	The priorities identified within the report are aimed at delivering service improvements, improving outcomes, and meeting local needs within the context of achieving challenging financial efficiencies and value for money. The improvement priorities contained within the report have been identified for delivery within existing resources.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
3.01	The report is to be published by the end of September 2024.  Approval for the final version is required. There is a risk if approval isn't given in time, we may not meet publication deadlines.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
4.01	Work began with Social Services Managers in October 2023 to gather updates on progress made with achieving the priorities set for 2023/24.
4.02	The draft Social Services Annual Report has been discussed at SSMT, Business COT and Scrutiny Overview Committee.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Social Services Annual Report 2023/24 (Final)
5.02	Social Services Priorities for 2024/25

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	None.

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	Contact Officer: Dawn Holt, Commissioning Manager Telephone: 01352 702128 E-mail: <a href="mailto:dawn.holt@flintshire.gov.uk">dawn.holt@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
8.01	CIW - Care Inspectorate Wales ensure that services meet the standards the public expect. They register, inspect and take action to improve the quality and safety of services for the well-being of the people of Wales.