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**Director of Social Services Annual Report
April 2021 – March 2022**

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Director's Summary of Performance

Whilst I reflect on the last 12 Months, I am struck by how challenging it has been across both Children and Adult Services and how, this time last year, I could not have imagined that 2021/2022 could be more challenging than the previous 12 months. The increased demand across our services has been significant and sustained. This reflects the pressures across our communities. The direct and indirect impact of Covid, various lockdowns and the cost-of-living challenges are all having a significant impact on people's lives as well as delays in people accessing treatment through the NHS. However, despite this I have witnessed the most outstanding force of goodwill and commitment from staff across both Children and Adult Services to do their utmost to deliver for Powys residents.

Our performance for 2021/22, in the context of the pressures is exceptional. We have continued to work with families to keep Children and Young People safe at the heart of their families and communities. In doing so we have significantly reduced the number of Children who come into the Care of the local authority. We have developed a range of accommodation options for young people leaving the care of the local authority and the Corporate Parenting agenda has been significantly strengthened. We have continued to support people to live at home independently and delay the need for admission to Nursing Homes by 4 years against the national average. Despite significant challenges in the Domiciliary care market, our workforce has worked additional hours and their days off to keep people at home, safe, whilst our commissioning team have been working with the market to reset and recruit. This continues to be an ongoing challenge. We have continued to embrace technology across both services to mitigate and manage risk and this includes several excellent examples of robotics, including robotic beds which reduce the demand for care and support.

It has been my pleasure to be the Director of Social Services in Powys for the last 4 years. However, this will be my final annual report.

Alison Bulman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. J. Bowen.", is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

Director of Social Services

1. Introduction

Welsh Government requires all local authorities to publish a report about the key achievements and challenges in Children’s and Adults Social Services in the previous year (please see relevant legislation at the end of this report). It is published on the Council’s website and is aimed at interested parties such as elected members, residents, voluntary/community sector organisations, statutory partners such as the NHS, regulators such as Care Inspectorate Wales and Welsh ministers. This report provides an overview of how well the services achieved the intended outcomes as set out in 2020/21 report, as well as identifying new developments and aspirations for 2022/23 and beyond. Detailed information about performance is available on our website, please see the link at the end of this report.

Demographics

There are more people over the age of 64 than in the rest of Wales, which provides a rich tapestry of experiences, but also creates challenges to the employment and care sector.

Population by locality	
Welshpool and Montgomery	18,438
Newtown	16,967
Brecon	14,448
Llandrdindod and Rhyader	12,767
Ystradgynlais	10,211
Knighton and Presteigne	9,636
Llanfyllin	9,187
Hay and Talgarth	8,605
Llanidloes	6,573
Machynleth	6,315
Llainfair and Caereinion	6,216

Age groups in Powys in % (ONS, 2020 mid year estimates)

	Powys	Wales	UK
0-15	16	18	19

16-64	57	61	62
65 and over	28	21	19

Powys County Council's Social Services Department includes Children's Services and Adults' Services. Both are supported by an internal Commissioning team, as well as Corporate Finance, Human Resources, and other support services.

The Adult Services Plan on a Page (below) explains how we will achieve that vision:

Our 7 key objectives

- 1. Front Door**
We operate an effective front door which provides information, advice and signposting which enables residents to make informed choices in relation to their care and wellbeing. The service focuses on resolution at the earliest opportunity for the resident.
- 2. Hospital**
We work with NHS Partners to have in place a set of arrangements that allow for the speedy transfer of people from hospital, to achieve the best possible outcomes for those people.
- 3. Partnership**
We work with Powys Teaching Health Board to adopt and reinvigorate a recovery approach to all health and social care services.
- 4. Community**
We work to ensure that there is timely, targeted and effective use of respite, rehabilitation and support that has a focus on enabling independence and self-management and avoiding the over-prescription of care.
- 5. Long term care**
We work alongside people with long-term care needs to have a care and support plan with a focus on achieving the maximum possible independence (as is realistic and possible for their individual circumstances) and delivers the desired outcome. We review these plans regularly based on outcomes achieved.
- 6. Workforce**
We have in place a workforce that is fully trained and supported to work with people needing social care which fits with the ethos and principles of the Council.
- 7. Management**
We collate and analyse data to help us understand whether there has been an impact on the delivery of outcomes and the management of demand on our services.

Children's Services set out its principles within the Plan on a page here



2. How Are People Shaping Our Services?

Powys County Council engages with the people of Powys and partners in a variety of ways and has continued to do so during the last reporting year, still heavily influenced by the pandemic. Therefore, most of our engagement was 'virtual'. We have been told that, rather than that being a detriment to engagement, many people in the community have welcomed this approach as it enabled them to participate without having to travel often significant distances.

Citizen Forums

Our citizen forums have continued to meet virtually via Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Microsoft Meet. We have taken the opportunity to consult on several different topics including the Customer Care Charter and Residents Expectation Booklet. We have also provided opportunities for support in responses to Welsh Government consultations and have had presentations from a variety of contributors including the Older People's Commissioner for Wales's Office who provided an overview on the report "Leave no-one Behind". Members of the forums have updated on projects within the community.

We have asked PAVO (Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations) to look at the function of our Older People's Forum which meets regularly to discuss issues important to older people in Powys, its membership and how we can ensure that the older citizens of Powys can have their voices heard and are awaiting the outcome of the survey to be undertaken with residents aged 60+. We hope that as part of this engagement we will be able to recruit new members to the forum. The work of the Older People's Forum will feed into the Age Well Partnership Board in the future.

Recognising, valuing, and coproducing with Young and Adult Carers

Young and Adult Carers experienced disproportionately pressures due to the Covid Pandemic as they looked after loved ones with ill health or a disability. The number of Carers has also increased by 27% (Carers Wales (2021). Powys's Population Needs Assessment (2021) estimates that there are now 35,918 carers in Powys over 18. Research (Becker, S (2018) indicates that as many as one in five children of school age are Young Carers during their school lives. This means one in five of the 15,445 pupils in Powys will become a Young Carer.

Our **Carers Steering Group** is made up of young and adult Carers along with leaders in Social Services, Education in Health. Carers of all ages chair the group and collectively the group plans and acts. We have collaborated with Credu, a Powys based charity, and the rapidly growing Carer's movement.

- Contact with 5991 Carers and families
- Person-centred support for **1157** Carers and their families in Powys. This means that Carers were listened to, understood, able to make informed choices and move towards their personal outcomes. This is sometimes achieved over a few sessions, sometimes over a few years, every person is different.
- Additional investment for bespoke respite supported for **782** Carers.
- Trained volunteer councillors gave in depth counselling support to **26** Carers in Powys
- Special investment in supporting Carers with Covid resilience meant **403** were able to access course / learning opportunities
- Investment from Welsh Government meant that **166** Carers in Powys were able to access emergency financial support through the winter
- Opportunities for social connection with a wide range of face to face and on-line activities and groups for young carers and adult carers, including action forums, peer groups, art groups, yoga and wellbeing groups and a summer festival for Carers of all ages and their families.
- Awareness and skills within social services, health, education and the wider community to recognise, value and support Carers throughout our communities, making 90,000 contacts through a range of media including face to face training and awareness raising stalls as well as social media, newsletters and press.

- Carers of all ages and others feel so passionately about the cause volunteering has tripled to **130** people in the last 18 months.

Parent Carer Hayley Pugh sums up our support when she says: *"Thank you, I've found such positive empowering support in Credu!! Credu's commitment to carers has been life changing. Giving us a voice, a platform, a purpose to dare to look forward and believe again in ourselves... a cuppa, a chat, a friendly ear, some support, positive direction, a platform to services, wonderful therapeutic sessions...I no longer feel like I'm a tick box problem. I feel like Hayley again...."*

Going forward, the number of Carers is considerably higher than the resources available to support them. resources. A key focus is therefore building capacity and capability within education, health, social services and community organisations to recognise, value and support Carers as a norm. Carers have a right to assessment and we are currently developing a pilot project whereby Credu undertake Carers Assessments to explore approaches and processes that give Carers the very best possible experience.

For more information about carers support services, please go here [Carers Cymru | Credu | Powys Young & Adult Carers](#)

Children's Services participation

In 2022-2023 Children's Services have worked with Coram Voice to undertake *Bright Spots*, a programme which aims to improve the well-being of children and young people in care by identifying and promoting practices that have a positive impact. This is a large piece of work which illustrates our on-going commitment to improving outcomes for children looked after and care experienced young people as outlined in Children's Services Participation Strategy. This gives us an opportunity to really listen to young people in a focused and systematic way to ensure we better understand how children and young people perceive their care, well-being, the people they know, and their rights. The initial part of the Bright Spots programme entailed distributing a survey called *'Your Life, Your Care'* with our looked after children aged 4-18. The results from the first survey demonstrate that children feel safe where they are living and feel they have trusted adults they can rely on. The care leaver survey results are pending. In 2022 there will be a wide dissemination event to share these findings and to begin to develop Powys' response to what children and young people told us.

3. Providing Services during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The period this report covers sees us in the second year of Covid-19, which continued to have significant impact on our citizens, people requiring care and support, carers and the Council and its partners. Please refer to measures the Council and its partners took in 2020/21 via the section at the end of this report. Many measures taken in 2020/21 continued in 2021/22, covering both adults and children's services.

OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE

CORONAVIRUS HAS HAD AN UNPRECEDENTED IMPACT ON LIVES WE KNOW IT. We're here to help Powys through these difficult times. As an open and enterprising council, we have embraced the way of working and delivering services. WE ARE WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES, RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES TO HELP GET POWYS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY.

For more information please visit www.powys.gov.uk/coronavirus

1 RESPONDING TO COVID-19

ADULT SOCIAL CARE working with the health board to support those with the virus, providing care at home and residential care.

CHILD CARE establishing safe child care for key workers and vulnerable children.

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING ensuring pupils continue to learn and have access to educational resources and support.

REOPENING OUR SCHOOLS

HOMELESSNESS people who are homeless (sofa surfing or rough sleeping) need to be brought indoors and adequately housed.

PUBLIC PROTECTION maintains public health which includes enforcing closures of premises where necessary and managing regional contact tracing.

2 KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE & RESILIENT

Providing care and support for **EXTREMELY VULNERABLE RESIDENTS**

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES and the self-employed in line with Welsh Government guidance.

Providing **REFUSE AND RECYCLING** services including Household Waste Recycling Centres.

Maintaining an emergency **HOUSING REPAIRS** and maintenance service.

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE ensuring essential repairs are carried out and an emergency response is available.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES ensuring children are protected and safeguarded.

LIBRARIES re-opening in a phased manner.

3 RUNNING THE COUNCIL

FINANCIAL Management and Reporting.

CUSTOMER SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS ensuring that the public, our councillors and our staff are regularly updated and informed.

Maintaining our essential **CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES** including workforce, finance and ICT.

OUR VALUES

- Professional** Whatever role we play in the council, we act with professionalism and integrity.
- Positive** We take a positive attitude in all we do.
- Progressive** We take a proactive and responsible approach to planning for the future.
- Open** We keep each other informed, share knowledge and act with honesty and integrity.
- Collaborative** We work constructively and willingly on joint initiatives.

Powys

Supporting Children, young people and their families

- ❖ Promote access to a range of Early Help services, preventing the need for statutory intervention.
- ❖ Focus on early intervention and prevention ensuring access to the right support at the right time to keep families together, where possible and children safe; intervening at the earliest opportunity to ensure that children and young people do not suffer harm.
- ❖ 'Work with' children, young people and their families rather than 'do to', to co-produce plans which will bring about the changes children need as quickly as possible.
- ❖ Provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high-quality placements for children who are looked after to meet the diverse range of their needs and circumstances, keeping children as close to home as possible.
- ❖ Achieve the best possible outcomes for those children in our care by providing good corporate parenting, specialist support and clearly planned journeys through care into adulthood.
- ❖ Ensure that the service has a skilled, supported workforce, equipped to provide a high-quality service to children, young people and their families, which is compliant with the legislative framework and in line with best practice.
- ❖ Ensure children and young people have access to a range of opportunities and services to support them to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created huge pressures on the availability of suitable placements for adults, children and young people. There has been a national shortage of placements which has been made worse by the pandemic with complications arising due to government guidance around Children's homes and issues with isolating and positive cases. There is a lack of provision of therapeutic residential placements for children and young people with severe emotional and behavioral needs in Powys and Wales. This has made it extremely difficult to balance the competing priorities of managing service demand, meeting the needs of children and young people and reducing expenditure with the need to achieve budget savings.

We increased staffing in our Front Door, Assessment and Business Support teams to ensure that we were able to cope with and manage the increase in demand safely and efficiently. The table below highlights the increase in contacts to the service in 2021-22 in comparison to the previous year.

Total number of contact to Children's Services	
April 2021	599
May 2021	572
June 2021	639
July 2021	766
August 2021	593
September 2021	871
October 2021	716
November 2021	736
December 2021	771
January 2022	755
February 2022	848
March 2022	794

Number of Children on the Child Protection Register	
March 2021	83
April 2021	88
May 2021	99
June 2021	107
July 2021	106
August 2021	105
September 2021	102
October 2021	107
November 2021	115
December 2021	116
January 2022	120
February 2022	128
March 2022	132

The increase in demand for services meant we needed to increase staffing resources in the Front Door, Assessment teams and Early Help. Initially these costs were going to be funded by the core budget but at the end of the year they were covered by Welsh Government grants for Covid relief.

The Children’s Services 2020/21 baseline budget included an investment of £5.15 million which in part was for new service development, to offset the 2019/20 existing pressures and the 2020/21 salary inflation, including employers pension contributions. Within the Financial Resources Model (FRM) we identified pressures of £7.646 million (and materialised) and savings of £2.221 million were agreed, of which £1.753 million were delivered. In addition, £275,000 of the unachieved 2019/20 savings were rolled forward into 2020/21 and achieved. The £468,000 of 2020/21 unachieved savings were written off as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process. The outturn was an underspend of £944,000.

Towards the end of 2020/21 the service had started to increase its spending in preparation for a potential surge in infection rates and demand for support. This spending was eventually funded by the Welsh Government.

Support for Adults through our Assist service (Adult Social Care front door)

Our Assist service, which acts as the first point of contact for Powys residents looking for possible social care support, managed 5,316 calls during 2021/22.

Of these 808 contacts resulted in the caller receiving information and advice about how to take their query forward (so not resulting in a referral to a social worker).

Care Home and Domiciliary Care Provision

There are several areas in which intensive support activity was needed during the pandemic. The Council’s work with care homes and domiciliary care has been subject to continuous change and some significant highlights are detailed below:

1. We continued our engagement with care home and domiciliary care providers, at one point including daily calls to offer support, advice, and guidance. We reduced these and eventually stopped in late 2021.
2. Providing care and support at home for older people and those with disabilities saw a steady growth during the year which has been challenging, as some providers are seeing staffing issues which are mentioned elsewhere in this report. We continued to work with our providers and our in-house team to manage this situation safely

The table below shows the increase of people waiting for Domiciliary care provision between April 2021 and March 2022

Number of Individuals awaiting Domiciliary care with no current provision	
April 2021	2
May 2021	11
June 2021	11
July 2021	25
August 2021	23
September 2021	31

October 2021	27
November 2021	28
December 2021	26
January 2022	43
February 2022	58
March 2022	48

3. We continued the work on our integrated care homes dashboard, which began in the Spring of 2020. This has been refined and is used to monitor issues and take early steps to support homes. Colleagues from the commissioning and operational teams, together with Health Board colleagues continued to meet as a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) for care homes to identify and agree actions to be taken to support our care homes.
4. We developed and implemented a Covid supply system for our providers including PPE and lateral flow tests and offered up to date advice and information to providers in relation to the Welsh testing regime.
5. The dedicated email address for the commissioning team, set up in 2020 continues to be used for providers to get in touch with us.
6. PPE supplies continued via the system established in 2020 and is ongoing
7. The Community Equipment Service continued to be pro-active in supporting not only care homes but also individuals living in their own homes, thus enabling these to remain at home.
8. The Council worked with *Rockhaven Healthcare Consultancy* to undertake a '[Fair Cost of Care](#)' exercise, which enabled us to agreeing set fee rates for older persons' care homes in Powys. The fees are set out in the Cabinet report of March 2021, "[Valuing Residential Care](#)". The exercise adopted an open-book approach to understanding the costs of residential care in Powys for care providers and calculated an agreed average cost and set fees, split into relevant categories. These fees were adopted and used from April 2021 until March 2022. There were several instances during the 'second wave' where the Council had to provide direct support to homes. Support included actions to maintain safe staffing levels (including temporary Council staff redeployment). In one instance the Council helped to source alternative temporary arrangements for resident catering.
9. The Council provided support to homes in response to requests concerning problems with securing COVID testing kits; correct self-testing procedures; and establishing operable staff testing arrangements, etc.
10. The Council promoted the availability of the Welsh Government hardship fund and assisted homes to make claims related to increased staffing costs and food prices, the provision of COVID secure visitor pods and testing areas, and additional costs incurred due to the requirement for staff testing. As of March 2021, the monies paid to homes via the Council from the hardship fund totalled £3,859,115.

Number of Individuals in receipt of nursing care	
April 2021	174
May 2021	177
June 2021	185
July 2021	181
August 2021	182
September 2021	186

October 2021	181
November 2021	183
December 2021	183
January 2022	178
February 2022	175
March 2022	174

Number of Individuals in receipt of residential care	
April 2021	370
May 2021	384
June 2021	392
July 2021	389
August 2021	387
September 2021	397
October 2021	393
November 2021	381
December 2021	380
January 2022	378
February 2022	385
March 2022	401

The right support at the right time and place

Here at Powys County Council we believe in your right to independence. Part of that means receiving the right support to live independently at the time you need it. If you're happy living in your own home but feel that you could do with a little support to make your life better then you might find this handy guide to the support that could be available to you here in Powys.

Do you need help around your home such as cleaning or help with meals?

Yes? Then do you have members of your family, friends or paid carers who could help you with this? If you still need help and are unable to sort out support, see below.

Contact the ASSIST team.

CYMORTH ASSIST
 Community Support for Older People
 0345 602 7050

Do you feel that you need help with personal care?

Yes? Then we can have a chat with you to discuss the best ways of achieving this. You could have the option of managing your home care support yourself using Direct Payments or we could manage this for you. We'd talk to you to find out what would be best for you.

Contact the ASSIST team.

CYMORTH ASSIST
 Community Support for Older People
 0345 602 7050

Do you feel that you can safely live at home?

Yes? If you're worried about your safety then we have equipment which might help. Some of this is technological, like a 24hour personal alarm system, while other items aren't, such as stair rails. You might already have access to some technology which can help, too, such as Google or Alexa. We can give you advice on how to use these to help keep you safe. Our AISCARA website can also help you find out what support could be available to you.

AISCARA
powys.livingmadeeasy.org.uk
 Remember, if you don't have internet access at home, this is freely available at your local library.

Powys Careline
en.powys.gov.uk/careline

Do you want to get out and about, meet friends, doing things that you enjoy doing?

Yes? Then our colleagues at the Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO) have a team of Community Connectors who can put you in touch with a Befriending Service and also advise you of other activities and groups in your community where you can meet others with similar interests. The Dewis Cymru and Infolingo websites also have details of groups and activities in your area.

PAVO
www.pavo.org.uk/help-for-people/community-connectors
 Tel: 01597 828649
www.dewis.wales
Infolingo
en.infolingo.cymru

You can find out more by calling the Assist Team.

CYMORTH ASSIST
 Community Support for Older People
 0345 602 7050

The web address which covers all Adult Social Care services is
www.powys.gov.uk/adultservices

If you are being harmed or abused, or you're worried about somebody else, please report it. If you report a concern and it turns out that nothing has happened you won't get into trouble if you really thought there could be a risk. In an emergency, don't wait. Call 999. Otherwise, you can contact Assist on 0345 602 7050.

PAVO **Powys**

Feedback from the Public

To help shape our service, we collect Compliments, Comments and Complaints and we discuss this feedback on a regular basis. We categorise them into Stage 1 and Stage 2 Complaints. Stage 1 complaints are dealt with by the team or senior manager of the department. If we are unable to

resolve a complaint at Stage 1, then it escalates to Stage 2 where the investigation is undertaken by an external independent investigator. If the matter is still unresolved, the complaint escalates to the Ombudsman.

In 2021/22 no complaints were presented to the Ombudsman. For 2020/21 there was an overall increase of eleven complaints and enquiries compared to 2019/20, however, 30% of all contacts into the complaints team are now being dealt with as enquiries and resolved before progressing to becoming a complaint. This is a result of focusing on dealing with issues as soon as possible and resolving them before they progress into bigger concerns.

Compliments

Area	Compliments
Adults with Disabilities	7
Contact and Safeguarding	9
Contracts and Commissioning	6
Domiciliary Care - South	1
Mental Health	15
Occupational Therapy - North	11
Occupational Therapy - South	1
Older People - North	7
Older People - South	11
Policy and Care Services	5
Reablement - North	9

Reablement - South	5
Total	87

Complaints

Area	Stage1	Stage2	Completed	
			Total	Deadline Exceeded
Adults with Disabilities	5	0	5	1
Appointeeship/Receivership Unit/DoLS	1	0	1	0
Contracts and Commissioning	2	0	2	1
Corporate Finance	1	0	1	1
Emergency Duty Team	1	0	1	0
Mental Health	2	0	2	1
Older People - North	1	0	1	0
Older People - South	3	1	4	0
Reablement - South	1	0	1	1
Total			18	6

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There has been a slight increase in compliments received during 2020/21 from 144 to 154. There was a substantial increase in Children's compliments up 400%, demonstrating the improvements in practise compared to previous years. The full Social Services Annual Complaint report is available on our website, please see at the end of this report.

4. Promoting and Improving the Well-being of Powys Residents

In 2020 we started work on our "Powys Pledge" for domiciliary care. This was in recognition of providers often working to different standards and the Council wanting to offer an incentive to improve quality. This work was finalised in 2021 and is under constant review.

Our ambition continues to enable people to remain in their own home for as long as is safely possible. This is often achieved with the support of families and friends. Domiciliary Care agencies, which are commissioned via a Dynamic Purchasing Framework provide professional support. At the end of March 2022 651 adults were in receipt of domiciliary care, a reduction of eighty-four individuals compared to March 2021. Some agencies unfortunately left the Powys market during the year, at the same time others joined.

The North Powys Well Being Programme

The North Powys Wellbeing Programme's long-term vision is "to assess and deliver a new integrated model in North Powys in line with the Health and Care Strategy, and to support effective learning and transfer across Powys."

Led by Powys County Council and Powys Teaching Health Board – with support from the Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO) – this project will address the biggest causes of ill health and poor wellbeing through professionals and communities working together, offering early help and health technology to ensure residents have a more seamless service when they need it.

This work is being shaped by the Integrated Model of Care, which was published in mid-2021, please see information at the bottom of the report.

A major strand of this programme is a planned multi-agency health and wellbeing campus in Newtown. The project team engaged with stakeholders and the community on early plans for this campus at the end of 2021 and a draft Strategic Outline Case is currently (March 2022) being considered by the council's Cabinet and Powys Teaching Health Board with an ambition of submission to Welsh Government later this year.

Proposals for the campus site include:

- A new school for Ysgol Calon y Dderwen (*This work is being managed as part of the council's Transforming Education programme but both teams are working closely together)
- Health and care facilities.
- A Health and Care Academy.
- Library and information services.
- Short term supported housing and accommodation for academy students and locum staff.

For more details, please refer to the website listed at the bottom of this report.

Home Based Support Service

We undertook a 3-year review of this service and our findings following consultation demonstrated the effectiveness and impact of having a local, accessible and personalised service. Home Support is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year and is delivered by a highly skilled workforce who are responsive and adaptable. We had a positive response to our annual survey with 82% of home support members sharing what has been helpful as well as their concerns and the challenges faced. The feedback highlighted a service which is valued, unique and preventative. Members told us that they were able to live at home with confidence and in safety within their own communities. Feedback will be used to continuously improve and develop the Home Support service and expand this into 13 localities. Quotes from users/members: *"I know that when I wear my pendant, Home Support is always there. It gives me peace of mind."* *"The staff are professional. They always treat me respect and dignity. They are empathetic to my care needs. Home Support has been a positive influence on my wellbeing and care needs."* *"On your advice I have managed to get extra support in for 3 nights giving me a well-earned break. This is the second time you have really helped us; we owe you so much."*

Shared Lives

Our Shared Lives offer enables individuals with care and support needs to share their home with a person in the same household, who benefits from accommodation and provides low level care and support. The team have increased by 2 workers, a carers development officer to assist the Shared

Lives carers maintain their compliance with training and supporting with the AWIF and inductions. At the end of March 2022 there were 30 Shared Lives schemes available in Powys. Two residents used our Shared Lives scheme for short term respite and 16 individuals were living in Shared Lives arrangements. Despite the limitations of the pandemic, we continued training Shared Lives carers, which will set us up for a continuation in growth of this area of work.

Supporting people to get back home from hospital

We continued to work with our partners to ensure that, once people are medically fit, they can move back home as quickly as possible. The pandemic posed significant challenges to achieve this due to the market conditions described elsewhere in this document. However, our social work teams successfully enabled 589 individuals to move on from hospital. Of these 331 (57% of all discharges) moved into their own home and others moved into either temporary placement in care homes or permanently into care homes (some of these may already have been resident in a care home).

Total number of people transferred from Powys hospitals on to D2RA pathways where Adult Services is the lead agency	
April 2021	52
May 2021	60
June 2021	58
July 2021	51
August 2021	50
September 2021	40
October 2021	35
November 2021	50
December 2021	47
January 2022	43
February 2022	58
March 2022	45

Number of people transferred from hospital on to D2RA pathways (4) – Care in a person's existing care home	
April 2021	1
May 2021	4
June 2021	0
July 2021	0
August 2021	0
September 2021	1
October 2021	1
November 2021	3
December 2021	0
January 2022	1
February 2022	0
March 2022	1

The Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) in Powys programme

Year Two of the Improving the Cancer Journey in Powys programme funded by Macmillan Cancer Support and in partnership with the council and Powys Teaching Health Board began with the launch of three pilot projects which offer people in Powys diagnosed with cancer a tailored package of support using Macmillan's electronic holistic needs assessment (eHNA) tool.

Trained link workers from Credu, PAVO's Community Connector Service and the Bracken Trust saw the value of such an offer and came on board, were trained and have begun to see a mix of referrals come through to them. Work is now progressing to increase referrals further via the Cancer Nurse Specialists in hospitals who diagnose and treat Powys patients and via Primary Care. Training and a peer support network is allowing the link workers to also share good practice and develop their skills set.

Early in 2022 the health board's palliative care team also signed up to use a new version of the eHNA for patients which is tailored to the additional needs and concerns which arise following a terminal/palliative prognosis or diagnosis.

Alongside working to increase the offer of the eHNA the programme team ...

- Produced their first End of Year report and an infographic summing up the key achievements to date
- Produced a compendium of patient stories which highlighted 15 patient stories and the key themes which recur for people
- Attended both the Macmillan National Conference and presented at the Rural Health and Care Wales Conference
- Successfully bid for and received a grant from the health board's Charitable Funds to purchase four sets of 50 recommended books which are now available to loan via Powys Libraries.
- Continued to coproduce ICJ communication materials with the input from the Journeying Together forum which was set up to ensure the voice of the patient was at the heart of the programme, including a letter for GPs to issue and the first ICJ Newsletter
- Completed a Theory of Change piece of work to support and drive the next phase of the programme
- Initiated discussions to explore opportunities to make best use of Powys assets, including libraries, Freedom leisure, and countryside and recreational areas

For further information please see the link at the end of this report.

Developing further accommodation options

We continued developing further options for our citizens to live independently. In addition to schemes already mentioned, we are developing our Extra Care programme as planned. Construction works are in progress in Welshpool on our new 66 apartment Neuadd Maldwyn scheme and in Ystradgynlais, where Pont Aur will have 41 apartments. Both schemes have a completion date of late 2023. Plans are also in an advanced stage of development for an extra care scheme in Brecon following WG funding allocation for a 60-apartment scheme. Consideration is also being given to further smaller schemes in other parts of the county.

Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

Powys County Council continue to protect and safeguard individuals from abuse and neglect through compliance with statutory duties under Part 7 Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA). Powys County Council also operate using the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019), which provides the national process of managing adult safeguarding cases.

The Adult Safeguarding Team manage reports received by anyone in Powys. All reports made are screened daily to determine if there is an individual who is or may experience abuse and neglect. The enquiry is completed within seven working days of a report being received and requires the adult safeguarding team to explore further any reported concerns.

Percentage of enquiries completed within time scales	
April 2021	100%
May 2021	95%
June 2021	100%
July 2021	97%
August 2021	92%
September 2021	94%
October 2021	94%
November 2021	92%
December 2021	88%
January 2022	97%
February 2022	88%
March 2022	85%

The Adult Safeguarding Teamwork as a key partner in several meetings arranged by other agencies. These include Daily Discussion / Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Complex Abuse Strategy Meeting (Children’s services led for those under 18 but may be transitioning to adulthood) and JIMP (Joint Interagency Monitoring Panel) relating to care provider settings. The Adult Safeguarding Team continue to actively be involved, represent and contribute to the regional Mid & West Wales Safeguarding Board.

Powys County Council has a responsibility under the Section 5 Wales Safeguarding Procedures, which relates to the management of safeguarding allegations / concerns about practitioners and those in positions of trust. Individuals in a position of trust are those who work with children, young people or adults at risk, including council staff, professional in partner agencies, such as health care or education and volunteers. The Adult Safeguarding Team have ensured that roles prescribed within the Wales Safeguarding Procedure (2019) such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DOS) within this process are fulfilled by the Senior Manager and Team Manager.

Other Projects

Social Care manages other projects that are supporting people to develop healthy domestic, family, and personal relationships, as follows:

Technology Enabled Care

Social Services can provide a range of different pieces of technology to help make living at home easier for older people as well as individuals who just need help with certain tasks. This technology includes home monitoring systems, pendant alarms, and door sensors. The Service has continued to promote what is available through a series of animations which can be found via the link at the end of this report.

We are working with a provider who is providing support to individuals in a remote part of the county on different therapeutic solutions. We have purchased interactive robotic companion “pets” which have been trialed under this project; the evidence is that these can provide therapeutic support and have the potential to reduce medication. The “pets” are robotic cats which are designed to look, feel, and sound like a real cat and come in a range of colours. They have synthetic, brush-able fur and built-in sensors which respond to motion and touch, including petting and hugging. They also make cat-like movements and sounds. Further details can be found in the supporting document.

The number of unique individuals supported and the number of pieces of equipment prescribed continue to grow with 1,328 pieces of equipment going to 695 new clients in 2021/22 TEC is helping unpaid carers to look after their loved ones with dementia in their homes for longer, some avoiding care home admission altogether or delaying the need for this. Using an average of £670 per person in annual savings, the projected costs which have been avoided because of the use of technology enabled care was £385,183 for the 2021/22 fiscal year.

Projected Cost Avoidance to Powys Social Care 2021/22

	No Clients ¹	Estimated Annual Saving per Client ²	Estimated Saving 2021/22 ³
	695	£1,405	£483,509

(1) Actual number of unique clients supported with Technology Enabled Care in Powys

(2) Estimated annual net savings per client based on research but at 30% only and assumes 70% of clients retain their TEC for 12 months

(3) Savings per client reduce each month to reflect diminishing time remaining in the financial year

Especially popular is the *Canary Home Monitoring System* which allow non-invasive monitoring of vulnerable person to know their movements, see video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJ350uHTC2k>.

Overall, the number of unique individuals supported has continued to grow in line with Vision 2025.

Our Day Centres for older people remained closed for much of the period due to Covid restriction; we kept this under constant review. However, Adult Social Care has continued to discuss with citizens how best to support their needs in diverse ways, including living with the support of carers or through family support. Our staff teams who normally work in day services have been supporting other business critical areas such as domiciliary care and outreach work. "Most recently, we have been working with Credu, supported by that created a space for local communities to identify different initiatives. This has included the local Community Hospital re-opening their community garden for residents to enjoy and maintain, as well as sociable (and socially distanced) walking groups."

Microenterprises

Our micro enterprise work, delivered by Community Catalysts continues to grow. At present there are thirty-four micro enterprises operating in the project area (up from 26 in April 2021), supporting forty-two clients with a Direct Payment and sixty-six private customers. 22.5% of all care for adults in their own home is delivered via a Direct Payment, an increase from 20% in March 2021.

Community Connectors

Our social work teams have continued to collaborate with Community Connectors with the number of referrals to them increasing. The Community Connector lead is now an integral member of the Community Resource Panels providing additional overview of services which are available within communities to support residents. Community Connectors work across the locality areas of Powys. Two Homeless Community Connectors who work closely with PCC Housing to support clients who are facing homelessness, are homeless or in need of temporary accommodation.

We also have 13 Locality Networks across Powys to bring together community groups, third sector organisations, individuals, and statutory professionals to share best practices and ways to collaborate.

7,340 people supported to find ways for them to take responsibility for their own health and well-being

- 3,577 new clients; 2,537 self-referrals
- 4,901 people were guided to third sector services that met their need within their own community
- 3,937 people supported with Covid-19 related support (for example shopping, prescription delivery)
- 278 clients supported in temporary accommodation as part of Phase 2 Homelessness Project
- 617 Multi-disciplinary, Virtual Wards or Patient flow meetings attended

4.6. Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live-in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

5. How we Do What We Do

Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

During 2020-21 Children's Services workforce have worked tirelessly and gone over and above to support and safeguard children, young people and their families. It has been more important than ever as service to support and look after the wellbeing of our workforce due to the many challenges faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the start of the year, it was vital that we ensured that staff were issued with the correct PPE and guidance so that business critical and face to face activities could continue. We very quickly moved all training to a virtual online basis and between the first lockdown and the end of August 53 webinars were held, they were also recorded so that staff could view them anytime. The social care workforce training programme also moved to online, and practitioners have had many opportunities to attend a comprehensive range of courses for their own professional and career development.

Wellbeing has been a priority and the service introduced weekly wellbeing sessions which all staff were encouraged to attend, these were mindfulness and singing and were very well attended. Staff roadshows were held virtually instead of in person, and they also contained an interactive session on wellbeing. The service developed weekly wellbeing bulletins that went on email, the leadership team ran a campaign encouraging staff to take their leave.

The local authority recognises supporting its workforce is business critical and it has a clear focus on recruitment, retention, and workforce development. All staff benefit from the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills, and careers. The local authority is ambitious to ensure people living in Powys benefit from longer-term and trusting relationships with skilled and supportive social workers who understand their needs and how best to work with them to reduce risk and improve their personal outcomes.

Senior managers provide operational practitioners with internal guidance and management support to make informed choices about maintaining their own health and well-being and the health of those they visit. Management support and supervision is highly regarded and practitioners welcome opportunities to be autonomous and creative.

Support for practitioners during the pandemic has included a range of information, quizzes, virtual singing, and virtual lunches. Practitioners told us about the difference this support makes to their well-being.

The service was extremely proud to have been deemed to have made significant progress since the last inspection in October 2018 and we continue to strive to provide the best services to children, young people and their families in Powys.

Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

In Adult Services strengths-based working is 'what we do.' It means that we take the time to understand what matters to those who approach us for support, to identify what they can do for themselves and what support they can draw upon from friends, family, and their wider communities. We have made our Strengths-based outcome focus training a mandatory requirement for all staff in adult operational teams.

We maintain strong links with Social Care Wales (SCW) to utilise their on-line training videos and other resources. We continue to attend all-Wales mentoring Group facilitated by SCW which enables us to network with other organisations and share their experiences of embedding the approach into practise. We have also attended workshops on outcome focussed case recording facilitated by SCW and researchers from Swansea University.

We have a pool of 43 Strengths-based outcome focussed mentors and run mentoring and quality matters meetings on alternate months where we share good practice and innovative ideas. Mentors have the opportunity to attend quarterly All Wales Mentor Support Groups which provide opportunity to learn how other local authorities are embedding the approach. We also have one member of staff that has attended the Train the Trainer programme on the Strengths based outcome focussed approach and is delivering training internally. Mentoring is undertaken formally through supervision, group reflective sessions and informally on day-to-day basis. We have also created an online library of guidance and good practice.

Powys is fortunate to have dedicated and hard-working social care staff who routinely demonstrate commitment and care for the individuals they serve. Despite that, Powys faces a significant long-term

challenge because demographic change is leading to an increase in older people (75+) and a decline in the number of people of working age (see table below).

	2018	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Total	132,447	132,421	132,710	132,905	133,211	133,602
18-29	15,127	14,301	13,082	12,935	13,468	13,313
30-44	18,419	18,554	19,258	19,277	18,283	17,940
45-54	18,911	17,805	15,213	14,297	15,187	15,612
55-67	26,124	27,013	28,529	27,995	25,190	23,688
Working age	75,581	77,672	76,082	74,504	72,128	70,552

(Source: 2018 Welsh Government Population projections © Crown Copyright)

This is causing recruitment and retention problems for the council. The longer-term challenges are shown in the table and graph below, which identifies the age categories of the Council's workforce:

	Annual Population Survey	Powys County Council workforce						
		December 2020	Education	Economy and Environment	Children and Adults	Resources and Transformation	Legal and Democratic Services	(above L3)
16 - 64	59,560	2,971	1,383	923	409	49	10	5,744
16-19	2,500	42	7	4	1	0	0	54
20-24	4,800	118	55	25	25	1	0	224
25-34	10,800	496	175	189	80	4	1	945
35-49	18,660	1,127	423	290	153	6	2	2,001
50-64	22,820	1,046	640	378	141	25	7	2,237
Other		142	83	37	9	12	0	283

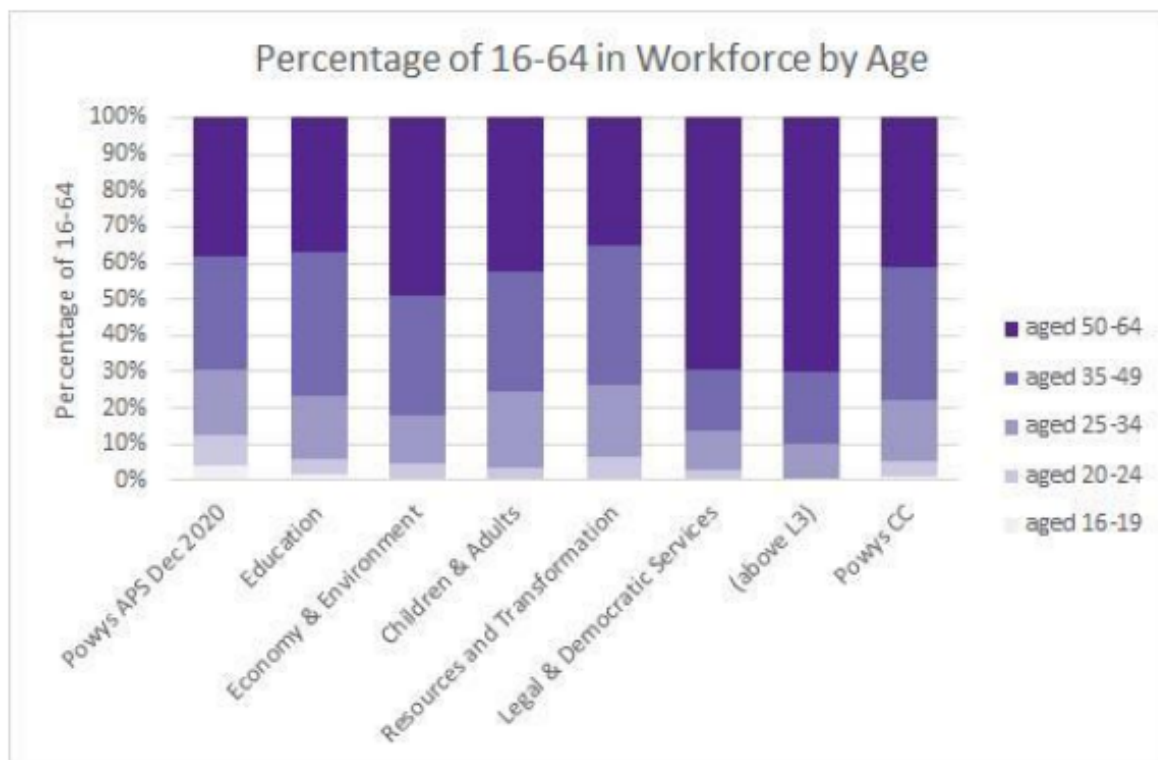


Chart 7 Percentage of 16-64 in the workforce by age

Source: Annual Population Survey (APS), ONS © Crown Copyright and Powys Headcount August 2021

As part of a “One Council” approach, we acknowledge the need to have the right numbers of people in the right roles with the required capabilities to deliver improvement. To achieve that goal, we are investing in the following:

- Workforce planning
- Attracting and recruiting staff
- Leadership and management development
- Performance management of people
- Workforce development
- Pay reward and recognition
- Professional progression
- Workforce health and wellbeing

The workforce in Powys is highly skilled and demonstrates an eagerness to improve services. The Council was developing agile working systems and policies throughout 2019/20, but this changed rapidly towards the end of March 2020 when the Council invoked business continuity and social services staff were supported to work from home or to be based at home where possible. The previous developments enabled this to be implemented effectively and efficiently and enabled swift transition to a new mode of working.

6. What we Achieved

To increase our staff engagement, we established an employee representative forum, which

provides an opportunity for staff to be briefed on current issues within the Service and to have the opportunity to raise issues and ideas for discussion or escalation. The group is working collaboratively to support the wider engagement and build a stronger culture of continuous feedback and learning across Social Services.

Grow our own – Adults services have 5 and Children's Services have 1 student on the Open University Degree in Social Work, all of whom are on Level 2 of their degree and have commenced their practice learning opportunity. There are also 4 members of staff in Adult Services undertaking their practice assessor qualification.

Securing a Stable Workforce

Powys has been successful in recruiting a permanently employed senior and team management cohort. However, there continue to be difficulties in recruiting and retaining experienced social workers across the county. Powys has some characteristics which pose additional challenges in the recruitment and retention of permanent social workers. There is a need to visit people requiring care and support/families in their homes across all areas of the community, which adds mileage and time to the working day. Despite various innovative recruitment campaigns, Social Services for both children and adults continue to invest a significant amount of financial and staff resource into recruiting agency workers to cover qualified social work positions. In response to this, Children's Services have developed a *Grow Our Own Social Worker* project.

This project has been in its early stages over the last two years. The project aims to support the sponsorship of a further 57 qualified social workers between 2021-2026 for both Children's and Adults Services. During the initial phase we achieved an increase in staff applying to undertake 1st Year Practice Modules and an increase in sponsorship for the Open University Social Work degree (Wales).

Children's Leadership Team organised and ran the first virtual recruitment event. The event was widely publicised and, in the lead-up to the event, 397 people clicked onto the link for the booking form. In total 37 people registered to attend with 10 people attending the event. The event consisted of the Head of Service, Senior Manager's and Team Manager's giving an overview of their service and the highlighting all the benefits of working in Powys.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic putting many of plans on hold, including attending national recruitment events and promotion in universities, we adapted quickly and implemented various social media campaigns to advertise our vacancies. We also advertised in a Welsh national newspaper, on the radio and developed new promotional videos with our social workers talking about why they like working in Powys and in Children's Services.

In Children's Services we extended our 'reclaim social work' project into 2021/22 – enabling more social workers to work face to face with children and families as part of their work.

The *Grow our own Social Work* project increased during 2021. Two staff were funded to undertake the Masters Social Work qualification whilst being paid a salary by Children's Services and a further 12 staff were given sponsorships across Children's and Adult's Services for the Open University Social Work degree. The Local Authority has supported a total of 23 placement learning opportunities for students in 2022. A further 12 sponsorships will be awarded in 2022.

In Adults Services we recruited on an ongoing basis for front line social workers and those wishing to work in Reablement or our Shared Lives schemes. We also employed a young person into an apprenticeship and intend to scale this approach up over the next few years. Our providers in Home Care and Care Homes have been running their own recruitment drives, including recruitment fairs in our market towns, using social media and – where possible – used non-financial incentives to attract new staff into the social care profession.

Our Financial Resources and How We Plan for the Future

Many local authorities are experiencing budget challenges and Powys is no exception, with significant financial savings made over the past ten years. The large variation in our expenditure makes resource management especially challenging. Decisions which affect the type and cost of services to be provided are often outside of the council's control and thus are uncontrolled and unpredictable (e.g., decisions taken by the court in children's cases or court decisions in relation to Mental Capacity Assessments).

As part of the budget setting process Adult Social Care had identified significant service pressures of £7.387 To counter the pressures, efficiencies were identified and savings of £5.091 achieved. The gap was bridged with cost mitigation due to early intervention and prevention through strengths-based practice and Technology Enabled Care (TEC) and the decision to limit the uplift for providers (however, see also paragraph re Fair Cost of Care review elsewhere). This has left the care market, which was supported financially through the Welsh Government's Hardship Fund paying for a proportion of vacant beds in care homes, in a fragile position and may need to be addressed in the future. The total payout of the fund was 3,326,755.91.

In addition, the Council paid out 1,297,668.95 to care home staff, which includes the 'Carer Recognition' scheme and associated overheads to care home owners. This means that the Council, via the Welsh Government Hardship fund paid out a total of £7.3m to care providers in Powys.

In 2021-22 Children's Services continued to make the most effective use of resources, to enable us to manage the increase in demand. This has been a real priority for the service. We have effectively used data to enable us to understand what pressures are going to arise and plan carefully to be able to manage those pressures effectively.

The Children's Services budget was set with unfunded pressures of over £2 million. Additional pressures of over £6 million were identified and potential savings identified of over £3 million, of which over £1 million were delivered. Of the £2 million unachieved savings, most has been reinstated as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.

We delivered a balanced budget again this year, demonstrating Children's Services have full oversight and control of the financial resources available to us. We maximized the use of grants to us to make sure that children, young people and families received the right help at the right time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created huge pressures on the availability of suitable placements for children and young people. There has been a national shortage of placements which has worsened during the pandemic with complications arising due to government guidance around Children's homes and issues with isolating and positive cases. There is a lack of provision of therapeutic residential placements for children and young people with severe emotional and behavioral needs in Powys and Wales. This has made it extremely difficult to balance the competing priorities of managing service demand, meeting the needs of children and young people and reducing expenditure with the need to achieve budget savings.

Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability

The Council is a proactive member and contributor to regional boards, and aspects of the local authority's improvement and transformation agenda are being progressed through the priorities of Powys Mid and West Wales, Powys Regional Partnership Board and the work of the Regional Safeguarding Board

In line with the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act (2014), the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) provides cross-sector leadership through a strong and shared commitment to providing seamless and integrated health and social care services for children, young people and adults living in Powys, with a primary emphasis on prevention and early intervention.

To this end, we continued to implement our Health and Care Strategy which sets out the strategic vision and approach to be taken in Powys. The Health and Care Strategy sets out priority areas and key strategic enablers which will help us to develop and deliver on the agreed Integrated Model of Health and Wellbeing.

Working in partnership our Area Plan identifies which services will receive greatest priority in respect of integrated working between the Council, the health service and others across key population groups.

This year, the local authority, with its partners, has led on the development of a revised RPB Population Needs Assessment to support better understanding of need across key population groups, to support planning and decision making.

Further information on the Powys RPB and access to its key documents can be found at the end of this report.

7. Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

In publishing this Annual Report, we have relied upon a substantial amount of information, data and progress reports, including those that have featured heavily this year following our recent inspections and surveys.

The Annual Report identifies the progress of the Council in providing for the Well-Being of those people who need our help and support. This report however is not the only source of information available to members of the public, key partners, and service providers.

We have a significant amount of background information that sits behind this report, providing additional detail about what we do and how we do it. Importantly, if something is not mentioned in this report as a key priority it does not mean we are not doing it, as there is a lot of activity across Social Services that plays a part in helping us to provide for some of the most vulnerable groups in our community. It is not possible to capture everything, which is why we are keen to signpost people to further information. More detailed information is published in a separate document ([Annual Director's Report Social Services 2021 – 2022 \(Supporting Evidence\)](#)),

To access further information about what we do then these are some of the documents that will provide more detail:

1. Welsh Government Guidance in relation to the Annual Social Services Report [Microsoft Word - Annual Report Guidance.docx \(socialcare.wales\)](#).

2. Detailed information about council performance is available here [Vision 2025: Annual Performance Reports - Powys County Council](#)
3. Director of Social Services Annual report 2021/21 and further documents in support of this report can be found here [Social Care ACRF \(Annual Council Reporting Framework\) - Powys County Council](#)
4. Market Position Statements are available here [Our Strategies and Plans on a Page - Powys County Council](#)
5. Powys County Council Corporate Leadership & Governance Plan 2017- 2020 ([Corporate Leadership Governance Plan v5.6.2.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#))
6. Healthy Caring Powys – Delivering the Vision (Area Plan)
7. The Adult Services Improvement Plan 2018-2023 [Adults Service Improvement Plan Appendix - Powys County Council](#)
8. The Powys Population Needs Assessment [Care and Support Population Assessment for Powys | Rural Health and Care Wales](#)
9. Children's Services Integrated Business Plan 2020-2023
10. Vision 2025 Corporate Improvement Plan [Corporate Improvement Plan 2021-25: the quick read edition \(office.com\)](#)
11. Council's Annual Performance Report [Vision 2025: Annual Performance Reports - Powys County Council](#)
12. Improving the Cancer Journey in Powys <https://www.powysrpb.org/icjpowys>
13. Commissioned Services Plans on a page [Our Strategies and Plans on a Page - Powys County Council](#)
14. Social Services Annual Complaints Report <https://en.powys.gov.uk/socialservicescomplaints>
15. Information about our Regional Work via the Regional Partnership Board can be found here [HOME | Powys RPB](#)
16. Information about the North Powys Well-Being Project www.powyswellbeing.wales
17. Information about Technology Enabled Care in Powys <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/10016/Help-to-live-at-home-through-the-use-of-technology>.