

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

County Council
20th January 2016

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Graham Brown, Portfolio Holder for Procurement, Commissioning and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Huw Williams

How many fully qualified dedicated Social workers are employed within Children Services in Powys and where are they located? Also, what is their current average 'case work' load and how does this compare to other authorities and national guidelines?

Children's Services is currently operating 4 social work teams that are responsible for the day to day handling of the referral and assessments process, and the ongoing case load management of Child in Need, Child Protection and Looked After Children caseloads. Social workers hold generic caseloads and the mix of these caseloads would be dependent on their experience and the complexity of the cases.

The following table shows a breakdown of social workers in the 4 operational child care teams as per the current structure at the start of November 2015. It should be noted that a Team Manager would not hold cases, and the Principal social worker would hold a reduced caseload due to other responsibilities.

| | Team Manager | Principal Social Worker | Senior Practitioner | Social Worker |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Brecon and Ystrad Children's Team | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Radnor Children's Team | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| Newtown Children's Team | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| Welshpool Children's Team | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| Total worker | 4 | 4 | 8 | 22 |
| Total case open cases 12.11.2015 | | 561 open cases | | |
| Average cases load | | 16.5 cases per worker | | |

The following County wide teams who have bases both in the North and South of the County have been excluded from the average case load calculations. In relation to the Children With Disabilities Team, and the 16 Plus Team cases are held by both qualified and unqualified workers (we can provide a breakdown of this upon request). In relation to the IFST/TANS teams they are crisis intervention teams who respond to immediate crisis and offer short term intensive support. Workers in these teams do not hold case responsibility as this remains with the allocated social worker. Finally the Fostering

Teams and Adoption teams undertake assessments however do not work directly with children and young people accessing services, again the case responsibility for children and young people will rest with the allocated social worker.

| | Team Manager | Principal Social Worker | Senior Practitioner | Social Worker |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Children with Disabilities | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3.5 |
| Open Cases as at 12.11.15 | 169 | | | |
| 16 Plus | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Open Cases as at 12.11.15 | 124 | | | |
| IFST/TANS | 1 | 1 | | 6 |
| Fostering Team | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| Adoption | 1 | | | 5.1 |
| Total | 5 | 4 | 6 | 23.6 |

The Welsh Assembly does not publish any national figures on average caseloads and therefore no direct comparisons are available with other Welsh Authorities. This said there have been a number of reports that have been produced in recent years that attempts to answer this question.

During 2012 Community Care undertook a survey covering 925 social workers from across the UK. This research suggested the UK average case load for a Child Care social worker was 25 cases.

More recently the Department for Education produced a report entitled "Children's Social Work Workforce during year ending 30 September 2014". This suggested that 16 child in need cases were held per full time equivalent.