



Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019/20

Powys County Council



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1. Director's Summary of Performance



In Powys County Council we are committed to working with our health board colleagues and third sector to deliver better outcomes for Powys residents. We are led in this by the Joint Health and care strategy working through the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and through driving the changes associated with the North Powys Wellbeing programme on which I lead.

As the Director of Social Services in Powys I recognise the improvement journey that both Adults and Children Services are on. Whilst also recognising that some people may have concerns about the pace of our improvement. I want to highlight the commitment to get this right and not just for the 'here and now', but to develop a sustainable, quality social services offer which is fit for purpose and the future. I believe this report will highlight the enormity of what has been delivered to date and transparency on what we have yet to deliver.

After the inspection in July 2017 (Children's Services) & January 2018 (Adult Social Care), I came in to post on the 23rd April with over 25 years of experience of working in and leading Social Care. My personal commitment is not to just oversee the immediate improvements of our service but a long-term investment in working in Powys, to see these improvements through, develop a culture of continuous improvement and deliver the best possible outcomes for Powys Residents working with our partners in the Health Board and voluntary sector.

We have a permanent Chief Executive who has now been in post since February 2019 and we have secured a permanent leadership team including the Senior Management tier who are passionate & committed to driving new ways of working and improved outcomes for our residents whilst taking our workforce with us.

The journey over the last 2 years has been challenging and we are appreciative of all the support and constructive challenge we have had from both Cabinet, Scrutiny committee & Care Inspectorate

Wales. In addition, we have had the support and challenge of Jack Straw (independent Chair) and Phil Hodgson (Board member), and the broader improvement and assurance board who have been instrumental in our journey of improvement. For which I am immensely grateful.

I also want to mention the support of colleagues both in our Corporate support services and in our front-line teams for enabling the improvements to date.

In March 2020, Social Services invoked its business continuity plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am proud that we have been able to continue to deliver business critical services across Powys during this difficult time, which is testament to the hard work and commitment of our staff.

Alison Bulman

Director of Social Services

2. Introduction



This is the Director of Social Services' report for 2019/20 for Powys County Council. It provides an overview of how well the services achieved the intended outcomes as set out in 2018/19 report, as well as identifying new developments and aspirations for 2020/21 and beyond.

Powys County Council's Social Services Department includes Children's Services and Adults' Services, both supported by a Commissioning team. The Adults' Social Care service adopted new principles of working, as set out in its improvement plan. These included:

How We Will Work Together

We believe that everyone should be seen as unique individuals who have strengths, hopes and aspirations as well as needs or problems. We want to support people to live the best life they can, helping them to find solutions that fit. We will focus on what matters to the individual.

We will:	You can help by:
Listen, be open, honest, friendly and non-judgmental.	Having your say and telling us about your experience.
Ensure that children and young people's voices and opinions are heard and are visible in all aspects.	Making your voice heard, participate in children and young people's forums and panels.
Work with our partners to protect you from abuse and exploitation.	Being aware and raising concerns about people who may be at risk of being harmed.
Support you to maintain your personal dignity, self-respect and to focus on what matters to you.	Staying safe, being healthy and active.
Support you to make informed decisions so that you can do what's important to you.	Engaging with us and taking responsibility for your health and keeping well.
Provide good, accessible information and advice.	Using online services where possible.
Help communities to be inclusive and supportive to minimise loneliness and isolation.	Be aware of what is available in your community and getting involved.
Be open to new ways of working and to embrace technological solutions, enabling a focus on getting value for money.	Providing ideas and trying new ways of working together.

Children's Services
Guide to the Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021

“Working together to ensure that Powys children and young people are safe, healthy, fulfilled and have their voices heard, valued and acted upon.”

In this plan, we will:

- Focus on early intervention and prevention
- Provide good parenting and specialist support
- Provide diverse and high-quality placements for children who are looked after
- Achieve the best possible outcomes for children in our care

The improvement plan:

- There are seven priority areas to deliver the plan
- Eligibility criteria, thresholds and early help
- Partnership working
- Self-referral and good one-point work practice
- Consulting and consultation
- Independent reviewing, quality assurance and complaints
- Infrastructure and support services
- Resilience

Links:

- The Children's Services Improvement Plan is linked to and supported by a range of strategies including:
- The Council's Vision 2025
- The Star Well Programme to be developed through the Regional Partnership Board
- Children's Services (Children Looked After) Strategic Framework

The plan has been developed by all parts of the Council working together. The Regional Partnership Board and Regional Self-referral Board will also play a big part in making the changes happen.

By continuing to work together with our partners we will have services which help children and families to achieve the best possible outcomes.

To view the plan, visit www.powys.gov.uk

Powys

1 - Children's Services set out its principles within the Children's Services Plan on a Page:

Children's Services

“Working together to ensure that Powys children and young people are safe, healthy, fulfilled and have their voices heard, valued and acted upon.”

In Children's Services, we will:

- Promote access to a range of Early Help services, which families can access 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 these children in our care by providing good 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

Links:

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Powys



3. How are people shaping our services?



Communicating and engaging with the public is important to how we shape the services people need and collectively evaluate how well we perform in delivering care and support to those who need it. Engaging and consulting on service development and delivery is crucial to delivering what the people of Powys require.

We are eager to hear about the services we already deliver and how we can support adults and children better. This is important for all our services and those who access them. In some areas we have done well to engage adults, but we need to improve how children are enabled to voice their opinions on the decisions that affect them.

Both service users and carers have been fully involved in the Carers' Steering Group, the Start Well, Live Well and Age Well Partnerships and other service user forums. Carers including young carers and citizens' representatives are supported through commissioned Credu and PAVO services

to enable their involvement and informed engagement at these groups, as well as at the Regional Partnership Board.

The Carers Steering Group commissioned CREDU to provide two additional Carers Support Projects using ICF Funding. The projects are for two years and will end in March 2021.

The Care Leavers Forum formed a young people's panel for recruitment in Children's Services and a Care Leaver Participation Apprentice role was established in the new structure.

- **Raising Awareness Project**

The project includes the following activities: To raise awareness among hard to reach communities, health settings and intergenerational work. Identify and recognise hidden isolated Carers; target communities with roadshows providing information, advice and assistance. Explore opportunities for young and adult carers to share experiences, use of technology, mobile apps, and intergenerational skill-building events.

- **Co-Production of Respite Project/Short Breaks for Children and Young People**

The project provides the creation of a new role to plan and arrange bespoke and innovative respite opportunities to enable Carers to have breaks when they need them, where services are not currently provided or meeting need. The project includes the following activities - Explore possibility of sharing of Carers' time by supporting Carers to provide some formal paid caring, looking at innovative and new respite opportunities, favour exchange, quick response respite while waiting for Assessments, opportunities for young people to attend residential courses to give families a break.

In response to requests for a wider choice of short breaks options for children and young people we have:

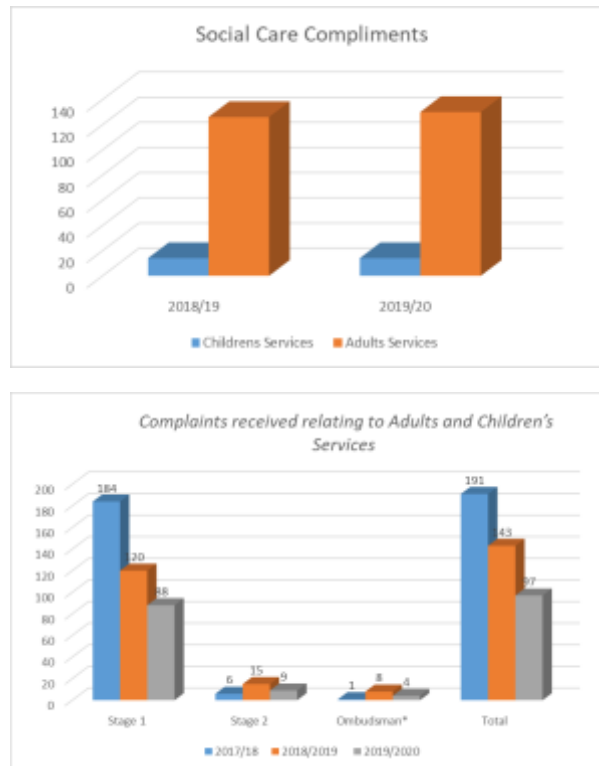
- Provided short breaks for 27 children and young people including 19 family short breaks;
- Increased Direct Payments to 62 families in receipt;
- Recruited additional personal assistants;
- Provided 606 overnight breaks for 18 children and young people at Golwg Y Bannau and Golwg Y Gamlas;
- Supported families through Integrated Disability Service Support Worker sessions.

As the project is about listening to 'What Matters' to Carers the project was able to respond immediately as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. CREDU were able to help some families cope better with being isolated, creating respite in Carers own homes and gardens.

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 2019/20, there has been a 33% decrease in the total number of complaints made compared to the previous year across both service areas. We are now resolving more cases at the point of enquiry, as opposed to progressing on to the complaint stage, this demonstrates our learning culture and putting things right at the earliest opportunity for the public. The Compliments for this year (144) remained about the same as last year (140). To see the full report, go to <https://en.powys.gov.uk/socialservicescomplaints>.



2 - * The number of the complaints can be double/triple counted as they are included in each stage of the complaints process. However, not all complaints at the Ombudsman or at Stage 2 will have been in Stage 1 in this year.

** Ombudsman Complaints include those that were accepted by the Ombudsman in the year being reported, not those which may still be ongoing from the previous year.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

For *Adult Services*, our aims are set out in our Integrated Business Plan 2020-2023. In Adult services, we will:

- Promote independence wherever possible by identifying what people can do for themselves, alongside community based support to achieve what matters to them.
- Support adults who require care and support through timely and strengths based assessments and care and support planning, and working to ensure that the right level of care and support is available to adults who require this support.
- Provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high-quality support services for adults who require care and support and their carers to meet the diverse range of their individual needs and circumstances. With a focus on outcomes.

- To increase the availability of volunteers to work in health and social care during the pandemic (and beyond), and to work with care and support providers to increase use of volunteers to increase service capacity.

For *Children's Services* our aims are set out in our Integrated Business Plan 2020-2023. We have committed to '*Work with* Children, Young People and their Families rather than *do to*, to co-produce plans to bring about the changes children need as quickly as possible.

In 2020-21 we will:

- Embed the Mind of My Own app and promote its widespread use among children and young people.
- Care experienced young people attend and actively contribute to the Corporate Parenting group
- Children who are looked after and Care Leavers fora meet regularly
- Children who are looked after and Care Leavers fora organise at least one participation event
- Children who are looked after and Care Leavers participate routinely and meaningfully in recruitment at all levels in CS
- Organise a Member Development session which enables the Young People's Forum to engage with Elected Members
- As part of our Pathway Planning Children's Services will ensure that 18 year-old care leavers are supported to be registered to vote

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



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

Understanding “what matters” in our conversations with people is paramount to successfully placing the individual at the centre of what we do. “What matters” is the *golden thread* that runs throughout our services and is an important guiding principle of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

What did we plan to do last year?

In last year’s Annual Report, we set out several priority actions to enhance how we work with people to help them achieve their outcomes, namely that we would:

We Said - We Did!

Streamline information so that it is in one place to ensure that the Information, Advice and Assistance services are better co-ordinated across our third sector organisations. To develop our digital offer including virtual assessments and enquiries. (A-1)

- A-1 A restructure that co-located a Social Worker and Community Connector with the ASSIST team and other front-door restructures have improved call wait times from 7 minutes to under 1 minute.
- A-1 Our website now has an increased focus on getting help at home with daily living, including a service called *Ask Sara*, an online, self-assessment tool is available on both the

internal and external website. The website also has short video animations that illustrate how technology can help people to live at home for longer.

- A-1 Our dedicated front door (ASSIST) website now offers a [multi-agency, bi-lingual enquiry form](#), as well as a direct referral pathway for carers. People can now contact us via webchat.
- Expanded our home-based support services to East Radnorshire, Llanidloes and Llandrindod Wells. These early intervention and prevention pilots were evaluated at the end of the 2019. Feedback from service users and carers does show that most feel able to stay at home and where home support has been a contributing factor to this. Further expansion will be considered.

Work with professionals to develop their understanding and respect for the importance of IAA in enabling the local population to make informed decisions and take personal responsibility for their health and wellbeing. (A-2)

- A-2 Training and support enhanced the quality of the 'what matters' conversation that staff had with individuals to ensure that they got the right level of support as soon as possible. ASSIST staff and Community Connectors are trained to prescribe low level technology to enable independence or enhance care to further resolve enquiries as early as possible and where possible avoid hand offs.
- Adult Services have worked closely with the newly appointed Joint Health and Social Care Workforce Planning Manager to inform a workforce strategy looking from a wider lens to include health, social care, volunteers and the independent sectors. The work which has been undertaken will also inform a national workforce strategy for Wales which is underpinned by the principles of A Healthier Wales.
- In partnership with the Powys Teaching Health Board and PAVO, our Community Connector service comprises 13 Community Connectors and a Senior Officer. The number of referrals into the service rose from 2,189 last year to 2,994 in 2019/20, an increase of 37% over last year. Over 90% of the clients supported to access third sector services said that the Community Connectors helped deliver 'what matters' to them, showing the immense value of third sector support.
- The Community Connectors have seen a huge increase of referral to support clients during the Covid-19 pandemic. They supported 650 people shielding and many others to access help in their local communities for prescription collections, shopping, loneliness, etc. The Connectors have supported 112 local Covid-19 Community Support groups to establish, develop and deliver support to their local community.

Promote further engagement in the Children's Commissioners Ambassador Programme throughout Powys Schools. (A-3)

- We have continued to promote the 4C's Young Commissioner Programme. The 4Cs manages the All Wales Framework for the Provision of Foster Care Services & the All Wales Framework for the Provision of Residential Care Services to Children and Young People.
- Young Commissioners have played an integral part in a number of 4Cs projects since 2017. Their participation ensures the voice of young people is at the heart of their work to support

commissioning, good quality care and improved outcomes for all of the children and young people looked after

Continue to encourage young people or adults and partner agencies to partake in the interview process for positions in Social Services. A-5

- Care Leaver Panels are a routine aspect of recruitment in Children's Services
- Health partners are invited to be part of interview panels within Adult Services.
- Adult Social Services took an active part in the countywide Careers Festival for secondary school pupils which was held at the Royal Welsh Showground in March 2020. We also continue to promote our apprenticeship programme.

Work with partner agencies, particularly the health board, to adopt the Children Looked After Pledge. (A-6)

- The Children and Young People's Pledge, designed by Young People, has been adopted by Powys County Council and Powys Teaching Health Board



Stabilise the work force and drive down the reliance on agency staff. (A-7)

- The Children's Services restructure was completed and has significantly improved the stability of the workforce. All Senior Manager, Team Manager and Team Leader posts were filled permanently. The number of agency social workers was reduced to 29 as of April 2020.

Drive up and maintain the performance across Children's Services. (A-8)

- Performance against key performance indicators has improved significantly and been sustained.
- The percentage of children looked after who have had three or more placements during the year has been sustained well below the Welsh National Average of 10%. At the start of the year Children's Services performance in this indicator was 6% and it was reduced further to 4% in March 2020.
- The percentage of statutory visits for children looked after carried out on time is recorded in June 2019 at 84%, performance dramatically increased from August 2019 onwards and was sustained at 92% or over every month onwards. In December 2019 the service reported that 98% of visits were undertaken within timescales.
- The percentage of child protection statutory visits carried out on time has also remained consistently over 90% since August 2019.
- The percentage of operational staff who received case supervision on a monthly basis has improved greatly and from January 2020 onwards achieved target over 90% or over.
- The number of children on the child protection register reduced from 123 in April 2019 to 90 in March 2020.
- The percentage of contacts to the Front Door service not requiring statutory services but was managed and supported through information, advice and early Help was consistently between 85 and 89% from December 2019 onwards.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- A1 Goal: Provide care and support for carers which will enable them to be supported to continue their caring role.
- A2 Goal: Further develop our strengths-based approach through promoting individual's own assets and community network support when determining how eligible needs can be best met.
- A3 Goal: Strengthen the Quality Assurance Framework and workforce development arrangements to ensure that assessments include the voices of children, young people and their families and plans are co-produced.
- A4 Goal: Develop the Early Help Strategy to promote Early Help as the multi-agency approach in Powys
- A5 Goal: Launch the rebranded Children's Services Front Door and Early Help Service
- A6 Goal: Review with partners the planned approach to multi-agency Early Help Hubs in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

(b) Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

What did we plan to do last year?

In the 2019/20 Directorate Plan we said that we would:

We Said - We Did!

Implement the new Health and Wellbeing phone app to supply mobile access to Dewis, Info Engine and NHS111 all in one place.

- The phone app is completed and being used. We will evaluate the effectiveness during the COVID 19 pandemic to ensure it was useful for people.

Support individuals to live independently, within communities of choice and where required deliver care closer to home, by continuing to work with partners to enable integrated or co-located working.

- For a variety of reasons, the provision of domiciliary care in Powys was challenging during the year. To address this, significant work was undertaken to reduce demand for domiciliary care, to provide support from other sources and to meet demand differently, as well as to increase capacity. The number of individuals awaiting care with no current provision reduced to 35 (403 hours per week) from a peak of 40 individuals in September 2019. There was also a reduction in the number of people receiving domiciliary care and in the number of hours of domiciliary care provided. However, the average time for providers to provide care increased to 33 days, reflecting the challenges in obtaining care in rural settings.
- Other work includes significant promotion of direct payments, TEC (Technology Enabled Care) and occupational therapy interventions such as provision of aids and adaptations, as well as specific projects:
- Moving with Dignity (Singled Handed Care) – Following a successful pilot, the Council has invested in two occupational therapists and equipment to enable reduction in the need for two care workers to visit some service users.
- Community Connectors - In collaboration with the Powys Teaching Health Board, we have commissioned a further 4 (total 13) Community Connectors who work across the county to support individuals' to engage with community groups and societies.
- AskSara - In February of 2020, the Council launched its "AskSara" service, an online self-help guide to help people find equipment or services.
- Home Based Support Pilots – The Council has invested in pilots across Radnorshire and the south of Montgomeryshire which provide 24/7 proactive floating support and rapid response service for people who use their Technology Enabled Care alarms.
- Reviews – We are working to ensure that reviews of care packages are undertaken in a prompt and regular manner, alongside providers, and are effective in releasing domiciliary care capacity where appropriate.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

In 2020/21, we intend to address the following priorities around protecting and promoting the physical and mental health and emotional well-being of our residents.

- (B1 Goal) Improve our system of tracking what services people are needing in Powys to support future commissioning decisions.
- (B2 Goal) Enable more people to remain in their own homes and reducing admissions into residential care, aided by effective partnership working in community mental health teams, and working alongside health partners to ensure that those with a primary health need have needs met through timely continuing healthcare funded support
- (B3 Goal) To develop regular conference calls with providers and to communicate effectively with providers via the conference call and by writing to them regularly with updates on national and local developments.
- (B4 Goal) Improve and revamp the Adult Social Care website to ensure that people can easily find what they want and designed to match the Social Services and Well Being Act. Including making sure that we promote greater awareness of AskSara.
- B5 Goal - Work with our partners to review the Start Well Board priorities to refocus how the partnership works together to support children's emotional wellbeing and mental health at the earliest opportunity.
- B6 Goal - Appoint an inhouse Psychologist in partnership with PTHB
- B7 Goal - Establish a trauma informed approach across Children's Services.
- B8 Goal: Increase the number of care leavers that report good wellbeing.
- B9 Goal: Further develop the range of short breaks provision available.
- B10 Goal: To improve our partnership working with the Powys Teaching Health Board's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.



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

What did we plan to do last year?

During 2019/20 we said we would:

- C-1 To improve and maintain our practice with regards to safeguarding to ensure, as far as possible, that Adults at risk of abuse or neglect, who have care and support needs and unable to protect themselves of all ages are safe in Powys.
- C-2 To embed strengths-based practice to support people to make informed decisions about living in, and engaging with, their own communities.
- C-3 To support Powys residents (adults and children) who receive services elsewhere to return home where possible and to receive support in Powys.
- C-4 To support our staff to achieve high operational staff receiving case supervisions monthly will be over 85%.
- C-5 Develop an Early Help Hub as part of the Children's Services restructure to increase the level of support which can be provided through early intervention.
- C-6 To undertake a detailed review all Children placed on the Child Protection Register. The statutory timescales within Children's Services will be 95%.
- C-7 Children Looked After (CLA) who have three or more placements in 12 months will continue to be below or in line with the Welsh National average at 10%.
- C-8 The percentage of placements accommodated with in-house foster carers will be 70%.
- C-9 The percentage of assessments completed with an outcome of no further action will be 40% or less.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

- C-1 Adult Safeguarding have completed over 95% of Safeguarding enquiries within statutory timescales.
- C-2 Adults: Strengths Based Working - The department continues to embed a strengths-based approach in all that it does. We have undertaken further redesign of our integrated assessment and care and support plan templates to ensure that we capture the strengths based conversations that we are having with our residents. and aims to empower people and support them to re-engage with their communities.

Children's Services continued to deliver the Signs of Safety implementation plan with:

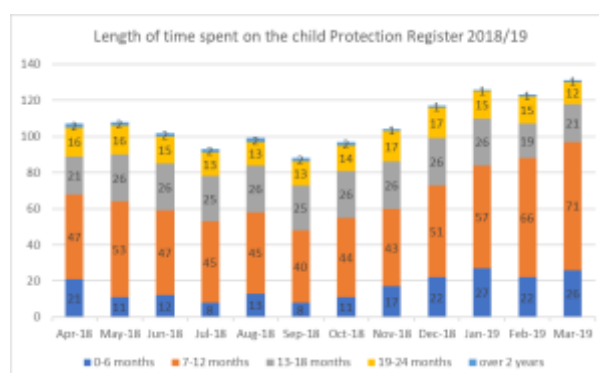
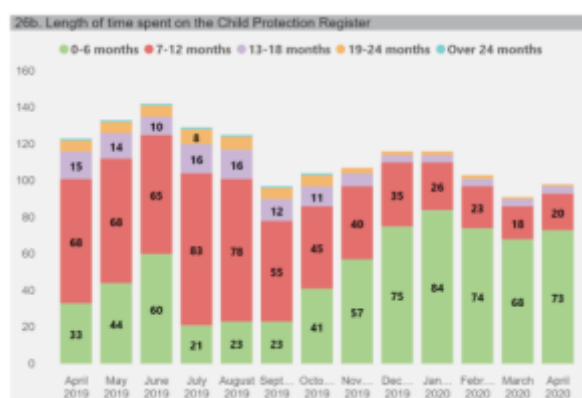
1. 155 practitioners and managers attending the 2-day and 5-day Signs of Safety training,
 2. Practice leads identified in all teams,
 3. Training sessions on a range of subjects including Signs of Safety Multi Agency Partner Workshop Events, Family Network Meetings, Genograms and Reflective Supervision.
 4. Implementation of our Closer to Home Strategy has meant 34 children moved closer to home from out of County placements during 2019/20.
- The Intervention and Prevention Service was established as part of the Children's Services restructure. Practitioners work directly with children, young people and their families and carers to stabilise arrangements which may be at risk of breaking down and prevent escalation. The number of children becoming looked after during 2019-20

was 61. In comparison the number of children becoming looked after during 2018-19 was 82. Therefore 21 fewer children have become looked after this financial year in comparison to the same time period last year.

1. C4 - Following the Children's Services restructure monthly supervision has been over 90% for every month since January 2020. Adults supervisions averaged 84.7% for the 11 months up to March 2020 when due to Business Continuity supervisions reduced to 57% for that month. Social Services Leadership Team are committed to ensuring all operational staff receive dedicated, formal 1:1 supervision every month, in addition to any informal, group and peer supervision that takes place.

2. C-5 Multi-agency Early Help Panels have been established. The Early Help Service worked with 837 children during the year. Of these only 64 children went on to receive statutory intervention.

3. C-6 We reduced the length of time children remain subject to child protection plans. We improved the process for reviewing the cases of children whose names have been on the child protection register for more than 12 months or who are re-registered within a 12-month period.



The number of children re-registered within a 12-month period was 7. Children's Services continued to improve compliance with statutory timescales, completing 90% of visits to children with a child protection plan within statutory timescales for the last 3 Months.



4. C-7 Children's Services has worked hard to improve the stability of placements for Children in our care. We introduced placement support workers as part of the new Intervention and Prevention Service to support foster placements and prevent placement breakdown. The figure for the number of children with more than three moves in 12 months has remained consistently low at 4% compared to the Wales average of 10%.

5. C-8 We consulted with foster carers and reviewed the support offer, whilst working with national colleagues on the harmonisation of fees for foster carers across Wales. We have invested in the Fostering Service, which is now made up of two teams covering the North and South of the County respectively. This more stable base has enabled the Teams to focus on improving the support provided and development of our carers as well as on recruiting new carers. We ran recruitment campaigns throughout the year which produced 132 enquiries, 18 assessments beginning and 14 foster families being approved at panel. 40% of children in our care are placed with in-house foster carers and we continue to work hard to recruit more foster carers.



6. C9 The Assessment Teams completed 692 assessments in the year. Of these, 11% were stepped down to early help. This figure has increased through the year, as our new structure and early help approach has been embedded. 41% progressed to Care and Support and 48% were closed.

- The statutory obligation to complete Deprivation of Liberty assessments (DoLs) within 21 days continues to be a challenge. We have worked together with regional partners to outline guidance to complement the guidance from the Department of Health. Staff responsible for DoLs continue to keep themselves updated with case law and developments during the Covid period. Preparations are ongoing for the transition to the new Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) which comes into force sometime in 2021. An audit

of the Council's DoLS service was undertaken in December 2019. This audit resulted in a number of actions which will be coordinated by our Senior Manager for Contact and Adult Safeguarding.

- We have created a Regional Threshold guidance and delivered online training to support staff with a clear process to inform safeguarding referrals. The *Wales Safeguarding Procedures* were launched in November of 2019, which is an essential part of safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Powys has begun training staff on applying the new procedures in practise.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

During 2020/21 we will be focussed on delivering a range of outcomes, including:

- C1 GOAL: The Regional Safeguarding Board will publish the regional safeguarding response to Safeguarding which is a single document outlining the Safeguarding response to children and adults safeguarding. The purpose of this document is to provide a designated reference point for the specific processes to be followed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to show the significant work undertaken by all our Board and partners in the development of these policies. The Senior manager has engaged with the board to produce this document and provide clarity during this time.
- C2 Goal: To develop a joint care home escalation matrix with the Powys Teaching Health Board to enable full awareness by the Care Home Steering Group (Section 33) of contract monitoring and concerns.
- C3 Goal: To convene a regular interagency, multidisciplinary team meeting to consider the needs and sustainability of care homes in Powys.
- C4: Work closely with partner agencies to improve our response to child exploitation and lead on the review of the regional arrangements for multi-agency working.
- C5: Complete phase two of the Children's Services restructure to strengthen the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service.
- C6: Develop the Powys Child Exploitation Strategy and Implementation Plan
- C7: Establish our Specialist Child Exploitation Intervention team.
- C8: Undertake a review of EDT and implement an out of hours response to child protection and adult safeguarding and mental health which meets demand.

(d) Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

What did we plan to do last year?

During 2019/20 we said we would:

- D-1 Review our access arrangements, promoting self-service and channel shift wherever appropriate. Ensuring we have the right model to meet the demands on the service. Promoting a culture of getting it right the first time for people who contact us.

- D-2 Review the end to end customer journey/experience and ensure that each step adds value and that our systems are lean and agile.
- D-3 Continue to promote a culture which routinely meets the expectations of the Social Services and Well-being Act and other legislation which encourages co- production and reduced dependence
- D-4 Regional Rural Centre in Newtown – in partnership with health and social care professionals, a proof of concept work has been completed including identification of a preferred site for a multi-agency campus in Newtown. Work has commenced on the design of the new model of care which includes mapping of existing services and local population needs.
- D-5 The proof of concept work has been completed. This includes the identification of a preferred site for a multi-agency campus in Newtown and the testing of how the vision/concept could fit on the preferred site through different layout options. This external report and its recommendations were approved by Council Cabinet on 19th February 2019. Further work is required to develop the multi-agency wellbeing campus model, and this will be undertaken during spring/summer of 2019.
- D-6 Continue to work with Powys County Council Housing Department and Associations on planning opportunities for Residential Units and training flats for Care Leavers.



How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

- D-1 Significant work has been undertaken during the year to review and create a new single point of contact which provides high quality information, advice and assistance. ASSIST is now functioning more efficiently and is providing excellent results including prescribing low-level Technology Enabled Care (TEC) equipment when needed. The percentage of individuals who have contacted the service for information and advice, but who have not returned to the service in the following six months is 77% (as of April 2020). The key role of the contact officers within the ASSIST team is to get to the heart of “what matters” to the person or their carer and to identify the outcome they are looking to achieve. The team work to a prioritisation framework to assess referrals and have a clear process for prevention and co-production with third sector services. There are clear pathways for any concerns which are raised about safeguarding. A new online enquiry form and carers assessment form have been introduced. In the last Quarter of 2019/2020, 86% of all approaches to Children's Services were supported and managed through the Front Door

with information, advice or via the Early Help Team, rather than a referral to statutory services. This percentage continues to be consistent each month and highlights how Children's Services is embedding the ethos of 'working with' Children, Young People and their Families rather than 'doing to' to enable children and young people to access the right support at the right time. The commissioned services, provided by 3rd sector organisations, have an important role to play with providing information, advice and assistance. Organisations, such as CREDU, provide thousands of people with information on a regular basis. It is estimated that there are 1,000 young people and approximately 16,000 adults who are looking after a family member or friend who are ill or disabled. The number of people now registered with CREDU as informal carers and who received information regularly is 3,413 as of 31 March 2020, up from 3,172 people at the same time last year.

- D-2 Work continues with the 'end to end' customer journey/experience and meetings with operational managers and Business Intelligence will continue as things return to normal.
- D-3 Since Sept 2019, our department has held quarterly Strengths Based Outcome Focussed trainings hosted by Social Care Wales. We have also added our own monthly Mentor Groups to support staff in embedding the practise. Powys has made the Strengths Based Outcome Focussed training mandatory for all frontline staff and Senior Managers. Monthly reflective practise meetings and a library of webinars, case studies and other resources further support Strengths Based Outcome Focussed practise. We are monitoring staff practise via audits to ensure staff are embedding their learning.
- D-3 In Children's Services, there have been a range of 14 different practice development sessions to promote and embed the Signs of Safety model of social work.
- D-4 Regional Rural Centre in Newtown as a part of the North Powys Programme – After extensive engagement with communities, staff and stakeholders, a new model of care has been developed taking into account population needs, existing service provision and gaps, quality of the estate and the broader challenges and opportunities at a local and national level. The new model of care was approved by the Health Board and is awaiting review by Powys County Council after being on hold due to COVID-19. It is anticipated that the model of care will need to be reviewed in light of COVID-19 to ensure it is still the best model moving forward.
- D-5 Further work has been done to develop a programme business case, but engagement has been limited due to COVID-19. Further work is required to be able to ensure full stakeholder support for the scheme before it can be considered for approval by Cabinet and the Health Board.
- D-6 Children's Services and Powys County Council Housing Department continue to work together to meet the accommodation needs of Children who are Looked After and our Care Leavers. During 2019/20, two Council properties (one in North Powys and one in South Powys) have been developed into our Springboard houses in Newtown and Brecon. These are shared houses for young people aged 16 to 25 who are leaving care and are ready for greater independence. A three-bedroom property in South Powys was also tenanted to Children's Services for use as a 2 bed children's residential home. The works commenced in 2019/20 and have been delayed due to the Covid-19 response. A further house in Mid

Powys was tenanted to Children's Services at the end of 2019/20, for use as emergency accommodation due to Covid-19. Children's Services worked with Newydd Housing Association to secure two one-bedroom flats in North Powys. In January a training flat in Newtown opened its doors to young people. The aim of the flat is to give Young People leaving care a chance to spend short periods of time living there, learning skills and experiencing what it's like to live alone. It gives young people the opportunity to be fully involved with their own programme for independence. This project was set up in partnership with Care Leavers. The other flat has provided floating support accommodation for a Care Leaver.

Technology Enabled Care (TEC) has continued to develop with new services being trialled. The number of unique individuals supported, and technology enabled care prescriptions have continued to grow with 708 new prescriptions in 2019/20. 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 £1,350 per person in annual savings, the projected costs which have been avoided as a result of the use of technology enabled care was £453,938 for the 2019/20 financial year.

Projected Cost Avoidance to Powys Social Care 2019/20 Number of clients - 708 (1) Estimated Annual Saving per Client - £1,350 (2,3) Estimated saving 2019/20 - **£453,938** (4)

(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

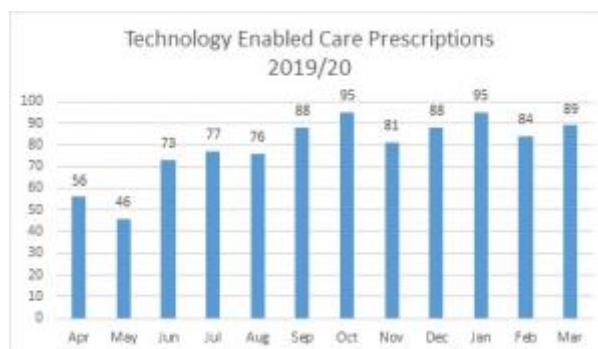
(3) Uplift applied for 2019/20 of 2%

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



3 - A series of animations were created to promote the equipment which is available to support people in Powys





4 - Technology Enabled Care Prescriptions by month

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>. “I have gotten fantastic feedback from clients/family using the equipment. The potential cost savings from families being able to maintain their loved one at home without the need for a care package is huge.” - Health Board Occupational Therapist talking about the Canary Home Monitoring System “My gran remained at home without a care package right up until she was hospitalised over a 5-month period, and, unfortunately then required 24-hour care in a nursing home. As a family we strongly feel that the Canary was the main reason we kept her at home for so long.” – Granddaughter Overall, the number of unique individuals supported has continued to grow in line with Vision 2025 targets with a total of 708 individuals being supported using TEC items since April 2019.

What We Will Do Next Year:

D-1 Goal: To enable more adults with a disability to gain training and paid employment as our current commissioned service expires in October of 2020, we will be retendering by reviewing current employment needs and using a locality approach.

D-2 Goal: To review daytime activities for adults and to support people to achieve what matters to them.

D-3 Goal: To increase uptake of technology amongst the people that we support to increase social connection and reduce loneliness and isolation.

D-4 Open a Spring-Board house in mid Powys

D-5 Complete an options appraisal of how a full range of supported accommodation for Care Leavers and Young People aged 16 to 17 who are homeless, can be best delivered.

D-6 Increase the number of young people in care who achieve their educational goals.

D-7 Increase the number of care leavers who are living in permanent accommodation at the age of 25.

D-8 Increase the number of care leavers who are in full time employment, education, or training.

(e) Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

What did we plan to do last year?

During 2019/20 we said we would:

- E-1 Increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across Mid and West Wales
- E-2 Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong
- E-4 Make early intervention and prevention a priority
- E-5 Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors
- E-6 Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services throughout the region.
- E-7 Ensure all organisations contracted to provide care services on behalf of Powys Council have a workplace domestic abuse policy and provide the same level of training as required of Council staff under the National Training Framework.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

E-1 Powys Commissions two main providers across Powys who:

- Work in communities and public services to raise awareness of domestic abuse, the signs of an abuse relationship and its impacts, and promote services available to support victims i.e. national helpline
- Provide training to relevant staff, practitioners and volunteers (from a range of statutory and third sector organisations) to raise awareness of domestic abuse as an issue, communicate the responsibilities under 'Ask and Act' and provide information on support/advice and referral routes for those experiencing domestic abuse.
- Support the development and promotion of the 'Ask me' scheme and 'safe disclosure points' in communities
- Develop skills to establish and maintain positive and healthy relationships
- Work with the locality housing related support and other service providers to improve intelligence and early intervention.

E-2. Sessions have been provided across schools in Powys which:

- Promote the importance of healthy relationships and raise the awareness of children, young people and adults about the issues of Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.
- Are delivered by qualified and experienced teachers - sessions can be delivered in Welsh or English and all resources are bilingual.

- Are cross curricular and are designed to promote peer discussion, using a range of techniques.
- Use materials that are thought provoking but are not designed to be so emotive as to cause distress, including the concept of “The Safety Zone”.
- Are designed to promote discussion not disclosure.
- Conclude with information for young people on where they can access help and support both inside and outside the school.
- A parent pack has been developed with activities for all ages, from under 4 to over 14. The pack contains practical activities for children and young people

E-3 The Regional Partnership are still working closely with partners around the academic review and profiling of perpetrators across Mid and West Wales.

- As a result of the Regional MARAC review the Daily Discussion process has been reviewed and is now in practice. Evaluation is also underway with Data Cymru for the Daily Discussions Process.
- The Capital Grant Award has supported implementation of Video Conference facilities across Powys, to support the Daily Discussions Process that was implemented in November 2019.
- We are working on the regional Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Pilot with Professor Jane Monkton-Smith and the Forensic Psychology Service.
- The focus for the next year will be piloting a digital perpetrator intervention in Powys, supported by learning from the recent Powys Domestic Homicide Review.

- E-4 The Children’s Services restructure included a big focus and investment in Early Help Services.
- Our new Early Help Service started their work in April 2019. 927 children received direct work (not including group work) from the team during the year. Of those 927 children only 64 were referred back for statutory assessment. For 50 of these children the reason was that their families did not engage with Early Help. We are confident that the Early Help team are working effectively alongside children, young people and their families at an early stage, avoiding the need for the involvement of statutory services.
- As part of the Early Help approach, we established early help panels to bring together multi agency partners to ensure that children, young people and their families can access the support they need at the earliest opportunity. Our partners Calan Domestic Violence Service and Montgomery Family Crisis Centre (MFCC) participate in those panels.
- The newly established Intervention and Prevention Service worked with 322 Children, Young People and their families to support with a range of issues.

*Figures from June 2019 to March 2020: CE Number of referrals - 33 Number of Children - 38 Number of Adults - 17 **Crisis Work***

Number of referrals - 10

Number of Children - 17

Number of Adults - 18 **CSE**

Number of referrals - 5

Number of Children - 5

Number of Adults - 2 **Family Support**

Number of referrals - 24

Number of Children - 36

Number of Adults - 30 **Parenting Support**

Number of referrals - 2

Number of Children - 4

Number of Adults - 4 **Placement Support**

Number of referrals - 35

Number of Children - 43

Number of Adults - 26 **Reunification**

Number of referrals - 9

Number of Children - 10

Number of Adults - 9 **Support to avoid accommodation**

Number of referrals - 104

Number of Children - 169

Number of Adults - 129 **Grand total**

Number of referrals - 222

Number of Children - 322

Number of Adults - 235

- ***Children and Young People supported by Intervention and Prevention Service to avoid accommodation in Local Authority Care*** = 166 (169 - 3 multiple referrals)
- ***Average cost of a placement for a child in care 2019-20*** = Around £50,000
- ***Total cost avoided 2019-20*** = £8,300,000

- E-5 We appointed a trainer to undertake the VAWDASV training. 75% of the Social Services workforce completed their level 1 training.
- E-6 Powys Commissions Domestic Abuse Support from two main providers, one North one South. Providers provide services which include:
 - Access to safe and appropriate accommodation
 - Crisis Support
 - Recovery Support
 - Preventative Services
 - Services specifically for children and young people effected by domestic Abuse
 - General awareness raising services
- E-7 All Powys contracts have these requirements within the standard terms and conditions. Compliance is monitored as part of our routine contract monitoring.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

(Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.)

- E1 The pandemic has meant that all day services have been closed. It is likely that risk assessments will result in an inability to re-open day centres in the near future due to the requirement to physically distance, especially among vulnerable groups. Therefore, the Council will need to work with day service users to ascertain the best alternative methods of achieving what matters to them. This may mean support to access technology and use technology to maintain relationships in a different manner, or to access physically distanced befriending groups, or other types of support. In addition, we will be working alongside service users to identify suitable volunteering, work experience and employment opportunities. The service will prioritise this work during the year.
- E2 To develop supported living services which are outcome focussed and support individuals to maintain their own wellbeing within society.
- Identify those in our teams who should complete the level two and three VAWDASV training and provide the relevant training opportunities.



5 - Amy published her experiences of Shared Lives in Powys

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

What did we plan to do last year?

In 2019/20 we stated that we would:

- F-1 In 2019/20, the council will work with partners and providers to support their sustainability and find innovative solutions to reduce the numbers of delayed transfers of care.
- F-2 Continue to increase the capacity of carers and number of participants in the Shared Lives Service. (Asking Sandra and Hazel)
- F-3 Work with the housing service and housing associations to develop better accommodation options for older people in Powys. This will include the development of extra care schemes in Welshpool, Ystradgynlais and Brecon.
- F-4 Reduced numbers of persons (per 1000 population) aged 75 and over who experience a delay in return to their own home or social care setting following hospital treatment. (this was 1.5 in 2017/18).

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Effective partnership working is crucial to improving outcomes for residents in Powys. Our service delivery plan sets out what we want to do to enable the speedy transfer of people from hospital to home through a re-abling and recovery-oriented approach. (From CIW Conf notes)

In January 2018, the number of delayed hospital transfers due to social care reasons was 18. In January 2020, the number of delayed transfers due to social care reasons was 3. I'm proud of this improvement for Powys residents, because I know the work that we have undertaken across the system that has contributed to this improvement. The main changes I'd like to highlight are around pathways and processes and creating new teams.

In terms of pathways and processes;

- We have co-developed a clear set of patient pathways, with corresponding pathway response times. We now have clear processes in place that provides a clarity that we didn't have before across social care and health.
- We have held pathway familiarisation sessions with our colleagues in District General and Community Hospitals so that these pathways are embedded.
- Senior Managers across Social Services and Health have instigated twice weekly patient flow meetings and a fortnightly delays forum. We're now managing patient flow in a calmer environment which supports clearer and more focussed discussions.
- We have created a patient flow tracker which is shared across the system. This gives the system real time intelligence on what patients are where, what discharge pathway they are on, and the work that we are undertaking across the system to support transfer to home.

In terms of teams;

- We have created a new hospital social work team that currently covers two acute settings, as well as five of our community hospitals. As soon as a patient is stable enough to start planning their transfer from hospital, our team works with them. Care and support plans, if required are signed off on a daily basis so that there is no additional delay in arranging for care and support. In January 2020, we received 73 referrals, of which 50 were appropriate. 80% of cases were allocated within 24 hours, with the remaining people allocated to a worker within 4 days.
- The reablement service is run jointly between the Council and the Health Board. Since our inspection, we have implemented alternative ways of working to expedite hospital transfers. In the South, we have utilised one worker to follow a *Home-First Model* and in the North, three workers have been seconded to the home first team, led by PTHB. This is helping us to support reductions of referrals to *The reablement service is run jointly between the Council and the Health Board. Since our inspection, we have implemented alternative ways of working to expedite hospital transfers. In the South, we have utilised one worker to follow a Home-First Model and in the North, three workers have been seconded to the home first team, led by PTHB. This is helping us to support reductions of referrals to reablement. Our performance data from January 2020 shows us that 83% of adults who completed a period of reablement had no package of care and support 6 months later.*
- Our performance data from January 2020 shows us that 83% of adults who completed a period of reablement had no package of care and support 6 months later.

Connected Persons - 9

Supported Lodgings - 1

Our Through Care Teams work with Young People so that they are fully supported as they transition into adulthood.

The newly established Housing Gateway Panels commenced in January 2020. This is a multi-agency panel which has been set up to ensure that Care Leavers are able to access accommodation without having to present as homeless (the previous process).

The Housing options available to young people leaving care have increased, as have the opportunities for young people to prepare for their own homes. The training flat, Spring Board project and Floating Support tenancy are the first of these improvements.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

To support people in 2020/21 to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation, we will:

- F-1 Goal: Further embed discharge to recover and assess pathways in partnership with health and third sector to promote as far as possible the recovery and rehabilitation of patients following their transfer from hospital.
- F-2 Goal: Conduct a review of our reablement service. Our joint partnership board has agreed to work together to commission a review of our reablement service to formalise the model we are working under; one that supports both the managing of demand from hospitals and in service users in our communities. (from CIW brief)
- F-4 Goal: To develop wellbeing calls to proactively contact vulnerable individuals in the community to support their independent living.
- F-5 Goal: To continue to develop the extra care schemes across Powys.
- F-6 Goal: To review the older persons' care home market to consider appropriate provision and evaluate provision is appropriate to meet need.
- F-7: We will continue the recruitment drive for foster carers and supported lodgings hosts
- F-8: We will improve the support provided to our foster carers
- F-9: We will increase the number of supported lodgings hosts
- F-10: We will open the first of our new Powys Residential Children's Homes.
- F-11: Undertake an analysis of range and cost of accommodation for care leavers age 18+
- F12: Following the review, we will commission or develop provision to improve the range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and homeless young people aged 16 to 17 years and deliver value for money.
- F-13: Design the model of care and therapeutic model for a Powys Children's Therapeutic Residential Home

5. How We Do What We Do?



(a) Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

Since the CSSIW inspection of Children's Services in July 2017 a permanent Head of Service has been appointed who has established a clear strategic vision for improving the service. The Service is two years into a journey of improvement.

The restructure of the Service (in 2019-20) from one based on generic teams where workers were required to undertake tasks from referral to adoption, to specialist teams. The restructure enables workers to have clarity of role and manageable workloads and makes Children's Services in Powys an attractive place to work. The specialist teams are now made up of the following:

- Early Help and Assessment
- Intervention and Prevention
- Care and Support
- Corporate Parenting
- Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

Following the restructure, staff morale has improved and colleagues report feeling better equipped to undertake their roles.

The practice framework Signs of Safety has been rolled out and embedded across the service. Training for all staff has been implemented and a Signs of Safety Implementation Group was established and meets monthly to progress the implementation plan. Team Managers and Practitioners report that using Signs of Safety has transformed the way they work with families and the focus is on developing family support networks and keeping children safely at home wherever possible.

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 the 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 36 Strengths-based outcome focussed mentors and have been running monthly support groups to increase their skills and confidence. 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).

Age Group	2014	2019	2029	2039	Working Age (16-64)	77,200
73,500	65,200	56,900				
75+	15,100	17,600	24,000	28,200		

(Welsh Government Population Projections (2016))

This is causing recruitment and retention problems for the council. 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 are highly skilled and demonstrate 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.

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.

In November 2019 a staff survey was conducted. 1,421 employees (including 35 Commissioning staff, 70 Childrens and Families staff and 207 Adults staff) responded to the survey, compared to 332 in 2018.

The survey found that:

Proud to work for the council Council average - 77% Commissioning - 77% Children and Families - 74% Adults - 81% ***Proud of the work I do*** Council average - 77% Commissioning - 71% Children and Families - 81% Adults - 84% ***I feel confident making decisions without having to seek permission from my line manager***

Council average - 83%

Commissioning - 83%

Children and Families - 78%

Adults - 84% ***I will go that extra mile to get the job done***

Council average - 91%

Commissioning - 89%

Children and Families - 93%

Adults - 95%

- 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.
- Occupational Therapy – During 2019/20, waiting times for occupational therapy assessments in the south of the county remained a concern, however a combination of innovative working in the form of focussed whole team assessment days in specific locations with the

greatest backlog of referrals, plus a return to full team capacity following one full term team member's maternity leave, resulted in this reducing significantly during the winter months.

Securing a Stable Workforce

We attended the Compass Community Care events in both Manchester (May) and Birmingham (March). We also participated in the Careers Wales event at the Royal Welsh Showground at the beginning of March. Social Care participated in the *We Care Wales* recruitment campaign run by Social Care Wales which included adverts on national television.

A focus for Children's Services has been on stabilising the workforce and the recruitment of a Permanent Senior Leadership Team. This has been achieved alongside key roles within the structure including Children's Services Participation and Engagement Officer, Children's Services Development Manager – Residential and Supported Accommodation, Safeguarding Manager, and Exploitation Manager.

The number of qualified social work vacancies has reduced along with the reliance on agency staff.

Several recruitment campaigns have been run during the year with the latest one at the beginning of 2020 before the Covid-19 pandemic. This included a social media campaign using new promotional videos with Children's Services staff talking about their experiences working in Powys.

The Children's Services workforce development project developed a business case for the "Grow our Own" Social Workers which sets out how we plan to expand the opportunities for existing staff to train as qualified social workers.

A Team Co-ordinator Pilot project was launched in January in the Care and Support South Team. This model has been derived from the Hackney Model. The Team Co-ordinator was allocated to work with 4 Social Workers, to support them with co-ordinating visits, arranging meetings, timely recordings and act as a contact for families. The pilot ran until end of March and delivered the anticipated outcomes – releasing social workers to spend more time doing the job they love – spending time working directly with children, young people and their families.

Children's Services Induction Training was reviewed and revamped in February and sessions were held for all new members of staff around the County. The sessions were attended by 22 new starters and feedback was very positive.

Operational Management Team meetings have been revamped and now have a focus on learning and development for Team Managers and Leaders.

(b) Our Financial Resources and How We Plan for the Future

Many local authorities are experiencing budget challenges and Powys has received one of the worst settlements in Wales every year for the last ten years. The large variation in our expenditures 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).

Some individual services are very expensive, where placements for children or adults with especially complex needs can easily exceed £150,000 a year and some will cost substantially more. Expenditure incurred in one year may lock the council into financial commitments for many years to come. To balance the competing priorities of managing service demand, improving quality, meeting higher expectations and reducing expenditure is especially problematic in situations where safeguarding children and adults from harm must be the key factor in decision-making. Additionally, there are many factors making the task even more difficult in recent years: increasing demand for services; new requirements from the Welsh and UK Governments; and the need to achieve budget savings in the face of reducing revenue.

As part of the budget setting process Adult Social Care had identified significant service pressures of £9.534 million. To counter the pressures, efficiencies were identified and achieved in full of £5.052 million. 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 not to give an uplift to providers during the year. This has left the care market in a fragile position and may need to be addressed in the future.

The Children's Services budget was set with unfunded pressures of £2.599 million. Pressures of £6.25 million and the savings identified of £3.651 million, of which £1.26 million were delivered. Of the £2.391 million unachieved savings, £1.704 million has been reinstated as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process.

It is recognised that the impact of the global pandemic, COVID-19 will be felt within the service for the year 2020/21. Towards the end of 2019/20 the service had started to increase its spending in preparation for a potential surge in infection rates and demand for support. However, this was funded by the Welsh Government.

(c) Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability

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, including:

- Older people with complex needs and long-term conditions, including dementia
- People with learning disabilities;
- Carers, including young carers;
- Integrated Family Support Services;
- Children with complex needs due to disability or illness

In line with the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act, 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 have developed a high-level, overarching plan called the Health and Care Strategy which sets out the strategic vision and approach to be taken in Powys. The Area Plan will outline the priorities to be delivered over the first 5 years and identify the lead agency for delivery.

The Health and Care Strategy priority areas are:

- Wellbeing;
- Early help and Support;
- Tackling the Big Four (cancer, circulatory disease, respiratory disease, mental health)
- Joined up Care.

The RPB will also address the key strategic enablers outlined in the Health and Care Strategy which will help us to develop and deliver the proposed model of care including:

- Workforce
- Innovative environments
- Digital First
- Transforming in Partnership.

Our renewed focus on our corporate leadership and governance through our vision 2025 plan sets out many challenges for us:

- The Council will ensure that it's vision for the future is promoted and understood by the officers, partners and residents.
- The Council, members and officers will be open about what the most important issues are and focus on addressing them.
- The Council will create a mutually supportive leadership culture, with clear roles between members and officers.
- By strengthening the corporate centre, the Council can support a more delegated leadership structure.
- Integrated Disability Service – We established the Integrated Disability Service (IDS) to include co-located multi-agency teams and a single management structure. An Integrated Disability Service triage process has been started. What were monthly physical meetings are now weekly meetings using Skype where needed. This gives quicker and more informed advice and action for children with disabilities or complex health needs.



Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

In publishing this annual report, we have relied upon a substantial amount of information, data, 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 responding to the wellbeing 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 that provide 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 doesn't mean we're 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's not possible to capture everything which is why we are keen to signpost people to further information.

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

- Powys County Council Corporate Leadership & Governance Plan 2017- 2020
- Healthy Caring Powys – Delivering the Vision (Area Plan)
- The Adult Services Improvement Plan 2018-2023
- The Powys Population Needs Assessment
- CIW Inspection Reports 2019 and 2020
- Children's Services Integrated Business Plan 2020-2023
- Vision 2025 Corporate Improvement Plan

