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NP15 1GA

Tuesday, 8 December 2015

Notice of meeting / Hysbysiad o gyfarfod:

Joint Select Committee

**Wednesday, 16th December, 2015 at 2.00 pm,
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA**

****There will be a pre-meeting in the Chamber for
Committee Members only at 1.30pm****

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies	
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3.	Risk Assessment for Social Services	1 - 12
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6.	Children's Services 3 Year Service and Financial Plan	71 - 86

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

R. Chapman
D. Dovey
A. Easson
D. Edwards
R. Edwards
D. Evans
P. Farley
M Fowler (Parent Governor Representative)
L. Guppy
R. Harris
B. Hayward
M. Hickman
D Hill
S. Howarth
D Husdon
Dr S James (Church in Wales Representative)
D. Jones
P. Jones
S. Jones
P. Jordan
K Plough (Association of School Governors)
M. Powell
C Robertshaw (Parent Governor Representative)
V. Smith
A. Watts
P. Watts
A. Webb
S. White
K. Williams
A. Wintle

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Welsh Language

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Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Outcomes we are working towards

Nobody Is Left Behind

- Older people are able to live their good life
- People have access to appropriate and affordable housing
- People have good access and mobility

People Are Confident, Capable and Involved

- People's lives are not affected by alcohol and drug misuse
- Families are supported
- People feel safe

Our County Thrives

- Business and enterprise
- People have access to practical and flexible learning
- People protect and enhance the environment

Our priorities

- Schools
- Protection of vulnerable people
- Supporting Business and Job Creation
- Maintaining locally accessible services

Our Values

- **Openness:** we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships.
- **Fairness:** we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect.
- **Flexibility:** we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation.
- **Teamwork:** we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals.

Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chryf

Canlyniadau y gweithiwn i'w cyflawni

Neb yn cael ei adael ar ôl

- Gall pobl hŷn fyw bywyd da
- Pobl â mynediad i dai addas a fforddiadwy
- Pobl â mynediad a symudedd da

Pobl yn hyderus, galluog ac yn cymryd rhan

- Camddefnyddio alcohol a chyffuriau ddim yn effeithio ar fywydau pobl
- Teuluoedd yn cael eu cefnogi
- Pobl yn teimlo'n ddiogel

Ein sir yn ffynnu

- Busnes a menter
- Pobl â mynediad i ddysgu ymarferol a hyblyg
- Pobl yn diogelu ac yn cyfoethogi'r amgylchedd

Ein blaenoriaethau

- Ysgolion
- Diogelu pobl agored i niwed
- Cefnogi busnes a chreu swyddi
- Cynnal gwasanaethau sy'n hygyrch yn lleol

Ein gwerthoedd

- **Bod yn agored:** anelwn fod yn agored ac onest i ddatblygu perthnasoedd ymddiriedus
- **Tegwch:** anelwn ddarparu dewis teg, cyfleoedd a phrofiadau a dod yn sefydliad a adeiladwyd ar barch un at y llall.
- **Hyblygrwydd:** anelwn fod yn hyblyg yn ein syniadau a'n gweithredoedd i ddod yn sefydliad effeithlon ac effeithiol.
- **Gwaith tîm:** anelwn gydweithio i rannu ein llwyddiannau a'n methiannau drwy adeiladu ar ein cryfderau a chefnogi ein gilydd i gyflawni ein nodau.

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SUBJECT:	Strategic Risk Assessment 2015
MEETING:	Joint Adult and Children and Young People Select Committee
DATE:	15th December 2015
DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority as provided in appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members consider the strategic risks presented for the next three years, in particular those of relevance to the committee and scrutinise the extent to which:
- all relevant risks facing the authority are appropriately captured,
 - the level of risk applied is appropriate based on the matrix in the council's risk management policy and guidance (appendix 2) and
 - mitigating actions are proportionate and appropriate
- 2.2 That members use the risk assessment on an on-going basis to hold the responsibility holders to account to ensure that risk is being appropriately managed.
- 2.3 Use the risk assessment to inform the future work programme of the committee.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The risk assessment ensures that:
- Strategic risks are identified and monitored by the authority.
 - Risk controls are appropriate and proportionate
 - Senior managers and elected members systematically review the strategic risks facing the authority.
- 3.2 The existing risks on the Strategic Risk Assessment have been updated based on evidence available in 2015, as presented at Appendix 1. Changes to the council's risk management policy were approved by Cabinet in March 2015. These are:
- including pre-mitigation and post-mitigation risk scores, this was also a key recommendation from scrutiny of the 2014 risk assessment

- ensuring greater clarity to the phrasing of risk so that each statement includes an event, cause and effect as shown below:

Event	Cause	Effect
Risk of...Failure to...Lack of ...Loss of...Uncertainty of ...Inability to...Delay in...	Because of...Due to...As a result of...	Leads to...and/or... result in...

- 3.3 The risk assessment only covers high and medium level risks. Lower level operational risks are not registered unless they are projected to escalate within the three years covered. These need to be managed and monitored through teams' service plans. The pre and post mitigation risk levels are presented separately. In most cases mitigating actions result in a change to the likelihood of the risk rather than the consequences as our actions are generally aimed at reducing the chance of a negative event occurring rather than lessening it's impact. Clearly there will be exceptions.
- 3.4 Following presentation to select committees, the risk assessment will be presented to Cabinet for sign off. Prior to this, it will also form part of budget papers for discussion at Council to reflect alignment with strategic risks and proposed budget decisions the Council is taking.
- 3.5 The risk log is a living document and will evolve over the course of the year as new information comes to light. An up-to-date risk log is accessible to members on the Council's intranet - The Hub. This will ensure as well as the ongoing specific scrutiny of the risk assessment annually, that select committees are able to re-visit the information at any point in the year to re-prioritise their work plan as appropriate.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 To provide timely and contributory information to the authority's performance management framework in ensuring that the authority is well-run and is able to contribute to achieving sustainable and resilient communities.

5. AUTHOR:

Matthew Gatehouse, Policy and Performance Manager

6. CONTACT DETAILS:

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Appendix 1

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigation already undertaken	Future Actions and timescales	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Service & Risk Owner	Cabinet Member	Select Committee
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			
1 new	The authority is unable to deliver its political priorities in the future because it does not yet have clarity on its future business model or longer term financial plan.	<p>While work is continuing on the need to address the longer term issue of a reducing resource base as part of the MTFP, these are often only looking 2-3 years ahead which will mean the authority does not have a longer term financial plan and its current business model could become unsustainable in the long term.</p> <p>The Council's partnership administration continuance agreement sets clear priorities and performance expectation in line with these resource priorities, this only extends to 2017.</p> <p>The introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations Act requires us to plan on a decadal and generational basis and our current models do not extend to this timeframe.</p> <p>Lack of understanding of the future model of the organisation means it is difficult to develop consistent Workforce planning, preparing a workforce plan for the authority is a proposal for improvement from Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement report 2014/15.</p>	2015/16	Unlikely	Major	Low	<p>The Budget setting process has set a number of guiding Principles to help focus the process of developing budget savings.</p> <p>In October 2015 Cabinet agreed a report setting out the budget proposals that have been developed particularly focused on the next year (2016-17) for budget consultation with Members, the public and community groups. Work is continuing on the need to address the longer term issue of a reducing resource base. Further work is continuing on proposals to address the savings in the latter years of the MTFP.</p>	<p>To develop and specify the business model for the authority in the long term.</p> <p>Ensure the Council's key delivery strategies Improvement Plan, MTFP, People Strategy, Asset Management Plan and iCounty Strategy all align to this model.</p> <p>Extend planning timelines for council's key strategic documents to ten years.</p>	2015/16	Unlikely	Major	Low	Paul Matthews	Peter Fox	All
			2016/17	Possible	Major	Medium			2016/17	Unlikely	Major	Low			
			2017/18	Possible	Major	Medium			2017/18	Unlikely	Major	Low			

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigation already undertaken	Future Actions and timescales	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Service & Risk Owner	Cabinet Member	Select Committee
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			
2	Some services may become financially unsustainable in the short to medium term as a result of reducing budgets and increasing demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From April 2016/2017 we have to make savings of £6.319m. We have looked at making savings amounting to £4.176m. We still have a gap of £1.743m to close and we need to continue to look at ways to do this. These are on top of the £5.8m savings we are working on to achieve the 2015/2016 budget. - This is after several years of reducing budgets (over £22 million in last 5 years) resulting in achieving further savings becoming increasingly more challenging. - At Month 6 of the 2015/16 budget the bottom line situation is a £1,066,000 (0.7%) potential overspend. In October 2015 the MTFP had modelled budgetary pressures up to 2019/20 of £6.5million. - A range of services have identified demand for services is increasing including planning, housing and public protection. - A range of services have identified the risk of not complying with legislative changes for example Welsh Language Standards. - An ageing population and complexity of demand in children's services will place increased pressure on services. - Children's services is forecast to overspend by £1.1M 	2015/16	Unlikely	Major	Low	<p>In January 2015 council agreed the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to set the 2015/16 budget with a 4.95% increase in council tax and a small contribution from reserves of £40,000. This includes £4.8million of specific saving initiatives identified for 2015/16.</p> <p>Work has continued to refine the modelling assumptions and outline the income generation or savings proposals that will need to be considered as part of the MTFP. The effect of the roll forward of the model, revised assumptions and pressures a revised gap of £11 million over the period of the plan 2016/17 – 2019/20 at October 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to develop Budget Mandates to deliver savings for April 2016/17 onwards. - Monitor progress against existing mandates that are part of the MTFP and report progress to Cabinet and Select Committee quarterly. - Develop a recovery Plan for the current year revenue budget 2015/16 - Engage with the public, members and community groups on emerging proposals for the 2016/17 MTFP. - Agree proposals to balance the MTFP in 2016/17 to 2018/19 taking into account the need to match the expected performance targets with adequate resources. - Consider how best to use capacity fund and any external funding sources to supplement the change programme required - Ensure that the detailed business cases that will deliver the MTFP are fully costed, stress-tested and managed - Review contractual arrangements to balance stability, value for money & risk - Implement a three year service and financial plan in children's services to ensure the service is able to deliver a balanced budget and continue to develop workforce practice. 	2015/16	Unlikely	Major	Low	Joy Robson	Phil Murphy	All
			2016/17	Possible	Major	Medium			2016/17	Unlikely	Major	Low			
			2017/18	Possible	Major	Medium			2017/18	Unlikely	Major	Low			

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigation already undertaken	Future Actions and timescales	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Service & Risk Owner	Cabinet Member	Select Committee
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			
3	A failure to meet income targets could lead to unplanned changes in other services or a call on reserves to balance the budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An increasing numbers of services have stretching income targets as part of their budgets. - Some services have limited skills and experience of income generation. - Other programmes can impact on planned savings targets for example the loss of income from the swimming pool in Monmouth as a result of school rebuild. - 48% of the income related mandated budget savings for 2015/16 are forecast to be achieved at month 6. 	2015/16	Likely	Moderate	Medium	An income generation strategy has been agreed by Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to Monitor the delivery of budget proposals agreed as part of the 2015/16 budget - Implement the income generation strategy. Use the ideas listed in the appendix to the income generation strategy to explore if there is any scope to increase income for the future years in the MTFP. - Develop a Recovery plan of alternative savings to present to members to agree at Cabinet in December 2015 	2015/16	Likely	Moderate	Medium	Joy Robson	Phil Murphy	All
			2016/17	Likely	Substantial	Medium	Roll of communications and engagement team has been broadened to include marketing.		2016/17	Possible	Substantial	Medium			
			2017/18	Likely	Substantial	Medium	Fixed term appointment of marketing officer made to support service delivering budget mandates. e.g. school meals		2017/18	Possible	Substantial	Medium			
4a	Potential that the authority is unable to deliver its new schools capital programme due to capital receipts not generating the required income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are forecast delays in capital receipts from 2015/16 to future years. At month 6, £5.2 million of the £10.2million capital receipts originally forecast to be delivered in the year (2015/16) are forecast to be achieved. - Reduction in capital budget 	2015/16	Possible	Major	Medium	The Asset Management Plan was agreed by Cabinet in November 2014 providing a clear strategy and plan for the management of the council's property and land assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Implement the Asset Management Plan as the structure to effectively manage property assets that the Council owns or occupies aligned to key corporate priorities and service needs -Ensure resource is available to maintain sale of assets -Development of the strategic use of Community Infrastructure Levy when available - Further refinement of priority assessments in the property and infrastructure budgets to ensure all pressures have been considered and ranked. 	2015/16	Possible	Major	Medium	Deb Hill-Howell	Phil Murphy	Economy and Development Strong Communities
2016/17	Possible	Major	Medium	2016/17	Possible	Major			Medium						
2017/18	Likely	Major	High	2017/18	Possible	Major			Medium						
4b	Pressure on capital budget from 21 st Century schools programme will impact on other areas requiring capital investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ambitious 21st Century Schools programme and need to provide Welsh medium education - The core programme has been constrained in order to enable the new schools programme to be funded. - A number of significant pressures are documented that are not currently funded. - In the event of emergency pressures resources will have to be diverted due to lack of capacity in the capital budget - Highways and property surveys highlight significant capital demand which is presently unfunded. 													

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigation already undertaken	Future Actions and timescales	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Service & Risk Owner	Cabinet Member	Select Committee	
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level				
5	Potential that the Council does not make sufficient progress in areas of weakness identified by regulators leading to underperformance	<p>- Following a positive performance trajectory over the past three years it will be challenging to deliver further improvements against key performance indicators.</p> <p>- Education services currently remain in special measures, although feedback from the Monmouthshire Recovery board is positive</p> <p>- Latest published WAO Annual Improvement Report highlighted "...that it is uncertain whether Monmouthshire will comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure during 2015-16" a significant factor in this conclusion is that the Council's education services for children and young people still require special measures.</p>	2015 /16	Possible	Substantial	Medium	<p>Worked With the Ministerial Recovery Board to address recommendations in the last Estyn Report and we have seen marked improvements in performance from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4.</p> <p>We have strengthened our performance management processes and introduced further self-evaluation arrangements</p>	<p>- Manage our actions in response to Estyn, CSSIW and WAO via existing mechanisms including the Post Inspection Action Plan and directorates' service planning.</p> <p>- Report Proposals for improvement and overview of performance arrangements to audit committee.</p> <p>- Complete a review of our self-evaluation procedure and implement any changes to the process to ensure that performance is evaluated and any problems are identified and acted upon.</p>	2015 /16	Possible	Substantial	Medium	Sarah Mc-Guinness & Will McLean	Peter Fox	CYP	
			2016 /17	Possible	Substantial	Medium			2016 /17	Unlikely	Substantial	Low				Liz Hackett-Pain
			2017 /18	Possible	Substantial	Medium			2017 /18	Unlikely	Substantial	Low				

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigation already undertaken	Future Actions and timescales	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Service & Risk Owner	Cabinet Member	Select Committee
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			
7	Failure to meet the needs of individual learners may result in them not achieving their full potential.	<p>- Gap in attainment between ‘all pupil’ and the eligible for Free School Meals cohort has narrowed in some key stages but remains a significant issue</p> <p>- Variation in standards across schools</p> <p>- To date we have not in all cases appropriately supported pupils with additional learning needs</p> <p>- Poor assessments in some schools due to leadership, management, capacity and performance issues</p> <p>- Unsustainable provision to meet the demand for Welsh Medium education provision</p> <p>- Not achieving the number of A* and A grades amongst the cohort of more able and talented pupils</p>	2015/16	Likely	Major	High	<p>We progressed the review of Additional Learning Needs strategy and policy. The first stage of a new policy was adopted by Cabinet in November 2014.</p> <p>Better targeted intervention based on better understanding of individual pupils potential.</p> <p>We continued working with the EAS to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the gap in performance between pupils receiving free school meals and those not receiving free school meals is narrowed Greater scrutiny of the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) expenditure to tackle the impact of poverty on pupil learning and performance 	<p>- Continue to self-assess and deliver effective responses to the Estyn inspection recommendations</p> <p>- Ensure that the Additional Learning Needs review delivers a sustainable, adequate and appropriate support to pupils with Additional Learning Needs</p> <p>- Ensure the commissioned arrangements with the EAS address the authority’s concerns in challenging and supporting schools</p> <p>- Deliver the Welsh Education Strategic Plan in collaboration with neighbouring authorities</p>	2015/16	Likely	Major	High	Sarah Mc-Guinness	Liz Hackett Pain	CYP
8a	<p>Potential that council services, including schools do not have the necessary ICT infrastructure meaning they are unable to maximise their offer to service users or learners needs.</p>	<p>- The SRS review has identified scope for improvement and greater realisation of opportunities for its partner bodies.</p> <p>- Schools and the EAS depend on reliable equipment and support from the SRS to implement systems for pupil tracking and to meet curriculum needs.</p> <p>- The Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement report 2014/15 identified the Council is developing its Information Technology arrangements in order to support its strategic vision but more work needs to be done.</p>	2015/16	Likely	Substantial	Medium	<p>Officers have now completed the SRS review, and it has been scrutinised by MCC’s Economy and Development Select and Audit Committees.</p> <p>Member organisations now agree an annual commissioning document with the SRS, detailing the individual services to be bought in from the SRS.</p> <p>Linked to the Council’s Asset Management plan a whole authority review has been undertaken of network infrastructure and will be updated alongside the acquisition or disposal of buildings</p>	<p>-Work with the SRS Board to implement the findings of the review specifically around: finance and the core service, governance and cultural and identity</p> <p>Following the approval of the SRS strategy in November 2015, develop a strong business plan, aligning with the strategy and MCC’s direction of travel.</p> <p>Work with the SRS to further strengthen business continuity arrangements within the SRS. The review date is January 2016</p> <p>Implement phase 1 of the ICT in schools improvements,</p>	2015/16	Likely	Substantial	Medium	Peter Davies	Phil Murphy Bob Greenland	Economy and Development

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigation already undertaken	Future Actions and timescales	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Service & Risk Owner	Cabinet Member	Select Committee
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			
							The council has approved a business case for £885,000 of investment in schools ICT infrastructure, bringing it up to a common standard and platform commensurate with the 21st century schools programme and WG aspirations for connectivity.	upgrading equipment and infrastructure as well as implementing SIMS in the classroom. This first phase is due for completion in July 2016. Phase 2 will see the migration of school based server infrastructure up to the SRS over an 18 month period. The revised SLA will become operational in April 2016							
8	Insufficient ICT infrastructure and skills in the county have the potential to lead to social and economic disadvantages	<p>- Broadband ‘not spots’ remain in the county despite Monmouthshire being part of the roll-out of Superfast Cymru;</p> <p>-It is likely that 4-6% of our most rural areas will not be impacted by this roll out</p> <p>A significant skills issue exists in the County. 19% of households don’t have internet access and 20% (approximately 14,363) adults in Monmouthshire don’t use the internet¹.</p> <p>Monmouthshire residents have high demand for broadband services, Ofcom figures indicating a 74% adoption rate.</p> <p>Other drivers include the council needs to prepare for increased digital public service delivery, the implementation of the Online Universal Credit system, children’s learning opportunities and the provision of digital health care.</p>	2015 /16	Likely	Substantial	Medium	<p>AB Internet have been awarded funding from UK Government to provide wireless broadband coverage to 1600 rural households and premises suffering from a poor broadband connection. The Council is working with AB Internet, the UK and Welsh Government to enable the delivery of the project albeit within a very tight timeframe.</p> <p>A Monmouthshire broadband mapping study identifying future opportunities was completed and presented to Cabinet in March 2015. This secured resources to ensure that the potential of Superfast Cymru and associated programmes identified are maximised for the benefit of Monmouthshire businesses and residents, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued promotional activity to support the Super-connected Cities voucher Scheme. - Local promotion and maximisation of the WG ICT exploitation programme - Completion of a Digital Monmouthshire section on the 	<p>-Deliver the I County digital road map which has three main areas of focus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) internal systems, processes, data and infrastructure 2) community, economic, business and education dimensions 3) opportunities for commercialisation <p>Promote the rollout and exploitation of high speed broadband across the County for both businesses and communities.</p> <p>A funding application to the new RDP for an urban/rural skills programme.</p>	2015 /16	Likely	Substantial	Medium	Peter Davies	Phil Murphy	Economy and Development
			2016 /17	Likely	Substantial	Medium			2016 /17	Likely	Substantial	Medium		Bob Greenland	
			2017 /18	Likely	Substantial	Medium			2017 /18	Possible	Substantial	Medium			

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			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			
							new Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise website. By September 2015 32,900 premises in Monmouthshire have been enabled with high speed fibre broadband.								
9	Reductions in our workforce due to budgetary pressures will impact on our capacity to deliver transformational change and improve performance.	<p>- Our people are central to the success of our council and county. Organisational culture impacts on our ability to address future challenges and make sustained improvements in areas that require it.</p> <p>- Continued economic constraint and local government reform can impact on staff morale and service objectives.</p> <p>-The number of employees has reduced in recent years, the head count at 31st March 2015 is 3,849.</p> <p>- Corporate self-evaluation identified we need to do more to support staff</p> <p>- A range of services have identified risks to their capacity for service delivery.</p>	2015/16	Possible	Substantial	Medium	<p>The people and organisational development strategy was further developed following engagement with staff and was subsequently focussed on developing people within and outside the organisation.</p> <p>The Monmouthshire Minds group consisting of 60 members of staff were established to enable us to “test” the meaningfulness of the strategy; helping disseminate and promote involvement and publicise the staff survey.</p> <p>A staff survey has been completed and the findings used to inform the action plan as part of the People and Organisation Development Strategy.</p> <p>Based on feedback received, the staff appraisal process, check in check out, is being reviewed and further developed.</p>	<p>- Continue to engage with staff on the People and Organisational Development Strategy to ensure the strategy continues to focus on addressing identified needs.</p> <p>-Take forward the activities in the programme plan of the strategy which brings together the many facets of people and organisational development we run to provide support and development for people whether they are inside or outside of our organisation.</p> <p>- Implement the updated staff appraisal process, check in check out, across the organisation.</p>	2015/16	Possible	Substantial	Medium	Peter Davies	Phil Murphy	Strong Communities
			2016/17	Possible	Substantial	Medium			2016/17	Possible	Substantial	Medium			
			2017/18	Possible	Substantial	Medium			2017/18	Unlikely	Substantial	Low			
10	Not having appropriate governance mechanisms does not make it easy for communities to work with us when we are co-delivering and co-developing services which will impact on our	<p>Concerns on overlapping and complicated community governance structures have led to some dissatisfaction amongst community stakeholders.</p> <p>There is a recognised disconnect between the process and</p>	2015/16	Possible	Substantial	Medium	A community governance review has been completed. A members seminar was held to discuss the suggestions in the Community Governance Review.	Council to consider and agree the community governance action plan endorsed by Cabinet in October 2015 to clarify structures and align process and delivery frameworks to support community governance. Take the actions from the review to	2015/16	Possible	Substantial	Medium	Kellie Beirne / Will McLean	Phil Hobson	Strong Communities
			2016/17	Possible	Substantial	Medium			2016/17	Possible	Substantial	Medium			
			2017/18	Possible	Substantial	Medium	A volunteer coordinator was appointed and is leading the		2017/18	Unlikely	Substantial	Low			

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigation already undertaken	Future Actions and timescales	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Service & Risk Owner	Cabinet Member	Select Committee
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level			
Page 11	shared ability to deliver sustainable and resilient communities.	<p>delivery frameworks set up to support community governance.</p> <p>The Council works collaboratively to deliver a variety of services and is increasingly considering alternative delivery models to sustain services. The council has already agreed an approach to involving volunteers and community organisations.</p>					<p>council's <i>A County That Serves</i> volunteering programme that aims to support and enable volunteers.</p> <p>As part of the budget setting process a budget mandate proposal to develop a 'Local Fund' across the county into which Town and Community Councils can make a contribution to sustaining the services they feel are most important to the wellbeing of their towns has been developed.</p>	<p>each locality for further development and consideration reflecting local needs and priorities.</p> <p>Continue to implement the "A County That Serves volunteering programme"</p> <p>Continue to implement the volunteer tool kit to clarify information, procedures and processes on volunteering</p>							
	11 new	The current configuration of the recycling service becomes unviable because of legislation requirements and financial constraints.	<p>Monmouthshire does not currently collect recycling in line with the preferred Welsh Government method.</p> <p>The review of the existing Welsh Government environmental grant worth £1.9m to the service could be cut by 50% in 2016/17.</p> <p>An Increase in recycling costs, the potential Welsh Government grant reduction and growth in waste tonnages means the waste service has an existing £1.4 million total pressure modelled in the Medium Term Financial plan over 2016/17 and 2017/18.</p>	2015/16	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	<p>A review of the Monmouthshire recycling service is currently being finalised. The initial findings of the review presented to cabinet in December 2014 identified that the service was currently compliant with EU regulations but that further work over 2015 will be undertaken to determine the long term recycling strategy and compliance with EU legislation and Welsh Government policy.</p> <p>On-going liaison with Welsh Government on the Environmental Grant funding, its importance to the service and positive impact it makes on the long term strategy.</p>	<p>To complete the recycling review report to determine the Council's long term recycling strategy and submit for Select Committee Scrutiny in January 2016 and cabinet approval in March 2016.</p> <p>To continue to liaise with Welsh Government on Environmental Grant funding.</p>	2015/16	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	Rachael Jowitt	Bryan Jones
			2016/17	Likely	Substantial	Medium			2016/17	Likely	Substantial	Medium			
			2017/18	Likely	Substantial	Medium			2017/18	Likely	Substantial	Medium			

Risk Matrix

The Council uses a 'traffic light' system of Red/Amber/Green associated with High/Medium/Low. A copy of the full policy and guidance is available to staff and members on [The Hub](#).

Impact/Severity	major	Low	Medium	High	High
	substantial	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	moderate	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	minor	Low	Low	Low	Low
		Unlikely	possible	Likely	Almost certain
		Likelihood			

ⁱ Recent figures obtained from the 'Get Monmouthshire On Line'

SUBJECT: Children's Services Quarter 2 Performance

MEETING: Children and Young People Select Committee

DATE: 15th December 2015

DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide members with a report card that considers quarter 2 performance in children's social services.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report card for Children's Services provides a line of sight between our performance and council's priority of support for vulnerable people.
- 2.2 The report draws on a range of measures, the majority of these are part of the national performance measurement framework.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members should use this report and the associated indicators to scrutinise whether services are being delivered in line with expectations and are contributing to the agreed outcomes.
- 3.2 Members should identify any areas of underperformance or concerns that require further investigation.

4 KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The report card uses a narrative format alongside graphs to show how the service is performing using a range of measures from the initial referral through to what care leavers are doing when they turn nineteen. It is supplemented by two appendices:
- Appendix 1 contains national performance indicators showing how we have performed over time and compared to other council's in Wales.
 - Appendix 2 contains a broader range of measures including local data, Wales averages are available for these measures but we are unable to publish performance for other authorities individually
- 4.2 The number of looked after children has increased from 108 at the end of 2014/15 to 121 at the end of quarter 2. Over the same period the number of children on the child protection register has declined from 49 to 41.
- 4.3 Children's Services continue to focus on four key National performance indicators where significant improvements were made last year. These are:

	Q2	
	2014/15	2015/16
SCC/011b – Initial assessments where the child is seen alone	57.4%	43.2%
SCC/016 – Child in need reviews	85.2%	59.5%
SCC/025 – LAC statutory visits	84.5%	80.6%
SCC/041a – Reviews of pathway plans	98%	100%

- 4.4 Performance in three of the four key indicators is lower at Quarter 2 than at the end of 2014-15. Charts 2, 3, 7 and 8 in the main body of the report show rolling-year data for these indicators.
- 4.5 Improvements have been made in 2 of the 3 indicators measuring the timeliness of the children protection process. The timeliness of initial child protection conferences and first core groups have both improved since last year but the timeliness of child protection reviews has decreased.
- 4.6 At the end of quarter 2, seven looked after children have had a non-transitional school moves (SCC/002), compared to 15 in the whole of last year. Continuing at this level would produce year-end performance slightly lower than 2014/15 when we were 21st in Wales. The service manager has confirmed that most (but not all) moves are due to children moving into long-term placements.
- 4.7 Two looked after children had 3 or more placements (SCC/004) during 2014/15. By the end of quarter 2 this year two children have had 3 or more placements, a further 8 children have had two placements so we are likely to exceed last year's total.
- 4.8 Three care leavers have turned 19 by quarter 2 and are in touch with social services (SCC/033d). Four more will turn 19 in the remaining 6 months. At present, of those four, two appear to be in contact meaning our likely year end position is 71% (5/7), down from 88.9% last year.
- 4.9 Of the three care leavers who are 19, one is in suitable accommodation (SCC/033e). Of the remaining two in touch who will turn 19 later in the year, both are currently in suitable accommodation. Our year end position is expected to be 60% (3/5,) a decrease from 87.5% in 2014/15.
- 4.10 Of the three care leavers who are 19, one is in education, training or work (SCC/033f). Of the remaining two in touch who will turn 19 later in the year, one is currently in education, training or work so our year end position is expected to be 40% (2/5), compared to 25% last year when we were lowest in Wales.

AUTHOR

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Quarter 2 2015/16 Performance Report

Council Priority: Protecting the Most Vulnerable in Society	Single Integrated Plan Outcome: Nobody's Left Behind
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Why we focus on this	Safeguarding vulnerable people is one of our council priorities. Children's services have a number of performance indicators covering service processes and outcomes for children. The National Performance Indicators are highlighted in the 'How are we performing?' and 'How do we compare with other areas' sections and are supplemented throughout the report with Service Improvement Data.
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What progress are we making?

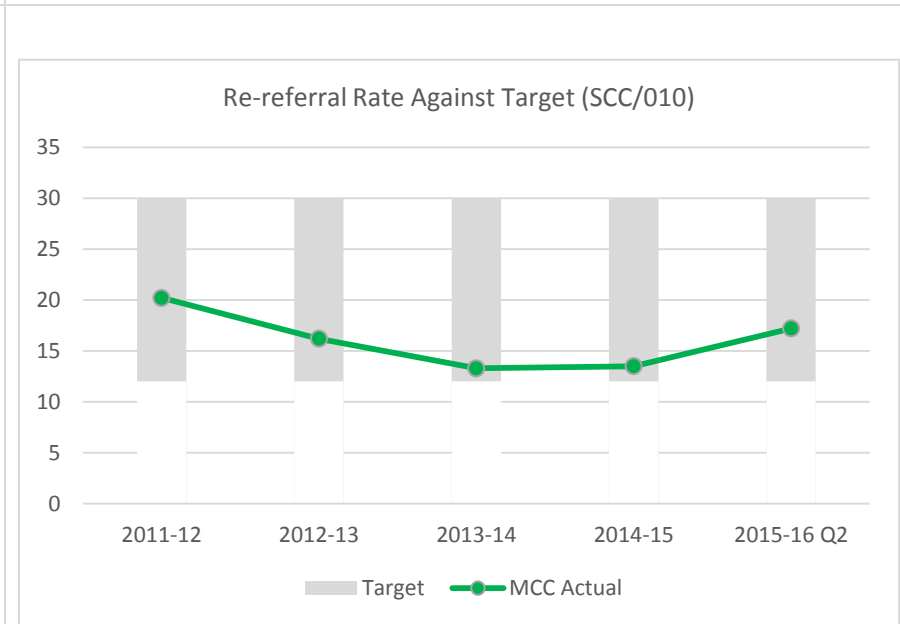


Chart 1 – re-referrals against target range

Referrals

Children's services took 163 referrals on 159 children during the first six months of 2015/16. Of these, a decision was made within one working day on 97.5% (SCC/006), lower than our target of 99.2%.

17.2% of the referrals taken were re-referrals within one year (SCC/010). Under guidance from CSSIW we set our target as an appropriate range, if re-referrals are high it could indicate cases being closed before necessary action is complete, if the re-referral rate is low it might suggest cases being held open longer than necessary.

The total caseload across Children's Services in September was 563, comparable with 544 in March 2015.

Service Comments

There were four referrals with data validation issues in respect of a decision being made within one working day, which have now been corrected. Re-referrals remain within the acceptable range of the target.

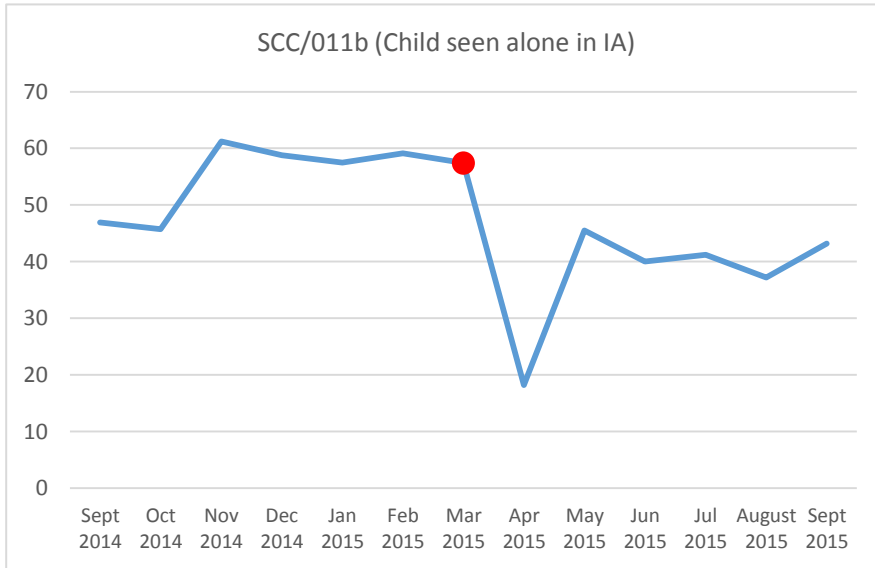


Chart 2: The percentage of children seen alone in initial assessment

Assessments

Following referral, children receive an initial assessment which should be a brief assessment to establish any necessary further action. 82.6% of initial assessments were completed within 7 working days (SCC/042), meeting our target of 82.2%.

During the initial assessment 92.6% of children were seen by the social worker (SCC/011a) and of these, 43.2% are seen alone (SCC/011b). It is not necessary for every child to be seen alone, in some cases it is not appropriate and sometimes children prefer to speak to a social worker with someone else present. Last year a focus on how we recorded this data increased our reported performance from 33.2% (2013/14) to 57.4% (2014/15), see Chart 2. We continue to monitor this to ensure our recording is accurate and where children are not seen alone there is an appropriate reason.

A core assessment follows an initial assessment if it is determined that a more detailed assessment is necessary. 77.0% of core assessments are completed within 35 working days which is a decrease on our 2014/15 performance which was 84.7%.

Service Comments

Children seen not seen alone continues to be monitored by the Service Manager on a monthly basis to ensure that there is an appropriate reason.

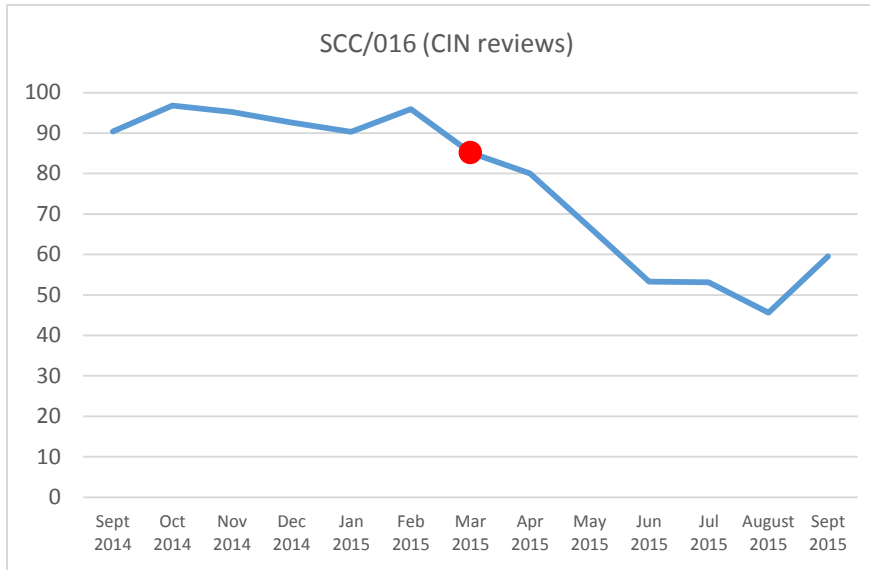


Chart 3: The percentage of Children in Need reviews undertaken on time

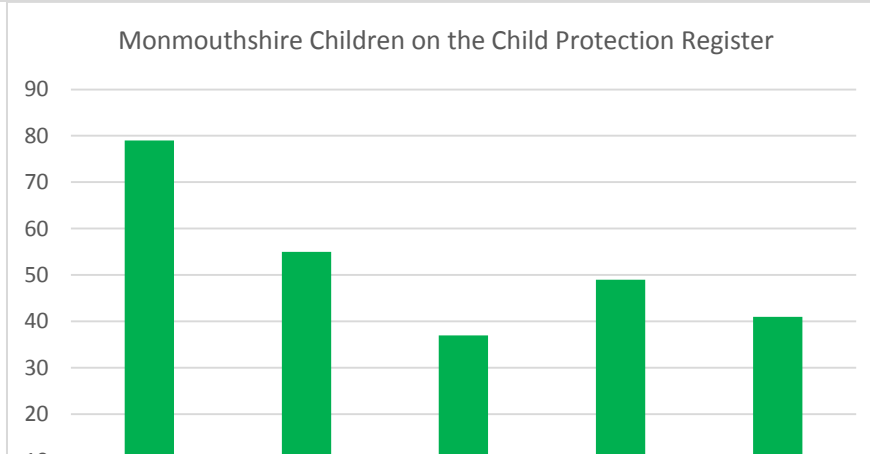
Children in Need

Following assessment, children are deemed ‘children in need’ if they will benefit from services and ongoing involvement with a social worker. We have identified the timely delivery of reviews of children in need as an area we need to improve performance. 59.5% of children in need were reviewed on time (SCC/016), this is a decrease from our year end position of 85.2% (see chart 3).

71.5% of children in need are allocated to a social worker (SCC/013(a)iii), 15.3% were allocated to other members of staff such as occupational therapists or support workers and the remainder were unallocated.

Service Comments

We are currently reviewing the way in which the reviews have been recorded to establish if there is a recording issue. Workers have also been reminded pre-planning reviews in a timely way and that reviews are considered to be late even if they are recorded one day late.



Child Protection

The number of children on the child protection dropped from 49 at the end of 2014/15 to 41 at the end of Quarter 2.

Where children are at risk of harm, child protection procedures are followed. A strategy discussion is held when there is cause to suspect that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. A strategy discussion enables Children’s Services and police to share information with other relevant agencies (such as education and health) and decide on the next course of action. 90.5% of initial child protection conferences were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion (SCC/014), an improvement from last year’s 75%.

Chart 4: Child Protection Numbers

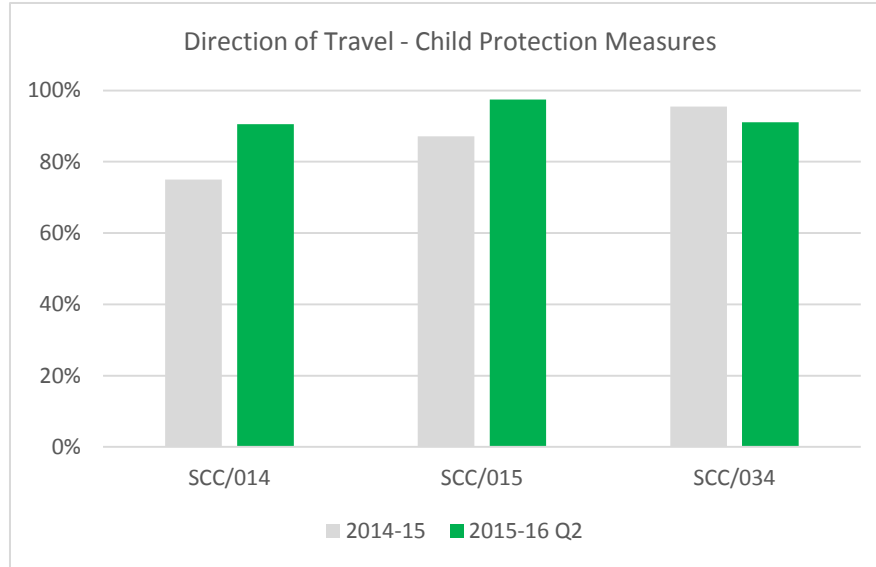


Chart 5: Change in Child Protection Measures from 2014/15 to Q2

At the initial child protection conference a decision is made whether or not to add the child to the child protection register. If the child is added to the register, the first core group meeting should take place within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference. 97.4% of first core groups were undertaken within this timescale (SCC/015), improving on last year's total of 87.1%.

Child protection review conferences should assess progress of the child protection plan and the continued risk of abuse or neglect. The first review conference should be held within three months of the initial child protection conference. Further reviews should be held at least six monthly while the child remains on the child protection register. 91.1% of child protection reviews have been held on time during the first 6 months of the year (SCC/034), below our 100% target.

100% of children on the child protection register are allocated to a social worker (SCC/013(a)i). The average number of months that children spend on the child protection register has dropped consistently as shown in the table below:

2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Q2
11.8	7.7	6.5	5.7

Service Comments

There has been a decrease in numbers of children registered during the period with 5 large sibling groups being de-registered. The numbers of children on the register in the last 2 years is showing no marked trend.

There has been a steady decrease in the numbers of children registered for longer than a year (from 56% at the end of 2013 to 10% as of 30th September 2015). This correlates to the appointment of a permanent child protection coordinator;

increased training around Child Protection Planning; and the implementation of multi-agency supervision within the authority.

Children are removed from the register when they are no longer at risk of significant harm or when they become looked after. 47 children have been de-registered in this period, 9 of whom became looked after children. This means that 38 children were de-registered because the family had successfully engaged with the child protection process.

We have been working on timeliness of ICPC which is reflected in the figures. We do need to sustain this, however, low registration figures and large sibling groups can have an impact on this. Sometimes we will still take a decision that it is better to be a day or two out than not have the right people around the table.

Taken overall the performance information indicates that once children are registered they are actively managed and monitored and that there are mechanisms in place to identify and support cases which may be at risk of drift.

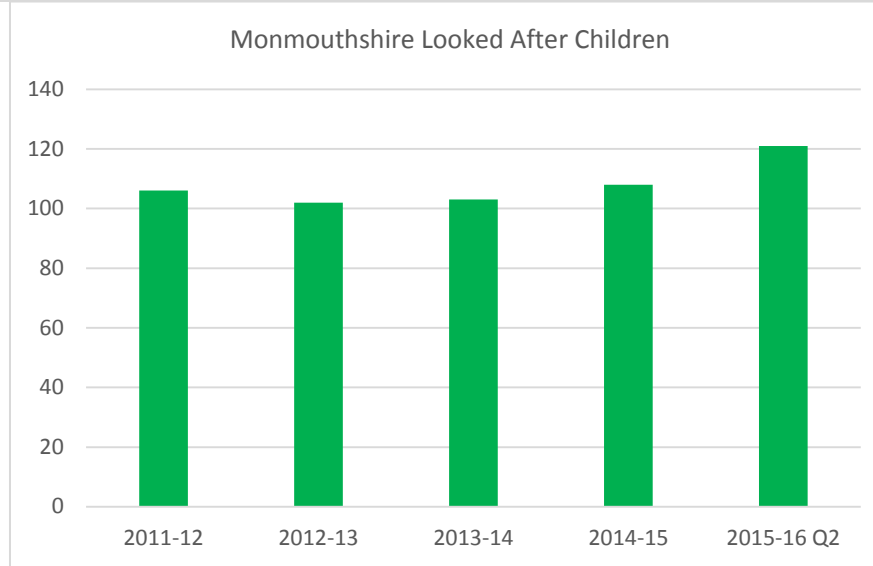


Chart 6: LAC Numbers

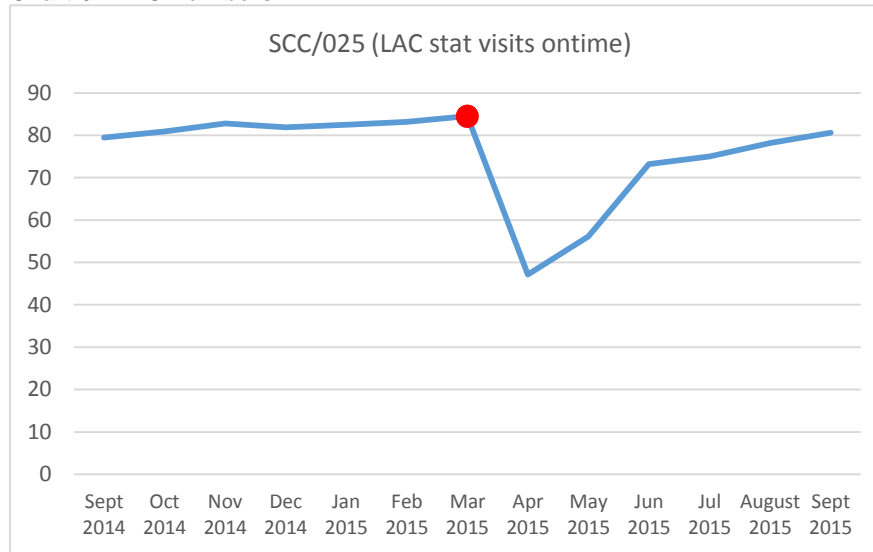


Chart 7: Percentage of LAC Statutory Visits undertaken on time

Looked After Children

The number of looked after children has increased from 108 at the end of 2014/15 to 121 at the end of quarter 2 (see chart 6).

93.3% of children becoming looked after had a plan in place at the time of entry into care (SCC/001a). 100% of looked after children had a plan for permanence in place by the time of their second review which is due within 4 months of the child becoming looked after (SCC/001b). All looked after children were allocated to a social worker (SCC/013(a)ii)

Social workers conduct statutory visits to looked after children, the timetable of these visits depend on when children enter new placements. 80.6% of statutory visits to looked after children were conducted on time (SCC/025), this is a decrease from year end last year but a slight improvement on our position at Q2 2014/15, see Chart 7. This is a key area of focus for us, last year we achieved a 19% increase but were still bottom quartile. Our target of 90% is to get us to a median position in Wales.

Reviews of looked after children are conducted by the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) and should ensure the care plan for each child continues to be appropriate and that the child's needs are being met. 100% of LAC reviews were conducted on time (SCC/021).

Looked after children benefit from stability. At Quarter 2 1.7% of looked after children had 3 or more placements (SCC/004), this is likely to increase by the end of the year, exceeding our final 2014/15 figure of 1.9% which was the lowest in Wales.

10.3% of school age looked after children had a non-transitional school move in the year (SCC/002). If we continue at this rate, we will be slightly lower than last year when Monmouthshire's rate was one of the highest in Wales at

21.4%.

Educational outcomes for looked after children are measured at key stages 2 to 4. 57.1% of looked after children achieved the Core Subject Indicator at key stage 2 (SCC/035) and 66.7% at key stage 3 (SCC/036). When compared to the wider Monmouthshire pupil population of 92.5% at key stage 2 and 90.8% at key stage 3 the gap in achievement is apparent. However, low numbers of looked after children in each year group mean overall percentage achievements are volatile.

The average point score for looked after children (SCC/037) was expected to be lower than last year based on the 9 children in this year's cohort and our target was set accordingly. Provisional data shows a decrease from 308 on average in 2014/15 to 232 in 2015/16.

Service Comments

The Service is currently undertaking some work to review children who have been admitted to care between April-September so that we can try and gain a better understanding of issues that may be affecting this increase. We will consider whether different practice, resources or interventions could assist in reducing the numbers safely. The significant rise in looked after children does place additional pressure on all aspects of the service.

The Service is continuing to work on improving our performance in relation to LAC statutory visits. The high numbers of looked after children as well as the high number and turnover of agency staff do add to the challenges of achieving this. Our new IT system, PLANT, has recently been implemented and we expect this to support staff in better planning and easier recording of their work.

The children who have had a school move have been reviewed on an individual basis. Of the seven children

		<p>affected five moved schools in a very planned way because they are now settled in their long-term placement and it had been agreed that attending a local school was not in their best interests. One child is statemented and the school decided they were unable to meet his needs and he is now being educated in a specialist school. Unfortunately one child did move schools because the only placement available for him was too far from his school.</p>
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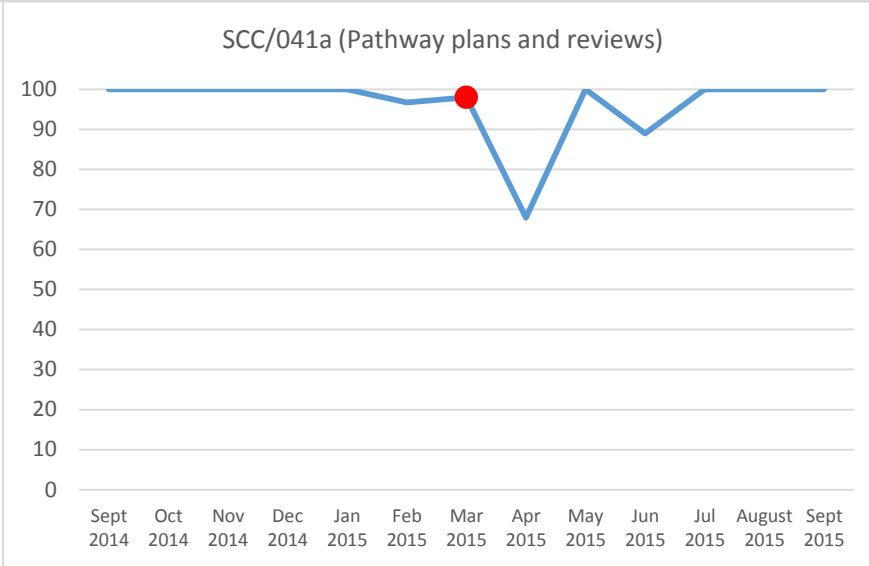


Chart 8: Percentage of current pathway plans

Care Leavers

Local authorities have a responsibility to assist children to prepare for, and transition to leaving care. From age 16 looked after children should have a Pathway Plan and access to a personal advisor. These continue as the children become care leavers until the age of 21 or longer if they remain in education.

We aim to stay in contact with care leavers and support their transition and stability into adulthood. All three 19 year old care leavers were in contact at Quarter 2 (SCC/033d), although this is projected to drop later in the year. One out of three care leavers were in suitable non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19 (SCC/033e). One out of three care leavers at the age of 19 were in education, training or employment (SCC/033f). This is an area we need to improve on and is an action in our Improvement Plan. This requires whole authority support to provide opportunities for work experience and apprenticeships.

At Quarter 2 all the required reviews of pathway plans had taken place (SCC/041a), we need to continue to focus on this until the end of the year so that each care leaver has a current plan. See Chart 8 for details.

Service Comments

The numbers of care leavers are relatively small and so small numbers do result in large swings in performance. The Service has just configured itself to have a group of practitioners who will work together as a “virtual” 16+ team. We have recruited practitioners who are committed and have specific skills for working with this age group. Two of the main priorities for these practitioners is to work with partners to develop a broader range of accommodation for care leavers and support for accessing education, training and

		employment. There are some early indicators that as a result of the Chief Executive's intervention that the Local Authority and partners are considering training and employment opportunities for care leavers.
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Collaboration/ Partners we are working with	South East Wales Adoption Service, National Adoption Service, Gwent Police, Education, Youth Offending Service, Action for Children and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.
What we have spent on this objective	<p>The total budget for Children Services 2015/16 is approximately £8.2m. Of the total Children Services budget, around £4.8m relates to LAC, which equates to nearly 60%.</p> <p>At Quarter 2 Children's Services were £1.18m overspent after reserve funding. A large element of expenditure is within external residential placements with the overall external placements budget supporting 64 children. The number of looked after children has increased this year. The service is experiencing significant staff issues resulting in the use of agency staff as well as additional capacity.</p> <p>A number of work streams are being followed in relation to recruitment and cost reductions. For example, we are working to implement in house contact centres, which will reduce costs of renting external facilities for contact and venue costs to host child protection conferences and LAC reviews etc.</p> <p>Prevention is being considered along with other work streams to increase effective services for families to reduce the risk of them coming to the attention of Children's Services. There is also work being developed to consider how to effectively support newly qualified social workers in the service, which will assist with a focus on children at the child in need level of support to reduce the numbers of children escalating further into statutory intervention.</p>

Appendix 1

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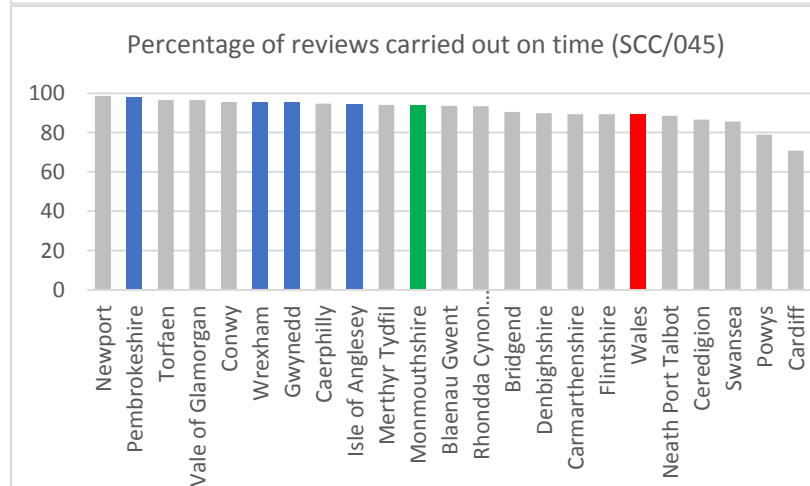
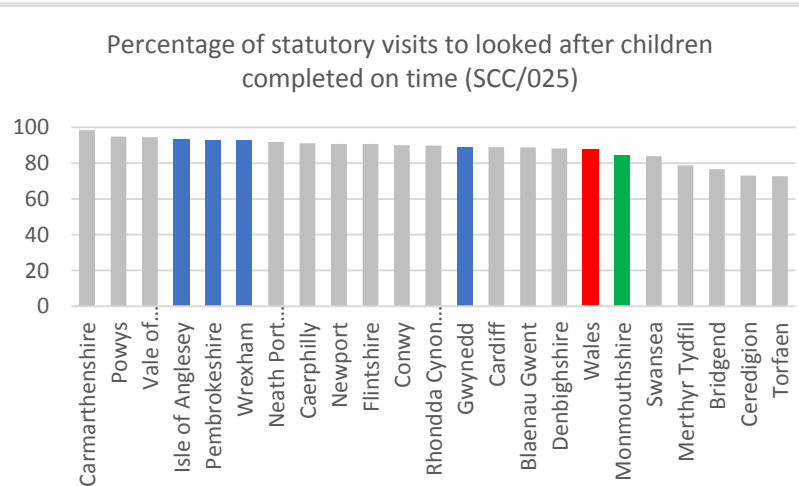
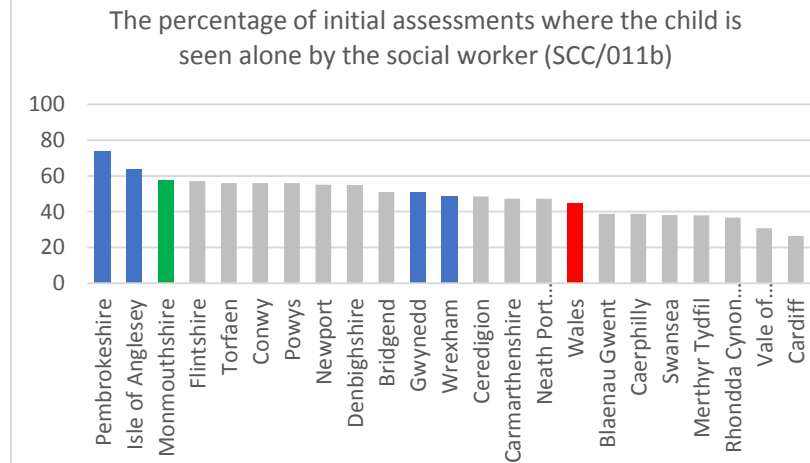
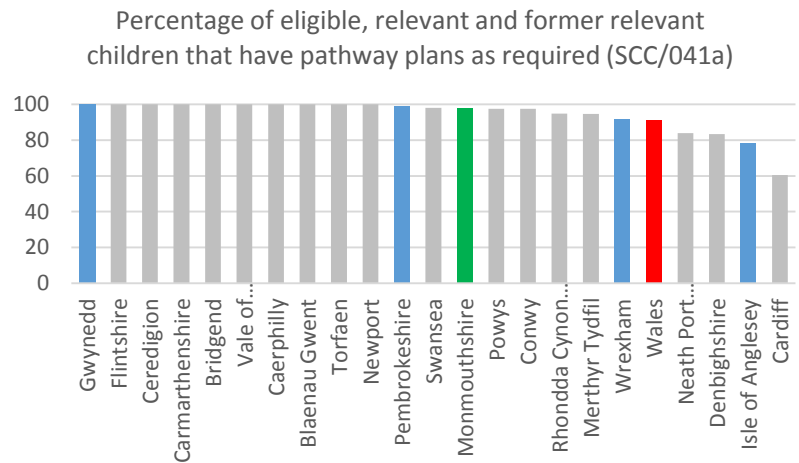
How are we performing?

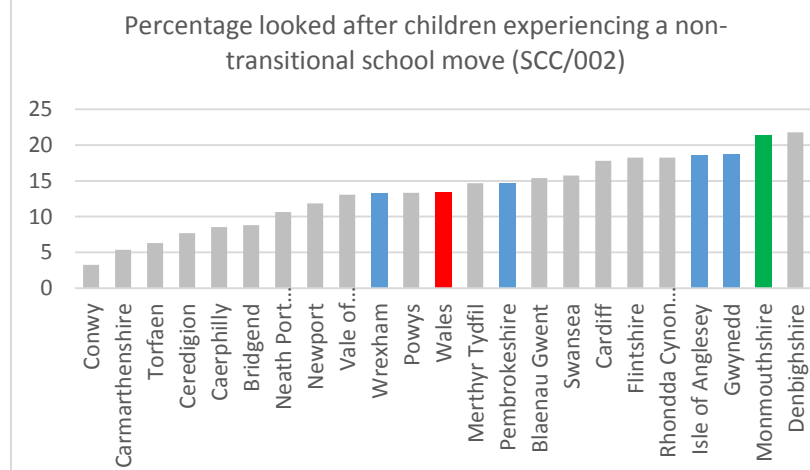
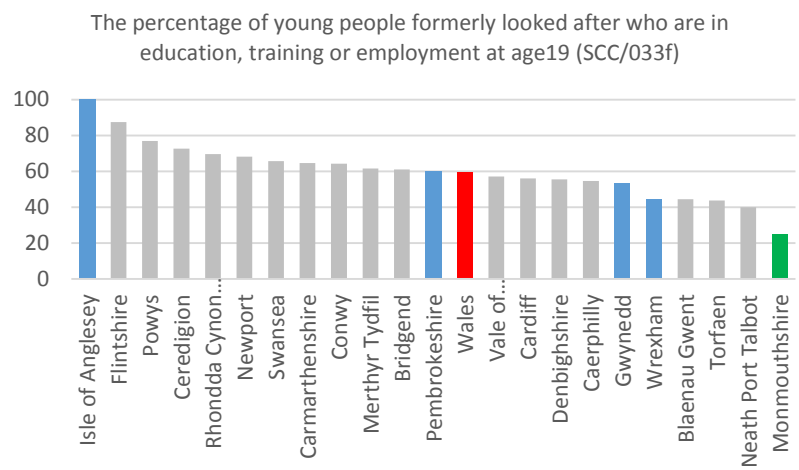
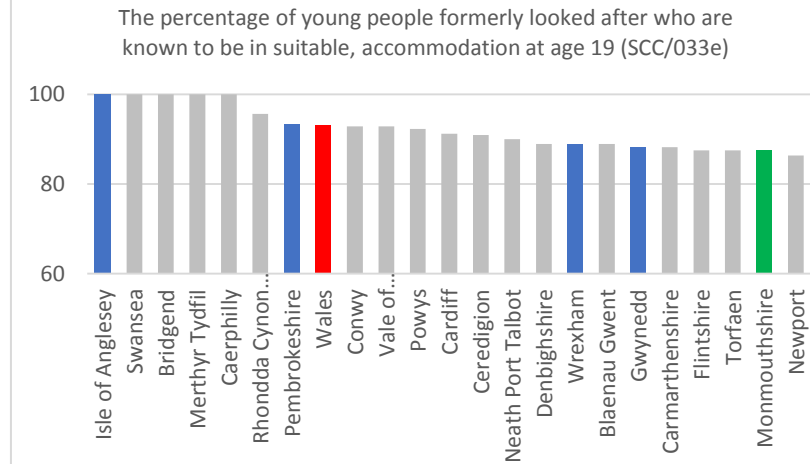
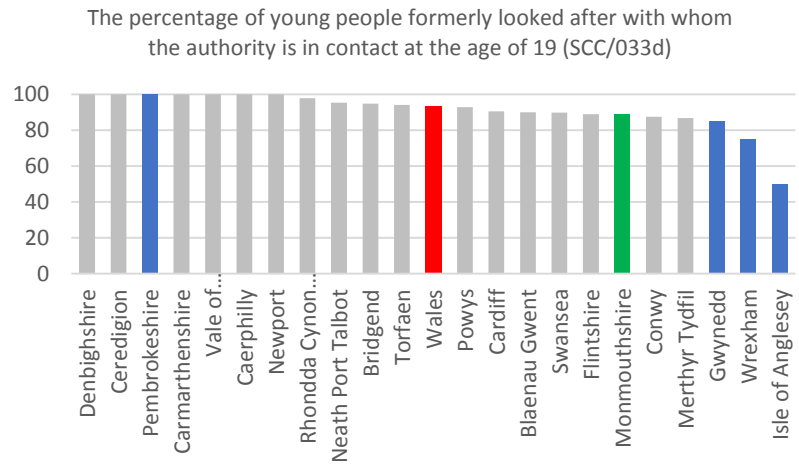
National Performance Indicators:

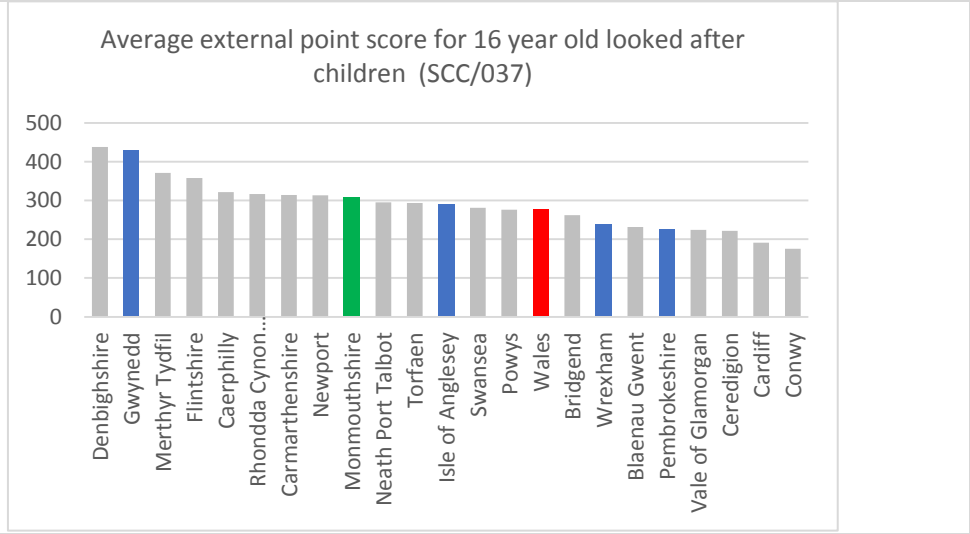
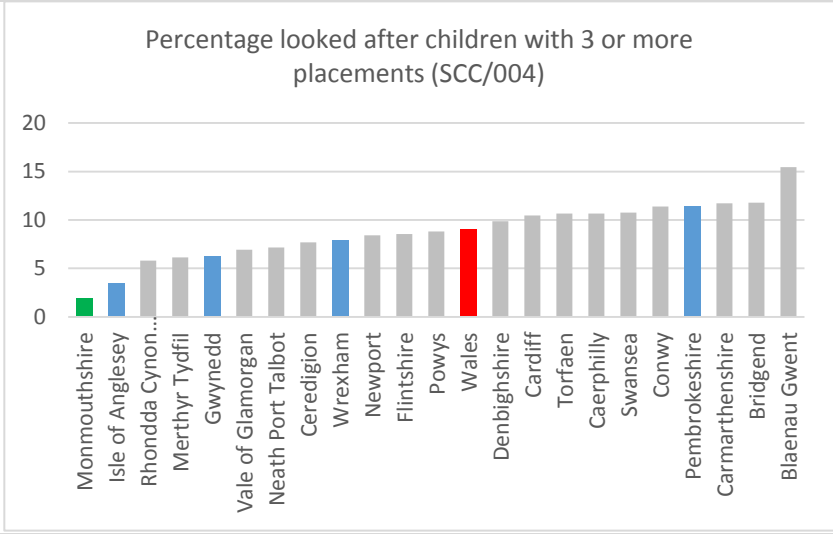
Performance Indicators	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Q2	2015/16 Target	Ranking in Wales
How Much?						
Number of Looked After Children	102	103	108	121	N/A	N/A
Number of Children on the Child Protection Register	55	37	49	41	N/A	N/A
Percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required (SCC/041a)	68.4% 54/79	73.3% 44/60	98% 50/51	100%	98%	13
How Well?						
Percentage of initial assessments where the child is seen alone (SCC/011b)	22.4% 81/362	33.2% 93/280	57.4% 213/371	43.2% 64/148	60%	3
Percentage of statutory visits to looked after children completed on time (SCC/025)	66.9%	65.3%	84.5%	80.6%	90%	17
Percentage of reviews carried out on time (SCC/045)	59.5%	86.1%	93.9%	84.7%	95%	11
The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19 (SCC/033d)	88.9% 8/9	92.3% 12/13	88.9% 8/9	100% 3/3	100%	19
Is anyone better off?						
Percentage looked after children with 3 or more placements (SCC/004)	2.0% 2/101	10.7% 11/103	1.9% 2/108	1.7% 2/121	6%	1
Percentage looked after children experiencing a non-transitional school move (SCC/002)	10.2% 6/59	11.0% 8/73	21.4% 15/70	10.3% 7/68	10%	21
The percentage of young people formerly looked after who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19 (SCC/033e)	100% 8/8	91.7% 11/12	87.5% 7/8	33.3% 1/3	100%	19
The percentage of young people formerly looked after who are in education, training or employment at age 19 (SCC/033f)	25.0% 2/8	58.3% 7/12	25% 2/8	33.3% 1/3	75%	22
Average external point score for 16 year old looked after children (SCC/037)	269 1614/6	222 1773/8	308 2156/7	232 2088/9	147	9
The average number of months that children spend on the child protection register	11.8	7.7	6.5	5.7	N/A	N/A

National Performance Indicators – How we compare:

In the charts below, Monmouthshire is highlighted in green, Wales average in red and the most statistically similar authorities in blue:







Appendix 2 – Key Children’s Services Indicators

How much did we do?										
Ref	Description	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	Q2 2015/16	2014/15 Wales Av	2014/15 Quartile in Wales	Direction of travel	2015/16 Target	Target Met
SCC/041(a) (NSI)	The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required	68.4% 54/79	73.3% 44/60	98% 50/51	100%	91.2%	Lower Middle	↑	98%	✓
SCC/001(b)	For those children looked after whose second review (due at 4 months) was due in the year, the percentage with a plan for permanence at the due date	100%	100%	100%	100%	94.7%	Top	-	100%	✓
SCC/013(a)i	The percentage of open cases of children with an allocated social worker - on the child protection register	100%	100%	100%	100%	99.9%	Top	-	100%	✓
SCC/013(a)ii	The percentage of open cases of children with an allocated social worker -children looked after	100%	100%	99.8%	100%	95.1%	Lower Middle	-	100%	✓
SCC/013(a)iii	The percentage of open cases of children with an allocated social worker - children in need	82.0%	79.0%	80.6%	71.5%	77.7%	Upper Middle	↓	77.5%	✘
LAC	Number of children looked after at the end of the period	102	103	108	121	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CPR	Number of children on the child protection register at the end of the period	55	37	49	41	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

How well did we do it?

Ref	Description	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	Q2 2015/16	2014/15 Wales Av	2014/15 Quartile in Wales	Direction of travel	2015/16 Target	Target Met
SCC/011(b) (NSI)	The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker.	22.4% 81/362	33.2% 93/280	57.4% 213/371	43.2% 64/148	44.8%	Top	↓	60%	✘
SCC/033(d) (NSI)	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19.	88.9% 8/9	92.3% 12/13	88.9% 8/9	100% 3/3	93.3%	Bottom	↑	100%	✓
SCC/025 (PAM)	The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations.	66.9%	65.3%	84.5%	80.6%	87.7%	Bottom	↓	90%	✘
SCC/045 (PAM)	The percentage of reviews of looked after children, children on the Child Protection Register and children in need carried out in line with the statutory timetable	59.5%	86.1%	93.9%	84.7%	88.9%	Upper Middle	↓	95%	✘
SCC/001(a)	The percentage of first placements of looked after children during the year that began with a care plan in place	Not submitted 2012/13	83.0% 44/53	100% 37/37	93.3% 28/30	92.2%	Top	↓	100%	✘
SCC/006	The percentage of referrals during the year on which a decision was made within 1 working day	93.9% 399/425	99.0% 411/415	99.2% 478/482	97.5% 159/163	97.0%	Lower Middle	↓	99.2%	✘
SCC/011(a)	The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the Social Worker	85.6% 310/362	95.7% 268/280	97.3% 361/371	92.6% 137/148	78.0%	Top	↓	97.5%	✘
SCC/014	The percentage of initial child protection conferences due in the year which were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion	84.8% 56/66	93.4% 57/61	75% 57/76	90.5% 38/42	92.6%	Bottom	↑	93.2%	✘
SCC/015	The percentage of initial core group meetings due in the year which were held	34.0% 16/47	96.2% 51/53	87.1% 54/62	97.4% 38/39	91.1%	Bottom	↑	91.5%	✓

	within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference									
SCC/016	The percentage of reviews of child in need plans carried out in accordance with the statutory timetable.	19.5% 89/456	57.5% 104/181	85.2% 190/223	59.5% 72/121	77.9	Lower Middle	↓	86%	✘
SCC/021	The percentage of looked after children reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year	100% 296/296	99.6% 284/285	100% 281/281	100% 172/172	95.5%	Top	-	100%	✓
SCC/034	The percentage of child protection reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year	90.5% 181/200	93.9% 155/165	95.5% 126/132	91.1% 72/79	98.0	Bottom	↓	100%	✘
SCC/042(a)	The percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 working days	76.5% 277/362	76.4% 214/280	76.8% 285/371	82.6% 123/149	75.9%	Lower Middle	↑	82.2%	✓
SCC/042(b)	The average time taken to complete initial assessments that took longer than 7 working days to complete	20 1643/84	20 1298/66	21 1,842/86	23 607/26	20.5%	Lower Middle	↓	15	✘
SCC/043(a)	The percentage of required core assessments completed within 35 working days	81.3% 74/91	86.7% 78/90	84.7% 138/163	77.0% 57/74	80.7%	Upper Middle	↓	86.7%	✘
SCC/043(b)	The average time taken to complete those required core assessments that took longer than 35 days	78 1326/17	66 794/12	56 1405/25	63 1075/17	62.5%	Lower Middle	↓	54	✘

Is anyone better off?

Ref	Description	2012/13 Actual	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	Q2 2015/16	2014/15 Wales Av	2014/15 Quartile in Wales	Direction of travel	2015/16 Target	Target Met
SCC/002 (NSI)	The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March	10.2% 6/59	11.0% 8/73	21.4% 15/70	10.3% 7/68	13.5%	Bottom	↑	10%	✘
SCC/004 (NSI)	The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year	2.0 2/101	10.7% 11/103	1.9% 2/108	1.7% 2/121	9.0%	Top	↓	6%	✓
SCC/033(e) (NSI)	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19.	100% 8/8	91.7% 11/12	87.5% 7/8	33% 1/3	93.1%	Bottom	↓	100% 8/8	✘
SCC/033(f) (NSI)	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at age 19.	25.0% 2/8	58.3 7/12	25% 2/8	33% 1/3	59.5%	Bottom	↑	75% 6/8	✘
SCC/037 (NSI)	The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting	269 1614/6	222 1773/8	308 2156/7	232 2088/9	276	Upper Middle	↓	147	✓
SCC/010	The percentage of referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months	16.2% 69/425	13.3% 55/415	13.5% 65/482	17.2% 28/163	21.1%	Top	↓	12-30%	✓
SCC/035	The percentage of looked after children eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment	80% 4/5	0% 0/3	66.7% 2/3	57.1% 4/7	60.0%	Upper Middle	↓	57% 4/7	✓
SCC/036	The percentage of looked after children eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 3 achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment	33.33 2/6	50.0% 3/6	57.1% 4/7	66.7% 4/6	43.1%	Top	↑	66% 4/6	✓

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Performance Evaluation Report 2014–15

Monmouthshire County Council
Social Services

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

Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2014 - 2015

Local Authority: Monmouthshire County Council

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

1. Summary

- 1.1. The council is making good progress with a transformation in practice agenda and is well placed to meet the requirements as set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (SSWBW Act). The council has concentrated on moving forward an ambitious agenda in adult's services. This has been more difficult in children's services where the department has been working hard to deliver on the post inspection action plan. This was developed to address the recommendations in the inspection undertaken by CSSIW in children's services in November 2014 where a number of areas of weakness were found. The action plan also identified the areas for improvement set out in last year's Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF).
- 1.2. Progress has been made in a number of areas to date. In particular the council has made improvements around statutory visits to looked after children and the timeliness of reviews for children in need as well as recruitment to permanent posts. However, there is still a journey of improvement that children's services will need to continue over the next year.
- 1.3. The council works well with partners across both adult and children's services to deliver better outcomes in the most efficient and effective ways. In adult services, partnership arrangements with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) are mature at both strategic and operational levels. However, although work is progressing sometimes this needs to develop at a faster pace with renewed energy and clear objectives. The mental health integration work around the Listen Engage Act Participate (LEAP) project across the whole council is an example of this.
- 1.4. Performance in adult services has improved further in a number of key areas in particular in relation to delayed transfers of care which have decreased. Ongoing progress in reablement services is evident and is working effectively in the hubs where they have been implemented. However, whilst headway has been made, the pace of change to roll out

services overall more systematically across the whole council needs to increase in order to recalibrate services in an appropriate and timely way.

- 1.5. There is significant support corporately and from members who have a good understanding of the challenges facing social care. This is evidenced by the protection of budgets in Social Services in 2014-15 and the agreement reached for additional funding of £1.2million in children's services in order to deliver its statutory functions and safeguard children effectively. However, this will become more difficult in the future when there is a need to make significant savings across all services within the council.
- 1.6. The council acknowledge that whilst its citizens have high expectations of public services in the future services will need to be provided in a different way and not necessarily by the council. Greater emphasis will be placed on support being provided through community networks and localised support.

2. Response to last year's areas for improvement

Identified improvement last year	Progress in 2014-15
Take action in response to the areas for improvement highlighted in the looked after children inspection.	A post inspection action plan has been developed and is subject to ongoing monitoring at three monthly Head of Service (HOS) engagement meetings with CSSIW.
Work with health colleagues to ensure that children and young people with mental health needs receive appropriate CAMHS services to meet their needs.	Progress has been made in this area with a refreshed approach to working together which has strengthened the partnership arrangements between both organisations.
Put in place systems to evaluate the impact of work undertaken by the safeguarding and quality assurance unit to improve safeguarding arrangements in education.	Overall improvements have been made and safeguarding training has been delivered in education. This work is ongoing.
Review structure and practice in the Family Support Team to ensure concerns are picked up and addressed in a timely manner.	This is being progressed as part of the action plan developed in response to the children's services inspections undertaken which is subject to ongoing monitoring.
The council should improve performance in relation to looked after children statutory visits.	This has improved from 65% last year to 83% where looked after children are having statutory visits in accordance with the regulations.
Review practice in and performance in	A training programme has been

relation to looked after children and take appropriate action to improve in this area.	developed and is being rolled out to staff and regular audits are undertaken.
Ensure a Personal Educational Plan (PEP) is in place for all looked after children who require one.	The PEP's performance indicator has improved from 58% to 87% over the past year
Further improve on the completion of children in need reviews in accordance with the statutory timetable.	Reviews undertaken have improved significantly and have risen to 86%.
Ensure the council has good understanding of the level of needs of vulnerable and at risk looked after young people and its corporate parenting responsibilities.	The council has recruited two care leavers who job share as apprentices and are represented on the Corporate Parenting Panel. A Child and Care Council is planned.
Implement the corporate parenting strategy.	The council shows commitment to the role of Corporate Parenting which now has a higher profile within the authority. There is now a better understanding of roles and responsibilities of the group.

3. Visits and inspections undertaken during the year:

3.1. Site visits provide CSSIW with an opportunity to speak with people who receive services, their families and staff who manage and work in the services. During 2014-15, CSSIW undertook the following site visits, observations and engagement opportunities:

- South Monmouthshire Mental Health Team.
- Awayday, developing a new commissioning approach- "Turning the World Upside Down".
- Visit to FC4FC (Foster Carers Group).
- Attendance at Foster Care Panel Meeting.
- Meeting with Care Leavers Group.
- Meetings with Multi Agency providers.
- Attendance at Core Groups and Child Protection Conference.
- Attendance at three Children and Young People Select Committees.

- 3.2. CSSIW also met with senior officers of the council throughout the year to review Social Services performance and discuss progress with the areas for improvement identified in last year's performance evaluation. The council was helpful in its engagement with CSSIW and readily facilitated access to enable site visits to take place.
- 3.3. CSSIW undertook an inspection in children's services in November 2014. This was as a result of weaknesses found during a national themed inspection on looked after children and care leavers earlier in 2014. Inspections of regulated services run by the council and by independent operators were undertaken. This included reviews of the in house fostering service. Details on these are contained in published reports and available on CSSIW's website.

4. Areas for follow up by CSSIW next year:

- 4.1. A number of specific areas for improvement have been identified in the body of this report. The council's progress in relation to these will be discussed with the council during regular engagement meetings in the coming year. Specific areas for follow up will include:
 - On going monitoring of the post inspection implementation plan in children's services.
 - Visit to the contact team to consider front door services.
 - Visit to the Raglan Project to consider outcomes for people with dementia.
 - Visit/ meet with service users with a learning disability who are part of the My Day-My life Project.

5. Inspection and review plan for 2015 -16

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

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

Adults

Overview

- 6.1. In adult services the council's key priorities is to promote independence to allow people to remain in control of their own lives through community based solutions, as well as providing more focussed integrated reablement services where necessary. The emphasis for this year continues with a move away from a deficit focussed approach in favour of concentrating on people's strengths and assets and finding joint solutions through partnership arrangements and family support.
- 6.2. The council has made progress in the way in which it supports older people with dementia to continue to live fulfilled lives within their own communities through the Raglan Project. It currently provides care to fourteen people in a rural area which promotes a relationship based experience of receiving care that is focussed on the individual and what matters to them. This has replaced the existing home care service and the project has recruited five full time enablement assistant posts which are salaried. This has been important to provide reliability and consistency. CSSIW spoke with a member of the team who talked enthusiastically about the feeling of empowerment and autonomy in being able to provide a flexible and bespoke service to the people whom she supports. This pilot has been very successful and has won a social services accolade. The council are working towards extending the project to other areas commencing in October 2015.
- 6.3. Changes in practice and new ways of working will lead to more autonomy and less bureaucracy in social care. This will have an impact on the existing models of service delivery and a change in culture for all partners. Work has already been undertaken in adult services via a series of workshops to raise awareness about future approaches to supporting people. This has been further underpinned by a care competency framework to ensure the workforce working on the Raglan roll out has the key competencies to deliver the new approaches to service delivery. Ongoing discussions with health partners and the voluntary sector will be key to its continued success.
- 6.4. A number of staff including the head of service have undertaken comprehensive training in dementia care accredited through Dementia

Care Matters and the University of Surrey which is being rolled out to other staff across the department.

- 6.5. The three year commissioning strategy which outlined the council's intention to explore further innovative partnership arrangements with providers who share the same values and aspirations has moved on. Earlier this year the council launched its proposals for a new model of domiciliary care based on the principles of empowerment and a person led approach building on the success of this way of working in the Raglan project. Workshops held over several days were well attended by both existing and new providers. CSSIW attended and will be interested in monitoring the progress on this over the next year.
- 6.6. Services for people with learning disabilities include the "My Day, My Life" project which provides evidence of better outcomes for a number of people. Twenty people in the Abergavenny area have been part of the programme which is based on an individual being assisted to access community based activities. This provides better and more meaningful opportunities for people at their pace rather than attending traditional day services. Although this is a resource intensive and lengthy journey, it creates independence and self worth and is innovative in its approach. It is anticipated that this project will be rolled out to the Monmouth and Chepstow areas this year.
- 6.7. Performance in completing annual reviews for 2014-15 has improved from 82% to 85% being carried out on time, and is above the Wales average performance. As part of the organisation's transformation in practice and in anticipation of the SSWBW Act, the emphasis is on engaging more effectively with people during reviews with the accent being placed on what is important to the individual who use services. Reviews concentrate on looking at the individual's needs and aspirations rather than a starting point of reviewing how the existing service meets the needs. Although this is more time consuming it is recognised that the quality of life and better outcomes for individuals will be achieved.
- 6.8. A number of improvements in the processes to safeguard vulnerable adults have been made including additional resources and reshaping of the team so as to ensure timely responses to concerns and investigations. It is recognised that further work is needed and a new safeguarding system is currently being developed which is planned to be fully implemented by March 2016. CSSIW has worked positively with the safeguarding team around a number of individual and service concerns during the year.
- 6.9. The Gwent consortium works in partnership with the five former Gwent

authorities that share the same boundaries as ABUHB who lead the independent deprivation of liberties (DoLS) team. Proportionate to their respective populations the council and health board each receive relatively low levels of applications although Monmouthshire receive a higher proportion than two other neighbouring councils within the consortium. In 2013-14 ten applications were received in the local authority (there are no figures available for 2014-15.) More applications were made from the council's social services managed care homes than from all the independent sector care homes with commissioned places. This suggests that the level of awareness of potential deprivations of liberty may not be consistent across all providers particularly with regard to independent sector care home owners. The council will want to consider how to address this in the light of the Supreme Court Judgement.

- 6.10. The number of best interest assessors (BIA's) has fallen although the level of work will undoubtedly increase as a result of the Cheshire West judgement. This will need to be managed in order to meet the requirements of the legislation. Also, the local authority does not have any BIA's located within their assessment and care management teams which may be an opportunity lost as an expert resource to raise awareness of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and DoLS to ensure it is embedded in assessment and care management.
- 6.11. The council should consider ways in which it can assure itself that DoLS and MCA is fully embedded in everyday practice. In addition the council should consider examining its management arrangements to ensure there is no conflict of interest between its supervisory body and managing authority functions.

Key National Priorities (adults)

Preventative and early intervention services

- 6.12. The national policy focus on preventative and early intervention services sets a number of challenges for the council where there are ever increasing numbers of older people who have complex needs and onset dementia and who wish to remain in their local community. In Monmouthshire, there is a greater emphasis on promoting the wider community networks through community coordinators and a lesser dependency on statutory services unless specific support is required. This has led to a change in the way in which people are helped in surroundings that are familiar and important to them. One example of this is the development of services for people with dementia overall as well as creating a number of area based community networks such as the Friends of Raglan and Dingestow to support people locally.

- 6.13. Progress is being made in this area and this is confirmed by performance indicators which shows that Monmouthshire per 1,000 population have the lowest number of people living in care homes in Wales. In addition the number of people over 65 years per 1,000 population supported in the community decreased this year from 57 in 2013-14 to 53 in 2014-15 and is well below the Welsh average. In addition, the council report that 54% of people are returned to independence after reablement and can have their needs met through wider community opportunities. Feedback from service users about this service is very positive. It is important that progress continues to be made and independence supported.

Integration of health and social care services for older people with complex needs

- 6.14. Monmouthshire has well established integrated health and social care teams delivering integrated services. The frailty agenda has been incorporated into the integrated service model and this continues to focus on early intervention and helping people to remain independent. Integrated assessment is delivered by health and social care staff within these integrated teams. Training on outcomes based assessment and care and support planning has been delivered to some staff within these teams. As an example, Mardy Park continues with step up and step down support being applied in both the residential accommodation which is downsizing and within the wider community. Performance data indicates that the integrated model of service delivery continues to have an impact with less people requiring support in the community. In addition fewer people were delayed in being discharged from hospital with the rate of delayed transfers of care (DTC) reducing from 1.8 in 2013-14 to 1.4 in 2014-15. The rate of people per 1000 population supported in care homes remains stable at 11 compared to a Wales average of 19.
- 6.15. The Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership Board was established to oversee and direct the development of mental health, learning disabilities and specialist services across Gwent. Strategies were developed for adults with learning disabilities and mental health services in consultation with service users, their families and staff. The strategy set out a future direction for services focused on integrated person centred services that promote independence and inclusion. Local areas in Gwent are engaging different options and timescales and awaiting the outcome of the learning from the second phase before roll across the five local authorities. Overall progress towards implementation of these strategies has been slow and requires renewed energy in order to re calibrate services in an appropriate and systematic way.

- 6.16 This year CSSIW undertook a short review of mental health services in the south team and found that the Mental Health Measure has been fully implemented. Staff provided evidence of the effectiveness of arrangements for joint working with health and care and treatment plans that demonstrated a clear focus on improving outcomes for people. The approach to service users emphasises empowerment alongside of providing appropriate support even where the needs are very complex.
- 6.17. Social Services make a strong contribution to the implementation of secondary services within the Mental Health Measure but do not directly support the local Primary Mental Health Support Services. Managers consider that the skills of the team are best targeted towards people with more complex needs. The implementation of the Social Care and Well-Being legislation with its requirement to offer or arrange earlier intervention and advice is likely to challenge this.
- 6.18. Quarterly performance audits are undertaken but the process is hampered by separate IT systems. The audit has highlighted issues about the way support to carers/family members is defined and prioritised. Assessments of strengths and needs are initially focussed on the individual referred to the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT). It appears that discussions on confidentiality which occur early in the process can result in family members not being defined as carers, and not being offered a carers' assessment.
- 6.19. Data provided by the council indicates that all carers are offered an assessment in their own right but only 14% had assessments undertaken. This represents poor performance and is amongst the lowest in Wales. This year's budget indicates that additional funding was set aside to implement the carer's strategy fully. Consequently the council state that they are confident that all carers are supported appropriately and data recording is inaccurate.

Areas of progress

- Support for people with dementia and their families through the overall development of local services.
- Commitment to training for all staff in Dementia Care Matters.
- Ongoing support for people with learning disabilities through the "My Day-My Life" Project.
- Engagement with the sector around the proposed transformation in

domiciliary care provision.

Areas for improvement

- The pace of change in rolling out the Raglan Project and the My Day–My Life project to other community hubs identified throughout Monmouthshire.
- The council should ensure that DoLS and MCA is fully embedded in everyday practice within assessment and care management.
- Data recording in relation to carers support from the council needs to be reviewed so as to ensure that carers are being appropriately supported.

Children and Young People

Overview

- 6.20. Overall the council's performance in relation to children's services has not been consistent across all key areas. Two separate inspections by CSSIW found no widespread or serious failings which left children being harmed or at risk of harm. However, management oversight of practice was insufficient and a number of recommendations were made.
- 6.21. There was evidence that staff at all levels and council members were committed to improving outcomes for children. Children and young people who are, or who are likely to be, at risk of harm were identified and protected particularly where safeguarding was in question. However, where there was no obvious indication of significant harm decisions to progress contacts to a referral were not timely. There was a risk of lengthy delays to children and families who were not always being offered help early enough.
- 6.22 The level of referrals in children's services is comparable with last year. Initial assessments performance has remained steady and is consistent with the average levels across Wales. Eighty five percent of core assessments were carried out in a timely way and exceed the Welsh average figure of 81%. Whilst this is slightly lower than last year's performance the council attribute this to the complexity of some cases. This year 200 of the total of 482 referrals were made as a result of substance misuse and/or domestic violence. The council are considering specific training needed in order to respond effectively to these particular issues. Where core assessments take longer than thirty five days the council has worked hard to minimise this and have significantly improved their own performance in this area.

- 6.23. During our inspection of children's services, we found that whilst assessments overall were timely and contained appropriate information from a range of sources the quality of assessments was not always consistent. The quality of recording throughout the assessment process was found to be poor and as a result failed to evidence the depth of enquiry that had been undertaken. This is an area that the council are addressing by undertaking a review of the quality of referrals as well as undertaking training both internally and with partner agencies.
- 6.24. In response to the inspectorate the council have developed a detailed post inspection action plan. Key performance indicators are reviewed and monitored closely and progress is reported to and monitored by the children's services leadership team. This in turn is reviewed at the engagement meetings and separate head of service meetings with CSSIW managers.
- 6.25. Whilst the level of children in need has decreased across Wales by 4% overall there has been an increase of 26% increase in Monmouthshire which equated to 79 children. In addition, following a sharp fall in 2013-14, the number of children on the child protection register has risen significantly by 38% and represents an increase from 37 to 51 children. This is in stark contrast to the Welsh average which is down by over 6 % this year. It is suggested by the head of service that this may be as a result of an increased focus on safeguarding awareness raising and training and the work undertaken by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit. However, a further review is planned to consider whether prevention is targeted effectively. CSSIW will monitor this over the coming year as part of our engagement.
- 6.26. During our inspection, CSSIW found that where there was an obvious indication that a child or children were at risk or had suffered significant harm a prompt decision was made. In these instances progress to referral and effective action was taken in all cases the inspectors reviewed. Child protection investigations were undertaken by suitably experienced social workers and decisions taken were appropriate.
- 6.27. Delays in accessing specialist mental health services for children via Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) was identified in the national thematic review. There has been an over dependency on social services by health to provide both funding and resources to assess and meet therapeutic needs of looked after children and care leavers. This had an impact on team resources and has now been addressed with some success. Agreement has been reached with the local health board that there is monthly access to a CAMHS worker to formally discuss the best way forward on individual cases. The council report early signs that having this new arrangement is improving

outcomes for children and young people. Whilst there is evidence of an improving picture this remains a challenge.

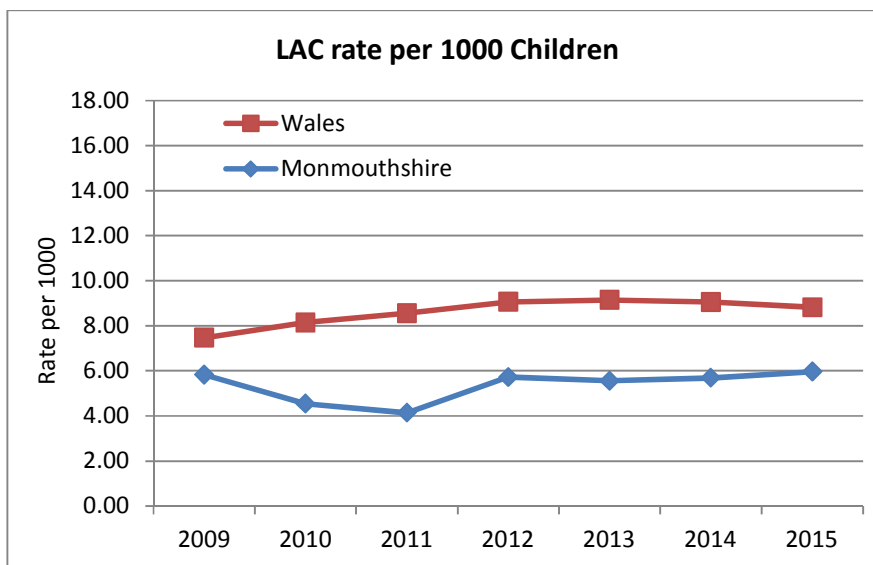
- 6.28. The council is a member of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) which covers the five Gwent councils and was set up in April 2013. The council uses the SEWSCB allegations policy which provides a comprehensive approach to managing allegations but is still in the process of developing a specific local policy.
- 6.29. Safeguarding is given a high profile within the council with the Chief Executive chairing the safeguarding group within the authority. Following two concerns raised by CSSIW around recruitment practices and safeguarding concerns in children's services the council undertook work to improve its policies, procedures and plans on safeguarding. There is now an overarching Monmouthshire Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place that provides guidance for safeguarding and child protection and training has been provided.
- 6.30. The council has mechanisms in place for listening and consulting with children and young people. Over the past year teams in children's services have received training in play therapy and have focussed on increasing the time spent with children and young people to ascertain the views, with emphasis on those who are looked after. More recently the council was successful in recruiting two part time care leavers as apprentices who will have a pivotal role in ensuring the voices and aspirations of care leavers are heard.
- 6.31. Staff within the supporting children and young people team have developed a young people's football team and other opportunities on a one to one basis to elicit feedback in an informal atmosphere. Further work needs to continue to ensure the voices of children and young people is sufficiently captured and used to shape future service development.
- 6.32. The inspection of children's services report published in February 2015 highlighted that performance management and quality assurance arrangements needed to be more effectively embedded so that managers at all levels have timely, relevant and accurate performance and quality assurance information to enable managers to be more effective in their roles and to deliver improvements. This is being addressed through the action plan.

Key National Priorities

Preventative and early intervention services

- 6.33. The council has identified the need to strengthen the Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) arrangements to ensure children and their families have access to early help. Although the council has up to date policies, procedures and guidance in place more needs to be done to understand thresholds between partners and statutory services. A JAFF coordinator has recently been recruited and training events for staff has been undertaken.
- 6.34. A recent decision by the council to reposition the strategic arrangements for JAFF into the policy and partnership service alongside other families' first initiatives with direct links with the Local Service Board (LSB) has been positive. This decision has the potential to create more effective joint service planning for children and families in need of help and support in the council. Work has commenced on developing a preventative pathway to enable support at the earliest opportunity. Continuation of this early intervention work will be key to deliver a successful early prevention agenda.
- 6.35. The council identified the development of a joint children and adult's disability service in last year's director's annual statutory report. Other priorities during the year have taken precedent therefore no progress has been made to date in this area.

Looked After Children



Numbers of LAC as at 31 March

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Monmouthshire	111	86	78	106	102	103	108

- 6.36. The above chart illustrates the seven year trend in the numbers of looked after children (LAC) per 1000 population across Wales and in Monmouthshire. Overall, the number of children and young people looked after by the council has increased slightly during 2014-15 (by 5 children from 103 to 108); thus the rate of children looked after is 5.97 per 1000 population which is amongst the lowest in Wales.
- 6.37. Performance on the number of school placement changes indicate that school placement stability has weakened with an increase from 12% in 2013-14 to 21% this year. This relates to 15 children. A number of changes are linked to the outcomes of court cases where children moved to long term placements and a number of high risk young people were placed out of county through necessity. The head of service reports that these changes were managed appropriately and the moves were planned to link with end of school term dates. The complexity of some of the cases has required specialist placements which are often not available near to home. Long term the council should consider what action needs to be taken to promote commissioning specialist placements locally.
- 6.38. The inspection of the fostering service found good progress had been made with greater clarity around the focus of the team. Compliance in all areas had been achieved. It has been recognised by the council that there is an additional burden on the placement and support team particularly in relation to family carer assessments required by the court. New foster carers are being recruited to meet demand.
- 6.39. The level of special guardianship orders (SGO's) has increased significantly over the past two years from two in 2012-13 to 21 in 2013-14. No figures are available for this year. The council has highlighted the need to have a more robust structure in place in order to meet its statutory duties to appropriately support this type of family carers and have presented a business case to council for additional resources to cover the increased workload. Longer term, the authority has identified significant savings that can be made where a child enters the system via an SGO rather than the provision of an in house foster placement.
- 6.40. In response to the improvement notice issued by Estyn in 2012 the council utilised the recovery plan as a catalyst to drive improvements around safeguarding across all service areas. It was confirmed during monitoring by Estyn in April 2014 that the foundations were in place for improving safeguarding arrangements. Social services and the

education department can evidence how they have delivered better educational outcomes for children who are looked after. The performance in relation to Personal Education Plans (PEPS) has improved considerably from 67% in 2013-14 to 87% this year which is significantly above the Welsh average figure of 70%. Performance around the allocation of personal advisors is in line with the national performance for this indicator. Closer joint working between education and children's services has contributed to this improvement.

Areas of progress

- The council has taken forward actions to address the recommendations arising from the inspection in November 2014.
- Progress with access to CAMHS services.
- Creation of two apprenticeship posts to ensure care leavers are appropriately represented on the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Areas for improvement

- The increase in the level of children on the child protection register requires a better understanding of whether thresholds levels are accurate.
- Progress work to improve transitions for children with disabilities to adult services.
- Take forward post inspection implementation plan.

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

- 7.1. The council's leadership and governance arrangements comply with statutory guidance. The current structure promotes leadership and direction. The director is part of the corporate team and there are clear lines of accountability through the senior management team, divisional meetings and team meetings. At the time of writing this report the director of social services had resigned his post. There has been confirmation from the council that this post will be replaced. This change within the senior management team means that social services will require additional support at the highest levels within the council to ensure the priorities across services can be taken forward by a newly established leadership team.

- 7.2. In adult services the workforce is longstanding and stable overall. Conversely, over the past few years the children's directorate has seen significant turmoil at both managerial and operational levels with significant numbers of agency staff and high turnover. A new head of service was appointed to the post in April 2014 and has provided stability to the role and is well respected both by members and staff at all levels.
- 7.3. Significant improvements have been made to stabilise and develop the workforce including a review of existing pressures to ascertain current and future resources to meet the demands of the service. A number of new posts and a reduction in the use of agency staff has raised the morale of staff who now say they feel well supported. This also contributes to better consistency in practice. The accredited training in dementia care alongside continuing professional development and effective supervision and reflection of practice will allow staff to promote the principles of the council of "doing it differently – doing it better".
- 7.4. The council has developed its Corporate Parenting arrangements more robustly. The two apprentices referred earlier in this report will represent the views of children and young people on the Corporate Parenting group. One of the priorities in the next year is to establish a 'Children in Care Council' to ensure that the focus remains on the issues that are important to looked after children as well as the opportunity to influence service design and strategic thinking. In addition the council are committed to developing employment opportunities for care leavers and looked after children within the council.
- 7.5. The council has increased its capacity for monitoring the quality of the services it commissions. New quality assurance processes have been introduced to direct services and commissioning. CSSIW work positively with the team and have undertaken a small number of joint inspections particularly where there is evidence that a service is under performing, has been identified as a service of concern or is part of the escalating concerns process. Commissioning strategies in other areas of service demonstrate a clear understanding of the council's priorities and the direction of travel for the future.
- 7.6. Over the past two years the adult services directorate has been in an underspend position due to the way in which demand has been managed and practice change. Whilst there has been a significant increase in the funding for the frailty and independent living programmes this has been set against a backdrop of savings made in other areas including mental health and residential care where fewer placements were made. This is in keeping with delivering the council's

independence agenda. Overall grants to voluntary sector organisations this year has decreased by 20%.

- 7.7. In contrast, in children's services there has been an overspend. This is due to a number of factors including a small number of expensive out of county placements for children/young people with complex and challenging behaviours. In addition, the department had to utilise agency staff extensively to ensure statutory functions were met. This position is improving. Recently a successful business case was made to the council's select committee for additional funding to resource the service appropriately to meet demand and strengthen the stability of the workforce through recruiting to permanent posts.
- 7.8. During 2014-15 CSSIW observed three select committee meetings. Members were well sighted on the issues being discussed and provided a high level of constructive challenge to both senior officers within Social Services and CSSIW officials.

Areas of progress

- Ongoing work with health and social care strategic partnership and relationships with the health board.
- Increased capacity and responsiveness corporately in relation to recommendations to drive improvements required and meet demand.
- Strengthening of the Corporate Parenting arrangements to ensure voices of care leavers are heard and drive strategic thinking.
- Level of challenge and understanding of Select Committee.

Areas for improvement

- Consider how children continue to be safeguarded in light of financial pressures faced by the council.

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Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Monmouthshire County Council Social Services

CSSIW Performance Evaluation Report 2014–15

Background

- Sets out the key areas of progress, good practice and areas where development and improvement is required.
- Findings based on:
 - Performance indicators
 - Director's & Heads of Service reports
 - Key council publications & information from scrutiny reports/minutes.
 - Inspection and site visits findings
 - Findings from regulatory inspections
 - Engagement with senior officers
 - Information from other inspectorates

Summary of findings

- The council is making good progress with a transformation in practice agenda and is well placed to meet the requirements as set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (SSWBW Act)
- Good partnership working across both adult and children's services to deliver better outcomes efficiently and effectively

In adult services progress is evident in moving forward an ambitious agenda, improvements including:

- levels of delayed transfers of care
- effective reablement services in hubs

Summary of findings



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- In children's services the department has been working hard to deliver on the post inspection action plan following the November 2014 inspection
Progress has been made in a number of areas including;
 - statutory visits to looked after children
 - timeliness of reviews for children in need
 - recruitment to permanent posts
- There is significant support corporately and from members who have a good understanding of the challenges facing social care
- Greater emphasis will be placed on support being provided through community networks and localised support



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Response to last years areas of improvement

- A post inspection action plan has been developed in Children's services
- Improved working relationship with CAMHS
- Safeguarding training has been delivered
- Structure and practice in the Family Support Team is being progressed
- Statutory visits to Looked After Children has improved from 65% to 83%

Response to last years areas of improvement

- Audits of performance and practice in Looked After Children is ongoing
- Progress in relation to Personal Educational Plans
- Children in Need reviews have improved significantly
- Appointment of two care leavers as apprentices
- Greater understanding of roles and responsibilities around Corporate Parenting

Adult Services

- Continued progression with strategies to support independence through community based solutions
- Fewer people living in care homes
- Effective engagement with service users which is outcome focussed
- Plans to roll out the Raglan Project to other areas
- Departmental training for staff in Dementia Care
- Safeguarding- additional resources and reshaping of team

Areas of progress

- Page 02
- Support for people with dementia and their families through the overall development of local services
 - Commitment to training for all staff in Dementia Care Matters
 - Ongoing support for people with learning disabilities through the “My Day-My Life” Project
 - Engagement with the sector around the proposed transformation in domiciliary care provision

Areas for improvement



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- The pace of change in rolling out the Raglan Project and the My Day– My Life project to other community hubs identified throughout Monmouthshire
- The council should ensure that DoLS and MCA is fully embedded in everyday practice within assessment and care management
- Data recording in relation to carers support from the council needs to be reviewed so as to ensure that carers are being appropriately supported

Children's Services

- Inspection in November 2014 highlighted identified areas for improvement
- Post inspection plan has been developed in response and is being implemented
- Good mechanisms in place for consulting with Children and Young People
- Assessments are timely and appropriate but quality needs improvement
- Child protection investigations and decisions made are appropriate

Children's services

- Increase in the level of Children in Need (26% in contrast to the national downward trend)
 - Good progress in fostering service
 - Work is progressing to drive forward an early intervention and preventative agenda
- Numbers of looked after children have increased slightly but are amongst the lowest in Wales

Areas of progress

- The council has taken forward actions to address the recommendations arising from the inspection in November 2014
 - Progress with access to CAMHS services
 - Creation of two apprenticeship posts to ensure care leavers are appropriately represented on the Corporate Parenting Panel

Areas for improvement

- The increase in the level of children on the child protection register requires a better understanding of whether thresholds levels are accurate
 - Progress work to improve transitions for children with disabilities to adult services
- Take forward post inspection implementation plan

Leadership, governance and direction

- Change at both managerial and operational level in children's services
- Overspend in children's services
- Achievement of savings targets within adult social services whilst delivering the council's independence agenda
- Robust corporate parenting arrangements in place
- Commissioning strategies in place demonstrate a clear understanding of the council's strategic priorities

Areas of progress

- Ongoing work with health and social care strategic partnership and relationships with the health board
 - Increased capacity and responsiveness corporately in relation to recommendations to drive improvements required and meet demand
 - Strengthening of the corporate parenting arrangements to ensure voices of care leavers are heard and drive strategic thinking
- Level of challenge and understanding of Select Committee

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Areas for improvement

- Consider how children continue to be safeguarded in light of financial pressures faced by the council

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SUBJECT: CHANGING PRACTICE, CHANGING LIVES IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

MEETING: ADULT AND CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT

DATE: 16TH DECEMBER 2015

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for a 3 year Service and Financial Plan for Children's Social Services which will form part of the overarching Social Care and Health transformation programme, *Changing Practice, Changing Lives*.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the 3 year Children and Young People Services and Financial Plan be referred to Cabinet for approval.

3. KEY ISSUES:

This plan forms part of an overarching transformation programme in Monmouthshire County Council Social Care and Health which was designed to deliver the cultural and practice change necessary to realise the benefits from the legislative framework in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2015). The transformation programme in Social Care has delivered both improved outcomes and quality of life for people and significant savings over the last 4 years in adult social services.

Recognising the differences in children's services, and the different starting place, the first phase of the transformation programme in children's services has focussed on getting the basics right and improving performance. The *Changing Practice, Changing Lives* programme will continue to be sensitive to those differences between adults and children's services, but also build on the strengths within the different part of the business to deliver a coherent purpose and governance for practice and commissioning in Social Care and Health.

A shared understanding of 'what good practice looks like' and alignment of all systems (from supervision to quality assurance to management meetings) is needed. Change is delivered by individual practitioners and teams coming together around a common purpose, supported by managers and leaders who set direction and remove the barriers that exist. Some limited external support from a recognised expert in children's services will be sought to develop the detail of practice transformation programme within children's services.

This plan has been developed for a very specific purpose – to ensure there is clear set of prioritised actions to deliver service and financial recovery. It builds on the very positive progress which has been made in children's social services over the last 2 years and sets

direction over a medium term time frame to address increasing challenges around managing need, workforce stability and financial sustainability. It reflects increasing challenges since the Service Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2015/16 was agreed. As such, the plan includes a set of actions which are additional to current SIP. The 3 year timescale of the plan and financial model, recognises that practice led transformation requires sustained direction and effort over a prolonged period of time.

The detailed plan is appended to this paper. There are 4 themes contained within the plan which detail the improvements required:

Quality and Effectiveness of Social Work Practice
Capacity and Capability of the Workforce
Improved commissioning
Service and Financial Performance and Accountability

The plan also contains within it a financial model, risks, mitigations and measures which will enable robust tracking of whether the plan is delivering the outcomes required. The key actions from this transformation plan will form the core of an updated Service Improvement Plan for 2016/17. The plan will also need to be flexible and contain within it a dynamic model which allows service and financial performance to be monitored robustly and challenged.

4. REASONS:

The Children and Young People's Select Committee is responsible for monitoring the performance of services provided to children and young people in Monmouthshire.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Children Social Services in Monmouthshire County Council have been focussed on improving practice and performance for a number of years. Considerable progress has been made, particularly in improving performance against priority performance indicators and addressing the recommendations of the CSSIW review of children's social services which was undertaken in November 2014.

It is critical that the improvements made are: embedded sustainably in practice and commissioning; are delivered by a permanent children's services workforce which is confident in practice who can access a range of evidence based support options which can achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people; and are delivered within the budget for the service set by the Council.

Since April 2015, numbers of looked after children have risen and the service is operating with a significant agency workforce due to a combination of vacancies and absence. These are the predominant reasons for net projected overspend in 2015/16 month 6 of £986K (adjusted for £115K reserve funding). The absolute priority is a robust medium term (3 year) service and financial plan which is based on informed analysis, projections of need and evidence of what works. Delivery of the plan needs to be driven by social work practice which is modern, evidence based, underpinned by a principle of intervening at the earliest opportunity and agreeing outcomes which with children, young people.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

The impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed quarterly. Criteria for monitoring and review will include performance against national and local performance indicators, the experience of children, young people and families, the number of looked after children, children on the child protection register and children in need and financial performance.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

This service and financial plan has been developed to ensure that children's social services in Monmouthshire continue to provide the highest standards of practice in safeguarding children.

8. CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

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CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL PLAN

2016-2019

Introduction

This Service and Financial Plan has been created to set out the steps that will be taken to bring about culture and practice of continuous improvement in service and financial performance of Children and Young People Services in Monmouthshire.

The Plan forms part of a wider transformation programme of Social Care and Health within Monmouthshire which is underpinned by the changing legislative basis for social services in Wales contained within the Social Services (Wales) Act 2014 which needs to be implemented by April 2016. The plans needs to be considered within the context of improvements to the wider systems that support the protection and wellbeing of children who need intervention from social services.

Governance

Improving the performance of its children and young people social services function is a high priority for the Council.

To ensure that the improvement work is effectively led and delivered, the Senior Leadership Team will provide regular oversight, challenge and direction. Children Services Improvement will be a standard agenda item at each Senior Leadership Team meeting.

Improving outcomes for children and families is also a partnership priority and it is critical that senior partners from the NHS, police, housing, education and third sector are fully involved in the next phase of improvement. It is proposed that the Programme Board performs that function, reporting to the Local Service Board.

Targeted, short term, external support from experienced, independent professionals will be procured to support this improvement work as necessary, building on the progress already made within the service and the benefits realised from the external review of safeguarding.

The Senior Leadership Team will use this development plan as its route map and this will be supplemented by a performance framework which will allow progress to be tracked. This will include information from a set of performance indicators, workforce trackers, financial monitoring and supported by a range of quality audits which will enable the voice of the children, young people and families to be

captured. On a monthly basis, the Senior Leadership Team will receive highlight reports on the previous month's performance as well as progress on the development plan. Quarterly, or more frequently if necessary, the Senior Leadership Team will review progress in greater detail.

Reports on progress against the Plan will be regularly brought to the Children, Young People Select Committee, Cabinet and Council as appropriate.

Background

Children's Social Services in Monmouthshire have made significant progress in improving practice and performance over the last 2 years particularly. This resulted in significant improvement in national performance indicators for 2014/ 2015 which, most importantly, were indicative of improved outcomes for children, young people and families. The service has responded positively to the CSSIW inspection of November 2014 which found no widespread or serious failings but noted the need to embed and sustain the work that had commenced to improve practice in children's services. In the most recent evaluation of performance published in October 2015, the Inspectorate note 'Progress has been made in a number of areas to date. In particular the council has made improvements around statutory visits to looked after children and the timeliness of reviews for children in need as well as recruitment to permanent posts. However, there is still a journey of improvement that children's services will need to continue over the next year'.

It is in recognition of the stage of the improvement journey in which Children's Services, and the need to ensure that improvements in outcomes and performance are built upon, and that the workforce and budget of children's services are put on a sustainable footing going forward, that this plan has been developed.

Current Position

There has been a significant increase in the number of looked after children in Monmouthshire in the last year. At the end of the second quarter of 2015/16, there were 121 looked after children, compared with 100 in November 2014. The service is also operating with high numbers of agency workers,. There has also been some deterioration in performance against prioritised performance indicators in the same period. The pressures in the external placement budget and the workforce budget (as a consequence of agency usage), have resulted in a net projected overspend in 2015/16 of £986K (adjusted for £115K reserve funding).

The improvement work continues to take place against a backdrop of extremely challenging financial settlements for local government in. It is also the case that pressures on families are increasing at this time, with incomes squeezed as a consequence of the economic climate. It is therefore critical to the Council that this is a medium term service and financial plan which is based on informed analysis and projections of need and evidence of what works. In a nutshell, it is critical that the children's service is put on a sustainable footing.

Experience of successful transformation from elsewhere, and from the experience of adult services in Monmouthshire County Council, is that progressive practice, by a stable workforce is the key to keeping children safe, improving outcomes for children and young people and achieving financial balance.

A clear and simple plan is needed to unite everyone around what needs to be done and to get everyone pulling in the same direction. This is the right cultural conditions for recovery. This relies upon strong, resilient leadership from Members, senior leaders and service management. Potential obstacles to recovery need to be overcome collegially and quickly, like prompt production of clear financial and performance data and management of the personnel issues

Purpose

The purpose of children's services in Monmouthshire is:

- Working alongside people to enable them to live their own lives
- Enable families and communities to keep children and young people safe and to reach their full potential.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES:

- We will work in **partnership** to facilitate solutions, building meaningful rapport/relationships with family's individuals and partners.
- We will know/be clear about the people who we will support in a **timely** manner.
- We will have a plan of how we will support people to develop a 'whole life' plan, and have a method to track progress and **communicate** effectively.(including commissioning)
- We will take an **outcome focused** approach to future planning (long terms and short term) with families and individuals to meet their own aspirations and goals.

- We will involve the **right people** at the right time to help people in crisis and take and will take responsibility for the appropriate pace and continuity of our on- going intervention.
- We will have **honest and transparent** conversations with **all** people.
- We will work with and **respect** other colleagues and challenge systems to ensure best practice and service delivery.
- We will use 'Check' to reflect **learn** and develop on our practice and decisions.
- Everything we record will be **purposeful** and proportionate.
- We will **value and respect our staff** and trust their judgement; and promote wellbeing in the workforce.
- Our IT system will work for us.
- We will work **creatively** and equitably within **all** resources available.
- We will improve **commissioning** to deliver of a range of evidence based services which will make a difference in the lives of children and young people
- We will **redirect resources** to reduce the need for children to come into care and to remain safely within their families through **early intervention** ensure that effective help is provided quickly, thus reducing the need for statutory intervention is reduced
- We will **manage resources** effectively to ensure that the children's service, whilst always putting the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people first, is able to do so in an agreed resource envelope
- We will **develop our workforce** to ensure a permanent workforce with the right skills to do the job in the right way.

Values

Work in children' social services will always be rooted in the values of the social work profession and the United Nations convention on the rights of a child:

- To hear and listen to the voice of the child or young person in everything that we do
- Respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people
- Promoting social justice
- Acting with integrity
- Ensuring our children are safe
- Treating all people with respect, compassion, empathy and care

- Ensure the staff are respected and involved
- Ensuring the proper stewardship of scarce public resources

Overarching Aims

At the outset it is important to articulate what we are expecting to achieve. The following quality statements illustrate the types of outcomes and experiences we are striving to provide.

- Children, young people and their families receive help and support to optimise their well – being and reach their potential at every stage. To ensure they get the best start in life and enjoy positive, rewarding experiences growing up in safety, protected from abuse or harm at home, at school and in the community.
- Children, young people and their families benefit from effective support as soon as needs arise. Get help early and frequently enough, at times, in places and in ways that meet their needs. In particular, those children and parents who are most vulnerable get help from staff who are able to reach out to them and facilitate the support they require for as long as it is needed. Support will be provided by Staff that that have the necessary skills and are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- Children, young people and their families feel valued and engaged as important contributors supported to work with services and as a consequence have positive experiences of the system. As a result children have confidence that they will be protected promptly and effectively when there are concerns about their safety or well-being.
- At all times staff listen carefully to children and have a thorough understanding of their views, wishes, and expectations and, accurately record what they say. Children are supported to make a contribution to their assessments to support sound and timely decisions about their lives.
- Children are not left to “drift” in the system. Review and decision making meetings take place regularly and at required intervals with sufficient independent challenge to drive progress forwards within timescales. Looked After Children experience nurturing and stable environments within local communities which support them to reach full potential.

Improvement Approach

Although improvements across all performance areas has been a service aim; particular focus has been, and will continue to be made on the following 4 national performance indicators/measures:

- Increasing the percentage of looked after children reviews carried out within statutory timescales
- Increasing the percentage of children in need reviews carried out within statutory timescales
- The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the Social Worker
- The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required

Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of comparative performance in the 5 national performance indicators/measures, between the period's 2013/14 and 2014/15 and quarter 1 and quarter 2 of 2015/16 respectively as well as the locally determined indicators for these areas.

Children's Services will continue to concentrate upon doing the basics well, prioritising the areas identified by the inspectors, under four themes:

- Quality and Effectiveness of Social Work Practice
- Capacity and Capability of the Workforce
- Improved commissioning
- Service and Financial Performance and Accountability

Theme 1 - Quality and Effectiveness of Social Work Practice

A relentless focus to improving practice is the key to success in children's services. A common understanding of 'what good practice looks like' and alignment of all systems to reinforce the primacy of this is critical. We will deliver safe, effective, high quality social work practice by:

- A diagnostic by a recognised expert in children's services to provide a robust assessment of the baseline position, particularly in managing the front door, thresholds and decision making. This needs to encompass a review of preventative alternatives as well as statutory thresholds;
- A training programme which ensures a common understanding of quality practice for every social worker;
- Implementation of outcomes training in all social work teams in preparation
- Ensuring there are agreed, functioning and consistent systems within all social work teams;
- Continuous improvement of the consistency and quality of decision making;
- Continuous improvement of the quality and consistency of assessments and care plans taking appropriate account of, and appropriately managing, risks, case recording including recording the views of children and key professionals;
- Ensuring looked after children and young people receive appropriate levels of support through effective multi-agency intervention which is responsive to their needs and ensures that no drift occurs in the care planning process;

- Ensuring that there is an appropriate performance management system in place at team level including a quality assurance process which ensures continuous improvement in practice
- Ensuring frontline managers are equipped to deliver effective supervision, management oversight, support and leadership to front line staff .

Theme 2 – Capacity and Capability of the Workforce

Delivering a comprehensive approach to workforce development to children’s services in Monmouthshire which delivers the following:

- Recruitment & Selection – we need to increase the speed of advertising for vacant posts, interviewing of successfully applicants and the ensuring safe recruitment process are concluded in a timely way;
- Management and Leadership programme to be implemented;
- Maximise attendance through effective management of sickness and other absences;
- Effective use of HR capacity and embedding people management skills with clarity of role between HR and service managers;
- Review existing staffing structure including a support framework for newly qualified social workers;
- Skills and capabilities assessment at an individual and team level linked to an appropriate training programme to create the culture and practice for change we are looking at models for this currently;
- Build on and progress to next stage in the cultural change/ OD programme;
- Explore the use of a case load supply and demand toolkit for social worker case load management.

Theme 3 – Improved Commissioning – Realigning Resources to effectively meet demand

For families that are showing signs of distress access to appropriate support at the earliest opportunity is critical. In areas where preventative services are successful, they can prevent them reaching a point where it is necessary for children’s social services to intervene. Initial analysis shows that investment in early intervention and prevention is commissioned from a number of different funding sources without a single commissioning plan which focusses funding (regardless of source) on the interventions where there is evidence that the maximum impact is delivered. A commissioning review and coherent set of robust and supportive services is urgently required to ensure that young people and children have the best start possible in their lives.

We will commission effective, high quality for children and families services by:

- Undertaking a baseline assessment of the availability and effectiveness of services available, to understand potential duplication, gaps and where evidence supports it, realigning resources with key pressure points;
- Young people and families are fully involved in co-producing the right services;
- Implementing a common access point for early intervention and prevention services to ensure everyone receives the right service for them;
- Establishing a common approach to commissioning in Social Care and Health, ensuring that children services can build on the skills and capacity in adult services
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the 4 Cs commissioning process;
- Reviewing assessment and commissioning of residential placements to ensure packages are 'right size' and 'right price' and that contributions from partners reflect assessed need;
- Work collaboratively with partners to identify the right range of accommodation and support options are available to ensure that young people are accommodated closer to home where appropriate;
- Ensuring there is a robust approach to realising the benefits from current business cases to increase the number of special guardianship orders and increase in in-house foster services What do you mean by 'realising the benefits from the current business case'.

Theme 4 – Service and Financial Performance and Accountability

Effective recording and reporting of our management information is essential in helping us to know whether or not we are making a positive difference to the lives of the children, young people and families. The new IT system for children's services provides opportunities to design meaningful local performance measures and report. Performance priorities are:

- A focus at every level on the prioritised performance indicators;
- Robust approach to tracking and evaluating the realisation of the benefits from the approved business cases;
- Full implementation of structured approach to audit and quality assurance of practice;
- Development of reports through PLANT to support operational management and continuous improvement;
- Implementing systems which support the new statutory performance indicators from April 2016 as a consequence of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act;
- A single review of business support roles and responsibilities to support operational teams in Social Care and Health;
- Continuing to develop and embed the culture and systems of financial control within the children's service.

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

A 3 year financial model for Children's Services has been developed. This is set out in **table 1** below. This model is based on a projected net increase in looked after children numbers of 12 over the next three years to 133. It is also based on: a reduction in agency workforce to the safe minimum (downscaling by

60% from the current projections), and an assumption that the benefits of the business cases approved by Cabinet in May 2015 will be fully realised to the anticipated timescales.

The resources and investment needed to realise these improvements have been identified and included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme. Where appropriate, the work is also reflected in the allocations of other budgets or grant funding arrangements.

There are a number of significant risks to delivery set out below:

Financial Pressure - There is a risk that the reduction in looked after children predicted in the model underpinning the Plan will be delayed or not delivered and consequently a greater net increase and base budget pressure. The actions to improve practice and commissioning set out in this paper have been developed with the intention of providing the culture and practice for a safe reduction in looked after children.

Workforce Capacity – There is a risk that the improvements to practice will be delayed as a consequence of continued challenges in recruiting and developing sufficient numbers of social workers with the skills needed to respond to need/demand. The actions within the developing workforce plan for children's services mitigate this risk.

Service Capacity – This plan is predicated on a strategy of early intervention and prevention which requires a review of current investments from core budgets and funded through specific grants. There is a risk that reductions in specific grants and difficulties in decommissioning existing services, will mean the full spectrum of early intervention and prevention services cannot be commissioned to create safe alternatives in the timescale.

Capacity to deliver the Service and Financial Plan – There is limited capacity available within children's social services, across Social Care and Health and within the Council to deliver this plan within the timescales necessary. It is critical that priority is given to this area of work given the implications financially and service terms of not doing so. Reporting to Senior Leadership Team is critical to unblocking any blockages to progressing this work at the pace needed.

Children Services Projection (2015/16 - 2018-19)		
	£m	Notes
Yr 1 - 2015/16		
Forecasted Overspend (M6)	1.18	121 LAC
Yr 2 - 2016/17		
Forecasted Overspend b/f from 2015/16	1.18	
Projected Cost of Existing 121 LAC to Reflect Best /Worst Cases	0.00	
Projected Cost of 1 Additional LAC	0.02	
Net cost saving of 60% reduction in use of Agency staff	(0.20)	
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend excluding Business Cases	1.00	122 LAC
<i>Cost Avoidance / Cost Saving re Business Cases re 2016/17</i>	(0.02)	
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend including Business Cases	0.98	
Yr 3 - 2017/18		
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend excluding Business Cases b/fwd from 2016/17	1.00	
Projected Cost of 5 additional LAC	0.32	
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend excluding Business Cases	1.32	127 LAC
<i>Cost Avoidance / Cost Saving re Business Cases 2016/17</i>	(0.02)	
<i>Cost Avoidance / Cost Saving re Business Cases 2017/18</i>	(0.18)	
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend including Business Cases	1.12	
Yr 4 - 2018/19		
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend excluding Business Cases b/fwd from 2017/18	1.32	
Projected Cost of 6 additional LAC	0.34	
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend excluding Business Cases	1.66	133 LAC
<i>Cost Avoidance / Cost Saving re Business Cases 2016/17</i>	(0.02)	
<i>Cost Avoidance / Cost Saving re Business Cases 2017/18</i>	(0.18)	
<i>Cost Avoidance / Cost Saving re Business Cases 2018/19</i>	(0.44)	
Forecasted Over/(Under)Spend including Business Cases	1.01	

Table 1

This 3 year financial model realigns the base line budget for 2016/17 by £1million. Between 2017/18 and 2018/19 the business case benefits can offset the predicted increase in LAC numbers. This is the realistic scenario.

Delivery strategies and action plans

In taking forward this work, four delivery strategies and action plans need to be developed:

- A workforce strategy and a workforce development plan that addresses the particular needs of the children and young people service workforce – **Lead: Peter Davies**

- Practice Improvement and Quality Assurance Strategy and Practice Standards - This framework and standards will ensure that as well as establishing effective strategic and operational management information to support decision making and the scrutiny of performance. There will be regular, systematic reporting of the quality of work undertaken directly by the service ensuring that outcomes and experiences of children and young people are driving the improvement efforts – **Lead: Tracy Jelfs**
- A Commissioning Framework for Children and Young People’s Services which will articulate the quantum and range of services to provide effective, evidence based range of options for people: **Lead Claire Marchant**
- A Communications and Engagement Strategy which ensures that communication and engagement activities are consistent and timely and that all stakeholders receive information and engage with the programme in the formats which are most appropriate for them – **Lead: Tracy Jelfs**