



# Improving Outcomes, Improving Lives

Director of Social Services  
Annual Report 2017



monmouthshire  
sir fynwy

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# Version Control

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## Alternative formats

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# Introduction

## Director's Overview

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This is my second report as the Statutory Director of Social Services with Monmouthshire County Council. It represents my personal analysis and reflections of our strengths and the challenges and opportunities facing wellbeing and social care and health in our county.

It is a statutory requirement of each local authority in Wales to appoint a Director of Social Services, and for the Director to report to Council annually on performance and outcomes in the previous year, and highlight the direction and actions for the year ahead. This year's report is in a format which will be required for all reports in Wales by next year and has been developed to show how we are meeting the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014) and the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (SSWBA).

This report celebrates excellence - the impact on the lives of our most vulnerable citizens when we get things right. It also very honestly appraises the challenges we face and the areas where we need to improve and do better.

My aim as Director is to build on strengths within the whole of Social Care and Health, across wider partnerships, within communities and within people's own lives. One of our main leadership roles in social services is to advance social just for all: to work effectively with people, communities and partners to reduce and remove the barriers that people experiencing disability, disadvantage and inequality encounter in accessing the opportunities and life chances available to the rest of the population.

I am determined that we use many sources of information and evaluations to understand the quality and impact of social services functions on people's lives. We need to understand what good practice and good quality care and support looks like, get the basics right consistently whilst enabling bespoke and creative solutions to the complexities of individual case work and major service risks.

Reporting in line with the SSWBA means the report is balanced between assessing how well we are promoting and supporting wellbeing and preventing the need for social care services as well as assessing need and securing services for people with care and support needs.

The SSWBA came into force on 6 April 2016. It is the most significant change in social services legislation in Wales for over 50 years. It provides the legal framework for improving the wellbeing of people who need care and support, carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales. The practice-led transformation of adult services and care and support in Monmouthshire was at the fore of driving and influencing the direction and legislation that was enacted.

The opportunity in Monmouthshire that the SSWBA has presents to us is to really focus on wellbeing as well as social services – to catalyse locality-based partnerships to connect people with each other and the communities in which they live. This joined up approach is at the heart of the social justice agenda. Getting it right is absolutely fundamental to enabling people to live the lives they want to live without the need for social care support at all, or considerably reducing that need. That is what matters to people – the impact of loneliness and isolation impacts on us disproportionately at the vulnerable times of our lives – as we get older, experience ill health or disability, or if we experience difficulties in our childhood. Getting this right is also fundamental to the financial sustainability of social services in Monmouthshire, as

in the rest of Wales and across the United Kingdom. The challenges we face of an older population, fewer people of working age to fulfil paid and unpaid caring roles and the rurality of our county are particularly acute.

Our focus on connecting people and communities builds on the learning from earlier developmental work – community connection and small local enterprise development. Most significantly, it builds on the assets within Monmouthshire communities in the form of community organisations, non-statutory partners, volunteers, community hubs and village halls. It benefits from a sense of purpose and committed leadership across the Council and beyond who are resolute that no-one should be left behind. Resources from different sources are being aligned to support this joined up approach within localities, the natural communities within which people live.

The SSWBA is focused on people rather than adults or children's services and this has enabled the beginnings of a common approach to practice, culture and quality of care across adults and children's services. This has been particularly evident in an all age approach to disability services. A new leadership structure for Social Care and Health has been implemented with key posts to support unified leadership of commissioning, safeguarding and disability services for adults and children's services.

Much of last year's report focussed on the challenges facing children's services in Monmouthshire. We are entering the second year of a three year practice led improvement programme to deliver excellence outcomes for children and young people. The improvement programme focuses on four areas:

- A sustainable operating model;
- Workforce development;
- Commissioning; and
- Addressing service critical issues.

Overall progress in the first year has been positive and we are where we need to be as a service at this stage of improvement. Critically, independent analysis of our progress has shown arrangements for managing contacts with us, and referrals to us, are much more robust than a year ago<sup>1</sup>. Our key achievements include:

- Putting in place a new operating model which reflects the way we need to work;
- Progression towards a permanent workforce and whilst reducing reliance on agency workers by 50%;
- A first stage review of family support has been completed which means we are able to access the right support for children and families at the right time more easily and
- Significant improvements in decision making at the front door of children's services, child protection and in court processes.

The numbers of Looked After Children (LAC) have stabilised (whilst neighboring authority areas have seen significant increases) and an external review of practice has evidenced some really positive improvements. However, there remain significant fragilities in the service which require focus in the next year;

- Further work is needed to develop early intervention and prevention approaches and integrate the Team Around the Family (TAF) within children's services;
- In the last year there has been a trebling of the number of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR);
- We have not recruited sufficient numbers of skilled Monmouthshire foster carers to accommodate children in county,
- Our timescales for completing assessments have not been good enough; and,

- Achieving consistently the high standards of court work required by the judiciary is a challenge and is having a significant impact on our workforce.

Overall, my assessment is that we understand our issues as a service and have the right leadership and plans in place to address them. Most importantly, the well-being and safety of children is at the heart of everything we do. There is evidence of the child's voice being clearly heard in our practice<sup>2</sup>. This value base drives us forward. The continued understanding and support of the Council is critical as we move into the next phase of our improvement programme.

Adult services in Monmouthshire has been on a transformation journey for the last five years – we have supported our workforce to have meaningful conversations to really understand what matters to people and to work with them to define their own outcomes. Relationships are at the heart of this way of working, most importantly the relationship with the person and their carers. The work to improve practice will never be complete and our quality assurance work in adults as well as children's services needs to ensure that we are getting the basics of practice right.

Relationships with partners in the NHS, the rest of the council and with providers of social care services are, of course, critical. Integrated health and social care community services delivered from resource centres in Mardy Park, Monnow Vale and Chepstow are at the centre of a locality approach in which social workers, therapists and nurses work together; organising interventions around people, not organisational or professional barriers. Mardy Park particularly has seen considerable development in the last year and as a result realised greater opportunities for different people and services to come together. Adult disability services have come together, are working closely with children's disability services, and are developing locality working. Relationships with primary care through the Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCNs) and wellbeing and preventative approaches have also really developed in the last 12 months.

The most significant challenge facing adult social care in Monmouthshire (as in many authority areas) is securing the right capacity and quality of care at home. There have been delays in people receiving the care they need, as quickly as they need it in the last year – some people have been delayed in hospital, but more people have been delayed in the reablement service. Some families have had to provide additional support until care is in place. Relationships with care providers have developed really positively, and they are working together with the council care at home services. We have a positive foundation on which to build to put in place sustainable solutions. As I said above, the particular challenges in providing care in a rural county, and securing a care workforce in a county with such high employment levels means we face greater challenges than some other areas. The next year will see the conclusion of the 'Turning the World Upside Down' work to commission quality relationship based care from the independent sector. We will also be launching a major workforce programme for the care sector 'Dare to Care' to promote positively the opportunity to work in care, linked to career pathways and fair terms and conditions.

There is much to do, and risks to manage, but overall the improvement journey is well-established, well-led and sustainable. Adult social services in Monmouthshire has demonstrated it is well placed for future challenges and most importantly there is evidence when we get things right we are actively transforming lives. Adult services need to be vigilant, and align systems to, achieve consistently good practice across all teams and to deliver plans to improve access to care at home. There are real strengths to build on in both adult and children's social services in Monmouthshire to build upon. There are also things we need to improve in both parts of social services. We have recognised particularly, and last year's annual report was very clear, that there were a number of significant risks requiring decisive

and sustained action in children's services. We put in place a three year improvement programme to address the risks and put children's services on a sound footing going forward.

Throughout this report, I will try to tell the story of what good looks like, what it means for people when we get things right. We have a mantra in Social Services 'doing the right thing is also the most cost effective thing to do'. This seems obvious in many ways. Invest in reabling people to keep them independent and they will need less long term care; invest in in-County fostering provision and fewer children are in expensive placements away from home and thus losing connection with their local community. It is clear, however, that this axiom will be severely tested in the coming year – the challenges of reducing public finances, a social care sector which needs to realign the way it works to secure the right workforce care, the demographics of an ageing population and a children's social services in the early stages of an improvement journey will prove a real test of professional and political leadership.

The priorities set out in this report for the coming years are, therefore, focused on service and financial sustainability – doing what matters and doing it right. We need to continue to develop our wellbeing offers to prevent and reduce the need for care and support, we need to continue our children's services improvement programme and we need to deliver a transformed care sector. This may seem daunting, but by aligning priorities with our culture, partnerships, practice and systems we are well placed to continue to do the right thing.

This next year is about delivering a positive and sustainable future for Social Care and Health in Monmouthshire and with the continued support of our workforce, council, partners and communities we are well placed to rise to the challenge.

Claire Marchant

**Chief Officer Social Care and Health/ Statutory Director of Social Services**



# The Vision for Monmouthshire

## Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Monmouthshire County Council's purpose is building sustainable and resilient communities. This purpose is about improving our place and maximising the contribution and well-being of the people in our communities.

The Council's well-being objectives that will help us deliver this vision are:

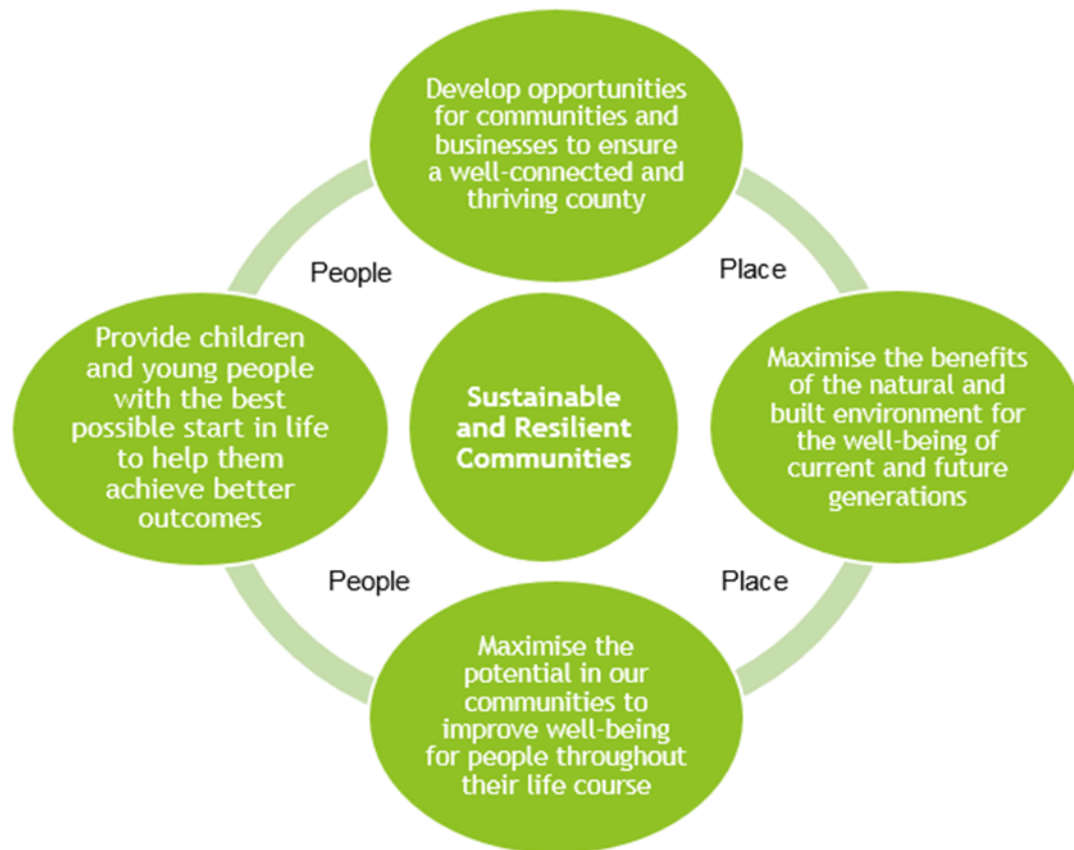


Figure 1

## Well-being, Social Care and Health in Monmouthshire

The purpose of well-being, social care and health in Monmouthshire is well aligned to the vision for our county: *'to maximise opportunity for all people to live the lives they want to live and the positive outcomes they identify'*.

Given the focus of our children's services improvement programme, we have expanded this purpose into the following vision:

*'It is our priority to ensure that we will find safe and appropriate ways to work with families to help them meet their children's needs, including their need to be protected from harm. We*

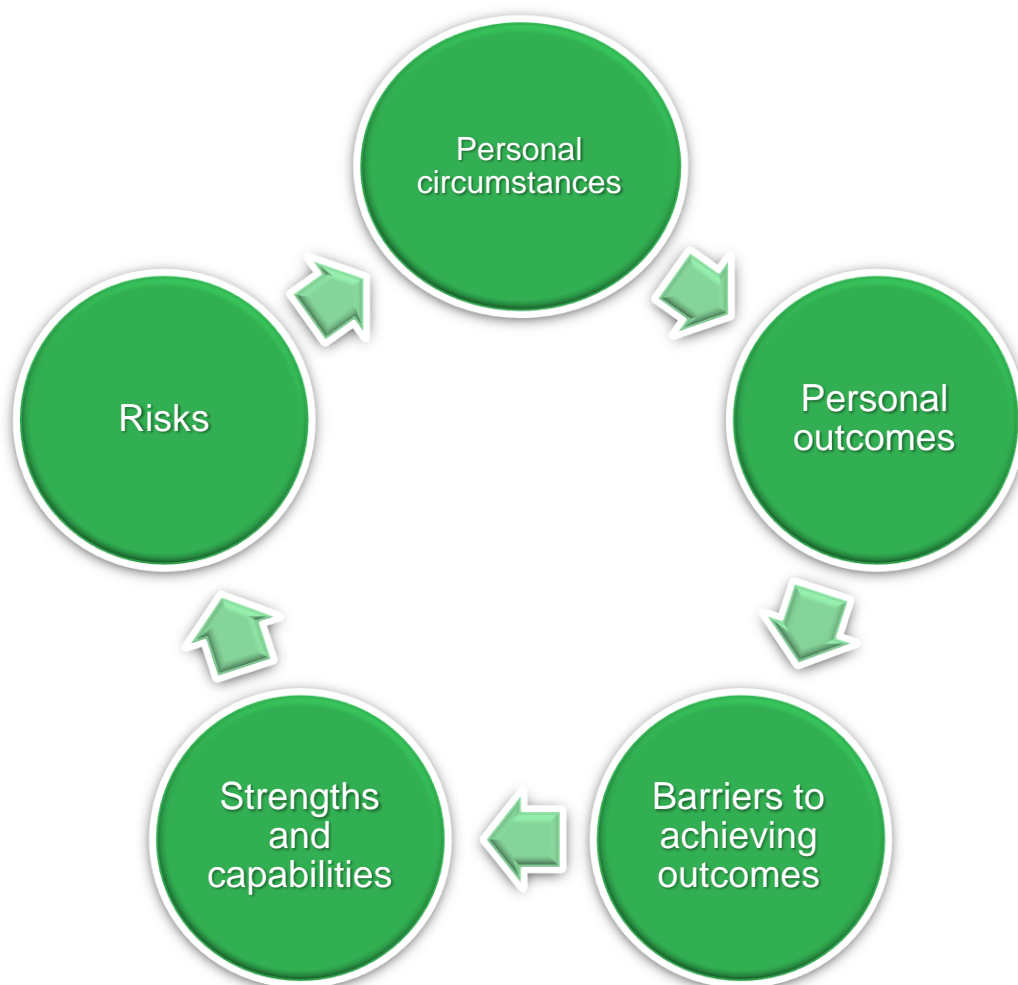
*will, whenever it is safe to do so, always look for ways to support children and young people to remain with their birth family or extended family and avoid the need for children and young people to become looked after.'*

Our purpose drives everything we do. It shapes our culture, our practice, our systems, how we develop our people and invest our time and resources.

Underlying our purpose are four principles:

- Listen to people to understand what matters to them;
- Build on strengths, not deficits;
- Connect people to other people and their communities;
- Relationships at the heart of care and support.

This means in practice we need to spend time having the right conversations so we work with people on the basis of what matters to them; recognising their strengths, capabilities and the resources available to them through their networks of family, friends and communities. This is at the heart of practice-led transformation. We aim to work with people; alongside them, not doing to them. We look to find options and solutions which best meet their version of a good life. This is illustrated in **figure 2**.



**Figure 2**

We work in partnership to intervene at an early stage. Our aim is to prevent the need for intensive interventions or high levels of services. This is in line with the focus of well-being of the SSWBA. **Figure 3** illustrates a snapshot of what is available to support people's well-being within their communities. It also shows how work with partners and communities to make best use our collective resources and in so doing to help people live good lives while reducing demand for long term social care and health services.

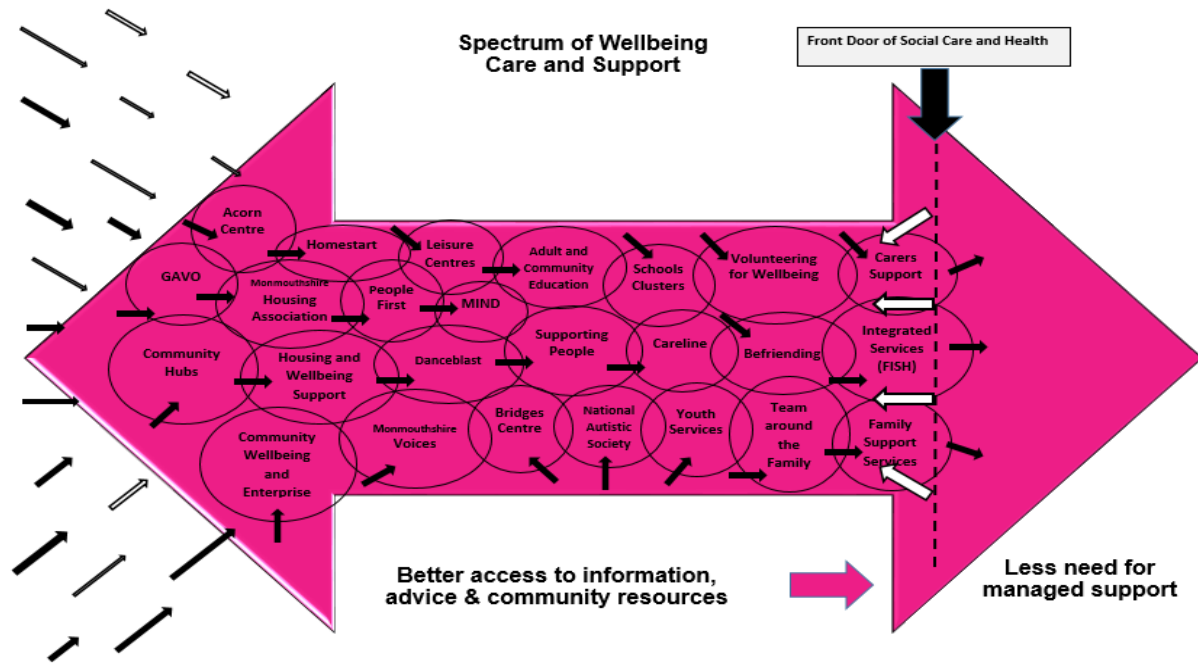


Figure 3

When people do need care and support, we need to work with them, their families and friends, to identify their own natural connections or connect them to support in their communities. People who live in our communities, their families and their friends have the greatest stake in developing those communities as places they want to live and that can meet their needs. Our role is to enable people to engage with and build things that they are passionate about, that can support them to achieve their well-being outcomes.

Monmouthshire's *County that Serves* programme puts our citizens at the heart of our efforts to develop local solutions to local challenges. Citizens are galvanised, trained and supported to make an impact on the issues that matter most in their areas. We have people, resources and networks that we can deploy sensitively and thoughtfully. If we get this blend right, today's generations get to live great lives on their terms within resilient and sustainable communities and we all act as custodians for those yet to come.

This approach to wellbeing is far more sustainable and supportive of people and families achieving change or the outcome they have identified than securing a service to do it for them. Our vision for locality working means supporting people to access what is available in the place they live. This is critical to combatting the scourge of loneliness and isolation which impedes people's ability to live the lives they want and their capacity to find their own solutions. Where we do need to commission or provide care and support for people, our aim is that this is flexible and supports achievement of the outcomes that people have identified for themselves.

**Our purpose is clear. The remainder of this report appraises how well we are performing against that purpose – what our strengths? What do we need to do better? What are our plans to achieve improvement?**

# Director's Summary of Performance

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## How well are we performing against the purpose we have set ourselves?

In last year's annual report I set out a number of priorities for improvement to focus where we invested time, effort and resources. The substance of this report reflects our achievements against those priorities, our quantitative and qualitative performance against national and local measures, supplemented with what people who have experienced wellbeing and social services in Monmouthshire have told us about that experience. My assessment also draws on external independent reviews, internal audits and case reviews, the views of our own workforce and external partners.

One of the key challenges in evaluating our performance is developing the right suite of measures and mechanisms for reviewing the evidence of how well we are doing. In 2016/17 we moved to a new suite of national outcome measures for social services in Wales. The new measures are aligned to the SSWBA. There is still a way to go to agree what 'good' performance is in respect of the new measures, and for comparative outcomes to be available across Wales. **Appendix 1** to this document illustrates our performance against some of the most important measures we use.

Systems are still being developed to ensure that we can report fully on all measures and capture the evidence that matters most in understanding the impact of what we do. It's important to highlight that this year's annual report includes evidence from surveys of adults, children and carers in addition to other sources.

We are committed to 'measuring what matters' and a new quality and performance framework for Social Care and Health is being implemented in 2017/18. This framework will mean in future reports national performance measures will be balanced even better with qualitative analysis, and the experiences of people who use our services. Heads of Service will report on their service areas at least twice a year into select committees. This will supplement the quarterly reports on the effectiveness of council services to select committees and cabinet. A number of the mechanisms are already in place in line with this new framework and the outputs against them are reflected in this report. The quality and performance framework adds value by bringing them into a coherent approach which will really enable us to understand the impact of what we do. **Figure 4** illustrates this approach.





**Figure 4**

### Overall assessment of wellbeing, social care and health

*Adult Services* – My analysis is that overall adult services are performing well and are well placed to continue to improve, whilst needing to deal with some very challenging issues in securing the right quality and quantum of care. The evidence for this assessment is:

**Practice in adult services is genuinely focused on what matters;** the work to ensure this practice is fully embedded is a continuous endeavour. There has been a real focus on working with people to identify their own outcomes, and to support them to live the lives they want to lead – feedback from adults with care and support needs reflects that this is largely their experience. Practice reviews with social workers in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) panels confirms understanding what matters is at the heart of practice. This is not always reflected fully in the way that work is recorded and this is an area for development in the next year.

**Some services for adults with care and support needs are delivering really flexible care and support based on long term relationships.** We know this is people's experience of in house residential care services provided in Severn View and Monmouthshire's Care at Home service because they tell us that is the case.

*On behalf of my husband, who suffers from vascular dementia as well as all his physical ailments, at the moment he has a very poor quality of life. The care my husband receives is superb. We have six totally professional ladies, four calls a day. We can't fault them. They are wonderful.*

**Not everyone in Monmouthshire gets the care they need as quickly as possible, and the standard of care can vary too much.** We know this because some people wait too long for care, either because they are delayed in a hospital setting or in another service. We know that we need to work with providers to ensure everyone gets the care they need, when they need it.

**We know our locality approach to wellbeing is making a difference** because we are measuring outcomes and listening to the stories of the difference this is making to their lives. We are working with Swansea University to understand how best to measure the whole approach around wellbeing overtime.

*Children's Services* - Children's services have made significant progress in the last year, from a position of great challenge in 2015/16, when we saw a significant increase in the number of LAC and a high number of agency social workers in our workforce. Independent external reviews (CSSIW into the front door of Children's Services, and a significant practice review from the Institute of Public Care, IPC, an academic social care body which is part of Oxford Brooks University, into practice) have confirmed that the service is improving and the direction is right.

*At a LAC review, foster carers were extremely complimentary about s/w and how they feel she has picked up the case and got to know the case, them, the mother, and the children really well in a relatively short time. They felt that "a weight had been lifted" from them as they feel that things are moving forward for the benefit of the children and s/w takes a lot of the worries away from them so that they can just get on with the day to day care of the children.*

Practice can still be variable, and not always as good as it needs to be at all times in all parts of the service. Whilst agency numbers have reduced, they still form a significant part of our workforce. Whilst there is no 'magic number' of children a County with the characteristics of Monmouthshire should be 'looking after', the significant increase in the number of LAC in 2015/16 was a real cause for concern. The stabilisation of the number of LAC, is, conversely, positive, but has been accompanied by a very significant increase in the number of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR).

The Children's Service Improvement Programme has brought leadership and focus on what needs to be done to achieve sustainable change which is built on firm foundations and embedded culturally. This provides the basis for consistent, and confident performance. Independent analysis of progress one year into the improvement programme has shown **there is some really good, child-focussed practice, particularly at the point of referral and assessment. We have not yet developed a clear enough approach to 'stepping down' children to support from preventative services. Our performance measures show we are not completing enough assessments in a timely way.**

A high degree of risk is being managed by working with families through a child protection process (child protection registrations increased from 35 to 97 in 2016/17). **Analysis shows we are not always intervening early enough to prevent risk from escalating and there is evidence partners do not always have confidence that the right support is available outside of a child protection registration<sup>3</sup>.**

We have reviewed and aligned family support services in the last year.<sup>4</sup> The review highlighted that there is a good range of resources (opportunities) available for family support but they not operating in a coherent way. **This means some families may not get the right family support in as timely a way as they should.** Following the review, there is a clear way forward for early help and intervention services, particularly to ensure the needs of families with complex problems are addressed.

**When children are looked after, we are not always able to provide foster care and support for them with Monmouthshire carers.** Recruiting Monmouthshire foster carers has

been a particular challenge in the last year, despite investment in this area. This can mean children and young people lose connection with the local area and the resources within it.

# How are people shaping our services?

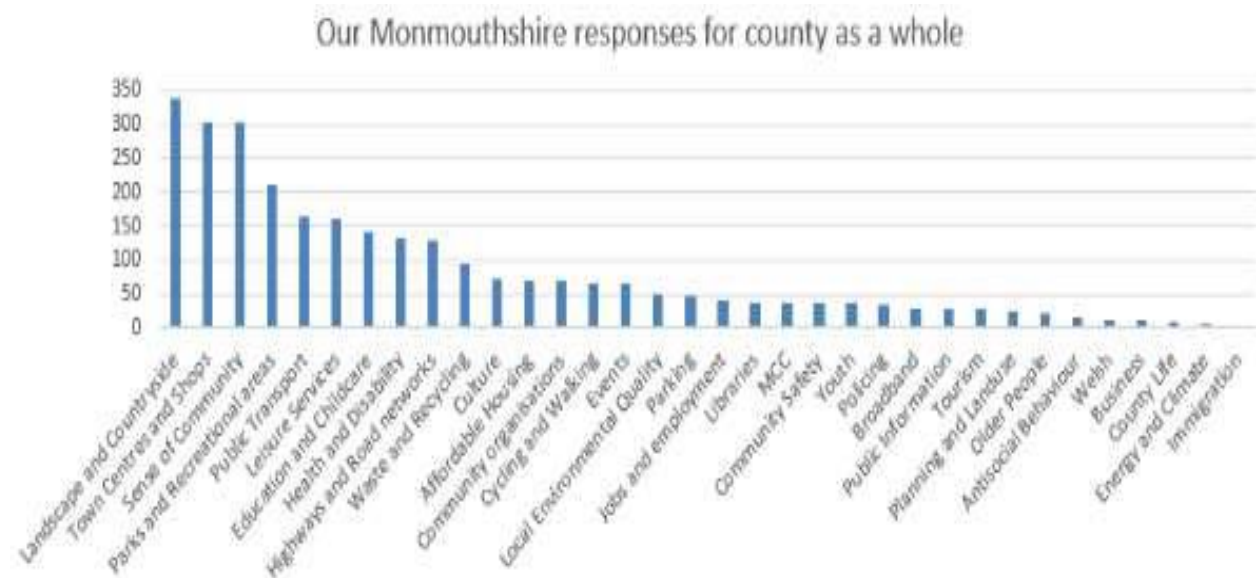
Public service partners in Monmouthshire have completed a major engagement exercise, *Our Monmouthshire*, to understand what really matters to people across the county. As part of the exercise more than a thousand people were interviewed and asked two questions:

‘What is good about where you live?’ and

‘What could make it even better?’

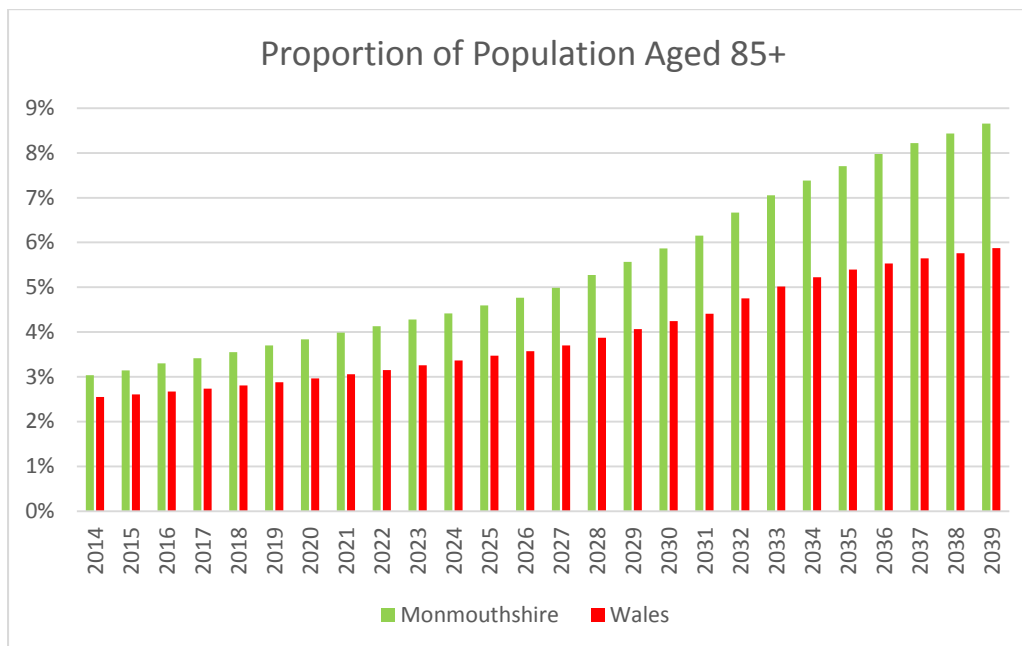
The theme which generated the most comments was landscape and countryside, with these comments being overwhelmingly positive. The next highest number of comments were about town centres and shops, with the degree of positivity depending on where people live. Also, attracting large number of comments were the strong sense of community and connection people felt to where they live and the friendliness of the people in the county. This accords well with the approach to locality working and connecting people to their communities and natural friendships which is a theme throughout this report. *Our Monmouthshire* is informing the Well-being Assessment, in line with the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG).

**Figure 5** shows the number of comments by theme for the County as a whole:



**Figure 5**

The things people have said through *Our Monmouthshire* have, along with data, statistics and research formed the well-being assessment which has also been consulted on in early 2017. The Public Service Board (PSB) is using the findings of the assessment to help decide on the priorities to focus on in the wellbeing plan. One thing is clear; the number of older people living in our County is going to increase over the next 20 years (see **figure 6**). The opportunity for many older people to continue to make fantastically positive contributions but also the challenges of physical ill health and dementia will be at the fore of partner considerations in setting those objectives for working together.



**Figure 6**

The Gwent Region Population Needs Assessment (PNA), is a requirement of the SSWBA. This has also been developed, and consulted on, in the same period as the future generation's well-being assessment. The consultation for the PNA has built on existing forums and established groups across the region, including the Greater Gwent Citizens' Panel. Partner agencies including private providers and third sector groups were key contributors in the consultation process in order to ensure fair representation and a balanced approach to the needs identified for and on behalf of the community. In addition a citizen's group has been established to scrutinise and steer the population needs assessment. The results of both these consultations will inform how services are shaped and delivered in Monmouthshire, and across the Greater Gwent region, in the forthcoming year.

### **Working with people to shape wellbeing and social services in Monmouthshire**

Some examples of active work with people to shape services in the last 12 months:

- Surveys of adults, carers and children and analysis of response
- Feedback on assessments undertaken by the Children with Disabilities Team
- Development of fora for LAC and care leavers
- Involvement in decisions which affect them (e.g. numbers of children attending LAC reviews)
- Advocacy services for children and adults
- Systems work to review practice across disability services for people of all ages which included qualitative interviews with a number of children, adults and families
- Development of the Carers strategy and the Young Carers Strategy which saw both adults and young carers shaping them<sup>5</sup>.
- My Day My Life, My Mates and My Holidays – co-producing services and outcomes to improve lives for people with disabilities.
- Monmouthshire People First, a user-led organisation for people with learning disabilities, is developing an approach to involving people in our area
- Mardy Park engagement examples of strong community engagement.



# Promoting and Improving the Well-being of those we help

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## ***Improving Practice, Improving Lives***

**What we must report on?** – We work with people to understand and support the personal well-being outcomes they wish to achieve.

**What does this mean?** – Understanding what matters to people, listening to understand and supporting them to articulate and achieve what a good life means to them.

### **What we said we would do (2016/17 *Priorities for Improvement*)**

- We will implement the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- We will deliver a practice-led programme for improvement in children's social services
- Confident social work practice will facilitate the best possible outcomes for people

### **What have we done?**

- ***Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014***

We have been transforming social work practice, understanding what matters, for a number of years. This is now reflected legally in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. This meant that we were able to take stock and evaluate where we needed to develop further and work with other partners to support their implementation. The 'Act Watch' group met for 12 months and covered many topics in the oversight of the implementation.<sup>6</sup> The development of partnership approaches to information, advice and assistance and well-being were developed during the year.

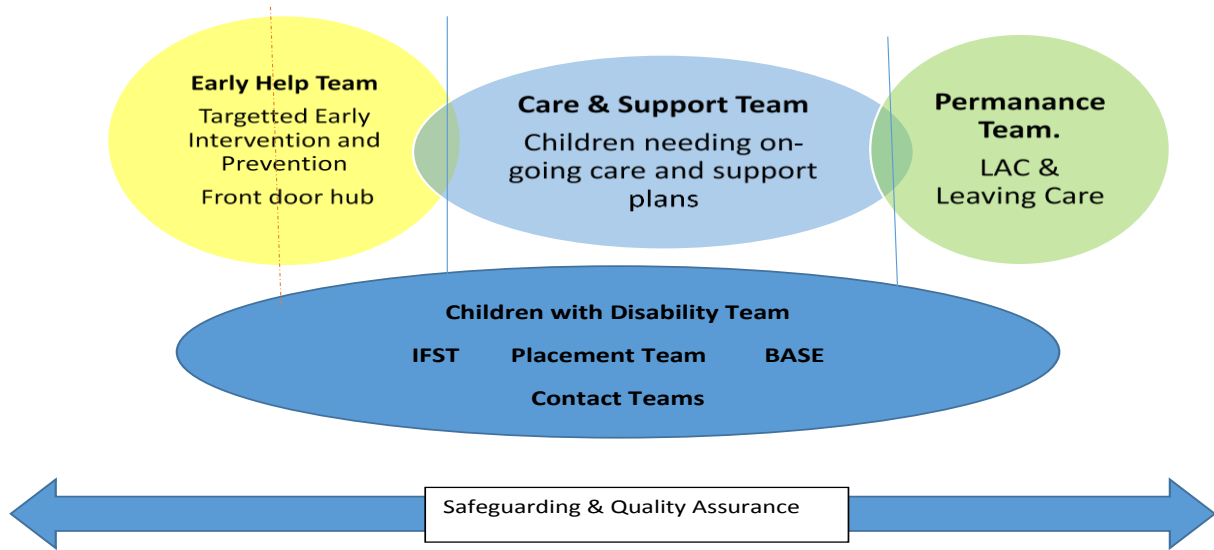
- ***Understanding what matters to carers***

The SSWBA broadened the definition of a carer, meaning more carers are entitled to carer's assessments and support plans. Carers must be actively offered an assessment where it appears they have a care and support need. Carers in Monmouthshire – adult carers and young carers - worked with the council and partners to actively develop carers' strategies which really reflected their priorities and were accompanied by a set of deliverable actions<sup>7</sup>.

- ***Excellence in Children's Services***

The operating model in Children's Services has been redesigned to support the right skill set to work with children and families (see **figure 7**).

**Proposed Service Delivery Model**



**Figure 7**

- The redesign of the operating model aims to provide increased capacity at front-door and the basis for the full integration of Team Around the Family (TAF). The operating model is based on a clear vision. It organises how children's services operate, right through from family support to complex needs. This will promote closer working between early help and prevention. The teams all have clear purposes which means children, young people and families should be able to access the right support at the right time. Practice improvement at the front door of children's services and during legal proceedings, have had a particular focus. Policies and procedures to support the model are being developed which address arrangements for dealing with contact and referrals, information gathering, assessment, eligibility and care and support planning, and step down to TAF.
- *Improving practice across all age disability services*  
Children and adult social workers who work with people with disabilities and their families have come together to develop a common approach to understanding what matters, and developing their practice to enable people across the age range to live their own lives. The aim of this work is to remove the word (and process) of 'transition' between adult and children's services through a common model of practice which is based on long term relationships. Services are organized around what support is needed.
- *New responsibilities for well-being and social services in the secure estate*  
The SSWBA includes new accountabilities for local authorities in which secure estate for adults is located. This has extended the duties of Monmouthshire adult services by 550 people. It offers the challenge of delivering on well-being and outcomes for service-users within the prison 'community' in a similar way to the wider population. Responsibility for these new duties sit with the Monmouth Integrated Services Team who are forging new partnerships with National OMS and the Prison Health Service (ABUHB) and developing nurturing/initiating creative, preventative approaches (the 'Buddy Scheme', Yoga, Mindfulness, Day activities, Peer support sessions), which involve the prison population with care and support needs.

## How well have we done?

*What have people told us about their experience?*

- 75% adults, 86% carers and 64% children report they felt involved in decisions about their care and support

*What are complaints, compliments and comments telling us about how well we are doing?*

- Figure 7 provides a summary of complaints and compliments received in the last year

	2016/17
Number of complaints received in the whole of Social Care	63
Number of comments received in Social Care	81
Number of compliments received in Social Care	118

**Figure 7**

- Whilst each complaint is individual there were some themes which provide the basis for learning: the need to improve communication, transparency and adherence to procedures, the need for a swifter response to families in distress or crisis and increased service offer.
- The compliments received reflect the impact on people's lives, often at a time of crisis, when we get things right, listen and support solutions to really difficult circumstances:

*"Awwww thank you!! He is doing amazing! Never ever did I think things would be as good as they are. The review was brilliant (I did cry!)"*

*Thank you! I bet it's nice for you and s/w to see how far he has come. Sometimes you look back on situations and think "we would never be where we are if it wasn't for them" that's certainly what I think about you both because u guys have been amazing all the way through! Thank you"*

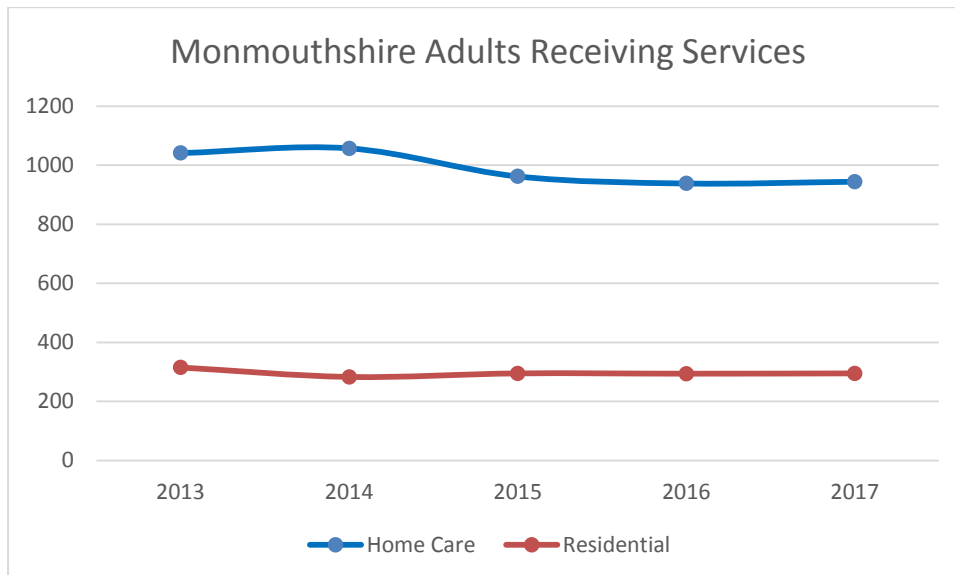
*We are lucky to be living within Monmouthshire Council who provide excellent social services and care by dedicated staff."*

*What does our performance against national outcome measures tell us about how well we are supporting children and young people to achieve positive outcomes?*

- 75.6% adults who received support from the information, advice and assistance service (IAA) have not contacted the service again during the year.
- 74.69% assessments for children were completed within statutory timescales.

*What other evidence is important in understanding how well we are doing?*

- *The impact of practice change in adult services* – understanding what matters to people and intervening earlier has meant, over time, a reduction in the number of adults receiving traditional care and support services in Monmouthshire (figure 8), despite a demographic which indicates we would need to be making more care home placements and commissioning more domiciliary care.



**Figure 8**

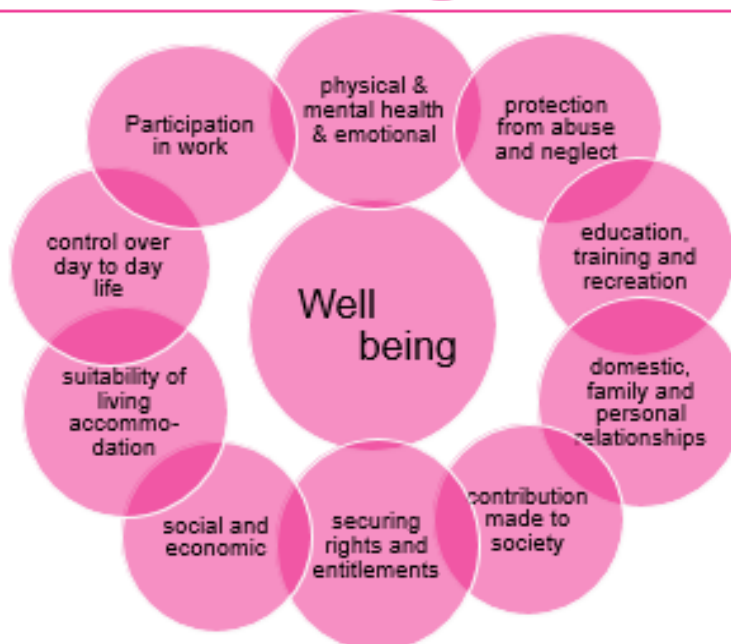
- The effectiveness of the 'front door' of Children's Services* - CSSIW undertook a focused inspection of the 'front door' of Children's Social Services at the start of the year. Overall, inspectors reported robust plans for a whole service redesign and improvement programme which include a focus on prevention, early intervention and wellbeing (in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act) and also address the recommendations identified in the previous CSSIW inspection. They noted a number of positive developments, that the improvement agenda is being driven with rigour but there is still a long way to go. The Inspectorate recognised these improvements will take time to implement and embed in everyday practice but that the stated commitment of the authority to improvement is evident.<sup>8</sup>
- Improving Practice in Children's Services* - an independent review of practice in children's services by Institute of Public Care has found evidence that Children's Social Workers are having the right 'what matters?' conversations with families and children<sup>9</sup>.

Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being,  
 Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society,  
 Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships  
 Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

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**What does this mean?** - This means working with people to support them to achieve the goals they have identified themselves which together constitute a good life. These are called people's 'personal well-being goals'. The SSWBA details the different elements of wellbeing (**figure 10**). People may need support in any of these areas to live the life they want to live.

## Elements of wellbeing



**Figure 10**

In working with people to achieve their personal wellbeing outcomes, there are three building blocks which form the foundation for wellbeing, care and support:



- **Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA)** – each local authority (with support of their local health board) must secure the provision of an information and advice service relating to care and support in its area (including support for carers) and (where appropriate) assistance in accessing these.
- **Early Intervention and Preventative approaches – being able to access advice and support** as early as possible to tackle problems and maintain a good quality of life, in so doing reducing or delaying the need for longer term care and support
- **Care and support** – We must assess people's needs if we know or think they have care and support needs or a carer needs support. Care plans describe the care and support that have been identified to enable someone to meet their wellbeing outcomes. This will include support from informal carers, friends and families, and support available in the community, as well as social care services.

### **What did we say we would do? (2016/17 Priorities for Improvement)**

#### **IAA**

- We will support people to live the lives they want to live by ensuring they have access to the timely, quality, information, advice and assistance

#### **Early Intervention and Prevention**

- We will ensure there are coherent models of early intervention, prevention, well-being with a focus on connecting people, families and communities – place based approach
- We will build on the success of our integrated community health and social care teams to develop place based approaches to well-being, primary, community and social care based on NCN boundaries.

#### **Care and Support**

- We will commission intelligently, informed by a clear evidence base and analysis of the needs we need to meet. Commissioning and innovative redesign of traditional services will be based on positive, long term relationships with providers. Links between practice and commissioning will be strengthened by using information from assessments and care plans as well as population level assessments.

### **What have we done?**

#### **IAA**

- We have reviewed the approach to, and availability of, IAA across the county<sup>10</sup>. IAA is available from a range of places in the County (community hubs, leisure centres, social care resource centres, primary care), for all citizens and includes a variety of activity e.g. signposting to support, managing debt, and access to food banks. People can self-refer to most IAA services.
- Staff and volunteers aim to provide a positive response even in the most complex of situations. Access is open and information is available in a wide range of formats, leaflets, posters, websites (including Dewis Cyrmu which has been launched in the last year as a source for professionals and the public detailing wellbeing opportunities in local communities). Contact is through telephone, drop in and or face to face. Social media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) is being developed - and take up via these methods, particularly for the younger generation, is increasing.
- The supporting people funded 'Gateway' provides information, advice and facilitates access to assistance for housing related support services, including financial advice,

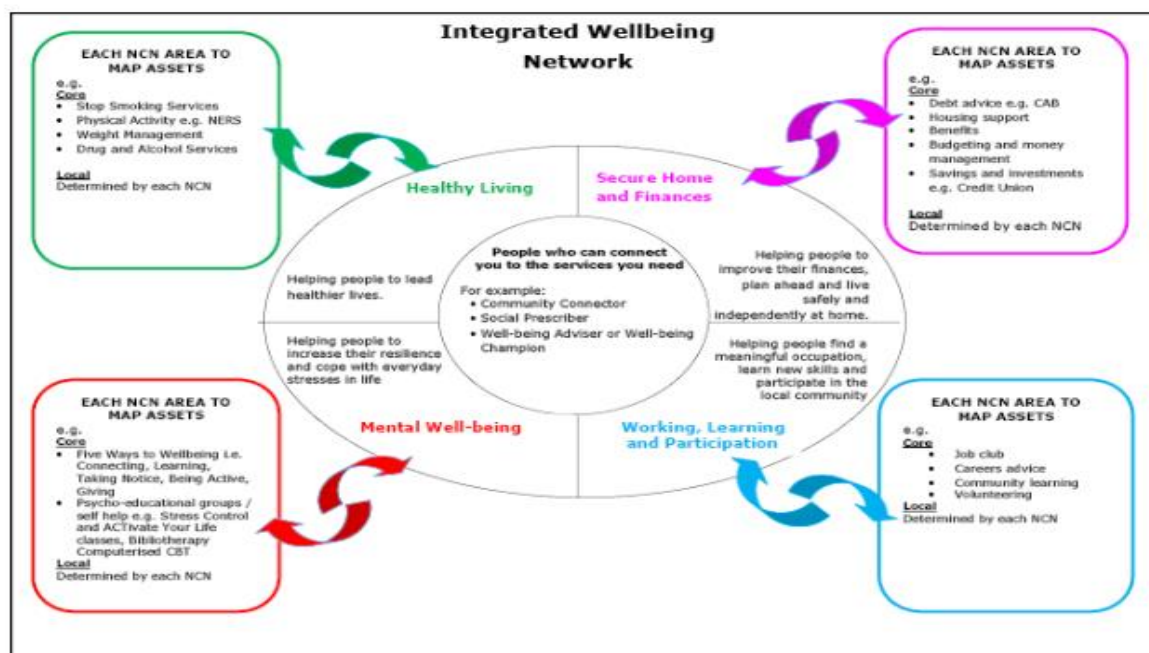
connection to community support and support in maintaining a tenancy. The IAA provided via the gateway has been expanded to support wellbeing outcomes to meet the prevention agenda of both the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Housing Act.

- We have implemented Dewis Cymru<sup>11</sup> locally as an information source for citizens and professionals about well-being in Wales.
- FISH (Finding Individual Solutions Here) and the 'Early Help' team in Children's Services are both being reviewed to make sure they are offering IAA in the most effective way.

### Early Intervention and Prevention

- We have facilitated locality working – sometimes called place based working – to bring together partners in natural communities who are engaged in activities which support wellbeing. This approach is delivered through many different organisations with a common purpose focussing on wellbeing, connection and contribution.
- We are working with a range of partners to facilitate 'joining up' what is available in 'integrated wellbeing networks' (figure 11) which are based on the 'natural' communities within which people live and within which they connect. There is also a strong connection with primary care 'neighbourhood care networks'. The wellbeing network approach recognises the different elements of 'wellbeing' and facilitates local communities and partners to map assets and understand where their gaps may be.

**Figure: 2.1 Intregrated Wellbeing Network**

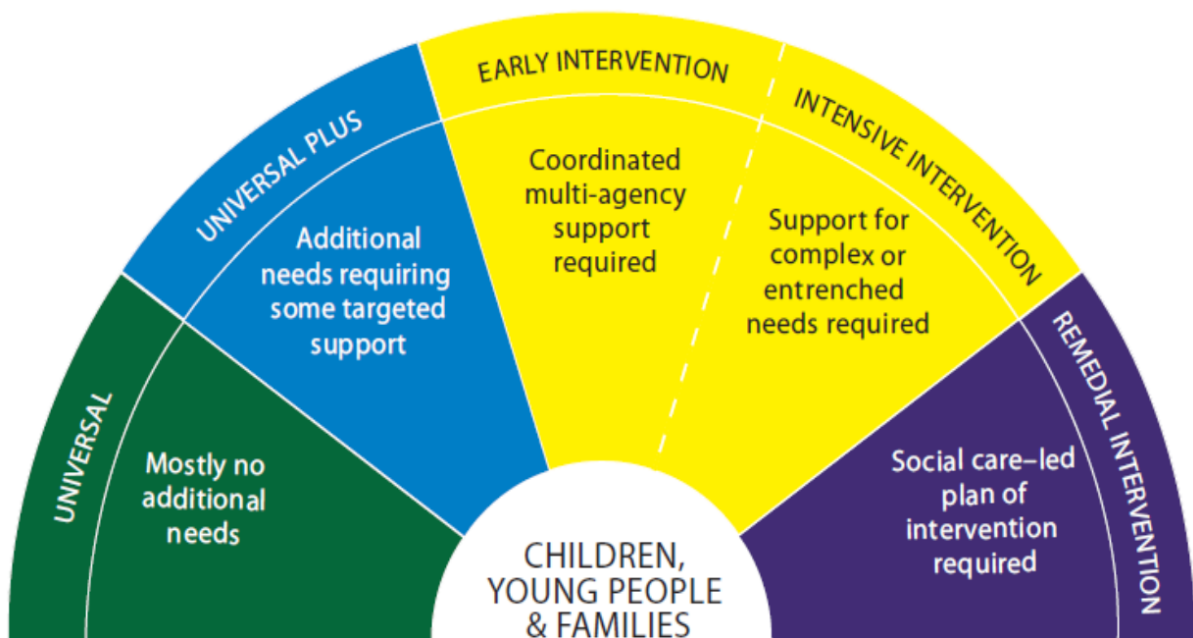


**Figure 11**

- The integrated wellbeing network approach recognises the importance of community hubs (for the whole population), and health and social care resource centres (for people with care and support needs) as physical assets which support wellbeing activities and health. In the last year the re-development of Mardy Park<sup>12</sup> as a resource centre in the north is providing a real focus for intra-generational wellbeing activities, as well as a base for integrated working for professionals.
- The focus is to provide person-centred service delivery through working collaboratively with the people who live and work locally. In effect the new services provide easy

access to advice, information, and assistance, with “**the right people being available at the right time in the right place**”.

- The model also identifies the roles of people in connecting roles, who support people to access other resources. We have invested Supporting People resources into housing and wellbeing workers and social inclusion workers who are working with people who may be isolated and vulnerable. They assist them to build natural networks and find community support that assists them to work through the issues they face and to prevent them accessing statutory services. Early intervention and prevention in action!
- In addition to the integrated well-being network, further early intervention and prevention for children and families is supported through the Families First programme. In the last year we have:
  - Improved integration of the Team Around the Family with children’s social services.
  - Reviewed family support services with the aim of delivering a more coordinated approach across the different tiers of care – see figure 12



**Figure 12**

### Care and Support

- Care and support in Monmouthshire has moved to a relationship based experience - care that supports a more natural life, promotes choice, control, independence and meets the social and emotional needs of the people we support.
- This principle is being embedded in the type of care and support services we are providing or commissioning across the county. Home support provided by the council has been remodelled. This started as the ‘Raglan Project’ and is now all the Monmouthshire Care at Home service is working in this way. This approach is transforming the experience of care for those who receive the service and their carers.
- We have worked with independent sector home care providers in the last year to transfer the learning from Monmouthshire Care at Home across the sector. Relationships between the council and independent providers have developed very positively through an approach to ‘turning the world (of traditional domiciliary care commissioning) upside down’.

### Learning, Developing and Participating in Society

- My Day, My Life, is a person centred approach to support for people with learning disabilities. In the last year, this approach has been expanded through My Mates, a scheme to help people with disabilities develop friendships, wider networks and personal relationships.

The impact of these relationship based approaches is most vividly evidenced through the stories of individuals<sup>13</sup>:

*“My Day My Life has really changed me for the better. Back in the old times I wasn't happy. Now I am. I have opportunity in the Youth Centre, Credit Union. I feel like part of the team, and not like a service user. I use taxis, I am friendly and have a good banter with them. I am on FB with a few friends that I have met through my time at the Credit Union. I am making friends within MDML itself and last week went to someone's birthday meal. My mam has seen a big change in me for the better. I am now using my own Bank cards and have been on three self-funded holidays with supported holidays. I can honestly say I don't want MDML to finish. My new confidence and independence is down to the programme. I used to dread getting up in the mornings not any more. It's also down to the staff, they are a friendly team and nothing is too much trouble for them.”*

- Children's services have also strengthened working arrangements with youth enterprise to improve opportunities for care leavers not in education, employment or training
- Close working with education to support our LAC to achieve educational outcomes. Schools are able to bid for additional funding for LAC pupils to provide additional support to raise standards via the Educational Achievement Service. Personal Education Plans are written in partnership between schools and social workers to identify areas of strength and areas for development. Appropriate information is shared so that any issues which may be impacting on performance can be addressed.
- There are two fulltime Personal Advisors whose key role is to support care leavers with a pathway plan, on their journey towards independence. There is a care leavers' group that supports young people via organised activities.
- Supporting volunteering and contribution - We provide a clear, consistent and collaborative approach to volunteering across Monmouthshire working with partners in public, private and third sector organisations. The council is supported by 1700 volunteers active across all directorates and 48 members of staff carry out volunteer coordination responsibilities in their role. We have trained 36 of these staff in volunteer management through our Leading Volunteers programme. Working together we have promoted volunteering in Monmouthshire as a way to increase wellbeing by improving the profile, quality and range of volunteering opportunities through various events and online campaigns. In adopting a coproduction approach with Bridges Centre in Monmouth we have specifically supported individuals into volunteer opportunities that benefit their wellbeing. This is one example of how we have increased the level of support, training and recognition for volunteers. Volunteers identified with additional needs are supported by a specialised volunteer coordinator.

### **Accommodation and Support**

- Children's services have worked creatively to secure housing and accommodation support through bespoke packages for LAC and care leavers, working with support providers and registered social landlords.
- We have invested in a number of business cases to improve outcomes for children through expansion of the numbers of foster carers and the provision of additional support through the psychology-led BASE service and additional support special to guardianships
- Commissioning capacity has been integrated into children's services for the first time in 10 years. This has enabled us to review all residential placements and revised our systems to ensure we understand the quality of care and outcomes for young people in residential placements.

## Improved Performance

### How well have we done (*What does the evidence tell us?*)

#### *What people have told us about their experience*

- 78% adults, 75% carers and 69% carers report they received the right information and advice when they needed it
- 82% adults, 91% carers and 88% children report they were treated with dignity and respect
- 82% adults, 80% carers and 88% children report they were given written information of their named worker in social services
- 75% adults, 86% carers and 64% children felt they were involved in decisions about their care and support
- 85% adults, 68% carers and 76% children were satisfied with the care and support they received.
- 51% adults and 36% carers reporting that they can do what matters to them
- 83% adults, 61% carers and 76% children report they feel satisfied with their social networks
- 86% adults, 82% carers and 80% children feel they live in the right home for them
- 78% children and young people are happy with whom they live
- 96% adults, 98% carers and 98% children have received care and support through their language of choice
- 59% young adults report they received advice and help to support to prepare them for adulthood
- 52% people report they chose to live in a residential care home

What does our performance against national outcome measures tell us about how well we are supporting adults to achieve positive outcomes?

#### Care and support

- 22 people have experienced a delay in their transfer of care from a hospital setting because we weren't able to secure the right social care support as quickly as we should have (more people will have been delayed in other community services). This is a significant improvement on the numbers of delayed transfers recorded for Monmouthshire residents in 2015/16 but does represent real pressure in the system due to the challenges in the domiciliary care market and a deterioration in performance compared to previous years.
- 17.39% people have had a reduced package of care and support six months following a reablement service; 73.33% have no package of care six months after a period of reablement. This is really positive performance, but due to people being delayed in reablement not everyone who would benefit from the reablement service is able to access support to maximise their independence.

### **What does our performance against national outcome measures tell us about how well we are supporting children and young people to achieve positive outcomes?**

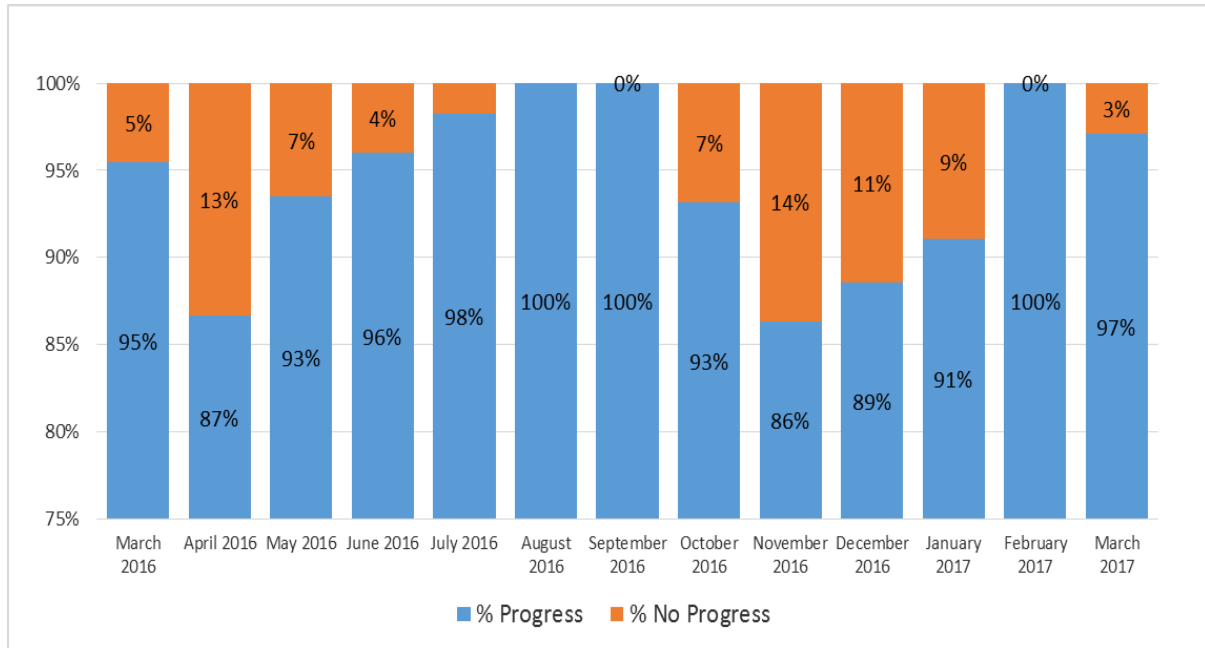
- 56.52% children are reported as seen by a registered dentist within three months of becoming looked after
- 98.33% LAC are registered with a GP
- 68.75% LAC are achieving the core stage indicator at stage 2 and 29.41% at key stage 4
- 8.14% LAC who, during the year to 31st March have experienced one or more changes in school during periods of being looked after that were not due to transitional arrangements
- 61.56% of children supported to remain living with their family
- 63.64% of care leavers are in education, training or employment at 12 months and 50% at 24 months after leaving care



- 5.45% of care leavers have experienced homelessness during the year

**What other evidence is important in understanding how well we are doing?**

- Analysis of performance in 2016/17 of Monmouthshire Integrated Services <sup>14</sup> has highlighted that of all referrals (on average 78 per week), 60% require IAA rather than allocation to a professional for further assessment.
- The same report analyses the degree of positive progress people with care and support plans are reporting. This is an extremely rich source of data to support how people we support feel they are progressing towards a better life (see figure 13)

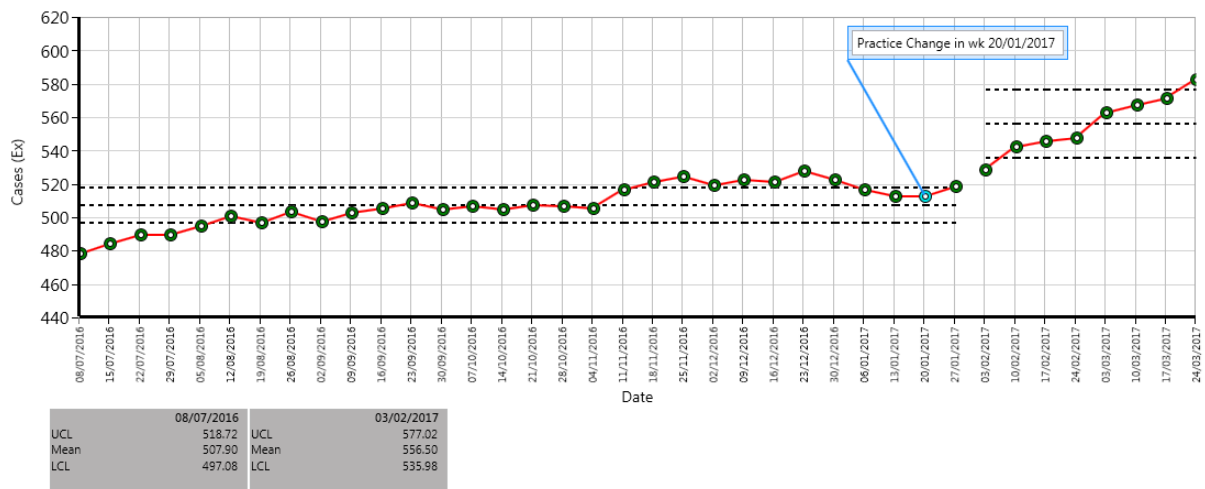


**Figure 13**

- Despite the pressures in the care sector, our performance measures in figure 14 shows the impact of closer working with, and between, providers in increasing the number of care packages they were able to support.

**F**

Number of Cases with External Providers (Group adjusted)



**Figure 14**

- Analysis by the Head of Children's Services is that there is an increase in the numbers of complex cases of families who are struggling across well-being domains.<sup>15</sup>
- Monthly analysis by the Independent Reviewing Officer highlights the number of LAC and mix of placements. Figure 15 is a summary over the last five years. The table illustrates the increased challenge in recruiting Monmouthshire foster carers (and the associated rise in placements with independent foster carers). The table demonstrates the rise in the number of children who have a looked after status who live with their own parents; a result of changing judicial practice.

	31.03.13	31.03.14	31.03.15	31.03.16	31.03.17
Monmouthshire Foster Carers	36	35	34	32	26
Monmouthshire Family and Friends Carers	28	19	16	29	23
Independent Fostering	25	25	37	32	42
Independent Living	2	2	1	1	5
Pre-adoption	0	7	2	9	7
Placed with Parent	4	9	9	16	20
Residential / Education Placement	6	5	8	10	8
Mother and Baby Placement	0	0	0	0	1
Secure Unit	0	1	1	1	1
Child in Hospital	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>133*</b>

\*The numbers include 3 unaccompanied asylum seekers

**Figure 15**

- The Independent Reviewing Officer produces a statutory six monthly report into the LAC reviews undertaken<sup>16</sup>. This provides an invaluable insight into how well we are support LAC, progress and opportunities to improve. A theme this year has been that despite the similar number of LAC at the start and end of the year, there has been a lot of change within the population of LAC). Again, positively in the last half the year there were no breakdowns in Special Guardianship Orders, compared with six breakdowns in the first six months. The report notes ongoing challenges within the Court processes and securing suitable accommodation and support for care leavers.
- During 2016/17 we have worked hard at ensuring that 'for those children where nothing else will do' (this is a quote from case law – that stipulates that all other options must have been considered and ruled out before Adoption is considered) we have systems in place to minimise the delays in the adoption process.. In 2016/17, 9 children were placed for adoption. This figure has been much lower in previous years and 9 represents a significant increase on 2015/16 where we only had 1 child adopted.
- In terms of educational outcomes for LAC, the latest data for academic year 2015/16 shows Monmouthshire's performance increased across all key stages. All key stage 4 LAC achieved a qualification.

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

## **What we said we would do (*Priority for Improvement*)**

Safeguarding children and adults at risk is our very highest priority

## **What have we done?**

### **Regional Safeguarding Arrangements**

- The arrangements for safeguarding across the region are led through the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and South East Wales Safeguarding Adult Board (SEWSAB) which have a range of sub-groups that deliver safeguarding in its practical form. Monmouthshire's Learning & Review Group improves the quality of inter-agency safeguarding arrangements and practice at a local level, promoting a direct link between the SEWSCB, its sub-groups and front-line practice across the region. The group promotes a culture of multi-agency learning and increased accountability with local authority areas supported by the boards' business unit.

### **Whole Authority Safeguarding Arrangements**

- We have developed a new whole authority safeguarding policy which for the first time comprehensively sets out Council policy for safeguarding children and adults at risk
- There is revised officer governance through the Whole Authority Safeguarding Co-ordinating Group to incorporate safeguarding adults at risk and ensure representation from all parts of the authority is at a senior (Head of Service) level.
- A self-evaluation tool (SAFE) for use across settings in Monmouthshire which support children and adults at risk has been developed.
- We have reviewed and strengthened capacity within the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit to provide the right leadership for whole authority safeguarding and to provide the basis for bringing adult and children's safeguarding together

### **Protecting Children and Adults at risk**

- Clear policies and procedures are in place to safeguard adults at risk and new responsibilities under the SSWBA including workers trained in adult protection orders are in place. The duty to report and wider awareness training has been delivered to a wide range of staff partners.
- We have supported the workforce in children's services through the new operating model, revising systems, policies and decision making processes.

### **Mental Health and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs)**

- We have successfully implemented a new Mental Health Act code of practice which has placed additional responsibilities on approved mental health practitioners (AMHPs) and the local authority.
- Monmouthshire has worked with other Gwent authorities to effectively support people who are deprived of their liberties in registered care settings. A number of people are deprived of their liberty in community settings and this has resulted in a few cases being presented to the Court of Protection for authorisations.
- We are scoping the need to implement the DoLs safeguards for young people aged 16-18.

- We are currently working with a number of young people aged 14-18 who have been identified with mental health issues. The past year has seen greater cooperation between children's services and adult mental health care services to ensure a better and more timely "transition" between services. These young people are now receiving relevant follow up and aftercare defined under the Mental Health Act and the Mental Health Measure.

### How well have we done (*What does the evidence tell us?*)

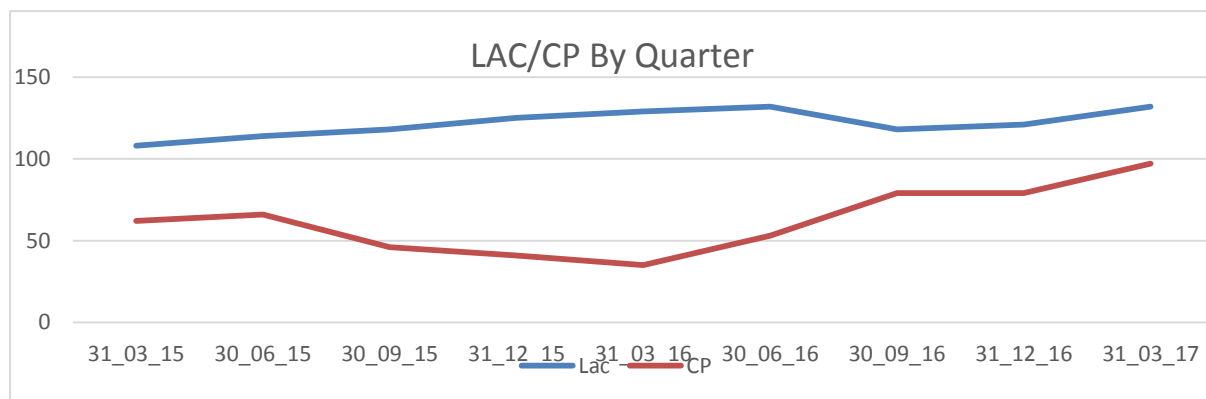
#### What does our performance against national outcome measures tell us?

##### Protecting adults at risk

- 274/309 (88.67%) adult protection referrals were responded to within 7 days

##### Protecting Children

- The most significant feature for child protection in Monmouthshire in 2016/17 was the increase in the numbers of children on the child protection register. This is illustrated in **figure 16**.



	31.03.15	30.06.15	30.09.15	31.12.15	31.03.16	30.06.16	30.09.16	31.12.16	31.03.17
<b>LAC</b>	108	114	118	125	129	132	118	121	132
<b>CP</b>	62	66	46	41	35	53	79	79	97

Figure 16

- 2.38 % children on the child protection register were re-registered during the year. A low level of re-registrations indicates that we are not making inappropriate de-registration decisions.
- The average length of time for all children who were on the child protection register during the year was 230 days – this is an improving position, indicating that cases are being actively worked.

#### What other evidence is important in understanding how well we are doing?

- Concerns around corporate safeguarding were raised by the Wales Audit Office following a review into safeguarding arrangements in a specific service in the operations division<sup>17</sup>. Whole authority safeguarding arrangements have been strengthened and the specific concerns around the individual service are being addressed.

- The child protection co-ordinator develops a 6 monthly report on children on the child protection register. The latest audit<sup>18</sup> highlights a number of areas for further exploration in considering why the numbers of children on the child protection register have increased so significantly. It appears from the analysis that the progress in practice in the last year has meant far higher levels of risk are being held through child protection processes.
- The next step for children's services, with multi-agency partners, is to really work through how the preventative services and care and support plans can be used more effectively to understand and manage risks outside a registration process.

# How we do what we do

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## What we must report on - Our workforce and how we support their professional roles

### What we said we would do (*Priority for Improvement*)

***We will support and develop the whole social care workforce so they have high levels of confidence, competence and training, underpinned by person-centred values, behaviours and attitudes.***

### What have we done?

#### Leadership in Social Care and Health

A new directorate wide leadership structure has been implemented. The Head of Adults and Head of Children's Services now have responsibilities across social care and health in the areas of commissioning, safeguarding and disability services. This recognises the strengths in different parts of the directorate and supports development of a unified culture.

A new service manager structure also reflects wider leadership roles across agencies (Integrated Service Managers) and the directorate (Commissioning Service Manager, Safeguarding Service Manager, Disability Service Manager). Getting the right people into leadership posts has been a major priority during the year. Children's services has benefitted hugely from the drive and experience of a former director of social services to support service improvement whilst all positions have been subject to recruitment.

The leadership structures and role profiles reflect the need to be outward looking, to form positive and productive relationships with colleagues across the council and with key partners. This is critical to achieving the best outcomes for people with care and support needs in Monmouthshire. The new operating model has been approved in children's services, bringing with it new roles for team managers within the service.

#### Training, Learning & Development

##### *Social Services and Wellbeing Act*

Training priorities in the last year have focused on supporting the training needed for the SSWB Act. A comprehensive training approach was taken in the lead up to the Act comprising both regional and locally delivered training. The impact of the training and the approach to working with partners has seen an increase in the knowledge of the Act. Its principles and underpinning ethos are very much the language of all partners. 32 organisations, statutory, voluntary, independent and private providers received training alongside our multi agency teams:

##### *Regional Workforce Development*

Welsh Government support for regional developments and national priorities has seen the implementation of Regional Boards for Social Care Workforce Development that pull together national themes from across Wales. The regional board has supported:

- Qualification routes for social work
- Post qualifying programmes such as Continued Professional Education and Learning, Approved Mental Health Professional certification and Team Manager Diploma Programme



- Vocational QCF programmes and review linked to Qualifications Wales
- SSWB ACT Organisational Development programme
- Social Services practitioner initiatives
- Dementia strategy
- Achieving Best Evidence
- DOLs and Mental Capacity - and a range of mental health related joint training
- Domestic abuse
- Safeguarding Board joint training group

#### *Monmouthshire Social Services Workforce Development*

A competent, confident workforce is a central component of the children's services improvement programme. A comprehensive skills audit has been undertaken in children's services which informed a training plan. This reflects the needs of the service and individual members of the workforce.

Our professional workforce across social care and health is supported to continually develop their practice which supports registration with Social Care Wales. We support practice in many ways including; supervision, continuous professional development panel and staff development through Continuous Professional Education and Learning (CPEL) framework for social workers.

We are developing competency frameworks across all our occupational groups. Direct care is the first competency framework developed. Our care workforce is being supported, and must perform against a clear set of standards. This is an important mechanism to improve the quality of care and ensure our workforce feels supported in their roles.

#### **Attraction, Recruitment, Selection & Retention**

At the start of 2016/17 there were 17 agency workers across children's' services. This has been steadily reducing throughout the year. At the end of the year there were eight agency workers within the service a reduction of over 50% in the year. An agency exit plan is in place that will continue to drive this down when it is safe to do so.

The high number of child protection registrations has meant a need to retain higher number of agency workers in the service due to the need to ensure risk is managed in a timely way for children and families.

A continuous recruitment campaign has resulted in an increase in applicants for advertised posts during the year. The recruitment campaign has been supported creatively by the marketing team with an emphasis on social media to support traditional recruitment methods. Further website work will be required to support all future attraction to the social care workforce.

We have developed a new induction programme in Children's Services, the Children's Services on-boarding programme. This supports all new appointees (including volunteers and agency workers) to ensure they are getting the right welcome to the Monmouthshire as well as the essential training and tools to do their jobs.

The very focussed approach to workforce development in Children's Services has meant morale in the service has improved, despite the level of change that is evident. Sickness absence has also fallen considerably in the service (see **figure 17**).

		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Children's services</b>	<b>Average sickness days per FTE</b>	<b>11.89</b>	<b>23.40</b>	<b>10.45</b>

**Figure 17**

Retention rates have also improved considerably and staff turnover is now at the lowest level in the last 5 years (see **figure 17**).

Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Staff turnover %	9.5	10.52	9.76	10.62	7.53

**Figure 17**

### **Dare to Care – Supporting Care Workers in Monmouthshire**

The most critical issue facing adult social services in Monmouthshire is the ability to secure a care workforce. Dare to Care in Monmouthshire is a campaign to promote care as a career, linked to a wider strategy to develop career pathways, fair terms and conditions, training and development and standards. The planning of this major workstream has started in 2016/17 and will be a major priority in the coming year.

### **What we said we would do (*Priority for Improvement*)**

We will achieve a balanced budget within adult and children's services  
We will align our business systems to support delivery of our priorities

### **How well have we done?**

**Appendix 2** is visual representation of how the overall social care and health budget (including public protection) is divided between different service areas and individual budgets. As the illustration shows, whilst the budget of nearly £42million is the largest in the Council, outside of schools, the overall budget is made up of many smaller budgets, each of which is fully (indeed over) committed supporting individuals with care and support needs.

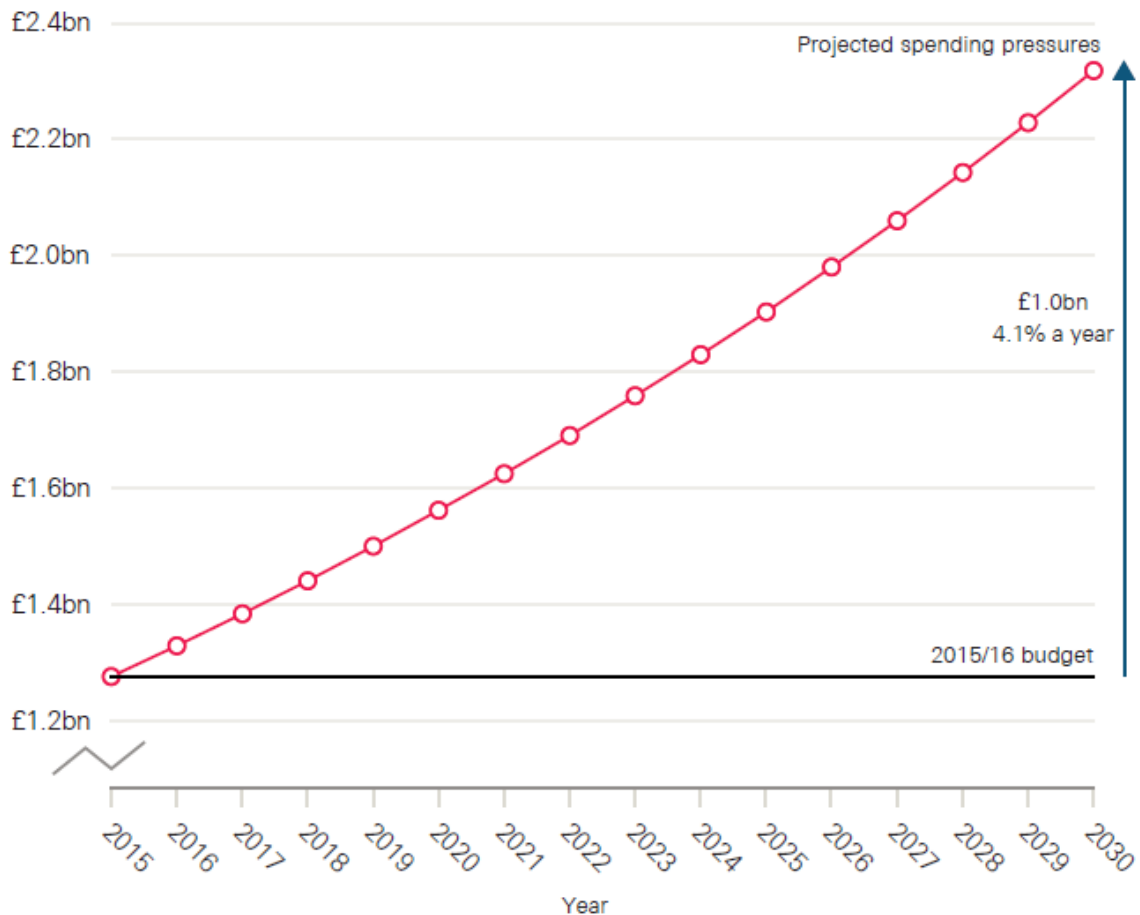
2016/17 was a very challenging year financially for social services in Monmouthshire. The outturn position was an overspend of £1.034million<sup>19</sup>. The considerable pressures reported throughout the year in adult and children's social services were reflected in the year end position. Children's Social Services reported an overspend of £572,000. This was a consequence of pressures in placements for LAC legal cost and agency workforce. These pressures were recognised in the 2017/18 budget and activity in all three areas is being taken forward through the children's services improvement programme. Adult social services outturn was an overspend of £492,000. Reductions in the budget at the start of the financial year had exposed pressures in older adult mental health services and the Chepstow integrated team arising from demographic pressures and pressures within the social care market. Again, these pressures have been reflected in the 2017/18 budget and a significant piece of work is underway to try and put commissioning of care at home on a sustainable footing.

### **The Challenge of Financial Sustainability**

The challenge to Monmouthshire County Council, and indeed all councils across the UK, is meeting the costs of social care services against the backdrop of reducing budgets and increasing demand for care and support. Demographic changes, increasing levels of age-related disability and the need to invest in the care sector is very well documented. A major study by the Health Foundation<sup>20</sup> into the financial viability of the NHS in Wales highlighted the financial, and consequentially service, pressures facing adult social care in Wales which are severe:

*"Pressures for adult social care are projected to rise faster than for the NHS, by an average of 4.1% a year. With funding unlikely to rise at the same rate, there is a real risk that the level of unmet need for care services could rise in Wales"*

**Figure 18** illustrates the gap between current funding levels.



**Figure 18**

### What does this mean in Monmouthshire?

The financial pressures facing Monmouthshire County Council are hugely challenging over the next 4 years. The Council has consistently supported pressures in adult and children's social care to the tune of £5 million over the last 4 years. Over the same period adult social services has delivered savings of £2.3 million. 2016/17 was the first year that adult social care was not able to deliver on mandated budget savings (£600,000). Overall, adult social care services have successfully managed the impact of increasing numbers of older people by transforming the way we support wellbeing, care and support.

Children's services have required significant investment to safeguard children as LAC numbers and child protection registrations have increased. In agreeing budget saving priorities for 2017/18, there are a number of important considerations linked to the service issues set out in this report. Critically, the relatively early stage of the children's services improvement programme means that it is imperative that the focus of the service continues to be improving practice and outcomes for children. In so doing, improvements such as recruiting more local foster carers and supporting children to remain with their own families rather than come into the looked after system, for example, will deliver both better outcomes for children, be far more cost effective and deliver savings over time.

In adult services, the Health Foundation work illustrates the overall pressures meeting the needs of an ageing population across the UK. Monmouthshire has the highest percentage of people aged over 85 in Wales so these pressures are compounded. In Monmouthshire, commissioning domiciliary care in a different way will, in time, prove more cost effective. We have already invested with providers in meeting the national living wage. We recognise that

to support the standards of our future domiciliary care workforce, that we will need to understand the true costs of delivering quality care in a rural county with limited available workforce.

Each service area in social care and health will develop a service and financial sustainability plan for the next four years which will set out the changes that will be needed to meet need and demand, within the resource available, over a period of time. This will mean changes to the mix of services. For example in the area of respite, we continue to move away from residential respite to flexible person centre options.

In both adults and children's services doing the right thing for people has proved, and will continue to prove, more cost effective and it is crucial this principle informs the incredibly difficult budget decisions.

# Our partnership working, political and corporate leadership, governance and accountability

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## **What we said we would do (*Priority for Improvement*)**

To effectively communicate with people, partners, elected members and council colleagues the important changes as a consequence of the SSWBA.

To realise the benefits for people from the statutory partnership arrangements and priorities for integration.

## **What have we done?**

The SSWBA required the establishment of a Regional Partnership Board from April 2017. The board, has been established and has met on bi-monthly. It has held two workshop events to confirm regional integration priority areas and developed joint statements of strategic intent for priority areas: older people; children with complex needs; carers.

Other elements of the statutory partnership and collaboration duties, including the establishment of a regional citizens' panel and a regional value based provider forum, are also in place with the Gwent region being amongst the first in Wales to establish these.

There are regional joint commissioning priorities: domiciliary care; model partnership agreement (for joint commissioning and pooled budgets for care home placements for over 65's); third sector review and pre-implementation work to support the national framework agreement for placements for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems.

The population needs assessment was completed, to meet statutory requirements under Part 2 of the Act, with discussion and sign off by each local authority and local health board governance process, with report submission by the deadline date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

The first Regional Partnership Board annual report was completed and submitted by due deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, and this met requirements set out in Part 9 of the Act.

The Regional Partnership Board has reviewed existing partnerships and integrated arrangements across health and social services and has agreed a number of partnerships under the board as follows:

- Children and Families Partnership
- Older Persons Integration Partnership
- Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership
- Carers Partnership
- Health, Social Care and Housing Forum

All integrated pieces of work will come under one or other of these partnerships and Monmouthshire is well represented on all partnerships, and leads the Children and Families Partnership.



At a local level, the Monmouthshire Integrated Services Partnership Board is well established and provides leadership to integrated working between primary, community health, social care and wellbeing services. The board also provides governance to the formal partnership agreements and pooled budgets between the health board and Monmouthshire County Council. Arrangements have been reviewed in the last year to ensure they are fit for the future and meet the aspirations for further integrated working supported by effective professional, financial and operational governance going forward.

# Our Priorities for Improving

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## What are the priorities for next year and why?

The 2015/16 annual report set out a comprehensive set of 14 improvement priorities which were designed to be delivered over a 3 year period. We will be continuing to progress those priorities, and progress against them all has been noted in this report. They have been 'themed' into 12 priorities and supporting actions for the next 3 years to align them with the SSWBA and the reporting framework within this report.

*Overarching this priority, we will, in the next year, work with people, communities and partners to develop a strategic vision for wellbeing, social care and health in Monmouthshire.*

The priorities are:

### 1. *Involving people in everything we do – 'nothing about me without me'*

- We will co-produce our approaches to well-being, care and support with people and communities, including:
  - Developing and delivering dementia awareness training with carers.
  - Co-producing opportunities for understanding what matters to people with learning disabilities with Monmouthshire Peoples First.
  - *We will build on the learning from the care leaver apprenticeships to ensure we are doing what matters to children and young people and improve our ways on involving children in care and care leavers in our work*

### 2. *Advancing social justice and wellbeing through an asset based community development approach – building everything we do around the communities in which people live their lives:*

- Set out a vision and support progression towards all support being delivered at a locality level. This means we will extend the locality approach to include children and families, people with learning disabilities and mental health.
- Support the community development team to facilitate meaningful community conversations to understand the assets and priorities for development in each locality
- Work with partners to align resources – finance, people, assets- within each locality to achieve maximum impact
- Build on strong relationships with primary care through NCNs to enhance integrated working between wellbeing, primary and community services
- Explore the opportunities for development of more integrated hubs to support the locality approach.
- Review structures and governance in partnership, reflecting a renewed purpose for integrated wellbeing, primary and community services
- Work with academic partners and Public Health Wales to develop performance measures will be developed and based on an agreed understanding of what good looks like.

### 3. *Early intervention and prevention – supporting people at the earliest opportunity to live the lives they want to live; preventing / delaying the need for intensive care and support*

- Work with colleagues across the council, with our partners and with communities to embed the principle that well-being and prevention is everyone's business and every service area can make a considerable contribution to well-being.

- Evaluate and determine if the current front door systems in adult and children's service support delivery of IAA comprehensively enough.
- Continue to work with a wide range of partners to develop locality approaches to wellbeing. This includes working with Public Health Wales to develop a social prescribing approach
- Work with school clusters and partners to develop a targeted, evidence-based model of early intervention and prevention in children's services for families that are showing signs of distress to ensure they can access early and appropriate support. This will aim to prevent families reaching a point where it is necessary for children's social services to intervene, less still for them to break down to the stage where their children are taken into care.
- Work with all partners to review current investment from all funding streams, e.g. core funding, Families First, Supporting People etc. to ensure the right range of targeted support is in place.

*4. Strengthening practice - developing our practice to understand 'what matters' to people so we focus care and support where it is needed on what people can do, and what they aspire to do, to overcome barriers to living the lives they want to live;*

- Social workers will spend their time working with people to understand what matters to them and facilitate them to live the lives they want to live.
- We will get the basics right – learning lessons from case reviews, audits and complaints in key areas such as child protection, adult protection, Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.
- Embed strengths-based and outcome-focussed practice in adult and children's services.
- Progression/ recovery/reablement will be at the heart of social work practice.
- Further develop and evaluate outcomes to understand the impact of practice change through a quality and performance framework that measures what matters. This will include quality assurance systems that support continuous improvement in practice and will be fully embedded in the way we work.
- Reflection as an essential part of practice is critical and a positive approach to continuing professional development, learning and review will support us to ensure we understand people's experience of us and improve from it.
- We will continue to develop our all-age approach to disability. This is a practice-led approach, improving the way we work with young people and their families throughout their life including at the critical time of the transition to adulthood.
- Where people have care and support needs we will work with them in a way which empowers them to identify, choose and control the support or care they need to live life as they want. There will be more direct payments so people can access the support which is right for them.
- We will support our workforce to enable them to better record 'what matters' in assessments and 'outcomes' care plans from the perspective of the person with care and support needs/ the carer.

*5. Delivering excellence in Children's Services – a programme to deliver practice-led transformation leading to improved outcomes for children in Monmouthshire*

- We will deliver year 2 of the Children's Services Improvement Programme. Year 2 of the programme will focus on:
  - Embedding leadership roles and responsibilities
  - Integrating targeted prevention through reviewing and integrating fully the team around the family into children's services
  - Fully implementing the quality and performance framework in every team and at a service level, this will enable remaining inconsistencies in standards of practice to be addressed

- Working with partners to identify, manage and mitigate risk outside of child protection processes
- Continuing to progress the court improvement plan
- Evaluating the options for increasing local foster carers for Monmouthshire children and recommending a way forward
- Understanding the quality of our support to our LAC and care leavers and making necessary improvements
- Ensuring there is a sustainable workforce model which minimises the number of agency workers
- Implementing the recommendations of the family support review
- Working with regional partners to develop more effective care and support options for children with complex needs

*6. Improving Outcomes – supporting delivery of personal outcomes so people can live the lives they want to live*

- Develop job coaching, apprenticeships and supported employment opportunities to enable people to overcome barriers to employment
- Support volunteering, including volunteering for wellbeing, so everyone has the opportunity to make for a contribution.
- Continue to develop 'My Mates' as a safe friendship/ relationship service for people with disabilities
- Implement the Carer's Strategy and Young Carer's Strategy to enable people with caring responsibilities to achieve their wellbeing outcomes
- Work with CYP to ensure the educational outcomes for LAC are met, and to minimise non-transitional school moves
- Develop an holistic plan to ensure a joined up approach to improve opportunities for our young people leaving care; specifically this will address:
  - Somewhere safe to live with financial security,
  - An active offer of education, work or training,
  - Ongoing social and emotional support

*7. Effective safeguarding - the very highest standards of safeguarding, understanding how we can prevent abuse and protect those who are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect*

- Ensure effective leadership and governance of safeguarding at a regional, whole authority and directorate level
- Develop the leadership of the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit in whole authority safeguarding and operationally adult and child protection
- Roll out the 'safe audit' and evaluating where gaps are in safeguarding practice across the council
- Develop and implement a refreshed training strategy and plan
- We will continue to work with regional partners to ensure the DoLs safeguards are used when needed

*8. Improving outcomes through partnership working – positive productive partnerships which deliver: with people, communities, across Monmouthshire and the Greater Gwent region.*

- Work effectively within the Regional Partnership Board to develop key priorities for regional working in health and social care, providing leadership in significant areas, e.g. children with complex needs
- Work effectively with Public Service Board partners to shape the wellbeing objectives and lead priority partnerships
- Work in partnership with social care providers, communities, families and individuals to develop creative solutions to improve outcomes to individual and service wide problems.

- We will build on successful collaborations with partners in the Greater Gwent areas such as the regional adoption service and frailty service and progress further collaborations where there is a clear business case.

*9. Quality of care - being passionate about the quality of care; care which is based on relationships and deep exploration over time of what matters to the people we work; developing our quality assurance mechanisms to really understand the impact and outcomes from practice and service delivery*

- Support the development of the direct payment cooperative work develops as one way of increasing the number of direct payments in the county.
- Complete the move from task and time to relationship-based care at home for the whole care sector in Monmouthshire, to address the critical issues in quality and quantum of care.

*10. Workforce development - Developing our workforce – in the Council and across the social care sector – to have the capability and capacity to achieve the standards we set ourselves*

- Work with partners through “Dare to Care “, a workforce strategy to reframe the image of care work, develop career pathways and apprenticeship and training programmes. Through this work, develop more sustainable retention and recruitment in the care sector.
- We will work with regional partners, and across the whole social care sector to prepare for workforce implications of the Regulation and Inspection Act.
- We will implement the next phase of our workforce plan for children’s service, the priority outcome being a stable, permanent workforce
- Training and organisational development activity will be aligned to the culture and values we are developing.
- We implement a collective development programme for the new leadership structure in social care and health

*11. Financial sustainability – four year service and financial sustainability plans for the whole of social care and health*

- We will develop our operating model for social care and health, supported by four year plans for each service area which are sustainable and cost effective from a service and financial perspective

*12. Intelligent commissioning - Using data and evidence to inform decisions about how we commission and develop the service officers to deliver outcomes*

- We will develop an integrated commissioning unit within social care and health which will embed commissioning as a core function within children’s services
- We will commission a new approach to care at home, ‘turning the world of domiciliary care’ commissioning upside down. We will also continue to address risks of business sustainability in the sector.
- We will re-provide the Council’s residential care for older people with dementia through an innovative partnership arrangement
- We will develop relationships with providers to deliver what matters to people with a learning disability and mental health problems, including increased community connection and reduction in dependency on service provision
- We will develop a commissioning framework in children’s services and engage with providers to ensure a full range of services which provide positive outcomes for children, young people and families

- We will continue to explore procurement approaches which ensure we pay a fair price for care, based on an open book, high trust, relationship
- We will commence a review of all supporting people services



## Further Information and Supporting Documents

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<sup>1</sup> Institute of Public Care *Monmouthshire Delivering Excellent Practice in Children's Services: Progress Review*, June 2017

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Public Care *Monmouthshire Delivering Excellent Practice in Children's Services: Progress Review*, June 2017

<sup>3</sup> Monmouthshire County Council, Child Protection Co-ordinator, '6 month Child Protection Report, Children on the CPR – the journey in the last 6 months!'

<sup>4</sup> Interim Family Support Review, April 2017

<sup>5</sup> Monmouthshire Carers Strategy , [Young Carers Strategy - You Tube Select Committee](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Act Watch Notes - April 2017](#)

- <sup>7</sup> [Carers Strategy English](#), [Carers Strategy Welsh](#)  
[Young Carers Strategy - You Tube Select Committee](#)

<sup>8</sup> Report on progress in relation to 'front door' services in Monmouthshire Children's services, June **2016**

<sup>9</sup> Institute of Public Care, Review of Delivering Excellence in Children's Services programme, April 2017  
The Provision of Information, Advice and Assistance in Monmouthshire, Report to Adult Select Committee.

<sup>10</sup>

- <sup>11</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aA-j6xXRwIE>

- [Dewis Press Release and Launch Photos.docx](#)

- [Telling the Story - evaluation Mardy Park.docx](#) , [Telling the story – My Mates](#), [Telling the Story – My Day My Life](#)

<sup>12</sup>Telling the Story – Mardy Park Photos

<sup>13</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Monmouthshire Integrated Services Performance Report for Gwent Frailty Joint Committee, 2016/17

<sup>15</sup> Head of Children's Services, May 2017

<sup>16</sup> Independent Reviewing Officer Reports – 01/04/16 – 30/09/16 & 01/10/2016- 31/03/2017

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<sup>17</sup> WAO Report into Safeguarding Arrangements in the Kerbcraft Service in Monmouthshire County Council, February 2017

<sup>18</sup> Monmouthshire County Council, Child Protection Co-ordinator, '6 month Child Protection Report, Children on the CPR – the journey in the last 6 months', April 2017

<sup>19</sup>Revenue & Capital Monitoring 2016/17 Outturn Statement, Monmouthshire County Council Cabinet, June 2017

<sup>20</sup> 'The path to sustainability: Funding projections for the NHS in Wales to 2019/20 and and 2030/31' , Toby Watt and Adam Roberts