

Public Document Pack



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council

Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa,
Aberaeron, Ceredigion SA46 0PA
ceredigion.gov.uk

16 November 2023

Dwynwen Jones

Dear Sir / Madam

I write to inform you that a Meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at the HYBRID - NEUADD CYNGOR CEREDIGION, PENMORFA, ABERAERON / REMOTELY VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE on Wednesday, 22 November 2023 at 10.00 am for the transaction of the following business:

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations)**
Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.
3. **Report on the delivery of food hygiene standards and animal feed inspections in Ceredigion (Pages 3 - 38)**
4. **Ban on the sale and supply of certain single-use plastic products in Wales becomes law. (Pages 39 - 60)**
5. **A proposal to implement a ban on giving live animals as prizes on Ceredigion County Council property (Pages 61 - 66)**
6. **Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 6 months update report on action against progress (Pages 67 - 78)**
7. **Statutory Director of Social Services Annual Report 2022/2023 (Pages 79 - 146)**
8. **To present to Committee the outcome of the Ceredigion Respite & Day Services Initiative through transforming day services (older people, learning disability, Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities and Autism) and Respite provision (Through Age) (Pages 147 - 306)**

9. **Independent Reviewing Service Performance Management Report quarter 1 2023.2024 (Pages 307 - 340)**
10. **Joint Scrutiny Working Group minutes of the 12.9.23 meeting for the Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care (Pages 341 - 348)**
11. **Consider the Forward Work Plan 2023.2024 (Pages 349 - 354)**
12. **Consider the Committee's minutes of the meeting dated 18.9.2023 and any matters arising therefrom (Pages 355 - 360)**

Members are reminded to sign the Attendance Register

A Translation Services will be provided at this meeting and those present are welcome to speak in Welsh or English at the meeting.

Yours faithfully



Miss Lowri Edwards
Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services

To: Chairman and Members of Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The remaining Members of the Council for information only.

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 22nd November 2023

Title: Food and Feed Service Plan 2023-2024

Purpose of the report: To inform Scrutiny of the Food and Feed Service Plan and to advise of the current and future challenges in delivering this statutory service.

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information: N/A

Introduction

The regulatory controls relating to food and feed are critical for ensuring the safety of food, and the integrity of the food chain from farm to fork.

It is important that regulatory controls are consistently applied across the whole of the UK, to ensure there is no breakdown in standards in the food chain that may affect the integrity and confidence of consumers in the food they consume. The feed chain integrity is critical not only to animal welfare, but also to avoid any harmful residues in feed that may affect any animal entering the human food chain.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) publishes Codes of Practice that regulate how Local Authorities deliver their food and feed services. This requires that all Local Authorities are sufficiently resourced to inspect food and feed businesses at regular intervals according to the risk to health they pose.

The authority is required to produce a Service Plan, to demonstrate how the food and feed requirements are delivered and adequately resourced on an annual basis. This includes a requirement that the Service Plan is taken through the democratic process.

Food Safety/Standards - Current Situation

The delivery of the programmed food inspections was severely affected by the restrictions of the pandemic. The FSA did publish "Recovery Plans" aimed to ensure that Local Authorities maintained a minimum level of risk-based responses in the later stages of the pandemic. It then issued instructions and milestones that Local Authorities were required to meet to ultimately achieve a full recovery of programmed inspections from the pandemic restrictions. The position in Ceredigion is that all the milestones were achieved by the end of Q1 of 2023, which represents a significant achievement. A number of authorities in Wales are still in a state of "recovery."

The enclosed Service Plan provides an outline of the food and feed inspection requirements for 2023/2024. This year represents a significant transition to "dual" inspections, where both food hygiene, and food standards are combined into a single

inspection. The Public Protection Officers have undertaken significant training and assessment to become competent to undertake these dual inspections in accordance with the FSA CoP standards.

The desirable outcome of dual inspections is that it reduces the inspection burden on food businesses and increases efficiency for the authority in avoiding two separate visits.

In order to deal with the significant backlog of new food businesses in particular, the service has commissioned external support. This has been allocated to pay a food contractor to undertake the dual inspections of food businesses.

A review of resources in the Service Plan has found, with the additional funding, that the service should be sufficiently resourced to deliver the food and feed programme this year. However, this is dependent on the Public Protection Officers being able to deliver their inspection allocation. Other service demands and ill-health etc. could impact on their ability to complete the programme. These officers are required to work across the whole of Public Protection, therefore any conflicting public health priorities may have an adverse impact.

The delivery of the FSA Recovery Plan milestones has created an unintended consequence in that a large proportion of the high risk food inspection programme is due in 2024 – 2025. These are “Category C” premises that are inspected every 18 months, and they typically handle and process high risk food meaning they are classed as “high risk”.

As a comparison, this year there are 168 Category C premises due for a dual inspection. This number of Category C inspections increases to 290 premises due in 2024 – 2025. This represents a significant increase, and the service may need to seek additional funding for contractors in the next financial year to meet these obligations.

Animal Feed

In 2009 and 2011 the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) audited the delivery of Animal Feed Official Controls in the UK and in response to the audit findings the Food Standards Agency (FSA) carried out its own UK-wide review of official feed controls and identified ways of improving the delivery of an effective, efficient and proportionate risk-based programme of official feed controls by working more closely with Local Authorities (LA's) and relevant stakeholders.

Based on that review and a new feed inspection model proposed by the FSA, Welsh Ministers agreed to remove a sum of money from the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) on a recurrent basis from 1 April 2015. In response, Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW) agreed that LAs would collaborate and work regionally in Wales to deliver animal feed official controls. Six regions were set up, each with a Regional Lead Feed Officer responsible to oversee the work in their regions. DPPW delegated governance of this work to Trading Standards Wales (TSW), and day to day management of the work to deliver official feed controls rests with each Local Authority.

Since 2015, the Service signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) each year between the FSA and three neighbouring feed authorities, namely Powys, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire to deliver an annual regional feed inspection programme.

Funding for the annual programme consists of quarterly payments from the FSA to fund regional delivery of animal feed enforcement, following receipt of quarterly returns and invoices for the work undertaken, and local authority lead officer funding to cover the administration costs of this role.

A governance group was set up by WG to oversee the delivery of animal feed official controls in Wales, including adherence to the terms of the MoU. The governance group consists of a representative from DPPW, TSW, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), and the FSA.

Since 2015, Ceredigion has consistently met its annual regional inspection target and received regional funding. The only time the authority has ever failed to meet its annual regional inspection target was during the Covid Pandemic when inspections had to cease.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why.

No – there are no policy implications or introduction of new initiatives. The enforcement of food and feed law is a statutory duty of the Authority. A Food and Feed Service Plan is legally required and sets out how the Service intends to deliver and resource official food and feed controls in its area and address any variance in meeting the outcomes of the previous service plan.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: N/A
Collaboration: N/A
Involvement: N/A
Prevention: N/A
Integration: N/A

Recommendation(s):

Members receive this report and recommend to Cabinet that the Food and Feed Service Plan 2023-24 is approved.

Reasons for recommendation:

The statutory Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) (2021) and statutory Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) (2014) require local authorities to produce and publish a service plan that demonstrates how the authority will work to deliver its food and feed service.

Contact Name: Carwen Evans

Designation: Corporate Manager (Public Protection)

Date of Report: 23/10/2023

Appendix 1 – Food and Feed Service Plan 2023-24.



Food Service Plan
2023-24 Final 23 - 24

Food and Feed Service Plan 2023-24

Drawn up in accordance with
the Food Standards Agency's
Framework Agreement (April 2010)

SECTION 1: SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

Introduction

There is a central government requirement for Local Authorities to comply with relevant legislation, Codes of Practice, Guidance on Enforcement Priorities and a Framework document to produce an annual service plan for food law enforcement.

Ceredigion County Council undertakes the normal range of food safety and food standards activities within the county of Ceredigion.

1.1 Food and Feed Service Aims and Objectives

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to enforce food and feed law as part of the UK's national "Official Controls" overseen and audited by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). Local Authorities must produce a plan setting out how they will deliver these functions. This document discharges that duty for Ceredigion County Council and has been written in accordance with The Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement, which is based on statutory Codes of Practice.

It is this Authority's aim to ensure that public health is protected through the efficient and effective enforcement of any food safety and feed laws falling to Ceredigion County Council for enforcement.

In producing this plan, Ceredigion County Council has included a range of strategies, activities and interventions to discharge its statutory duties and to support the achievement of the Council's wider strategic objectives and relevant National Enforcement Priorities. We seek to balance a risk-based, proactive inspection programme (and, where necessary, proportionate enforcement action) with tailored advice and support for local businesses to help them comply. We compliment this by providing information to the public to enable them to make informed choices about the food they consume.

Key to the way in which we deliver this service, are the five principles of good regulation:

- targeting (to take a risk-based approach)
- proportionality (such as only intervening where necessary)
- accountability (to explain and justify service levels and decisions to the public and to stakeholders)
- consistency (to apply regulations consistently to all parties); and
- transparency (being open and user-friendly).

Links to corporate Wellbeing objectives and plans

Ceredigion County's Council Corporate Vision, as described by the Corporate Strategy for 2022-2027 is to "*deliver value for money, sustainable bilingual public services that support a strong economy and healthy environment while promoting well-being in our people and our communities.*"

The Council has recognised four key Corporate Well-being Objectives that will enable the delivery of services that will enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being for the citizens of Ceredigion. These are:

- Corporate Priority 1: Boosting the Economy, Supporting Businesses and Enabling Employment
- Corporate Priority 2: Creating Caring and Healthy Communities
- Corporate Priority 3: Providing the Best Start in Life and Enabling Learning at All Ages
- Corporate Priority 4: Creating Sustainable, Green and Well-connected Communities

A copy of Ceredigion County Council's Corporate Strategy is available at: <https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/12183/corporate-strategy-2022-2027.pdf> and a summary of the corporate strategy is available at: <https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/12294/corporate-strategy-summary-2022-2027.pdf>

National wellbeing goals

The Local Well-being Assessment has also influenced this Corporate Strategy and the development of the four Priorities that the Council will focus on for the next 5 years. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 sets out seven national wellbeing goals to which public bodies including local authorities, are expected to maximise their contributions:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

These goals provide a framework for focussing work on outcomes and delivery for the long-term wellbeing of Wales. The activities undertaken by our food and feed service, the outcomes and strategic priorities are inter-related and make a significant contribution to the Authority's well-being goals.

1.3 Links to the National enforcement Priorities for Wales

Nationally, the service also contributes to the Welsh National Enforcement Priorities for Wales that were prepared by the Local Better Regulation Officer for the Welsh Government:

1. Protecting individuals from harm and promoting health improvement;

2. Ensuring the safety and quality of the food chain to minimise risk to human and animal health;
3. Promoting a fair and just environment for citizens and business;
4. Improving the local environment to positively influence quality of life and promote sustainability.

The Public Protection Team makes a direct contribution to the corporate wellbeing objectives and national enforcement priorities as follows: -

- Promoting high standards of hygiene in food and feed businesses.
- Ensuring that all food and drink offered for sale is safe for human consumption.
- Ensuring that all food and drink offered for sale meets compositional and quality standards.
- Minimise the incidence of food poisoning and food borne illness in Ceredigion.
- Encouraging the adoption of good practice at all stages in the food production chain.
- Working with partner agencies to eliminate food and feed fraud.
- Prevent the use of prohibited substances or inappropriate substitution of ingredients in food and feed products.
- Ensure that all food and feed businesses comply with relevant statutory requirements.
- Providing guidance and advice to potential and existing food and feed businesses.
- Ensuring that all food and feed businesses operate with the benefit of relevant licensing, approval and consent arrangements.
- Develop collaborative working arrangements to minimize the risks to health associated with the consumption of contaminated, poor quality or unsafe food and drink.

To achieve this aim, these services:

- Inspect all food premises and businesses in accordance with the adopted risk assessment and re-inspection programmes;
- Implement a risk-based inspection programme for feed establishments ;
- Participate in the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) to enable members of the public to make informed choices about where they eat or purchase food.
- Initiate appropriate enforcement action, having regard to Statutory Code of Practice and Guidance provided by the National Assembly for Wales to secure compliance with the relevant legal requirements;
- Prepare and implement sampling programmes for food that is produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within the County having regard to the Statutory Code of Practice;
- Enhance the awareness of the general public and the various sectors of the food industry operating in the County, of food related matters through education and publicity;

- Aim to effectively discharge the Council's statutory duties, functions and responsibilities relating to the enforcement of Food Safety and Animal Feed Hygiene legislation.
- Aim to effectively discharge the Council's statutory duties, functions and responsibilities in relation to the control of spread of communicable disease and food poisoning.

In March 2022, the FSA published the following National Enforcement Priorities for animal feed enforcement services, which officers will have regard to:

- Verification of effective implementation and maintenance of feed safety management systems.
- Verification of effective implementation and maintenance of feed safety management systems at businesses supplying former foodstuffs or co-products.
- Effective monitoring of feed on farms
 - Examination of former foodstuffs / co-products being used for feed on farms
 - On-farm record keeping requirements and documented procedures.
- Effective monitoring of storage arrangements at feed premises.
- Verification of the accuracy of feed labelling.
- Effective monitoring of consignments of feed originating from non-EU countries, at points of entry.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Ceredigion County Council was formed in April 1996 because of Local Government Reorganisation.

Population	71,468	
Area	1795 km ²	(179500 hectares)
Population (18+)	60,028	(84.0%)
Population (aged 60+)	23,525	(32.9%)
Population (aged 65-74)	9,942	(13.9%)
Population (aged 75 plus)	8,443	(11.8%)
	Source: Office of National Statistics 2021	

Ceredigion is one of the largest rural counties in Wales. Whilst agriculture has traditionally been the main industry in the area, the effects of the decline in farming and the general pressures being faced by this sector have had serious consequences for the local economy. In recent times, the importance of the area as a tourist destination has increased with large numbers of visitors enjoying the many and varied attractions that are available. The stunning coastline, superb countryside and excellent hospitality are the magnet that draws people back to the region.

2.2 Organisational Structure

Ceredigion County Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes the arrangements for the management of risk.

The Authority has approved a Constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. A copy of the Council's Constitution is available at: <https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/your-council/about-the-council/the-councils-constitution/>

Part 3.5 of the Constitution ("Scheme of Delegation to Officer") of the Council's Constitution, which was approved on 22 March 2018, sets out the scheme of delegation to officers. This scheme delegates certain functions of the Council and Cabinet to officers.

Ceredigion County Council, at its meeting on 9 January 2002, agreed to form a Cabinet Structure as part of its modernising government process. The proposal was in

response to the Local Government Act 2000 which outlined the way in which Councils will replace their traditional committee structures.

The Cabinet Member currently responsible for Public Protection Portfolio is Councillor Matthew Vaux.

The Council's Management Structure is set out in Appendix 1.

The Corporate Lead Officer for Policy, Performance and Public Protection (Alun Williams) is responsible for the management and leadership of Public Protection services, which includes the food and feed service.

Food law enforcement is a shared function carried out by officers of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards teams, collectively recognised within the Authority as "Public Protection". Both services work collaboratively and strive to ensure that all food and drink intended for human consumption which is produced, prepared, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within the County is without risk to the health and safety of the consumer and conforms with recognised quality standards.

The Corporate Manager for Public Protection (Carwen Evans) has the operational management of the food and feed service (which includes Food Hygiene, Food Standards, Animal Feed and Communicable Disease Control). The Corporate Manager is also responsible for management of the Health and Safety, Animal Health, Environmental Protection, Trading Standards, Licensing and Community Wardening areas of Public Protection.

The officers that deliver the food and feed service within Ceredigion County Council are organised as outlined in the structure diagram in Appendix 2. For a detailed breakdown of how these posts equate in terms of "full time equivalent" posts, refer to the Resource Section below.

2.3 Scope of the Food and Feed Service

Food law enforcement is a shared function carried out by officers of the Public Protection Service, namely Environmental Health and Trading Standards Teams. The roles/responsibilities are split as follows:

- Environmental Health - Food Safety, Hygiene, Standards and Feed
- Trading Standards - Food Standards and Feed.

In recent years, the Service has focused on increasing its food standards enforcement resources by investing in food standards training for hygiene and safety competent officers as well as undertake a peer development programme. This in-house programme has enabled the Service to use existing food standards competent officers to develop, support and mentor existing hygiene and safety competent officers to transition them to undertake food standards enforcement as well. This has resulted in environmental health food competent officers now being able to conduct dual hygiene and standards inspections.

Feed law enforcement is a shared function carried out by various officers of the Public Protection Service. The Officers of the Public Protection Service divide their time across a number of disciplines of Public Protection including Trading Standards, Animal Health and Food Hygiene.

The Food and Feed Service is managed by the Corporate Manager for Public Protection. The Service now operates on a hybrid basis, which means that nearly all staff work from home rather than office-based. However, Ceredigion County Council have retained offices at the following addresses:

Aberystwyth Area Office Canolfan Rheidol Rhodfa Padarn Llanbadarn Fawr Aberystwyth Ceredigion SY23 3UE	County Hall, Stryd y Farchnad, Aberaeron, Ceredigion SA46 0AT.	Cardigan Area Office Morgan Street Cardigan Ceredigion SA43 1DF
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Officers are contactable during normal office hours, from 8.45a.m. to 5.00p.m. Monday to Thursday, 8:45 to 4.30p.m. on Friday. Whilst the Food Service does not provide an emergency out of hours service, officers will respond to requests if they are able. Contact is via the Council's Emergency Standby Officer Tel: (North) 01970 625277 (South) 01239 851604.

The competencies of officers carrying out enforcement activities are based on qualifications, training and experience. These are reviewed as part of the internal annual appraisal process, and whenever new legislation is introduced. Authorisations of officers follow the Corporate delegation scheme as detailed above and the Authorisation of Officer procedure.

Lead Officers

The officers taking the lead in the enforcement of this legislation are as follows: The Environmental Health Manager (Heddwyn Evans) is the appointed Lead Officer for Food Hygiene and Safety and Anne-Louise Davies, Trading Standards and Licensing Manager is the Lead Officer for Food Standards and the Lead Officer for Feed.

The following functions are undertaken by the Food and Feed Service:

- Food premises registration
- Approval of premises covered by product specific legislation.
- Undertake a programme of food hygiene and standards interventions and re-visits.
- Undertake a programme of feed hygiene interventions and re-visits.

- Enforcement activities such as written warning, formal notices and closures, simple cautions and prosecutions in line with the Corporate Enforcement Policy.
- To implement the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme for food businesses.
- Food and feed sampling (for microbiological quality, composition, authenticity and nutrition).
- Investigation of complaints concerning the hygiene of food premises, unfit or contaminated food.
- Investigation of complaints concerning food/feed fraud, quality, composition, authenticity and nutrition of food/feed.
- Investigate suspected and confirmed cases of communicable disease including food poisoning in liaison with the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC).
- Respond to Food Standards Agency Food /Feed Incidents and Alerts as appropriate.
- Examine and respond to planning and licensing applications in relation to food premises where appropriate.
- Voluntary surrender of foods.
- Provide and review systems and procedures in line with FSA Framework Agreement.
- Imported food/feed control.
- Food hygiene at primary production premises is undertaken by officers who conduct food hygiene duties.

Provision of Specialist Services

The following analysts and examiners have been appointed, and have been authorised in accordance with the Authority's procedures.

Public Analyst (also appointed as Agricultural Analyst)	Public Analyst Scientific Services Ltd i54 Business Park Valiant Way Wolverhampton WV9 5GB Contact: Michelle Evans Direct Dial: 01902 627 241
Food Examiner	National Public Health Service for Wales West Wales General Hospital Glangwili Carmarthen SA31 2AF Contact: Gary Williams Direct Dial: 01267 237271

2.4 Demands on the Food and Feed Service

The demands on the food and feed service varies from year to year as premises open and close.

Food Hygiene and Standards

Interventions are chosen and programmed at a frequency dependent upon the risk that they pose to food safety and food standards. A breakdown of the establishments profiles that are located within Ceredigion, is provided below.

The number of food premises¹ contained in each category was as follows:

Type of Premises	No. of Premises
Caring premises	86
Distributors/Transporters	17
Hotel/Guest house	82
Importers/Exporters	1
Manufacturers And Packers	121
Mobile food unit	46
Primary Producers	20
Pub/Club	86
Restaurant/Cafe/Canteen	252
Restaurants and caterers - other	139
Retailer - other	59
School/College	59
Small retailer	165
Supermarket/Hypermarket	13
Take-away	64
Total	1210

The number of premises approved under Regulation EC No. 853/2004 is as follows:

Dairy Products	14
Fishery Products	3
Meat	1
Other	1
TOTAL	19

There are 1210 registered food businesses in Ceredigion. Provisions for registration are contained within the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006 which came into effect on 11/1/2006. These Regulations provide that most food businesses (except those covered by EC853/2004) must comply with the requirements of the community provisions contained in EC 852/2004.

¹ As at 31/08/2023

A wide variety of food manufacturing businesses operate within the County producing high risk products. These range from small, family run cheese manufacturing business through to multi-national companies producing high volumes of products for national and international distribution. The Public Protection teams have forged good links with trade bodies, other Local Authorities and specialist organisations e.g. the Specialist Cheesemakers Association to ensure that there is adequate appropriate expertise to enable competent inspection of any specialised processes.

Some of these businesses export products on a world-wide basis and outside the EU require specific Export Certificates to facilitate the sale of these products to these countries. The Section is authorised to issue these Export Certificates.

Feed Hygiene

The service is responsible for the enforcement of animal feed legislation controlling feed quality, safety, hygiene, labelling and traceability throughout the feed chain, including importation, manufacturing, and primary production (feeding of farmed livestock and growing crops). These controls help ensure the safety of the feed and food chain. Historically, most major animal disease outbreaks such as BSE and Foot and Mouth have been linked to animal feed. Likewise, major food incidents such as dioxins in pork have been linked to contaminated animal feed.

As of 1 April 2023, there were 1380 feed businesses subject to regulatory controls in Ceredigion. The profile of these businesses is set out below:

Feed Establishments – 1 April 2023	
Establishment Type	Number
Manufacturer (A01-08 and R01-R04 & R07)	3
Co-product producer (R12)	2
Mobile mixer (R04)	0
Importers	0
Stores (R09)	1
Distributors (A01-08, R01-03 & R05)	11
Transporters (R08)	4
On farm mixer (R10 & R11)	69
Pet food manufacturer (R06)	1
Supplier of surplus food (R07)	11
Livestock farms (R13)	1,262
Arable farms (R14)	16
Total	1380

2.6 Regulation Policy

Fair and effective enforcement is essential to protect the economic, environmental, and social interests of the public and business. Decisions about enforcement action, and in particular the decision to prosecute, can have serious implications for food businesses and individuals. Ceredigion's Public Protection service will enforce food

and feed legislation, in a proportionate manner, in accordance with the principles of 'Better Regulation' set out in the Regulators' Code.

The Regulators' Code (which came into statutory effect on 6 April 2014 under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006) provides a clear, flexible and principles-based framework for how regulators should engage with those they regulate. The main provisions of the Regulators' Code are:

- Regulators should carry out their activities in a way that supports those they regulate to comply and grow.
- Regulators should provide simple and straightforward ways to engage with those they regulate and hear their views.
- Regulators should base their regulatory activities on risk.
- Regulators should share information about compliance and risk.
- Regulators should ensure clear information, guidance and advice is available to help those they regulate meet their responsibilities to comply.
- Regulators should ensure that their approach to their regulatory activities is transparent.

These principles and the Council's approach to enforcement of food and feed law are set out in the Ceredigion County Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy. All enforcement action will be taken having regard to the Corporate Enforcement Policy. The policy was adopted by Council in 2018 and is currently being reviewed. Interested parties, such as the Food Standards Agency, will be asked to provide comments on the revised policy during the consultation process. The Enforcement Policy is supported by formal procedures relating to inspection, sampling, complaint handling and enforcement.

Due regard must also be had of the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 and the Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 which requires local food and feed authorities to have due regard to their contents in the execution and enforcement of food and feed legislation.

SECTION 3: SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 Interventions at Food and Feed Establishments

Food

Food hygiene and standards inspections are carried out in accordance with the adopted policy which is contained in the Regulatory Information And Management System (RIAMS) and the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2021.

The service will make the necessary arrangements to inspect, approve, register and licence relevant premises in accordance with the relevant legislation, Food Safety Act, the Code of Practice and centrally issued guidance.

Assessments of compliance of premises and systems in Ceredigion to the legally prescribed standards shall be undertaken. In assessing compliance, due consideration will be given to any relevant Industry Guides to Good Hygiene Practice and regard will be had to any other relevant centrally issued guidance. Appropriate and proportionate action will be taken in connection with any non-compliance found, in accordance with the Corporate Enforcement Policy having due regard to the circumstances of each case.

All registered and approved food premises in the County are risk rated following an intervention to determine the planned food hygiene intervention frequency using the risk assessment criteria found in Annex 5 of the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales).

The Authority undertakes an annual alternative enforcement strategy to regulate “low-risk” establishments, where the inherent hazards presented by the food business are not significant by virtue of their trading activities or the number of consumers they supply.

Food Hygiene inspection commitment

Food Hygiene inspection commitment for 2023 - 2024			
Risk Category	No. of premises	No. of inspections	Other enforcement strategies
A	8	16*	
B	68	68	
C	168	168	
D	72	72	
E	174 (258)		174 (258)
TOTAL	316	324	
* Subject to premises being re-rated as an A in the first intervention			

During the year, 100% of the inspections scheduled for risk categories A-D will be carried out. In addition, 100% of the premises rated as Category E will be subject to an alternative enforcement survey. Risk categories may be changed if food handling activities change, consumer complaints are received, other non-compliance is identified or any other reason becoming apparent which affect the risk rating of the premises.

The total number of programmed food hygiene inspections of high-risk premises targeted to be carried out during 2023/2024 is 252.

The Authority also undertakes non-programmed inspections to non-broadly compliant food businesses to ensure that contraventions of food law identified in the previous visit have been addressed in a timely manner. Food businesses are also entitled to apply for a Food Safety re-inspection under the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. As the nature of these requests is unpredictable, the predicted burden on the service for 23-24 has been calculated by multiplying the number of requests received in the first 6 months of 2023 by 2, as shown in the table below:

Revisits to non- broadly compliant premises (2023-24)	80
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Requests for re-inspection under the FHRs (2023-24)	50
TOTAL	130

Officers undertaking food hygiene and safety statutory duties are duly authorised in accordance with their qualifications and experience to enforce provisions relating to food safety, health and safety and communicable disease control.

Food Standards Interventions

Food standards interventions are carried out to ensure that food meets the requirements of food standards law, including correct presentation, composition, labelling and advertising, so as not to mislead consumers.

Food Standards interventions are carried out by officers from both the Environmental Health and the Trading Standards teams. All high-risk premises (category A) will receive a full inspection and medium risk premises will receive a full inspection where possible. Low risk premises will be subject to alternative strategies, which may include trade audits, self-assessment questionnaires or visits by other officers.

Officers undertaking food standards statutory duties are duly authorised in accordance with their qualifications, experience and competence in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) and Food Law Practice Guidance (Wales).

The food standards planned intervention/inspection programme is set up in a similar vein to that of the food hygiene programme. Every year there is a natural fluctuation in the number of premises due to some closing down and new businesses setting up.

Table A below shows the food standards minimum intervention frequencies for food premises which range from a yearly interval to every 5 years and the intervention plan for 2023/24.

Table A

Premises Rating Category	Minimum Intervention Frequency	Number of premises due an intervention
A	At least every 12 months	10
B	At least every 24 months	219
C	Alternative enforcement strategy or intervention every 5 years	291
Unrated* (*at 1 st April 2023)	-	363

Total planned food standards interventions due in 2023/24		
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Initial inspection of new food establishments

It is estimated that approximately 10-12 new businesses start trading in Ceredigion each month. New food establishments that come to the attention of the Food Authority for the first time must be subject to an initial inspection from a food hygiene and food standards perspective within 28 days of registering with the Authority. For new businesses, an initial desktop assessment is conducted to consider the registration information and any intelligence to ascertain the potential risk rating of the food business to prioritise initial visits and target our resources most efficiently. During an initial inspection, the intervention rating(s) for the establishment must be ascertained which subsequently determines the frequency at which the premises are inspected for each discipline. During the Food Hygiene inspection the premises will be rated under the FHRS.

Table 2 below shows the average number of new food businesses registering with the Authority each month. It also shows the backlog of new business inspections required for food hygiene and food standards.

Table 2: Number of new businesses due for inspection August 2023

Food hygiene	Food standards
Approx. 10-12 new businesses registered every month	Approx. 10-12 new businesses registered every month
Backlog of 155 premises awaiting inspection	Backlog of 328 premises awaiting inspection

Feed Inspections

Funding was removed from the local authority Revenue Support Grant in 2015 and is now managed by the FSA to fund regional delivery of feed official controls in Wales. The FSA adopts a risk-based approach to determine the number and nature of interventions to be delivered by each local authority and pays directly on delivery.

In accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014, the feed inspection programme must include all types of feed business establishments in the authority's area.

When feed businesses demonstrate, during a risk-rated inspection, to be broadly compliant by demonstrating a high standard of feed safety, and taking appropriate steps to comply with the law, these standards are recognised when determining the frequency of future inspections, and therefore qualify for 'Earned Recognition'. Businesses can also earn recognition by demonstrating at the time of inspection to be broadly compliant and being a compliant member of an approved industry assurance

scheme, such as ‘Red Tractor’ or an Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) member, or Farm Assured Welsh Livestock (FAWL) scheme.

“Earned recognition” does not mean that the feed business is excluded entirely from the inspection programme - it reduces the frequency at which inspections are carried out, taking into account compliance history, risk and or individual steps a business takes to ensure compliance. Feed business operators that qualify for earned recognition by being compliant members of an approved assurance scheme receive the lowest frequencies of inspections.

Feed business establishments which belong to an approved assurance scheme but which are found not to have satisfactory levels of compliance during a planned inspection will have their risk-rating increased accordingly unless the non-compliances identified are minor and can be rectified immediately or within a reasonable timescale of being identified.

If a feed business which is a member of an approved assurance scheme is no longer achieving satisfactory levels of compliance, it will lose its earned recognition status and the business must be informed of this.

If the Feed Authority decides to remove earned recognition from a feed business that is a member of an approved assurance scheme then the FSA must be informed.

In 2023/24, 740 of the 1346 feed businesses in the authority area are members of an approved assurance scheme recognised by the FSA.

Earned Recognition and Alternative Enforcement Strategies on Feed Establishments

The following table indicates the expected effect of the intervention risk-rating scheme on various types of establishments and indicates whether earned recognition through an approved assurance scheme or AES can be considered.

Business Description	Potential Approval/Registration Codes Applicable to the Business for illustrative purposes only	Poor Compliance Frequency of inspections Years	Varying Compliance Frequency of inspections Years	Satisfactory Compliance Frequency of inspections Years	Broad Compliance or better Frequency of inspections Years / AES	Earned Recognition for Members of Approved Assurance Schemes Frequency of inspections years / % annual inspection sample
Arable Farm	R14	3	4	5	AES	2%
Co-Product Producer	R12	1	1	2	4	5
Distributor	All approved codes plus R1,R2,R3,R5,R7	2	4	5	AES	2%
Importer	Not applicable					
Livestock Farms	R13	3	4	5	AES	2%

Business Description	Potential Approval/Registration Codes Applicable to the Business for illustrative purposes only	Poor Compliance Frequency of inspections Years	Varying Compliance Frequency of inspections Years	Satisfactory Compliance Frequency of inspections Years	Broad Compliance or better Frequency of inspections Years / AES	Earned Recognition for Members of Approved Assurance Schemes Frequency of inspections years / % annual inspection sample
Manufacturer of additives or of feed using additives	All Approved Codes plus R1, R2, R3 to R4 and R6	1	1	2	3	4
Mobile Mixer	R4	1	1	2	4	5
On-Farm Mixer	R10 or R11	2	4	5	AES	2%
Stores	R9	2	3	5	AES	2%
Supplier of Surplus Food	R7	2	4	5	AES	2%
Transporter	R8	2	4	5	AES	2%

The following feed interventions have been agreed for 2023/24 in Ceredigion

Premises Category	No. of premises due an intervention
Manufacturer (A01-08 and R01-R04 & R07)	2
Co-product producer (R12)	0
Mobile Mixer (R04)	0
Importers	0
Stores (R09)	1
Distributors (A01-08, R01-03 & R05)	7
Transporter (R08)	0
On Farm Mixer (R10 Annex II)	0
On Farm Mixer (R11)	4
Pet Food Manufacturer (R06)	0
Supplier of feed materials/Surplus food (R07)	3
Livestock Farms (R13)	169
Arable Farms (R14)	2
Total	188

3.2 Food and Feed Complaints

Policies with respect to the investigation of food and feed complaints are in place and will be adhered to at all times by investigating officers. Officers follow the procedures described in the online document management system RIAMS (Regulators Information and Management System) as well as having regard to the Corporate Enforcement Policy, Compliance and Enforcement Policy: Food Law Enforcement, the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2021, Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014, and the Feed Law Practice Guidance (Wales) 2016.

Consumer complaints concerning animal feed, food standards, composition, labelling and chemical adulteration are dealt with or led by the Trading Standards Team.

Consumer complaints relating to the fitness of food for human consumption, the presence of extraneous matter in food or the microbiological contamination/quality of food are dealt with by the Environmental Health Team. The team also deals with complaints relating to hygiene matters (premises, practices, personnel) in food businesses.

The performance indicator for first response to complaints received by the Food Service in relation to food matters is based on risk. Any complaint of a high risk nature (for example, pest infestation or food poisoning) is 1 day. Whereas medium and low risk are undertaken by the professional judgement of the Lead Food Officer. A medium risk food matter is usually within 10 days, whereas other low risk complaints maybe picked up in the next food hygiene inspection.

All complaints are recorded on the Tascomi database. In 2022/23, 644 food safety service requests were received, compared to 562 in 2019-2020 in the pre-pandemic period.

There is a clear increase in food safety and hygiene service request demand on the service based on the numbers of enquiries received, and it is unclear whether this may be related to the pandemic and/or cost of living crisis affecting food businesses. We expect to be able to process these complaints with the available staff resource however it is an aspect of the service that will be monitored closely.

There has also been an increase in demand for same day food export health certificates, or otherwise an increase in urgent requests. The service is introducing a same-day service to meet this demand, that will attract a fee representing the additional work involved.

3.3 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme

The Home Authority Principle

Ceredigion County Council is fully supportive of the Home Authority Principle. Public Protection Services welcomes the opportunity of acting as the Home and/or Originating Authority for the food manufacturing businesses that are based or operate in the County. Whilst some of the food manufacturers distribute their produce outside of the County, they are single premises business with no additional units or sites. Consequently, the Service acts in an informal capacity as the Home Authority for these enterprises.

The Primary Authority Scheme

The Authority is fully supportive of the Primary Authority scheme. The Authority does not currently act as Primary Authority for any food businesses operating in the Authority area, however the Service is committed to following any guidance or

inspection plans issued by the Primary Authority for businesses engaged in the partnership that trade in the Authority area.

3.4 Advice to Business

Due to budgetary constraints, Public Protection Services no longer respond to requests for service which are solely requests for advice and guidance by direct officer contact with the service user. The only exception to this is the advice that is given to premises seeking approval as a food manufacturer. This process occupies a significant proportion of officer time and should be considered when looking at the overall burden on the service.

Call centre staff are trained to support businesses by signposting callers to relevant literature available from Ceredigion County Council's Food Safety and Trading Standards webpages and the Food Standards Agency's webpages and downloadable resources.

3.5 Food and Feed Sampling

Sampling programmes have been developed and implemented to:

- assess the microbiological quality of food and feed produced and offered for sale,
- determine the compositional standards and descriptive integrity of food and feed.

Food Hygiene sampling

The Authority is committed to contribute towards the specific sampling surveys produced by the Wales Food Microbiological Forum (WFMF). In 2022 – 2023 the Food Service will participate in all published WFMF surveys.

The specific WFMF surveys target national concerns or trends that may introduce food safety issues. The current ones are: -

- Ready to Eat Salads (mixed salads or individual ingredients, with or without dressings including coleslaws etc and cheese)

The service will continue to sample food from premises that have exhibited poor practices during inspections. The approved premises are also sampled periodically in order to ensure the food manufactured meets safe standards.

Food Standards sampling

Food standards samples are taken to ensure that food complies with the relevant legislation as regards composition, quality, adulteration, misleading claims and general labelling issues.

The Service has a limited budget for food standards sampling. Priorities are identified having regard to local and national intelligence, risks to consumers in terms of safety or economic loss, and emerging risks and priorities identified by local and national intelligence. Ceredigion will continue to support any regional/national sampling activities co-ordinated by the FSA.

For 2023/24, the food sampling programme is as follows:

- Allergen safety survey (September 2023 – March 2024): 10 samples will be taken to test for the presence of egg and peanuts in meals ordered from takeaway establishments.
- Heavy metals in eggs survey (September – March): 10 samples will be taken to test for the presence (and levels) of heavy metals such as lead, in eggs sold over the farm gate.

Feed Sampling

Local authority funding for feed sampling is allocated by the FSA. Sampling is focused at ports of entry therefore there are no plans to sample animal feed in Ceredigion during 2023/24. However, the Service will carry out reactive samples based on any developing intelligence that it receives during the year, and/or participate in any regional sampling project/surveys coordinated by the FSA .

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

During 2022-23 the Commercial Services Section received 241 notifications of confirmed cases of communicable disease. This is a significant increase on the pre-pandemic numbers of communicable diseases reported.

Currently the staff from the Public Protection team are supported by staff of the Health Protection Hell (HPC) who carry out the majority of the initial investigations that follow a notification of a case of communicable disease made to the Authority.

Officers from the HPC and PP work closely with colleagues in Public Health Wales to quickly identify and screen persons suffering from communicable disease to prevent the spread of infection to the community.

The policies, procedures and protocols relating to the Control and Investigation of Communicable Disease outbreaks are contained within the Policy Manual for Communicable Disease Control which is held electronically on the RIAMS document management system.

Cover outside of normal office hours is provided on a goodwill basis dependent on officer availability.

3.7 Food & Feed Safety Incidents

All members of the Public Protection Services enforcing food and feed law receive FSA 'Food Alerts' and 'Feed Alerts' via the RIAMS document management system. All Officers are supplied with mobile devices which receive emails 24 hrs a day and 7 days a week.

The Corporate Manager will decide upon the response to be taken by the service in respects to any notifications received, depending on their nature.

Designated Officers will liaise with the Corporate Lead Officer in the absence the Corporate Manager. There is an expectation that personnel will be made available to respond on a 24 hr/day, 7 day/week basis. No formal arrangements have been adopted and the service is presently provided on a goodwill basis dependent on officer availability.

Food Alert procedures are undertaken in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 and Food Law Practice Guidance (Wales) 2012.

Feed Alert procedures are undertaken in accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (Wales) 2014 and Feed Law Practice Guidance (Wales) 2016.

3.8 Liaison with Other Organisations

The Authority is committed to ensuring effective liaison with other relevant organisations to secure consistency in enforcement approach in Ceredigion. Formal and informal liaison arrangements have been established with:-

- Food Standards Agency Wales and the Food Standards Agency
- Public Health Wales, Public Analyst, CIEH and CTSI
- Directors of Public Protection Wales
- The Corporate Manager for Public Protection or nominated representative, will attend all meetings of the Wales Heads of Environmental Health (WWhoEG) Food Safety Expert Panel.
- The Corporate Manager for Public Protection or nominated representative, will attend all meetings of the Wales Heads of Environmental Health (WWhoEG) Communicable Disease Expert Panel.
- The Corporate Manager or nominated representative, will attend all meetings of the South West Wales Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Steering Group.
- The Public Protection Team is represented on the South Wales Shellfish Liaison Group.
- The Public Protection Team is represented on the South Wales Communicable Disease Task Group.
- The Public Protection Team is represented on the Welsh Food Microbiological Forum.

Corporate management responsibility for the Licensing Service rests with the Corporate Manager for Public Protection, with the Trading Standards and Licensing Manager responsible for its day-to-day operational management. Consultation arrangements are in place with respects to applications for Temporary Event Notices, late night refreshment licences, liquor licences, etc. under the Licensing Act 2003.

A procedure has been introduced regarding the response of the Public Protection Team to applications for planning consent.

In response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Ceredigion County Council set up an Activities and Events Group. This liaison group, consisting of colleagues from a wide range of Council services, including Public Protection, Economic & Community Development Services, Corporate Health & Safety, Highways & Environmental Services, etc., meet several times a year to discuss and consider issues associated with various events held across the county, ranging from farmers markets, festivals, rally events, etc., which involve the local authority.

SECTION 4: RESOURCES

4.1 Financial Allocation

The budget allocation for the Public Protection service is £1,265,576

Based on the estimated staffing allocation (FTE) to the delivery of the food programme (covering both hygiene and standards), the staffing costs for delivering this service is £246,059. The Public Protection team covers all areas of Trading Standards, Licensing Environmental Health (other than Housing), and Animal Health therefore the allocation can change based on shifting public health priorities.

4.2 Staffing Allocation

Food Hygiene

Officers from Public Protection divide their time across a number of disciplines of Public Protection including Food Hygiene, Trading Standards, Health & Safety, Infectious Diseases, Environmental Protection, Public Health, Licensing activities and Animal Health.

The amount of time spent by each officer in each discipline is dictated by Officer qualification, experience, and authorisation in each specific field, as well as direction from the Corporate Manager.

There are currently 9 Officers who are food hygiene competent that equates to a FTE of 3.9. There are currently 9 Officers who are food standards competent that equates to a FTE of 1.16. Of those, 7 Officers are authorised to conduct dual hygiene and standards inspections.

In order to calculate the demand on the service to deliver the inspections required at the correct frequency, a time recording exercise was previously undertaken. These figures were reviewed and revised in 2023. The values recorded for inspections undertaken at premises were calculated across all risk categories, allowing the time burden associated with delivering our statutory obligations for the 2023-24 financial year to be predicted.

It has been calculated that 664 officer days are required to complete the food hygiene and food standards inspection programme in 2023-24.

Following up food hygiene and food standards service requests, delivering an alternative enforcement scheme and providing export certificates to food exporters based within the County carries an additional burden of 229 officer days. This means that the resource required to deliver the food hygiene and food standards service totals 893 officer days. This report indicates that only 814 officer days are available to complete the work, giving a deficit of 79 officer days.

However, an extra £20,000 has been allocated to the service for this financial year to address the deficit. This has resulted in procuring the services of a specialist contractor to undertake the required inspections. The contractor's services will contribute the equivalent of 86 officer days, based on the inspection of an average Category C premises for combined food hygiene and food standards. This contribution means that the service should be 7.2 officer days in surplus at the end of the financial year.

The 7.2 officer days surplus will be a small contribution to providing a level of service resilience which would enable a response to non-planned work activities e.g. a major communicable disease outbreak investigation. With so little surplus, in such circumstances, the ability of the team to complete the inspection programme may still be compromised.

Animal Feed Hygiene

Officers from within the various Public Protection teams who conduct animal feed hygiene duties divide their time across a number of other disciplines including food hygiene, trading standards, animal health, infectious diseases, environmental protection.

The Service has 1.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) resource allocated to deliver the FSA's annual regional feed inspection programme. There are currently 2 officers who are fully authorised and competent to undertake feed hygiene official controls; this equates to a full time equivalent of 0.25 full-time equivalent (FTE), and 10 officers to undertake alternative enforcement activities and/or low-risk inspections, mainly at livestock farms that do not mix e.g., R13 premises; this equates to 0.95FTE. However, due to staff absences e.g., maternity leave, and training and development of new staff, only 0.85FTE is currently available in 2023/24 to deliver the programme this year.

Since 2015, animal feed enforcement duties are funded directly via the FSA. The FSA adopts a risk-based approach to determine the number and nature of interventions to be delivered by each local authority and pays directly on delivery.

The Authority receives funding from the FSA for each feed inspection it carries out as part of the regional feed hygiene inspection programme. It should be noted however, that in the event of a major feed incident or investigation, the FSA expects the Authority to fund itself.

Funding for the annual inspections consists of quarterly payments from the FSA following receipt of quarterly returns and invoices for inspections undertaken. To receive funding, the Service signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) each year between the FSA and three of our neighbouring feed authorities, namely Powys, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire to deliver the feed inspection programme for the Mid and West Wales region.

For 2023/24, 188 feed inspections have been allocated to Ceredigion to complete as part of this year programme. Based on last year's funding rates, this year's inspection programme will provide approximately £29,121.

4.3 Staff Development Plan

Food Law Training Requirements

All authorised food officers require a minimum of 20 hours relevant on-going training to ensure they remain competent in carrying out the activities they are authorised to undertake. In accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (Wales) (July 2021), the training requirement is as follows:

- 10 hours on subject matters set out in Chapter 1 of Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and on the obligations of the Food Authority resulting from this Regulation, relevant to the activities they are authorised to undertake; and
- 10 hours on other professional matters

Feed Law Training Requirements

All authorised feed officers require relevant on-going training to ensure they remain competent in carrying out the activities they are authorised to undertake. In accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (Oct 2014), a minimum of 10 hours per year based on the principles of continuing professional development is required to ensure they remain competent.

All staff, as part of the Corporate Annual Appraisal scheme, have an annual training needs assessment with their line managers taking into account the requirements of the relevant Codes of Practice. This assessment is designed to fill any identified gaps in their knowledge or skills for the role they are likely to fill over the coming year and also to encourage staff to think ahead and consider what they need to do to prepare themselves for future roles and possible career advancement.

The pandemic has accelerated a development in the market of remote methods of learning. The service can now take advantage of remote courses over Teams, and in addition subscribes to an online training package where officers can fulfil training flexibly in their own time.

The Food Safety Expert Panel and the Trading Standards Wales provide a list of officer training requirements to the FSA on an annual basis. The Authority contributes to this process. Due to a nation wide shortage of appropriately training Public Protection (to include Trading Standards and Environmental Health Officers), there is a scheme being proposed to offer apprenticeship schemes to train new staff.

Staff development takes place by virtue of formal training arranged via external courses, using online training courses (certified) or provided within the Department and by staff continuing to enforce and administer the legislation.

SECTION 5: QUALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring

Ceredigion County Council recognises the need to measure the effectiveness of its food safety duties. The Service therefore carries out a number of activities to ensure that work is carried out in a consistent manner and opportunities to identify and implement improvements are taken.

To ensure the quality and consistency of our activities and in accordance with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement, procedures have been developed to harmonise the processes.

The monitoring of the quality of our policies and procedures is assessed in a number of ways, namely:-

- Internal audit of documented procedures and work instructions via internal audit;
- Audits/assessments undertaken by the Food Standards Agency.
- Review of corporate complaints and compliments about the service.
- Local Performance measures reported to Performance Board
- Service risk monitoring

We are committed to involving customers in the continuous improvement of services and recognise the need to have structured methods of obtaining service users views and perception of the service.

SECTION 6: REVIEW

6.1 Review against the Service Plan

Every year Business Plans are prepared and implemented for the Public Protection Service which include objectives and performance measures to be achieved throughout the year. The objectives and performance measures include tasks that are specific to the Food and Feed Service and those identified for 2023 –24 are as follows:

Task

Deliver a full food and feed law intervention programme for 2023-24 in accordance with the Food and Feed Code of Practice to discharge statutory duties.

Performance measures:

- The number of high risk new businesses subject to food hygiene inspection.
- The number of high risk food establishments subject to a food hygiene inspection

During the year the performance of the service is reported to a Performance Board which includes senior management of the Local Authority, Leader of the Council and the Chairs of the various Scrutiny Committees.

The Board scrutinise the performance of the service on a quarterly basis against the tasks and performance measures that have been set.

6.2 Identification of any Variation from the Service

Performance review systems within the Authority enable us to recognise any shortfalls against targets during the year. Consideration is given to factors that may impact on performance/shortfalls and what remedial action may be required to resolve any issues.

Performance in relation to progress in achieving objectives set out in the Business Plan is reported to the Performance Board on a quarterly basis.

6.3 Areas of Improvement

The Service has documented internal procedures and policies and routinely reviews the number of documented procedures.

Areas for improvement in the Food Service includes:

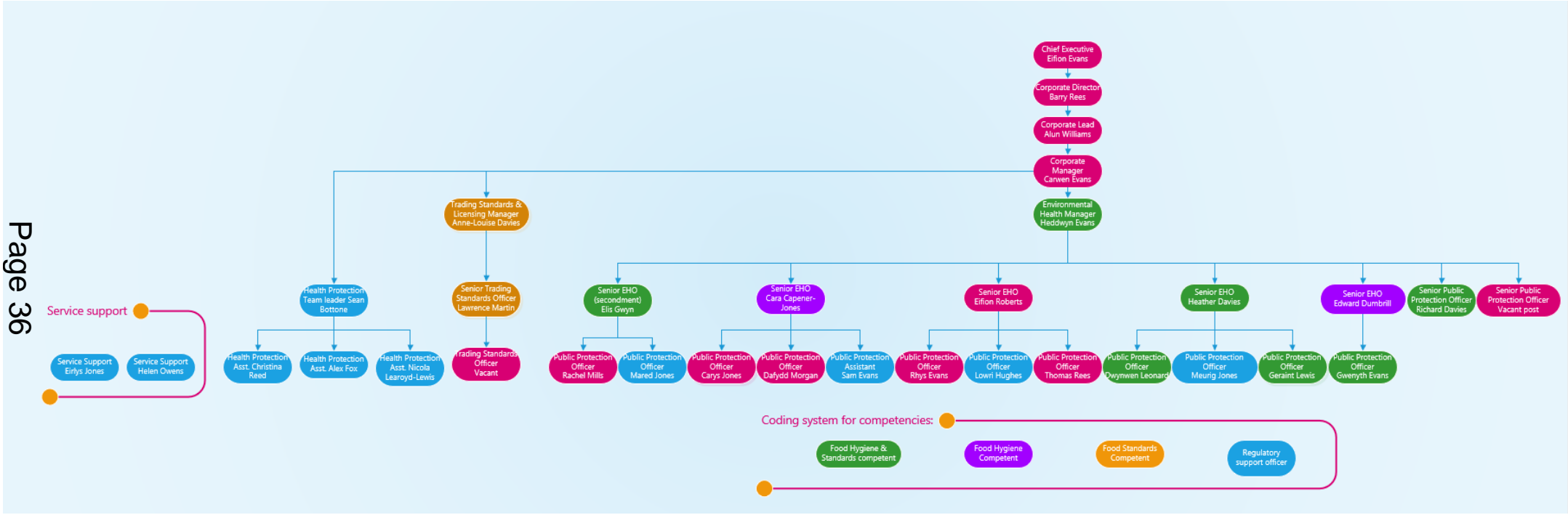
- Utilising and developing existing staff members to become food/feed competent to increase the resource capacity of the Food and Feed Service;
- Continue with reviewing, updating and amalgamating of procedures and policies;
- Continue to improve quality of data held on the database and improve reporting;
- Maintain and continually improve the quality of Food Hygiene, Food Standards and Feed interventions and the knowledge and experience of officers carrying out this work;
- Improve liaison and coordination with other authorities and agencies;
- Raise the profile of the service with customers and Members;
- Ways in which the service can better support local businesses through the provision of advice and information.

Appendix 1
The Senior Management Structure of Ceredigion County Council

01/09/2023

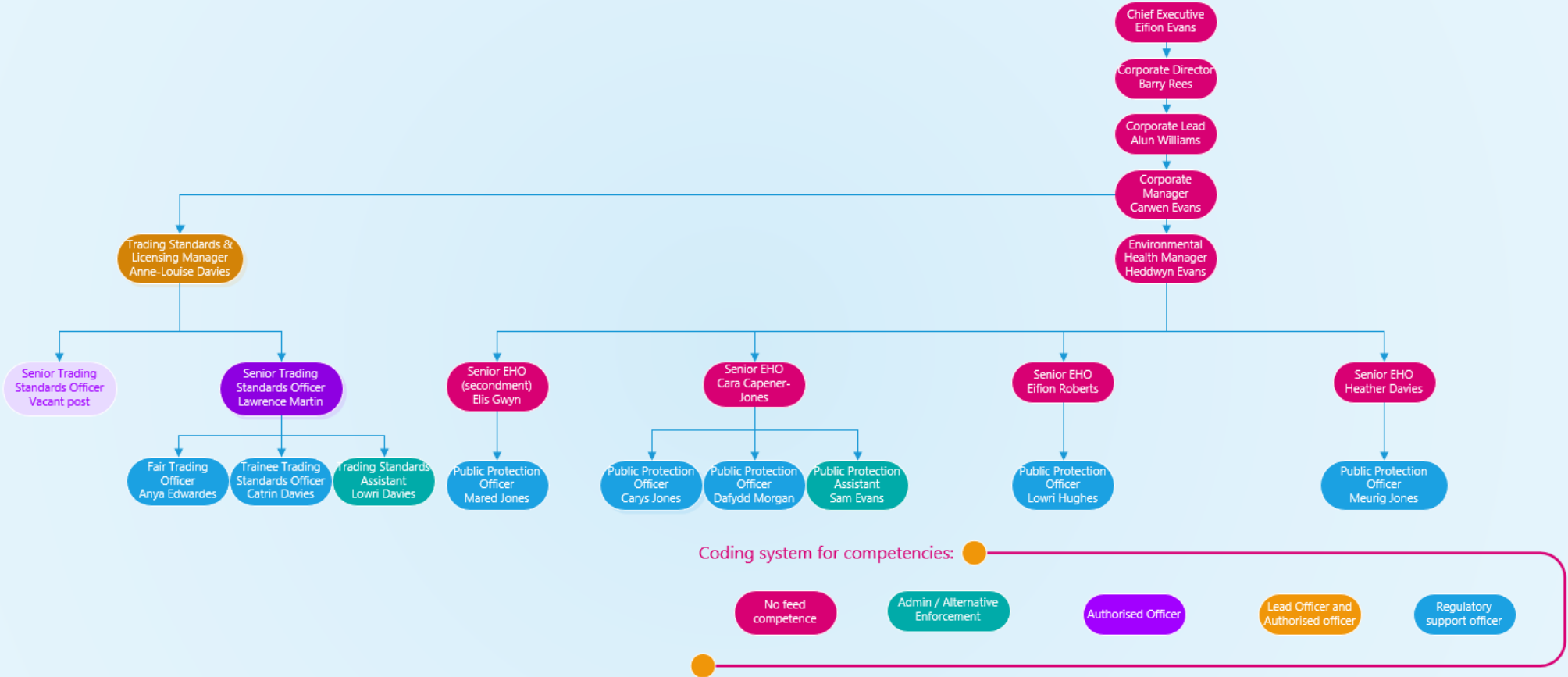
CHIEF EXECUTIVE: EIFION EVANS												
CORPORATE DIRECTOR : BARRY REES						CORPORATE DIRECTOR: JAMES STARBUCK						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of corporate strategic priorities and objectives which deliver high quality, safe, efficient and effective services to the residents of Ceredigion To work strategically and creatively to achieve the highest possible standards of performance in Council services 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be Corporate Director and provide strategic leadership within the Council ensuring that all services comply with, and support, the Council's strategic objectives and standards. To deputise for the Chief Executive when required To provide leadership, guidance and performance management of up to six Corporate Lead Officers 						
CORPORATE LEAD OFFICERS (7)						CORPORATE LEAD OFFICERS (6)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be Corporate Lead Officer and lead advisor to the Council for all matters relating to their specific functions as listed below To provide a key link with Corporate Directors and work with other Corporate Lead Officers in ensuring that strategic and corporate objectives are effectively co-ordinated and implemented across all service areas 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst Corporate Lead Officers have specific responsibility for the management and leadership of a portfolio of service areas, they have an overriding corporate responsibility to ensure that all service activities and actions comply with and support Council strategic objectives and standards To work creatively and strategically to achieve the highest possible standards of performance in Ceredigion County Council services 						
SCHOOLS AND LIFELONG LEARNING		LEGAL & GOVERNANCE	FINANCE & PROCUREMENT	POLICY, PERFORMANCE & PUBLIC PROTECTION	ECONOMY & REGENERATION	HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	PORTH CYNNAL - SPECIALIST THROUGH AGE SERVICES	PORTH GOFAL TARGETED INTERVENTION	PORTH CYMORTH CYNNAR	PEOPLE & ORGANISATION	CUSTOMER CONTACT & ICT	DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
Elen James (Secondment)	Clive Williams	Elin Prysor	Duncan Hall	Alun Williams	Russell Hughes-Pickering	Rhodri Llwyd	Ricky Cooper	Donna Pritchard	Greg Jones (Secondment)	Geraint Edwards	Alan Morris	Lowri Edwards
*Chief Education Officer	Deputy Chief Education Officer	*Monitoring Officer	*Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer)				*Statutory Director of Social Services	Deputy Director of Social Services			*SIRO *Proper Officer for Civil Registration	*Head of Democratic Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-16 education Attendance, inclusions & behaviour support Pupil welfare Pupil Referral Units EOTAS Lifelong Learning, Skills & Employment Cultural Services Catering Pre-school provision Childcare offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Improvement Attainment Additional Learning Needs Admissions and appeals Governors Sustainable Schools Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Corporate Governance Internal Audit Coroners Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement, Commissioning and Payments Core Finance (Deputy 151) Service Finance (Deputy 151) Revenues & Financial Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Partnerships, Engagement & Equalities Complaints, Compliments & FOI Public Protection Corporate Performance & Research Refugee resettlement Civil contingencies & Business continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth and Enterprise Planning Property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highways Maintenance Highways Development Local Environment Services Transport Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist through age services including: Strategic Safeguarding Quality Assurance and Independent Review Mental wellbeing and substance misuse Planned care Extended support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intake & Triage Team Targeted intervention services Fostering Services Residential and Day Care services (*Responsible Individual) Integrated community equipment stores Emergency Duty Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing Centres Support & Prevention Early Intervention Housing Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Advice & Admin Pay, Benefits & Systems Learning & Development Health & Safety Employee engagement & wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT Customer Contact Archives & Info Management Library Services Civil Registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Democratic Services Welsh Language Standards Translation External Communications Electoral Services Corporate Service Support Project Management
* denotes Statutory Roles												

Appendix 2: Operational team structure for the delivery of food law enforcement



Appendix 3: Operational team structure for the delivery of feed law enforcement

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CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to:	Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	22 November 2023
Title:	Ban on the sale and supply of certain single-use plastic products in Wales becomes law.
Purpose of the report:	To inform Scrutiny of new legislation banning the sale and supply of certain single-use plastic products in Wales.
Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:	n/a

Background

Plastic takes hundreds of years to break down and causes damage to our oceans, rivers, and on land. Plastic pollution is also a source of greenhouse gas emission because of how it is manufacture and the way it is disposed.

When Welsh Government consulted on the ban in 2020, it identified that annually in Wales some 226 million units of plastic cutlery were sold, along with 173 million plastic straws, 5.7 million plastic stirrers, 26 million polystyrene cups, 30 million plastic bud sticks and 1 million plastic balloon sticks.

Current Situation

The Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023 (“the Act”) introduces Stage 1 of the ban on businesses and organisations in Wales to sell or supply certain single-use plastic products to consumers – which came into effect on the 30th October 2023.

The Act makes it a criminal offence for businesses and organisation to supply the following products:

- Single-use plastic plates
- Single-use plastic cutlery – like knives, forks and spoons
- Single-use plastic drinks stirrers
- Cups made of some types of polystyrene
- Takeaway food containers made of some types of polystyrene
- Plastic sticks for balloons
- Single-use plastic-stemmed cotton buds
- Single-use plastic drinking straws – apart from people who need them to eat and drink safely and independently.

The ban will affect retailers, food vendors, takeaways and the hospitality industry and will apply to supplies both over the counter and online. There are however a number of exemptions, for example that permitting pharmacies to continue to provide plastic

straws in cases where individuals need them to eat and drink safely and independently. Other exemptions will see plastic stemmed cotton buds still being used in healthcare settings and plastic spoons permitted with the supply of liquid medicines in order to measure dosage.

Stage 2 bans will come into force by April 2026. This will affect the supply of the following products:

- Single use plastic carrier bags
- Polystyrene lids for drinks and food containers
- Products made from a type of plastic called oxo-degradable plastic

It is envisaged that, as was the case with the introduction of the single use carrier bag charge some years ago, the new law will embed itself smoothly, with full compliance being achieved.

It is anticipated that as a result of similar bans already introduced elsewhere in the UK (Scotland in 2022 and England on 1st October 2023), those larger scale businesses trading across the different administrations will have already introduced the necessary changes. Further down the line, should enforcement action be required in the case of any on-going non-compliance, then the Act makes provision for a number of enforcement options which include civil sanctions as well as prosecution.

The Act has also introduced new enforcement powers for local authorities to effectively enforce the new legislation. Only officers appointed by a local authority in Wales can exercise the enforcement powers contained in the Act to enforce the ban on single-use plastic products.

Therefore, officers within Public Protection, namely Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing officers, require authorisation under the Environmental Protection (Single-Use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023 and any associated regulations to fulfil this function on behalf of Ceredigion County Council. For this to happen, Council will need to delegate this function to the Corporate Lead officer for Policy, Performance and Public Protection.

Public Protection officers from the Council's Public Protection will continue to work with local businesses to achieve compliance with the new requirements, offering advice and signposting to sources of information. This will be achieved largely through existing inspection regimes. However, if necessary, the council will take enforcement action against those that deliberately fail to comply with the legal requirements.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? No

If, not, please state why.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term:

Collaboration:

Involvement:

Prevention:

Integration:

Recommendation(s):

For information.

Reasons for decision:

For information.

Contact Name:

Carwen Evans/Anne-Louise Davies

Designation: Trading Standards & Licensing

Officer **Date of Report:** 30/10/2023

Appendix A:

Welsh Government Guidance: [Draft guidance for bans and restrictions on single-use plastic in Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCTS) (WALES) ACT 2023

Statutory guidance for bans and
restrictions on single-use plastic in Wales



AUDIENCE

This guidance document is aimed at businesses and organisations that will need to comply with bans under the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023.

OVERVIEW

This document provides guidance for the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023 (the Act).

This statutory guidance is made under section 2(3) of the Act, which confers a duty on the Welsh Ministers to prepare and publish guidance on:

- (a) the single-use plastic products that are prohibited under the Act; and**
- (b) the application of any exemptions listed in column 2 of the Table in paragraph 1 of the Schedule to the Act.**

ACTION REQUIRED

Businesses or organisations will need to stop supplying the banned products set out in the Act from the dates listed.

Enquiries about this document should be directed to:

Local Environment Quality
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: singleuseplastic@gov.wales

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Single-use plastic bans in Wales

Why are we banning single-use plastic products?

Evidence gathered from beach litter surveys show that plastic is the most common type of material found littered on Welsh beaches. While it can sometimes be difficult to identify where this plastic has come from, it is often associated with products that people use to eat and drink “on-the-go”. As these products are often provided to people at low, or no cost, they are usually thrown away without thought, which can cause harm to wildlife and our environment. Others have been disposed incorrectly down the toilet, for example cotton buds.

To help prevent this environmental damage, many communities and businesses across Wales have already begun to move away from unnecessary single-use plastic. Our bans aim to build on this action and stop the flow of harmful plastics into our environment. The Welsh Government wants to shift society away from a throwaway culture and encourage greater reuse of products to help reduce the amount of waste being generated. Our goal is to create a more sustainable Wales, one which we are proud to hand on to future generations.

How are we banning single-use products in Wales?

To help Welsh Ministers tackle plastic pollution, the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023 (the Act) was passed by the Senedd Cymru on 6 December 2022. The Act includes a table which lists several commonly littered single-use plastic products which are to be banned in Wales (unless there are certain exemptions). This guidance includes details of which products are included and what needs to be done to comply with the law when it comes in force.

The Act will also allow Welsh Ministers to add other single-use plastic products to this list if action is required to tackle environmental damage caused by other single-use plastic products which fall within the definitions in Section 1 of the Act. This will be done by introducing new regulations and involve a public consultation before any changes are made.

What is being banned and when?

The Act currently covers 10 specific single-use plastic products and those single-use plastic products made of oxo-degradable plastic. To ensure businesses, organisations and the public have enough time to prepare for these bans, we are introducing them in phases. Details of these phases and the products being banned in each phase is outlined in the guidance below.

PHASE ONE BANS

from 30 October 2023

The supply of the single-use plastic products listed here will be banned in Wales.



Single-use plastic plates



Single-use plastic cutlery



Single-use plastic drink stirrers



Plastic sticks for balloons



Single-use plastic-stemmed cotton buds



Takeaway food containers made of expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene



Cups made of expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene



Single-use plastic drinking straws*

*with exemptions for people who need them to eat and drink safely and independently.

PHASE TWO BANS

Work is currently ongoing to prepare for the ban of single-use plastic carrier bags, polystyrene lids for drink and food containers and products made of oxo-degradable plastic. As some of these bans will require changes to existing regulations and additional time for businesses and organisations to find alternatives, these products will NOT be banned in phase one in October 2023.

We expect these bans to be introduced by **Spring 2026**.

Guidance will be published before the bans come into force for these products.

What does a ban mean?

It means you will not be allowed to sell or give away for free, any of the single-use plastic products described in this guidance to a consumer in Wales, unless there is an exemption provided.

Can the bans change?

Yes, it is the intention of the Welsh Government to increase the type of single-use plastic products that will be banned in Wales. We are aiming for bans for single-use plastic carrier bags, polystyrene lids for drink and food containers and products made of oxo-degradable plastic to be in place by Spring 2026. We will publish guidance on these bans before they are introduced.

The Act also allows the Welsh Ministers to make changes to the list of banned single-use plastic products and the exemptions. We need to do this by making regulations (these are a type of law). The Senedd must pass a vote agreeing to the changes before they become law. If we want to change the list by introducing regulations, we will consult on our proposals.

Are non-plastic single-use alternative products also being banned?

The ban will **NOT** apply to products covered in this guidance which are made of other types of material, for example wooden cutlery or cotton buds with cardboard stems.

However, the ban **will** apply if the non-plastic alternative product is **coated, lined, or laminated with plastic**. For example, a single-use plate made of paper which is coated or lined with a layer of plastic will be banned.

What type of plastic is included in the ban?

Details of the types of plastic included in the ban of the 10 specific single-use plastic products can be found in **Annex A** (Page 14). Whilst most single-use plastic products being banned will be made from traditional “**synthetic**” plastic (which is plastic derived from crude oil, natural gas or coal), the Act allows products made of other types of single-use plastic to also be covered. This can include:

- **bio-based** plastics which directly replace their fossil-fuel based counterparts, as they have the same chemical structure and properties.
- Fossil-fuel based **compostable** plastics where the plastic may present a contamination risk to the recycling stream, often require certain conditions before they breakdown (sometimes only partially breaking down which can result in microplastics) and their manufacturing processes may use toxic chemicals.

This is because whilst some bio-based plastics and compostable plastics may often be marketed as an environmentally friendly option, they can also be problematic.

Who does the ban apply to?

The ban applies to the supply of single-use products to consumers in Wales and affects all business and organisations, and any person who owns, manages or has substantial control over the business, organisation or undertaking such as:

- A body corporate (a business or company)
- A partnership
- A person acting as a sole trader
- A government body or other public service provider (For example a school or Council)
- A charity, club, syndicate or voluntary organisation.

The ban does **NOT** apply to the supply of these products between businesses or organisations. For example, a wholesaler can still supply single-use plastic straws to a restaurant (please see details on exemptions below).

Examples of those who will need to stop supplying single-use plastic products to consumers (unless there are exemptions):

- Hospitality and retail businesses – For example, cafés, bars, restaurants, hotels, takeaways, supermarkets, online stores, a market trader, online seller, food stall operator, cinemas and/or festivals.
- Organisations and not-for profits – For example, schools, charities, government bodies, community services, health services and/or sports clubs.

What are the offences under the Act?

When the bans come into effect, in Wales, it will be a criminal offence to:

- Supply or offer to supply any of the banned single-use plastic products (including for free) to consumers in Wales, unless there is an exemption (these can be found below)
- Display any of the banned single-use plastic products (including drinking straws) or allow customers to help themselves
- Intentionally obstruct an officer of a local authority (Council) when they are conducting an inspection of your premises.

Understanding what the law will be in Wales

Businesses and organisations are liable for any offences committed by their employee(s). It is, therefore, the responsibility of businesses or organisations to ensure that those working for them understand what single-use plastic products are banned and whether there are any exemptions in place.

Possession of a single-use plastic product included in the bans is **NOT** an offence. The offence is committed **only** where the products are supplied to a consumer in Wales or are offered for supply on premises in Wales.

It **is** an offence for businesses and organisations to arrange for the delivery of the product to a consumer at an address in Wales, even if the business or organisation is outside of Wales.

Purchasing a banned or restricted product when outside Wales will **NOT** be an offence.

The offence does **NOT** apply to individuals who supply products to other individuals. For example, it will not be an offence to give your family member a single-use plastic plate if you have one at home. The ban intends to remove these products from the supply chain before they reach the consumer.

The bans will be enforced by local authorities (Councils) and they have powers to enter and inspect a premise, make test purchases and remove banned goods.

If you commit an offence then you may be tried in a Magistrates Court and if found guilty, the Court may impose an unlimited fine. Alternatively, you may be subject to civil sanctions.

How do I comply with the bans?

Businesses and organisations should take steps now to start planning for the new law by following the advice below.

From 30 October 2023:

- Stop providing customers with banned single-use plastic products
- Make sure staff are aware of the bans and comply with the law, training should be provided to help them understand the effect of the new law on their work
- Tell customers about these changes
- If you have single-use plastic products left over when the bans come into effect, speak to suppliers, your local council or trade association about how to recycle it
- Once the bans are in force, businesses and organisations will be responsible for paying any costs they incur recycling or disposing of excess stock.

Are there any exemptions?

The Act contains exemptions for some of the banned products. The Act gives the Welsh Ministers the power to lay regulations to remove or amend existing exemptions where they think this is needed. Regulations would have to be approved by the Senedd before they become law.

Details of existing exemptions are provided below. Please note details on exemptions in relation to single-use plastic carrier bags will be included once those bans come into place.

Single-use Plastic Product	Exemption
Straws	<p>Pharmacies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community pharmacies, including online pharmacies, can continue to sell straws or packets of straws to consumers who say they need them for health or disability reasons. <p>Businesses and organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be provided in connection with the provision of care for someone else. For example, someone providing health, medical or social care can provide one if they reasonably believe one is needed for health or disability reasons. Can be sold or provided free of charge accompanying food or drink to a person who says the straw is needed for health or disability reasons, for that person or for someone else to consume the food or drink. Straws used for medical care or treatment.
Cups	A cup that is not made of expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene.
Takeaway food containers	A takeaway food container that is not made of expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene.

To note: If you require a straw, you will NOT need to provide proof of need to access a single-use plastic straw.

Why have we added Exemptions?

Straws

We recognise some people will need access to single-use plastic straws to help them to eat or drink independently. To ensure this can happen, businesses and organisations (*including pharmacies*) can continue to supply drinking straws to those who require them. By doing this we also make sure that businesses and organisations meet their legal obligations to provide reasonable adjustments under requirements set out in **The Equality Act 2010**.

It should be noted the stocking and supply of a single-use plastic straw is a matter for an individual business or organisation.

Cups and takeaway food containers


These exemptions mean that a cup or takeaway food container that is made of a different material from expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene is **NOT** included in the ban. Other types of takeaway cups and food containers are not included in the ban, even if made of other plastic materials.

What are the alternatives to single-use Plastic?

We believe the bans provide an opportunity for people to think differently about how they go about their daily lives. Rather than buying and supplying single-use products to customers, businesses and organisations could supply reusable products to reduce waste. Where this is not possible businesses and organisations should look to supply non-plastic single use products.

Choosing reusable products could help save money, as well as benefiting the environment. Studies show, for the products being banned, reusable products are better for the environment compared with non-plastic single-use alternatives.

We have devised a traffic light system to show which types of products are better for our environment.

Single-use Plastic Product (Banned)	Non-plastic Single-use Product (Better for the environment)	Re-useable Product (Best for the environment)
 Plastic plates	Paper/Bagasse (sugarcane)	Ceramics/Wood/Re-useable Hard Plastic
 Plastic cutlery	Wood	Metal/Re-useable Hard Plastic
 Plastic drink stirrers	Wood/Paper	Metal/Re-useable Hard Plastic
 Plastic drinking straws	Paper	Metal/Re-useable Hard Plastic
 Plastic-stemmed cotton buds	Paper	Re-useable Plastic (Silicon)
 Plastic sticks for balloons	Paper/Wood	N/A
 Cups made of polystyrene	Paper/Bagasse	Glass/Re-useable Hard Plastic/Ceramics
 Takeaway food containers made of polystyrene	Card/Bagasse	Metal/Re-useable Plastic

(A list of these materials can be found in Annex B)

Which type of products should I use?

Where it is not possible to switch to reusable alternatives, we encourage the use of single-use products made of materials which easily biodegrade, such as paper, wood and cardboard. This is based on evidence from Life Cycle Analysis studies, which recommend the best alternatives for environmental protection.

Life Cycle Analysis allows us to compare the environmental impact of products made of different types of materials. We have utilised the [European Commission's Life Cycle Inventories of Single Use Plastic Products and their Alternatives report](#) and the more recent reviews of [Life Cycle Analysis by the United Nations](#) to support our recommendations of alternative products that are better for our environment.

Support for businesses

Business Wales is the Welsh Government's bilingual business support service, which provides a range of general business advice, information and signposting to encourage the creation, growth and sustainable development of micro businesses and small-medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

Business Wales, also provides specialist strands of advice and support on topics such as resource efficiency.

Resource efficiency is now more important than ever, for reducing overheads, and to drive Wales towards a low carbon, low waste sustainable economy.

Business Wales Resource Efficiency Advisers are available to support businesses to adopt or improve environmental strategies. They work with businesses towards creating a resource efficient and resilient business model by providing a range of advice and one to one support. They also provide access to workshops on issues such as using fewer raw materials to help reduce the risk of material scarcity, driving innovation and resilience, and helping businesses reach new markets.

In addition to:

- helping businesses in reducing overheads and increasing profitability
- helping businesses comply with health, safety and environmental legislation
- enhancing the business image with customers, employees and the local community and
- improving the workplace and the local environment.

For further support or business advice, you can contact:

Call: 03000 603 000

Email: Businesssupport@gov.wales

Or visit the Business Wales Website

[Business Wales \(gov.wales\)](http://BusinessWales.gov.wales)

The Business Wales Helpline opening hours for calls are 10am – 4pm, Monday to Friday except on public holidays.

Annex A: Definitions

To help understand what the bans mean and what products are included we have provided an overview of the key parts of the Act below.

What do we mean by plastic product?

This is a product that is wholly or partly made of plastic, including products with a plastic lining or coating. For example, a paper plate with a plastic coating is banned.

What do we mean by plastic?

Plastic means a material consisting of a polymer, other than an adhesive, paint or ink, and includes a material consisting of a polymer which has other substances added to it.

A polymer can function as the main structural component of a product. It does not include a natural polymer which has not been chemically modified.

This means that products that are made of **fossil fuel-based plastic** and plastic made of **naturally occurring polymers** which directly replace their fossil-fuel based counterpart, as they have the same chemical structure and properties are included in the ban. This can include **bio-degradable** and **compostable plastic**.

Please note you will need to seek further advice from your supplier to determine whether the type of plastic being used in the product covered by our legislation is being banned.

What do we mean by single-use?

This means any product that is not designed or manufactured to be used more than once before being disposed of.

What do we mean by supply?

A person commits an offence if they sell or provide a banned product free of charge to a consumer in Wales. This includes both on premises in Wales (for example a shop) or by arranging for the delivery to a consumer in Wales (for example online).

Definition of products banned during Phase 1

These are products which will be banned from 30th October 2023.

What do we mean when we say a single-use plastic plate?

This is a flat receptacle designed to hold food for eating but **NOT** for serving.



What do we mean when we say single-use plastic cutlery?

Cutlery means a fork, knife, spoon, chopstick or other utensil (for example a “spork”) which has been designed to be used for consuming or serving food.

Spoons that come with medicines are **NOT** included in the ban.



What do we mean when we say a single-use plastic drink stirrer?

This is a stick designed to be used for stirring a hot or cold drink or liquid food. Drinks stirrers made of a material which has been coated, lined, or laminated with plastic are also included.

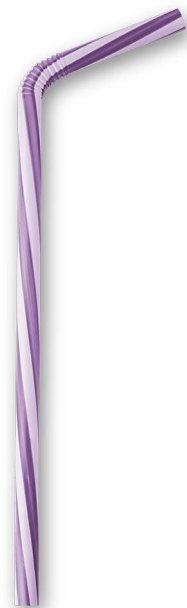


What do we mean when we say a single-use plastic straw?

A straw designed to be used for consuming liquid food or drink, including straws attached to cartons. Straws made of a material which have been coated, lined, or laminated with plastic are also included. There are exemptions (see below).

Exemption:

- **retail pharmacies** can continue to sell straws or packets of straws to consumers who say they need them for health or disability reasons
- can be provided in connection with the provision of care for someone else. For example, someone providing health, medical or social care can provide one if they reasonably believe one is needed for health or disability reasons
- can be sold or provided free of charge **accompanying food or drink** to a person who says the straw is needed for health or disability reasons to **consume the food or drink**
- Straws used for medical care or treatment.



You will **NOT** need to provide proof of need to access a single-use plastic straw.

What do we mean when we say plastic-stemmed cotton buds?

A cotton bud is a small, thin stick with cotton wool attached around one or both tips, designed to be used for cosmetic applications or personal or animal hygiene.

Forensic and medical swabs are **NOT** included in the ban.



What do we mean when we say plastic sticks for balloons?

This is a stick, including any attached mechanisms, designed to be attached to a balloon so that it may be carried or supported.

What do we mean when we say expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene?

Polystyrene where the polymeric material is expanded at any point during its manufacture by any means (such as heat from steam and expansion during cooling) using any blowing agent (such as butane, pentane and propane).

Expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene cups

A cup that is made of expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene. A cup is something designed to be used to hold liquid food or drink for consumption. For example, they are often used



for hot, takeaway food and drinks as they help keep it warm. They are sometimes used in takeaway food outlets for serving beans, peas or curry sauce.

Expanded or foamed extruded polystyrene takeaway food containers

Takeaway food container means a receptacle other than a plate (for example a bowl, box, cone, portion pot or clam shell-type containers), designed or manufactured to be used to take food away from the place where it is provided. The food is ready to be consumed without any further preparation, such as cooking, boiling or heating and is normally eaten immediately.

These products are sometimes used to serve foods such as fish and chips, burgers, fried chicken and side orders such as beans, mushy peas or curry sauce.



Annex B:

Description of Materials

Bagasse: the dry fibrous material formed after crushing sugarcane to extract its juice. This is an eco-friendly material which is biodegradable.

Bamboo: fast-growing and durable plant material.

Cardboard: like paper but thicker and more durable. It is made from natural materials.

Glass: hard and transparent, made from sand and heated, it is durable and able to be used as an alternative to single-use plastic.

Metal: a chemical element, such as iron or gold, or a mixture of such elements, such as steel, that is generally hard and strong, and through which electricity and heat can travel. Items made of metal can be reused and recycled.

Paper: material manufactured from the pulp of wood.

Re-useable hard plastic: many items like a KeepCup are made of plastic with the intention of being reused.

Wood: hard and fibrous material which forms the main substance of a tree branch or trunk. Can be processed and used for plates, cutlery and drinks stirrers.

Annex C: Disposing of products

When a ban is in force, businesses and organisations will no longer be able to supply the banned product and will need to bear the cost of disposing any unused stock.

To avoid this businesses and organisations may want to stop buying the single-use plastic products that are to be banned. This could help avoid building-up stock and avoids any potential difficulty in disposing them once the bans are in place.

If there is stock still available after a ban begins, we would advise the business or organisation to contact their local Council to determine what recycling facilities are available to dispose of the stock.

this document provides more detailed information on what to do with certain waste materials.

We recognise some of the smaller products, such as cutlery, straws and stirrers are difficult to recycle due to their size and shape. This is one of the reasons they have been included in the bans.








For others, such as those made of polystyrene, the recycling process is complex, which means not all polystyrene is recyclable. Businesses and organisations in the UK can arrange collection of waste polystyrene by a licensed carrier to transport to an appropriate recycling facility where it will be sorted, cleaned, and recycled if possible.

The Waste Hierarchy

The Welsh Government’s statutory [Guidance on Applying the Waste Hierarchy](#) booklet ranks waste prevention and management options according to what is best for the environment. Page 13 of

Help identifying different types of plastic

Plastic products are required to have a marking on them which identifies the type of plastic they are made of. This can also help with correct disposal and recycling.

						
PETE	HDPE	PVC	LDPE	PP	PS	OTHER
Polyethylene Terephthalate	High Density Polyethylene	Polyvinyl Chloride	Low Density Polyethylene	Polypropylene	Polystyrene	Other

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

Date of meeting: 22 November 2023

Title: A proposal to implement a ban on giving live animals as prizes on Ceredigion County Council property

Purpose of the report: To recommend the implementation of a ban on the giving of live animals as prizes on Ceredigion County Council property

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:
N/A

Background

Within Ceredigion County Council, the protection and endorsement of high standards of animal welfare is upmost as part of supporting the farming industry, and to support those who enjoy keeping animals as pets. The authority therefore supports the RSPCA campaign on “giving pets as prizes” by proposing to implement a ban on giving live animals on Ceredigion County Council property.

This report provides the context on the proposed ban of the giving live animals (e.g. Goldfish, etc) as prizes as set out in the Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (RSPCA) campaign of 2021.

While a range of animals are given as prizes each year in Wales and the rest of the UK, goldfish are the animal most commonly associated with pets as prizes. Goldfish are easily stressed and very often fish that are won as prizes suffer miserably from shock, oxygen starvation or die from changes in water temperature, and many will die before their new owners can get them home.

Acquiring an animal to be kept as a pet should be the result of careful planning and prior consideration. The prospective owner should have a clear understanding of the responsibilities involved and carefully consider whether they have, and will continue to have, the facilities, time, financial means and level of interest necessary to ensure a satisfactory standard of care for their animal prior to acquiring it.

Since the start of the RSPCA campaign, 13 Welsh authorities have supported the RSPCA campaign, namely:-

- Bridgend
- Caerphilly
- Cardiff
- Conwy
- Flintshire
- Neath Port Talbot
- Newport
- Pembrokeshire
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Torfaen County Borough
- Vale of Glamorgan
- Wrexham
- Merthyr Tyfil

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 (applicable in both England and Wales), does not forbid giving live animals as prizes unless they are given to unaccompanied children. The Act makes it an offence, in England and Wales, to give away live animals as prizes if the person can reasonably be believed to be under 16 years of age and is not accompanied by an adult.

However, there are some exceptions in section 11 (3)-(6) of the Act. It is a different matter in Scotland, where it is an offence, under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, to offer or give an animal to another person as a prize (whatever their age), except where it is offered in a family context.

The RSPCA believes that this legislation does not go far enough and does not cover the animal welfare issues associated with this practice and therefore, they would like to see similar legislation to the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced in England and Wales; to make it an offence to give an animal as a prize, regardless of age, except within the family context.

Ceredigion County Council has an opportunity to ban “pets as prizes” on Council property, thereby serving to raise public awareness of animal welfare surrounding the giving of live animals as prizes. Therefore, in view of the current legislation, the Council can introduce a ban through changing its terms and conditions of the agreements to use Council property. This report is supported by the Corporate Lead Officer for Economy and Regeneration who oversees management of Council land and facilities.

Current Situation

To our knowledge no event held on Council land currently offers Pets as Prizes. There are autumn fairs held in Cardigan, Aberaeron and Aberystwyth, however it is understood that goldfish are not given as prizes by this operator.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.
Yes

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: The Council is committed to championing high standards of animal welfare

Collaboration: The Council works closely with other statutory agencies such as the Welsh Government, Animal and Plant Health Agency in ensuring animal welfare standards are maintained. The Council also works with the RSPCA to further our shared aims and objectives.

Involvement: The recommendation is consistent with the actions of other authorities who have implemented the same, and is in line with public expectations of protecting animal welfare.

Prevention: The activity of banning the giving of pets as prizes prevents the potential for adverse animal welfare.

Integration: Ensuring broader controls on animal welfare is in line with objectives contained within the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015

Recommendation(s):

1. That the committee recommends to Cabinet an outright ban on the giving of live animals as prizes, in any form, on Council land.

Reasons for decision:

To maintain high levels of animal welfare throughout Ceredigion County Council through implementing a ban on the practice of giving live animals as prizes on Council land due to the potential distress caused to the animals.

Contact Name: Carwen Evans/Heddwyn Evans

Designation: Environmental Health Manager

Date of Report: 10 October 2023

Acronyms:

None

Appendix 1 – Appendix 1 – Letter from Lesley Griffiths, AS/MS Minister from Rural Affairs and North Wales



Letter to Local
Authorities - Eng.pdf



Letter to Local
Authorities - Cym.pdf



Ein cyf/Our ref MA/LG/2024/23

Chief Executive Officer
Welsh Local Authorities

September 2023

In light of recent renewed public interest, I wish to raise with you the issue of the giving of animals as prizes, particularly goldfish.

You will recall I previously wrote in December 2019, seeking feedback on this matter. I am pleased to note the positive progress in this area since and understand 12 of our 22 Local Authorities, included as an annex overleaf, have implemented bans on the giving of animals as prizes on Council owned land.

I have, however, recently been made aware of renewed concerns amongst the general public and third sector organisations about this practice, concerns I share.

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, owners and keepers of animals have a responsibility to ensure the welfare needs of their animals are met. It is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering, and this applies to both the prize givers and receivers.

I am writing to you as one of the 10 remaining Local Authorities not to implement a ban, asking if you would consider the banning of this outdated practice on your land.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I appreciate your continued efforts in promoting responsible pet ownership and discouraging this practice, which I feel no longer has a place in our society or reflects our animal welfare values. Responses can be sent to animalwelfarewales@gov.wales.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

Annex 1: Local Authorities which have implemented a ban on the giving of pets as prizes

Bridgend
Caerphilly
Cardiff
Conwy
Flintshire
Neath Port Talbot
Newport
Pembrokeshire
Rhondda Cynon Taf
Torfaen County Borough
Vale of Glamorgan
Wrexham

Cyngor Sir Ceredigion County Council - Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

An integrated tool to inform effective decision making



This **Integrated Impact Assessment tool** incorporates the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Sustainable Development Principles, the Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011 (Welsh Language Standards requirements) and Risk Management in order to inform effective decision making and ensuring compliance with respective legislation.

1. PROPOSAL DETAILS: (Policy/Change Objective/Budget saving)

Proposal Title	Ban of giving Pets as Prizes on Council Owned Land and Property
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Service Area	Public Protection	Corporate Lead Officer	Alun Williams	Strategic Director	Barry Rees
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Name of Officer completing the IIA	Heddwyn Evans	E-mail	Heddwyn.Evans@ceredigion.gov.uk	Phone no	5144
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Please give a brief description of the purpose of the proposal

An immediate voluntary ban of allowing the practice of giving animals as prizes on Council owned land and property.

Who will be directly affected by this proposal? (e.g. The general public, specific sections of the public such as youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits, staff members or those who fall under the protected characteristics groups as defined by the Equality Act and for whom the authority must have due regard).

General Public requesting use of Public Land

VERSION CONTROL: The IIA should be used at the earliest stages of decision making, and then honed and refined throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable development, Welsh language and equality considerations wherever possible.

Author	Decision making stage	Version number	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
	<i>e.g. Budget Process, LG, Scrutiny, Cabinet etc.</i>			<i>This will demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable development throughout the evolution of a proposal. Have you considered and applied the sustainable development principle and Well-being Goals?</i>

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COUNCIL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: Which of the Council's Strategic Objectives does the proposal address and how?	
Boosting the Economy, supporting Business and enabling employment.	The protection and endorsement of high standards of animal welfare is upmost as part of supporting the farming industry, and to support those who enjoy keeping animals as pets
Creating caring and healthy communities	Maintaining high standards of animal welfare supports an empathetic and caring community
Providing the best start in life and enabling Learning at all ages	
Creating sustainable, greener and well-connected communities	

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NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for **evidence to support your views**. These need to include your baseline position, measures and studies that have informed your thinking and the judgement you are making. It should allow you to identify whether any changes resulting from the implementation of the recommendation will have a positive or negative effect. Data sources include for example:

- *Quantitative data - data that provides numerical information, e.g. population figures, number of users/non-users*
- *Qualitative data – data that furnishes evidence of people's perception/views of the service/policy, e.g. analysis of complaints, outcomes of focus groups, surveys*
- *Local population data from the census figures (such as Ceredigion Welsh language Profile and Ceredigion Demographic Equality data)*
- *National Household survey data*
- *Service User data*
- *Feedback from consultation and engagement campaigns*
- *Recommendations from Scrutiny*
- *Comparisons with similar policies in other authorities*
- *Academic publications, research reports, consultants' reports, and reports on any consultation with e.g. trade unions or the voluntary and community sectors, 'Is Wales Fairer' document.*
- *Welsh Language skills data for Council staff*

2. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES: How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the five sustainable development principles, as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does the proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not, explain why.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the principle?

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<p>Long Term Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future.</p>	<p>The Council is committed to championing high standards of animal welfare and this policy supports the overall</p>	<p>Research by RSPCA. Observations of work undertaken by Public Protection Service .</p>	
<p>Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver.</p>	<p>The Council works closely with other statutory agencies such as the Welsh Government, Animal and Plant Health Agency in ensuring animal welfare standards are maintained. The Council also works with the RSPCA to further our shared aims and objectives.</p>	<p>As above</p>	
<p>Involvement Involving those with an interest and seeking their views.</p>	<p>The recommendation is consistent with the actions of other authorities who have implemented the same, and is in line with public expectations of protecting animal welfare.</p>	<p>As above</p>	
<p>Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse.</p>	<p>The activity of banning the giving of pets as prizes prevents the potential for adverse animal welfare</p>	<p>As above</p>	
<p>Integration Positively impacting on people, economy, environment and culture and trying to benefit all three.</p>	<p>Ensuring broader controls on animal welfare is in line with objectives contained within the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015</p>	<p>As above</p>	



3. WELL-BEING GOALS: Does your proposal deliver any of the seven National Well-being Goals for Wales as outlined on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. We need to ensure that the steps we take to meet one of the goals aren't detrimental to meeting another.			
Well-being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts:-	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?
3.1. A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs.	No impact		
3.2. A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change).	No impact		
3.3. A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximised and health impacts are understood.	No impact		
3.4. A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected.	No impact		
3.5. A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental well-being.	No Impact		

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<p>3.6. A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.</p> <p><i>In this section you need to consider the impact on equality groups, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement.</i> You need to consider how might the proposal impact on equality protected groups in accordance with the Equality Act 2010? These include the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or beliefs, gender, sexual orientation.</p> <p>Please also consider the following guide:: Equality Human Rights - Assessing Impact & Equality Duty</p>	<p>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or negligible impact.</p> <p><i>Using your evidence consider the impact for each of the protected groups. You will need to consider do these groups have equal access to the service, or do they need to receive the service in a different way from other people because of their protected characteristics. It is not acceptable to state simply that a proposal will universally benefit/disadvantage everyone. You should demonstrate that you have considered all the available evidence and address any gaps or disparities revealed.</i></p>	<p>What evidence do you have to support this view?</p> <p><i>Gathering Equality data and evidence is vital for an IIA. You should consider who uses or is likely to use the service. Failure to use <u>data</u> or <u>engage</u> where change is planned can leave decisions open to legal challenge. Please link to involvement box within this template. Please also consider the general guidance.</i></p>	<p>What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p> <p><i>These actions can include a range of positive actions which allows the organisation to treat individuals according to their needs, even when that might mean treating some more favourably than others, in order for them to have a good outcome. You may also have actions to identify any gaps in data or an action to engage with those who will/likely to be effected by the proposal. These actions need to link to Section 4 of this template.</i></p>																
<p>Age Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their age? (Please tick ✓)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="69 989 786 1332"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Positive</th> <th>Negative</th> <th>None/ Negligible</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Children and Young People up to 18</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>People 18-50</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Older People 50+</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	Children and Young People up to 18			✓	People 18-50			✓	Older People 50+			✓	<p><i>In practice, the IIA is likely to concentrate on young and older people.</i></p> <p><i>How do older and younger people access our services, access issues etc. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p> <p><i>Have you considered the impacts in line with the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child? Follow this link:</i> UNCRC</p> <p><i>Have you considered the impacts in line with the Older People's</i></p>		
	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible																
Children and Young People up to 18			✓																
People 18-50			✓																
Older People 50+			✓																

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				Commissioner Section 12 Guidance: Equality & Impact Assessment Older People		
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Disability Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their disability? (Please tick ✓)				<i>What issues are there are around each of the disability needs groups e.g. access to buildings/services, how we provide services and the way we do this, producing information in alternative formats, employment issues.</i>		
Hearing Impairment	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Physical Impairment	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Visual Impairment	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Learning Disability	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Long Standing Illness	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Mental Health	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Other	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			

Transgender			
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Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on transgender people? (Please tick ✓)				People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. Consider the provision of inclusive services for Transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.		
Transgender	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Marriage or Civil Partnership Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on marriage or Civil partnership? (Please tick ✓)				A union between a man and a woman and legal recognition of a same-sex couple's relationship. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters. This characteristic is protected but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination. For example in employment, civil partners must be provided with the same benefits available to married couples, such as survivor pensions, flexible working, maternity/paternity pay and healthcare insurance.		
Marriage	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Civil partnership	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Pregnancy or Maternity Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on pregnancy or maternity? (Please tick ✓)				Includes expectant mothers, mothers who have recently had a child. Protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.		
Pregnancy	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Maternity	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			

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			✓	<i>maternity relates to employment practices and/or the failure to implement work-based equal opportunities policies.</i>		
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Race Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on race? (Please tick ✓)				<p><i>Think about what the proposal will do to promote race equality with the aim of: eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between persons of different racial groups.</i></p> <p><i>Also think about the potential to affect racial groups differently. Issues to look at include providing translation/interpreting services, cultural issues and customs – dietary issues, religious holidays or days associated with religious observance; access to services, issues relating to Asylum Seeker, Refugee, Gypsy & Traveller, migrant communities and recording of racist incidents etc.</i></p> <p><i>Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>		
White	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Asian / Asian British	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Other Ethnic Groups	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			

Religion or non-beliefs Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different religions, beliefs or non-beliefs? (Please tick ✓)				<p><i>Race and religion are often linked. Research suggests that "...religion itself does not entail significant levels of reported discrimination... It is ethnicity – rather (or more) than religion – which acts as a visible and ready conduit for disadvantage and perceived discrimination".</i></p> <p><i>What the likely impact is e.g. cultural issues and customs i.e</i></p>		
Christian	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Buddhist	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			

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Hindu	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	<i>dietary issues, religious holidays or days associated with religious observance, Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i>		
			✓			
Humanist	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Jewish	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Muslim	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Sikh	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Non-belief	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Other	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			

Sex Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on men and/or women? (Please tick ✓)				<i>Consider what issues there are for men and women e.g. equal pay, responsibilities for dependents, issues for carers, access to training, employment issues. Will this impact disproportionately on one group more than another.</i>		
Men	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Women	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			

Sexual Orientation			
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Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different sexual orientation? (Please tick ✓)				<p><i>This is whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, opposite sex or to both sexes.</i></p> <p><i>Consider the provision of inclusive services for e.g. older and younger people from the Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual communities. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>		
Bisexual	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Gay Men	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Gay Women / Lesbian	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			
Heterosexual / Straight	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible			
			✓			

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Having due regards in relation to the three aims of the Equality Duty - determine whether the proposal will assist or inhibit your ability to eliminate discrimination; advance equality and foster good relations.

3.6.2. How could/does the proposal help advance/promote equality of opportunity?

You should consider whether the proposal will help you to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantage
- To meet the needs of people with certain characteristics
- Encourage increased participation of people with particular characteristics

No impact

3.6.3. How could/does the proposal/decision help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation?

You should consider whether there is evidence to indicate that:

- The proposal may result in less favourable treatment for people with certain characteristics
- The proposal may give rise to indirect discrimination
- The proposal is more likely to assist or impeded you in making reasonable adjustments

No impact

3.6.4. How could/does the proposal impact on advancing/promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

You should consider whether the proposal will help you to:

- Tackle prejudice
- Promote understanding

A ban on giving pets as prizes indicates a commitment to Animal Welfare which supports an empathetic community.



Having due regard of the Socio-Economic Duty of the Equality Act 2010.

Socio-Economic Disadvantage is living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in the same society.

As a listed public body, Ceredigion County Council is required to have due regard to the Socio-Economic Duty of the Equality Act 2010. Effectively this means carrying out a poverty impact assessment. The duty covers all people who suffer socio-economic disadvantage, including people with protected characteristics.

3.6.5 What evidence do you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to the proposal?

Describe why it will have a positive/negative or negligible impact.

No impact

What evidence do you have to support this view?

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

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3.7. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh Language are promoted and protected. <i>In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This in order to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language Measure 2011.</i>				Describe why it will have a positive/negative or negligible impact.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action (s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Will the proposal be delivered bilingually (Welsh & English)?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	<i>Will the proposal increase or reduce the opportunity for persons to receive or access information in Welsh?</i>		
	✓					
Will the proposal have an effect on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	<i>Will the proposal alter the linguistic nature of the community?</i> <i>Will the proposal increase or reduce the opportunity for persons to use the Welsh language in a social setting?</i> <i>What opportunities does the proposal provide to develop Welsh language skills within the community?</i>		
			✓			
Will the proposal increase or reduce the opportunity for persons to access services through the medium of Welsh?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	<i>Will the proposal ensure that people can access services in their preferred language, Welsh or English?</i> <i>Will the proposal increase or reduce the opportunity for persons to use the Welsh language within the workplace?</i>		
			✓			

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				<p><i>Will the proposal impact on the number of Welsh speaking staff within the service?</i></p> <p><i>Will the proposal increase or reduce the opportunity for staff to improve their Welsh language skills or access training via the medium of Welsh?</i></p>		
How will the proposal treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	<p><i>How will the proposal ensure that Welsh speaking service users receive services to the same standard as those who access the same services through the medium of English?</i></p>		
			✓			
Will it preserve promote and enhance local culture and heritage?	Positive	Negative	None/ Negligible	<p><i>What opportunities are there to promote the Services that are provided through the medium of Welsh?</i></p> <p><i>What opportunities are there within the proposal to promote the Welsh language?</i></p> <p><i>Will the proposal increase or reduce opportunities to take part in sport, art and recreation activities?</i></p>		
			✓			



4. STRENGTHENING THE PROPOSAL: If the proposal is likely to have a negative impact on any of the above (including any of the protected characteristics), what practical changes/actions could help reduce or remove any negative impacts as identified in sections 2 and 3?

4.1 Actions.

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?	Progress
All Council Estates managers will be advised of the new policy	As soon as possible after the policy is approved.		Immediate start
All existing Council tenants will be advised of the new policy	As soon as possible after the policy is approved		Immediate start
Any new Council tenants will be advised of the policy	As arises		Immediate start
Events Group will be advised of the policy	Immediately after approval		Immediate start

4.2. If no action is to be taken to remove or mitigate negative impacts please justify why.

(Please remember that if you have identified unlawful discrimination, immediate and potential, as a result of this proposal, the proposal must be changed or revised).

4.3. Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing.

How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

5. RISK: What is the risk associated with this proposal?

Impact Criteria	1 - Very low	2 - Low	3 - Medium	4 - High	5 - Very High
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Likelihood Criteria	1 - Unlikely to occur	2 - Lower than average chance of occurrence	3 - Even chance of occurrence	4 - Higher than average chance of occurrence	5 - Expected to occur
Risk Description	Impact (severity)		Probability (deliverability)		Risk Score
	1		1		1 x 1 = 1
Does your proposal have a potential impact on another Service area?					
Animal welfare is improved; people are educated to not support such practice; complaints to RSPCA will reduce; a consistent approach by local authorities across Wales					

6. SIGN OFF					
Position	Name		Signature		Date
Service Manager	Carwen Evans				25/10/23
Corporate Lead Officer					25/10/23
Strategic Director	Barry Rees				26/10/23
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matthew Vaux				06/11/23

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 22nd November 2023

Title: Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Updated Action Plan

Purpose of the report:

1. To report on the activities included in the Action Plan to address the issues identified in the CIW Report now that we are six months post Inspection.
2. To note the progress and to raise any points of interest.

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:

Scrutiny requested that the Action Plan that was developed to address the recommendations made by CIW was reviewed after a period of six months. This report is being presented as this period of time has now elapsed.

Background

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) carried out a performance evaluation inspection of Ceredigion County Council's (the Local Authority) Social Services in March 2023.

The purpose of the inspection was to review Ceredigion County Councils Social Services performance in exercising its social services duties and functions in line with legislation as defined under the principals of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

Following this inspection, and having accepted as a proportionate response the recommendations contained in the report, an Action Plan was devised to seek to address the findings and to continue to make further improvements.

Having initially shared the Action Plan with Committee on the 24th May 2023, Committee requested that the Action Plan be monitored through the Healthier Communities Scrutiny Committee after six months and then one year after to maintain progress and momentum through to completion.

Current Situation

The current Action Plan is an active live document that is used to support the improvement work following the CIW Inspection as well as continuous monitoring of services that seeks to improve services and celebrate success.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why.

No, this is not a policy or strategy.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term:

Collaboration:

Involvement:

Prevention:

Integration:

Recommendation(s):

To note the contents of the report.

Reasons for decision:

Contact Name: Audrey Somerton-Edwards

Designation: Corporate Lead Officer, Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services.

Date of Report: 30th October 2023

Acronyms:

CIW – Care Inspectorate Wales

Theme	CIW Ref	Strengths Identified
People - Voice & Choice	2.1	For many people, their voices are heard, and their personal outcomes captured. There were examples of practitioners working collaboratively and consistently with people to support what matters to them. People we spoke with said they had been understood and their voice heard with effective and regular communication. 82% of people who responded to our people survey said they were treated with dignity and respect 'at all times' or 'most of the time' by the local authority.
People - Voice & Choice	2.2	People are able to communicate in their preferred language. There was evidence of the active offer being made and managers were confident of adequate numbers of Welsh speaking practitioners to implement the active offer
People - Voice & Choice	2.3	We found advocacy is proactively considered and offered, particularly in the context of child protection conferences and reviews for children who are looked after by the local authority. It remains a strength from our previous assurance check in 2021 that these services are readily available. Advocates routinely attend decision making forums to represent children's views. Some children who are looked after told us of difficulties they had at times in accessing support and a lack of transparency about their rights and entitlements. Some of the children felt they were making decisions unaided at key points in their lives. This may be an area in need of further strengthening. In adults there was evidence of people being supported by informal advocates to participate in decisions that affect them. Practitioners in adult's services understand the importance of advocacy. The formal advocacy provider noted that perhaps, at times, they could have been involved at an earlier stage
People - Voice & Choice	2.4	People are being provided with the opportunity to tailor and manage their own care and support using direct payments. However, in common with other local authorities across Wales recruitment of personal assistants to provide support via direct payments is a challenge. We heard how the service is actively trying to recruit new personal assistants supported by a new website and software system
People - Voice & Choice	2.5	Ceredigion has a committed workforce which is responding to an increasing workload both in terms of complexity and volume. 77% of the respondents to our anonymous staff survey reflected these challenges but said they were well supported by colleagues and managers. We also heard how staff valued the accessibility of senior leaders. 74% of staff said their workloads were manageable
People - Voice & Choice	2.6	In response to the challenges faced by the local authority when recruiting qualified social workers there is a focus on 'growing our own' from internal staff. We heard how, positively, the local authority has been working closely with Aberystwyth University to try and establish a social work course to train the workforce required for the future. We further note the local authority is carefully considering employing overseas workers. They would want those workers to commit to learning the Welsh language and are mindful of supporting them to integrate into the local culture
People - Voice & Choice	2.7	Managers we spoke with expressed confidence they are skilled and supported to lead. The Director of Social Services is currently a temporary appointment. A permanent person is being sought to give the senior leadership team improved stability.
Prevention	3.1	Senior managers fully understand access to early intervention and prevention is key to maintaining well-being and mitigating the demand on managed care services. An area of strength in Ceredigion is the shared strategic commitment to the preventative agenda as evidenced by the transformation to the TAW model. This ensures a focus on prompting people's independence and supporting families to stay together when safe to do so
Prevention	3.2	We saw examples of assessments and child protection conference reports, which were child focused and written in a way the child or young person could engage with and understand. The quality of most reviews for children remains a strength from our previous check in 2021. Minutes are written directly to the child, giving the feeling of a personalised letter. These minutes acknowledge the child's wishes and explain in child-friendly language the outcomes and decisions of their review
Prevention	3.3	Social workers clearly strive to establish meaningful relationships with children and families, with an emphasis on direct work with individual children. We saw examples of social workers playing games with children, colouring with them and playing football to build relationships. We found strong evidence of practitioner reflection, professional curiosity and clear decision making in respect of children and young people
Prevention	3.4	Under the TAW model a range of preventative services have been combined under the umbrella of PCC. The range and capacity of these services, including those provided by the third sector, is undoubtedly a strength which our staff survey indicated is appreciated by the workforce in Ceredigion. We observed well organised meetings to determine which services are best placed to support families. Well-being centres are planned as a 'one stop shop' for services including leisure, housing and youth services. The local authority is currently developing a directory of resources, services and facilities to make the early help offer clearer for staff and the public

Prevention	3.5	We heard, as a commitment to developing community links and supporting the preventative agenda, the local authority has increased the number of Community Connectors, working in a patch-based model, throughout the county, looking to connect people with services, activities and events happening in their locality with the aim of impacting positively on their well being
Prevention	3.6	Despite the high demand and waiting list for occupational therapy assessments we saw some examples of the services ability to respond promptly. This included the provision of some equipment to promote people's independence enabling them to remain living at home for longer.
Prevention	3.7	Assistive technology, including the provision of wrist watches to monitor people's vital health signs and falls, is a key strategy to support early intervention and prevention. We also heard about projects such as PCC giving 'Fitbits' to young people to encourage them to stay active even when they were not engaging directly with services. The local authority is also developing office space to be able to showcase the offer of assistive technology
Prevention	3.8	Like most local authorities across Wales there is substantial pressures on capacity within the domiciliary care market in Ceredigion. Despite this demand timely hospital discharge continues to be a priority. We saw a focus by the enablement team on effectively supporting people to regain their independence and enabling people to return home in accordance with their wishes.
Well-being	4.1	Safeguarding children and young people is prioritised across the TAW model. Social workers demonstrated a good understanding of the history and current situation of families. We found skilled and competent workers performing well in meeting children and young people's need to be safeguarded. Decision making in relation to significant harm is clear and results in appropriate action
Well-being	4.2	Children are seen by their social worker as often as needed in line with the levels of needs and risks. There is recognition of the impact of poverty on families and financial support regularly provided to support parents to attend contact. We saw practitioners increasing visits, including on weekends, and supporting intensively to proactively reduce safety risks. One parent powerfully described the approach as "understanding, actually supporting me and letting me speak". She also said the conference reports now recognise strengths as well as risks. This supports our findings that risks in child protection are appropriately considered and balanced with the families' strengths
Well-being	4.3	Family Group Conferences are routinely and effectively used to formalise support for parents/carers to safely care for their children. In these cases, good outcomes are often achieved for children. Significant work is being undertaken to maintain children with their parents and, although this was not always possible, we saw good outcomes where children remained with extended family. Positively, we heard how Family Group Conferencing is now being extended to include work with adults, as a reflection of the TAW model.
Well-being	4.4	We saw excellent examples of practitioner analysis and rationale recorded which evidenced an understanding of what was required to help people meet outcomes. Children's views are considered as part of planning and informed social worker analysis on the risk of harm. Recordings highlight strengths as well as detailing the worries and the lived experiences of children. We saw excellent examples of multi-agency risk assessments, using SOS methods and a range of other tools to facilitate direct work.
Well-being	4.5	In relation to adult safeguarding, an area of strength previously, we saw some variation across the social care records reviewed, with most showing timely and effective safeguarding practices aligned with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (WSP). However, records could be strengthened by consistently evidencing all reasonable steps have been taken to enable the person to participate in the safeguarding process.
Partnership	5.1	We heard consistently positive messages about partnership working from the people we spoke with during our inspection. At a strategic level, senior leaders work together to address cross cutting departmental challenges. One senior manager described their senior management structure as a 'powerhouse' for getting things done. Externally, we heard about excellent working relationships with the strategic lead in community health services. We saw evidence of partnerships directly benefiting people such as the development of care homes for children in Ceredigion meaning they can remain in their own communities, and the Borth project, a multiagency meeting focusing on getting people the right help and support at the right time
Partnership	5.2	Operationally, effective integration and collaboration between professionals is evident across teams. Structures are in place which allow for coordinated consideration of requests for care and support in relation to prevention. Integrated working with health services in Porth Gofal Triage and Assessment ensures people can be directed towards the most relevant professional in a timely manner. This promotes holistic consideration of people's circumstances and risks to ensure well informed triage decisions. For example, effective and timely triage and referral for enablement input meant one person could be discharged promptly from hospital and regain independence at home without the need for formal care and support

Partnership	5.3	Decision making forums, including child protection conferences, are well attended by a range of professionals. Practitioners described engagement in these meetings as 'exceptional' with examples given of paediatricians routinely in attendance. We heard how conference reports are routinely shared, however the sharing of the conference minutes in a timely manner, post conference, needs to improve. There was evidence of joint working with health in the small number of disabled children files viewed and healthy disagreements between professionals at times.
Partnership	5.4	Schools have many positive partnership arrangements. For example, we saw a clear pathway enabling children who are looked after to access emotional health support through the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) and more general initiatives such as surveys to target specific groups of children and contextual risks around issues like vaping. There are clearly good partnerships benefiting children between schools and youth workers, school counsellors and inclusion officers
Partnership	5.5	Social work staff told us the timeliness and quality of partners contributions to assessments is good. We saw examples of effective multi agency partnership working and a commitment to supporting families and maintaining children within their families.
Partnership	5.6	Providers gave positive feedback about their relationships with the commissioning team. They talked about how the tendering process can be challenging, but the local authority is supportive and hold workshops to simplify this and clarify expectations. Providers also said the commissioning team are willing to listen to their opinion and take action to improve issues.

Theme	CIW Ref	Area for Improvement	Owner	Actions	Due Date	Update 1 September 2023	RAG	Scrutiny Review 1 Healthier Communities Scrutiny 22 November 2023	RAG	Final Review and Completion	RAG
		The local authority must ensure people's voice is central to the work they undertake with people.	DP	*Review of recording Policy will be revised to explicitly reference the need to record the recognition of the need for a carers assessment and the offer being made.	31.12.23	The Recording Policy will be updated to reflect carers discussions regarding their needs.		Not yet completed but is being reviewed and will be actioned by the due date.			
			RC	*Establish a Care Experience forum - to co produce the Commissioning of services, Policy development, represented on interviews for key roles.		There are developments in place to ensure that the experience of children looked after is assimilated into areas of the local authority business. There has been investment from the Eliminating Profit Program to strengthen the care leaver support we offer. The appointment of a Team Manager for Care Leavers will strengthen support for care leavers and those who work with them.		The initial Corporate Parenting Meeting took place in September which was a collaboration of Cllrs and Officers in raising the profile of Corporate Parenting activities across the Council. Further activities in developing the work of the Corporate Parenting Meeting will take place through November, December and January with a fit for purpose Corporate Parenting Meeting established in February 2024.			
			RC/EI	*Collaborate with schools to identify and support young carers in education.		This work will commence when the new school year starts		Work has started with key stakeholders, but further work is required to identify young carers through exploring opportunities within PCC and Lifelong Learning.			
	2.9	The local authority must ensure practitioners consistently comply with the general duty to promote the well-being of the carer, by explicitly offering carers assessments to people to discuss what support they require, with reasons for refusal of an assessment routinely recorded.		* Regular reporting on Cares Assessment compliance through the Performance Board by inclusion in Business Plans.		When the Ombudsman review is complete consideration will be given to inclusion in the Business Plan		Thematic review timetable agreed at TAW Board and will be completed within the next 12 months			
				* Review all documentation to ensure they reflect the need for a Carers Assessment to be offered		This is being reviewed and will include any recommendations from the Ombudsman review. Additionally this is being reframed within the Signs of Safety development.		As above			
				Donna Pritchard will be the designated Lead Officer whilst the carers development work is undertaken. This role will be re-considered at the conclusion of the Ombudsmans review.		Greg Jones is now the Designated Lead Officer for unpaid carers activity since being appointed in June 2023.					
People - Voice & Choice	2.10	The local authority must increase short break provision across the county to help address the well-being needs of parents and carers.	SH/NL	*This work is being address as part of the Respite/Care Breaks within the Carers, Community and Ageing Well Steering Group	31.03.2024	This work has commenced.					
			NL	* Eliminating Profits project is focused on recruiting foster carers including short breaks and respite.		Eliminating Profit funds have been invested in the Fostering Service. The Foster Wales national initiative is also being accessed to increase the number of mainstream foster carers and short break and respite carers.		Day Opportunities and Respite review has been concluded and final draft of the report will be presented to Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd November 2023 and Cabinet on the 5th December. The Fostering team continue to progress with the recruitment of an officer that will support the recruitment of foster carers including short break foster carers.			
			NL/ASE	Ensure that carers are appropriately represented in the approval of respite carer fostering, Supported Lodgings and Shared Lives placements to fully appreciate the needs for the carer. Representation on Panel will also offer reassurance that the child/relative will receive good quality care.		There is a foster carer representative on the Ceredigion Foster Panel. When the Supported Lodgings and Share Lives		As previous update			
People - Voice & Choice	2.12	The local authority must carefully consider their future workforce strategy to prioritise a sufficient and sustainable workforce, with the capacity and capability to consistently meet statutory responsibilities.	RC/GE	* This is being addressed as part of TAW Recruitment and Retention workstream and being monitored as part of the group in to TAW Programme Board	30.09.2023	The recruitment and retention issue is active and ongoing. This includes the rolling advertisements, commissioned recruitment activity and the prompt response to all enquiries. The need to recruit across all social care roles is recognised and prioritised within the TAW service and colleagues in People and Organisation. The red rating is in recognition of the acute challenges in recruiting qualified social workers, occupational therapists and care and residential staff.		The Council continues to experience challenges with recruitment of suitably qualified social workers on a permanent basis. The challenges are also relevant for the recruitment of suitably experienced practitioners as Agency Workers. The Local Authority are exploring options, including overseas recruitment and the utilisation of Agencies in supporting recruitment activities. The Workforce Development Strategy will inform this work further but similarly, the red rating is in recognition of the acute challenges of recruiting qualified social workers, occupational therapists and care and residential staff. Positively, we have been able to recruit the TM within the Occupational Therapy team.			
				* Strategy will be reviewed as part of the revised Workforce Plan		The newly published Workforce Plan recognises and reflects recruitment challenges.		Continues to be under development.			

People - Voice & Choice	2.13	The local authority should ensure robust management oversight of practice and reflective conversations are taking place with sufficient information noted to evidence decision making.	RC	*Comms has been put in place around updated supervision policy, and also highlighted within the QA Framework.	30.06.2023	The newly launched supervision policy was announced by internal comms. The consultation in respect of the Quality Assurance Framework work was undertaken by workforce wide consultation. The formal launched will communicated by internal comms.		New Supervision Policy has been launched but continued QA activity will support the narrative that this is making a positive impact on the quality of practice, reflection and analysis that has a direct impact on the services and interventions provided to people.		
			QA Officer	* Thematic Audit required to allow for full picture to be understood		This is a recording practice issue that will be the subject of thematic review.		A full range of priority action Audit Activity has been produced and approved by the TAW Board. Over the coming 12-month period the QA activity will be rolled out in the priority service areas that triangulates the quality and standard of practice and the impact this is having on people of Ceredigion.		
				* Recording Policy Needs to be updated		As above		As above.		
People - Voice & Choice	2.14	The local authority must ensure it has a competent and confident workforce.		* TNA's are completed every year, and appraisals are also completed. Annual Appraisal will consider all training needs be it mandatory or specialist	30.09.2023	The Annual Appraisal cycle has commenced with a strong emphasis on supporting the workforce to complete training in line with their specialism and to identify future training needs.				
People - Voice & Choice	2.15	Staff told how they benefited from the support of peers and would welcome more opportunities for face-to-face contact in offices. We heard how arranging in-person meetings for adult and children's services can be a challenge due to lack of suitable facilities. This included child protection conferences when face to face meeting is the family's preference. This is something the local authority should consider.		* Office are now open for staff face to face access. * Locations for CP Conferences are limited but available. Team Manager Quality Assurance to complete an audit of available and suitable locations for CP Conferences and present the available options for consideration.		The hybrid model is in action. New locations for CP conferences have been identified. However, there is still scope to improve the number of suitable venues to utilise for face to face conferences		Offices remain open that supports hybrid working. Work is underway to identify suitable venues across the County through working with partner organisations, including the 3rd sector.		
People - Voice & Choice	2.16	The local authority must implement and embed a robust quality assurance framework.	ASE	* The QA Framework consultation has now concluded and the feedback received is being considered and amendments will be made to strengthen the approach where appropriate. * Quality Assurance Officer post out to advert * Quality Assurance Support Officer out to advert	30.06.2023	QA Framework to be launched 1 October 2023. Appointment made		As above, the QA framework has been agreed and is in place. As above		
				* Development of a thematic audit workplan		Interviews will take place at the beginning of September. Proposed workplan to be presented to TAW Programme Board on 25.09.2023				
People - Voice & Choice	2.17	The local authority must ensure complaints are consistently responded to in accordance with the prescribed timescales in the "The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014", and lessons learned from responding to complaints drive improvements.	RC	* Develop a tracker for all Social Service Complaints to be reviewed as part of regular CLO meetings with the Complaints Manager to review responses and ensure that there is adherence to timescales from all perspectives. The review meetings will take place on a fortnightly basis. * Ownership of the tracker will rest with the Statutory Director of Social Services in partnership with Complaints Manager. * QA Officer will be in a position to gather and implement learning from complaints via lessons learned log linking with L&D, and Policy Review	30.06.2023	There is now a fortnightly meeting between the Statutory Director of Social Services and the Complaints Manager to discuss and coordinate complaints activity. As above		These meetings are taking place regularly between the Customer Complaints and Compliments Team and the DSS. As above		
						This work will commence when the Quality Assurance Officer takes up post on 1 October 2023. The information gathered from the monitoring meetings which take place between the Complaints Manager and the Statutory Director of Social Services will assist in identifying themes and trends which contribute to service improvement. The aim is to reduce the number of complaints by learning from services users.		This work will be carried forward given that the QA officer took up post in October 2023.		
Prevention	3.9	The local authority must review its current arrangement to ensure people consistently receive a timely response when they contact them.		*Revisit protocol between Clic and Porth Gofal Triage and Social Work Teams to ensure access to case holder	30.09.2023	There is a comprehensive review of Pathways and Protocols taking place. During September there are a series of workshops scheduled to involve managers from across the TAW service. The purpose is to reinforce the need for efficient case transfers and to identify opportunities to build capacity.		This work is ongoing.		

				* Need to ensure feedback to referrers at point of decision		See above		This work is in progress and will be supported by the work of the QA Officer.		
				* Need to identify thematic QA for process.		See above		This work is in progress		
Prevention	3.10	The local authority must take the required action to ensure compliance with timescales for statutory reviews and ensure all relevant professionals are invited to contribute, as it is missing the opportunity to assure itself resources are being used to best effect.	RC	* Develop a specific action plan and program of work to resolve backlog	31.01.2024	See above		This work is in progress.		
Prevention	3.11	The local authority should continue to work strategically and operationally with its partners to look for solutions to alleviate the situation.	DP	* Working group already established and tendering process is being reviewed	30.06.2023	The tendering process had been reviewed and practice amended accordingly				
Prevention	3.12	The local authority should engage with people experiencing sensory loss to hear their voice to influence the development of services.	HW	* Assistive Technology and Equipment workstream is focused on the Sensory Service with a view to redesigning service	31.03.2024	The appointment of the Technology Enabled Care and Sensory Services Manager has strengthened the approach to utilising technology in the care settings. The workstream continues to be active.		Workstream continues to focus on this programme and a service implementation plan has been developed to further develop services.		
Prevention	3.13	The local authority must ensure it understands the high re-referral rate, so leaders can assure themselves about the appropriateness of closures/signposting and demonstrate clear evidence of management oversight.	TJ	* This will form part of the first year cycle of thematic reviews for the QA Officer, but is also currently being analysed as part of the ongoing monitoring of the Children's Porth Gofal Triage and Assessment process. The re-referral statistic was identified prior to the inspection.	31.03.2024	This data is being analysed as part of the Pathways and Protocols work that is ongoing.		Work on this continues to progress. A key area of work identified is the appropriate capture of data and information to inform the service in relation to rereferrals.		
Prevention	3.14	The local authority must assure itself the discharge of care orders is prioritised.	ASE	* Already forms part of the CLA Strategy and incorporates a clear plan to support the reduction or prevention of children becoming accommodated by the local authority. Early Intervention services are key to prevention.	30.06.2023	Eliminating Profit funding has been utilised to purchase additional legal services capacity to discharge care orders where children are now safe at home or with family or Special Guardians.				
				* Currently 10 children being explored for revocation.						
Prevention	3.15	Fostering recruitment should continue to be prioritised.	NL	* Foster Care recruitment is being progressed as part of the Children's Steering Group and Eliminating Profit work. There has been further additional funding allocated to Ceredigion through Foster Wales (02.05.2023) to strengthen and develop the foster carer infrastructure. Work has already started on the Fostering integration with MyAccount which will support the recruitment process to help the wider daily report functionality to free up capacity.	30.06.2023	Work alongside the our internal plans and the Foster Wales initiative continues with funding to support recruitment allocated from the national pot to further develop services.		No further update		
				* Foster Carer Engagement Plan in place to allow for the sharing of innovative ideas between officers and foster carers.		Regular Engagement Meetings are taking place between officers and foster carers to generate innovative ideas to recruit and support foster carers.		As per previous update		
Prevention	3.16	There are mixed views from third sector providers about partnership working with some expressing the opinion that there could be more recognition of what services there are and more done to coordinate them at a strategic level. The local authority may benefit from carrying out a mapping exercise to understand the variety of third sector services with the aim of facilitating greater collaboration.		* Contracts Panel has been put in place to monitor the quality and effectiveness of contracts and determine whether value for money is being achieved.	30.06.2023	The Contract Panel and the supporting documentation has now been established and will commence in September 2023.		Underway		
				* This needs to form part of the 3rd sector grants review, with a view of rationalisation of funding. The work of the Contacts Panel will assist in gathering this information for rationalisation.		See above				
				* Clients Service Strategies should also determine the need for services		Working ongoing				
Prevention	3.17	The local authority must ensure plans are updated in line with statutory standards.	RC	*Need to understand the issues that are causing timescales to drift, what is contained in the IRO monitoring reports, is whether this still the case now that Innovate are in place. Will review following Q4 data reporting to analyse the performance.	30.09.2023	More analysis is needed in this area. Although timescales have improved.		Work continues in this area with close working between CM and Manager for the IRO Service. Further analysis is needed in this area although their continues to be improvement in the timescales.		
				* Protocol required for Personal Advisors to improve timescales for care leaver Pathway Plans.		This review will start when the Team Manager comes into post after 18 September 2023.		Progress in this area is developing with the permanent recruitment to the Team Manager post within the Leaving Care Team. They will be able to continue to develop this work and provide further analysis of need.		
Well-being	4.5	In relation to adult safeguarding, an area of strength previously, we saw some variation across the social care records reviewed, with most showing timely and effective safeguarding practices aligned with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (WSP). However, records could be strengthened by consistently evidencing all reasonable steps have been taken to enable the person to participate in the safeguarding process.	EU/RC	An end to end review of current practice will take place to assess effectiveness of current practice and identify any areas that need to be strengthened to encourage participation of the person at risk.	30.06.2023	The Signs of Safety development has given an opportunity for practitioners and managers to review practice to support effectiveness and implementation. The work is continuing but the uncertainty regard WCCIS is a risk.		Momentum in embedding the Signs of Safety work across the organisation continues with the roll out of the Signs of Safety Practice Ambassadors and now a regular practice forum where good practice is celebrated. Some uncertainty regarding the current WCCIS challenges and capability but work is progressing with the development of tools that supports direct delivery of practice to people.		
Well-being	4.6	The local authority should review current arrangements to ensure the outcome of referrals are shared with the reporter and that minutes are shared with attendees in a timely manner.	TJ and all decision making managers	Need to ensure referrers are notified at point of decision within Porth Gofal Triage and feedback is recorded.	30.06.2023	This is part of the Pathways and Protocols Review.				
			ASE/EU	Need to ensure that minutes are approved in a timely manner and circulated as required within good practice guidelines.		Business support has been strengthened to address this issue.				

			TJ	Develop reporting suite, also need to focus on backlog of case closures		The data set for the service has been reported to TAW Board and the backlog has improved and continues to be addressed.				
Well-being	4.7	The local authority must ensure there is robust oversight of safeguarding practice to assure itself of compliance with the WSP.	RC/EU	Needs to be reviewed		The Concise Child Protection Review has acted as test in this area. Feedback has indicated that the Care Inspectorate Wales have not identified weakness in Ceredigion. However, a full audit of procedures relating to children and adults will take place.		As part of the robust audit plan this area of work will be a focus of this work to provide reassurance and evidence that practice in this area remains strong. As noted, no identified weaknesses were noted in the Inspectorate Wales Activity and will remain a focus of future inspectorate activities in line with the roll out of future inspection activities.		
Well-being	4.8	The local authority initiates child protection processes in a timely way but must assure itself multi-agency involvement is considered at the earliest opportunity.	All managers will input into the audit	Undertake a thematic audit of strategy discussions and meetings to understand attendance levels in line with statutory timescales.	30.06.2023	A review of this matter was undertaken for the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board and reported through the Local Operational Group.				
Well-being	4.9	The local authority must review adult assessment documentation to ensure it follows all core statutory requirements as outlined in Part 3 Code of Practice (Assessing the Needs of Individuals).	EU/QA Officer	* This work will be addressed as part of the QA Framework and thematic audits. A document review is taking place under the Signs of Safety development programme.	30.09.2023	This will be within the remit of the Quality Assurance Officer on commencement of duties.		As noted earlier.		
Well-being	4.10	The local authority must review its recording policy to include robust managerial oversight to ensure all records are maintained appropriately.	EU/QA Officer	*Policy review is to form part of the role of the QA Officer *General comms to managers regards the outcome of the inspection and areas of learning via workshops	30.09.2023			As noted above.		
Partnership	5.7	There is evidence of practitioners developing professional working relationships with people built on co-operation and a shared understanding of what matters. However, working in partnership with people and carers on co-produced outcomes requires improvement in some service areas. As already mentioned earlier in the report the domains of assessments and principles of 2014 Act need further embedding in practice especially when completing proportionate assessments. At times the support is service led and functional rather than focussing on what matters and the outcomes the person wants to achieve.	All managers will input into the audit	Thematic audits will be conducted in order to measure input of families to their plans, and the proportionality of assessments.		The Proportionate Assessment has been reviewed and is being utilised.				
Partnership	5.8	The local authority should review its communication strategy to ensure that their model is understood and accessible.		Link to Comms Workstream - Website development	30.09.2023	Work with partner agencies is ongoing to assist their development of understanding the Through Age Wellbeing model.				
Partnership	5.9	Overall providers feel the local authority has been clear about the vision of the TAW model. However now that the restructure has taken place some are unclear of the current situation within some teams. The local authority should consider updating their partners on the current operational arrangements.		* Comms Plan to be updated, to ensure stakeholders are aware of new structure and the roles of teams and services within the model. The update of the website will assist in this area. We will give consideration to facilitating a workshop across the TAW for third sector providers.		As above.				
Partnership	5.10	Some providers noted the number of agency workers in some teams, which can affect the quality of referrals and when the workers are not based in Ceredigion this has been a barrier to meeting. The local authority should ensure that employing agency staff working outside Ceredigion does not cause any barrier or delay to people receiving support.	CM's	Terms of reference will be reviewed for all Through, Age, Care and Wellbeing meetings and agreeing to the ongoing approach to hybrid meetings.		Complete				

Carer assessment offer and support plans
Voice - young carers, adult victims of alleged abuse
Re-referrals

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CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 22nd November 2023

Title: Statutory Social Services Directors Report – 2022-2023

Purpose of the report: 1. To report to Council on the performance of the Ceredigion County Council Social Services for the years 2022-2023.

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:

The report has not been requested by Scrutiny but is presented in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

Background

The Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services content is defined in Part 8 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 under the “Code of Practice on the Role of Directors of Social Services”.

The Annual Report aims to produce a rounded picture of the Social Services Department in Ceredigion which provides more timely feedback into planning and budgetary processes.

The report describes how the Social Services Department in Ceredigion has performed during the year 2022-2023.

The report will be used by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to help inform their independent evaluation of Ceredigion and their inspection activity work.

Current Situation

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.

No, this is not a policy or strategy.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term:

Collaboration:

Involvement:

Prevention:
Integration:

Recommendation(s):

To note the contents of the report.

Reasons for decision:

Contact Name: Audrey Somerton-Edwards

Designation: Corporate Lead Officer, Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services.

Date of Report: 30th October 2023

Acronyms:

CIW – Care Inspectorate Wales

Ceredigion County Council

Audrey Somerton-Edwards



**Ceredigion Social
Services –
Statutory Director’s
Annual Report
2022/2023**

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1. Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to publish the annual report for 2022-23. At the beginning of this fiscal year, Sian Howys was the Statutory Director for Social Services, and we thank her very much for her work before retiring in November 2022. I joined Ceredigion County Council in April 2022 and took over the role of Director of Social Services on an interim basis on 01 November 2022, whilst the recruitment of a permanent Director was undertaken.



In line with the expectations of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Statutory Director of Social Services is required to publish a report on the Social Services duties within the Local Authority over the previous year, at the end of every fiscal year.

This is our opportunity to evaluate our performance and draw attention to lessons to be learnt and any required improvements. It is also an opportunity to highlight good practice and celebrate success.

The report provides a summary of what is in progress over the year to come.

The past few years have not been easy for the people of Ceredigion or for the Social Services workforce. The pandemic was incredibly challenging for our carers, our residential homes, those workers who visit people in their homes, and for all other workers. The impact of the pandemic continues, and we can see the challenges that have arisen as a result of the cost-of-living crisis. We have contended with significant workforce challenges that needed robust and decisive action to address.

Whilst I reflect on the last 12 months, I am struck by how challenging it has been across the whole of the Through Age Wellbeing services. The increased demand across our services has been significant and sustained. This reflects the pressures across our communities. The direct and indirect impact of meeting ever more complex needs, the cost-of-living challenges, post Covid issues are all having a significant impact on people’s lives as well as delays in people accessing treatment through the National Health Service. However, despite this I have witnessed the most outstanding force of goodwill and commitment from staff across the Through Age Well-being service to do their utmost to deliver for Ceredigion communities. Our performance for 2022-23, in the context of these pressures has been exceptional.

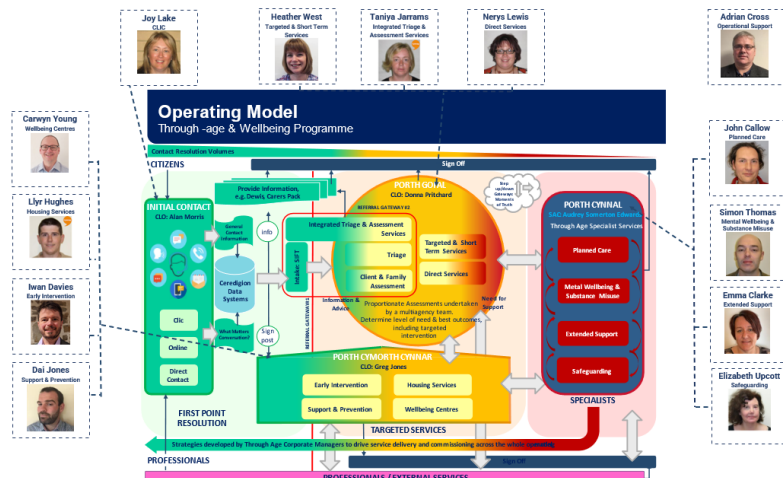
We have continued to work with families to keep children and young people safe at the heart of their families and communities. We are continuing to work with families to reduce the number of children who come into the care of the Local Authority. We have continued to support people to live at home independently and delay the need for admission to residential care. Despite significant challenges in the Domiciliary Care market, our workforce has worked additional hours and their days off to keep people at home, safe, whilst our commissioning team have been working with the market to reset and recruit. This continued to be an ongoing challenge. We have continued to embrace technology across our services to aid efficiency and safety for our communities.

During March 2023 Care Inspectorate Wales undertook a Performance Evaluation inspection which highlighted our strengths across the whole service. The final report recognised that the areas we are seeking to improve were aligned with their views on the requirements. It was satisfying to see our plans and developments endorsed by the regulator.

We welcome feedback from all stakeholders regarding this report.

It has been my pleasure to be the Director of Social Services in Ceredigion for the past 12 months.

The Through Age and Well-being Integrated Service Delivery Model



For the year 2022 23 there has been significant progress in consolidating the implementation of our integrated Through Age Wellbeing Service model.

During 2021 the TAW Strategy 2021-27 was approved as an ambitious programme of change to achieve our five key Strategic Objectives:

- Promote positive health and wellbeing and support people to self support
- Provide proportionate approaches to managed care and support
- Protect individuals and keep them from abuse, harm and neglect
- Strengthen families so that children and young people remain within their family
- Enable individuals to live independently in their own communities

The model has been reviewed and some structural amendments made to ensure that the Through Age Wellbeing Services delivers services effectively and efficiently.

In March 2023 we received feedback from Care Inspectorate Wales recognising the value of the Through Age Wellbeing model as an innovative format to meet the needs of the community at all life stages. The report was published by CID on 18 May 2023.

The emphasis during the year has been to promote a climate of collaboration and cooperation across the three Porths to benefit the community. This has been achieved by engaging the workforce and elected members to understand our business and to contribute to plans and development as the integrated Through Age Wellbeing Service model matures.

Audrey Edwards

Audrey Somerton-Edwards
 Interim Statutory Director of Social Services
 Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Cynnal

2. Summary of Performance

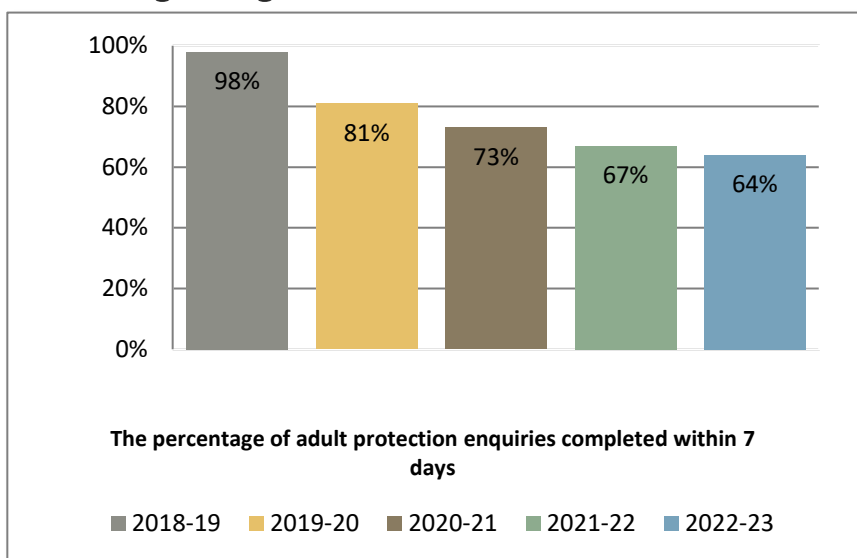
The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 Section 145 set out our duties to report on the performance of social services functions. You will see below how we have performed in the key areas of our service in the past year.

Adult and Commissioning Services Summary

The performance of services for adults is satisfactory with priority given to adhering to local, regional, and national guidance, and protocols in collaboration with partner agencies to meet the needs of adults.

We continue to develop our key service areas such as CLIC for initial contact and signposting to Porth Gofal for advice and assistance, triage and proportionate assessment of need. Our early help approach to practice is becoming embedded into our Through Age Wellbeing Service model. Every opportunity to intervene at an early stage is utilised by deploying services from Porth Cymorth Cynnar continues to prevent the escalation of needs to levels where statutory intervention is needed.

Adult Safeguarding

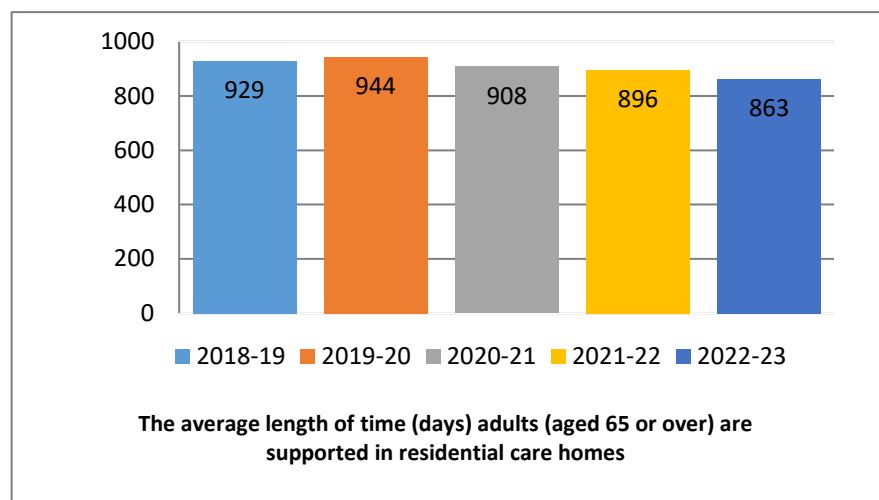


There has been a decrease in the percentage of Adult Protection enquiries completed within seven working days during 2022-2023.

The main reason for this has been that during this period, there was considerable service pressures and challenge with workforce capacity and the fact that as some of the staff are agency workers and do not live in the locality, there are some delays in staff going out to visit people in the community to speak to them as part of the

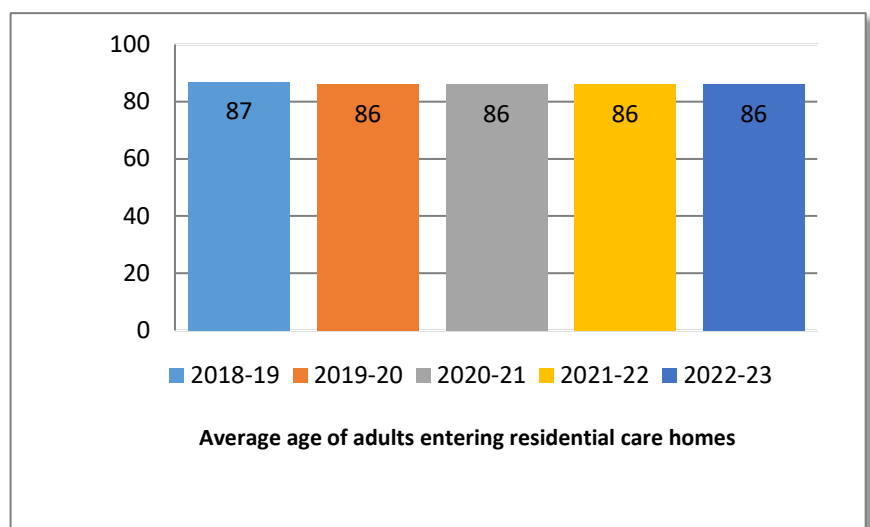
Safeguarding Enquiry. Nonetheless, high risk cases have been prioritized and timely action taken when required to ensure people’s safety.

Adults supported in residential care homes



Residential care provides a range of options for individuals who require 24 hour care. These include short term, temporary and permanent placements. There are various residential care options available, depending on the needs of the individual. Ceredigion operates five residential care homes (as at March 2023) itself and commissions with several private companies both in Ceredigion and further

afield.



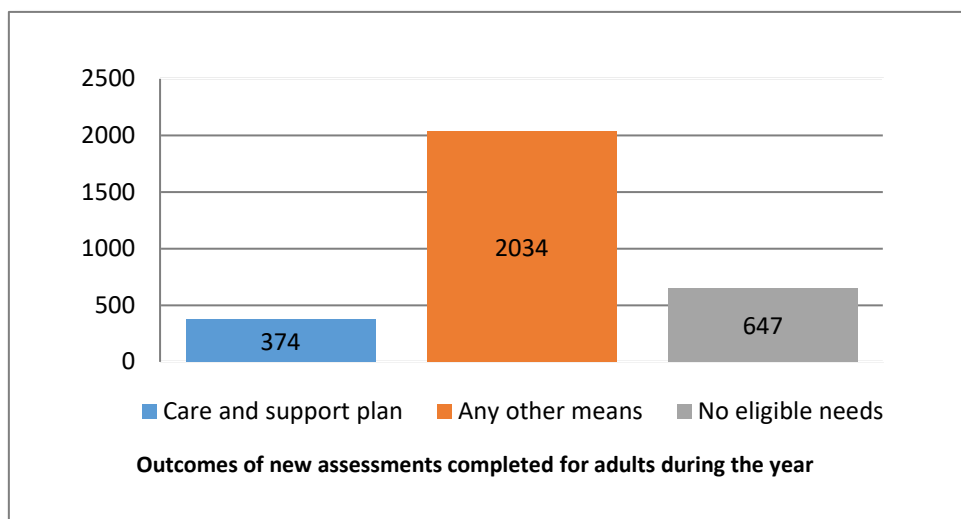
Advice and Assistance for Adults

The PATHWAYS OF CARE DELAYS PILOT commenced November 2022 which was the start of a new framework for reporting delayed transfers of care from a hospital setting which had been suspended at the start of the pandemic. A pathways of care delay is experienced by an inpatient occupying a bed in an NHS hospital, who is ready to move on to the next stage of care but is prevented from doing so by one or more reasons. The revised definition for recording a delay is:

“any patient post 48 hours clinically optimised”

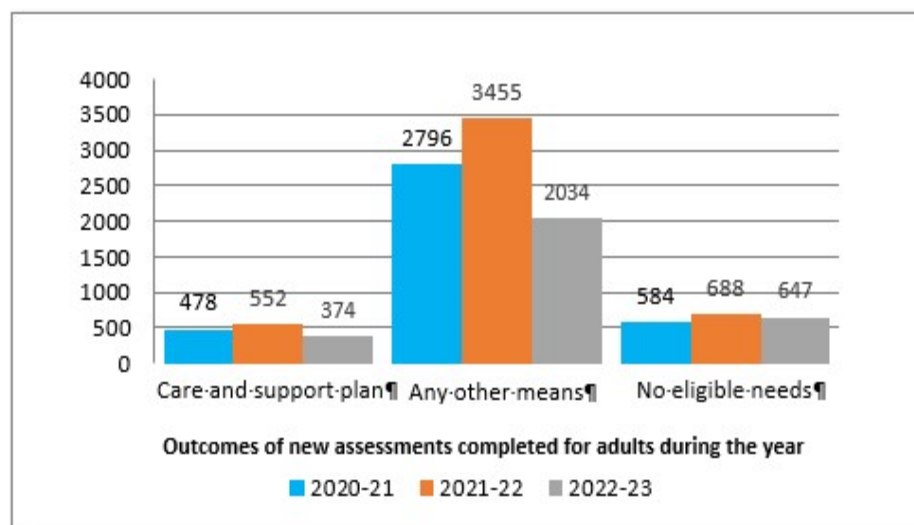
There has been a slight decrease in the number of delayed discharges between 2021-22 to 2022-23 but has not returned to the pre pandemic phase, the reason for this is the change in the definition and reporting of DTOC. The flow of patient discharges has improved due to increased capacity within domiciliary care and enablement service where by those with less complex needs

discharges are able to progress quickly due to availability of support. The step down beds in Cartref Tregerddan has also supported the flow of discharges for those who require 24hr support whilst recovering from an acute illness. The person is discharged to the step down bed for a period of up to 6 weeks. This has enabled for assessments to take place when the person fully recovered and functionally optimised.



All new adult referrals to the authority are progressed to Porth Gofal Integrated Triage and Assessment service when advice and assistance is required. Porth Gofal is an integrated Triage with Hywel Dda Health Board. The integrated Triage consist of a Senior Social Worker, nurse, Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapist who will undertake a holistic

proportionate assessment with a focus on Prevention, early intervention reducing escalation of need for long term statutory care and support.



- Any other means relates to the other national outcomes for assessment that are not for a care and support plan or no eligible needs.
- There are no care and support needs to meet. = There were no eligible needs to meet
- Needs can be met through the provision of information, advice, and assistance. = Needs were able to be met by any other means.
- Needs, can be met, through

the provision of preventative services. = Needs were able to be met by any other means.

- Needs, can be met, wholly or in part by the individuals themselves (with or without the assistance of others). = Needs were able to be met by any other means.
- Other matters can contribute to the achievement of the personal outcomes, or otherwise meet the needs. = Needs were able to be met by any other means.
- Needs can only be met through a care and support plan, or a support plan (needs are eligible). = Needs were only able to be met with a care and support plan.

Porth Gofal is the integrated decision making hub for Ceredigion that triages and determine the level of need of all cases and the best outcomes for those individuals. Porth Gofal is the heart of service provision that focuses on ensuring that Citizens receive the intervention that is best placed to meet their needs or where else to guide them to early help or specialist services.

Porth Gofal aims:

- Adults to remain in their own communities and in their homes, maximising their independence and improving their health outcomes and quality of life.

What Porth Gofal provides:

- A responsive service to Citizens living in Ceredigion.
- Applies a Strength based needs assessment focusing on service user choice and control using the Signs of Safety framework.
- A reduction in the time Social Care professionals spend in determining eligibility for statutory services.
- Legislatively compliant service that meets the statutory requirements of the SSWBA.
- A safe service that identifies vulnerable and at risk Citizens, that responds effectively.

What Porth Gofal achieves:

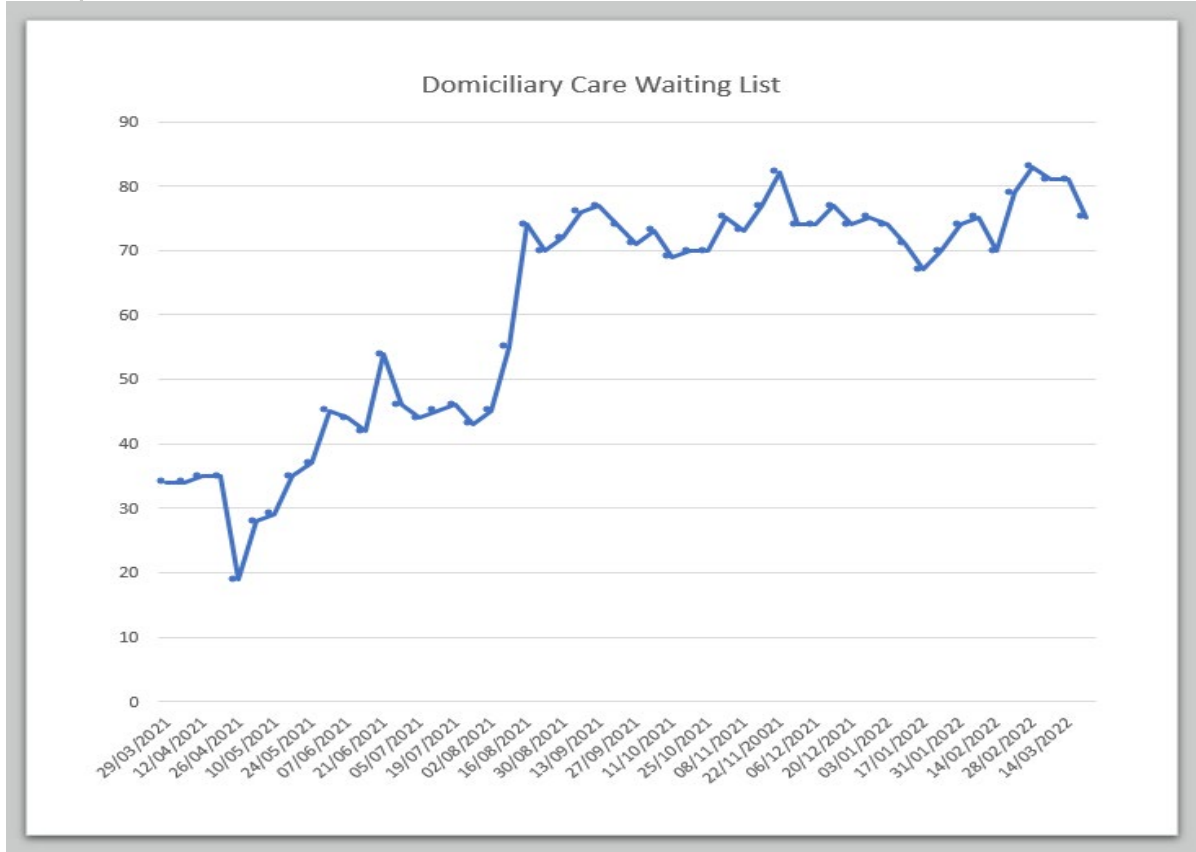
- Provides information, advice and assistance about community health and social care services for adults that improves the connection between people and their communities.
- Encourages a balanced approach to the assessment of need ensuring that citizens are at the centre of conversations, decisions and the “what matters” conversation takes place.
- Multidisciplinary triaging of referrals to identify the right professional to respond e.g. Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist or Social Care Workers to ensure right response at the right time.
- Provide more consistent, co-ordinated assessment for care and support.
- Improve the flow of information between services, resulting in faster decisions being made about people’s needs and support.
- Reduces hospital admissions by providing rapid wrap around re-ablement response service.
- Provides an in-reach service to reduce delayed transfers of care by providing timely discharges from hospital.
- A commitment to integrated working with a focus on positive rehabilitation outcomes for the citizens is essential.

People continue to receive specialist advice at the point of receipt of referral, the signs of safety model is used as part of the conversations with individuals with a focus of building on the persons strengths and resilience. Through the process of completing a proportionate assessment information and advice is provided and discussions around rehabilitation as Porth Gofal works in close collaboration with Therapies. This has led to many referrals being able to be closed following a proportionate assessment due to IAA being provided, referrals to 3rd sector or de-escalated for therapy support for rehabilitation. For those who appear to have more complex needs a social care assessment is undertaken whereby a worker will undertake a comprehensive assessment. Following this assessment, the outcomes may be the same that following preventative support such as enablement the person may have regained their independence and will not require a care and support plan and the provision of a long-term service.

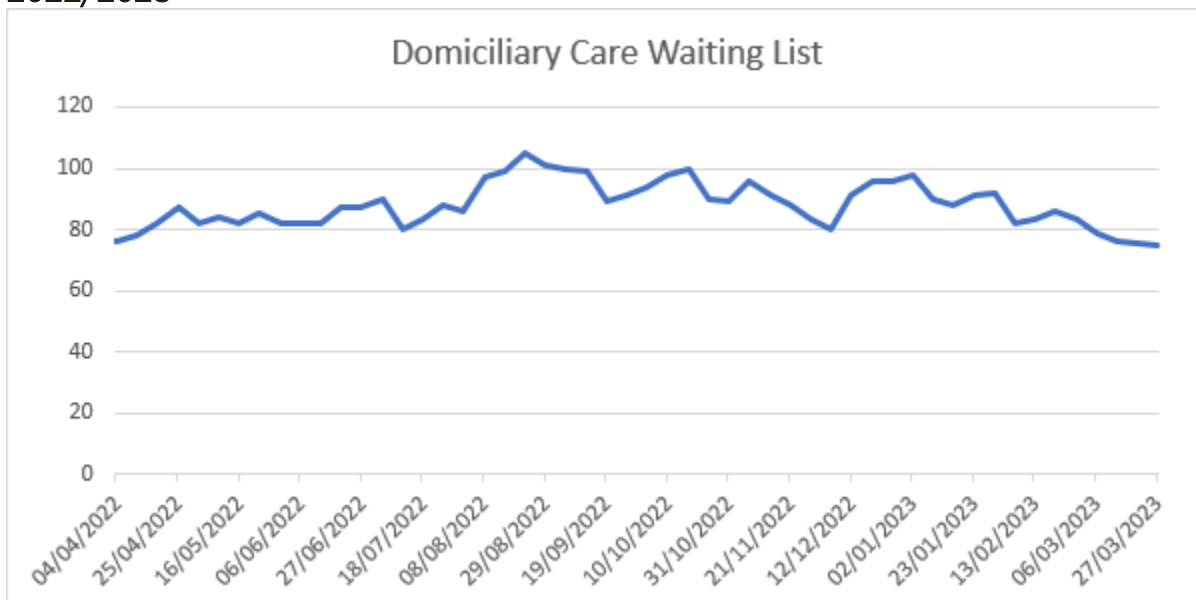
Provision of Domiciliary Care

During the period 2022-04-04 to 2023-03-27 the number of people waiting for domiciliary care fluctuated between a low of 70 and a high of 105.

2021/2022



2022/2023

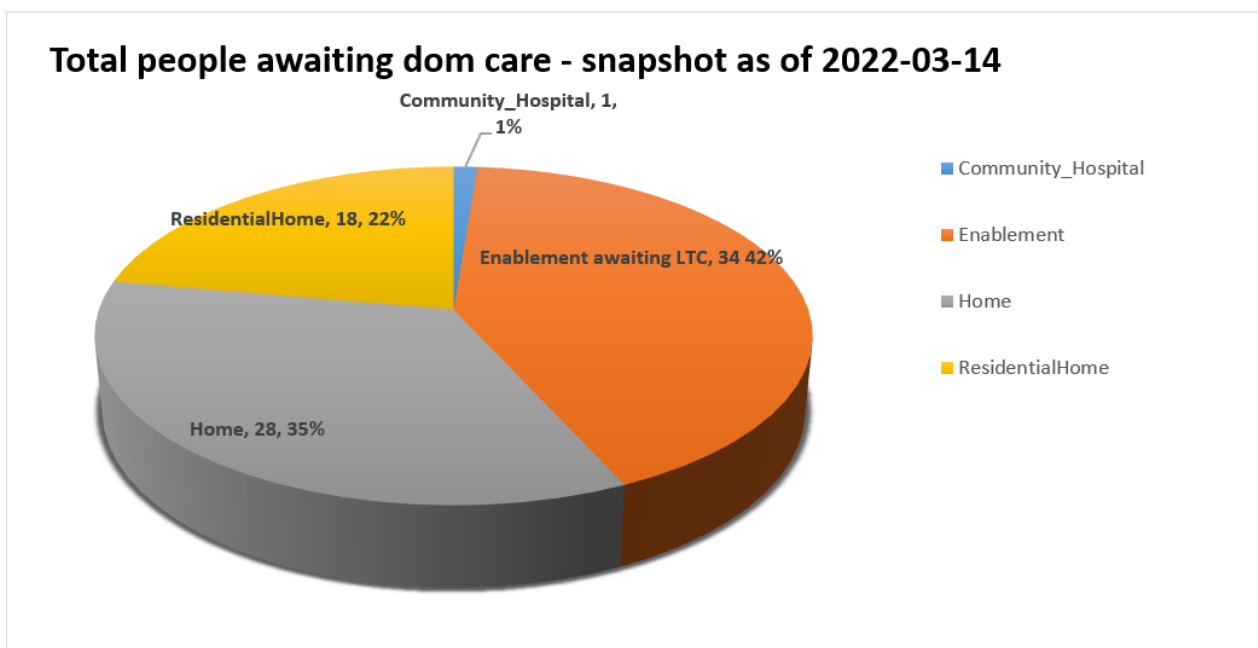


Providers reported that recruiting new staff continues to remain steady, unfortunately they are still losing some staff at a similar rate. The net staff loss/gain across the providers overall was often a negative figure. Staff were noting various reasons for leaving the service one of the highest being unable to maintain the cost of running a vehicle; followed closely by low pay; not suited to care work (physical/mental health impact), unaffordable childcare expenses and the impact of Covid 19.

Discussions in the regular providers/CCC meetings and the informal drop in continue discussions that took place over the summer, including all concerns and queries raised, were shared, and discussed at highest level including the Chief Executive. Providers were reassured that their voices were being heard at the highest levels.

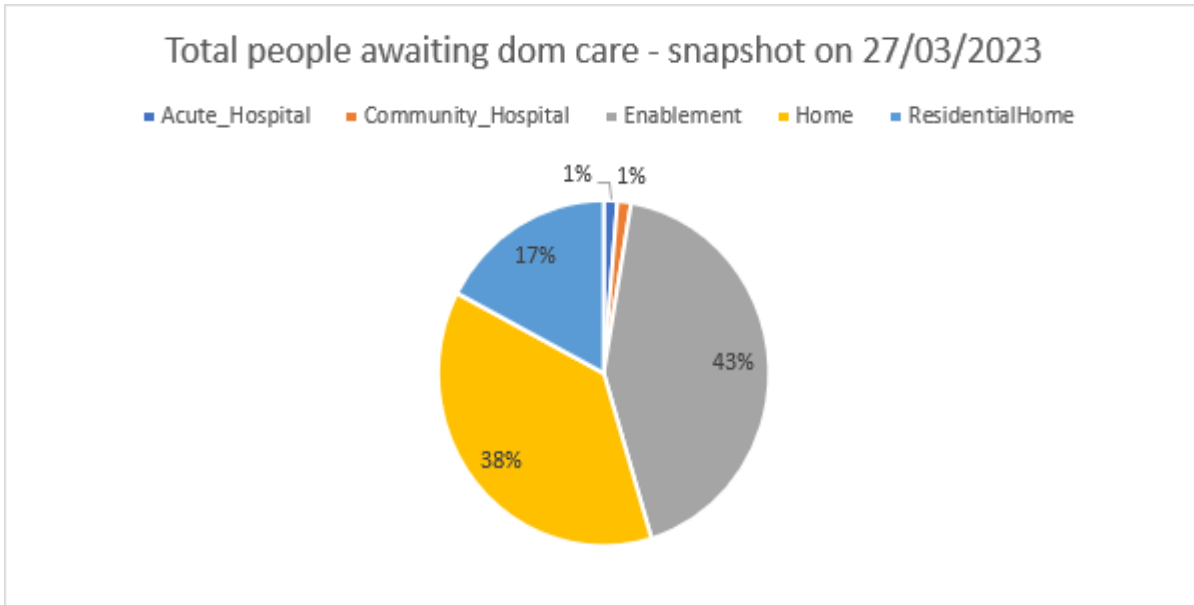
2022 snapshot of total Number of people in receipt of domiciliary care shown in graph below:

The total number of people in receipt of domiciliary care showed a decline in the period between March 2021 and March 2022 and remained static in the second half of the year at around 277

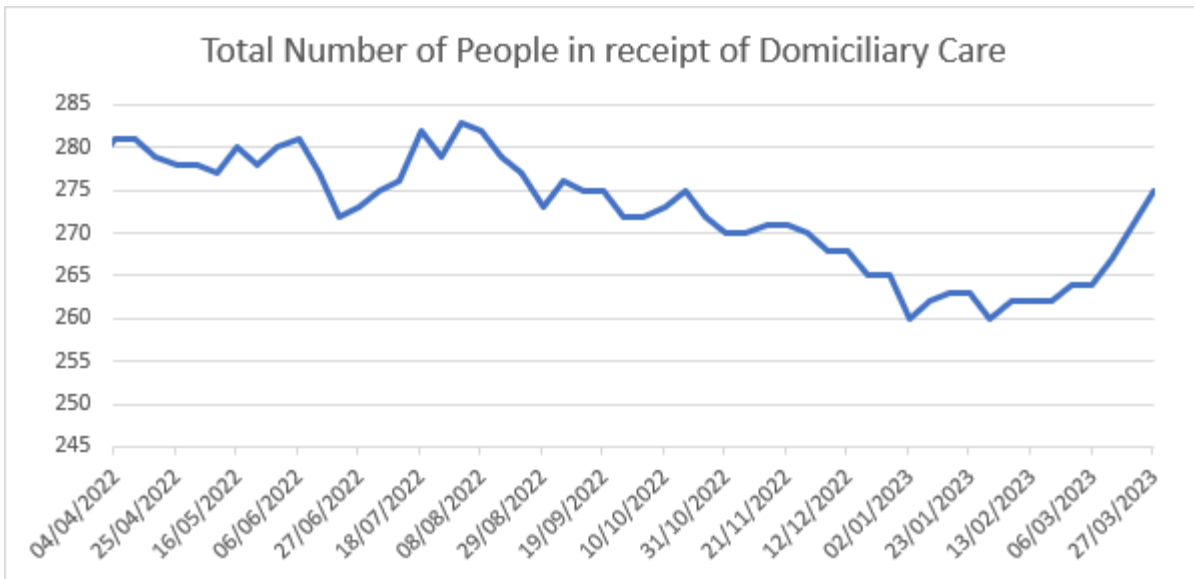


2023 snapshot of total Number of people in receipt of domiciliary care shown in graph below:

The total number of people in receipt of domiciliary care remained static at approx. 277 in the period between March 2022 and Dec 2022 and dropped to an average of 265 in the last quarter of the year.



2022/2023



	Total hours of home care purchased from independent sector	Individuals in receipt of commissioned care
2017/2018	239470.73	551
2018/2019	241300.18	571
2019/2020	234499.18	540
2020/2021	209780.61	487
2021/2022	192088.00	278
2022/2023	187068.4	275

Enablement Team 2022/2023

2022/23	Total referrals	enablement	Long Term	Closed	Started
Apr-22	60	41	19	15	45
May-22	43	28	15	18	25
Jun-22	40	29	11	18	22
Jul-22	54	41	13	26	28
Aug-22	57	36	21	34	23
Sep-22	35	20	15	6	29
Oct-22	48	33	15	18	30
Nov-22	33	22	11	12	21
Dec-22	27	19	8	16	11
Jan-23	42	28	14	16	26
Feb-23	52	42	10	33	19
Mar-23	23	27	6	4	19
TOTAL	514	366	158	216	298

We continue to enjoy good working relationships with providers which gives us a good basis on which to build, allowing us to work closely with the market through the peaks and troughs. Providers continue to feedback that their regular meetings with Ceredigion County Council are beneficial and informative. Providers can raise important issue and trends can be identified and escalated when necessary, ensuring their voices are heard regionally.

We have several remote, isolated areas in which it is very difficult to procure care. In order to facilitate the release of pressure in certain areas and to aide hospital discharges we continue to utilize our in-house Enablement team to support with domiciliary care bridging long term cases and discharges.

As of 27/03/2023, 12 commissioned providers were delivering around 3943.88 hours of care every week. CCC in house enablement were supporting 36 people with long term care needs.

Our domiciliary care providers have generally been able to work together to ‘patch’ their cover to parts of the county. Several of our providers offer care services to Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Powys and can fill the gaps in their rotas across county lines.

Children and Families Services

Across the Through Age Wellbeing Service, we have continued to work collaboratively with the Schools Service and partner agencies to support vulnerable children and their families. Our aim has been to intervene and provide early help at the first opportunity. We have identified increased complexity of needs in the aftermath of the pandemic and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on vulnerable families.

The number of children recorded on Ceredigion Child Protection Register has risen steadily during 2022-23 and stood at 52 children at the end of the year. This is an increase on the end of year figure for 2021-22 when there were 45 names recorded. Post pandemic society is once again more open and we have had greater visibility of and access to children, but also the pressure placed on families during that period continues to take its toll. The most frequent categories of risk identified were domestic abuse, parental mental health and substance abuse and emotional / psychological harm.

The number of Ceredigion Looked After Children increased to 132 children by 31 March 2023 compared to 101 at the end of the last year. The increase is being closely monitored to ensure we continue to work with the whole family as a means of achieving re-unification safely wherever possible. For those children who cannot safely be at home with their family we endeavour to support and guide them as responsible corporate parenting.

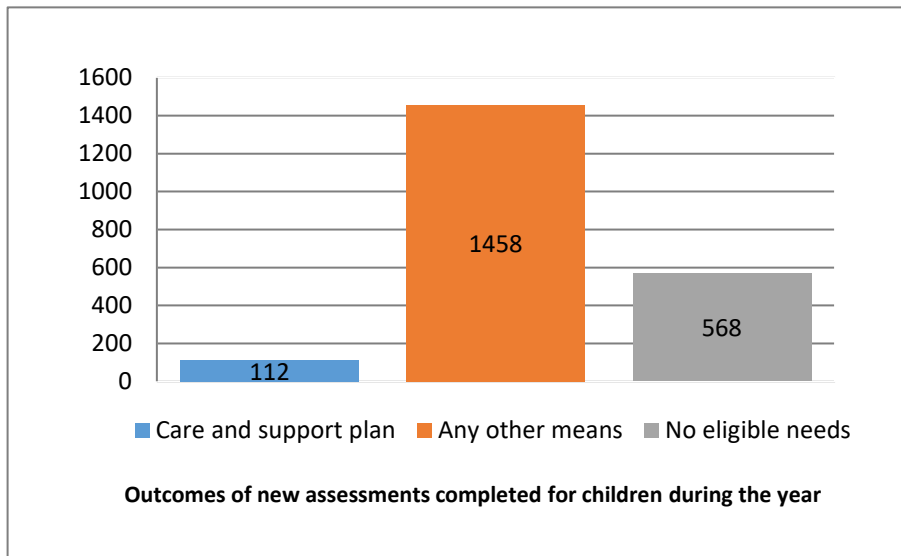
During the year 2022-23 we have had an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children referred to Ceredigion through the National Transfer Scheme, which has contributed to the sharp increase in children in our care.

A lack of suitable placements for looked after children has once again been a consistent theme locally and across Wales. We aim to reduce our reliance on ‘for profit’ provision by focusing on good quality, cost effective local options. We have commenced work to expand and develop our own internal placement and support resources to ensure that children and young people remain in Ceredigion and close to their family, school, and home community,

We are developing residential care provision, supported lodgings and stepping up our recruitment of local foster carers.

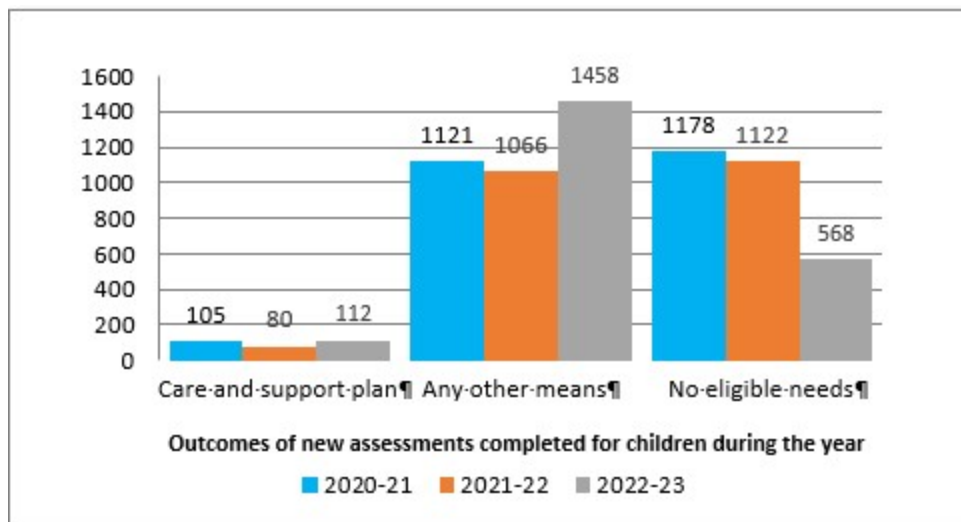
As ever our workforce and foster carers have come forward and offered exemplary support to children and their families over and above our expectation, for which we are extremely grateful.

Outcome of Assessments



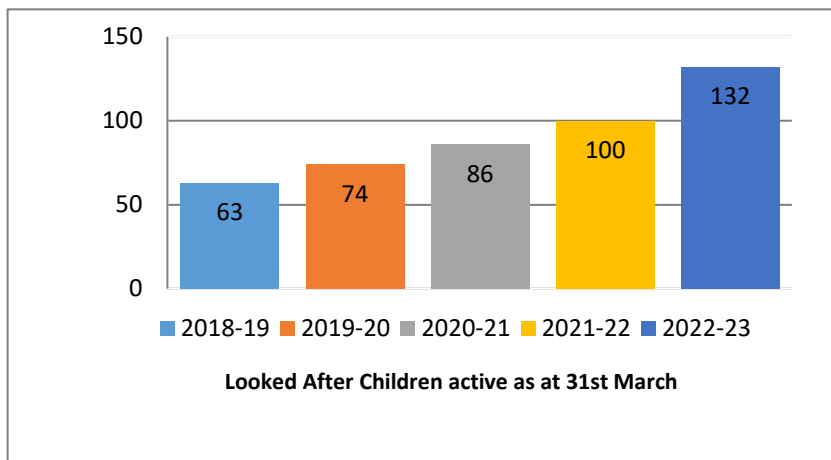
There have been 2,138 assessments completed in the last year, the vast majority requiring advise and assistance rather than any formal Care and Support Plan. Ceredigion Council has developed a Proportional Assessment, this allows us to use one form for enquiries that might be resolved by advice however if through a conversation it is identified that support for a family is required then this decision can be recorded. The

information then can be used to support a fuller assessment of a child’s needs without families having to repeat information that they have provided.



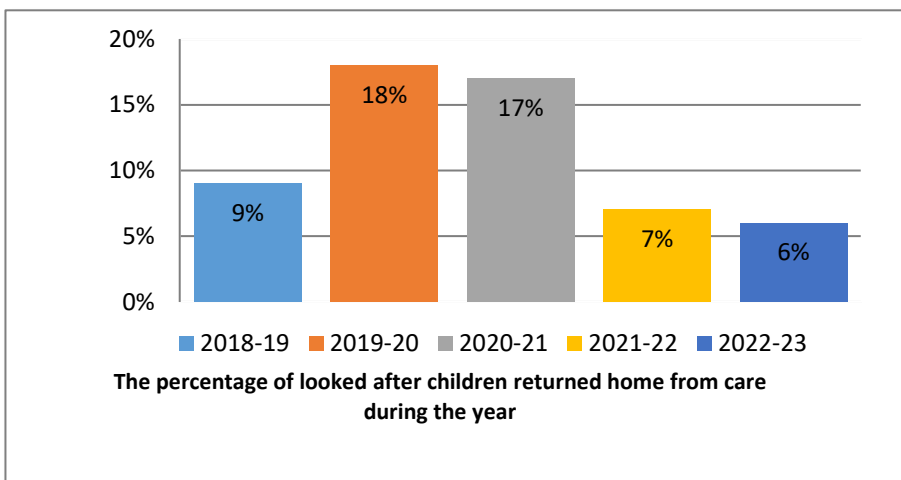
There is clear evidence of increased demand and alongside this an increase in complexity. This is not necessarily reflected in the chart however the number of new assessment where no eligible needs were identified has halved compared to previous years.

Looked After Children



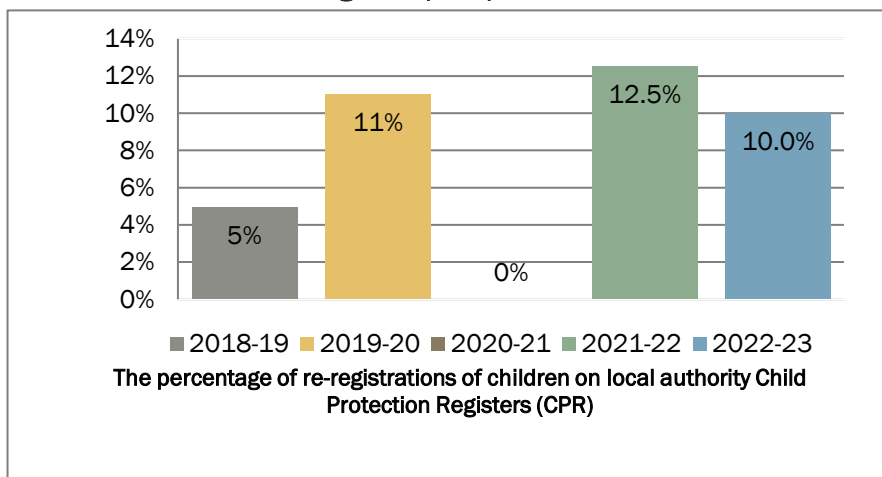
The number of Children Looked After continues to increase and in addition to our children from Ceredigion we are now part of the national transfer scheme for UASC. The increased numbers means many of our children live outside Ceredigion. This is due to placements being limited within Ceredigion and no residential placements within the county. The geography of Ceredigion often means that even with children in

neighbouring local authorities they still remain close enough to attend their school and be part of their community. There has been work on discharging care orders as a number of children are placed with family members and are thriving so we can confidently discharge care orders.



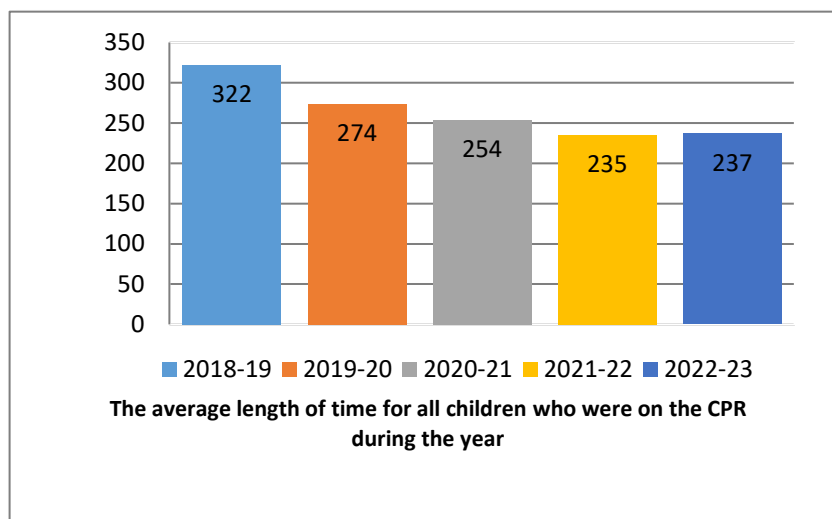
The percentage of children returned home remains low, this is explained by a number of factors from the decision making to bring children into care being the correct one. To the complexity around parents needs and that in order to establish permanency for children, the timeframe around parents making required changes does not fit the child’s needs.

The Child Protection Register (CPR)



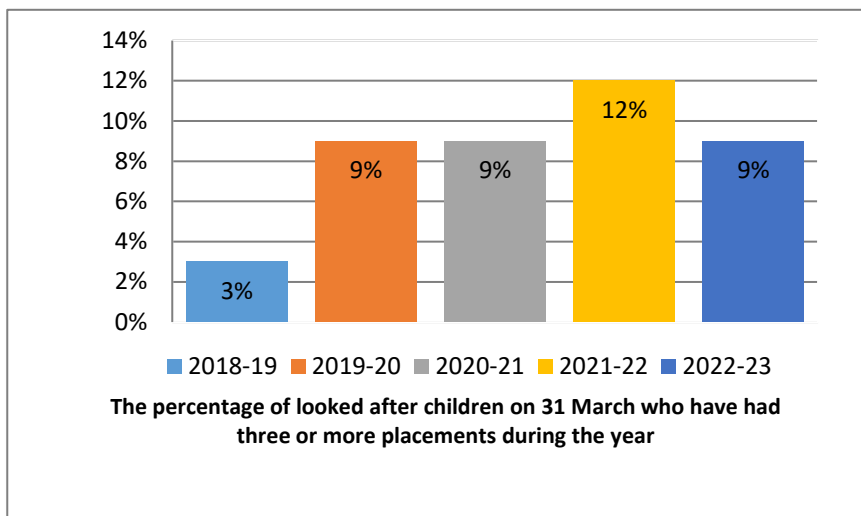
There has been a slight decrease from 12.5% in 20-21 to 10.0% in 22-23 in relation to the re-registration of children on the local authority’s Child Protection Register. Since COVID restrictions were more fully lifted in the 2021-22 period, and children/young people were returning to education and outside agencies and had more contact with children/young people, the

high percentage of re-registrations occurred and there were specifically larger families where a number or all the children within one family were re-registered. There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of re-registrations during 22-23, but it still remains high and on-going work is being undertaken to address this and to ensure that when children are being removed from the register, that the changes made in and by the family are more sustainable. Also, there is greater access to step down support for children and families, which would prevent the need for re-registration.



During 2022-23 period it was more possible to work with partner agencies to undertake actions with children and families who had been on the register for a longer period, and this has led to the decrease in the length of time children have been on the CPR in relation to 2020-21 but a slight increase from 21-22. However, the complexity of cases and level of overall risk to children being presented is still high and means that children are on the register for longer.

Looked after children – stability of placements



The number of children experiencing 3 or more placements remains too high, although a reduction from last year and back to previous years percentage it is an area that requires more work. The limited number of placements combined with placing older children with complex needs often means that a number of placements are required before a child can be found a suitable long term placement.

There is additional training with foster carers in order to equip them with the skills to meet the needs of children and in our matching meetings we identify some of the challenges we are aware of. The demand on placements especially foster placements has increasingly led to fewer offers for even younger children that previously would have automatically been placed in foster care. We are often having to use residential placements and then once there negotiating to find a foster placement. This alongside an emergency placement can then contribute to the figure of 3 placements.

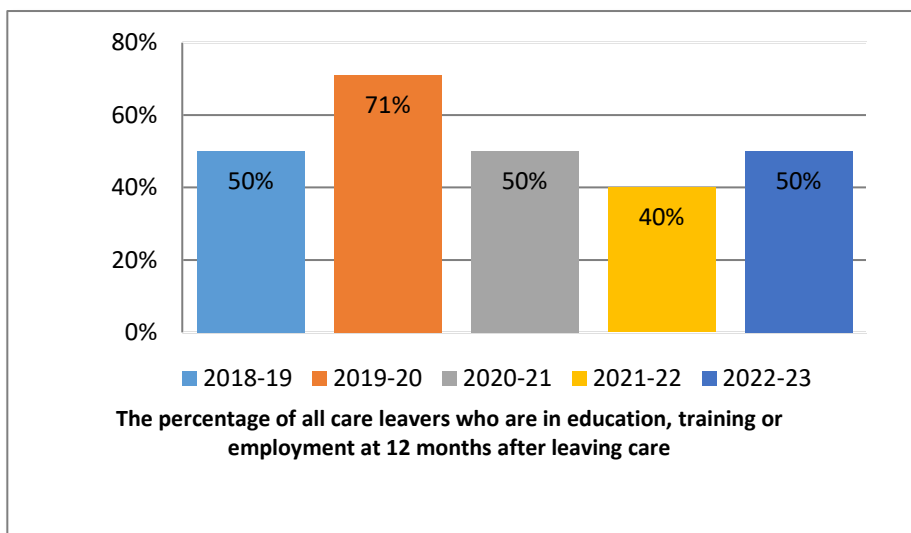
There is a need for more training of staff within residential placements as we have a range of providers and our experience, and the care of children does vary especially in how they respond to challenging behavior. We try to commission providers that are trauma-informed and use restorative approach however the care market is such that demand outstrips provision, so options are extremely limited when coming to identify placements.

The positive for our children is that the majority of Looked After Children have one placement and overall the vast majority of children remain settled in their placements, however the focus still needs to be on those that are unsettled for whatever reason.

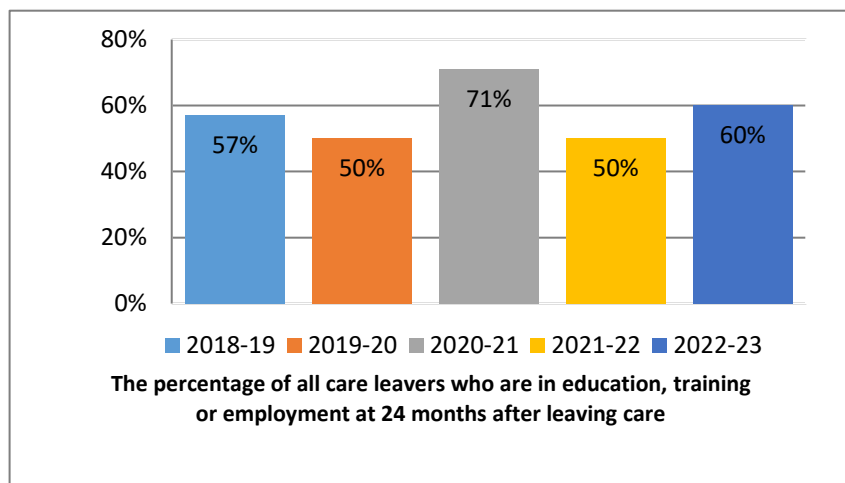
Young People Leaving Care

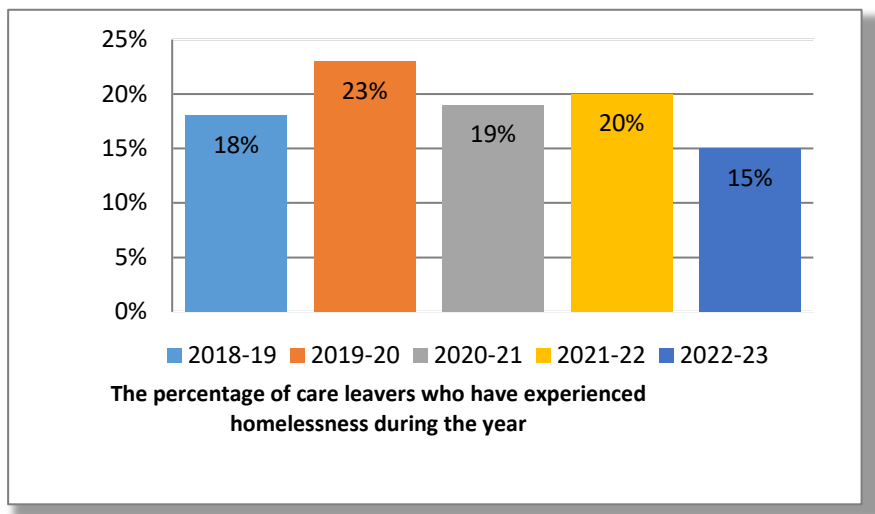
Leaving care is a term used to reference a group of children who are between 16 and 18 yrs. old and have previously been in care but are no longer legally “looked after” by the Local Authority. When children leave care, we still have a duty to support these people until the age of 21, or 25 if they are in full time education or have a disability.

Personal Advisors working with other professionals work hard to ensure that the children leaving care are in education, training or employment. It is important that these young people are able to obtain the skills to take them into adulthood. The challenges for these children are greater than those children from settled and supportive families, who equally face difficulties gaining employment or education.



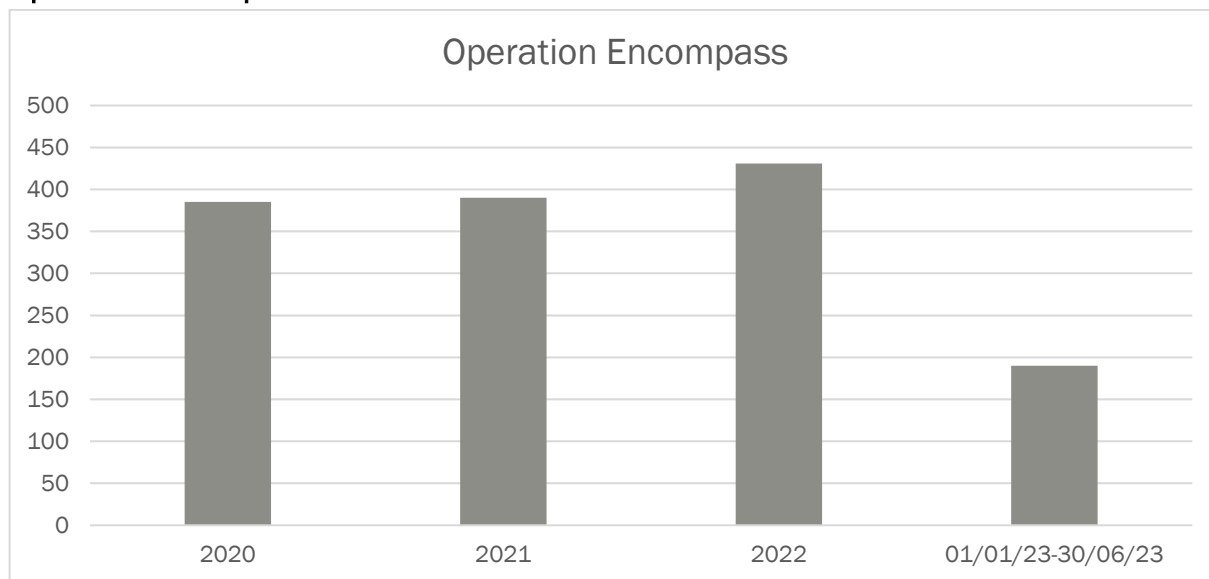
It is pleasing the percentage of young people that remain in education, training or employment. We fund practical support for these young people using the St David’s Day Grant.





Housing provision for all young people is a challenge however more so for our care leavers who often do not have settled supportive parents. There is ongoing work to improve provision for care leavers with our housing service and housing providers. The young people are supported when housing breaks down this can often be due to relationship breakdowns, unemployment and issues beyond the young person’s control. The initiative When I am Ready has provided additional support for young people reaching 18 and being able to live with their foster carers as lodgers until they are ready to transition to independence.

Operation Encompass



Operational Encompass became live in Ceredigion in November 2019. It has been working consistently well since its launch, with sharing of information on a daily basis with Schools (or as notifications are received). There have been a few notifications received from time to time regarding families from neighbouring authorities on the border of Ceredigion, however this information is also forwarded accordingly. Since lockdown, the sharing of information changed from telephone calls to emails, and the Information Sharing Protocol was then amended to accommodate this. It is noted however that the full email notification is not shared with schools in its entirety, each report is edited to include only the victim/alleged offender details. Children details, whether or not they were present, time/date and summary of the incident. Schools are fully briefed on the support services available for children who have been exposed to incidents either within their homes, or within their own relationships, these include Spectrum (Hafan Cymru) and West Wales Domestic Abuse Service. To ensure that Schools remain fully sighted on their pupil’s safety and wellbeing, the School’s Safeguarding Service continue to share notifications also throughout the School holidays, therefore is not limited to term time only. The figures within the above table reflect the number of referrals received, which show an annual increase since 2020.

3. How Are People Shaping Our Services?

Ceredigion County Council, Through Age Wellbeing Services have continued to work alongside all agencies and individuals to improve and transform our services with their input. We have engaged formally in partnership and through regional arrangements on an organisational level with:

- Hywel Dda University Health Board
- Dyfed Powys Police
- Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Board
- Regional Partnership Board
- National Probation Service
- Care Inspectorate Wales
- Audit Wales
- Public Service Ombudsman Wales
- Social Care Wales
- Association of Director of Social Services Cymru
- Mid and West Wales Adoption Service

On an individual level we have facilitated a number of consultations and reviews to help guide and contribute to our plans to improve services on:

- Domiciliary Care
- Day and Respite Opportunities
- Care Inspectorate Wales Performance Evaluation Inspection
- Child Protection Rapid Review
- Regional Dementia Strategy Action Plan
- Audit Wales Unscheduled Care Review

To ensure participation we have helped people to access consultations by:

- Meeting with people in person with Welsh and English speakers according to need
- Meeting with people virtually
- Speaking to people on the phone
- We facilitated a survey both online and on paper. All surveys were available in Welsh and English as well as in easy read format.
- People sent us extra information such as reports by email
- We put posters around the community at places people visit
- Community Connectors from the Council helped members of the public with the survey

We strongly believe that this approach has promoted voice and control for the Ceredigion community.

During 2022-23 we continued to deliver advocacy services to vulnerable groups and to analyse the outcomes from complaint and compliments about our services.

Learning Disability Strategy 2018-2023 and Improvement Action Plan

Ceredigion is an active participant in the Regional Lives Improvement Group (RLIP). This group ordinarily alternates bi-monthly between a business meeting and a meeting led and chaired by the Dream Team. The Dream Team is a group of service users, supported by Pembrokeshire Peoples First, who actively support the regional group, particularly with use of Integrated Care Funding.

Services for Disabled Children, Prevention and Transition were inspected by CIW in the 4th quarter of 2019-2020. A CIW inspection was held in March 2023 which looked at every team in the Through Age Well-Being model.

Progress on the Action plan

Ensure that children and their families can be clear about what support they can access, how and when and where.

- Some staff have case loads which reflect the TAW model, others are still very much in their adult/child role. Training is being looked at as to how we can support the workforce to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to be confident in working in a TAW way.
- The website for information on disabilities has been started however this is in the very early days it is hoped that this will be an easy guide for people to see where they can go for help support which will include links to the 3rd sector.

Equip and support staff to complete and record good quality assessments and care plans that meet all statutory requirements including the child’s communication needs

- Monthly staff supervision is in place to quality assure live cases.
- Use of 1-page profiles for children on their WCCIS record.

Equip and support staff to identify, assess and provide support when required for carers in accordance with statutory requirements.

- Staff identify carers and offer carers support needs assessment
- Staff training re carers assessments has been completed.
- Staff will record reason for refusal of carers assessment if this is the case.
- The team work closely with the Through age carers and community support team to sign post carers in the right direction.

Establish the Disability Register in compliance with SSWBA requirements and use it to inform future service development and strategic commissioning.

- Register is now live and on Ceredigion County Council web site for families to enter their data.
- This will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to identify and inform future service developments and demands.

Improved service delivery and range of support services available for disabled children and their families in accordance with their needs.

- There is an ongoing public consultation about short breaks and respite to see what the needs of the service users in Ceredigion are. It is hoped that this will be delivered by the end of the year.

- DASH have been provided with the contract to offer respite weekends to some of the young people identified as in need of this provision. Respite provision has been affected due to shortage in staffing.
- Ceredigion will spot purchase further respite opportunities from DASH once the contracted amount of weekends purchased has come to an end.
- We have employed 2 project workers in the team to enable them to undertake direct work and offer further hands-on support to individuals and families according to their assessed needs.

The Local Authority and the Health Board work effectively together in the provision of support and review and develop existing commissioning arrangements for disabled children and their families.

- Service specification is implemented.
- Weekly tracking meeting are held between Extended Support and health colleagues to discuss cases and identify the most suitable person to work with the young person.
- Close working relationships continue with health with plenty of challenge when needed.

Children and young people can receive greater support for independence.

- RIF funding has been agreed to develop the use of assistive technology
- Close working with education and Lifelong Learning and Skills to develop a more enhanced package of support for young people who wish to leave school education at the age of 16.

Develop an effective quality assurance framework, underpinned by effective managerial oversight of its core functions and processes.

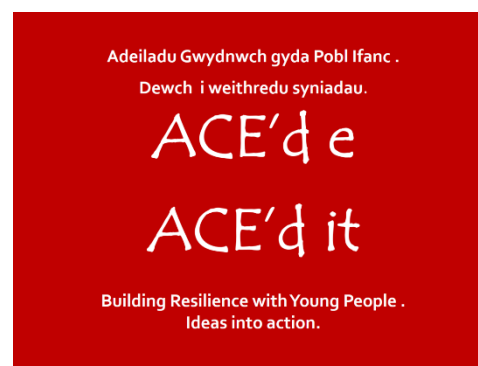
- SOS template and methods are being used in staff supervision.
- QA framework to be developed as an audit tool for managers to undertake random audit checks on cases.
- Managers have had training on supervision skills.
- IPC Programme of support for managers in Extended Support.

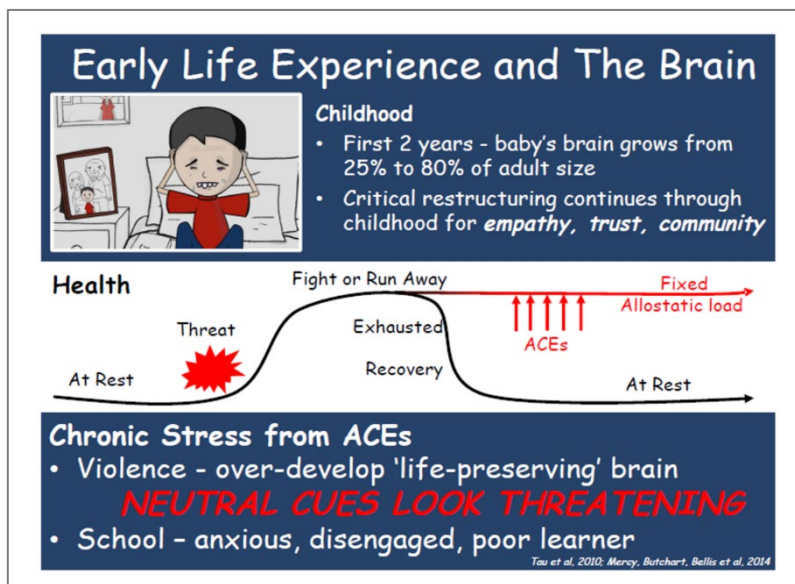
People’s voice and choice is heard

- Neurodivergent consultation meetings will be established in Ceredigion – the 1st is due to take place in September 2023. The aim of this is to ensure we have the voice of the people when looking at services being offered.
- A children’s group needs to be established to hear the voice of the child.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that affect children. These could happen whilst growing up, being abused or living in a household affected by domestic violence, substance misuse, mental illness or criminal problems. Children who suffer ACEs are more likely to develop a range of chronic diseases and suffer with poorer mental well-being.





In the year 2020-2021 training opportunities were offered to staff to ensure that we, in Ceredigion, were able to provide earlier interventions and help our professional care for and support children, young people and their families. This was a follow-on to the 1829 frontline staff who were made Ace aware the previous year following a training needs analysis across services.

Even though COVID-19 had a huge impact on training due to restrictions many staff were trained in ACEs to develop their understanding of the impact of trauma and the effects on

children and young people. Team Teach training (positive behaviour management) was done by many staff as was the STAR programme which covers domestic abuse and respectful relationships. Drawing and Talking therapy training was provided for 13 members of staff to be able to support children, young people and adults who may be suffering from trauma or poor mental health.

Self-Harm and Suicide Awareness was provided due to the nature of referrals being sent in for support for children and young people both in schools and the community.

Other courses included ‘Creative Counselling’, Trauma Recovery Model, (TRM was developed in a response to the complex needs of children and young people with multiple adverse childhood experiences).

During the year 2022-2023 Team Teach training was delivered to a number of schools both primary and secondary as they were responsible for arranging the training directly with Team Teach. Schools were asked to identify how many staff required Level 1 and Level 2 training and the number was in the region of 460 in March 2023.

A further 11 members of the Support and Prevention staff team received Trauma Recovery Model training in March continuing with the county’s commitment to ensuring that staff are ACE aware and are able to respond to the complex needs of those children and young people.

Planned training for May 2022 was provided by Wales Restorative Approaches Partnership (WRAP) for Support and Prevention staff along with the Deputy Head Teacher of one primary and one secondary school in the county as part of a pilot scheme with a view to rolling out WRAP training in the coming year. It will be up to the schools to arrange directly with Wales Restorative Approaches Partnership.

During the year 2022-2023, Team Teach training was delivered to a number of schools both primary and secondary as they were responsible for arranging the training directly with Team Teach. Schools were asked to identify how many staff required Level 1 and Level 2 training and the number was in the region of 460 in March 2023.

During the last six weeks of the summer term funding became available with the view of supporting the staff who required the training to be able to receive it. During that time a total of 46 people which included foster carers, teaching assistants, head teachers, deputy head teachers & care assistants from residential facilities to name but a few, through Support Pathways, Porth Cymorth Cynnar working alongside Schools Service.

The remainder of the funding has meant that a number of training dates have been put onto the internal booking system for school staff to be able to arrange convenient dates for themselves. This will be done directly with the Learning and Development team and Schools Service. The target is for as many schools as possible to ensure their staff have received this training to ensure a consistent approach across the authority.

Due to the initial cohort including those within senior management posts the feedback has been extremely positive and all school staff are now able to book directly on to the any of the multiple dates available themselves.

The Learning and Development team arranged dates for the ‘Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences using Virtual Reality’ training. The training is aimed at frontline staff working with members of the community that may have experienced ACE’s. The authority has 14 VR headsets and by the end of July 2023 a total of 41 members had attended the training. (The L&D team will roll out further dates in line with demand.)

In addition to these dates 3 members of the Support and Prevention team complete a day’s ‘Train the Trainer’ and have since trained their teams, Community Youth Work and Preventions team, Youth Work and Engagement team & Support and Attainment team. A further 3 members of the Family & Parenting Support team also attended the ‘Train the Trainer’ day and have since trained their teams.

Two trainers attended the ‘Trauma Informed Communities’ conference which was held in Aberystwyth University and put on a workshop using the headsets there. Head teachers within the county are due to receive the training during September along with Team Managers.

There are also e-learning modules available to all staff within Ceredigion and one of these is ‘Ask and Act’ which is specifically for professionals to help them spot the signs that a child or young person may be experiencing VAWDASV (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) , and how to ask & act on any disclosure and report accordingly. To the end of July 2023 190 staff had chosen to complete the e-learning module.

Since the start of this academic year there have been a total of 19 people trained in Team Teach de-escalation techniques. These include members of the Engagement and Attainment Team who work with vulnerable children and young people in schools and in the community, staff from some of the high schools and foster carers. The L&D team have arranged a number of dates for this training to be delivered during the next couple of months and it has been handed over to the schools and relevant departments for people to book themselves on to the course as and when they are able to. Support Pathways, within Porth Cymorth Cynnar, regularly liaise with Schools Service to ensure that the certificates and sent to the relevant people in a timely fashion. One of the largest schools in the county has arranged for twilight sessions for the training due to logistics of people having to drive across the county. Schools have, on the whole, given very positive feedback regarding the trainers.

Last term TAPPAS (Teams Around the Pupil, Parent, and Setting) meetings were piloted with 3 schools and the first meetings have been held this term. The purpose of these meetings is to identify pupils at an early age who are at risk of disengaging from their education, becoming NEET and requiring specific intervention. As a result of utilising the VAP information (Vulnerability Assessment Profile) a number of children and young people have been identified and have been discussed with professionals to ascertain what support could be offered earlier. These meetings will continue on a termly basis and are linked directly to the Welsh Government’s Youth Engagement & Progression Framework (YEPP).

National Safeguarding Week November 2022

Ceredigion’s Operational Group collaborated with the Regional Safeguarding Board Business Unit to deliver a programme of activities to support National Safeguarding Week. Events and communications during the week were centered on particular themes.

A highlight of the week included a launch and celebration of a safeguarding training resource and video animation for professionals, which took place at Parc-y-Scarlets Stadium in Llanelli. The video animation had been created by children and young people from Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys and was formally launched by the Children’s Commissioner for Wales, Rocio Cifuentes.

During the week, a variety of events including conferences and webinars that raised awareness and highlighted issues that affect children and adults at risk. This included a multi-agency conference on Domestic Abuse that was hosted by Dyfed Powys police, a webinar which revisited some of the themes associated with the Operation Jasmine Review into the neglect of older people in care homes and an event aimed specifically at schools and education staff, to promote the positive emotional health and well-being of children post pandemic. In other webinars, there was emphasis on learning from case reviews with an emphasis on safeguarding children living with Foster Carers, Adopters and Special Guardians, which identified why practitioners and managers must always “think family” and see both the adult and the child.

The regional program was also supported by national events taking place across the whole of Wales. This included the launch of new multi-agency training standards being led by Social Care Wales and an event was held, hosted by the National Independent Safeguarding Board in collaboration with the Violence Prevention Unit on shaping the future of Safeguarding in Wales. Several virtual seminars and workshops took place with attendance from Ceredigion officers throughout the week exploring these topics, complemented by a social media and website campaign.

Carer Support and Engagement

During 2021-2022 as part of the transformation towards the Through Age and Wellbeing model, two small teams, the Carers Unit and Porth y Gymuned merged to become the Carers and Community Support Team. The work to support carers has developed and refined during 2022-23.

This year we produced a Carers and Community Support annual report. The report reflects the breadth of the work undertaken by the Carers and Community Support Team and it’s commissioned partner Gofalwyr Ceredigion Carers along with the positive impact on those receiving services.

At the centre of the team’s work is the provision of high-quality information to users of the service and it is encouraging to see that the numbers of unpaid carers registered on the Carers Information Service and Young Carers Information Service has increased, meaning that more of the county’s unpaid carers have access to information such as the Carers Magazine.

The team has also been pro-active in engaging with Ceredigion communities organising events, drop ins with our Community Connectors and have supporting the Warm Spaces initiatives, again providing up to date information to those attending.

Here is a flavour for how the services has developed during 2022-23:

PROVIDE INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

What did we do?

- Printed and distributed **4250** magazines across Ceredigion.
- Increased Carers Information Service membership by **14%** to **1888** carers.
- Welsh Government’s Charter for unpaid carers distributed to **100%** of the Carers Information Service.
- Increased the Young Carers Information Service membership by **144%** to **151** young carers.
- **3000** Information for Young Carer booklets distributed to schools across the county.
- Supported Gofalwyr Ceredigion Carers to deliver information advice and guidance to **805** adult carers and provide **2016** hours of replacement care to give carers a break from their caring role.
- Worked with Gofalwyr Ceredigion Carers to support **158** young carers to have a life outside their caring role.

Public engagement across the county




2022-23 has been the first year, since the Covid pandemic, that the team have been able to arrange and attend public events. In total we have held and attended 96 events across Ceredigion.










- **49** community drop-in events
- **243** people attended community drop-in events
- **24** partner events attended
- **16** themed events organised by the team
- Participated in **7** tackling hardship groups

Breakdown of Community Connector engagement 2022/23

- **607** enquiry referrals received by Community Connectors through CLIC

The top 3 reasons people contacted the Community Connectors were:

-  Loneliness and isolation (137)
-  Blue badge applications (108)
-  Cost of living related issues (68)

North Ceredigion – 177 referrals	Mid Ceredigion – 220 referrals	South Ceredigion – 210 referrals
 47  21  17	 53  38  21	 49  37  30

- Of the **137** clients who requested support due to loneliness and isolation **117** did not have any family members or friends who they could rely on for support.
- **78** unpaid carers contacted the Community Connectors for support
 - **49** of them were already members of the Carers Information Service before contacting the service and
 - **26** joined the Carers Information Service following contact with the Community Connectors.
- **13** unpaid carers were referred on to Porth Gofal for a carers needs assessment.

DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE BREAKS FOR CARERS

Ceredigion Carer Card

- Issued **189** new adult carer cards, an increase of **136%** from the previous year
- Issued **55** new young carer cards, a **500%** increase
- A total of **394** unpaid carers in Ceredigion are using a Ceredigion Carer Card to access free leisure facilities in the county.

Ceredigion Carers Fund

Carers applied for up to £150 to improve their health and wellbeing.

- **£116,197** awarded
- **591** individual and family applications processed.
- **776** carers benefitted.

What did carers spend the money on?

1. Short breaks and holidays (179)
2. Therapies and spa sessions (84)
3. Sport, fitness and outdoor activities (67)
4. Clothing (56)
5. Technology (52)
6. Gardening (42)

Borth Multi Agency Team Multi Agency Team (MAT)

The Carers and Community Support Team have established good contacts and created strong working relationships amongst the MAT members who have been extremely approachable when further support has been required. We have got to know the surgery team well and from a learning perspective we now understand the roles of professionals such as Admiral Nurses, District Nurses, and other Allied Health Professionals. We also have a clearer idea of their involvement in a person’s care, where that person is in their journey both physically and mentally and it informs us in

our work to ensure the best positive outcomes. Any pre-existing barriers between our team and health colleagues have now been removed through participating in this project.

- **150** total number of patients seen by Borth and Tregaron MAT
- **19** patients directly referred to the Carers and Community Support Team
- **9 – 60+**, age range of patients supported

Patient outcomes:

- **58%** supported to join social groups in local area
- **21%** referred onto commissioned carer support service for in depth support
- **16%** supported to access mental health services
- **11%** were supported to access practical support at home from Red Cross and Age Cymru
- **11%** supported to access Citizens Advice Bureau surgeries.
- **5%** supported to access Country Cars for help with transport

Expanding social prescribing in Ceredigion

In January 2023, following the widespread recognition of the Borth Multi Agency Team accomplishments, the GP surgery in Tregaron approached us with a proposal to establish a second, similar team. Currently, the team is in its initial phases, and we hold a positive outlook regarding the potential advantages it will offer to the patients and community of Tregaron throughout 2023 - 2024.

Ceredigion Family Support and Early Help Services

Ceredigion Parenting and Family Support Team consists of –Team Around the Family (TAF), Parenting Support Workers, Family Group Meetings and Flying Start provide early help to the most vulnerable families & children in Ceredigion. These services work with the whole family network rather than focussing on one individual. Where a multi-agency approach is required, TAF can work with the family to identify and address the identified issues, using a strengths based approach to building family resilience.

Team Around the Family

In 2022 - 23 Team Around Family (TAF) completed 192 JAFF assessments, of which 13 had indication of a child with a specific additional learning requirement or disability.

Annually, around 48% (approx. 94) of the requests are re referrals (often years later) when families are reaching a different life stage and considered TAF effective in the previous assistance and ask for our support again.

79 of all referrals received by TAF and Family Support were noted to have concerns with regards to Substance Misuse with a proportion of these also displaying other factors that would contribute to Adverse Childhood Experiences.

The number of requests being processed within five working days has increased to 57% and this reflects the planning and changes that have been implemented in the last year. Allocation meetings are now held on a weekly basis where referrals are discussed and allocated.

Family Support

Our non-Flying Start Family Support provision consists of a small cohort of Family Worker who assist families by focussing on the provision of parenting support.

This year our Family Support workers received 358 referrals. Of the 358 referral received, 240 received parenting intervention within group settings or as bespoke one to one support packages. 6 families were signposted to more appropriate support and 22 declined support or the invite to attend a parenting programme.

In the year April 2022 – March 2023, approximately 20 evidence-based group parenting programmes were delivered either virtually or face to face throughout Ceredigion. We delivered programmes such as Family Links, Family Links for parents of children with a disability or additional need, Talking Teens, Incredible Years Baby and Incredible Years Toddler.

Other structured parenting programmes were delivered throughout the county including Language and Play, SPACE (Supporting Parents and Children Emotionally), Baby Massage, Blame it on the Brain, GroBrain Baby, GroBrain Toddler and Helping Me, Helping You.

54% of the families who received intervention reported an improvement in their well-being, resilience and parenting skills.

The majority of courses are now being delivered face-to-face-in locations around Ceredigion. Courses such as our ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition) Programme and Online Safety and Gaming Webinar continue to be delivered Virtually, due to their nature. The ASC Programme has weekly ‘guest speakers’ input. These professionals work to support families as part of the ASC assessment pathway and beyond, therefore, thus virtual delivery enables these professionals to take part. Virtual delivery also cuts travelling time, costs and enables any family who needs the support to attend no matter where they reside in Ceredigion. The ASC programme also provides a virtual peer support network for parents who are experiencing similar challenges with their children.

In Spring 2022, staff attended SPACE Training. It is a programme that support parents and children who have experienced trauma in their lives and gives strategies to support them. Since being trained to deliver the programme, four Space Programmes have been delivered in Ceredigion and parents’ feedback has been very positive. One comment stating, *“The course has helped me to off load and get advice from other members of the group and it was really helpful”*.

Family Workers continue to support families on a one-to-one basis and create a bespoke programme of parenting support to suit the needs of the individual family. There are plans in place to hold drop-in sessions in Penparcau Family Centre for families support them with their child’s challenging behaviours hardship, and create a safe space for parents to meet other parents in similar situations.

Family Workers continue to develop their knowledge and skills to support children, young people and their families through identifying gaps in training and thus receiving the relevant training.

Within the service we also have access to a Family Group Meeting Co-ordinator, whose role is to support families within the Early Intervention Hub. There are currently six open cases that are receiving support.

Flying Start Provision

The Flying Start Programme was launched in Wales in 2006/7 with the aim of making a decisive difference to the life chances of children under 4 in the areas in which it’s offered. The Flying Start scheme is postcode / LSOA based and delivers the following services to children under 4 and their families/ carers:

1. Quality part-time fully funded childcare (12.5 hours p/w) for 2-3 year olds
2. Enhanced Health Visiting
3. Access to parenting services
4. Speech, Language and Communication support.

During 22/23, we expanded the full Flying Start provision to the Penparc 1 LSOA (Llechryd area) and the take up of the offer has been positive and steady. During 22/23 permission was given by Welsh Government for us to expand to new postcodes in existing Flying Start LSOA’s in order that all postcodes in those LSOAs are Flying Start eligible. This has increased the number of children eligible for Flying Start services by 117.

Planning for additional expansion of the childcare element of Flying Start was also progressed during the year with new LSOAs being brought into this aspect of the programme in 23/24.

Flying start services were delivered from the Integrated Children’s Centres in Aberystwyth and Cardigan and were the bases for multi-agency staff.

Maternity and Early Years Integration pathfinder pilot

Our Maternity and Early Years Integration pathfinder pilot progressed well during 2022-2023 with provision in 5 areas of the county, linked in the main to third sector family centres. This is a place based approach targeted at supporting 0-7 year olds and their families. The support is similar to that provided by Flying Start, however, there is no funded childcare element. The approach brings together professionals from a variety of disciplines to form virtual teams to support families in their localities.

As part of the pathfinder pilot programme The West Wales Maternity and Early Years Strategy was written and consulted upon in the Hywel Dda region. The strategy which seeks to promote integration will be launched in 23/24.

Penparcau Family Centre

Penparcau Family Centre has been well utilised in 22/23. Activities included 6 after school activity sessions spread out over 2 months for children aged between 4 and 11 (primary school age). These activities were arranged following feedback received from families stating that they would like activities arranged for their older children. The sessions were well attended (on average 8 families attended). We also arranged Festive Craft Sessions that were open for parents to attend, these took place during December. They were unstructured sessions, cooking and craft activities were available if parents wanted to take part, or they could attend as a way of meeting other parents. These were also well attended and feedback was very positive.

Many parenting programmes took place in the Family Centre, for parents of children between the ages 0 to teenagers. These included Stori a Sbri, Family Links Nurture Programme and Additional Needs or Disability Family Links, Blame it on the Brain, Talking Teens and Space.

We have also supported partner organisation within the local authority and third sector by facilitating meetings in the Family Centre. These organisations included LAC Contact Team, Education Tutoring Services, Family Group Meetings and West Wales Domestic Abuse Service.

Ceredigion Support and Prevention Services

The Support and Prevention Service is made up of multi-disciplined teams, with the overall aim of providing child, youth, and family-led approaches to enable children, young people, families, and wider communities to be empowered, to achieve, to develop personally, emotionally, socially and be the best that they can be. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Signs of Safety underpin everything that we do. Our teams provide universal and focused support that include:

- **Youth Work and Engagement;** Youth work in schools, education progression, accredited learning, and participation

School based Youth Workers engage with young people aged 11 – 18 both in universal and focussed contexts. Youth Workers strive to build and maintain meaningful relationships with all school pupils; that include referred pupils who are deemed at risk of disengagement from mainstream education, due to one or a host of reasons.

Youth Workers form relationships based on voluntary engagement. Through participation with individuals, Youth Workers can design a tailored plan that offer support in the form of personal, social, emotional, and behavioural needs of the individual. This can be delivered both within and outside the school environment and be both targeted and universal.

- **Support and Attainment;** Primary / secondary mentoring, transition, emotional wellbeing, nurture, and outreach

The Children and Young People’s Skills (CYP) Mentors support children and young people who may show challenging behaviour because of their social and emotional experiences. Mentors provide support for children and young people in Primary and Secondary Schools, and other education settings.

Mentors promote a holistic and strengths-based approach to better understand the deeper reasons as to why children are finding their current environment challenging in both focussed one-to-one and small group-based settings. This is to help manage their emotions, channelling their energy positively by focussing on attainment, both educationally and personally.

- **Community Youth Work and Prevention;** 16-24 support, community outreach, youth centres, focussed and universal provisions

Our Community Youth Work and Prevention team provide targeted and universal interventions with the aim of tackling and alleviating potential risk factors or underlying issues such as family, social, individual, educational, or mental and emotional health related issues, that may arise that put

them at an increased risk of offending and re-offending, but also preventing them from needing further statutory intervention such as professional mental health services, further medical intervention and even housing support as an example.

Provisions range from outreach, mobile and detached activities, youth centres and clubs, and collaborative targeted programmes and projects.

- **Support Pathways;** Through-age interventions, allocations, screening, quality assurance, data and performance analysis, resource support

The Support Pathways team is the gateway for all referrals to Porth Cymorth Cynnar and its services whether they are received from Clic or triaged by Porth Gofal. The team provides direct support to each service within Porth Cymorth Cynnar to identify, allocate, monitor, and evaluate interventions or support.

The team supports the ‘step up and step down’ protocols by working with Porth Cynnal and Porth Gofal to ensure timely and effective support for children/young people, adults and for families/carers.

The team also helps oversee the data and quality assurance processes of Porth Cymorth Cynnar services, ensuring that we can meet the needs of citizens as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Service snapshot 2022/23:

- **627** children and young people were open to support,
- An average of **150** pupils received weekly support via school-based youth worker,
- Skills’ Mentors supported an average of **160** pupils each week,
- **23** primary-aged pupils received weekly 1:1 support with a further **20** accessing weekly community-based nurture programmes,
- **154** interventions closed to Mentor support due to positive outcome ie., re-integration, signposting,
- **170** pupils identified as at risk of disengagement/ exclusion engaged in weekly targeted projects such as Pathways, Phoenix Course, Tonic Surf etc.
- **62** pupils have been escalated to PCC Strategic Panel for Step-up/ statutory service escalation due to complexity
- **32** vulnerable pupils at risk of statutory intervention were monitored weekly
- An average **80** children and young people accessed weekly universal and extra-curricular activities (lunch and after-school clubs), youth clubs and community-based programmes)
- **273** children and young people accessed holiday activity programmes
- **185** young people aged 16-25 supported through inspire or 1:1 support from community youth work team due to factors affecting their route into education, employment, and training (EET) such as substance misuse, mental health, and youth homelessness. **87** organized workshops have been delivered with **68** young people successfully entering ETE with **46** young people reporting an increase in self-efficacy and confidence. Y Fan project promoted positive engagement with rural/hard to reach areas of the service.
- **1** additional members of staff have joined the service with a **97%** retention rate.
- **8** staff members where supported to complete the level 3 youth work qualification, **4** staff members gained support for higher level qualifications with in the service,
- Signs of Safety practice implemented in referrals, allocations, and monitoring processes.

Care Inspectorate Wales Activity

In January 2023 notification was received from Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) that a Performance Evaluation Inspection would take place.

An intense evaluation of performance across Adult and Children’s Service from 27 February 2023 to 10 March 2023 took place.

Verbal feedback was provided on 16 March 2023 and the draft written report was received on 6 April 2023. A formal response to the draft report was made by the Local Authority on 21 April 2023. There were no matters that required significant amendment contained in the report as the content reflected closely the verbal feedback.

An Action Plan has now been formulated to respond to the recommended improvements outlined by CIW in the report and to build on the strengths highlighted. The overwhelming majority of the actions were already in progress as the matters identified by CIW were being addressed before the commencement of the inspection.

The Action Plan has been presented to the Healthier Communities Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

The CIW report was published on 18 May 2023.

This was the first thematic inspection since the implementation of the Through Age Wellbeing model implementation. The model is innovative and designed to respond to wellbeing to prevent escalation of needs across all life stages.

The inspection explored four domains and made the following observations:

People – Voice and Control

‘For many people their voices are heard’.

‘People are able to communicate in their preferred language’

Well-being

‘Safeguarding children and young people is prioritised across the Through Age Wellbeing Model.

Prevention

‘Senior managers fully understand access to early intervention and prevention is key to maintaining well-being’.

Partnership and Integration

‘Effective integration and collaboration between professionals is evident across teams’

We are very pleased to have the Through Age Wellbeing model of service delivery recognised as effective by our regulator.

Complaints and Compliments

Compliments

A total of **217 compliments** were received from service-users and/or their representatives during this reporting period. This is more than double the number of compliments that were recorded for Social Services during 2021-2022 (104 in total). Some examples of the compliments received are provided below.

Service Area	Compliments received
Porth Cynnal	78
Porth Gofal	139
Total	217

“As ever, I am so very grateful for the excellent way in which you have helped us and continue to provide support. Your efficiency is outstanding and your advice on all matters is friendly, thorough, and very reassuring to me.”
 – *Mental Health / Wellbeing*

“(Service user) was grateful for the afternoon and enjoyed meeting us all, knowing that the support was there should she need it.” – *Early Intervention*

“Thank you / Diolch from the bottom of our hearts for all of the care and love you showed and gave to X. He was so happy and loved all of you, you gave him the best years of his life.” – *Porth Gofal*

“Thank you for all your help and support during the last few months, my grandmother and the whole family appreciated it.” – *Direct Services*

“The holistic manner that you work with, is outstanding and I so wish that others who are educating themselves in order to work in social care could have some of your insight in how things should be done and be allowed the time and resources to do so. Once again you are an absolutely fantastic social worker and there should be more like you.” – *Mental Wellbeing*

“We are very pleased with the quick response from the OT Service. They were clear in their communication, kept us updated throughout, and have provided valuable support to enable my mum, who is 93, to be much safer and more confident in her own home. This has been hugely beneficial to myself and the rest of the family, as we have been very worried about her. We are very thankful for the help and support.” – *Occupational Therapy Service*

“Thank you for putting forward various options and many thanks for your kind assistance.” – *Integrated Triage & Assessment Service*

Complaints Report

Introduction

This report will refer specifically to all **Social Services compliments and complaints** received during 2022 – 2023. This data will also be included as part of the Council’s Annual Compliments, Complaints and Freedom of Information (FOI) Report for 2022 – 2023, on a corporate level, which will be published later in the year.

The Council has fully implemented the requirements outlined in Welsh Government’s statutory **Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014** and the **Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014**. These regulations underpin the Council’s own **Social Services Complaints Policy**, which is due to be reviewed during the forthcoming year. The current Policy was approved by the Council’s Cabinet committee on 17th March 2020, and predominantly sets out the responsibilities placed upon staff within **Porth Cynnal** and **Porth Gofal** Services, as well as the corporate **Complaints and FOI Team**. This promotes accountability and ensures that effective arrangements are in place to resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity, and if this is not possible, to ensure complaints are managed in accordance with the Council’s statutory obligations.

It is vital that the Social Services complaints process operates in accordance with the principles of the **Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014**, as well as ensuring that the process is accessible to all, and is fair and transparent.

Social Services Complaints Activity

Every effort is made to resolve complaints pro-actively and in many cases this is successful. In such instances the contact will be recorded as a concern. However, in some cases this is not possible, particularly when the issues being raised are of a serious or complex nature. These instances will be managed in accordance with the afore-mentioned complaints policy and procedures.

The Social Services complaints procedure consists of **two stages**, and Corporate Managers within Social Services (i.e. Porth Cynnal and Porth Gofal) are responsible for managing complaints against their respective service-areas, ensuring that the appropriate level of decision-making and accountability is in place. The Corporate Managers strive to achieve meaningful outcomes as a consequence of complaints and, where necessary, measures will be implemented to ensure lessons are learned and any service improvements are prioritised. The Complaints and FOI Team is independent from Social Services, managed within the Policy, Performance & Public Protection Service, and is responsible for overseeing the administration of the complaints process.

A total of **60 ‘concerns’** were received within the reporting period, with the majority having been resolved satisfactorily without requiring escalation under the formal complaints procedure. However, this report will focus on the **complaints** that were investigated under stages 1 and 2 during the course of the reporting year.

For information, Stage 1 is the only opportunity that is available for Corporate Managers to investigate and/or resolve a complaint. The statutory regulations stipulate that an Independent

Investigating Officer (IIO) must be appointed to conduct investigations at Stage 2 and, in cases involving children, an Independent Person (IP) is also commissioned to oversee the investigation process. Once the Council’s own complaints process has been exhausted, complainants have the right to refer their complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) if they remain dissatisfied.

Total number of complaints received in 2022 – 2023

Service Area	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Porth Cynnal	19	6	25
Porth Gofal	12	1	13
	31	7	38

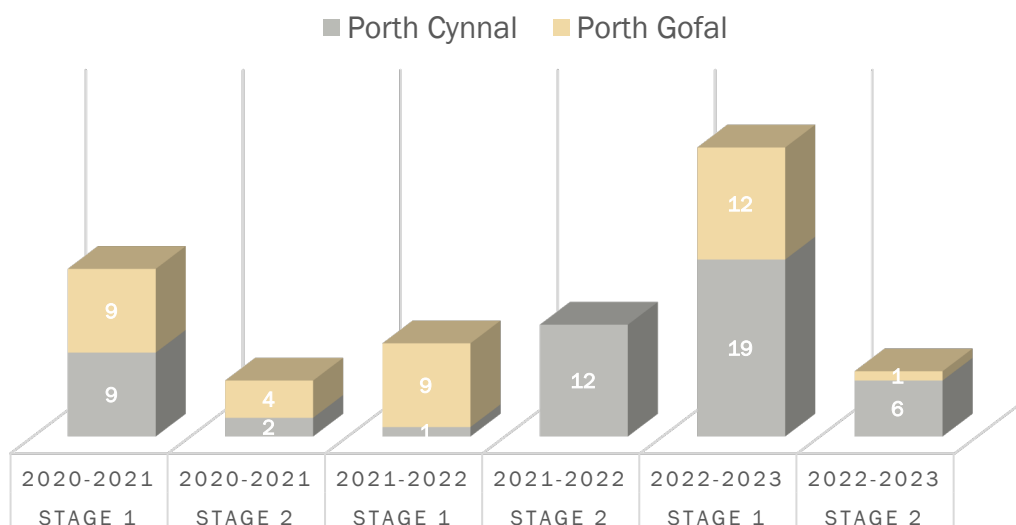
A total of **38 complaints** were received in relation to Social Services in 2022–2023, which demonstrates an increase when comparing these figures to the previous reporting period. During 2021–2022 there were **22** complaints in total which were addressed under the Social Services complaints policy.

Senior staff in Porth Gofal and Porth Cynnal continue to work closely with the Complaints and FOI Team by adopting an early-resolution approach when appropriate and this is proving to be an effective strategy. From the 60 concerns managed pro-actively, only eleven cases subsequently went on to be investigated at Stages 1 and/or 2; this equates to **82% of all concerns having been resolved satisfactorily** in the first instance.

Comparative data

Comparative data is provided below with regard to complaints received by Porth Cynnal and Porth Gofal, for the years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 and the current reporting period – 2022-2023.

SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS



Complaint Outcomes by Service

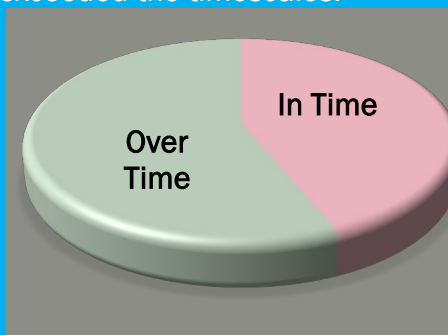
A breakdown of the number of complaints and their outcomes is provided below, in accordance with the relevant service areas:

Porth Cynnal	Not Upheld	Upheld	Ongoing / Suspended / Discontinued
Planned Care (Adults) (3)		1	2
Planned Care (Children) (6)	2	2	2
Safeguarding (Adults) (4)	1		3
Safeguarding (Children) (4)	1		3
Extended Support (Adults) (6)	1		5
Mental Wellbeing (Adults) (2)	2		
Total	7	3	15

Porth Gofal	Not Upheld	Upheld	Ongoing / Suspended / Discontinued
Integrated Triage & Assessment (Adults) (6)	2	1	2
Integrated Triage & Assessment (Children) (3)	1	2	
Targeted Intervention Service (3)			3
Direct Services (1)		1	
Total	3	5	5

Stage 1 Timescales

Of the 31 complaints which were recorded at Stage 1, only 16 were concluded (i.e. not suspended, withdrawn or discontinued – this will be explained in more detail in the analysis). 7 of these complaints were closed within the prescribed timescales. The remaining 9 exceeded the timescales.



Stage 2 Timescales

Only 5 of the 7 complaints that were recorded at Stage 2, progressed to the independent investigation stage, because two complainants decided to withdraw their complaints. All five of the complaints that were investigated took longer than prescribed timescale of 25-working-days. However, the statutory requirements to obtain written approval from the Director of Social Services was fully complied with, and responses were issued at the earliest opportunity following completion of the investigation.

Analysis and Conclusions

Firstly, closer analysis of the **60 cases** that were initially recorded as ‘concerns’ revealed that **only 11** of these **subsequently escalated to the formal complaints stage**. This predominantly supports the benefits associated with taking a ‘**pro-active resolution**’ approach, where possible. The remaining **49** concerns (82%) were resolved successfully without further action required.

There has clearly been an **increase** in the number of complaints received in relation to Social Services during 2022-2023. Having received **31 Stage 1** complaints in the last year, this is the highest level since 2015-2016, when 32 Stage 1 complaints were received in a single year. There were **fewer Stage 2 investigations** conducted during this reporting period and in terms of outcomes, the ratio of upheld to not upheld complaints was fairly balanced.

However, the most striking factor within this year’s report is that a total of **20 complaints** were not concluded. There are a variety of reasons behind these, which will be explained below.

A ‘complaint’ is usually recorded at the point of receipt when it is deemed to meet the criteria for instigating the policy immediately: i.e. it is not a ‘first time request for a service’ or the issues being raised are felt to be sufficiently serious that intervention at Corporate Manager level is necessary.

There are, however, other factors that need to be considered once a complaint is formally recorded, but before the process can actively commence:

- ensuring appropriate consent is obtained from the service-user (when others raise concerns on their behalf).
- consideration as to whether there are any ‘concurrent investigations’ underway (i.e. if there are any court proceedings or safeguarding investigations that could be compromised by a complaint investigation)
- ascertaining whether the complaints process can be followed at all (e.g. instances whereby the complainant is seeking to overturn a decision made by a Court)

In these instances, the complaint may not be able to progress until the necessary checks are completed and this can occasionally take some time, whilst engagement between the Service and the complainant ensues.

Analysis of the **20 complaints** that were not concluded during the reporting period showed that:

- **3 complaints** were **resolved immediately** following the intervention of the Corporate Manager for the relevant Service.
- Failure to supply the service-user’s **consent** accounted for the discontinuation of **4 complaints**.
- In **5 cases**, the complainant **failed to engage** with the complaints process and the cases were subsequently closed.
- **4 complaints** were **ongoing or escalated to Stage 2** before completion of the Stage 1 complaint.
- **3 cases** were actively **withdrawn** by the complainant’s.
- **1 complaint** was unable to be progressed due to **other investigations** taking priority.

Whilst this is an unprecedented number of complaints that were not concluded within the reporting year, the cases were managed in accordance with the statutory policies and procedures and, in the

interests of openness and transparency these complaints were not removed from the system. Furthermore, all complaints were shared with the relevant service areas and the Corporate Managers responsible in each case sought to ensure that there were no underlying issues that required further intervention or investigation.

Response times at both stages of the complaints process requires improvement, though only one case exceeded the six-month timeframe. Complaints that take longer than the prescribed timescale to resolve is occasionally unavoidable, and the overarching priority is to ensure that complaints are investigated thoroughly, and careful consideration is given to the findings and recommendations which emerge from such investigations.

Porth Cynnal received a higher number of complaints which is largely due to the nature of the services they deliver, and their complexity.

Of the **18 complaints** that were fully investigated, 8 were upheld. Although this is an increase compared with the figures analysed during 2021-2022 (4 complaints upheld), this represents 44% of all complaints investigated, which is still an improvement on the statistics for 2020-2021, whereby 58% were upheld. Further, whilst almost half of all complaints investigated were upheld, acknowledgement must also be given to the number of concerns that were successfully resolved, and the complaints that were withdrawn earlier in the process because of the work undertaken by services to remedy the issues.

Themes and Trends

Poor communication remains a consistent factor in most complaints, and, in many cases, these are addressed promptly at service-level to prevent unnecessary escalation. This was evidently the case in respect of the 49 concerns resolved pro-actively, which far exceeds the number of cases that were subsequently investigated under the formal complaints process.

Timescales

As identified in previous reporting periods, improvements need to be made with regard to response times, particularly at Stage 1 of the complaints process. There is a requirement at Stage 1 to offer a ‘discussion’ between the complainant and the relevant Corporate Manager. Therefore, securing the availability of managers remains a challenge, as well as attempting to then co-ordinate their availability with that of the complainant. This will continue to be monitored in future reporting periods.

It has also become increasingly evident during the course of the reporting period that poor complaints handling has become a prominent feature in the failure to process cases expediently. Extensive efforts are being made to ensure better communication between Social Services and the Complaints and FOI Team, but some challenges have arisen as a consequence of increased complaints and FOI activity on a corporate level, as well as in the case of Social Services. This remains an ongoing concern which has been escalated as necessary.

Learning Lessons

In all cases whereby a complaint is deemed to be upheld (either in its entirety or specific elements) it is crucial that recommendations are put in place to learn lessons and prevent any recurrence in the future. Examples of some lessons learned from complaints received during 2022–2023 are summarised below:

- *It was agreed that the Service would commence a weekly log of all communication, which will be shared with the complainant and minutes of meetings will be shared promptly with the relevant parties. This should limit anxiety levels due to lack of communication and delays in receiving documentation from the service.*
- *Relevant staff will ensure that discussions are held with interested parties in advance of formal meetings, so that everybody is aware of the format of the meeting and how they are expected to contribute to this. These discussions will be recorded, and a formal record will be given to all attendees as part of the process. In addition, staff were reminded about the importance of making a brief log of any telephone conversations, in accordance with relevant Council policies.*
- *Completion of assessments / reviews and carer’s assessments to be considered upon receipt of complaints, to ensure that level of care provision adequately meets the needs of the individual.*

Complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

During 2022–2023 the Council received **eleven** new contacts from the office of the PSOW relating to Social Services complaints. These related to cases within the following services:

- Porth Cynnal (7)
- Porth Gofal (4)

There were a greater number of referrals received from the Ombudsman during 2022-2023, with only 9 having been received in 2021-2022.

Whilst no complaints referred to the PSOW resulted in a formal investigation, there were **eight complaints** that required intervention by the Ombudsman. These complaints were resolved by way of *‘Early Resolution / Voluntary Settlement agreements’* reached with the Ombudsman’s office, the details of which are provided in the table overleaf.

Cases requiring Ombudsman intervention by way of Early Resolution Agreements

Service(s) & Reference	Summary of Complaint	Agreed Actions
<p>Porth Cynnal; Extended Support and Complaint Handling</p> <p>Case ref: 202200812</p>	<p>Complaint had previously been investigated independently under Stage 2; however, the complainant remained dissatisfied with the outcome.</p> <p>The complainant’s main concerns were that the Service failed to undertake appropriate and necessary assessments to determine her relative’s degree of learning disabilities, and that it failed to consider vital information provided during a telephone consultation.</p>	<p>The Ombudsman advised that the Council should respond to the additional queries raised by the complainant, following the independent investigation at Stage 2.</p>
<p>Porth Cynnal; Safeguarding and Complaint Handling</p> <p>Case Ref: 202201388</p>	<p>Complaint had previously been investigated independently under Stage 2. This process was unnecessarily protracted, and clarification was sought by the complainant regarding information that was included within the independent investigation report.</p> <p>In particular, the complainant wished to receive further information regarding the case law that was referred to, which the Social Worker had based their decision upon when providing care to the complainant’s relative.</p>	<p>The Council agreed to provide additional information surrounding the case law that had been considered by the Social Worker at the time that decisions were made surrounding care provision.</p> <p>In addition, an earlier agreement to award a ‘Time and Trouble’ payment due to the lengthy complaints process, had been overlooked at the point that the formal response was issued. Therefore the Council honoured its earlier decision in this regard, and acknowledged the additional inconvenience caused by having to approach the Ombudsman to obtain the information requested.</p>
<p>Porth Cynnal; Extended Support</p> <p>Case Ref: 202200853</p>	<p>Complaint that the Council had failed to properly implement the terms of an Early Resolution agreement undertaken in September 2020. This included the Council’s failure to fully complete a Carer’s Assessment, and for the continuing uncertainty surrounding the terms and arrangements of Respite Care. The Complainant was also aggrieved that the Council appeared to take an inconsistent approach to Direct Payment uplift.</p>	<p>The Council agreed to follow up on the arrangements previously agreed in relation to conducting a Carer’s Assessment. An Independent Social Worker was commissioned to complete this task.</p> <p>The Council also agreed to write to the complainant within six weeks to provide a full explanation regarding the Council’s approach in respect of providing respite care.</p>

<p>Porth Gofal; Integrated Triage & Assessment and Complaint Handling</p> <p>Case Ref: 202205115</p>	<p>Complaint regarding the Council’s failure to take seriously the concerns raised by the service-user about the care provider that was commissioned to assist her. The Complainant made a complaint directly to the care provider, but their response was incomplete and inaccurate.</p> <p>The Council declined to investigate the complaint because it was satisfied with the care provider’s response and that no further action was needed. However, the Ombudsman disagreed – ruling that the Council did not fulfil its duty to accept the complaint in line with the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations.</p>	<p>The Council agreed to contact the complainant to obtain her complaint and issue a response which was consistent with the statutory complaints procedure.</p>
<p>Porth Cynnal; Extended Support and Complaint Handling</p> <p>Case Ref: 202206613</p>	<p>Complainant contacted the Ombudsman because the Council had failed to investigate the complaints she had submitted in February 2022.</p>	<p>The Council accepted it had failed to investigate the complaints raised and agreed to commence Stage 1 of the complaints process immediately. An apology was also given for this failure in complaints handling and a redress payment was agreed in acknowledgement of the Time and Trouble the complaint went to in order to have her complaint considered.</p>
<p>Porth Gofal; Integrated Triage & Assessment Service & Complaint Handling</p> <p>Case Ref: 202202005</p>	<p>Complaint that the Council had failed to provide regular and meaningful updates regarding her complaint.</p>	<p>The Council agreed to issue a formal apology and an explanation for the delays she experienced during her complaint. It was also agreed that the formal response would be issued within four weeks of the Ombudsman’s decision, and a payment of £100 would be given in recognition of the time and trouble the complainant went to in making her complaint to the Ombudsman.</p>
<p>Porth Cynnal; Extended Support and Complaint Handling</p> <p>Case Ref: 202107463</p>	<p>Following an independent investigation at Stage 2 of the Social Services Complaint Procedure, the complainant contacted the Ombudsman because the Council had failed to implement the recommendations made by the Independent Investigating Officer.</p> <p>In addition, the Council had failed to inform him that a full safeguarding investigation would not be taking place; though the issues identified during the complaint were considered during a Professional Concerns Meeting, under the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures.</p>	<p>By way of a Voluntary Settlement Agreement, the Ombudsman proposed that the Council and the Support Service that was involved in the original complaint, should meet with the complainant and his son (the service-user) formally to explain the safeguarding decision and to discuss any additional measures that would facilitate future learning.</p> <p>It was also agreed that a direct apology was warranted for the lack of communication following the conclusion of the Stage 2 investigation. The Council agreed with this proposal</p>

		and the necessary actions were undertaken.
<p>Porth Cynnal: Safeguarding Service and Complaint Handling</p> <p>Case Ref: 202107158</p>	<p>Complaint about the Council’s failure to close down a safeguarding case promptly, which had repercussions on the complainant’s ability to resume specific working responsibilities. The Complainant also stated that her complaint was not appropriately addressed once she had brought these matters to the Council’s attention.</p>	<p>The Council accepted full responsibility for the delays the complainant experienced in respect of the safeguarding case, and that this was further compounded by the failure to manage her complaint effectively. Further, the Council accepted it had not fully appreciated the impact that these matters had on the complainant.</p> <p>The Council agreed to provide a corporate apology for the maladministration identified by the Ombudsman and provide financial redress in the sum of £725 in recognition of the injustice that prevented her from returning to her duties within a youth organisation, and for the poor complaints handling – including the time and trouble invested by her, having to pursue her complaint.</p>

4. Promoting and Improving the Well-being of Those We Help

The six quality standards used to measure the Local Authority’s performance against the wellbeing outcomes are:

1. Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve
2. Working with people and partners to protect and promote people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being
3. Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect, or harm
4. Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society
5. Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family, and personal relationships
6. Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs .

Throughout 2022-23 we have worked to maintain, sustain and develop in each of the Through Age Wellbeing services:

Porth Cymorth Cynnar

- Wellbeing Centres’ - facilities that enhance the core physical activity and leisure offer with meeting, consultation, and treatment spaces. The Wellbeing Centre will incorporate services that consider and improve the physical, social emotional and mental aspects of an individual’s wellbeing and contribute to them enabling individuals to achieve their full potential.
- Further development and delivery of blended universal and focussed through-age community activities and interventions to enable empowerment, resilience, and independence.
- Worked collaboratively with key stakeholders and voluntary sector organisations to develop a range of services to meet the evolving needs within our communities to support and enable individuals and families in Ceredigion to cope well with the challenges and pressures that they may face.

Porth Gofal:

- Direct Payments support service has been developed in house and is up and running efficiently
- Domiciliary Care – has been strengthened to recruit and retain new providers to work across Ceredigion
- Fostering – the service is working closely with Foster Wales to support recruitment, retention and training of foster carers
- Day Services Opportunities in dependent review has taken place – the action plan for implementation will be compiled shortly

Porth Cynnal:

- Develop preventative and recovery approaches across Porth Cynnal Services and the TAW model and with partner agencies focusing on mental wellbeing, domestic abuse, substance misuse
- Safe Looked After Children Reduction have been implemented
- Safe accommodation for children and local parent and baby accommodation provision is close to completion
- Embed Signs of Safety practice
- Revision to the structure in Mental Wellbeing, Substance Misuse and Safeguarding Quality Assurance has taken place to enhance efficiency.

Workforce Challenges

There has been a continued focus on recruitment with several campaigns both internally but also supporting external providers with campaigns.

The challenges of recruiting and retaining key staff specifically Social Workers and Occupational Therapists has been significant throughout 2022 -2023, however it is acknowledged that this is a national recruitment and retention issue and opportunities around regional working have been explored. The Council has a strategy for meeting this challenge including the following approaches:

- Increase number of Social Work traineeships
- Offering qualification opportunities and learning pathways for the current staff
- student placements
- Reviewing job roles and evaluations
- Refreshing advertising - intensive and new campaigns to join Ceredigion
- Use of agency staff where required alongside Ceredigion staff

Supporting Staff Wellbeing

We are committed to providing responsive, accessible, and inclusive support to staff:

- Employee Health & Wellbeing Officer
- Employee Assistance Package
- Occupational Health
- Responsive approach including, wellbeing surveys/questionnaires, discussions with managers & teams, streamlined appraisal process, drop in sessions
- Organization wide activity and support including, information on intranet, Wellbeing Wednesdays, Activities, Wellbeing Webinars, Shielding staff
- Dedicated health and wellbeing webinars, regular meetings with Corporate Manager/Registered Managers
- Individual staff support within care homes
- Strengthened the supervision policy

Ceredigion Local Authority Housing Services

Under Homelessness interventions, in 2022-23, 708 cases were opened where there had been approaches due to households believing to be at risk of homelessness or presenting as homeless on the day. This is slightly lower than the figure recorded for 2021/22 (737).

Of the 708 cases opened 32.6% (231) were provided with advice and assistance and aided to prevent homelessness. This represents a decrease in the number of cases provided with advice and assistance in comparison to 2021/22. However, the number of cases which progressed to full assessment under s62 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 was higher than in 2021/22 i.e. 477 cases.

As a result of these assessments, 207 cases were successfully prevented and/or relieved. The total number of prevention outcomes recorded for 2022/23 was higher in comparison to the number of outcomes recorded for 2021/22 i.e. 180 and 142 outcomes respectively. The total number of relief outcomes in 2022/23 was similar to the figure recorded for 2021/22.

The number of clients assisted through financial means including signposting remains steady. There are however many cases where paying off arrears or aiding person to additional benefits is not able to prevent homelessness. This is because there are many non-financial reasons for homelessness, as seen in the table below with the ‘Loss of accommodation’ including no fault evictions being the main reason for approach (cases assessed under s62 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014). Therefore, the majority of successful prevention outcomes was achieved through the provision of alternative accommodation.

Parent, friend or other relative no longer willing or able to accommodate	21%
Breakdown of relationship with partner	Violent 5% Non-violent 10%
Violence for other reasons	4%
Loss of accommodation, e.g., Landlord served notice	33%
Rent arrears	3%
Current property unaffordable	0.6%
Current property unsuitable (e.g., overcrowding/ medical reasons)	6%
Prison release	5%
In institution/care (e.g. hospital discharge)	2%
Other, inc homeless in emergency, return from abroad, sleeping rough	8%

The Housing Options services continue to work in line with the ‘No one left out’ approach following guidance from Welsh Government, which will be enacted in law in the near future, effectively removing ‘priority need’. Therefore, there are no longer any single persons without vulnerabilities turned away at the interim accommodation duty and full duty stage. This means that Housing Options Service has been experiencing continued high demands for temporary accommodation and the number of households recorded as residing in temporary accommodation at the end of the month fluctuated between 75 and 84 households in 2022/23, with single person households accounting for the highest proportion of households placed in temporary accommodation (63% as at 31/03/2023).

For the year 2022-23 under the adaptations service, 86 Disabled Facilities Grants, 20 Minor Repairs, 61 Safe, Warm and Secure Grants and 650 Rapid Response Adaptions have been delivered.

The availability of contractors to complete adaption works and the increase in material costs, will impact the number of DFG’s the service can deliver going forward.

The development of a new Contractor Framework is currently under way, which will hopefully be available during the next financial year. We anticipate more contractors coming on board with the delivery of adaption works, which will assist to alleviate some of the service delivery pressures.

Under housing register work, for the year 2022-23, 1276 Housing Register Applications were received across all 4 Registers (affordable, general, older persons, accessible)

What difference has the service made?

The total number of approaches has slightly decreased however the number of cases progressing to full assessment and requiring more intensive intervention has increased which has been reflected in the higher number of prevention outcomes thus enabled the service to avoid homelessness.

Due to the increasing reliance on temporary accommodation coupled with the lack of affordable accommodation available in the county, the Housing service adopted temporary changes for a short period of time in agreement with partner RSLs to prioritise allocations to social housing to persons with homeless duties and in temporary accommodation. The temporary changes to the Allocation policy assisted the Housing Options team in meeting the demands for temporary accommodation as well as successfully rehousing households in permanent accommodation which contributed to the higher relief success rate for 2022/23.

The landlord guarantee scheme has become operational offering an additional tool to prevent homelessness and facilitate move-on to accommodation in the private sector.

Disabled Facilities and Safe Warm and Secure grants have assisted clients to live independently within their own homes.

A total of 240 applicants secured housing from the Housing Register. 79 (33%) allocations were made to people owed a homeless duty. This percentage has increased slightly following a temporary change to our allocation policy. This enabled applicants in temporary accommodation and/or with a homeless duty, to be offered permanent accommodation above all others on the Housing Register, wherever possible, and supported the early intervention and prevention agenda.

Due to the increasing reliance on temporary accommodation coupled with the increased number of potential homeless cases from both cost of living, and Ukraine refugees, for a short period the Housing service is working with the partner RSL’s to prioritise allocations to social housing to persons with homeless duties and in temporary accommodation.

How well have we done?

Housing - Homelessness

Total prevention outcomes: 180 (this includes successful prevention, unsuccessful prevention, non-cooperation, assistance refused, withdrawn, and withdrawn due to loss of contact)

Successful prevention outcomes: 124. Therefore 68.9% of households threatened with homelessness were successfully prevented. (Meeting target of 65% and slightly up on last year’s

67.6%). Of the 180 households 25 households (13.9%) withdrew from the service and therefore Housing Options were unable to assist or establish an outcome.

Total relief outcomes: 173 (this includes successful relief, unsuccessful relief, assistance refused, non-cooperation, withdrawn and withdrawn due to loss of contact).

Successful relief outcomes: 83. Therefore 47.9% households were provided with successful relief measures within 56 days. This represents a significant increase in the relief success rate in comparison to 2021/22 which was 33.7%. Of the 173 households 57 households (32.9%) did not achieve a successful outcome within 56 days and therefore progressed to the next stage of the housing options process i.e. s75 investigation. 32 (18.5% of total) clients withdrew from the service.

Housing - Adaptations

During the year 2022-23 a safe home was provided for 817 disabled and vulnerable applicants to remain living independently leading to improved quality of life.

Energy Efficiency

During the year a total of 420 clients received either improvements to their homes through EE initiatives and/or EE advice to improve their financial position and outgoings.

145 ECO4 Flexibility Declarations were issued to eligible households for funding (October 2022 to March 2023), with Air Source Heat Pumps, Solar photovoltaics and the various types of insulation being the main energy efficiency measures installed.

A total of 275 fuel poor households were assisted by the Warm Homes Fund Category 3/LOT 1 – Energy Efficiency and Health Related Solutions project between April 2022 and March 2023, with confirmed benefits (improved financial position) to the households of £250,793.00 (approximately £912 per household).

Ceredigion County Council were the Winners of the Wales Energy Efficiency Regional Awards 2023 and were awarded 3rd place at the National Regional Energy Efficiency Awards 2023.

Housing – register

1083 Housing Applications were activated on to the Housing Register enabling consideration for social housing allocations. In addition to this, amendments were made to applications and application renewals ensuring correct and up to date information for our RSL partners.

Delivery of affordable housing across all tenure

The SHG programme is part of a 3-year rolling development programme made up of several funding streams from Welsh Government.

The development programme is based on regularly updated needs analysis of the Housing Registers with the aim of delivering a mix of social and intermediate housing across Ceredigion alongside a partnership with Registered Social Landlords who develop the schemes.

What difference has the objective made?

The number of Social Rented units being delivered is likely to increase year on year over the next 3 years with a generous SHG budget allocation for the 3-year programme. This will enable Ceredigion

to contribute to Welsh Governments 20,000 Target. Developments are being targeted to help meet the identified local need in the County. The range of affordable tenure options is also being increased to help address the different housing needs within the County.

During this year there was a total 27 Social Housing units delivered by our partner Housing Associations operating within Ceredigion. This is a decrease of recent years as the financial viability of schemes have been challenging due to vastly increased construction costs and contractor availability, all of which are the aftereffects of the pandemic. Moving forward with a £22.7m budget over 3 years there are some large, exciting schemes in the programme which if market conditions allow will mean a record delivery of social housing in Ceredigion for the coming years.

Contribute towards the development and integration of the Porth Gofal - Early Intervention and wellbeing model:

The HSG Gateway Service, is ensuring all cases are allocated the appropriate interventions in a timely manner. This has gone from strength to strength and has enabled the service monitor demand and outcomes effectively. This information and working alongside other services within the TAW model will be invaluable as we undertake a full review and recommission all HSG funded services operating within Ceredigion in the coming year.

Ensure that the accommodation needs of residents are met

The Housing Service continues to work towards ensuring that the accommodation needs of residents are being met. Throughout the year 397 inspections of licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation were undertaken to ensure safety standards were being met. 211 private rented accommodation enquiries were received resulting in 89 visits to ensure safety standards were being met, and 4 cases of harassment and illegal eviction were investigated.

Lifting of Covid restrictions together with a full complement of staff in the Housing Standards Team has allowed the backlog of HMO inspections that built up during the pandemic to be reduced considerably.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

This coming year will see the continuation of delivery of services as a Through Age Wellbeing Service model to achieve our five wellbeing objectives:

- Promote positive health and wellbeing and support people to self support
- Strengthen families so that children and young people remain within their families
- Provide proportionate approaches to managed care and support
- Protect individuals and keep them safe from abuse, harm and neglect
- Enable individuals to live independently in their own community

We want to:

- Continue to strengthen our workforce through recruitment, education and training to enhance and strengthen our practice to meet the demands of delivering the wellbeing objectives.
- Implement Day Service Opportunities
- Respite care to children and adults
- Work with Domiciliary Care providers to increase the available provision across the county
- Increase the number of personal assistants to deliver Direct Payment services
- Implement the Action Plan in response to the Regional Dementia Strategy
- Increase the number of inhouse approved foster carers
- Establish children residential placement provision
- Increase the number of carers supported by the Carers and Community Support Service
- Utilise early intervention services to keep children at home
- Reduce the number of children in our care
- Reduce the number of children on the Child Protection Register
- Develop our services to make a Rapid Response to Suicide or at risk of Suicide and their families and friends

5. How We Do What We Do

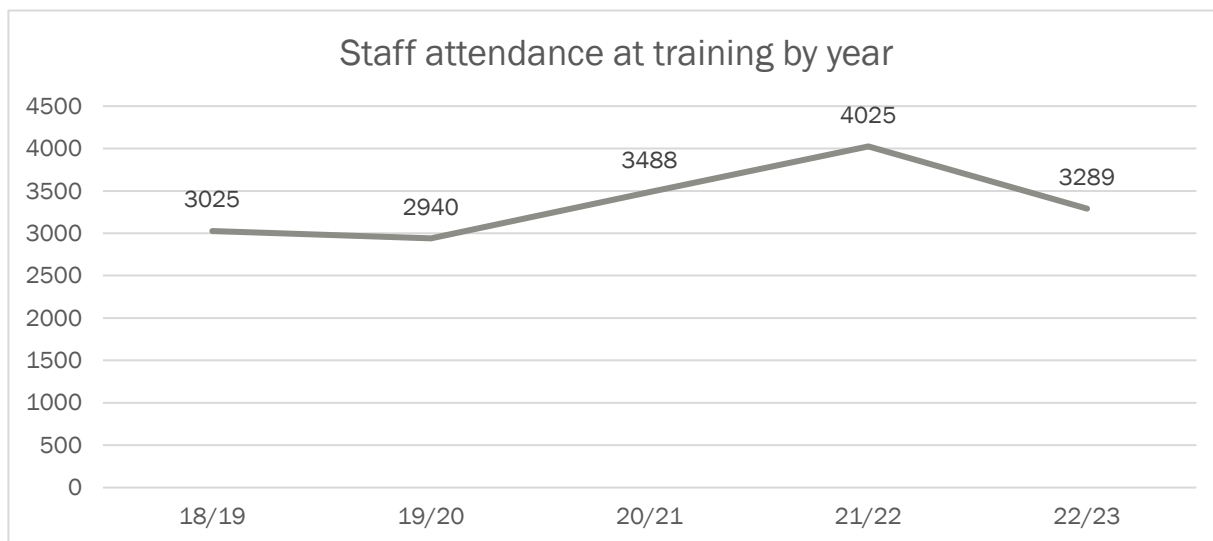
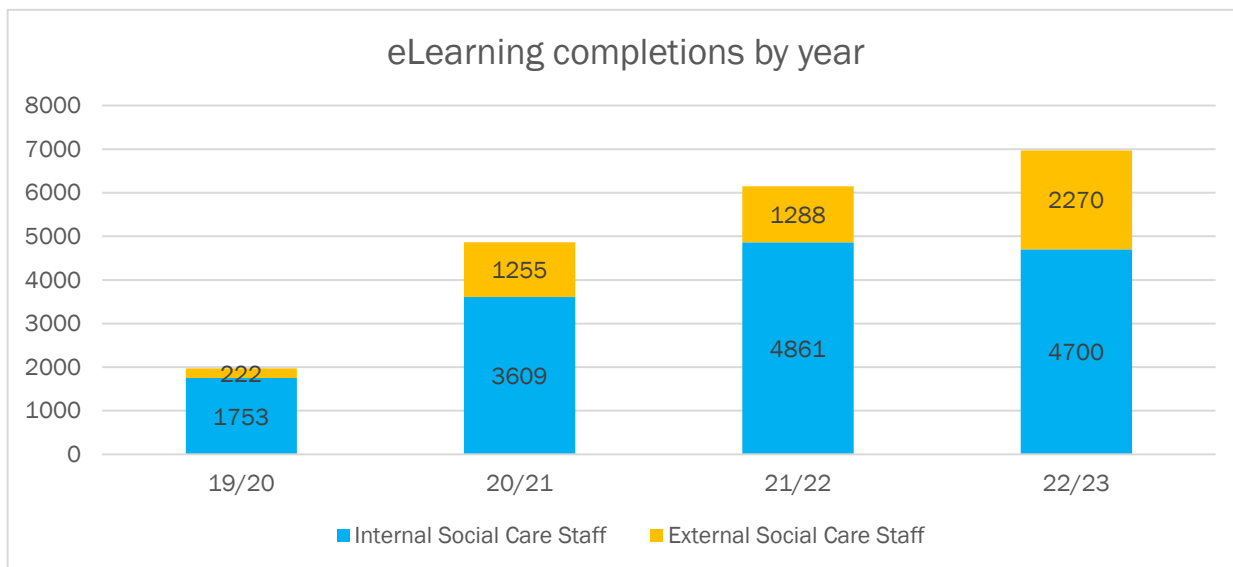
How we have supported the professional development of the Social Care Workforce

The Through Age Wellbeing model continues to be embedded through the provision of a broad range of training which supports the induction, continuous professional development, and regulatory requirements of those involved in service delivery.

An annual training needs analysis is conducted across the social care workforce which asks internal teams and external providers to identify their training needs and priorities for the year. Meetings are also hosted to encourage and support dialogue with external providers, these have proved beneficial in the targeting of resources for example in the commissioning and delivery of Mental Health First Aid training.

A blended approach to training delivery is adopted; trainer facilitated sessions are delivered on-line, face to face sessions are reserved for specific subject areas for example, Manual Handling, Dementia Bus and Autism Reality Experience. In addition, e learning modules on core areas of practice are available across the sector.

Despite national and local recruitment and retention challenges, the workforce has continued to access training and pursue development opportunities. Staff shortages and the pressures of service delivery have seen training attendance decrease slightly this year however, this is mitigated somewhat by the increasing number of e learning completions. The previous years’ investment in a new Learning Management System, Ceredigion Learning Pool, has evidenced return on investment. The bilingual, user-friendly system now offers 31 e learning modules to the sector which cover a variety of subjects including Safeguarding, Autism, Mental Capacity Act, Infection Prevention & Control and Tourette’s Syndrome. Both the development of e learning modules and completion rates continue to increase annually. A bespoke programme of e learning has also been developed and made available to support Personal Assistants including Health and Safety in the Home and First Aid Awareness. The graphs below illustrate the number of e learning completions and training attendance by year:



Social Care Wales Workforce Development Grant (SCWWDG) funding remains core to the provision of training however, rising training costs require increasing prioritisation and focus on mandatory and regulatory requirements. A total of 394 trainer facilitated events have been delivered covering core areas of social care/social work practice and health and safety.

67 internal staff members have been supported to achieve qualifications across a variety of subject areas including Health and Social Care, Social Work, Team Manager Development Programme, Practice Educator Award, Assessing Decision Making and Trusted Assessor, a further 56 staff are continuing to work towards qualifications.

Significant work has been undertaken to support workforce succession planning. On-line information sessions have been delivered to promote careers in social care/social work in addition to the Council’s Trainee Social Worker Scheme. 2 staff qualified as Social Workers in 2022 and a

further 17 are being supported on social work qualifying training including the Certificate of Higher Education in Social Care Practice which consists of the first two modules of the social work degree.

To promote wider awareness of Dementia as well as careers in social care, initiatives have included the offer of the Dementia Bus experience to all county secondary schools, local Further Education College, Carers, Personal Assistants, Elected Members, and the Council’s Senior Leadership Group.

We seek to innovate and continuously develop our training offer and following a successful pilot scheme have now introduced virtual reality into training delivery. Training on Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Practice now incorporates the use of Virtual Reality Headsets and has received exceptional feedback. This offer will be further developed over the coming years.

In support of the ‘Active Offer’, 18 Social care staff have been supported to undertake Welsh Language courses delivered by the Council’s Work Welsh Tutor. The Welsh Language Awareness e learning module has continued to be promoted with the highest number of completions in a year of 258 internal and 94 external social care staff.

Language profile of our Through Age Workforce:

Porth Cymorth Cynnar:

OVERVIEW	No of People	% of People
Non-Welsh speaking	49	20.85%
Welsh Speaking	186	79.15%
TOTAL	235	100%

GAP	No of People	% of People
GAP in ALTE requirements	83	34.87%
Meets ALTE requirements	154	64.71%
TOTAL	235	100%

PERSON - SPEAKING & LISTENING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	2	15	32	30	66	90	235
% of People	0.85%	6.38%	13.62%	12.77%	28.09%	38.30%	100.00%
PERSON - WRITING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	6	23	39	43	52	72	235
% of People	2.55%	9.79%	16.60%	18.30%	22.13%	30.64%	100.00%
PERSON - READING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	4	22	35	45	48	61	235
% of People	1.70%	9.36%	14.89%	19.15%	20.43%	34.47%	100.00%

Porth Cynnal:

OVERVIEW	No of People	% of People
Non-Welsh speaking	57	52.78%
Welsh Speaking	51	47.22%
TOTAL	108	100%

GAP	No of People	% of People
GAP in ALTE requirements	57	52.78%
OK	50	46.30%
Unknown	1	0.93%
TOTAL	108	100.00%

PERSON - SPEAKING & LISTENING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	3	27	27	15	13	23	108
% of People	2.78%	25.00%	25.00%	13.89%	12.04%	21.30%	100.00%
PERSON - WRITING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	10	31	23	11	13	20	108
% of People	9.26%	28.70%	21.30%	10.19%	12.04%	18.52%	100.00%
PERSON - READING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	10	27	25	9	16	21	108
% of People	9.26%	25.00%	23.15%	8.33%	14.81%	19.44%	100.00%

Porth Gofal:

OVERVIEW	No of People	% of People
Non-Welsh speaking	155	47.84%
Welsh Speaking	169	52.16%
TOTAL	324	100%

GAP	No of People	% of People
GAP in ALTE requirements	165	50.93%
OK	155	47.84%
Unknown	3	0.93%
#MULTIVALUE	1	0.31%
TOTAL	348	100.00%

PERSON - SPEAKING & LISTENING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	29	73	53	66	34	69	324
% of People	8.95%	22.53%	16.36%	20.37%	10.49%	21.30%	100.00%
PERSON - WRITING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	64	69	64	54	28	44	324
% of People	19.75%	21.30%	19.75%	16.67%	8.64%	13.58%	100.00%
PERSON - READING	0	1	2	3	4	5	
No of People	56	65	62	45	43	53	324
% of People	17.28%	20.06%	19.14%	13.89%	13.27%	16.36%	100.00%

Our Financial Resources and How We Plan For the Future -

The Council’s financial settlement from WG for 2022/23 was far better than 2021/22. Overall WG core funding of £119.4m was an 8.9% increase on the previous year, albeit Ceredigion was below the Welsh average of 9.4%.

The Council still had a budget gap due to considerable cost pressures. However, at £1.3m, this was far smaller than in previous years and this was tackled via a corporate approach focussing on Travelling costs, Fees & Charges and Treasury management opportunities. A last minute additional sum from WG in February 2022 through a reopening of the 2021/22 RSG settlement also included a sum of £239k for supporting the Domiciliary Care sector.

With the new Through Age and Wellbeing operating model in place - Porth Gofal, Porth Cynnal and Porth Cymorth Cynnar had a combined 2022/23 Original Budget of £46.7m. This was 28% of the Council’s 2022/23 Original budget of £165.8m (up from 25% in 2021/22). The rising cost of Social Care across the Pyrth Services at c£7.1m was recognised as being a significant part (57%) of the Council’s overall cost pressures of £12.3m for 22/23. Included within the Social Care related cost pressures for 22/23 were:

- The new WG policy to ensure that registered Social Care Workers received the Real Living Wage (£9.90 per hour). This formed a large component of a £2.168m cost for annual inflation uplifts for externally Commissioned Services - which were significant at 8.87% for Domiciliary Care / Supported Living, 9.13% (interim) for Residential Care and 11.15% for Direct Payments.
- The Council invested £857k as a Year 1 pump priming investment in the new staffing structure for the Through Age and Wellbeing model, with a further Year 2 investment of £224k in 23/24 to follow.
- A full external review of Older Persons placement fees was also instigated in January 2022 - undertaken and facilitated by Laing Buisson. This concluded with a further increase on top of the interim 9.13% uplift of between 8.1% and 20.9% across the 4 main fee categories. This resulted in an additional investment of £520k in the sector and the Council’s placement fees being on average the 3rd highest in Wales.
- A £513k investment was also made in the Direct Payments sector by increasing the core hourly rate from £11 to £12.50 per hour, prior to the further impact of the Real Living Wage.
- There was also an emerging trend of significant increases in volumes in the Looked after Children area which necessitated a cost pressure of £743k being recognised

The Council’s 2022/23 final performance was an overall breakeven position, with the Council’s overall financial position remaining positive and resilient. The Pyrth TAW services out-turned with an overspend of £1.577m, which mainly stemmed from Porth Cynnal (£1.650m overspend) which is the higher end part of the TAW model.

Adverse trends included higher in county Looked After Children costs (£295k overspend), increased Older Persons Placement costs (£576k higher than budget) and increased Learning Disability placement costs (£1.056m higher than budgets). A growing use of both professional social worker agency staff and Care Home agency staff was being seen, however in 22/23 this was largely contained from savings elsewhere within TAW services eg. Vacant posts / vacancy drag / Day services. Market supplements are also now being paid for certain Social Worker posts, with this currently being funded from reserves (£198k).

At year end, corporately a sum of £1.0m was set aside into the Creating Caring & Healthy Communities corporate wellbeing objective earmarked reserve. This was linked to a Cabinet decision to in-source a private sector Care Home in Aberystwyth during 2023/24.

Looking forward to 2023/24 and beyond, the financial challenge facing the Council and the Pwrth services remains significant both in terms of cost pressures and the ageing population dynamic. The range of cost pressures facing the Council for 23/24 is some £22m in total (£10.9m of which relates to Pwrth TAW services), equating to an inflation rate of over 13%. Factors within these cost pressures include the £1 increase in the Real Living Wage to £10.90 for Registered Care Workers as well as general staff pay award challenges, further investment needed in the Domiciliary Care sector in readiness for a new tender framework and increasing volumes of Looked after Children both in and out of county as well as increasing volumes of Older Person and Learning Disability placements. There remains a considerable recruitment challenge for professional Social Worker and Care Home roles.

In terms of Capital investment, there is a variety of investment going into Pwrth services. This includes repurposing Leisure facilities into Wellbeing Centres, with Lampeter Wellbeing Centre being the first of these to complete early in 23/24. There is also considerable capital investment going into our Local Authority Care Home infrastructure, including a dementia project at our Hafan Deg Care Home as well new initiatives being progressed for 3 new in County Children facilities, the first of which is due to come on stream towards the end of 2023/24.

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

All services across the Through Age Wellbeing Service work within the legislative, regulatory, policy and guidance framework with partners and stakeholders to ensure our accountability and compliance.

Corporate Governance

- Through Age Wellbeing Programme Board
- Leadership Group
- Healthier Communities Scrutiny Committee
- Overview and Scrutiny Coordination Committee
- Cabinet
- Full Council

External Partnerships

- Welsh Government
- Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Board
- Regional Partnership Board
- National Probation Service
- Care Inspectorate Wales
- Audit Wales
- Public Service Ombudsman Wales
- Social Care Wales

- Association of Director of Social Services Cymru
- Mid and West Wales Adoption Service

The West Wales Care Partnership

Section 14A of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act requires local authorities and Local Health Boards to produce Area Plans setting out the range and level of services that will be provided in their area in response to regional Population Assessments. These Plans must be produced every 5 years and initial plans must be published by 1 April 2019.



The West Wales Area Plan for 2018-23, 'Delivering Change Together', has been agreed by the Regional Partnership Board and endorsed by Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire County Councils and Hywel Dda University Health Board. It includes a series of strategic commitments which the Partnership will take forward over the next five years to support the transformation and integration of care and support in the Region.

Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Board:

CYSUR is the Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Children Board.

CYSUR is an acronym for Child and Youth Safeguarding: Unifying the Region and is also the Welsh word for reassurance.

CYSUR is an amalgamation of the former Local Safeguarding Children Boards in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, and Powys.

CWMPAS is the Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Adults Board.

CWMPAS is an acronym for Collaborative Working and Maintaining Partnership in Adult Safeguarding and is also the Welsh word for scope or remit.



The CWMPAS remit also stretches across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, and Powys

The regional arrangements were established to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

During 2022-23, The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board continued to operate in accordance with its statutory obligations. Ceredigion County Council officers participated fully in the Board’s activities both locally and regionally. Developing creative solutions to some of the significant workforce challenges the social care and the public sector workforce is experiencing at a national level has been another key area of the Boards’ work this year, as well as the implementation of key multi-agency policies and protocols.

The Board’s collaborative response to the continuing challenges, alongside our successes and achievements, have continued to demonstrate the paramount importance of the Regional Safeguarding Boards and their work in the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

6. Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

Title	Location
Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board 2022-2023	 maww-safeguarding-annual-report-2022-23.pdf
Ceredigion CC Carers Unit Annual Report 2021-2022	 Carer's Annual Report 2021-22 (FINAL).pdf
Language Profile of Ceredigion	annual-welsh-language-standards-monitoring-report-2022-23.pdf (ceredigion.gov.uk)
West Wales Regional Partnership Board Regional Carers Strategy	West Wales Carers Strategy 2020-2025 – West Wales Care Partnership (wwcp.org.uk)
West Wales Area Plan for 2018-23, ‘Delivering Change Together’	http://www.wwcp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/West-Wales-Area-Plan-English-Final-Version-29-03-18.pdf
Through Age and Well-being Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2027	PowerPoint Presentation (ceredigion.gov.uk) 20211001-taw-strategy-action-plan-final-approved.pdf (ceredigion.gov.uk)
Statutory Director of Social Services Annual Report 2020-2021	https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/13425/2021-2020-annual-report.pdf
Statutory Director of Social Services Annual Report 2021-2022	https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/media/13426/2022-2021-annual-report.pdf

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CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 22 November 2023

Title: To present to Committee the outcome of the Ceredigion Respite & Day Services Initiative through transforming day services (older people, learning disability, Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities and Autism) and Respite provision (Through Age)

Purpose of the report: To scrutinise the outcome of the public engagement and the Action Plan developed and make recommendations if required to Ceredigion County Council Cabinet.

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:
To scrutinise the report and the Action Plan and make recommendations if required to Ceredigion County Council Cabinet.

Background

Cabinet approved on the 6th of December 2022 that we progress with a wider engagement and consultation in 2023 focusing on the re-design of Respite and Day Opportunities. The engagement and consultation embedded the key principles of the Through Age Wellbeing (TAW) Strategy alongside National and Regional Strategies relating to Learning Disabilities, Children Looked After and Respite opportunities on a Through Age basis.

The review focused on the following key areas: -

- Day Service opportunities for Older Adults including those living with a diagnosis of dementia
- Day Service opportunities for Individuals living with a learning disability, autism, and profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD)
- Transition pathways on a through age basis for those living with a learning disability/ autism
- Respite provision (day and residential) on a through age basis

An extensive public engagement and consultation took place between March – August 2023, undertaken by an independent Company (Practice Solutions Limited) which was funded through Regional Integrated Funding (RIF).

The review forms part of the Council's work to deliver the Through Age Wellbeing Strategy and action plan 2021-2027, which was agreed at Council in October 2021. Practice Solutions Ltd. were commissioned to support the council's consultation approach to transforming services, undertake desktop research and deliver independent engagement activities that underpin this report.

A mixed methods approach was used in the review. A desktop exercise analysing reports on local services was undertaken, as was a review of legislation relating to person centred planning and the duties placed on organisations to ensure the wellbeing of future generations.

A wide range of stakeholders were engaged in the work, including people that access respite and day opportunities, families and carers, service delivery organisations, council employees working in social care and day opportunity centres, health employees and people with learning disabilities, dementia, children and young people and those with complex needs. A survey was distributed widely to those using services their families and other unpaid carers council staff and staff in the council's partner organisations.

A consultation survey was initiated through the council website and was open to the general public throughout the engagement period with 205 responses. Alongside that, Practice Solutions engaged with 206 people in person, both face to face and online. In total, 411 people total took part in the review.

Having completed the engagement and desktop exercises the data were analysed and the following key findings were identified. From these key findings a number of recommendations have been developed, for the council to consider. The recommendations are set out below:

Key Findings of the review

The views expressed by participants in the review identified virtually all issues highlighted in the ADSS Cymru national review which was completed early this year. Many of the issues faced within Ceredigion are common to many local authorities in Wales. However, some issues mentioned in the national review were not raised within the Ceredigion review. Most notable in the issues that did not generate much discussion was the use of video technology, social media and communication Apps to augment day opportunity services. In some areas these approaches enabled the creation of WhatsApp groups for service users and carers to continue to meet outside formal services.

The key findings of the Ceredigion review fall into several themes. Many of them are replicated across age and client groups but some were more specific to individual client groups. The key themes are therefore set out below using headings. Unless specified they are common throughout services.

The Importance of day occupation and respite services

Day opportunity and respite services were universally perceived as vital in meeting the social, occupational and activity needs of those people using them. They were also identified as being critical in enabling unpaid carers to continue to provide their essential role. Without the services carers would struggle to care and without unpaid carers services would not be able to plug this gap. This would likely lead to many people needing statutory service interventions particularly among those people with complex needs.

The impact of COVID-19

Similarly, to authorities across Wales and the UK services were significantly impacted by the pandemic. Many had to close or restrict services and some people, especially those living in supported housing were reported to have lost their services due to the prioritisation of those who were unsupported. Services have not returned to pre COVID-19 levels and some people who left services have not returned. The national review found that this was widespread across Wales with some services using augmentations such as video conferencing and support outside place-based services were used to plug gaps. Many initiatives that had been previously planned were brought forward by some local authorities to address the need for continuing support. Many places in Wales have retained these approaches as part of a service redesign.

Complexity and stratified need

Throughout the review a comment that frequently emerged was that one size does not fit all. This reflects both people's individuality in needs and tastes and the fact that a high level of complexity exists in the care needs and arrangements for some people. Among people requiring services a spectrum of needs exists, which requires a stratified response.

Commentary in the national review strongly suggested that complexity is increasing for a variety of reasons, and this is impacting on the demand for services and the capacity of services to meet need.

Within Ceredigion descriptions were given of people having become more frail during lockdown and more anxious about using services for fear of contamination. These issues are not unique to Ceredigion but were reported across the country. These factors and the increasing complexity of need demonstrates further the need for person centredness and the necessity to prioritise those in greatest need and their unpaid carers.

Transport

An issue that was continuously addressed by stakeholders was that of transport. The national review highlighted the necessity for transport and the impact of COVID-19 and its social distancing and the recent escalation in fuel prices on the availability and suitability of existing transport. It highlighted the centrality of these issues in rural communities. The evidence gathered in the Ceredigion review bore this out.

This was a live topic for participants who see transport as the fulcrum on which access to services swings. Several potential solutions were offered by different groups. These will need to be considered possibly by means of a formal strategy reflecting the needs of different individuals and groups to find workable solutions to this challenge.

Staffing

The availability of staffing was raised as an issue by all sectors. In the third sector problems these were described as having been worsened by the necessity due to financial pressures to introduce short term and zero hours contracts. This has led to staff leaving and risks that further staff may leave. Social Worker availability was reported as leading to a lack of continuity in care for people using services and reduced liaison with unpaid carers and staff in other agencies. Staffing problems were highlighted in the national report and the issues identified nationally are evident in Ceredigion.

Having access to well trained, committed staff is vital to enable post COVID service recovery and to assist with service redesign. Some of the improvements some stakeholders sought are dependent on an available workforce. This may require the necessity to review the multiagency workforce and the application of prudent health and social care approaches to maximise the utility of the combined workforce.

The national report was informed that the workforce was universally perceived to be an asset in the transformation of services but that members of the workforce can be a barrier to change. It identified that some staff may need additional support in change management training and training in the application of person centeredness and co-production. Ceredigion may need to consider these issues as they consider service transformation.

Service alignment

The staff that engaged with the event had a great deal of mutual respect. However, they believed that delivery of services could be improved and more efficient if the agencies and staff worked more closely together. Several suggestions were made these include third sector organisations utilising council buildings when not in use, greater use of commissioned services from the third sector, provision of health and personal care in some day opportunity settings, a greater unified approach to paid employment opportunities by working together as employers and with employers and joint approaches to the use of other community facilities.

Communication

This was an issue for all participant groups. Some felt that communication has suffered during the pandemic both between agencies and between those using services, their carers and the services themselves.

Communication specific to the introduction of the proposals was highlighted. Some staff felt that they would have preferred to have been engaged sooner. For some the proposals were not known about until their involvement in this review. However, all sectors welcomed their involvement in the review and the communication that this has facilitated. Moreover, they are committed to participation and want to continue to be involved as the process moves on. Some people were, however, sceptical as to whether the Council will genuinely listen to their views and concerns.

Some people identified fora and advocacy that previously existed having weakened in recent times. These it was felt could be revisited and reinvigorated to enable people such as carers, people using services and staff to have their say.

The introduction of new phone lines by the council drew criticism from agencies that work in partnership with it. People described long waits to get through and engaging with call handlers who were not as aware of services as individual practitioners are and with whom staff in other agencies previously had close working relationships.

Direct Payments

Direct payments were referenced by many groups. They were viewed positively in their ability to allow greater flexibility, the tailoring of provision to individual needs and greater choice. However, they were seen by many to be overly complicated and with little support for people to manage their administration. Furthermore, a shortage of personal assistants to employ with direct payments significantly impacts on their potential benefits within the current employment climate.

Ceredigion County Council service redesign proposals

Views among review participants on the proposals to reform services were mixed. Some people welcomed the proposals, recognising the need for reform to respond to a more community-based service offering and meeting the needs of changing and future demand. Others were sceptical about their workability most significantly through age care and the mixing of client groups within the same environment. These concerns focussed predominantly on the necessity for specific skills to work with specific client groups and potential safeguarding issues. Many who were sceptical were not opposed but felt that such changes would need to be carefully managed.

Broadly speaking people wanted more information and detail on how the proposals would be designed and how the changes would be introduced. Ensuring the input of people using services,

their unpaid carers and staff in all relevant organisations could be facilitated within consultation exercises and would be likely to assist in addressing uncertainty and people's concerns.

The expansion of the range of activities was broadly welcomed but all parties believed that this should be driven by service user choice and the application of person-centred planning.

On balance, most agreed that having more activities centred around meaningful opportunities which develop life skills employment and potentially paid employment would be very positive. Such activities offered before the pandemic should be prioritised and expanded in the future. Extending hours was welcomed but many groups did not want this to be at the expense of core service hours.

Hub and spoke models

During the national review the concept of hub and spoke services were frequently discussed. Many of the issues raised in these discussions chime with those issues raised in Ceredigion most notably the use of a mix of place-based, day service support and access to community facilities. The hub and spoke model, which uses the day centre as a community resource connected with other community facilities, offers a blend of place based and community opportunities to people using day opportunity and respite services. Exploring these models may significantly support the expressed choice by service users and their families to a blended approach to meeting need. The availability of the hub allows people with complex personal care needs and some behavioural challenges to have some aspects of their support provided in an environment that protects their privacy and dignity supported by the availability of the necessary aids and adaptations.

Person centred planning (PCP)

Wales specific legislation, most notably the SSWBA and the MHM together with strategy and policy, embrace the principles of PCP and for some people make it a statutory duty. The provision of voice and choice can be dependent on the use of PCP. Moreover, many of the discussions concerning the expansion of the range of activities and the places in which these should take place can be addressed by the application of PCP. Some staff stated that PCP is already in use. However, national reviews of SSWBA and the MHM have questioned the quality overall of Care and Support Plans and Care and Treatment Plans. Keeping PCP under review to ensure quality could therefore reap benefits both in terms of ensuring tailored packages for individuals and informing change management processes.

One issue highlighted in the national review when considering peoples individual plans was that of the needs of the person using services and their unpaid carers not always entirely aligning. The benefits accrued from day opportunities and respite for the unpaid carer are often expressed as providing respite for them. Allowing them to work, undertake their critical tasks and to have some time for themselves including the opportunity to meet with other unpaid carers.

However, when planning revised service offers that may not offer the duration, frequency, or location of support for those using services but based upon their wishes, can create tension between services, staff and in particular unpaid carers. This is not easily resolved but the need to plan in the best interests of the service user is vital and where service revision leads to some of these changes careful planning and engagement of both the service user and their carer will be necessary. If this impacts on unpaid carers their needs should also be appropriately addressed and assessed. The review found that currently this is not always the case.

People with dementia and memory loss

This group of people felt they were underserved by council services. As services are developed their preference is to receive support in non-stigmatised, community-based facilities with the ability to pre plan respite.

Adults with learning disabilities

Many people within this group stressed the importance of routine, continuity of support, and the need for a calm environment.

Children and Young people

Children and young people were clear that their preference is for activities that support skills development, are activity based and make use of community resources. They also do not want to be prevented from undertaking some activities that children not in the care of the local authority can participate in for example trampolining.

Young People in Transition

This group expressed a strong desire to have their needs and changing circumstances to be addressed earlier in their pathway of care to prevent gaps in support and the need to struggle to access adult services as they leave young adulthood and move into services directed at working age adults.

Change of name for some day centre facilities.

Almost half of respondents 43% expressed no opinion on this matter. Of those that did, a small majority 25% opposed the idea. It should not be assumed that those that did not respond did not oppose the idea.

If the Council wishes to proceed in making a name change to reenforce proposed changes of use and an expansion of its service offer and they wish to work with a mandate from the local population, those using services and their families, they will need to re-cavass opinion.

The need for change

Increasing complexity among service users, the impact of the pandemic, the impact of the cost of fuel, food and resources generally, the availability of staff both professionally affiliated and non-affiliated, changes in the appetite from service users to use more community-based services and community assets in addition to place-based services, transport challenges, the need for greater agency alignment between social care NHS and third sector services all strongly suggest a need to reform service provision in Ceredigion. These same factors were identified in other parts of Wales as drivers for change.

Staff are the single greatest asset in the planning and delivery of services and unpaid carers provide the foundation and core relationships that sustain those served within day occupation and respite services. It is imperative therefore that staff and unpaid carers work in tandem with the council and its partners as they work to overcome the challenges services face. This requires that they remain part of the process and are truly heard.

Paramount however are the needs and wishes, choices and voices of those who use services. They must be engaged in an ongoing dialogue to ensure that genuinely person-centred planning

is used to meet their needs in an environment that enables them to grow and to meet their full potential.

Furthermore, as required by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 the council and its partner agencies must ensure as they plan and take forward those service reforms deemed necessary that they are considering the needs of those who will require services in the future and that these services are efficient, effective, evidence based, and sustainable.

Recommendations

1. Ceredigion County Council should pursue its plans to revise the provision of day opportunity and respite services drawing upon this report and its accompanying action plan.
2. The Council should consider developing the role of a transformation lead to oversee and drive the change management and implementation processes.
3. Ceredigion County Council should work with its partner agencies including the NHS and third sector service providers to ensure that any efficiencies that may be gained by joint operational and strategic planning may be attained. This will need to include the consideration of innovative approaches to resource sharing.
4. Ceredigion County Council should review its person-centred planning processes to ensure that these are effective, not overly bureaucratic and genuinely capture and promote service user voices and choices in individually tailored plans and in line with any statutory duties enshrined in the SSWBA and the Mental Health Measures. All people using these services should have a high-quality person-centred plan. Where necessary it should review the care and support plans of those people impacted by service changes introduced during the pandemic. The reform should address as a priority, groups such as those with dementia, carers and foster carers for whom services have been identified as underdeveloped.
5. Ceredigion County Council needs to ensure that as service reform impacts upon provision that the needs of families and other unpaid carers are addressed with meaningful assessments and the provision of adequate support.
6. Ceredigion County Council together with its partners should consider adopting a hub and spoke model which utilises service centres as community hubs whilst drawing upon a range of community facilities to provide day opportunities that can provide those activities that people would like to access as close to their homes as possible. This should include supporting and enabling people to access paid employment and formal learning where appropriate.
7. Ceredigion County Council, together with its partners, should develop a transport strategy that ensures that the most efficient methods are used to enable access to day opportunity and respite services. This will need to consider public and private transport together with Council provided transport.
8. In pursuing its reform agenda, the Council will need to engage with service users, carers, council staff and those working in other agencies via formal and informal consultation. Fora previously used to engage these groups should be reviewed and where appropriate reinstated to enable the processes of partnership working in the delivery of the agreed Action Plan.
9. The Council should consider canvassing opinion on the proposal to rename its day centres as part of its wider consultation on service reform.

A fundamental element of delivering the action plan, will be to ensure that the Welsh language is an integral element.

Next Steps

- Present to Healthier Ceredigion Strategic Group and create an integrated Health, Social Care and 3rd Sector Development Group to oversee the delivery of the Action Plan.
- Communicate the initial findings of the review with the key stakeholders including service users, staff, families, carers, public and 3rd sector organisation.
- Develop a resource schedule and robust programme plan to support and ensure that capacity is identified to lead on this significant transformation programme.
- Development of a robust engagement and communication plan, supporting and providing opportunities for clients and carers groups to become actively involved in redesign of the new models and pathways.
- To work with the Unions in developing a staff representative group to engage and participate in exploring and developing the new ways of working.
- To return to the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an Annual Progress report.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why.

Yes attached.

Summary: The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies across Wales, named in the Act, to work towards achieving seven well-being goals including: -

- A Wales of cohesive Communities - Attractive, safe, viable and well-connected
- A more Equal Wales – A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic circumstances)
- A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language - A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage, and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation

- A healthier Wales – ‘A society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood’.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: The Local Authorities Through Age Wellbeing Strategy sets out the vision for the next 10 years. Alongside this there are several National and Regional strategies that provide short and long-term targets and measures that will need to be considered as part of the consultation.

Collaboration: Collaboration between partners and stakeholders will be at the heart of the consultation and the action plan. The main collaboration will be between public sector colleagues including the Hywel Dda University Health Board, Third Sector organisations and officers from across the Authority.

Involvement: Stakeholders and partners will be involved throughout the planning and consultation period.

Prevention: The consultation will include prevention opportunity through exploring wider respite opportunities to support un-paid carers.

Integration: The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places new requirements on all organisations that commission and provide care. The West Wales Care Partnership is working together to respond to those requirements, improving services and joining them up as far as possible so they deliver the best outcomes for our citizens.

The action plan is an integrated plan.

Recommendation(s):

Report for information and agreement on any recommendations to Cabinet prior to approval.

Reasons for decision:

To enable the Authority to progress with the re-design of respite and day opportunities in line with the Through Age Wellbeing Strategy and National drivers for change.

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Designation: Corporate Lead Officer - Porth Gofal

Date of Report: 1 November 2023

Acronyms:



CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Review of Respite and Day Opportunities

Report v5.1

Practice Solutions Ltd
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Executive Summary

Ceredigion County Council is undertaking a review of day and respite services. This is being done to ensure that the Council best meets the needs of current and future service users. The work undertaken by Attain on behalf of Ceredigion County Council to develop its Dementia Engagement and Service implementation Plan Project, predicts a significant increase in the number of people living within the County with a dementia due to its ageing population. Furthermore, a review conducted by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) identified within Wales, an increase in the complexity of those requiring social care support due to several factors. This increase in both anticipated incidence of dementia and increasing levels of complexity among children, adults and older adults, contributed to the need for the Council to undertake this review and develop an action plan to address changing needs.

The review forms part of the Council's work to deliver their [Through Age Wellbeing Strategy](#) and action plan 2021-2027, which was agreed at Council in October 2021. Practice Solutions Ltd. were commissioned to support the council's consultation approach to transforming services, undertake desktop research and deliver independent engagement activities that underpin this report.

A mixed methods approach was used in the review. A desktop exercise analysing reports on local services was undertaken, as was a review of legislation relating to person centred planning and the duties placed on organisations to ensure the wellbeing of future generations.

A wide range of stakeholders were engaged in the work, including people that access respite and day opportunities, families and carers, service delivery organisations, council employees working in social care and day opportunity centres, health employees and people with learning disabilities, dementia, children and young people and those with complex needs. A survey was distributed widely to those using services their families and other unpaid carers council staff and staff in the council's partner organisations.

A consultation survey was initiated through the council website and was open to the general public throughout the engagement period with 205 responses. Alongside that, Practice Solutions engaged with 206 people in person, both face to face and online. In total, 411 people total took part in the review.

Having completed the engagement and desktop exercises the data were analysed and the following key findings were identified. From these key findings a number of recommendations have been developed, for the council to consider. The recommendations are set out below:

Key Findings

The views expressed by participants in the review identified virtually all issues highlighted in the ADSS Cymru national review. Many of the issues faced within Ceredigion are common to many local authorities in Wales. However, some issues mentioned in the national review were not raised within the Ceredigion review. Most notable in the issues that did not generate much discussion was the use of video technology, social media and communication Apps to augment day opportunity services. In some areas these approaches enabled the creation of WhatsApp groups for service users and carers to continue to meet outside formal services.

The key findings of the Ceredigion review fall into several themes. Many of them are replicated across age and client groups but some were more specific to individual client groups. The key themes are therefore set out below using headings. Unless specified they are common throughout services.

The Importance of day occupation and respite services

Day opportunity and respite services were universally perceived as vital in meeting the social, occupational and activity needs of those people using them. They were also identified as being critical in enabling unpaid carers to continue to provide their essential role. Without the services carers would struggle to care and without unpaid carers services would not be able to plug this gap. This would likely lead to many people needing statutory service interventions particularly among those people with complex needs.

The impact of COVID-19

Similarly, to authorities across Wales and the UK services were significantly impacted by the pandemic. Many had to close or restrict services and some people, especially those living in supported housing were reported to have lost their services due to the prioritisation of those who were unsupported. Services have not returned to pre COVID-19 levels and some people who left services have not returned. The national review found that this was widespread across Wales with some services using augmentations such as video conferencing and support outside place-based services were used to plug gaps. Many initiatives that had been previously planned were brought forward by some local authorities to address the need for continuing support. Many places in Wales have retained these approaches as part of a service redesign.

Complexity and stratified need

Throughout the review a comment that frequently emerged was that one size does not fit all. This reflects both people's individuality in needs and tastes and the fact that a high level of complexity exists in the care needs and arrangements for some people. Among people requiring services a spectrum of needs exists, which requires a stratified response.

Commentary in the national review strongly suggested that complexity is increasing for a variety of reasons, and this is impacting on the demand for services and the capacity of services to meet need.

Within Ceredigion descriptions were given of people having become more frail during lockdown and more anxious about using services for fear of contamination. These issues are not unique to Ceredigion but were reported across the country. These factors and the increasing complexity of need demonstrates further the need for person centredness and the necessity to prioritise those in greatest need and their unpaid carers.

Transport

An issue that was continuously addressed by stakeholders was that of transport. The national review highlighted the necessity for transport and the impact of COVID-19 and its social distancing and the recent escalation in fuel prices on the availability and suitability of existing transport. It highlighted the centrality of these issues in rural communities. The evidence gathered in the Ceredigion review bore this out.

This was a live topic for participants who see transport as the fulcrum on which access to services swings. Several potential solutions were offered by different groups. These will need to be considered possibly by means of a formal strategy reflecting the needs of different individuals and groups to find workable solutions to this challenge.

Staffing

The availability of staffing was raised as an issue by all sectors. In the third sector problems were described as having been worsened by the necessity due to financial pressures to introduce short term and zero hours contracts. This has led to staff leaving and risks that further staff may leave. Social Worker availability was reported as leading to a lack of continuity in care for people using services and reduced liaison with unpaid carers and staff in other agencies. Staffing problems were highlighted in the national report and the issues identified nationally are evident in Ceredigion.

Having access to well trained, committed staff is vital to enable post COVID service recovery and to assist with service redesign. Some of the improvements some stakeholders sought are dependent on an available workforce. This may require the necessity to review the multiagency workforce and the application of prudent health and social care approaches to maximise the utility of the combined workforce.

The national report was informed that the workforce was universally perceived to be an asset in the transformation of services but that members of the workforce can be a barrier to change. It identified that some staff may need additional support in change management training and training in the application of person centeredness and co-production. Ceredigion may need to consider these issues as they consider service transformation.

Service alignment

The staff that engaged with the event had a great deal of mutual respect. However, they believed that delivery of services could be improved and more efficient if the agencies and staff worked more closely together. Several suggestions were made these include third sector organisations utilising council buildings when not in use, greater use of commissioned services from the third sector, provision of health and personal care in some day opportunity settings, a greater unified approach to paid employment opportunities by working together as employers and with employers and joint approaches to the use of other community facilities.

Communication

This was an issue for all participant groups. Some felt that communication has suffered during the pandemic both between agencies and between those using services, their carers and the services themselves.

Communication specific to the introduction of the proposals was highlighted. Some staff felt that they would have preferred to have been engaged sooner. For some the proposals were not known about until their involvement in this review. However, all sectors welcomed their involvement in the review and the communication that this has facilitated. Moreover, they are committed to participation and want to continue to be involved as the process moves on. Some people were, however, sceptical as to whether the Council will genuinely listen to their views and concerns.

Some people identified fora and advocacy that previously existed having weakened in recent times. These it was felt could be revisited and reinvigorated to enable people such as carers, people using services and staff to have their say.

The introduction of new phone lines by the council drew criticism from agencies that work in partnership with it. People described long waits to get through and engaging with call handlers who were not as aware of services as individual practitioners are and with whom staff in other agencies previously had close working relationships.

Direct Payments

Direct payments were referenced by many groups. They were viewed positively in their ability to allow greater flexibility, the tailoring of provision to individual needs and greater choice. However, they were seen by many to be overly complicated and with little support for people to manage their administration. Furthermore, a shortage of personal assistants to employ with direct payments significantly impacts on their potential benefits within the current employment climate.

Ceredigion County Council service redesign proposals

Views among review participants on the proposals to reform services were mixed. Some people welcomed the proposals, recognising the need for reform to respond to a more community-based service offering and

meeting the needs of changing and future demand. Others were sceptical about their workability most significantly through age care and the mixing of client groups within the same environment. These concerns focussed predominantly on the necessity for specific skills to work with specific client groups and potential safeguarding issues. Many who were sceptical were not opposed but felt that such changes would need to be carefully managed.

Broadly speaking people wanted more information and detail on how the proposals would be designed and how the changes would be introduced. Ensuring the input of people using services, their unpaid carers and staff in all relevant organisations could be facilitated within consultation exercises and would be likely to assist in addressing uncertainty and people's concerns.

The expansion of the range of activities was broadly welcomed but all parties believed that this should be driven by service user choice and the application of person-centred planning.

On balance, most agreed that having more activities centred around meaningful opportunities which develop life skills employment and potentially paid employment would be very positive. Such activities offered before the pandemic should be prioritised and expanded in the future. Extending hours was welcomed but many groups did not want this to be at the expense of core service hours.

Hub and spoke models

During the national review the concept of hub and spoke services were frequently discussed. Many of the issues raised in these discussions chime with those issues raised in Ceredigion most notably the use of a mix of place-based, day service support and access to community facilities. The hub and spoke model, which uses the day centre as a community resource connected with other community facilities, offers a blend of place based and community opportunities to people using day opportunity and respite services. Exploring these models may significantly support the expressed choice by service users and their families to a blended approach to meeting need. The availability of the hub allows people with complex personal care needs and some behavioural challenges to have some aspects of their support provided in an environment that protects their privacy and dignity supported by the availability of the necessary aids and adaptations.

Person centred planning (PCP)

Wales specific legislation, most notably the SSWBA and the MHM together with strategy and policy, embrace the principles of PCP and for some people make it a statutory duty. The provision of voice and choice can be dependent on the use of PCP. Moreover, many of the discussions concerning the expansion of the range of activities and the places in which these should take place can be addressed by the application of PCP. Some staff stated that PCP is already in use. However, national reviews of SSWBA and the MHM have questioned the quality overall of Care and Support Plans and Care and Treatment Plans. Keeping PCP under review to ensure quality could therefore reap benefits both in terms of ensuring tailored packages for individuals and informing change management processes.

One issue highlighted in the national review when considering peoples individual plans was that of the needs of the person using services and their unpaid carers not always entirely aligning. The benefits accrued from day opportunities and respite for the unpaid carer are often expressed as providing respite for them. Allowing them to work, undertake their critical tasks and to have some time for themselves including the opportunity to meet with other unpaid carers.

However, when planning revised service offers that may not offer the duration, frequency, or location of support for those using services but based upon their wishes, can create tension between services, staff and in particular unpaid carers. This is not easily resolved but the need to plan in the best interests of the service user is vital and where service revision leads to some of these changes careful planning and engagement of both the service user and their carer will be necessary. If this impacts on unpaid carers their

needs should also be appropriately addressed and assessed. The review found that currently this is not always the case.

People with dementia and memory loss

This group of people felt they were underserved by council services. As services are developed their preference is to receive support in non-stigmatised, community-based facilities with the ability to pre plan respite

Adults with learning disabilities

Many people within this group stressed the importance of routine, continuity of support, and the need for a calm environment.

Children and Young people

Children and young people were clear that their preference is for activities that support skills development, are activity based and make use of community resources. They also do not want to be prevented from undertaking some activities that children not in the care of the local authority can participate in for example trampolining.

Young People in Transition

This group expressed a strong desire to have their needs and changing circumstances to be addressed earlier in their pathway of care to prevent gaps in support and the need to struggle to access adult services as they leave young adulthood and move into services directed at working age adults.

Change of name for some day centre facilities.

Almost half of respondents 43% expressed no opinion on this matter. Of those that did, a small majority 25% opposed the idea. It should not be assumed that those that did not respond did not oppose the idea.

If the Council wishes to proceed in making a name change to reinforce proposed changes of use and an expansion of its service offer and they wish to work with a mandate from the local population, those using services and their families, they will need to re-cavass opinion.

The need for change

Increasing complexity among service users, the impact of the pandemic, the impact of the cost of fuel, food and resources generally, the availability of staff both professionally affiliated and non-affiliated, changes in the appetite from service users to use more community-based services and community assets in addition to place-based services, transport challenges, the need for greater agency alignment between social care NHS and third sector services all strongly suggest a need to reform service provision in Ceredigion. These same factors were identified in other parts of Wales as drivers for change.

Staff are the single greatest asset in the planning and delivery of services and unpaid carers provide the foundation and core relationships that sustain those served within day occupation and respite services. It is imperative therefore that staff and unpaid carers work in tandem with the council and its partners as they work to overcome the challenges services face. This requires that they remain part of the process and are truly heard.

Paramount however are the needs and wishes, choices and voices of those who use services. They must be engaged in an ongoing dialogue to ensure that genuinely person-centred planning is used to meet their needs in an environment that enables them to grow and to meet their full potential.

Furthermore, as required by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 the council and its partner agencies must ensure as they plan and take forward those service reforms deemed necessary that they are

considering the needs of those who will require services in the future and that these services are efficient, effective, evidence based, and sustainable.

Recommendations

1. Ceredigion County Council should pursue its plans to revise the provision of day opportunity and respite services drawing upon this report and its accompanying action plan.
2. The Council should consider developing the role of a transformation lead to oversee to drive the change management and implementation processes.
3. Ceredigion County Council should work with its partner agencies including the NHS and third sector service providers to ensure that any efficiencies that may be gained by joint operational and strategic planning may be attained. This will need to include the consideration of innovative approaches to resource sharing.
4. Ceredigion County Council should review its person-centred planning processes to ensure that these are effective, not overly bureaucratic and genuinely capture and promote service user voices and choices in individually tailored plans and in line with any statutory duties enshrined in the SSWBA and the MHM. All people using these services should have a high-quality person-centred plan. Where necessary it should review the care and support plans of those people impacted by service changes introduced during the pandemic. The reform should address as a priority, groups such as those with dementia, carers and foster carers for whom services have been identified as underdeveloped.
5. Ceredigion County Council needs to ensure that as service reform impacts upon provision that the needs of families and other unpaid carers are addressed with meaningful assessments and the provision of adequate support.
6. Ceredigion County Council together with its partners should consider adopting a hub and spoke model which utilises service centres as community hubs whilst drawing upon a range of community facilities to provide day opportunities that can provide those activities that people would like to access as close to their homes as possible. This should include supporting and enabling people to access paid employment and formal learning where appropriate.
7. Ceredigion County Council, together with its partners, should develop a transport strategy that ensures that the most efficient methods are used to enable access to day opportunity and respite services. This will need to consider public and private transport together with Council provided transport.
8. In pursuing its reform agenda, the Council will need to engage with service users, carers, council staff and those working in other agencies via formal and informal consultation. Fora previously used to engage these groups should be reviewed and where appropriate reinstated to enable the processes of partnership working in the delivery of the agreed Action Plan.
9. The Council should consider canvassing opinion on the proposal to rename its day centres as part of its wider consultation on service reform.

Introduction

Ceredigion County Council is undertaking a review of day and respite services. This is being done to ensure that the Council best meets the needs of current and future service users. It is part of the Council's work to deliver their [Through Age Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2027](#) and its accompanying action plan. These were agreed at Council in October 2021. The strategy aims to deliver services that will enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being for the people of Ceredigion. A key priority is to enable individual and family resilience.

Action 4.2.5 within the Action plan sets the intention to review the range of respite provision for through age, day provision, residential care and third sector provision, in order to develop a plan for future services according to a *through-age* model. The intention is to ensure that there is a range of **appropriate respite support** available to maintain independence and support for carers, reducing the need for longer term care and support services.

Whilst the Ceredigion, Through Age Wellbeing Strategy, covers a range of client groups it is important to note related work taking place in services for those people with a learning disability. This includes, the recently published Welsh Government [Learning and Disability Delivery and Implementation Plan 2022-26](#), and an ADSS Cymru review of Learning disability services in Wales as outlined in more detail.

'Day Opportunity Services' include:

- Activities that take place during weekday, daytime hours at designated centres across Ceredigion.
- People having access to a support worker who takes them out to undertake activities.
- Accessing events, training, social activities, and other types of programmes in the community

'Breaks for adults / Respite for carers' includes:

- Residential stays in a care home
- Day activities including sitting services, going out with a carer / direct payment that give carers a chance to have a break from the caring role

'Short Breaks' includes:

- Going to activities that include overnight stays
- Visiting local places within Ceredigion
- Staying in a hotel, residential home or self-catering accommodation
- Visiting places outside of Ceredigion such as the countryside or city breaks
- Spending time with people of similar age or with similar interests, or with friends

Purpose of the report

This report describes what people living in Ceredigion would like to happen with day and respite services in the future. It describes the views of residents in Ceredigion – both those who use services now and those who might use services in the future. We heard from people of all different ages and who have a wide variety of needs and interests. We learnt more about the types of activities people would like to take part in, what they like about services now, and changes that they would make going forwards.

We considered legislation and policy that directs how people's care should be planned and delivered and considered the findings of national approaches such as the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) report which explored the factors influencing the future direction for respite and day opportunity services.

Using the views expressed by people in Ceredigion together with a desktop analysis of factors influencing practice, a number of conclusions have been established and recommendations made to Ceredigion County Council for consideration of what should happen in the future.

Background

The Council has traditionally offered a range of support services to people according to either their age group or their needs. For example, the three-day centres Canolfan Meugan, Canolfan Steffan and Canolfan Padarn are for adults with learning disabilities during regular weekday hours.

The Council also offers support to children through schools and to young people of transition age through the Camu M'laen service, play schemes and short breaks.

Other examples of day and respite care services include people with dementia accessing respite care in a residential home.

The impacts of Covid

During the Covid pandemic, delivery of usual services was suspended due to national restrictions and a virtual platform was established offering welfare calls to vulnerable residents. Staff provided guidance, support, and advice during that time, as well as working alongside schools to support families. People living in supported accommodation were offered support from their homes. A resource list was kept active on the internet via the Council website to make residents aware of sources of support.

Since the easing of Covid restrictions, most services have re-opened, including some day service provision and respite services. However, not all services have re-opened, and this has created challenges across communities around service provision.

The [Through Age Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2027](#) sets out the key priorities for Ceredigion County Council. The aim is to '*enable the delivery of services that will enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being for the people of Ceredigion.*'

Key components are:

- Providing early help and support to prevent deterioration
- A focus on developing skills that support independence and wellbeing
- Providing easy access to information, advice and assistance based on need

The Through Age Well-being programme was established in 2021. It consists of four services:

- **Clïc:** online and telephone support, information, and assessment
- **Porth Cymorth Cynnar:** early help and wellbeing services

- **Porth Gofal:** Assessment and specific support such as home care and direct payments, fostering, day and residential care. Porth Gofal is a partnership between the local authority, Hywel Dda UHB and third sector organisations. A multidisciplinary team offers support to individuals – focusing on promoting independence
- **Porth Cynnal:** a service for people of all ages with complex needs who receive planned care

The Council has been thinking about the best ways to meet more people's needs.

On 6 December 2022, the Cabinet approved a decision that the Council should undertake a wider consultation in 2023 focused on the re-design of Day Services and Respite provision. Councillor Alun Williams, Ceredigion County Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Through Age Wellbeing said

“Things have changed a lot in recent years. So, it's a good time to consult again with our service users and carers to see how we can best help in the modern world. We are committed to improving the lives of all our vulnerable people in the county. We think the best way to do that is to help people to live as independently as they are able to, whilst providing excellent services when they need it.”

Following this the Council contracted Practice Solutions Ltd. to provide independent expertise around engagement and consultation with stakeholders and support the review of day and respite opportunities.

Review Methodology

The approach undertaken by Practice Solutions used a range of approaches to reach its conclusions and to formulate its recommendations.

These included:

- Desktop analysis of local reports into local service provision
- Gathering details on key stakeholders and access to engagement participants
- Production of a survey, its dissemination to participants, collation of responses and analysis
- Holding a number of engagement events, face to face, using video conferencing and telephone calls.
- Gathering additional written material from the people we spoke with.
- Analysis of the ADSS national report and the most relevant legislative and policy changes that effect the way person centred planning is carried out.
- All of the information gathered was analysed in order to produce this report.

The Council asked us to make recommendations about what actions can be taken to support the development of day and respite services. Once we had looked at all the evidence and considered what would be most helpful, we agreed on a list of recommendations and finished writing our independent report. It will be given to the Council for consideration alongside a developed action plan to be considered around the next steps.

Wider policy context

We have outlined the broad national policy context that this review takes place in ensuring our recommendations are underpinned by the policy areas outlined below.

The Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities, and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

The Act establishes 7 wellbeing goals and 5 ways of working. This approach underpins our understanding and context of this review. The wellbeing goals are:

- A Prosperous Wales
- A Resilient Wales
- A More Equal Wales
- A Healthier Wales
- A Wales of Cohesive Communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

The five ways of working are:

- **Long-term:** The importance of balancing short-term needs with the needs to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
- **Integration:** Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies
- **Involvement:** The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves
- **Collaboration:** Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
- **Prevention:** How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6 April 2016. The fundamental principles of the Act are:

- Voice and control – putting the individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control overreaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being.
- Prevention and early intervention – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need.
- Well-being – supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support.
- Co-production – encouraging individuals to become more involved in the design and delivery of services.

The Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010

Among the provisions of the MHM Part 2 places duties on health and social services to provide a Case Manager to all people, of any age, using secondary mental health services. This can, and frequently does, include some people with co-occurring conditions such as learning disability, substance misuse problems

and some people who are neuro diverse. People subject to part two of the Measure must be provided with a care and treatment plan setting out how their care is to be provided.

In order to deliver the statutory duties enshrined within the 2014 Act and the 2010 Measure, the Council must meet those needs identified within individual assessments and care plans. It will therefore need to review and plan its directly provided services and those commissioned from third sector and independent service providers. Where appropriate it should revise provision to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of service provision giving due regard to changing needs and the availability of financial resource and workforce.

Behaviour Support Planning

A Behaviour Support Plan provides carers with a step-by-step guide to managing challenging behaviour. It is based on the results of a behaviour assessment. Two important parts of the plan are:

1. Proactive strategies. These are used to make sure that the person has got what they need. They also describe ways to teach the person communication and other skills.
2. Reactive strategies are designed to keep the person and those around them safe.

The ADSS National Review of Respite and Day Opportunity Services 2023

Key to the development of our recommendations is the consideration and context of wider national projects recently taken place. We have outlined some of the key findings that underpin and inform our understanding. ADSS Cymru commissioned a review of respite and day opportunity services considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure that these services are maximising innovative approaches to improve and enhance the delivery of services to those who use them, their unpaid carers and those who will such services in the future. The reviews conclusions were:

The need to review day opportunities, respite, and short break services

Many agencies had, prior to the pandemic, identified the need to review and potentially reform day opportunity and short break services to ensure that the model of provision was continuing to meet current needs.

Some participants believed that a national debate on the future of day opportunities and short break services would assist in bringing about change at scale and pace. Some advocated the potential value of national guidance, whilst others felt this could stymie local initiatives and lead to unintended consequences.

The impact of the pandemic on day opportunity and short break services

The provision of day opportunity and short stay services was profoundly disrupted by the pandemic. Many services were forced to close for a period. Some having re-opened offer a reduced service compared with pre-pandemic levels, for example offering fewer or shorter sessions. Evidence suggests that a considerable number of people have not returned to services since they reopened, and many others have reported that since returning the availability of services has reduced in terms of frequency and length of time that the service is available.

The degree to which services closed, the duration of closure and the speed of reopening varied across Wales. The pandemic led to essential revisions to service provision resulting from social distancing requirements. Some of the changes introduced were being considered prior to the pandemic, which was perceived to have accelerated some planned changes. When reviewing services some agencies found that buildings in use prior to the pandemic were not fit for purpose moving forward.

The environments and model of service were also questioned by some. Many participants in focus groups believed that an over reliance on place-based services, i.e., those provided solely or predominantly in a specific building or group of buildings, can lead to 'institutionalised' models and develop a dependency among those that use the service and their families.

Many services described greater use of community assets during the pandemic. This includes local facilities and open spaces. Reduced access to transport and people's preferences have led to this trend continuing for many. However, significant numbers still wish to see services revert to those offered prior to the pandemic.

In some instances, these changes have been sustained since the services entered a recovery phase as restrictions were lifted.

Economic and workforce pressures

Some of the enablers and barriers identified by participants can be addressed by means of effective planning and change management, but some impediments arise from structural and economic factors outside the direct control of those responsible for providing or commissioning the services. Included within these are the inflationary pressures experienced in recent months which are felt to have exacerbated many of the challenges faced.

Workforce challenges and a lack of funding were described as delaying or preventing service change. The provision of a central funding stream that enables local authorities and providers to be equal partners, would offer opportunities to stimulate and enable transformation to take place. The workforce was universally perceived to be an asset in the transformation of services. However, services also identified that members of the workforce can be a barrier to change. Some staff may need additional support in the change management training and training in the application of person centeredness and co-production.

Increased complexity among those using services

Many services reported an increase in the complexity of people being referred to them in recent years. They also highlighted that some people who had used services prior to the pandemic had more complex needs upon their return to services as restrictions were lifted. This is clearly an important issue in relation to partnership and joint commissioning arrangements between health and social care.

Employment as part of day opportunities

The importance of supporting people with disabilities to attain paid employment was raised by some participants in the review; there is a sense that this is not always given due prominence in models of support, despite the obvious potential benefits to individuals and wider society.

Collaboration between day services and other agencies, such as businesses and employment services, and education, will be required to deliver such opportunities effectively, particularly, roles that can navigate people through the various pathways and funding streams to achieve paid employment.

Equal opportunities policies need to be applied by public sector bodies and promoted in other sectors to ensure that the skills and abilities of people with disabilities are recognised and that these people can contribute to the local economy. Resources such as Access to Work funding can facilitate improvements in this area.

Hub and spoke approaches

Hub and spoke approaches adopted in different areas offer helpful, blended approaches combining centre-based support, access to community facilities and the creative use of technology to improve access and optimise outcomes for individuals.

Technology and transport

When services were closed, the use of technology, especially video and telephone conferencing, increased enormously. This had a positive impact on engagement with those using services and their families and enabled people to develop and sustain their own networks using chat groups and other virtual activities. It also assisted inter and intra service communication. For some people using services, and some staff, the use of digital technology was a challenge, due to poor IT skills and limited or no access to equipment and/or the internet.

Transport provided by services was significantly reduced during the pandemic. This was particularly challenging for those living in rural settings. It has been reported that due to the preference of some of those who attend services, increased costs pressures resulting from fuel inflation, as well as the duty local

authorities have to tackle Climate Change, some providers have reduced the use of transport and continue to promote access to services closer to home.

Day opportunities as respite support to family members

A theme which ran through the review was a recognition that day opportunities and short break services frequently benefit both the recipient of the service and their families. However, when services are being planned for individuals, a tension may often arise between the interests of the individual and their unpaid carers in how this service is to be provided. It is important to recognise that the wishes of the assessed individual must come first and when that individual lack capacity, then decisions must be in the persons best interest and those arrangement must be least restrictive.

The importance of person-centred care and the co-production of services

When introducing and evaluating service changes, many agencies recognise the importance of person-centred planning and co-production, and there is a clear sense that such approaches are fundamental to efficient and effective service reform. Co-production principles should also apply to the strategic planning, delivery and review of service models. Person centeredness and co-production are not always clearly understood or applied effectively by services and their staff. Appropriate training and development are required to address this.

The impact of the pandemic on the mixed economy of care provision

The impact of the current financial context on donations presents an existential threat to a number of third sector agencies that are dependent, or part dependent, upon charitable donations.

Commissioning day opportunity and respite services fit for the future

Whilst the variety and diversity of service provision has improved, levels of provision are reported to have declined following the pandemic. However, the review team found it difficult to quantify this reduction in provision due to the lack of standardised and consistently prepared quantitative data on service provision and use.

Greater collaboration within, and between agencies is necessary to commission a range of support that includes community resources outside the direct control of social care and health services. This includes services that support progression to paid employment. The necessity for collaboration is particularly critical as people transition through different stages in the life course, for example when leaving school or college, transferring into services suitable for young adults, or those suitable for older adults at a later stage. To avoid unnecessary disruption to people's lives, some services have begun to take a through-age approach based upon individual need not chronologically age.

Models of effective practice were identified within the review. Learning can be gained from exploring what these services have achieved and how they did so. However, it is important to recognise that directly replicating such models to other areas will not always be appropriate; for example, some approaches may be better suited to urban rather than rural environments. Replicating existing models in a different area will always require planning and the effective change management. Some participants believed that the fact that day opportunity and some short break services are not regulated is inappropriate and that this can place these services at a disadvantage.

The need for effective engagement

Services identified that in order to increase the use of local community facilities, better engagement with local communities and community leaders will be required and there are examples from our field visits where this has worked well. It is essential to ensure that people using services, those referred to services

and families are fully involved in the processes of assessment, planning, delivery and review, especially when changes to the nature of provision are proposed.

Enablers of, and barriers to, innovation

Some contributors reported that the pandemic demonstrated that changes can be made without applying undue bureaucracy or process. The necessity of making rapid changes led to a sense of 'permission' to take risks and introduce creative models. This provides a precedent for more nimble service development moving forward.

Stakeholders were generally aware of the barriers and enablers to service reform identified within the review. Those representing children and young people felt that language used, and issues identified, were not always applicable to their area. Accordingly, the report has attempted to address those issues and services specific to children and their families.

The legislative duties contained within the SSWBA and the MHM together with the use of BSPs offer the potential for enhanced person-centred planning. Co-production approaches are at the heart of these approaches and should ensure that the needs of the people using services and their unpaid carers are paramount in decision making.

The conclusions of the national review are directly relevant to the findings within Ceredigion, addressing as they do many of the objectives of the Ceredigion review.

Consideration has therefore been given to both these legislative changes and the findings of the national review in the analysis of the broad range of opinions gathered through the Ceredigion engagement exercise.

Engagement Summary

The following summary provides an overview of how we have engaged with the identified stakeholder groups, and those who chose to take part. The engagement took place between March and August 2023. It was extended by a further 11 days (16 weeks in total) to ensure we were able to meet with as many people as possible. During the additional engagement time we offered extra workshops to parents and carers, to people that could not attend previous sessions, and to children and young people to ensure their voice was heard.

What did we do?

We read reports and documents that told us about the history of the service.

We met with the Council to understand more about Ceredigion day and respite service. The Council gave us a comprehensive list of people who might want to talk with us about their views, experiences, and opinions.

Following stakeholder analysis that identified a wide range of partners, it was agreed that we would contact people from a wide range of groups. More information on the groups of people we contacted can be found in Appendix B. These included:

- People who use day and respite services now and their families, including young people, people of transition age (18-24) who might access services in the future, adults with a learning disability, and older people with Dementia
- People who work for the services now
- Other people who work in the Council and know about services
- People who have jobs at other community agencies that know about services, and people who work in the NHS with those who access support from the Council.

Between March and 1 August 2023, we talked to people in different ways so that there were no barriers to contributing to the review.

- We met with people in-person
- We met with people over the computer
- We spoke to people on the phone
- We facilitated a survey throughout the engagement period, both online and on paper. The survey was available in Welsh and English as well as in easy read format (details on survey responses are set out below).
- People sent us extra information such as reports by email
- We put posters around the community at places people visit (See Appendix C)
- Community Connectors from the Council helped members of the public with the survey

The team visited Ceredigion on nine different days, visiting the day centres where activities were taking place holding events with staff, carers, and families in the community at different venues located in Aberaeron, Aberystwyth, Lampeter, and Cardigan.

- We attended RAY Ceredigion to meet with people with dementia and their families
- We facilitated events for attendees of the Canolfan Steffan, Meugan and Padarn day opportunity programmes
- We facilitated events for employees at learning disability day centres and other Council employees
- We met with foster carers

- We hosted a parent and carers evening
- We hosted a carers tea and spoke with the carers forum
- We facilitated sessions with transition age people with learning disabilities (Camu M'laen)
- We facilitated a session with looked after children
- We facilitated an event for children during the school holidays
- We offered extra sessions so that people who could not join earlier activities could take part

The team also held several online workshops for community organisations and families / carers. We facilitated many individual calls and conversations with a wide range of stakeholders to hear their views.

The team created resource packs and put posters in community venues such as libraries and GP surgeries. We also circulated the survey link on social media to encourage people to take part.

The Council ran a public survey online throughout the engagement period.

We used various ways to communicate:

- Sending Easy Read and picture photo symbol invitations and inviting participants
- Using visual aids and creative forms of expression.
- Asking participants to bring photos and items that show what is important to them, working with chart paper, markers, and sticky notes.
- Having shared conversations about what and who is important in individual lives through person-centred community mapping tools.

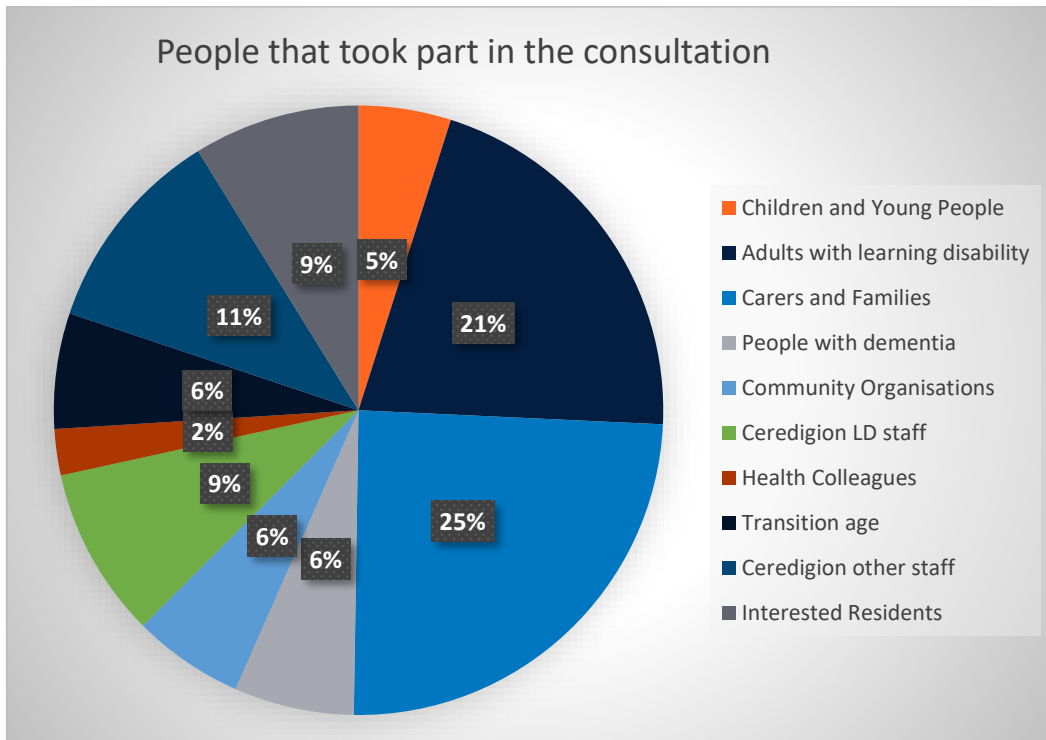
Who we spoke to

Overall, we had a very positive response to the engagement, with numbers as illustrated in the table below.

Group	In person	Online	Survey	Total
Carers and family members	21	5	74	100
Adults with learning disabilities	49	2	44	85
Other staff working in the Council	7	27	12	38
Staff working in learning disability services	34	2	1	37
Interested Residents of Ceredigion	X	X	37	36
People with dementia	21	X	5	26
People of transition age	6	X	21	25
People working in community organisations	X	21	3	24
Children and Young People	14	X	7	20
People working in the NHS	X	9	1	10
	140	66	205*	411

* Some of the people that responded to the survey will also have attended other types of engagement activities.

Appendix B is a list of the people we spoke to.



Conclusions

The number of people who gave their time to talk to us shows how interested people are in respite and day services in Ceredigion. In total 206 people took part in our activities and workshops or had conversations with us, while 205 people answered the survey. A total of 411 people took part.

Not only did a large number of people speak to us, but they came from a wide range of backgrounds. The two biggest groups of people that took part were adults with a learning disability and carers / families.

We also spoke with a lot of Council staff, working both in day services and across other teams. Using different ways to engage with people was helpful and allowed people with communication difficulties to be heard. Several important themes emerged from the engagement of people in Ceredigion. These are highlighted in the various sections of this report.

A summary of other engagement themes

The future of day opportunities and respite services

Below is a summary of key messages from each of the stakeholder groups we engaged with, coming out of Practice Solutions led activities. More detailed commentary can be found throughout the report.

Children: Wish to take part in activities that they enjoy, being active and spending time with friends

Transition age: Self-directed support and choice, support in the community and a focus on social opportunities and skill development and planning for the future.

Adults with a learning disability: those already attending day opportunities reflect that it is a very important part of their lives and like routine. There was a very wide variety of interests and activity suggestions from this group. Choice and safety came through strongly. Adults felt upset about a lack of access to things they previously enjoyed such as gardening, cooking and employment opportunities, and hope to engage with these again soon in the future. Adults wanted further opportunities for short breaks and respite. People spoke very positively about the potential of wellbeing hubs.

People with Dementia: People with dementia enjoy taking part in day opportunities tailored to their interests in community venues. They are not keen on the idea of 'day centres' or residential homes, but prefer time out on short breaks and doing activities. People spoke positively about using SMART technology to stay home as long as possible. There was a strong message that there are not currently many opportunities offered through the council for this group and they mostly access from other places.

Carers: Carers would like to see more support available to keep them well and able to care longer. They do not currently feel there is adequate access to respite and for those with neurodiversity and dementia, carers did not feel there were any day opportunities in place at present. Foster carers noted that they have no access to respite.

Community Organisations and NHS employees: Spoke about a desire to be more closely connected to the council and did not feel that they were aware of the process to access funding. Demonstrated that they are offering a wide range of activities that service users are accessing. Were less clear on what is available through the council and asked whether there could be a community calendar developed for them to access.

NHS staff suggested that it would be helpful to offer clinics / appointments at venues while people were attending them, to save on extra travel time for everyone and to be more convenient to service users.

Ceredigion Day Centre Staff and other Employees: Wished for services to fully resume and noted many activities post covid had not re-started. Reflected that the introduction of a brokerage service would support better coordination of care packages and free up more staff time. Agreed with the principles of extended hours and person-centred care.

Day centre employees felt anxious about potential changes and expressed a wish to be included in conversations that will affect them. They also felt that there should be regular day opportunity hours as well as extended evening and weekend hours. They wished to offer a wide range of activities and were generally positive about trying new things like mixed groups, as long as this was done safely and with careful planning.

The Survey

In addition to speaking with people directly we also produced a survey which we sent to people. The survey allowed those who couldn't or preferred not to meet us to have their say. Some people completed the survey and spoke to us.

Who responded to the survey?

In total, 205 people responded to the survey. This included 156 online surveys, and 49 returned paper surveys. 18 people completed easy read surveys.

1. In which role are you responding to this survey?

- 30 people who have a social worker or use services
- 48 people responding on behalf of a service user (some who identified as carers)
- 48 unpaid carers
- 15 people who might want to access services in the future
- 36 interested residents of Ceredigion
- 6 people who noted they are a foster carer
- 7 people did not respond to this question

We asked some questions to better understand the people responding to the survey. We asked people about:

- Welsh language
- Religion
- Transport
- Gender and sexual orientation
- National identity
- Caring status
- Age
- Disability
- Caring responsibilities

If you would like to read more about the people who responded to the survey, you can find details in Appendix B.

What we asked people

The key questions we asked included:

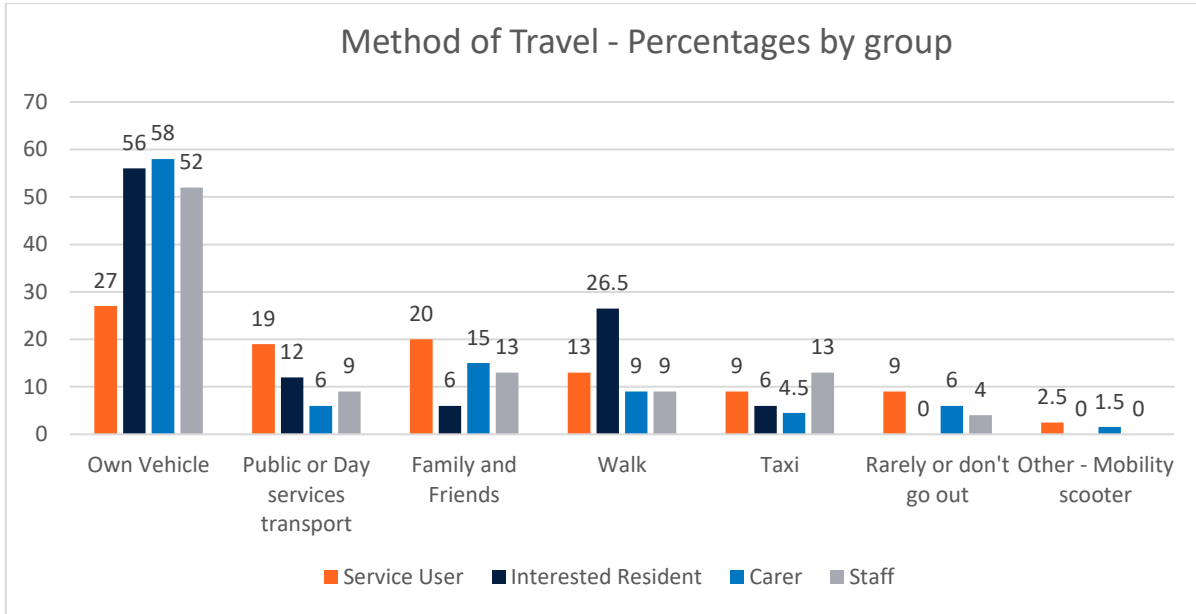
- What people like about day and respite services?
- What people would change about day and respite services?
- Which activities that people would like to see offered?
- Which places in the community would people like to go to?
- What hours of service would they prefer?
- What are the issues they have with transport?
- What do people think about possibly changing the name of some day services?
- How would people like to be involved going forwards?

Survey Responses

The sections below describe the responses to the key survey questions. More information on what people from different groups told us is also included within the other sections of this report.

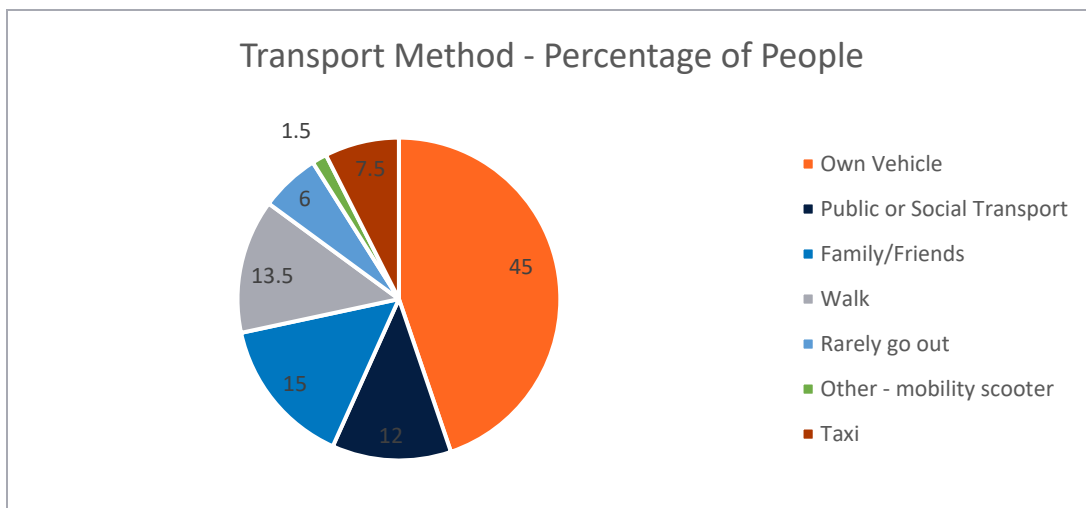
Responses to travel

Most people said that they use several types of transport, however there were some differences between people who access services and those who do not. It should be noted that the day centre minibus was not one of the survey choices and eight people responded in their comments that this is their preferred method of transport.



45% of survey respondents in Ceredigion rely on their own vehicles to get around which was the biggest category of responses. Carers, family members and the general public are more likely to use their own vehicle (55%), while people who access services are less likely to use their own vehicle (27%), and the most likely of any group to use public transport (19%) or to rely on the support of family and friends to travel (20%) The issue of whether those using services have Motability vehicles to enable them to get around themselves or to be driven was not addressed.

Below is a breakdown of the overall preferred travel methods in Ceredigion:



We asked people to share some comments about travel needs. Themes from travel comments included:

Response type	Number of Comments
Unable to use public transport or concerns about its reliability	17
Reference to one of the survey options for travel	10
Use the minibus	8
Used to be offered minibus but no longer available or told not eligible	6
Rural – no public transport available	5
Transported by Ceredigion staff member or Shared Lives	4
Having a car is essential	2
Other modes of transport including electric bike, Motability car	2
Direct payment costs are too low to cover transport	1

Here are some examples of comments made about transport:

“I would prefer if someone can pick me up rather than having to rely on family members.”

“From experience of working with service users who access respite and day services it would be beneficial to provide transport for them.”

“A bus specific for travel to and from day centre. This would enable my carer an adequate break and ensure if I live on my own, I will have a safe and structured way of transport.”

“Access to transport is a major issue within Ceredigion. Raising cost of fuel and diminishing bus services.”

Conclusions

Transport is a critically important issue in both the provision of and access to day opportunity and respite services. This was a key issue identified in the national report but as in Ceredigion the impact was most significantly evident in rural communities.

Rural communities must contend with not only long distances between their homes and services but scant public transport systems.

People are heavily dependent on the use of private cars and buses, but buses are for many inaccessible due to a limited timetable and their ability to board a bus.

Lifts from family members/friends and staff or transport laid on by services is the predominant means of accessing services at distance from people’s homes.

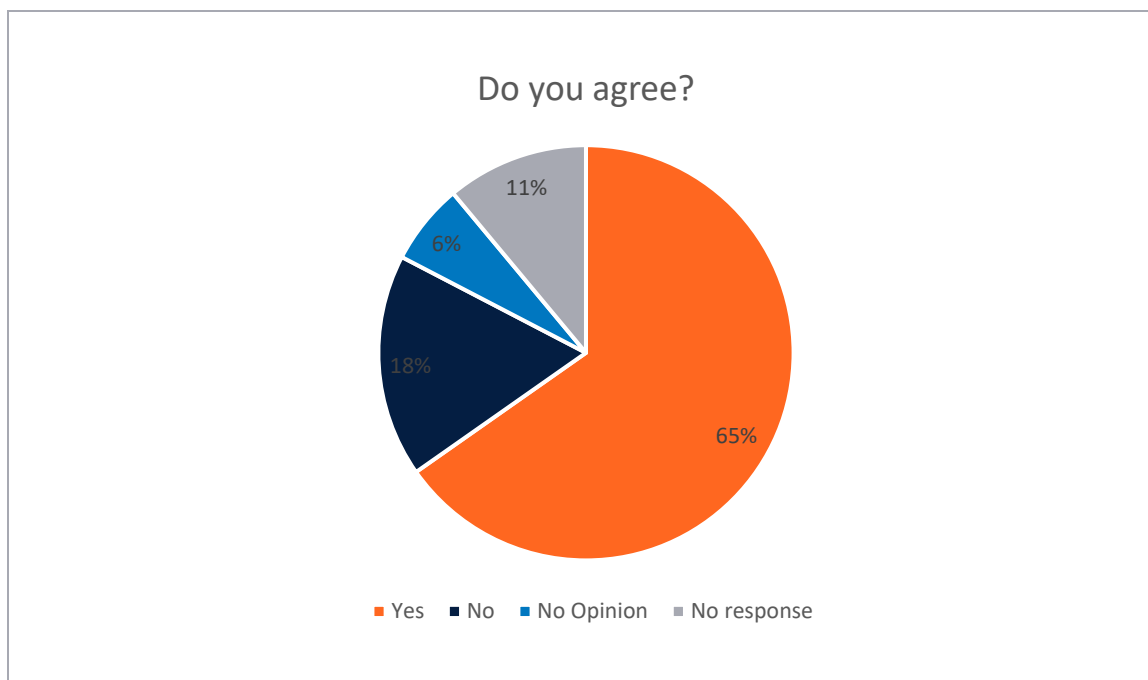
The number of people who have Motability vehicles or benefits specifically designed to enable attend services is not clear from the data gathered.

A strategic approach to enabling access to service hubs or providing services in satellite sights is essential in the planning and delivery of services within Ceredigion.

Responses to proposed wider range of activities

Question 8: We are planning to offer a wider range of activities and opportunities to our service users. To enable us to make sure we meet the needs of everyone who need to use our services, we are proposing to provide opportunities to additional groups from within our community. This will mean that Canolfan Steffan, Padarn, and Meugan will be used differently, with a variety of services available at different times of the day / week and used by different groups. Do you agree?

65% of people responding to the survey said that they agree with the recommendation, while 18% disagreed with it. 17% either did not respond or had no opinion on this matter.



Of those who responded to the survey that did not agree, a summary of their responses is set out in table below together with a sample of the comments received.

Response type	Number of Comments
Services should be kept the way they are	7
Concerns about how the vision will be achieved	5
More information required	3
Concerns that the changes will mean less service for some than there is now	3
Services should return to how they were before covid	2
Other	1

Here are some examples of comments made about the proposed changes:

"I don't want to mix with other groups. I don't like young people who are noisy. I like to be with my friends."

"One size does not fit all either in relation to premises or activities and staff support."

"I'm unsure if it is possible to offer all these different service user groups with a real and substantive service/support with the current work force at the current level of pay and conditions without potentially watering down the service that the current and previous service users are/were receiving."

"Why not make a community hub that is open to a variety of abilities, where people are able to interact with each other regardless of these differences, this would be meeting The Equality Act 2010. A base that individuals are able to feel safe, respected and valued and not 'hot spotting' in an environment they don't feel connected to."

Conclusions

A considerable majority of respondents agreed with some change in the use of community hubs.

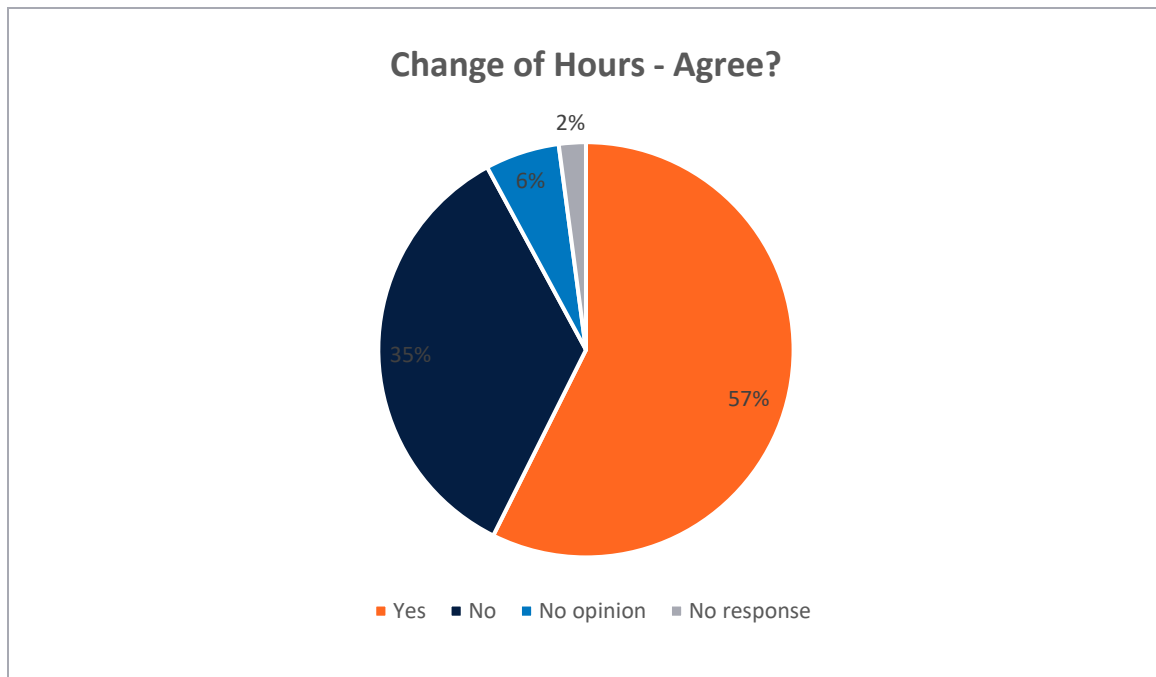
Of those that did not agree their concerns focused on the suitability of staffing to meet the needs of a variety of client groups and an assumption that change would create a one size fits all approach.

If the council proceeds with introducing some changes in use of the resources specified, they will need to consider the workforce implications of expanding use and how the needs of different client groups can be accommodated within the changes.

Responses to changing hours

Question 9. We are proposing to move away from traditional Day Services hours of 9am – 3pm (closed on Bank Holidays). We plan to offer a range of the following based on the needs of the individual. These changes could include: Half day sessions morning or afternoon Sessions specifically for certain activities Early evening (weekdays) Saturday Sunday National Holidays Between Christmas and New Year (excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day). Do you agree?

57% of survey respondents agreed with the proposed change of hours. 35% disagreed, while 8% either did not respond or had no opinion.



Of those who did not agree, below are a summary of the comments:

Response type	Number of Comments
Services should be kept the way they are	18
Concerns about having enough staff / transport to cover extended hours	12
The importance of routine	7
Weekends and holidays not needed / more appropriate as family time	4
More information needed / not clear why things are changing	3

Here are some examples of comments made about the change in hours:

“Routine is important to me. Half day or evening sessions wouldn't be long enough because I have to travel.”

“I have reservations that there will be adequate transport and staff to cover all that may be planned.”

“I agree that weekends would be beneficial, whether the service is required on national holidays and in between the Christmas period would need to be discussed with the service users and their families.”

“This will place both my wellbeing and my son’s wellbeing at risk. The current arrangements also mirror the times that my other children are in school. My son's provision needs to take place at the same time to support my return to work.”

“During the Covid pandemic his access to the service was severely disrupted. This had a significant effect on his emotional and physical wellbeing - including an increase in his seizure activity, which then affected my wellbeing as his main carer. I am concerned that changes to the times and days that this service is provided on will mean that these difficulties reoccur.”

Conclusions

The majority of those that responded to the question were in favour of changing the hours of service provided.

Some questioned why provision should include weekends, evenings, and public holidays because these are times when families can be together. This presumes that all potential users of services have families with whom to spend time. This demonstrates that the use of extended hours needs to be tailored to individual needs and wishes.

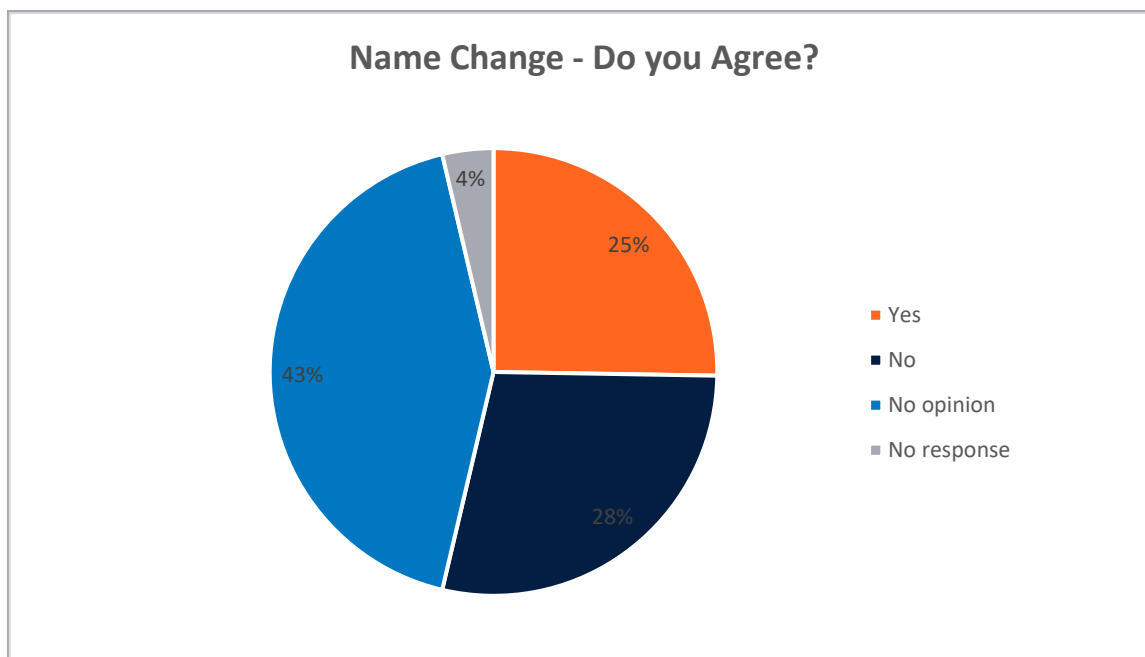
As in the national report the issue of the use of a core of hours during the working day is identified as enabling those who provide unpaid care to work and otherwise carry out tasks to enable them to care for the person using services and others to whom they have responsibilities. This issue demonstrates both the importance of day opportunities and short break services to provide important respite to unpaid carers and the potential that their needs and the person who requires services may not always align.

Addressing the use of extended hours needs to be guided by personalise plans which address both the needs of the user of services and their unpaid carers.

Responses to renaming proposal

Question 10: To reflect the future model and in line with Through Age Wellbeing, we are proposing to re-name Canolfan Steffan, Padarn and Meugan. Do you agree?

43% of people responding to the survey did not have an opinion on this issue. Of those who did respond, there was a close split between people agreeing with the proposed name change (25%), and those who did not agree with this (28%). Therefore, more people did not agree with the proposed name change.



Of those who did not agree with the proposal to re-name the facilities, respondents had some strong opinions as to why.

Below is a summary of the comments by theme:

Response type	Number of Comments
The names should be kept the way they are	26
More information needed / not clear why things are changing	16
Confusing for service users	11
Other – waste of time / concerns about cost	9

Here are some examples of comments made about the proposed name changes:

“These buildings have a history and a resonance for all the people who have accessed support over the years. They have been a community, a safe space, a vital resource for disadvantaged people.”

“The names of the centres have been set to reflect the views of the service users in the centres. The service users through self-advocacy groups decided on the names and it should be the service users that use the centre that decide on the names rather than it being a higher-level management decision. Again, this is destroying the community within which the service users are part of.”

“Local residents know the names of the centre. Name changes will confuse people living in the area. Canolfan Padarn was named due to being situated in Llanbadarn Fawr and Padarn was named after the local Saint who formed the village and parish. Diolch/Thanks.”

“This has been a second home, a place of safety and security to many individuals over the year, giving them a sense of purpose and structure. The name brings nostalgia and memories, with all the disruption and anxiety over the last few years, the name should remain the same.”

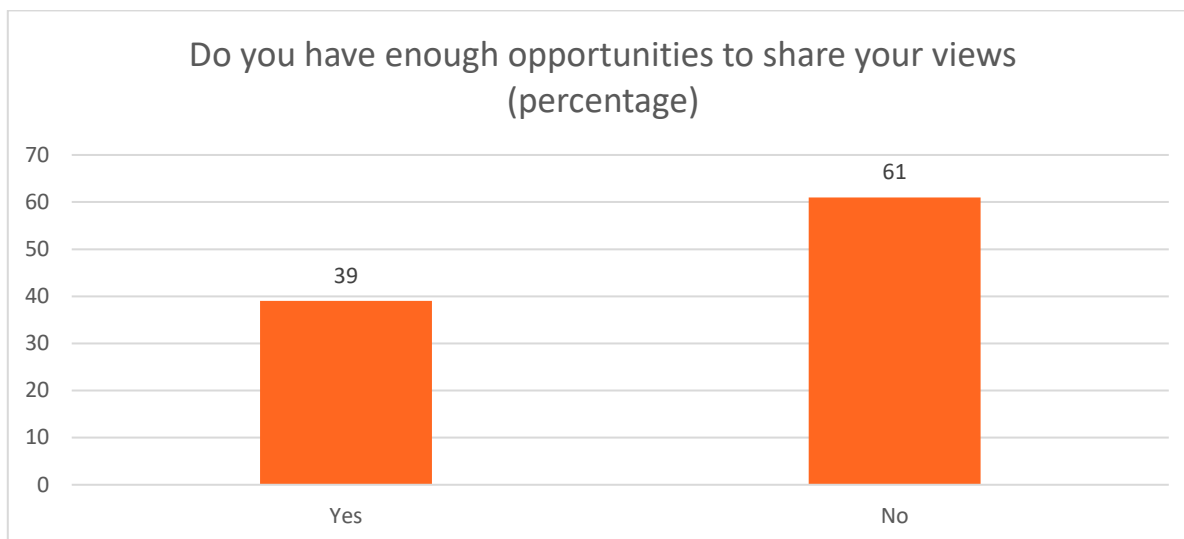
Conclusions

Almost half of respondents 43% expressed no opinion on this matter. Of those that did a small majority 28%:25% opposed the idea. It cannot be assumed that those that did not respond did not do so because they did not oppose the idea.

If the Council wishes to proceed in making a name change to reinforce a potential change of use and expansion of its service offer and they wish to work with a mandate from local population and those using services and their families, they would need to re-canvass opinion.

Responses to opportunities to share your views

Question 24. Are there enough opportunities to share your views?



28 people (39%) said that they felt they have enough opportunity to share their views.

43 people (61%) said that there were not enough opportunities to share views with the Council. Of the options listed, people stated that other ways to involve them could include:

Support groups for different needs	24
Local self- advocacy group provided independently from local authority	23
Support groups for different ages	22
Support groups through the medium of Welsh	9
Other	9

Other suggestions included public meetings, a steering group of service users and families, listening to what people say, having more information provided by the social worker, group advocacy sessions, support workers to talk to me about my views.

Conclusions

Most respondents 61%:39% did not feel that they have sufficient opportunity to share their views.

Several opportunities which may afford a greater opportunity to share views were provided by some respondents.

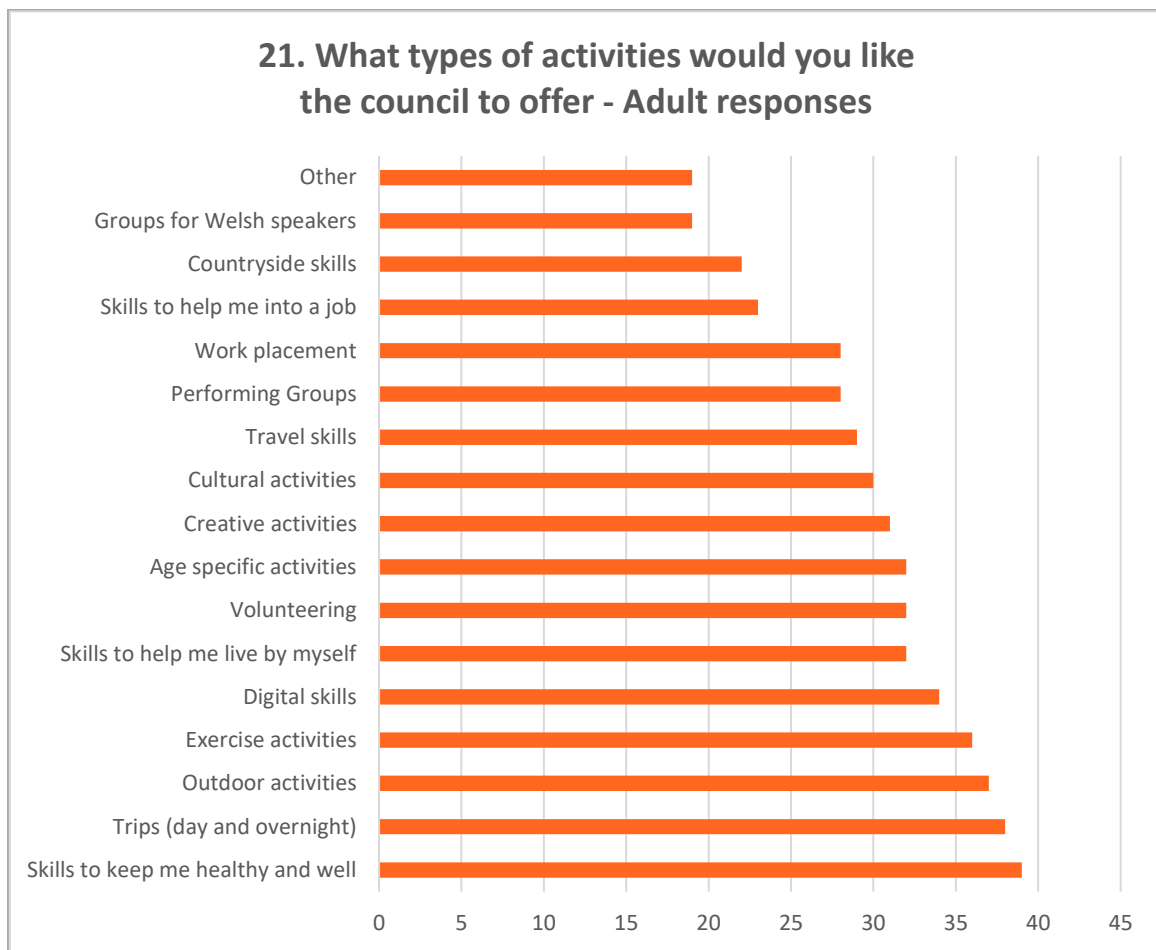
The Council may wish to review their standard approaches to consulting with citizens to ensure that as their plans progress into implementation people's views can be heard and responded to.

Response to the provision of activities

The review captured views on the range of activities that people would like the council to offer for differing client groups in day opportunities and respite short break settings. These were explored by age demographic and stakeholder group. The views are set out below by group.

Adults

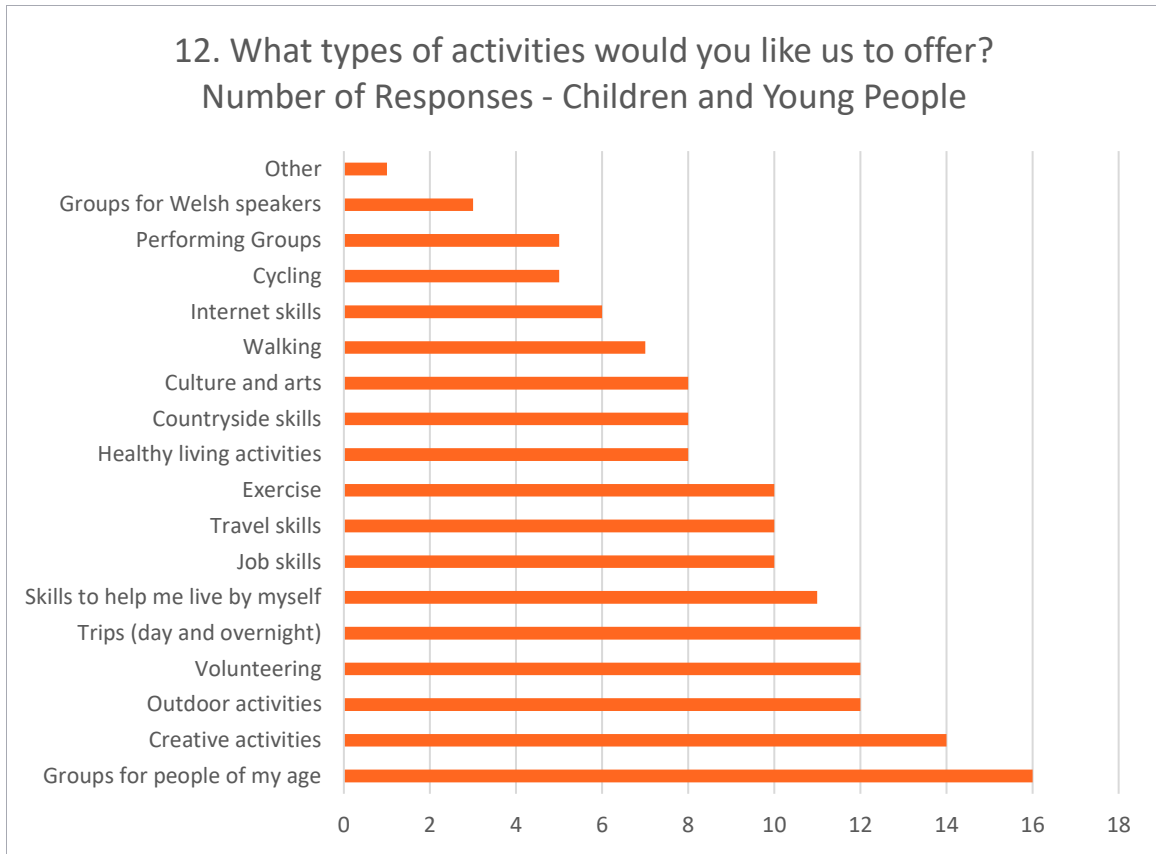
66 people responded to the question about what types of adult activities they think they would like to access. The number times each activity was picked are shown in the chart below, with the three most popular choices being skills to keep me healthy and well (59%), day and overnight trips (58%) and outdoor activities (56%)



Comments included other types of activities, such as sensory room, multisport activities, hairdressing and church-based activities. There were also a couple of comments that more activities needed to be provided for individuals with dementia.

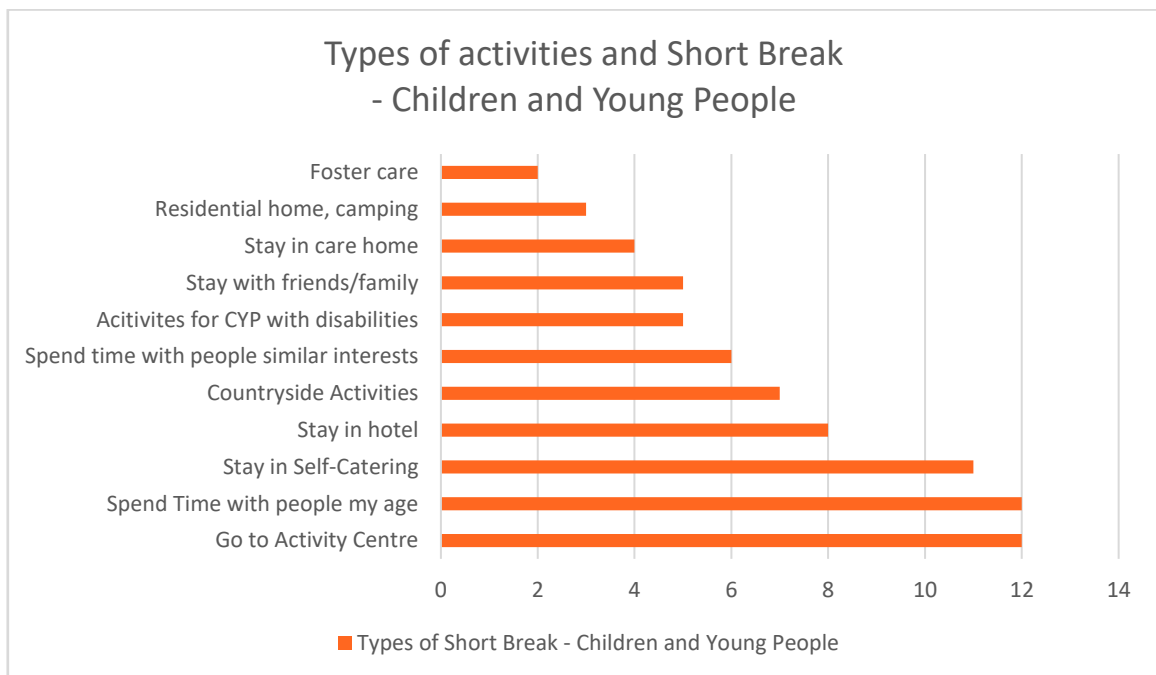
Children and Young People

Within the survey, 21 people responded to the question about what types of activities for children and young people they would like the Council to offer. The results are shown in the chart below, with the three most popular choices including groups for people of my age (76% of respondents), creative activities (67% of respondents), and a tie between outdoor activities, volunteering and day /overnight trips (57% of respondents).



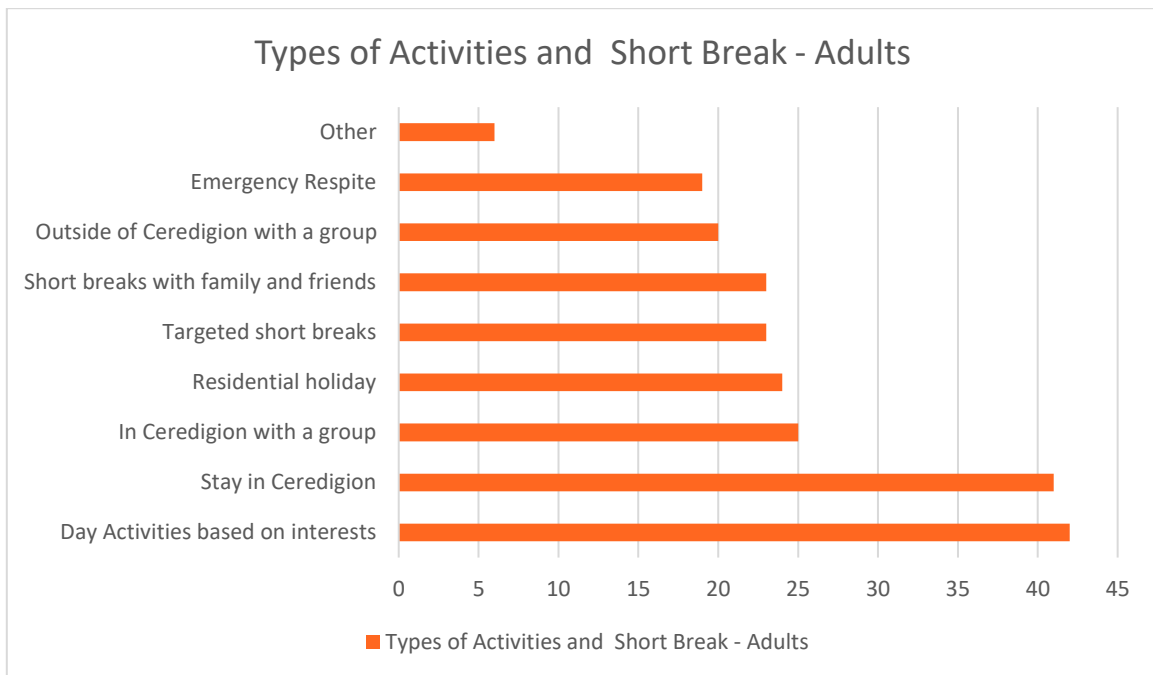
Survey Responses: Short Breaks and Activities – Children and Young People

There were 19 responses to this question. The three most popular choices were go to an activity centre (63%), Spend time with children and young people my age (58%) and Stay in self-catering accommodation (58%)



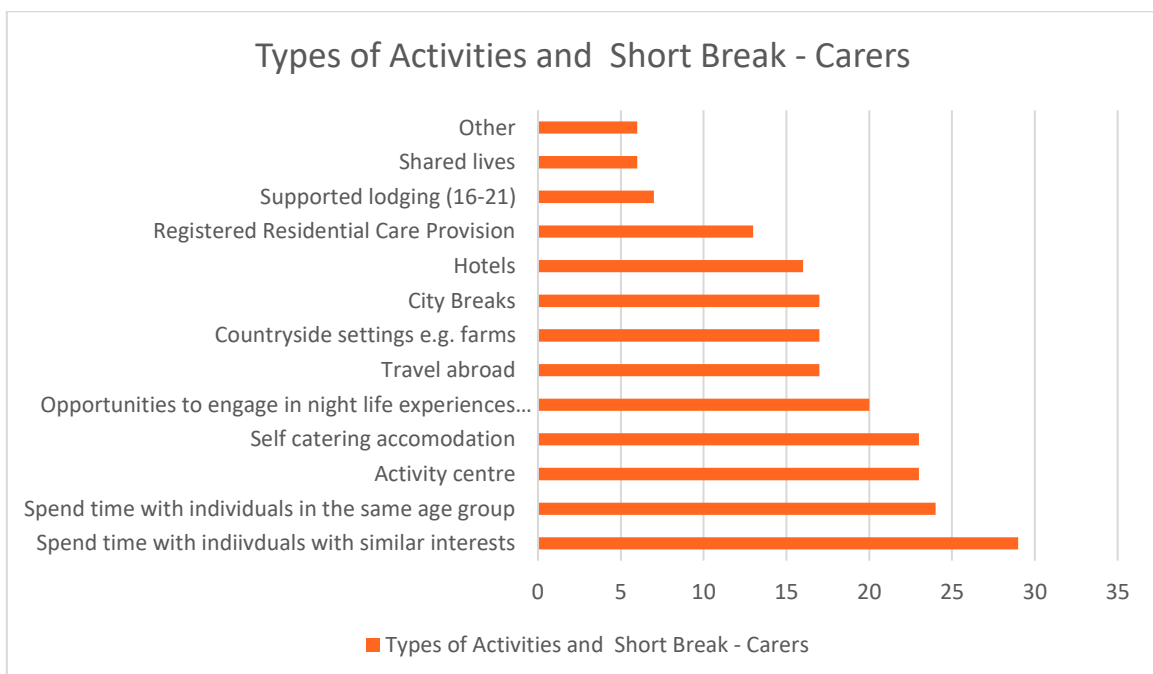
Survey Responses: Short Breaks and Activities – Adults

There were 65 responses to this question. The three most popular choices were Day Activities based on interests (65%) Staying in Ceredigion (63%), and activities in Ceredigion with a group (38%)



Survey Responses: Short Breaks and Activities – Carers

There were 59 responses to this question. The three most popular choices were spend time with individuals of similar interests (49%), spend time with individuals of same age group (41%) and activity centre (39%)



Carers made some additional comments as below:

“Half a day would not be sufficient as there is a lot of prep work needed at home before leaving the person cared for with someone else”

"I don't have any respite for my son"

"Having respite in Ceredigion in an emergency would be useful"

Conclusions

Among adults and Children and young people expressing preferences for activities and respite breaks the needs highlighted were very similar. They focussed upon access to community facilities and spaces, the provision of overnight activities, skills development and spending time with people with similar needs and among children and young people, those of their own age.

Some expressed a desire to use local (within Ceredigion) facilities, and some identified a desire to travel beyond Ceredigion to take part in activities and breaks. It is possible that some expressed a preference for local and distant activities.

General Comments

A lot of people made additional general comments on the survey. There were 117 responses that included general comments. These are summarised below, with some direct quotes (it is important to note that the direct quotes do not necessarily represent a consensus view on the issue raised).

Request for additional services	26
Many people described what an ideal service would look like	22
Several respondents raised concerns about current service provision.	21
Need for activities to return post covid / negative impacts on service users and carers	17
More information needed about the proposed changes	9
Need for council to keep engaging with people going forwards / concerns about not being heard and poor communication	9
Sharing of personal stories and experiences	8
Keep services how they are now	8
Importance of the council offering transport / impact for those that can't access now	5
Concerns about people with different needs mixing – but also comments that this can be beneficial	4
Importance of inclusion of people who speak Welsh	1

26 people said that there should be additional services including:

- Emotional support / anger management
- Day activities for older people / people with dementia x11
- Services for people with autism / neurodiversity x2
- More support for carers x13
- Need for residential respite x3
- More sitting services
- More short breaks
- Preventative services

Examples of comments:

“I wish there was a safe place for an elderly person to go for a day - somewhere that has disabled toilets, care staff that can give a hand, meet friends, have some hobbies or crafts and activities.”

“We need services for autistic children and adults. The Ceredigion Young Carers provides meetings, day trips and short breaks for the carers but there is nothing available for the autistic child/young adult.”

22 people described what an ideal service would look like, including:

- More flexible services
- More choice of activities rather than set routine
- More skill building
- Wrap around service that provides excellent and safe support
- Housing, training, and a great social life

- Somewhere safe and happy
- To be included and not left in the corner
- Gym should be available in school hours
- Ensure adequate staffing
- Offer of regular respite
- Life skills e.g., cooking, budgeting.
- Walking, horse riding, football, rugby, swimming, sewing, art
- Welfare, compassion, stimulation, friendship, exercise, music. Gardening
- Basic skills e.g., Maths/ Welsh/ English
- Ability to receive support for physical health needs too i.e., diabetes clinic, hairdresser, a place to shower, a place to do laundry
- Opportunity to socialise especially for people with impairments
- LGBTQ+ inclusive
- A base to go back to between activities
- Respite care should be pre- bookable, so that carers can plan a break for themselves and their families
- Regular day care should be always on offer, to give much- needed time for carers to have opportunity to schedule their own needs
- Safe environment, integration with health to offer physical health programmes

“More flexible services, more choice of activities rather than set routine. More skill building. Not for us to have to fit into criteria.”

“I feel that the day centre provision was such a beneficial service for people to leave their homes, meet other people, have a meal and be able to speak to other people outside of their families. I also feel that the services such as a bath at the day centre was beneficial.”

“These locations need to be within the community and should provide engagement, warmth, sustenance, and compassion. This will ensure that the pressure on the NHS beds and on social services and placements is reduced.”

21 respondents raised concerns about current service provision. Most comments centred around lack of access rather than the quality of services themselves. Themes included:

- Referral response times
- Some people feeling excluded from access
- Concerns about services being cut
- Need for more staff
- Decline in services available to carers - desire to bring carer forum back, lack of respite for foster carers x4
- Lack of access to specialist equipment and long waits
- Problems filling existing services
- Service withdrawal / discharge of people during covid without notice
- Lack of ability to source carers through direct payments

17 people commented on the need for activities to return post Covid / negative impacts on service users and carers.

“My son had five full days at the centre before its closure due to Covid and has struggled to adapt since. It is hard to see how the changes proposed will benefit him and others like him.”

9 people asked for more information about the proposed changes

“Service users and Families need to have a realistic view and timeline of what is being offered and when. I would hate for people to be promised the earth and receive not a lot due to staffing/financial worries.”

9 people commented on a need for Council to keep engaging with people going forwards / concerns about not being heard and poor communication.

“Services should be designed and implemented in Co-production with the people that use them. Individuals should be able to make their own choices and supported to access those. They should be regularly reviewed, and the individual be allowed to try new and different things if they want as any other person not requiring support can do.”

8 people shared personal stories and experiences:

“My son's level of disability means that Canolfan Steffan and similar support services are not appropriate--he is too challenging. If he were to return to his home community after college (he is in an out of county college as there is nothing appropriate here), very good day services would be key to his sustainability. I know his peers also need this desperately.”

“As a foster carer especially through the pandemic we were granted zero respite. Services are so short now a lot of us still don't have any! Our birth children then are not offered any family activities the same as LAC, it used to happen but since been cut. Government grants have gone to Ceredigion for foster carers, but we are yet to receive!”

4 people had concerns about people with different needs mixing – but also comments that this can be beneficial.

Adult and children services should be separate, and workers should not be expected to work with both

“Client groups. They are very different areas of expertise.”

“I've heard that there is evidence of a benefit when mixing groups of people in a care setting, such as school aged children and older adults. It would be lovely if there were joint activities or services to bring people together.”

5 people commented on the importance of the Council offering transport / impact for those that can't access now.

“Transportation is very important. People in rural areas should be able to access these services without spending a fortune of taxis.”

1 person mentioned the importance of inclusion of people who speak Welsh.

“People should not be excluded because of their Welsh or English language skills.”

8 people want to keep services how they are now.

“The current day services for service users available in centres on a daily basis with specialist workers need to be maintained, supported, and allowed to grow. The impulse to share services and reduce tangible services to save money on tight budgets and to recognise groups of people with complex needs at the same time, is perhaps inevitable and certainly understandable. However, I think that this way will in the medium term, result in alienation of service users and their families from the very provisions this plan hopes to deliver.”

Conclusions

The additional comments included within the survey responses provide a particularly rich seam for the council to use as a reference because they include some critical issues and some very helpful personal views that illustrate the themes covered within the review.

The additional comments focused upon areas where services could be improved addressing both gaps in current services and the manner in which they are provided.

They highlight the need for a safe and welcoming environment and where issues are raised about quality this was frequently in relation to the range of services on offer and access to them rather than the quality of service provision.

People's anxieties were also expressed in terms of requiring more information going forward on some proposed changes together with a desire from some to ensure that as services bounce back from the impact of the pandemic that service levels are restored. A small group expressed a view to see no change.

Stakeholder group feedback

The section below highlights feedback from the different stakeholder groups that responded to the survey together with the views expressed within the various engagement sessions.

Children and Young People

PSL facilitated a workshop on 1 August with 14 looked after children. 4 staff were also in attendance and 7 children responded to the survey.

Children and young people spoke about what they enjoy about day services and respite:

- New people to play with
- Chance to relax
- Get space from siblings

Children and young people shared what they would change:

- One young person commented that they thought generally “some foster carers can be bad – improve foster care”
- Being stigmatised by other children i.e. when they are seen outside school with social worker.
- Young people were keen to lift the ban on some activities. Currently they believed that they can’t do things like trampoline as it doesn’t meet Ceredigion Council health and safety requirements. This made them feel at a disadvantage as they believed other children were allowed to go as the regulation only affected children in care.

We asked children to have a vote about if they a) wanted things to stay as they are now b) wanted more activities or c) wanted less activities. Half of children voted to keep things as now, and half wanted more. None asked for less.

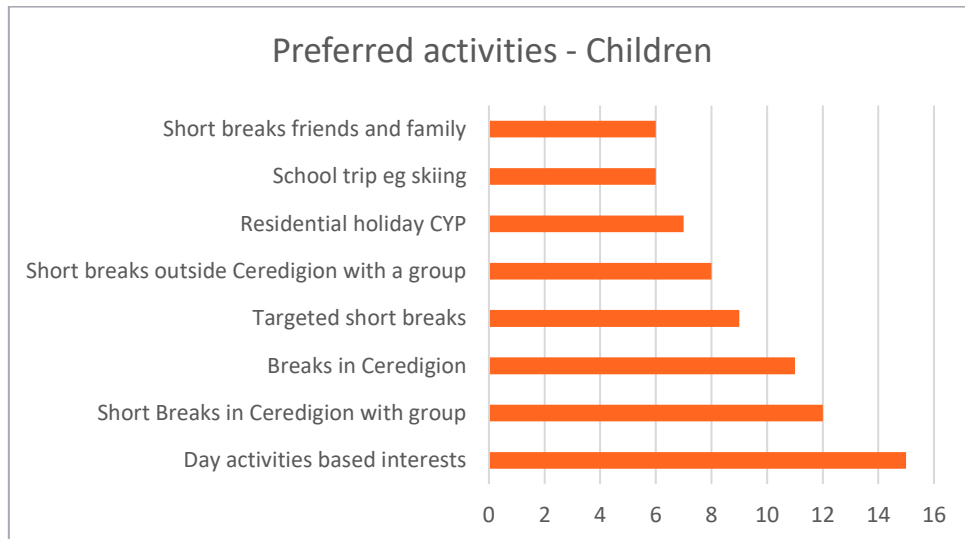
They also had good ideas about what services should look like:

- Do things with animals like helping at a shelter
- Stay somewhere longer
- Go to theme parks and attractions
- Would like to go to places for respite that are not foster carers i.e., friend’s houses
- Really like trips away and days out such as Llangrannog, Boat trips, Zoo, Jump Park, Water Park, Bluestone, Camping

They also spoke about places that are important to them this included places they like to visit but also personal spaces such as their bedroom. These are set out in Appendix D

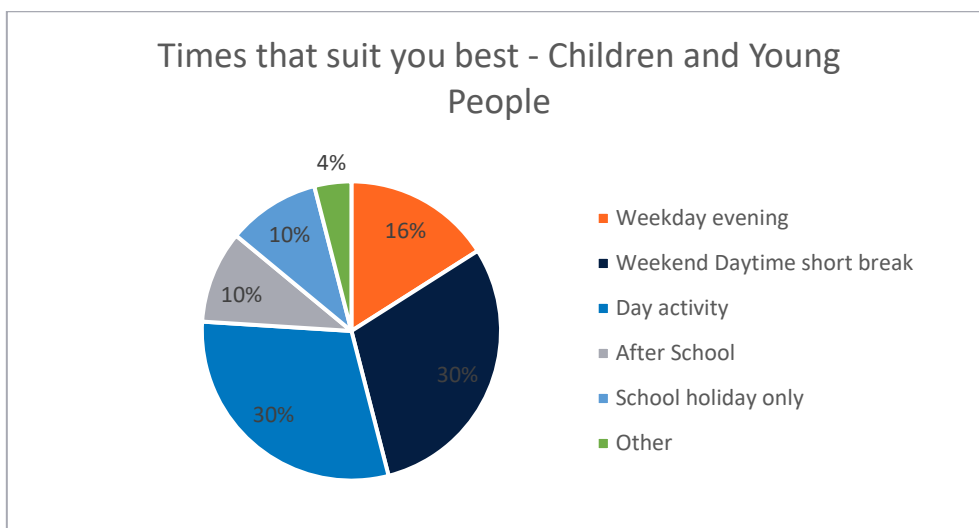
Which of the following would you be interested in?

The most popular choices for activities for children in the survey were day activities based on interests, short breaks in Ceredigion with a group and Breaks within Ceredigion



What times would suit you best?

Survey respondents indicated a preference for day activities and weekend daytime short breaks (30% of responses each). 16% of people also chose weekday evening. Fewer people wanted after school or school holiday activities (10% each)



One person commented that they do not have money to do anything.

Conclusions

The Children and young people that participated expressed views on the things that they would like to change. They included normalising their life experience by allowing those in care to participate in activities open to other children and young people.

They would like to minimise the stigma associated with being looked after by the local authority.

They also set out a range of activities that they would wish to participate in and the places that they would like to do them in and the places that they enjoy being in.

In terms of when they would wish to see additional activities the focus was on weekends and daytime short breaks. Few wanted school holiday or after school activities.

Importantly one person pointed out that a lack of money can prevent people taking part in some activities.

Young people of transition age (16-24 years):

Young people with a variety of issues who were in the age group 16-24 who may therefore transition from young people's services into services for adults were specifically engaged.

21 people of transition age responded to the survey. Only 5 out of those 21 people knew what services were available to people of transition age.

6 people took part in a session facilitated by Practice Solutions.

In the survey, 16 people reported having a physical or mental health condition, 4 had no mental or physical health condition and 1 person preferred not to say. Of those who reported a condition, 6 did not have a care plan.

What people want in the future from services

People that answered the survey told us that it is very important that they can make their own choices. Other things they told us were:

- I should be allowed to self-direct my own support rather than be tied into a service that isn't my choice
- I want to be with people my own age and be out in the community.
- I want to work
- Organised activities for groups of people my age with autism.
- More Personal Assistants so I can access things
- Services that enabled people to access their community, and enable family members to have respite / access work / respite
- A day service which can provide activities, a friend, socialisation, communication, opportunities, change of scenery, a sense of belonging.

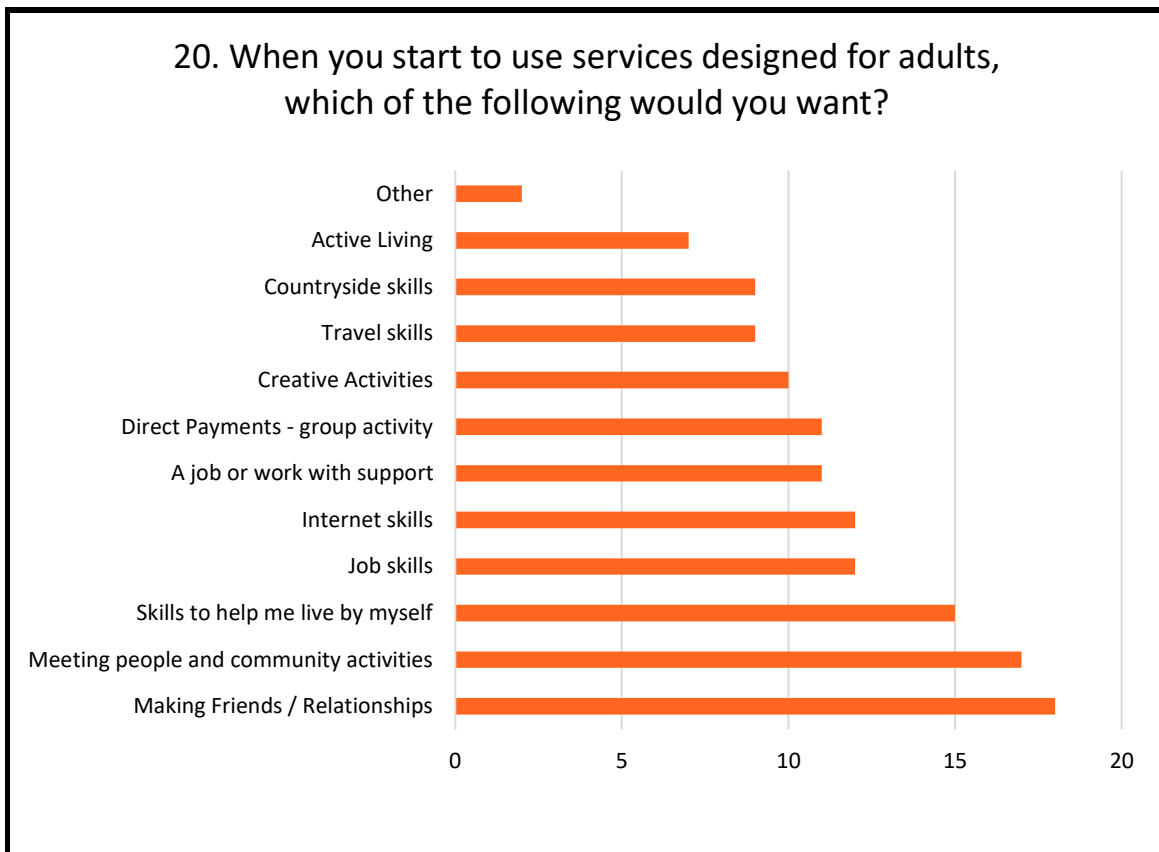
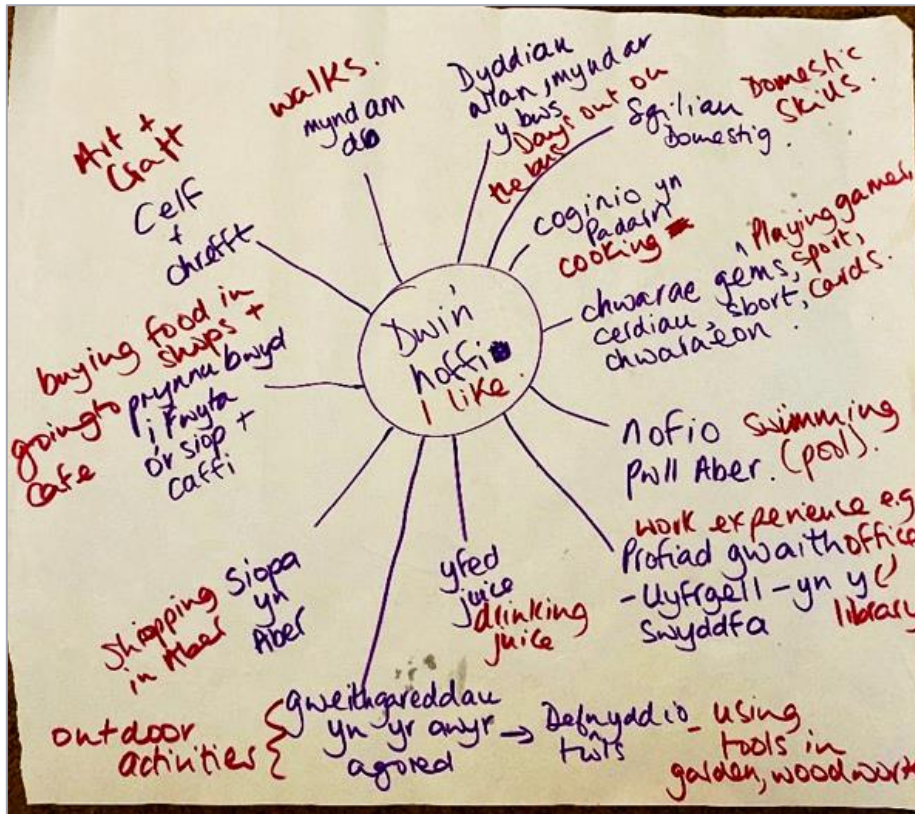
What we would change about day and respite services

Whilst the majority of responses were positive, someone commented that they felt day services were of lower quality than what you can access in school and college.

Survey: Activities that people would like the Council to offer – People of transition age

22 people responded to the question about what types of activities they think they would like to access when they become adults. The results are shown in the chart below, with the three most popular choices including having a job or developing job skills, social skills (making friends and meeting people to do activities), and digital skills.

Sample diagram used to record respondents' views on the activities that people would like the council to offer



The three most preferred activities for people of transition age that they felt they would like to be offered when they access adult services were making friends / relationships (18 responses), meeting people and community activities (17 responses) and skills to help me live by myself (15 responses).

People of transition age also made comments about the types of services they would like as adults and other services.

“It is a scramble to get things in place, no forward planning, no transition social worker in place, never know what’s happening next.”

“Camu M’laen is a really positive structure but what next?”

“Limited access to sheltered housing / hard to access.”

What do you like about day / respite services now?

- Seeing friends
- Staff
- Routine

What would you change about day / respite services?

- Boys and girls in the group
- More visits to national library
- Work experience opportunities
- More day trips/days out
- Go out in community, socialising
- Be with people
- Do life skills and cooking
- Want a bus/ transport
- More consistency is staff working with them
- More consistency with vehicles
- Go to leisure centre
- Less changes in base location
- Interactive screen in centre
- Deep pressure sessions
- Sensory experiences
- No info about what is happening next once these service users leave transition
- They have had to fight to get places at their next place

What hours would you like to be able to access support?

- Uncertainty from some group members
- 1 individual said they would like weekend
- 1 individual said they would not like weekend

How do you travel to activities?

- Bus
- Car
- Taxi

Activities you enjoy

- Art on walls – our artwork and photos of achievements
- Pictorial register of who's in each day
- Cooking communal meal
- Learning new accredited / recognised skills

One parent informed they have returned questionnaires and submitted them to the consultation process: from their son's perspective and from their own.

Conclusions

The people in the young people in transition group focussed their wishes on being more socially and physically active. They want to develop life and employment skills and they want to work. Some said that day services tend to be of lower quality than those provided in school or college.

Some stated that they do not always know what is available to them and that they have to scramble to access services as they move into adulthood.

They stated that they enjoy routine and seeing friends and staff. Transport is an issue as is accessing some facilities.

Adults with a learning disability

93 people with learning disabilities took part in the consultation – 49 spoke to us in person, 2 online and a further 44 people responded to the survey.

What we like about day and respite services

Many participants spoke about enjoying day centres, with positive relationships with the staff. They also mentioned enjoying the range of activities on offer, benefiting from the routine.

What we would change about day and respite services

- Communication
- Activities
- Community Places
- Transport

People with learning disabilities spoke positively about the minibuss transport, and those that did not have it anymore said this had had a very negative impact on them.

What types of activities are most important to you?

Many participants told us that they enjoy attending the day centre and that it is a big part of their life.

There were a HUGE number of activities that people feel are important. The range of activities described identifies that people enjoy different things and whilst they are similar to people in general their desires are unique and should be addressed in person centred assessment and planning.

The types of activities that matter to people include:

- Skills development
- Getting out and about and exploring
- Socialising
- The arts
- Relaxing and looking after my emotional wellbeing
- Being outdoors
- Work and learning
- Staying active

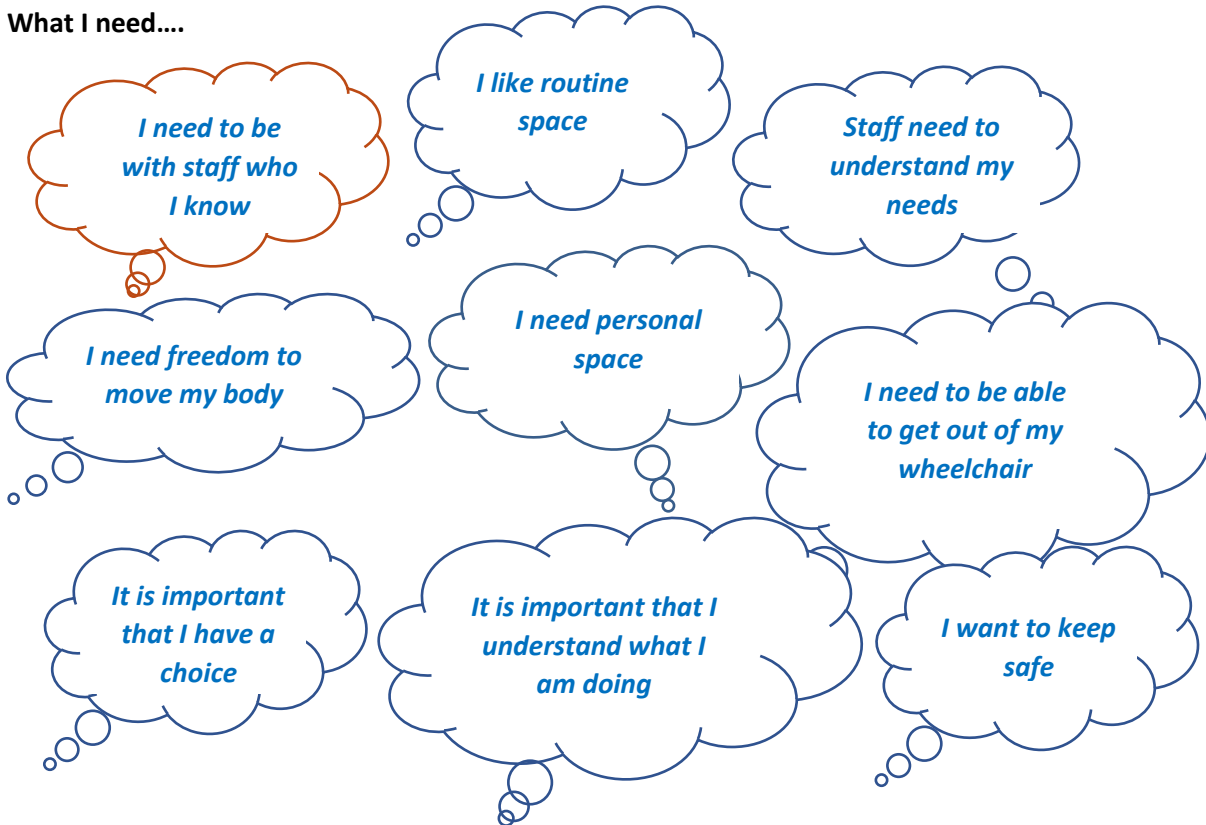
All the activities that participants talked about are things that are meaningful to them. It was very important to participants that they be given a choice of things to do based on their individual interests, goals, and areas for personal development. A full list of activities discussed is available at Appendix D

In addition to the activities that are meaningful to them, people also described the places that matter. These are captured in the illustration below. A full list of places that they identified are included at Appendix D.

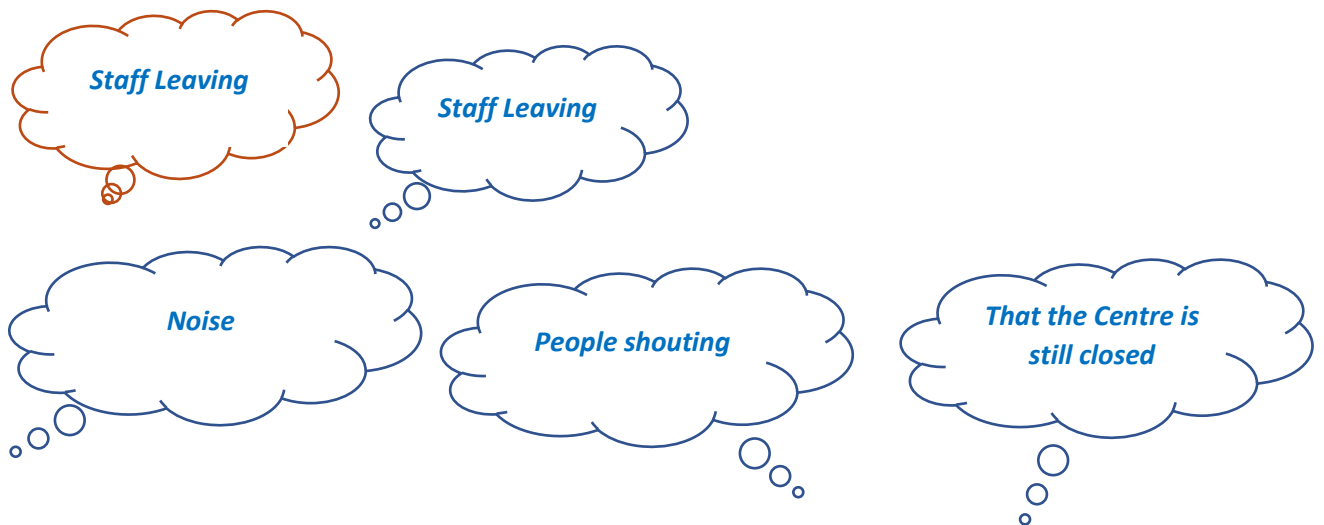
What should we know about you?

Participants shared more about themselves with facilitators, telling us about their personality, what they need from day and respite activities, and what they do not like. Some of the themes are illustrated below.

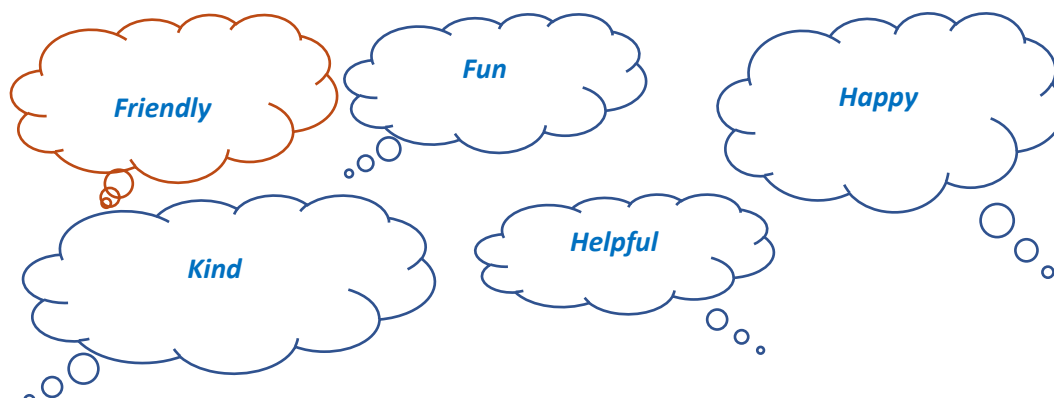
What I need....



I Don't Like...



Describing Me...



What do you like about day and respite services?

Positive relationships with staff

What would you change about day and respite services?

Many people spoke about missing activities that used to be offered before the Covid-19 pandemic that have not come back. They also spoke about friends who used to come to day centre but have not returned. In some cases, this was very upsetting for participants as they felt they were not able to see their friends and did not understand why. Several expressed the importance of asking those living in supported accommodation being able to share their views.

The main worry of those that participated in engagement was that day services would not return to how they had been before the pandemic.

Two people that attend day centre spoke about missing speaking to the elderly like they did before when there was a café.

During our work, we noted major unrest and upset over the closure of Padarn and relocation to an Aberystwyth venue. The Council have advised that the centre was closed due to refurbishment post-Covid-19. Respondents express concerns that there had been Council communications promising its reopening, however it continued to remain closed, and this was causing distress as their belief was the current facility is too small and cannot accommodate as many. There was a belief that services were limited as to the number of activities that can be undertaken at the present venue, including gardening, cooking etc.

Concerns were communicated around significantly reduced and/or scaled back services, access and/or transport and the resultant lack of care/support for many clients post Covid-19. Many clients said they are yet to return to centre provision due to the lack of space and/or transport.

What would ideal day and respite services look like?

Participants in workshops spoke about the importance of people accessing services being involved in the design and delivery of whatever happens next. This is sometimes referred to as coproduction. It is also important that people work with staff to develop their care and support plan.

Transport was highlighted as a key issue for many people – suggesting that an ideal day and respite service would have access to a minibus to activities for those who need it. Travel to and from day centres as well as going out to activities was noted by many as essential to their participation. This was particularly true for those living in more rural areas.

Participants in workshops really valued work experience and meaningful activities. They were also keen to have support around developing life skills like gardening, cooking, shopping, and using local services like the bank and library. Many participants also placed high value on physical exercise and getting out and about.

Structure is very important, and participants asked to have the same schedule each day / week to help them to have a routine.

Those who took part in the engagement workshops asked for longer hours including weekend and evening access overall.

More people who responded to the survey also agreed to extended hours. 32 people with learning difficulties responded to the survey. Of those, 21 responded 'Yes' to extending hours to include evenings and weekends, while 7 did not agree with this change (the others did not have an opinion).

Regular communication was very important – about activities taking place in the community and also to keep people and their families up to date about what is happening with service changes – both online and offline.

Ideal services would have both buildings and also take people out into the community. Accessible buildings with appropriate changing, toileting and mobility features are critical for those with physical care needs.

Short Breaks

- Well trained and experienced staff
- Direct points of relevant Council contacts for carers
- Increase availability of domiciliary care and respite
- Increased training for staff – introduces apprenticeship opportunities to encourage people to the sector
- Provide more local support – explore use of local venues e.g., church halls, community centres
- Increase work placement opportunities for service users
- Reintroduce and focus on meaningful and stimulating activities which promote life skills in particular days out, cooking, gardening, shopping, using local services e.g., bank, library, leisure centres and wellbeing centres

Examples of best practice:

- Men's shed
- Camu M'laen
- Forget me knot
- Arts for wellbeing
- Age Cymru Be-friending
- The Care Society

Service user responses:

"I like coming to the centre to see my friends."

"Don't take our centre(s) away."

"We want our bus back so we can go places and do things."

"Somewhere safe and happy. To be included and not left in the corner."

Conclusions

The range of activities described by those adults with a learning disability who participated in the review was vast. The settings in which they would wish to be active was also varied. This demonstrates people's individuality and the necessity when planning to support people to use person centred planning. People expressly want to be involved in the future planning of services and in the co-production of their care and support plans.

People were also clear that they wish to be communicated with, not only to express their choices but to ensure they understand how their needs will be met.

People expressed a desire for routine, a calm environment and stability including continuity of relationships with staff and with their friends who also attend.

People were concerned about the reduction of services during the pandemic and felt that many had not reverted to previous provision when restrictions were lifted. Particular concerns were raised about the closure of Padarn.

Transport was highlighted as crucial to ensuring access to the centre and community facilities. Centres were identified as particularly important for those with personal care needs. Retention of the centres was highlighted.

People wanted an extension of hours and days when services are available.

People with dementia

26 people with dementia took part in the consultation – 5 completed surveys and 21 spoke to us in person.

What we like about day and respite services

People with dementia told us that they enjoy taking part in day opportunities at venues that are tailored to their interests. They do not necessarily want to go to a 'day centre' and some felt that this was stigmatising. Participants interviewed were attending voluntary sector day activities. There are currently no Council run day activities for people with dementia.

In terms of respite, a few people expressed that it is good for their family members to have a break and that it is best when they can go out to do activities. People with dementia did not wish to go to residential care homes for respite.

Some people reported having positive experiences with direct payments.

People spoke positively about smart technology and how it is supporting them to stay home, including alarms on doors, flood sensors, a tracker watch etc. This also enabled carers to go out a bit more, knowing that their loved one was safe.

What we would change about day and respite services

There was a strongly expressed view that respite and day activities are currently severely limited for people with dementia in Ceredigion. This was expressed by a wide range of people throughout the engagement.

Direct payments were felt to be complicated, with a lot of hoops to jump through and little support around the process.

People spoke about the need for greater accessibility and shorter wait times for respite care.

Additional areas of concerns highlighted in responses include:

- Day centres have not re-opened after Covid
- A feeling that the right things are not being funded
- Two people commented that there is high staff turnover and that they seldom have the same support worker twice, which can be confusing for someone with dementia
- Some People with dementia perceived that respite care means having little to do i.e., don't want to sit in a chair and require stimulation and involvement in activities
- Concern that they will lose skills if no activities are in place

Communication

People with dementia spoke about being unsure what was available locally – some good suggestions about ways to improve communication included:

- Resource packs
- Posters (in libraries, community centres etc)
- Communications activities
- Online information (for some people)

Which of the following would you consider important for your short break opportunity? What types of activities or short breaks would you mostly be interested in? (People with memory problems or dementia)

People with dementia and memory problems identified a range of types of short breaks including:

- With family and / or friends
- Day activities based on interest area x3
- Staying in Ceredigion
- Residential holiday service for adults x2
- Access to targeted short breaks
- Access to emergency respite
- Self-catering accommodation
- Countryside settings
- Residential care provision

Activities Preferred by people with dementia that we spoke to:

A wide range of activities were identified by those we spoke to with dementia including:

- Intergenerational activities with younger people
- Socialising
- Tai Chi
- Singing groups
- Women's Institute
- Walking
- Swimming
- Reading
- Church groups
- Keep fit for dementia
- Arts and crafts
- baking
- music

"There seems to be fewer options since Covid in terms of activities and support."

Some people felt there were a lack of activities tailored to men such as woodworking. Most activities listed by individuals that they enjoyed were out in the community rather than formal services, most often delivered by the voluntary sector. There was a preference to be integrated in the community, rather than separated in a centre.

Community Places

Overall there was a sense that voluntary sector organisations struggle to receive any funding and are often at risk of closure.

Some people suggested that there could be better use of existing community spaces for activities such as accessible buildings including care homes, community halls etc.

People spoke about the challenge of long waiting times for respite care – they felt that it would be good to be able to access respite in care home for a weekend to try before doing longer periods.

A couple of comments:

"Very confusing to get information and diagnosis."

"One person to help navigate the system would be positive."

Transport

Transport is a major challenge for people with dementia, who may not be driving or using public transport anymore and often rely on family members to support getting around.

Conclusions

While day and respite services were described by some as very limited for people with dementia or memory problems. There were also useful suggestions on how communication could be improved.

The perception was that services that are available are provided by the third sector with no specific council provided services.

People said they want less stigmatised activity opportunities in community settings. They want services based in centres that enable them to undertake activities.

Some people had positive experiences of using direct payments whilst others said that their use was too complicated.

People valued the fact that services allow respite as this is supportive of family members, but some felt that wait times are too long. They said that opportunities to sample respite before committing would be welcomed. The use of assistive technologies was believed to be helpful for giving peace of mind to family members.

As with other groups they stated that access to transport goes hand in glove with access to services.

People had clear views of the activities they would like to engage in and where and what type of respite settings they would wish to access.

Family members and carers

100 family members and carers took part in the consultation– 21 in person, 5 online and 74 completed the survey.

What we like about day and respite services

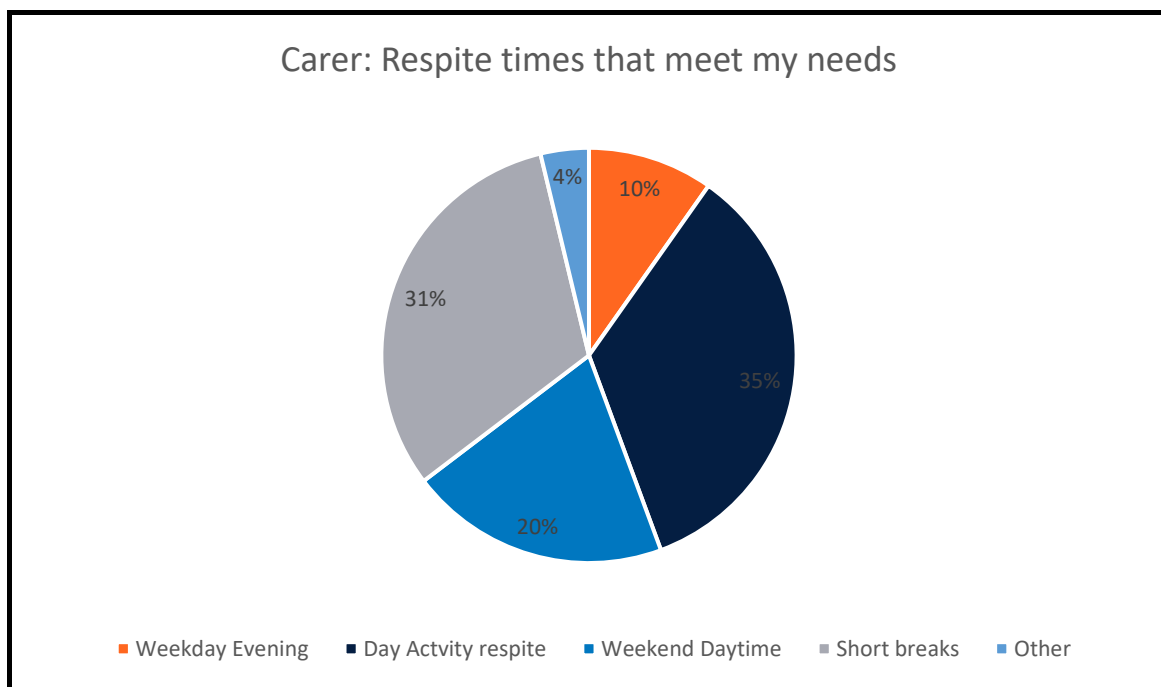
Feedback captured that current services are invaluable and a key support to enable them to continue in caring roles. It spoke warmly about staff and felt they really understood the person they care for well. Employees were also described as highly skilled. All carers felt day services were positive and wanted them to continue.

For those using direct payments, they largely report a positive experience with more flexibility and appropriate support for the person they care for.

“The carer assessment was fairly quick – but the support never came.”

If you are an unpaid carer, which respite service opportunities would best meet your needs?

79 people responded to this question in the survey. People sometimes chose multiple responses. The pie chart below shows that the most preferred types of respite include day activity respite (35%) and short breaks (31%), followed by weekend daytime activities (20%).



Carer comments on the survey also told us that any respite is valuable, and that having flexibility and being able to book ahead is essential. Carers also told us that if there is not a service during the day when they are working it would not allow them to continue caring because they need to be able to pay the bills.

What we would change about day and respite services

Some respondents expressed concerns that existing services might be taken away and a few people concerned about family members might not being able to return to day centres after the covid pandemic. There was a perception from some people that their service has stopped during this period. Families also spoke about the impact of not seeing friends that had been discharged on those they care for, with one person noting their child had been in ‘floods of tears’ many times missing their friend living in supported accommodation because they were not able to attend.

There were some concerns about the lack of private carers available for people on direct payments and some people reported challenges in doing the administrative function. There was a reported lack of support to assist with managing the budget and accounting processes. In a few cases, this led to not taking up direct payments – for two people, they were then discharged due to a lack of engagement - despite still wanting support.

Carers expressed concern about lack of transport in some locations.

Carers felt that some residential homes should be used for only respite and that former care homes be re-opened for this purpose.

Carers asked that day centres re-open as they were before Covid but with the option for other times including evenings and weekends, noting that some people prefer flexible choices.

Carers reported a lot of staff turnover:

“I want to be able to talk to the same person within social services, instead of repeating yourself every time you ring up”

Communication

A concern raised around communications was around the perception that their family member had been discharged from support or had their days reduced at day centre without communication from the council. Many people expressed a desire for improved communication to families about what is happening with the transformation programme. Many had not heard about the consultation until contacted to attend a workshop. It was also believed by some respondents that staff have been unable to answer their queries and were unsure of what was planned.

There was a request from a few people for advocacy services to be more involved with service users and families.

All of those who took part in the consultation were keen to continue being involved in the next steps.

Activities

Some families reported that there continues to be a high level of concern about risk, post Covid-19, with a feeling that activities had not fully resumed. Concerns were raised about it potentially taking months for a risk assessment for new activities to take place. Several people noted that the kitchen has not reopened which means people are not able to learn cooking skills. One person stated that they believed they were advised that they cannot attend any out of county activities even when these are close to the county border. People miss taking part in gardening activities.

Comments include:

“Need for meaningful activities such as life skills and work experience and greater creativity.”

“Carers felt choice should be offered and a range of supports including 1:1, group activities, Gateway club etc. Activities should be meaningful.”

“Carers shared best practice examples of activities including Men’s Sheds, forget me knot, Arts 4 wellbeing, Age Cymru befriending and the care society.”

“Carers were supportive of integration but felt that health and safety need to be considered and felt staff should have training to work with new client groups.”

“Carers asked for more flexible direct payment options.”

Community Places

In the brainstorming sessions, carers asked for longer care calls to allow for clients that require more support, and nighttime care / respite which is currently not available.

Village halls are accessible to smaller communities.

Transport

This has been affected by the lack of transport for those they care for. A couple of carers suggested that car-pooling to activities would be helpful, rather than having individual support workers taking people to activities in the community.

Carers also felt that transport should be easily accessible, affordable, and available for day hire for activities.

Comments from carers:

"We need answers to questions asked and not brushed under the carpet."

"Why can't the day centres be used as before Covid."

"Routines are broken."

Carers felt that staff should be well trained, and administrative staff should support improved communication and be key points of contact.

Conclusions

Carers were clear that day opportunity and respite services are essential to enable them to continue in their caring role. Day time support was highlighted as crucial as it allows people to work. Carers identified those respite opportunities for themselves that would assist them.

Being able to book respite in advance would help as would flexibility which can be enhanced by direct payments. Whilst direct payments were valued, they were seen as complex with no assistance available for carers to support their administration.

Carers are concerned by the impact of the pandemic with services limited or curtailed impacting on continuity of care and friendships.

Limited staffing and venues for respite are a concern as is the availability of transport. Some suggested car sharing, or pool cars could help.

Communication was highlighted as an issue. Carers want to be actively involved in future changes to services.

Foster Carers

We spoke with experienced foster carers, who shared with us that it can be very challenging finding activities for children of different ages, and that respite is no longer available through the Council, where it used to be regularly provided

Carers noted that there used to be project workers that took children out for the day and supported individual needs, but these staff are no longer supporting foster placements.

Covid was a difficult time to be a foster parent as children had no parental contact or support and were off school.

Case Study: Foster carers requested respite once a month, however there are no longer any respite foster carers to support this. They commented:

“We used to all help each other. An emergency respite carer was arranged when things got to breaking point – but they sometimes cancelled last minute, which was very distressing. Now we have nothing.”

One suggestion was that a network of foster respite carers be established to support one another – *The Mockingbird Programme* was cited as an example of good practice.¹

Foster carers noted the importance of continuity around social workers but said there had been a lot of changes recently and often it was an unknown agency worker supporting foster children. In one case a child had 12 social workers in 2 years.

Foster carers also noted that there was a lack of communication from the Council, and that in one case they had never been offered any support or made aware of any activities.

Day trips had reduced, and foster families were no longer invited to meals together. One family noted that having an activity on the weekend once a month would enable the family to have some time away from their fostering role and also introduce the children to others their age.

Foster carers noted that many people were leaving to go to private agencies and that the Council could do more to make fostering attractive such as running recruitment events and flexibility. A couple stated they were feeling quite disconnected and isolated and felt a loss of a sense of community.

Conclusions

Foster carers were concerned that respite to themselves and supportive social events have ended, even though during the pandemic they were under greater strain than previously.

They feel isolated and would welcome more communication. High turnover of social workers and the consequent lack of continuity exacerbates these problems.

¹ [The Mockingbird programme | The Fostering Network](#)

Community organisations providing support to people with disabilities.

We spoke to a wide range of organisations across Ceredigion – 21 different organisations online and a further 3 took part in the survey. The providers run many programmes for people with mental health conditions, learning and physical disabilities, dementia and substance misuse are offered, for both children and adults across Ceredigion.

A few organisations had Council funding and a longstanding positive relationship with the Council. They spoke about being able to access training such as autism awareness, which has been invaluable to their staff. Several of the voluntary sector organisations spoke of the lack of opportunity to access Council funding and expressed the view that they offer a valuable service to people accessing support from the local authority but are at risk of closing without support.

What organisations told us about respite care

There was felt to be a lack of access to respite across Ceredigion, with very few services identified by participants.

Many participants noted that families really need 24/7 specialist respite care, both for children and adults. There need to be emergency spaces for those who need it and regular breaks for families at risk of carer breakdown. There also needs to be some facility to plan ahead for holidays and longer breaks of a week or more. Many get by with only a couple of hours a week to leave the house in which time they need to do all their shopping and chores and do not get any rest.

Communication

One provider spoke about having a longstanding positive relationship with the Council, with key contacts in each department being very helpful and supportive. However, they noted that they are finding the new services (CLIC and call centres) not as helpful and described spending a long time on the phone trying to ask queries that were followed up on immediately before the transition. The Carers Unit in the Council was said to be very good at sharing information with carers registered to them. There had been a perceived withdrawal of community connectors, who seem to have less contact than before.

Several organisations said that they felt out of touch with the local authority and had little communication from them – none of the organisations had heard of the pending changes today and respite services, until they were contacted directly to take part in engagement.

Providers would have liked to be involved with the planning around day and respite activities from the beginning. It was very important to them that they are kept informed throughout the process and given opportunities to help shape and support the work. Many spoke about learning of changes through families - asking them if they had heard what was happening.

The *Connect Ceredigion* website was felt to be a positive step but will only be as up to date, as providers are able to allocate time to update it. It was felt that if community connectors establish positive relationships with providers, they can then learn about upcoming events and activities to share with residents of Ceredigion.

Activities

Those we engaged with advocated a wide range of meaningful activities and felt that the community has a lot to offer, but that most people do not know the breadth of what is available.

There are many activities currently available in the community offered by the services, both via referral from health or social care, or drop in. Of those we spoke to, day and respite services on offer included:

- Exercise programmes and comprehensive wellbeing offer at new leisure centre including pre-diabetes programme, exercise buddies' scheme, and exercise referral (NERS), mostly accessible via referral from NHS
- Healthy living activities
- Bereavement counselling
- Support to carers
- Outreach support to people living in isolated rural areas
- Youth activities such as summer programmes and holiday play scheme
- Respite for children and young people, and weekends away with groups of up to six children
- Drop-in centre for advice on financial matters

Community partners had mixed views on whether through-age activities bringing people with different needs together was a good idea – some felt this was very positive, whilst others expressed concern that staff would not be appropriately trained to work with individuals with different types of needs due to their expertise in the area they currently work.

Supported housing providers spoke about offering a mix of activities to residents – they noted the negative impact of people no longer being able to attend day centres, though some residents still do attend on reduced days. One person in particular living in supported accommodation was said to have felt abandoned, and to cry because they miss their friends and do not enjoy going out with their support worker as much as they liked the centre. The types of activities vary but included support in the home, going shopping, to Gateway club, out for a drive or for food in the evenings.

Two providers noted a gap in the provision of service for people who are neurodiverse or have autism.

There was a suggestion that having a community calendar of upcoming activities would be very helpful for providers to know what is happening locally and to enable people to choose what they would like to take part in.

Challenges

Several organisations spoke about offering activities on very tight budgets and one-year pots of funding. This has meant they often have to ration care, respite in particular is very oversubscribed, and there are long waiting lists for some of activities. Where group activities are offered, the organisations try to plan outings based on what interests the most individuals in the group but are often limited by a lack of transport or funding beyond visits to local parks or seaside. The retention of staff in the voluntary sector in particular has been very challenging due to the lack of contracts of more than one year long, zero-hour contracts and subsequent high staff turnover.

Where referrals for support are received from the local authority, it was felt that there could be more direction around what specific activities are requested and for how long i.e., a request for respite could be a one off but currently once on the list people stay there for life without regular review. Clear goals for individuals and what they hope to achieve could also be more clearly described. Since Covid, the Council has referred far fewer people to activities, and some of the people who used to attend have been discharged and lost touch with services. A play scheme that was previously oversubscribed is not filling spaces. A few people mentioned that they felt the threshold to receive services had increased significantly over the past two years owing to the challenges in the care sector.

Some services described a process where clients were discharged during Covid with the onset of the through-age model in 2021. Where they were at maximum capacity, this is now significantly reduced. Concern was expressed about these clients and what alternatives they may have been offered. Some families have approached external organisations to say they were not informed of their discharge until they

phoned to enquire and were told they no longer have a key worker / are closed to review. This is reported to be causing some distress.

Opportunities

A few providers mentioned that one of their major challenges is covering the costs of buildings with increasing rent and bills due to the cost-of-living crisis. They felt that if the Council made accessible buildings like leisure centres and day centres available to book by community groups outside of normal hours, this would enable a wide range of additional activities and events for the community at a much lower cost, saving both providers and the Council money and increasing the offer of support to those who would benefit from it. Suggestions included youth clubs, cinema nights, and having people who access services run a café or host dinner for the community to gain work experience. The new leisure centre has a lift, hoist in the pool and accessible toilets. Canolfan Steffan in Lampeter is more modern and has changing hoists.

Some buildings such as respite facilities have a kitchen and other amenities tailored to meet the needs of people with a wide range of needs.

Many expressed that these venues could be used in the evenings and at weekends to hold activities without additional cost to the Council.

People spoke positively about the new well-being centres and wanted to know more about when and where the other two would open. There was some uncertainty about how people can access the services available.

A suggestion was made that the creation of a pathway approach to map out possible supports through different ages would be helpful, in planning ahead for individuals.

Providers felt that if the Council involves charities and community groups in service planning, there would be positive partnerships that could support more holistic care, and closer working across services. By working closely with the NHS, voluntary and Council could together provide much more streamlined day and respite support that could ultimately prevent hospital admissions and declining health / quality of life.

Carers

Providers working with carers noted that it can be difficult to find appropriate services. There are not a lot of things on offer for carers, and it can be frustrating and stressful to seek support in the caring role. There was a sense that the unpaid carer workforce is fragile and without regular breaks at risk of being unable to continue, which then puts additional pressure on care services.

Transport

Transport is a key issue and several providers felt better access to a minibus with wheelchair ramp would support more activities given the rural nature of Ceredigion.

It was noted that for people living rurally without a car, public transport is sometimes not available or inappropriate. Alternatives like Country Cars and a discounted taxi service can be oversubscribed, and a barrier for some who cannot afford the rates to travel.

Conclusions

Organisations described a good relationship with the council but fear that services may be under threat due to funding issues.

They identified gaps in respite provision due to a shortage of services can be particularly difficult for carers who sometimes get inadequate support to undertake necessary tasks. Unpaid carers were seen as vital but also fragile due to the amount of support some receive.

Several participants raised issues with communication both operationally, worse since the introduction of CLIC, and strategically. They said they had not been aware of proposed changes until invited to participate in the review.

Organisations stated that a lot of services are available in the community listing a broad range. However, people frequently do not know about them. Connect Ceredigion was viewed as helpful but needs to be up to date to be relevant. Ironically although services are available and funding is tight referrals to some services have dropped since the pandemic.

High turnover of social workers and the reduction in the number of community connectors is unhelpful. Services described a lack of goal orientation once referrals are made with little follow up or review.

The availability of stable staffing is a particular challenge for services, worsened by short term funding streams.

Organisations had mixed views about through age services due to the specialism required for some clients, others welcomed the opportunities that they might afford.

Staff were concerned that since the pandemic some people had services withdrawn and expressed concern as to what has happened to them.

They believe that many community resources such as leisure centres and other public buildings could be used to plug gaps at limited cost. They believe that working in close collaboration with the council and NHS assets could be better used and systems streamlined that would be beneficial to all not least those with support needs and their carers.

Transport was identified as a particular problem due to availability and affordability.

Ceredigion Staff and Council Officers

We met with a wide range of council employees across different service areas.

27 staff met with us online, and 7 in person. 12 also completed a survey.

These included:

- Staff working with older people
- Staff working with carers
- Staff working in Community Learning Disability Teams
- Staff working in extended support
- Staff working with children and young people

What we like about day and respite services

Staff spoke warmly about their colleagues and noted their specific skillsets in working with people who have different needs. There was a belief that staff in day services know clients very well and that changes will be difficult, but positive if done in the right way.

Staff agree with the principle of person-centred care and believe that this is largely done already.

What we would change about day and respite services

Council employees expressed views around how services operate. Some of the key points included:

- Some people expressed a view that services are risk averse, such as keeping Covid restrictions going too long and not trying new activities in case anything happens
- Staff expressed concern that those living in supported accommodation would not be able to access activities, as they were discharged during Covid and not all individuals have returned to day activities
- There is limited availability of appropriate transport for those attending activities – more escorts and vehicles needed (some participants can make their own way / should be encouraged where possible)

Referrals

There is no brokerage service, which means social workers spend a lot of time administratively arranging packages of care and support. This reduces the time they have to engage with service users and to undertake regular reviews.

Staff spoke about needing a streamlined process as there are currently multiple referral forms / inclusion criteria. There was a belief that services could work more closely together and with community and NHS colleagues to deliver wrap around support. It was felt that improvements to the referral process would also help to reduce waiting lists and provide a better service to people.

Future service provision

Choice should be the centre of everything that happens.

Most employees agreed with plans to extend hours to include evenings and weekends and felt staff should be offered a choice of shift patterns and flexible working.

Buildings

- There should be regular buildings that act as a safe base – familiarity and routine were felt to be important
- Buildings should be accessible with good transport links

- Buildings need some special facilities like a sensory room and kitchen

Communication

- Staff would like to be kept informed and involved throughout the process, and valued the opportunity to share their views
- Used to hold advocacy groups with quarterly meeting to involve service users / groups – to bring this back and also to hold workshops / groups throughout process with those accessing services
- Employees spoke positively about the workshops but wondered whether their views would be taken on board by the Council with regards to next steps

Activities

- There was a view that there is a lack of appropriate alternative service provision to the day activities currently in place – Mencap and Shared Lives are in place and a few community activities, though there is no list and sometimes difficult to identify what is going on
- There was a consensus that it would be helpful to offer some activities with a wider range of people taking part, but that this needs to be done in a planned way, rather than 'big bang.' Some attendees at workshops spoke about past positive experiences of offering community events and intergenerational activities. Cooking and gardening also offer potential for a wide range of people to come together and learn new skills / share in a meal and so on
- Some staff suggested running pilots of new activities. It was felt to be important to have enough staff with the right skills present to support those attending. Things to consider include sensory issues, how much space is needed and quiet spaces, noise levels, air flow and temperature, personal care needs, safety considerations
- Many services have not returned post-pandemic, due to ongoing staffing challenges
- There is not enough commissioning of voluntary sector organisations to deliver services – many of them are experts and able to offer activities at less of a cost than through the council
- Staff felt that we could use Community Connectors to greater effect to have regular schedule of activities that people can join
- Should promote a community feel to activities but ensure decisions about which to attend based on individual need
- Direct payments can be useful but hard to get personal assistants to support with this, which restricts access

Types of activities

Activities should be a mix of buildings and community – staff in Ceredigion had a lot of ideas including:

- Cooking, gardening, clubs, activities, sports, food, cinema, exercise, daily living skills, work placements, social groups (Gateway club), holidays, Moulin Rouge, advocacy groups etc.
- Support with communication and developing skills
- Staff felt that there should be a balance social and meaningful activity
- Groups - to be facilitated by staff using skills etc to make choices
- Programme of activities that changes all the time
- There was a suggestion that the voluntary sector could use community day centres in the evening to run their own activities as they are struggling to pay rent currently, or that they could run some activities with service users during the day by being commissioned by the council.

Community Places

Staff spoke about new community connector roles and felt these could be used to better effect to find what is available in the community. They also suggested that community connectors could liaise with businesses to identify employment opportunities and placement experience.

Conclusions

Ceredigion staff and officers value the work of day opportunities and respite care staff recognising their skill, knowledge and understanding of clients. However, they view services as risk averse and slow to revert to pre pandemic levels some people who lost a service have not returned. They see transport as imperative for access to community facilities but recognise that where people can make their own way they should.

They agree with person centred planning stating that they already largely do it. They see people being able to make choices as central to everything that happens.

Referral processes were seen as bureaucratic and could be streamlined.

They were broadly welcoming of proposed changes but viewed buildings as important hubs for aspects of care. They were in favour of a phased introduction and the possible use of pilots for new activities. They wish to be involved in following through on proposals but want to ensure their views are considered.

They believe that more services should be commissioned via the third sector and that a brokerage system for care would reduce time spent seeking services. Community connectors were seen as potentially helpful in both co-ordination and commissioning of the necessary range of services.

Ceredigion Day Centre Employees

Day centre staff felt very upset about the proposed changes, because they felt they had not had enough information about what was happening and were worried about service cuts and the impacts on their jobs. They were also concerned that:

What we like about day and respite services

What LD staff would keep about services:

- Days and hours of the service / work-life balance, routine
- Sense of community / friendship
- Person-centred planning
- How the service was before covid
- Base as 'safe place'
- Access to equipment and transport (for those with a bus)
- Having tier of coordinators to support
- Respite support
- Work in area of expertise
- Advocacy for service users

What we would change about day and respite services

Employees reflected a number of feelings about the proposed changes. The main themes included:

- Being concerned that their voice would not be heard
- Feeling uncertain about what changes might mean for themselves and people that access services

What LD staff would change about services

- Bring back the service users discharged during covid
- Need for respect for professionalism and expertise of staff
- Bring project workers back
- Fewer restrictions around activities (risk aversion)
- Return people's hours to pre-Covid levels
- LD should have a base

What would ideal service look like?

- Regular hours (9am-4pm)
- New staff for evenings / weekends
- Centre as hub / base
- Use of centre for range of activities
- Better connections with community partners and able to access services from voluntary sector etc.
- Both in centre and out in community
- Good transport for all
- Integration with the community
- Cradle to grave transition support
- Help with employment opportunities
- People in supported living able to access activities
- Use of specialised knowledge with sensory needs, communication, and behavioural support from staff
- Person-centred /needs led care plans

- Assistive technology in place
- Good communication between all layers (frontline/managers)
- Training for staff
- Activities that are meaningful, interesting, planned & reviewed
- Canteen

Communication

There is a risk of losing staff to other sectors due to uncertainty over plans going forward.

Staff also feel stronger communication would enable them to discuss plans with those accessing support and their families, who have a lot of questions about what is happening.

- Staff would like to have a chance to influence the future of services
- Staff want to help shape the service
- Staff want to feel valued and heard
- Staff want more information about what it means to them and service users
- Staff want guidance and support
- Staff want managers to engage directly

Activities

- No budget for craft supplies and printing paper
- Some staff felt that restrictions put in place during covid mean that they are more limited in what they can offer to participants now
- Concern about lack of activities post Covid which was frustrating for support workers

Through Age Model

It is unclear to employees what exactly this means, and there are some concerns including:

- Whether there will be an expectation that all staff are 'masters of all things' in terms of understanding a wide range of disabilities / age groups/ equipment and so on
- Whether staff who are highly skilled in their areas of expertise will suddenly have a very large caseload / what it will mean practically speaking if age groups come together
- May be a lack of funding / training / staffing to support the new model
- Could be some issues around managing environment such as those requiring additional safety measures as per DoLs legislation (locked doors and so on) and also needs (diet, toileting, access issues etc)
- Legislation tells us that we can't mix looked after children with adults without particular permissions / risk and safety assessment and so on

Transport

Employees feel that more transport is required – both to assist people in getting to and from the day centres but also taking them out to do activities.

Conclusions

Ceredigion day opportunity and respite staff expressed concern about some of the proposed changes. They felt that they did not have enough information on the proposals and had not been engaged as early as they should have been. They want to participate in the implementation of change and ensure that their voice is heard.

They believe that some caution is required in integrating services due to specialist skills and knowledge being required to work with some client groups and the potential safeguarding issues that may arise not least in intergenerational work involving children.

They valued the pre-pandemic service and were concerned that changes may impact adversely on those who use the service and staff.

They wanted pre-COVID levels of service to be re-introduced and those who were discharged to return.

Whilst they value service bases, they wish to see integration, continued person centred ff, staff training, additional staff to cover extended hours, bigger budgets for activity resources, the use of assistive technologies and access to transport.

NHS Employees

We spoke to NHS staff from different backgrounds working in community and inpatient teams as well as speech and language therapists.

What we like about day and respite services

Patients spoke positively of day centre and enjoyed attending.

What we would change about day and respite services

Provide opportunities to use venues to support people in having integrated health visits to reduce transport challenges for staff and individuals i.e., to receive occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and other NHS staff in one day.

Day services, along with other types of care, support people to leave hospital. In recent months with a reduction in services available, health staff have noticed that people are waiting in hospital longer for support that will allow them to go home.

NHS staff identified that it would be beneficial if physical health care needs could be met while people are at day services, for example to undertake chiropody and haircuts.

Specific venues referenced included Hafan y Waun and Awel Deg care homes, which could be used for day centre participants and the community to hold events. They were referenced as examples of good practice and their refurbishment means they have a reminiscence room, tearoom, and can accommodate theatre nights etc. but were closed after being field hospitals. These should be re-opened.

There would be more opportunities for carers to come together and to receive support.

There are some difficulties in people finding personal assistants using direct payments, due to a shortage of these staff working in Ceredigion.

One NHS staff member referenced an example of good practice coming out from England's Warm Home schemes, which saw the community attending churches, pubs etc. to gather and stay warm. Many of these have continued, and there was a view that Ceredigion could do the same.

Communication

There is a desire to strengthen relationships between health and social care. Staff expressed that since the pandemic and differing policies on home working / different ways of working, it does feel that the NHS and local authorities have drifted apart a bit. NHS staff noted that it has been harder to reach social workers, and that they often are working from remote locations so cannot attend in person.

Staff spoke about the new Porth Gofal phone line and said this had made reaching the appropriate people in the Council very difficult and time consuming, where they used to have direct lines. GPs have stopped phoning the Council and are instead now turning to social prescribers, with the exception of the most complex cases as they cannot wait 40 minutes to speak with someone about a patient in the office.

There is a sense that most communication is now done through email or referral and is quite 'hands off' which means a lack of personal relationships.

The health board employs a third sector integration officer whose focus is locating activities in the community.

NHS staff noted that there seems to be a shortage of advocacy services for people with complex needs.

There would be more opportunities for people accessing services to have their voice heard.

Staff felt there were a wide range of good community venues that could be used, including Hafan y Waun and Maes Mwldan which are accessible buildings. Community events could be planned at more central locations such as Hafan Deg Lampeter. Staff referenced that people used to gather in care homes and take part in activities.

Activities

NHS employees felt there is scope to work more closely together around care and support planning for individuals with complex needs. They have noticed that there is less availability of day and respite services since the covid pandemic.

Allied health professionals such as occupational therapists noted that they would value hearing more about activities happening through the Council.

“We are standing on the outside looking in.”

The NHS spoke about a previous panel that was held jointly between health and social care to link people to supports. They feel that the introduction of one central phone line has led to delays as they no longer have direct contacts in the local authority and call handlers do not know what is needed every time. They have been turning more frequently to GP social prescribers to assist. The professionals line allowed access without a wait but staff now waiting over 30 minutes for a response and often have to give up and move to the next patient.

Staff spoke about the potential of community connectors to support integrated working but noted that this service had almost entirely withdrawn in recent months. When they reached out to meet with the connectors, they were told this could only be done out of hours as they no longer worked with the health board.

In terms of community activities, NHS staff we spoke to share the view that traditional day centre in daytime hours is vital for carer respite. It offers a social space, relationships, seated exercise, and is good for people with frailty. Since the pandemic, the NHS is seeing many more people with frailty after a period of reduced activities. There was a sense that people are still a bit reluctant to integrate with others as they used to, and more alcohol / substance misuse impacting on wellbeing.

It was felt that wellbeing hubs are a good opportunity but possibly targeted more to younger people. It is vital that the community support older people. Having centres in town is positive to increase integration. NHS staff noted that some defunded community organisations now seem to be closing.

It was noted that it is a big step for people to go from a few care calls a day at home to entering long term care – staff felt that day centre might help to bridge the gap and keep people at home longer. People might also access facilities such as hoisted baths and so on in the care home which would save a lot in equipment costs. They could also access a hot meal and take part in meaningful activities in the care home.

There was a sense that some of the community forums have been disbanded / not resumed since covid, which has a negative impact, particularly on carers. The carers forum used to have 35 organisations but most recently only had 3.

Transport

NHS staff noted that transport is essential for people to attend activities – for carers of people with dementia, they often have to attend with their loved one, which does not afford either person a break.

One staff member noted that rather than car sharing there are often 3 individual taxis with one person each which is not good value for money.

Communication

Participants feel that communication between the Council and NHS has broken down since covid. One reason might be the differences around working from home or the office, which means that social workers do not have as much contact with for example community nurses or occupational therapists as before.

There has been little communication from the Council over the past couple of years. Previously delivered training to staff (many years ago). The team feels out of the loop in terms of opportunities to work more closely.

NHS staff feel frustrated about the new changes that mean they can no longer phone a direct number when they need to reach an employee of the Council.

Conclusions

NHS staff valued the day opportunity and respite service which they added were valued by patients. They viewed these community facilities as crucial to assist discharge from hospital and may delay the need for some people to go into long term care. The reduction in service provision has led to delayed discharges.

They wish to see closer health and social care integration with day services being available for the delivery of some health and physical care services. They were concerned that there has been drift since the pandemic in health social care liaison and communication including G.P. referral patterns. This has been worsened by the introduction of the Porth Gofal phone line leading to a preference by health staff to use email which does not enable professional relationships to build. This they view as impacting on joint formulation of care and support packages. Improvements in communication are essential for closer working between staff and for those who use services and their carers.

They stated that some services used as field hospitals need to reopen.

Greater use of community facilities could add a range of options and transport was seen as essential to enable access to services and facilities.

Recommendations

1. Ceredigion County Council should pursue its plans to revise the provision of day opportunity and respite services drawing upon this report and its accompanying action plan.
2. The Council should consider developing the role of a transformation lead to oversee to drive the change management and implementation processes.
3. Ceredigion County Council should work with its partner agencies including the NHS and third sector service providers to ensure that any efficiencies that may be gained by joint operational and strategic planning may be attained. This will need to include the consideration of innovative approaches to resource sharing.
4. Ceredigion County Council should review its person-centred planning processes to ensure that these are effective, not overly bureaucratic and genuinely capture and promote service user voices and choices in individually tailored plans and in line with any statutory duties enshrined in the SSWBA and the MHM. All people using these services should have a high-quality person-centred plan. Where necessary it should review the care and support plans of those people impacted by service changes introduced during the pandemic. The reform should address as a priority, groups such as those with dementia, carers and foster carers for whom services have been identified as underdeveloped.
5. Ceredigion County Council needs to ensure that as service reform impacts upon provision that the needs of families and other unpaid carers are addressed with meaningful assessments and the provision of adequate support.
6. Ceredigion County Council together with its partners should consider adopting a hub and spoke model which utilises service centres as community hubs whilst drawing upon a range of community facilities to provide day opportunities that can provide those activities that people would like to access as close to their homes as possible. This should include supporting and enabling people to access paid employment and formal learning where appropriate.
7. Ceredigion County Council, together with its partners, should develop a transport strategy that ensures that the most efficient methods are used to enable access to day opportunity and respite services. This will need to consider public and private transport together with Council provided transport.
8. In pursuing its reform agenda, the Council will need to engage with service users, carers, council staff and those working in other agencies via formal and informal consultation. Fora previously used to engage these groups should be reviewed and where appropriate reinstated to enable the processes of partnership working in the delivery of the agreed Action Plan.
9. The Council should consider canvassing opinion on the proposal to rename its day centres as part of its wider consultation on service reform.

Appendix A: Demographics

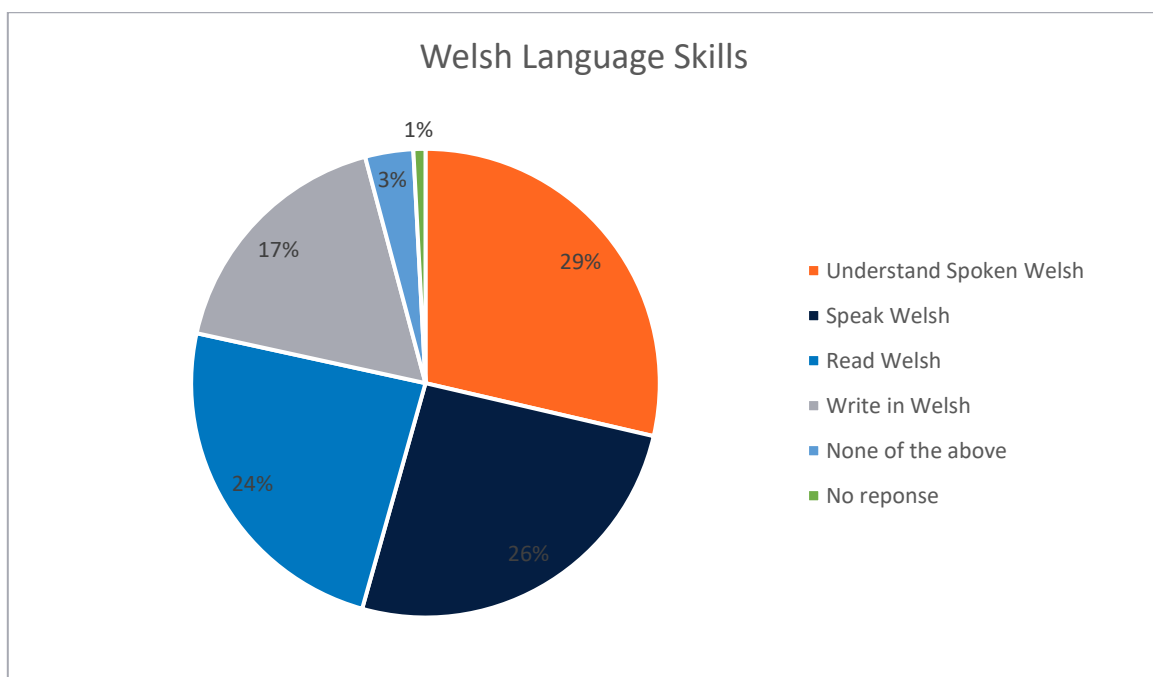
Welsh Language

6% of people (11 individuals) completed survey in Welsh, while 18% indicated a preference for the Welsh language

93% of people completed survey in English (179 people), while 73% indicated a preference for the English language

17% prefer Welsh verbal communication from the Council, while 10% prefer Welsh written communication

In terms of the Welsh language skills expressed by survey respondents, below is a breakdown of self-reported confidence levels



Religion

The majority of survey respondents (55%) identified themselves as Christian, with the next biggest categories being no religion (19%), prefer not to say (19%) and atheist (6%). Only three people (2%) identified as another religion (Wiccan, Buddhist and Omnist).

Gender and sexual orientation

21% of survey respondents were male and 66% were female – less than 1% identified as other. (13% did not respond or preferred not to say).

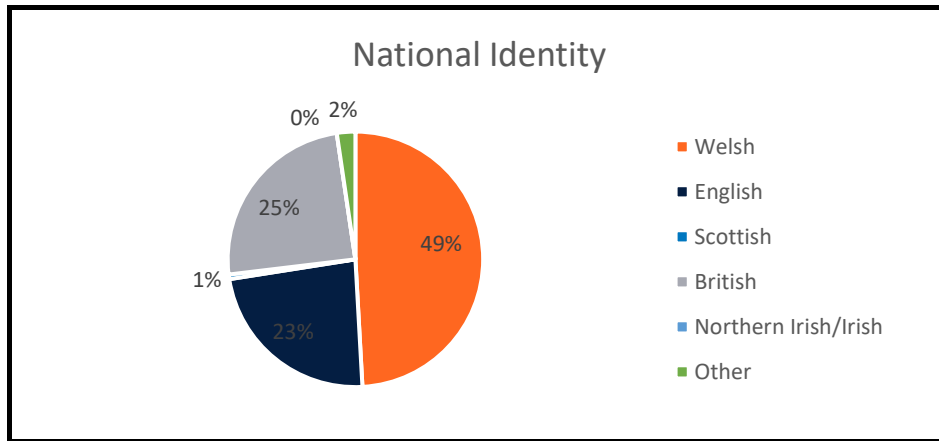
65% of people said they are the same gender as at birth, while 5% of people said they were not the same gender as at birth (30% did not respond/ preferred not to say)

74% of those who responded said they were heterosexual or straight, while 3% said they were gay or bisexual. (25% did not respond / preferred not to say)

National Identity

Approximately three quarters of respondents identify as Welsh or British (74%). While about a quarter of respondents identify as English (23%). 4 people (2%) identified as other national identities including European and Canadian. There were no survey respondents from ethnic minority groups.

167 respondents to the survey identified as white. Only one person identified as being from a mixed background. 21 respondents did not answer this question. None of the respondents identified as being from other ethnic backgrounds.

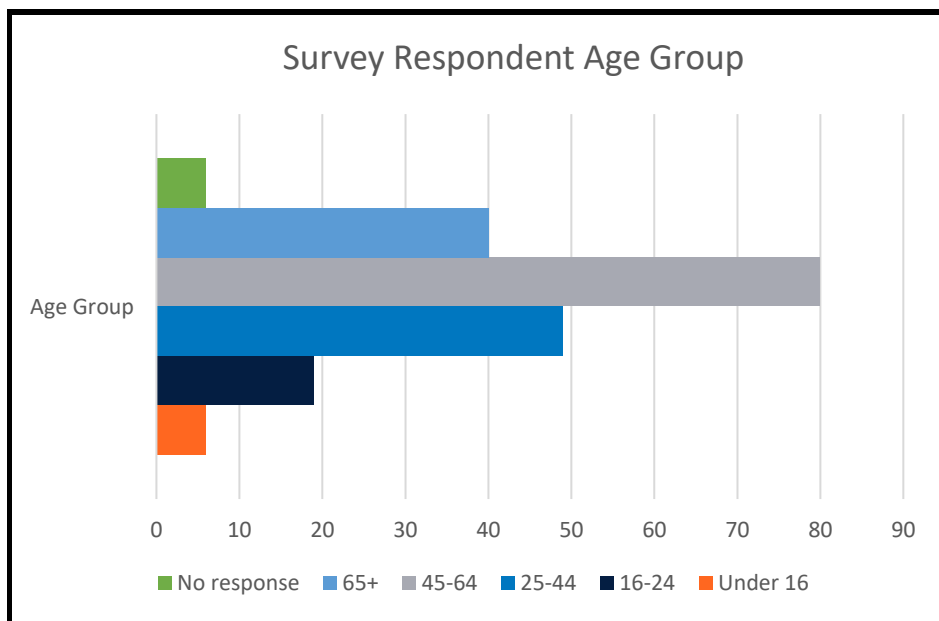


Caring Status

Of those that responded to the question (84%), 57% reported having caring responsibilities, while 43% do not.

Age Group

The largest group of survey respondents were adults aged 45-64 (40%). A breakdown of age groups is seen in the table below:



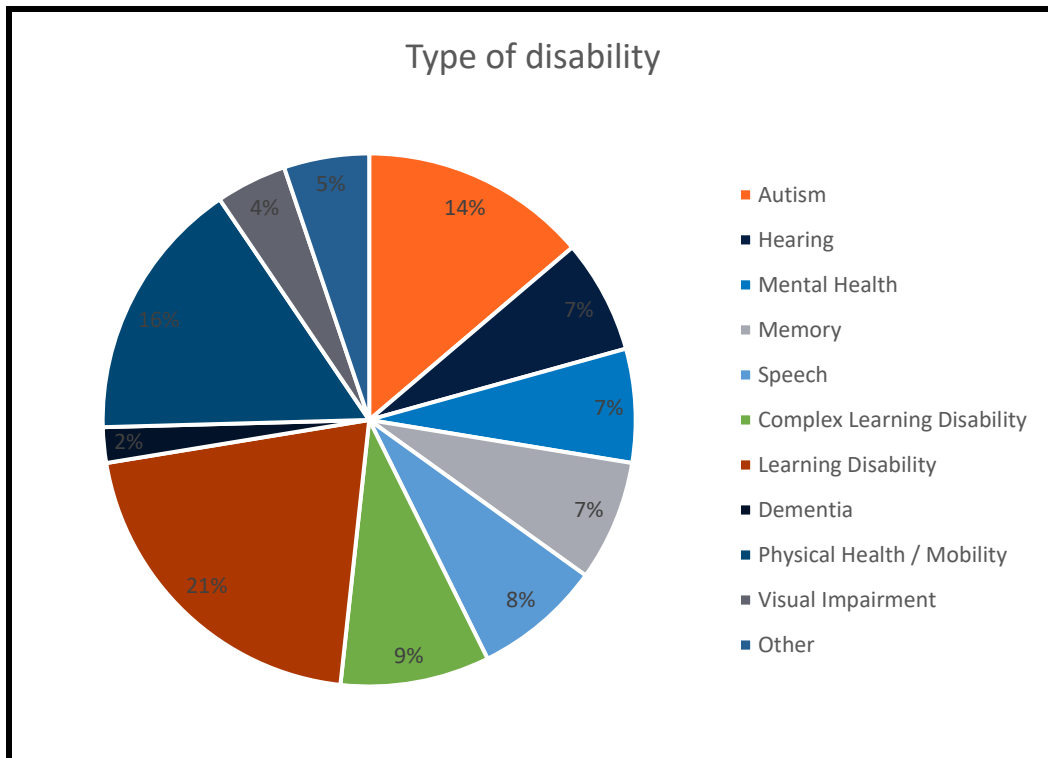
Disability

89 people responding to the survey reported having a disability (47%)

80 people responding to the survey stated that they did not have a disability (42%)

21 people preferred not to say (11%)

Of those who identified as having a disability, 66% stated that they have a care and support plan while 34% do not



A wide range of conditions was reported, and many people listed several conditions on the survey. Of those who selected 'other' they listed Down's syndrome, ADHD, epilepsy, brain injury, mutism, heart, and lung conditions.

Children and Young People

There were 19 responses to this question. The three most popular choices were: go to activity centre (63%), Spend time with children and young people my age (58%) and Stay in self-catering accommodation (58%)

Carers

There were 59 responses to this question. The three most popular choices were: spend time with individuals of similar interests (49%), spend time with individuals of same age group (41%) and activity centre (39%)

The council asked whether people felt they have enough opportunity to share their wishes and feelings, and how more opportunities could be created

28 people (39%) said that they felt they have enough opportunity to share their views.

43 people (61%) said that there were not enough opportunities to share views with the Council. Of the options listed about ways to get involved, the 3 most popular choices were 'support groups for different

needs' (28%), 'local self-advocacy group provided independently from local authority' (26%) and 'support groups for different ages' (25%).

The council asked how people felt about renaming Canolfan Steffan, Canolfan Padarn and Canolfan Meugan

43% of people responding to the survey did not have an opinion on this issue. Of those who did respond, there was a close split between people agreeing with the proposed name change (25%), and those who did not agree with this (28%). Therefore, more people did not agree with the proposed name change.

People that did not agree had very strong opinions as to why. Of the 62 comments, 42% related to why people wanted to keep names as they are, such as the names having been created by service users.

Children and Young People

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Appendix B: List of people that we spoke to

This table is a list of the different organisations and people that took part in the consultation. Their names are on the left, and we've grouped them to help us organise the report. The third column tells us whether they took part online or in person (engagement approach). The final column is the number that took part.

Facilitated Engagement Session			
Organisation - Group	Cohort	Engagement approach	No
Through Age Physical Activity & Play	Staff / Officers	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Family Centre Network, Plant Dewi	Community Organisation, Children and Young People	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Equalities and Inclusion, CCC	Staff / Officers	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Childcare Unit, CCC	Staff / Officers, Children and Young People	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Area 43	Community Organisation, Children and Young People	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
West Wales Housing Association	Community Organisation	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Working Wales	Community Organisation	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Mudiad Meithrin	Community Organisation, Children and Young People	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training (HCT)	Community Organisation	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Public Health Wales	NHS	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
Credu Cymru	Community Organisation, Carers	Online	1
Street Games, Staff	Community Organisation, Children and Young People	Online, CYP Provider Forum	1
School Officers	Staff / Officers	Online, individual meeting	5
Foster Carers	Carers, Children and Young People	Online workshop	2
Young People of transition age - Camu M'laen	People using services, Young people of transition age	In person, face to face	6
People with dementia	People with dementia, people using services	In person, face to face	21
Carers of People with Dementia	Carers, People with dementia, older people	In person, face to face	9
Rays Ceredigion	Community Organisations, Older People	In person, face to face	2
Employee of Council (carers)	Staff and officers		1
Carers Forum Aberaeron	Carers	In person face to face carers tea Aberaeron	6
People with Learning Disabilities - Padarn	People with Learning Disabilities	In person, face to face	17+3
People with Learning Disabilities - Steffan	People with Learning Disabilities	in person, face to face	9
People with Learning Disabilities - Meugan	People with Learning Disabilities	in person, face to face	11
Families and Carers of People with LD	Carers, Learning disabilities	in person, face to face	5+1
Looked after children	Children and young people	in person, face to face	15
Mencap			2
Disability Sport Wales			1
DASH			1
Staff working at day centres for people with learning disabilities	People with Learning Disabilities	In person, face to face	34
Council Employees - CTLD, extended Care, CYP and other (breakdown coming from Helen)	Staff and officers	Online workshop	17
staff who sent additional information	Staff and officers, children and young people,	Additional email information	4
Adferiad	Community Organisation	Online workshop	1
SALT health colleagues		Online workshop	2
Mirus			1
Cavo			1
Hahav			1
Shared Lives			2
Staff working with people with learning disabilities in supported accomodation	Learning disabilities	online workshop	1

Contacted and Invited to Engage		Contact Method
Organisation - Group		
Housing providers including:		
Barcud		email
Housing support grants		email
Family Housing		email
The care society		email
Older people:		
Age Cymru		email
Alzheimer's Society		email
Voyage		email
Domiciliary Carers		email
Red Cross		email
Other organisations		
Marie Curie		email
People First		email
Voyage		email
Mind		email
Clynfyw		email
Tir Coed		email
The care society		
Perthyn		email
RABI		email
Disability Forum		email
West Wales Action for Mental Health		email
CYP Organisations:		
Plant Dewi		email
SNAP		email
Tros Gynnal		email
Given info to disseminate		
Police		email
Libraries (also supplied with hardcopy surveys and community connectors working with individuals to complete)		email
Fire service		email
Community connectors		email

Appendix C: Flyer



Review of Day and Respite Services

Are you?

- a resident with a disability
- a family member or carer
- a young person supported by social care
- a social care provider
- interested in the way services are delivered in Ceredigion

We would like to hear YOUR thoughts on Day & Respite Service provision in Ceredigion - respond by 21 June 2023

Have your say!

SCAN ME!



Visit the QR code or the link to complete the survey.

https://bit.ly/CC_day_respite_review

 Ceredigion County Council

 Practice Solutions

Appendix D: A summary of the views expressed by stakeholder groups

What People Told Us





Ceredigion County Council – Day and Respite Service Review

Phase 2 Service Action Plan
October 2023



Document control

Owner	Ceredigion County Council
Document Title	Ceredigion County Council – Day and Respite Service Review: Phase 2 Service Action Plan
Version	2.1 - Draft
Author	Phill Chick
Date	19/10/2023

Document history

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.1	04/08/23	Ainsley Bladon	Submitted to Project Manager
1.2	07/08/23	Ainsley Bladon	Adapted to client's preferred format
2.0	19/10/23	Phill Chick	Revision following report redraft
2.1	03/11/23	Phill chick	Revision following client feedback

Introduction

Practice Solutions Ltd. supported Ceredigion County Council (CCC) to undertake extensive engagement and a desktop review of relevant legislation and related reviews in Wales about day and respite services. This work forms a part of CCCs delivering the Through Age Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2027.

Action 4.2.5 in the strategy sets the intention to review the range of respite provision, day provision, residential care and third sector provision, to develop a plan for future services according to a through-age model. The intention is to ensure that there is a range of appropriate support to maintain independence and to support carers, reducing the need for longer term care and support services.

We spoke to over 400 people, and our engagement report sets out four themes to take forward. This document is our Phase II Action Plan, and sets out the things that the Council should do next to ensure they are delivering the services people need, taking into account the views and wishes expressed within the consultation exercises and the environment the service is currently working within and those likely to arise in the future. All the actions are based on the key findings and recommendations made in the PSL report, and in line with the Through Age Wellbeing Model. This requires considering ways that people can be supported to stay as well and independent as possible and maximizing the creative use of those resources in our community that can be used to provide support to those who need it.

How will the plan be delivered?

The Council will involve those people affected by the plan throughout – this will include as a minimum; people who access services and their families, employees, community partners including the third sector, and the NHS. There will be regular updates about what is happening and how to get involved.

A project Steering Group will oversee the delivery of the Phase II plan to ensure things are staying on track. As part of this important transformation programme there will be a designated lead that will ensure the implementation of the action plan is progressed in line with the agreed timeframe

Leaders and Timelines The tables below set how who will do what, and how long it will take

Ceredigion Through Age Wellbeing Model



Theme One: Urgent Priority Action Areas

Key Findings:

The importance of day opportunity and respite services

The need to redesign services to address current pressures and those projected to arise in the future.

The Impact of Covid 19

The need for service change and service alignment

Action Point	Key Beneficiaries	Delivery Approach and Impact	Lead Partner	Estimated Timeframe
1. Ceredigion County Council should pursue its plans to revise the provision of day opportunity and respite services drawing upon the PSL report and this accompanying action plan.	Those currently using services and their unpaid carers. Future users of services and their unpaid carers. CCC and its partner agencies	Drawing upon the PSL report and this action plan CCC will, in consultation with service users and their unpaid carers, staff and partner agencies, deliver remodeled day opportunity and respite provision in line with the Through Age Wellbeing strategy. This will achieve sustainable services suitable to meet current need, which will be able to flex as required to meet future demands arising from increasing complexity and an increasing prevalence of dementia among Ceredigion's ageing population.	CCC	November 2023-2027
2. The Council should consider developing the role of a transformation lead to oversee and drive the change management and implementation processes for the plan.	CCC and its partner agencies Service beneficiaries	Agreement by CCC to create a transformation lead post. Should this be agreed a job description and person specification for the post should be developed and the post advertised and appointed to. The transformation lead will review changes to services including those implemented as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic making recommendations for services to be restored to pre pandemic levels or amended as required to maximise service provision and service user satisfaction.		November 2023-January 2024

Action Point	Key Beneficiaries	Delivery Approach and Impact	Lead Partner	Estimated Timeframe
<p>3. Ceredigion County Council should work with its partner agencies including the NHS and third sector service providers to ensure that any efficiencies that may be gained by joint operational and strategic planning may be attained. This will need to include the consideration of innovative approaches to resource sharing.</p>	<p>CCC and its partner agencies Service beneficiaries</p>	<p>The Project Steering Group will develop a programme to review existing resources across agencies currently providing day opportunity and respite services, together with other community facilities. The programme will seek to develop a shared plan to align service provision and maximise the use of capital and revenue resources to best provide services. The plan should ensure that flexibility is built into the redesign of services enabling optimal provision now and in the future.</p>		<p>November 2023-2027</p>

Theme Two: Person Centered Care Planning

Key Findings:

The importance of person-centered planning in appropriately meeting individual need

The identification of increased complexity and stratified need among those using services

The need to respond to specific client groups including unpaid carers

Action Point	Key Beneficiaries	Delivery Approach and Impact	Lead Partner & Possible Sponsors	Estimated Timeframe
<p>4. Ceredigion County Council should review its person-centred planning processes to ensure that these are effective, not overly bureaucratic and genuinely capture and promote service user voices and choices in individually tailored plans and in line with any statutory duties enshrined in the SSWBA and the MHM. All people using these services should have a high-quality person-centred plan. Where necessary it should review the care and support plans of those people impacted by service changes introduced during the pandemic.</p>	<p>People accessing support, unpaid carers and families</p>	<p>Initiation of a review of the care planning process</p> <p>Ensuring that CCC and its statutory partners are meeting their duties in line with the SSWBA 2014 the MHM 2010 and any other relevant legislation.</p> <p>To use a wide variety of techniques that identify personal strengths and goals using co-production and person-centered approaches. Gathering identified unmet need should form part of the person-centered planning process in order to collate intelligence and data on underdeveloped services. This should include, as a priority, the needs of foster carers and groups such as those with a dementia and those in transition from children to adult services. These areas were highlighted as underdeveloped within the consultation exercise.</p> <p>For those in transition addressing potential future needs should commence from age 14 and such consideration should become standard practice.</p> <p>Where people's access to services was</p>	<p>CCC Partner statutory and non-statutory services</p>	<p>Within 3 months and continuously thereafter.</p>

<p>The reform should address as a priority, groups such as those with dementia, carers and foster carers for whom services have been identified as underdeveloped.</p>		<p>impaired by the changes introduced during the pandemic this should be reviewed and appropriate services provided.</p> <p>Introducing a brokerage system will ensure that social workers have more time to spend with people reviewing their plans.</p> <p>As a result of these actions person centered planning processes will inform and drive the reform and delivery of respite and day opportunity services to those requiring them.</p>		
<p>5. Ceredigion County Council needs to ensure that as service reform impacts upon provision that the needs of families and other unpaid carers are addressed with meaningful assessments and the provision of adequate support.</p>	<p>People accessing support, unpaid carers and families</p>	<p>In addition to reviewing care planning processes, individual care plans should be reviewed for all clients within the routine review schedule and, where appropriate, their unpaid carers.</p> <p>People whose services were suspended or disrupted during the pandemic should have their care needs reviewed as a priority and services restored in line with the outcomes of these reviews.</p>	<p>CCC</p>	<p>Throughout 2023-24 and thereafter</p> <p>Nov2023-Jan 2024</p>

Theme three: Service provision

Key Findings:

- The added value that can be gained by using an integrated hub and spoke approach to service delivery.
- Activities should be meaningful and support skills development.
- People with direct payments require more support.
- The importance of a coherent strategy to provide transport to facilities delivering day opportunities and respite.
- The necessity for collaboration between agencies to address workforce shortages, maximise the efficient use of available staffing and actively seek to enhance the existing workforce and recruit and retain staff going forward.
- People should be able to access respite care when they need it, and access should be as simple as possible.

Action Point	Key Beneficiaries	Delivery Approach and Impact	Lead Partner & Possible Sponsors	Estimated Timeframe
6. Ceredigion County Council together with its partners should consider adopting a hub and spoke model which utilises service centres as community hubs whilst drawing upon a range of community facilities to provide day opportunities that can provide those activities that people would like to access as close to their homes as possible. This should include supporting and enabling people to access paid employment and	People accessing day activities Community Providers	<p>Hub and spoke models utilise resources such as day centres to act as a community hub in which more specialist support is provided alongside a range of community-based facilities. Community resources and open spaces are used to deliver a range of opportunities in non-stigmatising “mainstream” environments.</p> <p>Some activities will be open to a wider range of people – for example intergenerational and holiday events, community café and cinema events. Others will be tailored for people with particular needs and interests.</p> <p>Activities will be offered at traditional weekday times (i.e., 10am – 3pm). Services will explore need and deliver activities at evenings and weekends as required by means of directly provided council services or by allowing community organisations to access buildings running activities in them when council and other public spaces are not in use.</p> <p>The Council will work with community partners to</p>	Community connectors, Voluntary sector, CCC Porth	Review need Nov 2023-April 2024. Delivery 2024 and thereafter Within 12-24 months

formal learning where appropriate.

offer activities that can be accessed by everyone, including at wellbeing centres in line with action 1.1.6 in the Through age Wellbeing Strategic Action Plan. To improve the mental, emotional, physical and social wellbeing of Ceredigion residents.

To open the Plascrug and Cardigan Wellbeing Centres as planned.

Community Connectors should strengthen the Clic and Connect to Ceredigion websites to reflect an up-to-date calendar of events and activities accessible by the public and partner with organisations able to offer work placements to people.

Council to create an employment program with input from those that will be accessing the program.

A range of respite options should be offered to adults and children, both inside and outside of Ceredigion, including short breaks, residential respite, and one-to-one support. respite care should be pre-planned, as well as available in emergencies.

Cymorth Cynnar

Porth Gofal

By March 2024

Action Point	Key Beneficiaries	Delivery Approach and Impact	Lead Partner & Possible Sponsors	Estimated Timeframe
<p>7. Ceredigion County Council, together with its partners, should develop a transport strategy that ensures that the most efficient methods are used to enable access to day opportunity and respite services. This will need to consider public and private transport together with Council provided transport.</p>	<p>People accessing day opportunities Service providers</p>	<p>Partners will examine all modes of transport currently used, including people's motability vehicles, unpaid carers private transport, public transport, minibuses and pool car provision and private taxi services.</p> <p>Where people's needs can be met locally these should be used to avoid unnecessarily long periods spent in transit.</p> <p>Actions will achieve improved access to services with the potential to reduce costs by rationalizing the various modes of transport available.</p>	<p>CCC and partner organisations transport providers</p>	<p>Nov2023-March 2024</p>

Theme Four: Communication, Advocacy and Involvement

Key Findings:

- The need for effective communication with people that use services, families and carers, community providers, and employees to enable an effective change management process and reduce the anxiety felt during times of change and reform.
- Closer engagement between sectors can assist improvement of service delivery.
- People are feeling disconnected and need more information to understand what is happening and how they can access it.
- Specific engagement regarding the name change of some facilities needs to be considered

Action Point	Key Beneficiaries	Delivery Approach and Impact	Lead Partner & Possible Sponsors	Estimated Timeframe
8. In pursuing its reform agenda, the Council will need to engage with service users, carers, council staff and those working in other agencies via formal and informal consultation. Fora previously used to engage these groups should be reviewed and where appropriate reinstated to enable the processes of partnership working in the delivery of	The public People accessing services Families Carers Staff Community organisations	<p>The Council should hold workshops with stakeholders as plans progress to ensure regular input from those affected by changes, including staff, service users and their families and unpaid carers. If appointed the transformation lead can drive these processes.</p> <p>Public facing engagement can be enabled by holding community meetings in person, online discussions, surveys, and message boards.</p> <p>Community Connectors should re-establish a strong community network that includes regular meetings to share information about new developments and opportunities to</p>	CCC	By Dec 2023 and ongoing throughout the change programme

the agreed Action Plan.		work together. To re-establish professionals' line for NHS and other colleagues re-establishing the ability for NHS colleagues to connect with key contacts / departments within the council quickly enabling better outcomes for service users and faster referral times.	CCC	Within 1 month
9. The Council should consider reconvening opinion on the proposal to rename its day centres as part of its wider consultation on service reform.	The public People accessing services Families Staff	The Council needs to consider whether it wishes to re-engage and canvas opinion on the name change.	CCC	Within 1 month



Proposal Details

Title of Policy / Proposal / Initiative	
Transforming Day Services (Older People, Learning Disability, Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities and Autism) and Respite provision (Through Age)	
Service Area	Officer completing IIA
Direct Services	Nerys Lewis
Corporate Lead Officer	Strategic Director
Donna Pritchard	James Starbuck
Please give a brief description of the purpose of the proposal	
<p>As part of the Through Age Wellbeing Model Strategy and in conjunction with several National and Regional Strategies it is timely for us as a local authority to consult on the re-design and modernisation of our respite and day provision throughout the County.</p> <p>The consultation and engagement will focus on the following key areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Service opportunities for Older Adults including those living with a diagnosis of dementia • Day Service opportunities for Individuals living with a learning disability, autism, and profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) • Transition pathways on a through age basis for those living with a learning disability/ autism. • Respite provision (day and residential) on a through age basis. 	
Who will be directly affected by this proposal?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Looked After (CLA) • Individuals living with a Learning Disability • Individuals with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD) • Individuals living with diagnosis of dementia • Individuals living with symptoms of dementia (undiagnosed) • Individuals living with Autism • Older adults • Respite provision (day and residential) on a through age basis. • Wider population who may require access to services in the future. • Staff 	
Have those who will be affected by the proposal had the opportunity to comment on it?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation and engagement • Consultation with Stakeholders • Online and paper Surveys • Organisational Managing Change policy 	

Version Control

Version Number	Author	Decision making stage	Date Considered	Description of any amendments made
1.0	Nerys Lewis	Scrutiny / Cabinet	05.12.2023	

Council Corporate Well-being Objectives

Which of the Council's Corporate Well-being Objectives does this proposal address and how? Click here to read a summary of our [Corporate Strategy 2022-27](#)

<p>Boosting the economy, supporting business, and enabling employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support new and growing businesses in the County • Create new job opportunities for skilled young people • Promote equal opportunities in employment • Achieve sustainable economic growth • Support working parents in Ceredigion • Enhance the provision of skills and learning opportunities for people aged 16+ • Further develop apprenticeships in the County
<p>Creating caring and healthy communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for the care needs of our population • Deliver the Through Age Well-being Programme • Promote the Welsh Language in Ceredigion • Pursue initiatives to train and recruit childcare and social care staff • Encourage and enable people to get physically active so they can benefit from positive health and wellbeing • Enhance the role of Community Connectors to support the development of resilient communities • Further develop participation events to ensure communities have a voice • Develop and increase the number of focussed and universal extra-curricular and holiday activity programmes • Develop and increase the number of support groups and programmes
<p>Providing the best start in life and enabling learning at all ages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Ceredigion Youth Council as a forum for children and young people • Developing Children and Young People's skills, knowledge and confidence to be physically active • Ensure that all learners identified Additional Learning Needs are supported appropriately to become independent and fulfilled individuals
<p>Creating sustainable, greener, and well-connected communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on Ceredigion's excellent performance in waste management and recycling • Enable more young people to build their lifetime home • Support increased provision for walking and cycling

National Well-being Goal: A Prosperous Wales

An innovative, productive, and low carbon society where everyone has decent work and there is no poverty.

Click [here](#) for information about a prosperous Wales.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. (Click [here](#) for information)

The initial phase of this programme of change is to consult and engage with the population to establish the current needs and wishes of the key population groups as identified above. The scope focuses on individuals care and support needs in relation to Respite and Day Opportunities.

The need for change includes challenges in following areas: -

- **Geography** - Remote location of service users
- **Service locations** - Service users often need to travel unacceptable distances to receive service.
- **Education, Support and Employment** – services to support service users into employment.
- **Labour Market** - Challenges to employ staff into vacant roles.
- **Economic performance** – creating opportunities to develop employability skills and pathways to employment within Ceredigion
- **Household income** – to develop opportunities for independence through a range of local accommodation-based approaches. Supporting parents and carers to have confidence in supporting individuals living with a LD to gain the independence they wish, based on their person-centred care and support plans.
- **Participation in education and the labour market** – to create local opportunity to meet the range and complexities of assessed care and support needs, allowing maintaining local connections to be continued.
- **Fair work and earnings** – to develop and work with the local economy to create roles that support equal access to employability through disability friendly organisations.
- **Poverty and deprivation** – to provide access and support to our population to information, advice and guidance based in methods that meet the needs of the individual.
- **Qualifications** – to further develop transition pathways and qualifications for individuals living with a learning disability, supporting their person-centred career pathway plan.
- **Mode of travel** – to introduce safe travel training for all service users, and to support the development of community based reducing the need to travel.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

Please refer to the Practice Solutions Report following Consultation and Engagement.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to this National Well-being Goal?

Please refer to the Action Plan which accompanies this report.

National Well-being Goal: A Resilient Wales

A society where biodiversity is maintained and enhanced and where ecosystems are healthy and functioning.

Click [here](#) for information about a resilient Wales.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. (Click [here](#) for information)

As part of the next phase in developing the programme of change the action plan will explore the positive and negative implications to the society's biodiversity.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

n/a

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to this National Well-being Goal?

n/a

National Well-being Goal: A Healthier Wales

A society where people make healthy choices and enjoy good physical and mental health.

Click [here](#) for information about a healthier Wales.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. (Click [here](#) for information)

As part of the next phase in developing the programme of change the action plan will explore the positive and negative implications relating to the National Well-Being Goals.

As noted in the PSL Report:

"a review conducted by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) identified within Wales, an increase in the complexity of those requiring social care support due to several factors. This increase in both anticipated incidence of dementia and increasing levels of complexity among children, adults and older adults, contributed to the need for the Council to undertake this review and develop an action plan to address changing needs"

What evidence do you have to support this view?

The data indicates that there will be an increase in people living with dementia as well as people over 65. According to the current Census information the population of Ceredigion aged over 65 years has grown 17.2% since the 2011 Census. This is slightly lower than the Wales average of 20%. In contrast the population level of those aged under 15 years has decreased 10/1% which is the largest percentage decrease in Wales. The predicted number of people living with dementia in Ceredigion is

projected to increase by 2040 to 2,022 current data from the QAIF 2019-20 shows 608 registered with a GP.

The QAIF 2019-20 also shows 385 registered with a Learning Disability, 867 with Mental Health issues, registered as Obese there are 6,797 registered. These are all potential issues that will impact on their health and wellbeing and need support from health and social care services either now or in the future.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to this National Well-being Goal?

Review and develop a programme of change relating to the re-design of Respite and Day Opportunities.

National Well-being Goal: A More Equal Wales

A society where everyone has an equal chance whatever their background or circumstances.

This section is longer because you are asked to assess the impact of your proposal on each group that is protected by the **Equality Act 2010**.

Click [here](#) for information about equality in Wales.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their age? (Click [here](#) for information)

Children and Young People up to 18	Positive
People 18-50	Positive
Older people 50+	Positive

Describe the positive or negative impacts.

Positive

The re-design of Respite and Day Opportunities will provide a person-centred approach and strengths-based opportunities underpinned through the individuals assessed care and support plan. Where there is no such plan in place, opportunities through preventative services provided through 3rd sector, local authority and other organisations will be available.

A key element of the re-design programme will be to ensure that we can explore opportunities to reduce provision being provided outside of the County, meaning that we explore ways to develop the required provision locally no matter the age on a through age basis. Supporting the individuals in maintain their community connections.

Opportunities to explore safe and flexible approaches to the use of our buildings in line with the Through Age Wellbeing Strategy.

Capital investment through current Regional Funding, to develop provision that can meet the changing and complex needs of our population.

Negative

If we do not change our approach we will continue to place outside of the county, meaning that children and adults lose their connections and family and friends require to travel distances to see their loved ones.

The current challenge of ensuring that correct provision is provided at the right place and time.

What evidence do you have to support this?

Please refer to the Practice Solutions Report following Consultation and Engagement.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

Please refer to the Practice Solutions Report following Consultation and Engagement.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their disability? (Click [here](#) for information)

Hearing Impairment	Positive
Physical Impairment	Positive
Visual Impairment	Positive
Learning Disability	Positive
Long Standing Illness	Positive
Mental Health	Positive
Other	Choose an item.

Describe the positive or negative impacts.

Positive

Future model should offer support to the whole community based on their assessed needs.

Trained specialist staff to meet the needs utilising a person-centred model and strengths-based approach.

The development of facilities can flex with the needs of the user/client.

Development of provision on a Through Age basis, allowing service to develop clear pathways and improved transition planning.

Improved multi agency approaches to solution focused approaches.

What evidence do you have to support this?

Please refer to the Practice Solutions Report following Consultation and Engagement.

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

Please refer to the Action Plan which accompanies this report.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people who are transgender? (Click [here](#) for information)

Trans Women	Positive
Trans Men	Positive
Non-binary people	Positive

Describe the positive or negative impacts

Positive

Improvements to facilities, supporting individual identity and their wishes and feelings.

Upskills of staff to enable an understanding of appropriate support.

What evidence do you have to support this?

We will seek guidance as and when required to assist us in planning and supporting key considerations.

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

As above

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different sexual orientation? (Click [here](#) for information)

Bisexual	Positive
Gay Men	Positive
Gay Women/Lesbian	Positive
Heterosexual/Straight	Positive

Describe the positive or negative impacts

Positive

Improvements to facilities, supporting individual identity and their wishes and feelings.

Upskills of staff to enable an understanding of appropriate support.

What evidence do you have to support this?

We will seek guidance as and when required to assist us in planning and supporting key considerations.

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

As above

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people who are married or in a civil partnership? (Click [here](#) for information)

People who are married	Positive
People in a civil partnership	Positive

Describe the positive or negative impacts

Positive

To support partners to maintain their relationships as they wish.

What evidence do you have to support this?

We will be developing person centred care and support plans based on the wishes and feelings of the individuals, taking into consideration relationships.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

As above

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people who are pregnant or on maternity leave? (Click [here](#) for information)

Pregnancy	None / Negligible
------------------	-------------------

Maternity	None / Negligible
------------------	-------------------

Describe the positive or negative impacts

n/a

What evidence do you have to support this?

n/a

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

n/a

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their ethnic origin? (Click [here](#) for information)

Asian / Asian British	Choose an item.
------------------------------	-----------------

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Positive
--	----------

Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups	Positive
---------------------------------------	----------

White	Positive
--------------	----------

Other Ethnic Groups	Positive
----------------------------	----------

Describe the positive or negative impacts

Positive

To explore opportunities to support individuals through their origins, including cultural opportunities in the local community.

What evidence do you have to support this?

We will be developing person centred care and support plans based on the wishes and feelings of the individuals, taking into consideration their ethnicity and culture.

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

As above

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different religions, beliefs, or non-beliefs? (Click [here](#) for information)

Buddhist	Positive
Christian	Positive
Hindu	Positive
Humanist	Positive
Jewish	Positive
Muslim	Positive
Sikh	Positive
Non-belief	Positive
Other	Choose an item.

Describe the positive or negative impacts

Positive

To explore opportunities to support individuals through their origins, including cultural opportunities in the local community.

What evidence do you have to support this?

We will be developing person centred care and support plans based on the wishes and feelings of the individuals, taking into consideration their religion, belief or non-beliefs.

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

As above

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on men or women? (Click here for information)	
Men	Positive
Women	Positive
Describe the positive or negative impacts	
Positive	
To explore and develop group opportunities meeting the specific needs of the individual based on their sexual orientation.	
What evidence do you have to support this?	
We will be developing person centred care and support plans based on the wishes and feelings of the individuals, taking into consideration their sexual orientation.	
What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?	
Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between men and women?	
As above	

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people from the Armed Forces Community? (Click here for information)	
Members of the Armed Forces	Positive
Veterans	Positive
Spouses	Positive
Children	Positive
Describe the positive or negative impacts	
Positive	
To explore and develop group opportunities meeting the specific needs of the individual based on their career background, working in collaboration with local armed forces groups.	
What evidence do you have to support this?	
We will be developing person centred care and support plans based on the wishes and feelings of the individuals, taking into consideration their sexual orientation.	
What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?	
As above.	

Socio-economic Duty

Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, making it more difficult to access basic goods and services.

Family background or where a person is born still affects their life. For example, a child from a wealthy family often does better at school than a child from a poor family, even if the poorer child is more naturally academic. This is sometimes called socio-economic inequality.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?	None / Negligible
Describe the positive or negative impacts	
This will be reviewed in the next phase of the programme of change.	
What evidence do you have to support this?	
n/a	
What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?	
Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?	
n/a	

National Well-being Goal: A Wales of Cohesive Communities

A society with attractive, viable, safe, and well-connected communities.

Click [here](#) for information about cohesive communities.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. <u>HINT</u>
The Local Authorities Through Age Wellbeing Strategy sets out the vision for the next 10 years. Alongside this there are several National and Regional strategies that provide short and long-term targets and measures that will need to be considered as part of the consultation.
he Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places new requirements on all organisations that commission and provide care. The West Wales Care Partnership is working together to respond to those requirements, improving services and joining them up as far as possible so they deliver the best outcomes for our citizens.
The action plan is an integrated plan.

Collaboration between partners and stakeholders will be at the heart of the consultation and the action plan. The main collaboration will be between public sector colleagues including the Hywel Dda University Health Board, Third Sector organisations and officers from across the Authority.

Stakeholders and partners will be involved throughout the planning and consultation period.

The consultation will include prevention opportunity through exploring wider respite opportunities to support un-paid carers.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

Please refer to the Practice Solutions Report following Consultation and Engagement.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?

Please refer to the Action Plan which accompanies this report.

National Well-being Goal: A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

A society that that promotes and protects culture, heritage, and the Welsh language and which encourages people to take part in the arts, sports, and recreation.

Click [here](#) for information about culture and the Welsh language

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts.

Positive

The re-design of the respite and day opportunities services will provide an opportunity of enhance and embed the Welsh language, culture and local connections.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

To explore and develop person centre opportunities through the Welsh language, enhancing local connections through culture, arts and language in accordance with More than Words – Welsh Language Policy

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?

n/a

With reference to the following, do you think this proposal will have a positive or negative effect on the Welsh language?

[Click here](#) for information

Opportunities for people to use the Welsh language

Positive

Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language

Positive

What evidence do you have to support this view?

As above

What action(s) can you take to increase the positive impact or mitigate any negative impact on the Welsh language?

As above.

National Well-being Goal: A Globally Responsible Wales

A society that considers how our actions might impact on other countries and people around the world.

[Click here](#) for information about global responsibility.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. **HINT**

Positive

To enhance opportunities through the green and blue environment, utilising woodlands, growing of produce and enhancing pathways underpinned by this goal.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

As above.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?

n/a

Strengthening the Proposal

If you have identified any negative impacts in the above sections, please provide details of any practical changes and actions that could help remove or reduce the negative impacts.

What will you do?	When?	Who is responsible?	Progress
If we do not change our approach we will continue to place outside of the county, meaning that children and adults lose their connections and family and friends require to travel distances to see their loved ones.	Review as the programme action plan is implemented	TAW	On-going
The current challenge of ensuring that correct provision is provided at the right place and time.	Review as the programme action plan is implemented	TAW	On-going
<p>If no action is to be taken to remove or mitigate negative impacts, please justify why. (If you have identified any unlawful discrimination then the proposal must be changed or revised.)</p>			
n/a			
<p>How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?</p>			
Through the TAW Programme Governance			

Sustainable Development Principle: 5 Ways of Working

Describe below how you have implemented the five ways of working in accordance with the sustainable development principle of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



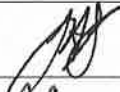

<p>Long term Balancing short-term needs with long-term need and planning for the future.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>The Local Authorities Through Age Wellbeing Strategy sets out the vision for the next 10 years. Alongside this there are several National and Regional strategies that provide short and long-term targets and measures that will need to be considered as part of the consultation.</p>
<p>Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places new requirements on all organisations that commission and provide care. The West Wales Care Partnership is working together to respond to those requirements, improving services and joining them up as far as possible so they deliver the best outcomes for our citizens.</p> <p>The action plan is an integrated plan.</p>
<p>Involvement Involving those with an interest and seeking their views.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>Collaboration between partners and stakeholders will be at the heart of the consultation and the action plan. The main collaboration will be between public sector colleagues including the Hywel Dda University Health Board, Third Sector organisations and officers from across the Authority.</p>
<p>Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>Stakeholders and partners will be involved throughout the planning and consultation period.</p>
<p>Integration Considering the impact of your proposal on the four pillars of well-being (social, economic, cultural and environment) the objectives of other public bodies and across service areas in the Council.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>The consultation will include prevention opportunity through exploring wider respite opportunities to support un-paid carers.</p>

Risk

Summarise the risk associated with the proposal.

	1	2	3	4	5
Impact Criteria	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Likelihood Criteria	Unlikely to occur	Lower than average chance of occurring	Even chance of occurring	Higher than average chance of occurring	Expected to occur
Risk Description	Impact		Probability	Score (Impact x Likelihood)	
Successful delivery and completion of the programme action plan.	3		3	9	

Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Corporate Manager	Nerys Lewis		30/10/2023
Corporate Lead Officer	Donna Pritchard		30/10/2023
Corporate Director	James Starbuck		30/10/2023
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Alun Williams	x 	30/10/2023

Study	Sample Size	Intervention	Comparison	Outcome
1	100	...	...	...
2	200	...	...	...
3	300	...	...	...
4	400	...	...	...
5	500
6	600
7	700
8	800
9	900
10	1000
11	1100
12	1200
13	1300
14	1400
15	1500
16	1600
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26	2600
27	2700
28	2800
29	2900
30	3000
31	3100
32	3200
33	3300
34	3400
35	3500
36	3600
37	3700	...	...	...
38	3800	...	...	...
39	3900	...	...	...
40	4000	...	...	...



A report about day opportunities and respite services in Ceredigion

What people said



This document was written by the **Practice Solutions** on behalf of **Ceredigion County Council**. It is an easy read version of 'Review of Day and Respite Opportunities Report'.

November 2023

How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 29**.



Where the document says **we**, this means the **Client**. For more information contact:

Website: www.ceredigion.gov.uk

Phone: 01545 570881



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About this report



We are a company called **Practice Solutions**.

Ceredigion County Council asked us to look into:



- day opportunities



- and **respite** services in Ceredigion.

Respite is when someone who needs support stays somewhere for a short time. It may be to give a carer a rest.



This report is about what the people of Ceredigion said.



We spoke to over 400 people. We spoke to:

- people of all ages
- people who use services
- people who work for services
- and others.

There are lots of day services in Ceredigion. For example:



- 3 day service centres for people with learning disabilities.



- Services for children.



- Services for older people and people living with **dementia**.

Dementia is a condition that affects the brain. It can cause memory loss, confusion and other issues.

Ceredigion County Council wants day services to achieve these 3 things:



- To support people early on to help stop health issues getting worse.



- To support people to be independent and learn new skills.



- To make sure people get the information and advice they need. In a way they understand.

What people said

1. Transport



Most people had their own vehicle. For example, car.



But many people rely on buses or family and friends.



Some people were not happy with public transport.



Some people use a minibus.



Transport is a very important issue in Ceredigion.

2. Changing who uses day services



Ceredigion County council want more people to use day services.



They want more groups to use the facilities of the day services.



Day services would be used throughout the week at different times.



Most people agreed with this.



Ceredigion would need to think about staffing and how to support people well.

3. Changing hours



People were asked what they thought about changing the hours of day services. For example, having half day sessions, evening sessions and weekend sessions.



It would depend on the activity. It would be based on the peoples assessment and needs.



Most people agreed with the changes.



Some people had worries about it.



It is important to think about the needs of people who use day services and their carers.

4. Changing the name of 3 day services



People were asked if they agreed to changing the names of:

- Canolfan Steffan
- Padarn
- Meugan



Most people did not have an opinion on this.



Ceredigion County council may need to get more views on this.

5. Sharing views



People were asked if they had enough chances to tell the council their views.



Most people said they didn't get enough opportunity to say what they thought.



People gave ideas for how they could share their views more. For example, if groups were run to get views.

6. Activities



People were asked what kinds of activities they would like at day services.



We looked at different ages and groups when asking this question.

The 3 most important activities were:



- Keeping healthy and well.

- Day and overnight trips.



- Outdoor activities.

7. Comments



People were asked if they had any other comments to make.



Some people said they wanted to see extra services.



Some people were worried about services. They gave lots of different reasons.



People gave lots of different ideas about the services they would like to see.

What the different groups said

Adults with a learning disability



We asked adults with a learning disability what they thought about day services.



Many people enjoy them and what they offer.



People liked the minibus. People who do not have the minibus anymore said it affected them badly.



People gave examples of activities they liked. For example, learning skills and getting out.



It was very important to people to be given a choice.



Many people said they missed activities that were on before Covid.



Some have not gone back to their day centre. This is because of lack of staffing or transport availability.



A lot of people were upset about Padarn day centre closing.



People want to have a say about:

- what new services look like
- and how they are run.



Transport was a big issue for many people.



People also said they needed a routine.



A lot of people said they would like activities in the evenings and on the weekend.



It was also very important to keep them and their families updated about changes.

Children and young people



This group said they enjoyed having people to play with.



Some did not like how they were treated by other children.



When asked what they thought services should look like they said:

- Do things with animals.
- Stay somewhere longer.
- Go to theme parks.



They were interested in weekend activities and short breaks.



Few wanted school holiday activities or after school activities.

Young people aged 16 to 24



Most people did not know what services were available for them.



A lot of people had a physical or mental health condition.



They said it was important for them to be able to make their own choices.



They wanted control over their own support.



They said they wanted to be with people their own age and be out in the community.



Most felt their experiences of day services were good.

People with dementia



People said they like activities about their interests.



They did not always want to go to day centres.



There are no council run day activities for people with **dementia**.



They said they did not want to go to care homes for **respite**.



People felt there were not enough activities for them.

Family members and carers



They said day services were really important.



They spoke warmly of staff. They felt they understood the people they supported well.



Some had concerns that services would be taken away.



They said it would help them if they could book **respite** services in advance.



Carers also said **communication** was an issue.

Communication is the way we give people information. It includes speaking and writing.



Carers want to be involved in saying what happens to services.

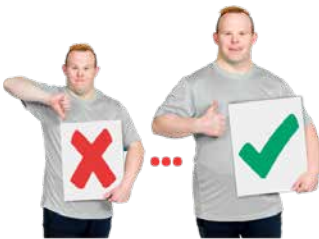
Foster carers



Foster carers look after children when they do not have parents who can care for them.



They were concerned that they no longer got **respite** services.



They said they needed better **communication**.



They also said social workers kept changing.

Community organisations providing support to disabled people

We spoke to over 20 organisations who provide support to adults and children. And organisations who support people with:



- mental health issues



- learning disabilities



- physical impairments



- **dementia**



- substance misuse issues. This means having a problem using alcohol or drugs.



They were happy to have training from the council.



Some were worried about a lack of funding to be able to keep running.



They said there was a lack of **respite** services. They said families needed much more support.



Some said they had little **communication** from the council.



They felt more use could be made of buildings in the community for day services.

Staff



We spoke to a lot of different staff. For example. Staff from:

- the council
- day centres
- NHS.



Council staff said the work of staff at day and **respite** services was important.



But they were concerned they were still running like they did during Covid.



They agreed with changes to day services.



Staff who worked for day services felt they had not been given enough information about changes.



They were worried about service cuts and the effect on jobs.



They thought care needed to be taken about mixing groups of people. They have specific care and support needs.



NHS staff valued day and **respite** services. They said their patients did too.



They would like to see health and social care services work together with day services more.

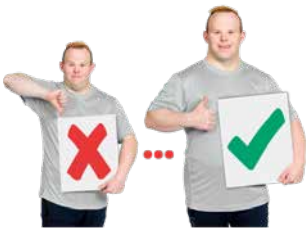


They thought more community services and transport are needed.

What we think should happen next



These are some of the things we think need to happen next.



Ceredigion County council should make changes to day and **respite** services.



Someone should be given the job of carrying out this work.



The council should keep talking to people and working together to make changes.



The council should work with other organisations to help make sure this work is done well. For example, the NHS and charities.



The council should develop community hubs. These are centres that provide advice and support in the community. They would include day services.



The council should make a plan for transport.



The council must make sure it listens to what people want and put their needs first.



The council should make sure people are supported while the changes take place.



The council should ask people again what they think about re-naming the day centres.

Hard words

Communication

Communication is the way we give people information. It includes speaking and writing.

Dementia

Dementia is a condition that affects the brain. It can cause memory loss, confusion and other issues.

Respite

Respite is when someone who needs support stays somewhere for a short time. It may be to give a carer a rest.



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council

Young Persons Report



An
easy read
summary for
all ages

Ceredigion County Council

Review of Day Opportunity and Respite Services

What is this report about?

We want to make sure that Ceredigion County Council provides the services that people need and want.





What are day opportunity and respite services?

The council provides these services to people of all ages.

Day opportunity services

provide activities for people to learn skills, have fun and socialise.

These are usually held in day centres or community buildings during weekdays.

The activities can be social, creative or educational. They're a chance to get out and try new things.

Respite services

provide care for people when their **unpaid carer** * needs a break.

This can be so the carer can do important tasks, go somewhere, or just have a break.

Respite care can be for a few hours, a few days or longer.

These include day activities or staying in a care home or holiday accommodation.

People of all ages use day opportunity and respite services

* **Unpaid carers** – These are anyone who helps care for someone. They might be a family member like a parent, sibling or child, or they might just be a friend. Unlike staff, unpaid carers are not employed to deliver care.



How did we find out what people think about Day and Respite Services for this report?

We used different ways to find out what services are currently available and what people want and need, including various service reports and guidances.



We also spoke to a lot of people face-to-face and online:

People that use day opportunity and respite services

Families and carers

Organisations that deliver services

Staff in social care and day opportunity centres

Health staff

People with learning disabilities

People with dementia

Children and young people

People with complex needs



We spoke to 206 people face-to-face and 205 completed an online survey that was open to the public.

In total, 411 people took part in this review, including children and young people.

The importance of day opportunity and respite services

Everyone we spoke to said day opportunity and respite services are very important.

For **service users***, these services:

- Help them to socialise with other people
- Take part in activities they enjoy learn important **occupational skills***

* **Service users** – This is the term for people who use services. These services can range from care support to activities. A wide range of people in Ceredigion are service users, including children in care, people with disabilities, and people with dementia.

* **Occupational skills** – These are a set of skills and knowledge that help someone do a job. The council provide day opportunity services to help people develop these skills. These might give people more independence at home or they might help them to get a paid job

For unpaid carers, these services:

- Give them free time for rest or work
- Opportunity to socialise with other carers and staff
- They would struggle to meet the needs of the people that they care for without these services

Day opportunity and respite services are very important to service users, families and unpaid carers.



Why things may need to change

There are a lot of reasons why Ceredigion should update its services:

- People's needs are becoming more complex
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic
- **The increased cost of fuel, food and resources**
- The availability of staff to support people who need support
- **The desire for more local community centres open for all community members to use and with shared resources**
- Transport challenges such as not enough drivers, whilst recognising that transport is essential for supporting people to access day and respite services
- **The need for social care, the NHS and third sector services* to work closer together**

* **Third sector organisations** – This is the term for people who use services. These services can range from care support to activities. A wide range of people in Ceredigion are service users, including children in care, people with disabilities, and people with dementia.

Day centre names

The council would like to offer more community activities at day centres.

To help promote this change, they have suggested changing the name of some day centres.

If the council wants to go ahead with these name changes, it should check back with the public to get their support.



Service redesign proposals

Feedback on the proposals to reform services was mixed.

Some people said the changes were needed. Services should meet the needs of service users now and in the future.

Other people were worried by the suggestion of mixing different groups of service users in the same setting.

This is because people need specific support for their needs. They weren't against the proposals, but said it needed careful management.



Most people liked the suggestion that more activities will be available. Everyone agreed that these should be designed around what service users want and need.

Most people agreed that there should be more activities that help people to get paid jobs. The council should focus first on opportunities that were closed during the pandemic.

People liked the idea of day opportunities and respite services being available for more hours. But they wanted to make sure this didn't affect how well the service was delivered.



People said it was important that everyone is informed on how the proposals were designed and introduced. Everyone should have their say.

What children and young people said...

We spoke with children and young people in a workshop and through a survey.

Here's what they said:

What they enjoy about day opportunity and respite services

New people to play with

The chance to relax

Get space from siblings

What they would change about services

One young person said they thought that "some foster parents can be bad – improve foster care."

Some young people said that other children have a negative view about social workers and being in care. More work needs to be done to change opinions so young people don't feel embarrassed or ashamed.

Young people would like the council to lift the ban on some activities that don't meet health and safety requirements, like trampolining. These rules don't affect children who aren't in care, and this doesn't seem fair.

What services they would like to see

- Do things with animals like helping at a shelter
- Stay somewhere longer
- Go to theme parks and attractions
- Respite homes that aren't foster carers, like friends' houses
- Day trips like Llangrannog, boat trips, Jump Park, Blue Stone and more

What young people of **transition age** said...

We also spoke to young people aged 16-24. This is called transition age, when they move from children's services to adult services

What they want in the future from services

- They want to direct their own support rather than be tied to a service that isn't their choice
- They want to be with people their own age and out in the community
- They want work
- They want organised activities for groups of people their age with autism
- More personal assistants to help them with access
- Services that help them to access their communities
- Respite services for family members
- A day service that provides activities, friendship, opportunities, a change of scenery and a sense of belonging

What they want in adult services

We surveyed young people about what activities would be most useful when they move to adult services. The most popular options were:

Support in making friends / relationships

Meeting people and community activities

Skills to help me live by myself

What they like about day opportunity and respite services

Seeing friends | Staff | Routine

What they would change about services

- Boys and girls in the group
- More visits to the national library and leisure centre
- Work experience opportunities
- More day trips
- Going out into the community
- Life skills and cooking
- Want a bus or better transport
- More consistency with staff working with them
- More consistency with vehicles
- Less changes in base location
- Interactive screen in centre
- Sensory experiences
- More information about what happens when you leave transition
- Making it easier to get a place in services

Overall feedback

Children and young people

Children and young people said they wanted activities that helped them to develop skills.

They want activity-based services and they like using community resources.

They also want take part in activities that are open to children who aren't in care.

76% of children & young people said they wanted activity groups with people their own age

67% of children & young people said they wanted creative activities

57% of children & young people said they wanted outdoor activities, trips, and volunteering activities

Young people in transition

Young people said that sometimes their needs and circumstances aren't listened to early enough. This meant there were gaps in support when they moved to adult services.

They also said that they struggled to access adult services when they transitioned.

“ It is a scramble to get things in place, no forward planning, no transition social worker in place, never knowing what's happening next.

“ Camu M'laen is a really positive structure, but what next?

“ Limited access to sheltered housing.

Adults with learning disabilities

This group highlighted the importance of routine, continuity of support, and the need for a calm environment.

You can read the Young Persons Action Plan to find out what our next steps are.

Interested in reading the full report?

If you would like to read a more detailed version, the full report and an easy-read version are available on the Ceredigion County Council website.

Social Care & Wellbeing

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CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny

Date of meeting: 22 November 2023

Title: Porth Cynnal Specialist Services (Children & Adults)
Independent Reviewing Service
Performance Management Report
QTR 1 2023 - 2024

Purpose of the report: To monitor the progress of Looked After Children through Independent Reviewing Officers scrutiny of their plans and placements during the first quarter of 2023/2024. This information contributes to Members fulfilling their roles as Corporate Parents

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:

To ensure that the Local Authority and Members can fulfil their duties as Corporate Parents

Background

Attached is the Independent Reviewing Service Report Quarter 1 2023/2024.

Quarterly reports are taken to the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of an ongoing examination of the topic to ensure that the Local Authority fulfils its duties as the Corporate Parent.

This report includes national and local standards and targets used to measure outcomes for looked after children and care leavers at the time of their review meeting and includes Welsh Government Performance Indicators.

On the basis of the information available and the views expressed during the review meeting, the IRO makes a professional judgement about the effectiveness of a child/young person's care plan in meeting their needs and may recommend changes to the care plan.

During the review meeting the IRO considers whether the child/young person requires assistance to identify relevant other people to obtain legal advice/take proceedings on their behalf. This action was deemed necessary for 2 young people by the IRO in the period.

In addition, the IRO has regard as to whether the child/young person's human rights are being breached in any way and, if so, might make a referral to CAFCASS Cymru. This action was not required at any of the review meetings in the period.

Current Situation

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS;

- At the end of quarter 1, there were 125 children being looked after compared to 132 as at the end of Q4.
- 95 children were reviewed in this quarter compared to 101 in the previous quarter. 94.7% of review meetings were undertaken within the Statutory Timescale.
- 20 children left care in this quarter compared to 3 in Quarter 4. 2 children returned home to family. There were 15 children where their care orders were revoked. 2 young people moved on to supported lodgings or independent living provision or into a shared lives placement and 1 young person moved in to a "When I am Ready" placement.
- The placement provision for the children reviewed during this Quarter were that 24 are in Local Authority foster care (in county), 16 in kinship carer placements in county and 5 out of county, 18 were in Independent Foster Agency placements (7 in county, 11 out of county), 10 children were placed with parents, and 14 were placed in residential care provision outside of the county. 3 children were placed with family, 2 were placed for adoption, 2 were in a Mother and Baby Residential setting and 1 was in supported lodgings/independent living.
- Of the reviews that took place in this quarter and where there were permanency plans in place, the plan for 42 children were that they would be cared for in Long Term Foster Care, 20 were to remain with Kinship/family members, 9 children were in placement with parents, 5 children were subject to twin tracking, 5 children are to be adopted, 2 children are to be cared for in residential care and 1 child was being supported to be rehabilitated with parents.
- 55 children were being cared for under the legal status of a Full Care Order, 17 were under an Interim Care Order, 5 under a placement order and 18 under Section 76.
- Of the children reviewed in this quarter, 100% of children received a statutory visit. This was compared to 98% in Quarter 4.
- 54.5% of the care and support plans were recorded as being in place at the first review compared to the 46.7%. The low percentage again this quarter, was due to staffing difficulties within the Planned Care Team which prevented the plans being completed on time.
- 95 (100.0%) Reviews identified that the young person's cultural views were met.
- It was recognised at 79 reviews that the young person's religious needs were met; for a further 16 reviews it was unknown as to whether the needs had been met. An interpreter was needed and provided for 5 reviews.
- 88 Reviews recorded that the child / young person was a UK Citizen, with 7 reviews noting that the child / young person was not a UK Citizen. 5 Children / Young people were Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers, none of these children / young people had an EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in place. 3 Other children / young people who were not UK Citizens had a EUSS in place. All 5 reviews recorded that an application had not been made for an EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS); however all 5 reviews recorded that the young person was being supported in this respect
- The percentage of children (of sufficient understanding) who understand their reason for being looked after was 93.2%.
- The percentage of children of sufficient understanding who were involved in or consulted about their review, was 100%
- The percentage of children who were made aware of their right for an advocacy service, was 88.3%

- Number and percentage of Looked After Children of school age who had a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school during this quarter is 93.8%
- Number and percentage of Looked After Children who received Health Assessments in accordance with statutory requirements was 93.7%
- Number and percentage of Parents consulted by the Social Workers before the review or who attended the review was 100%.
- 17 Pathway Plans were held in this quarter, compared to 30 in Quarter 4. 82.4% Pathway Plan Reviews were held within timescales.
- The percentage of Young Persons with allocated Personal Advisor / Social Worker was 100% during this Quarter.
- The Percentage of Young People Consulted for their Review Meeting during this Quarter was 94.1%

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why.
No

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

This report is provided on an ongoing basis and demonstrate the continuing work that is undertaken with Looked after Children in Ceredigion

Long term: Balancing short term need with long term planning for the future.
Collaboration: Working together with other partners to deliver
Involvement: Involving those with an interest and seeking their views; stakeholder engagement and consultation
Prevention: Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse
Integration: Positively impacting on people, economy, environment and culture and trying to benefit all three

Recommendation(s):

To note the contents of the report and the levels of activity with the Local Authority.

Reasons for decision:

So that governance of the Local Authority activity and its partner agencies for Looked After Children are monitored.

Contact Name: Audrey Somerton-Edwards

Designation: Corporate Lead Officer: (Children & Families)

Date of Report: 26 September 2023

Acronyms:

IRO - Independent Reviewing Officer
 LAC - Looked After Children
 CAF/CASS - The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
 APR - Action and Progress Records
 PEP - Personal Education Plan
 PI - Performance Indicators

CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
NEET - Not in Education, Employment or Training
PRU - Pupil Referral Unit

Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council
Safeguarding Service

Independent Reviewing Service Performance Management Report

Quarter 1: 1st April 2023 – 30th June 2023



...yn gofalu i wneud gwahaniaeth
...taking care to make a difference

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

This report provides information collated by the Quality Assurance and Independent Reviewing Service in order to monitor performance and quality assure services to looked after children, care leavers, children in residential placements and those children who receive respite care and short breaks. The information is based on the monitoring forms completed by the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) following each review meeting within this quarter along with other performance information held by the Children and Families Service.

BENCHMARKING

This report includes national and local measures and targets used to measure outcomes for looked after children and care leavers at the time of their review meeting.

On the basis of the information available and the views expressed during the review meeting, the IRO makes a professional judgement about the effectiveness of a child/young person's care plan in meeting their needs and the IRO will highlight to managers any poor practice.

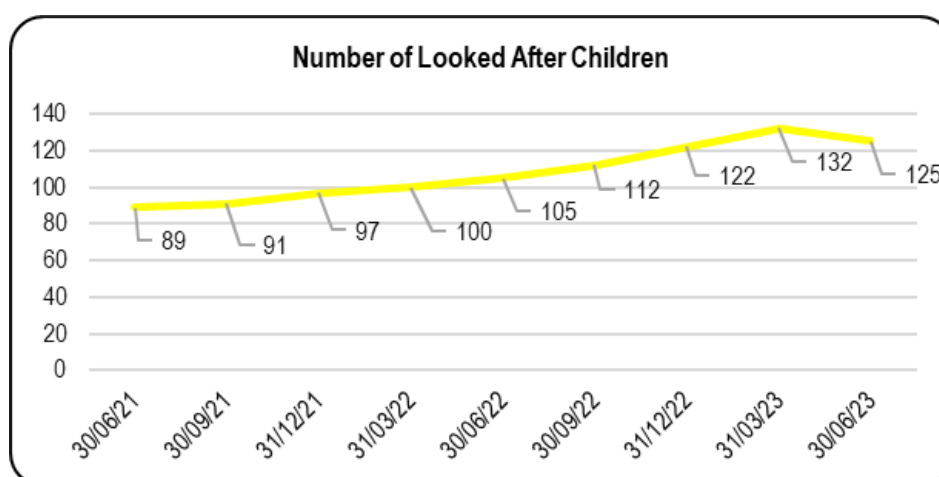
During the review meeting the IRO considers whether the child/young person requires assistance to identify relevant other people to obtain legal advice/take proceedings on their behalf. This action was deemed necessary for 2 children/young persons in the period.

In addition, the IRO has regard as to whether the child/young person's human rights are being breached in any way and, if so, might make a referral to CAF/CASS Cymru. This action was not required at any of the review meetings in the period.

SECTION TWO CARE PLANNING

1. **Headline Figures for Q1:**

The following table and chart provide the total number of Looked After Children data at the end of each quarter commencing with the most recent quarter.	
30 June 2023	125
31 March 2023	132
31 December 2022	122
30 September 2022	112
30 June 2022	105
31 March 2022	100
31 December 2021	97
30 September 2021	91
30 June 2021	89



2. **Number and percentage of Looked After Children Reviews undertaken within the statutory time requirement.**

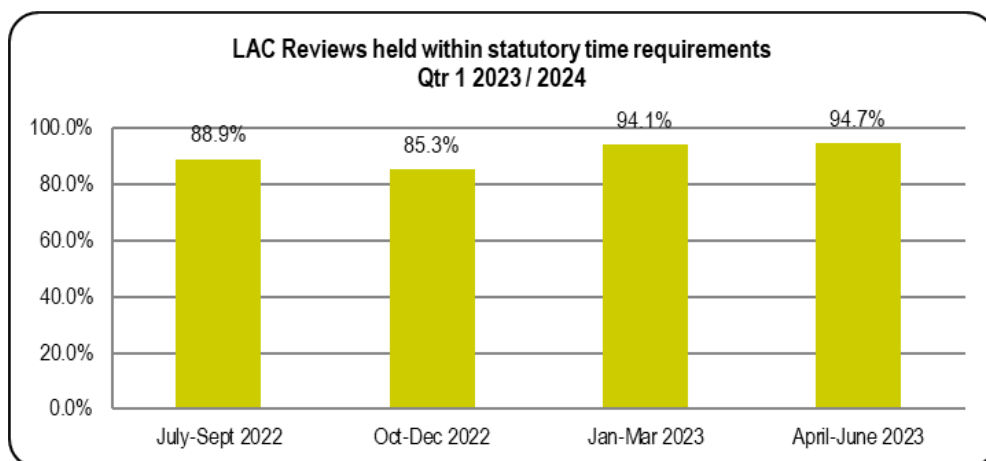
Target Set 100% - Target achieved 94.7%

95 Children were reviewed within the Quarter.

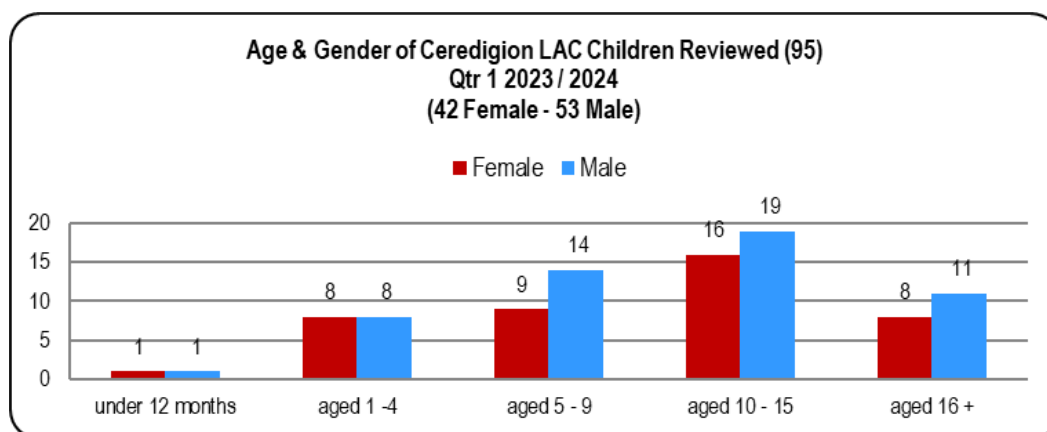
- 90 (94.7%) LAC Review Meetings were undertaken within the statutory requirements.
- 5 (5.3%) LAC Review Meetings were held out of statutory requirements; the reasons recorded were as follows: -
 - Reviews for a group of 3 siblings were delayed due to young people's birthdays and carer's availability.

- 1 Review Meeting was delayed allowing the young person to attend with a further Review Meeting delayed due to social worker’s availability.

	April-June 2023	Jan-Mar 2023	Oct-Dec 2022	July-Sept 2022	April-June 2022
Number of children reviewed in the quarter	95	101	116	63	83
Number of reviews held in timescale	90	95	99	56	75
Number of reviews held out of timescales	5	6	17	7	8



3. Age and Gender of the Children Reviewed in the Quarter:



4. Cultural, Religious and Language Needs

95 (100.0%) Reviews identified that the young person's cultural views were met. It was recognised at 79 reviews that the young person's religious needs were met; for a further 16 reviews it was unknown as to whether the needs had been met. An interpreter was needed and provided for all 5 reviews.

5 Citizenship

88 Reviews recorded that the child / young person was a UK Citizen, with 7 reviews noting that the child / young person was not a UK Citizen.

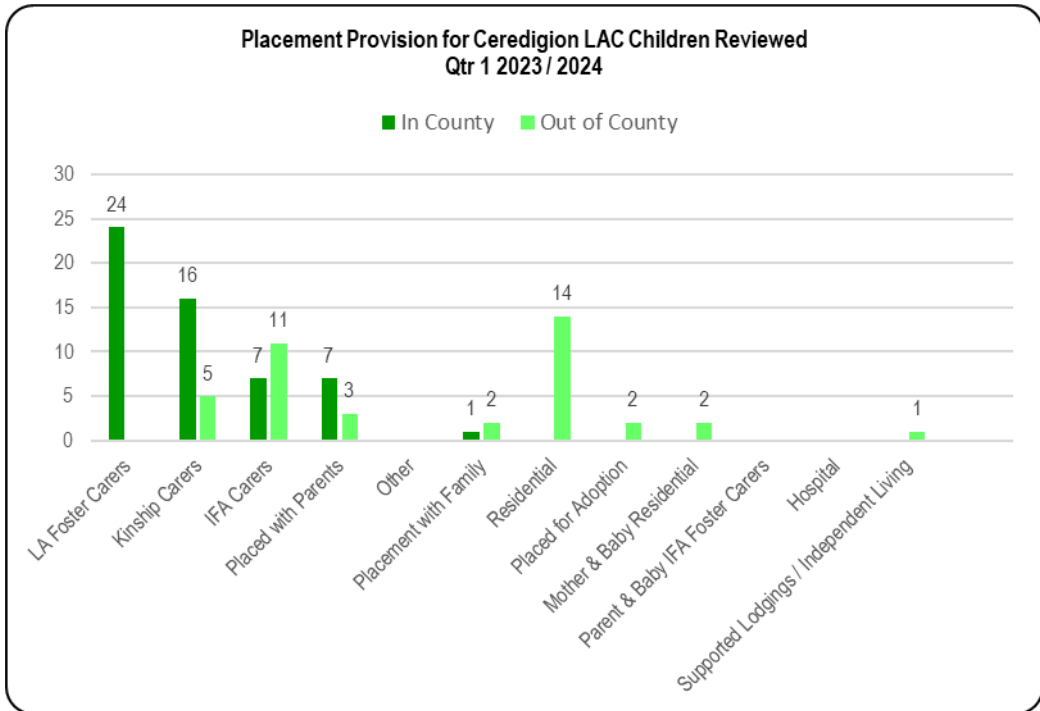
5 Children / Young people were Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers, none of these children / young people had an EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in place.

3 Other children / young people who were not UK Citizens had a EUSS in place.

All 5 reviews recorded that an application had not been made for an EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS); however all 5 reviews recorded that the young person was being supported in this respect.

6 Nature of the Placement Provision of Children Reviewed in the Quarter:

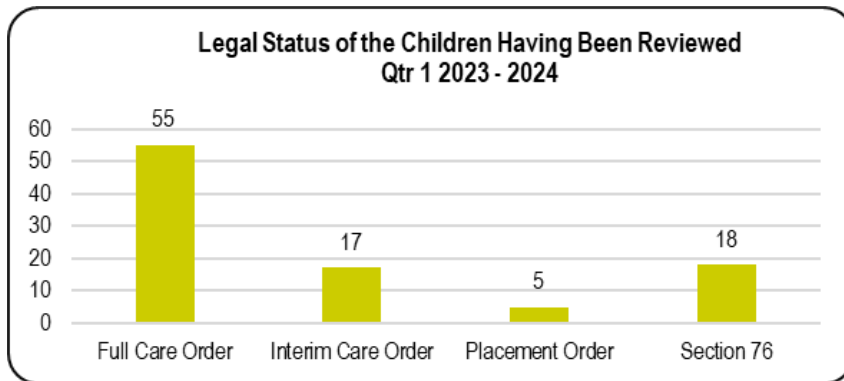
Type of Placement	In County	Out of County	Total
LA Foster Carers	24		24
Kinship Carers	16	5	21
IFA Carers	7	11	18
Placed with Parents	7	3	10
Other			
Placement with Family	1	2	3
Residential		14	14
Adoption		2	2
Mother & Baby Residential		2	2
Parent & Baby IFA Foster Carers			
Hospital			
Supported Lodgings/Independent Living		1	1
	55	40	95



5 Reviews noted that the young person was an unaccompanied child and placed in a care setting which did not meet their first language needs. There was a translator present for 4 of the reviews to enable the young person to participate accordingly. A translator was booked for the other review but failed to attend on the day.

7. Legal Status of Children Reviewed in the Quarter:

Legal Status of the Children Having Been Reviewed	
Full Care Order	55
Interim Care Order	17
Placement Order	5
Section 76	18
Total	95

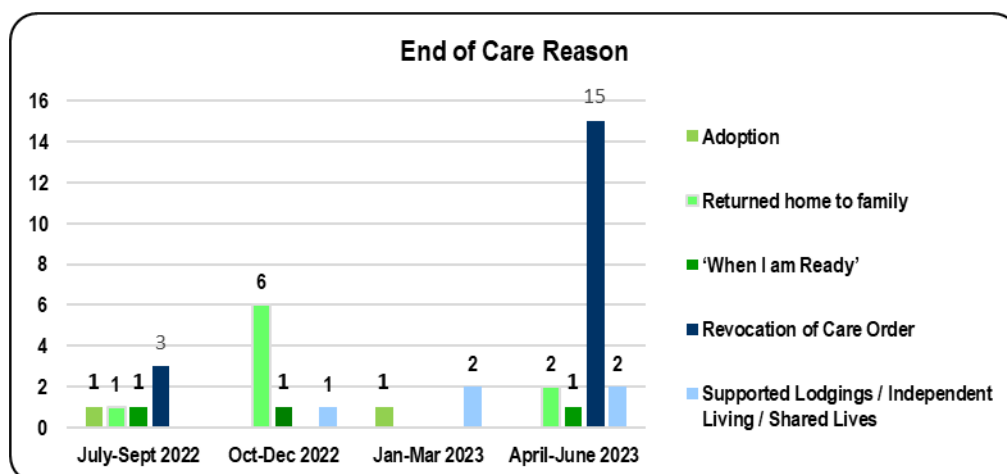


Delegated Authority

Delegated Authority was confirmed to be in place for 68 children who were reviewed with 5 reviews noting that this was yet to be undertaken. It was unknown at 9 reviews with a further 13 reviews recording that it wasn't applicable for the case.

8. Reasons for End of Care of the Children Reviewed

Period	Number left care	End of Care Reason				
		Adoption	Returned home to family	'When I am Ready'	Revocation of Care Order	Supported Lodgings / Independent Living/Shared Lives
April - June 2023	20	0	2	1	15	2
Jan - Mar 2023	3	1	0	0	0	2
Oct - Dec 2022	8	0	6	1	0	1
July - Sept 2022	6	1	1	1	3	0
Total	37	2	9	3	18	5



9. Number and percentage of Looked After Children who have an allocated Social Worker.

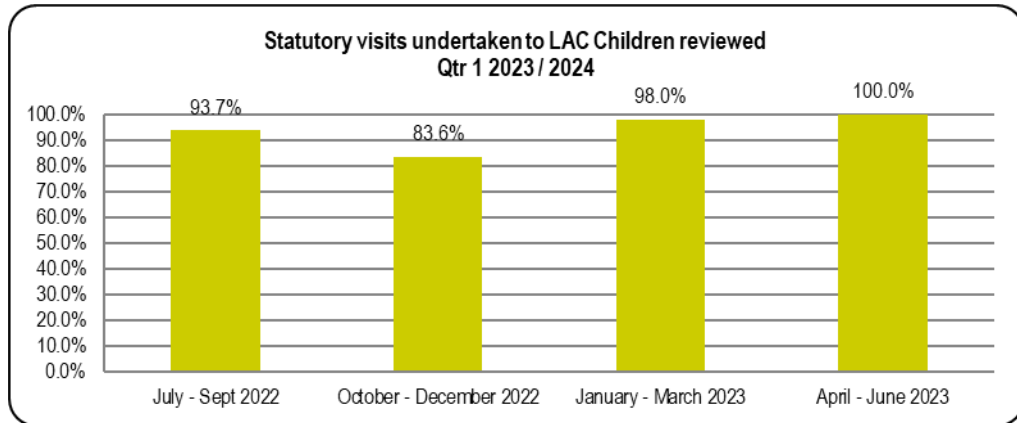
Target Set 100% - Target achieved 100.0%

- 95 (100.0%) LAC Reviews recorded that a qualified Social Worker was allocated and actively involved with the child.

10. Number and percentage of statutory visits undertaken to Looked After Children reviewed within the required timescales.

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 100.0%

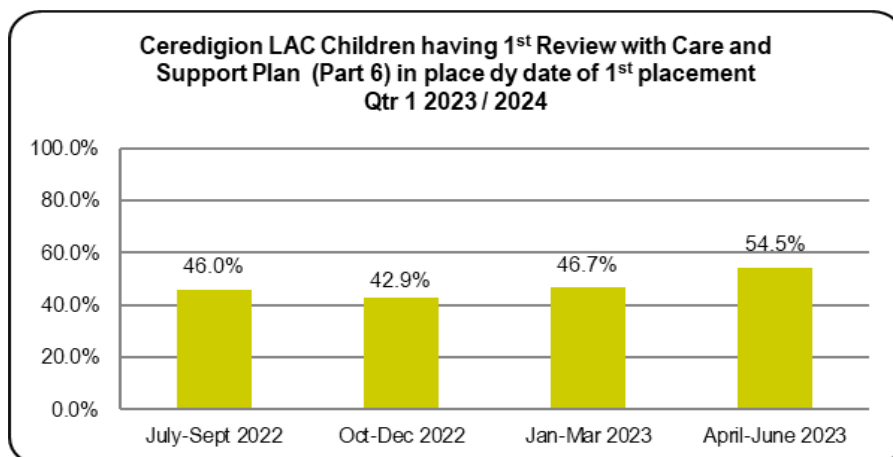
- 95 (100.0%) Looked After Children received Social Worker visits in accordance with the statutory requirements.



11. Number and Percentage of Care and Support Plans (Part 6) in place at the date of the first placement and of up-to-date plans available for the Review.

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 54.5%

- There were 11 Children that became Looked After during this quarter; 6 (54.5%) Review meetings recorded that the child / young person had a Care and Support Plan (Part 6) in place by the date of his/her placement. The Care and Support Plan (Part 6) wasn't in place by date of placement for the other 5 children / young persons.



- 82 (86.3%) Reviews recorded that the Care and Support Plan(Part 6) was up to date.

- The IRO identified that updates were required to the Care and Support Plan records (Part 6) of 13 children. It was identified that the updating of the Care and Support Plan was still outstanding for 11 children/young persons.

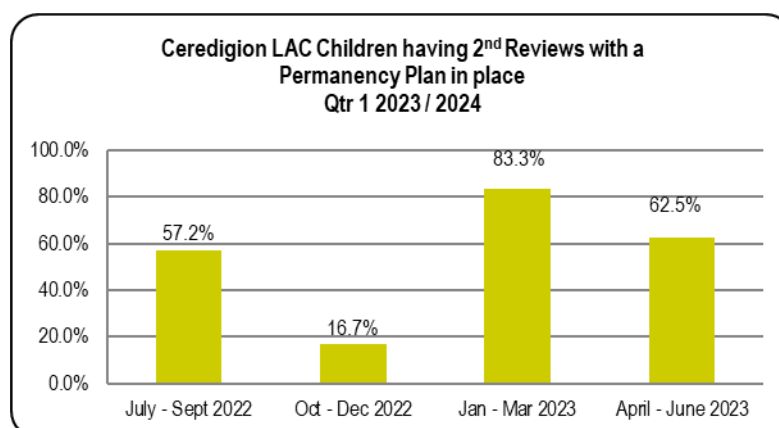
12. Number and percentage of Looked After Children who have a Permanency Plan by the second review if a return home has not been planned.

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 62.5%

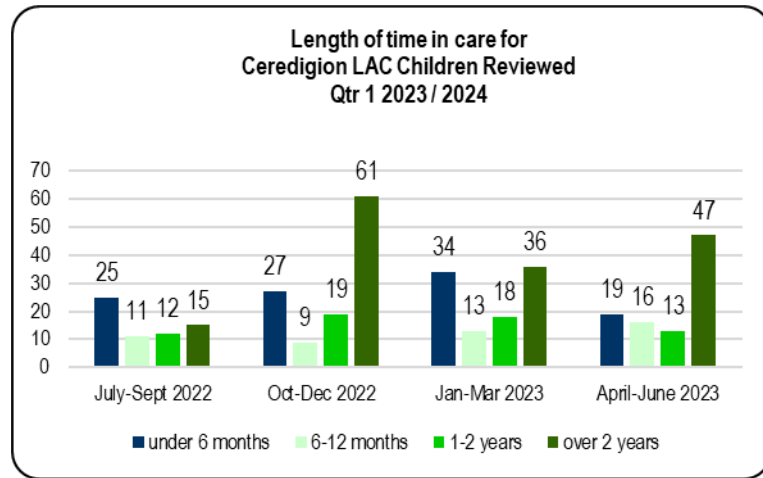
- There were 8 second reviews during this quarter, 5 reviews (62.5%) recorded that a Permanency Plan had been agreed. This compares to 83.3% in the previous quarter.
- There were concerns recorded by the IRO in 4 (4.2%) reviews in this period regarding the progress of the Placement / Care and Support Plan / Permanency Plan.

The nature of the concerns was as follows: -

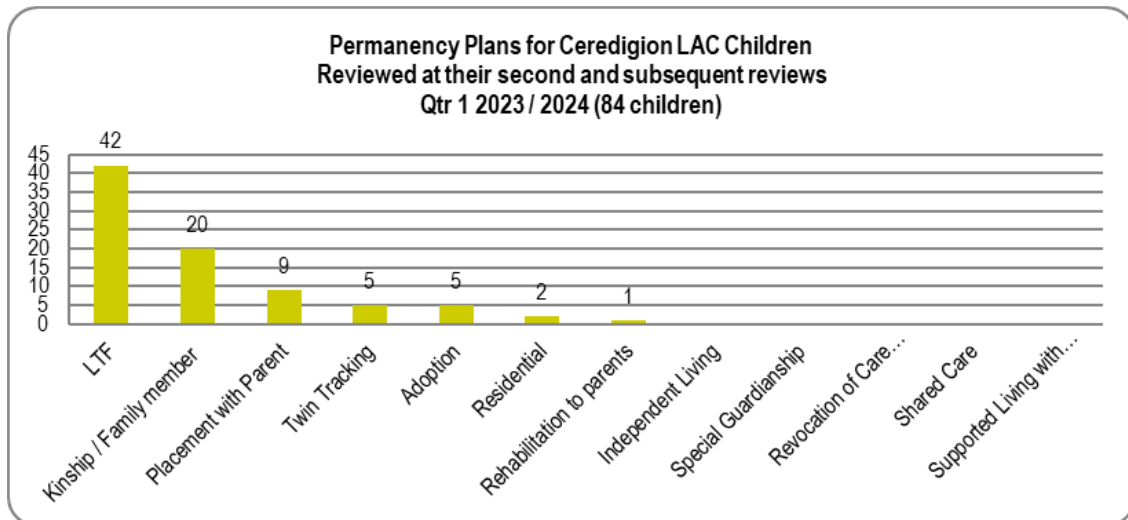
- It was noted that the young person was currently in a short term placement with a plan to move to a long term placement, which has been flagged at previous reviews but has still to be resolved. A placement identified at the beginning of the year fell through which has also unsettled the young person.
- Concerns regarding parent's ability to work with the Local Authority and the impact on the young person in being able to access activities or obtain a passport if this was refused by parent.
- There is a need to make decisions regarding young person's long term care arrangements as soon as possible. The emotional impact of changes in care on the young person are evident and s/he needs reassurance of where s/he is going to live.
- Delay in case being assessed and presented to Court for revocation.



13. Length of Time in Care:



14: Nature of Permanency Plans:



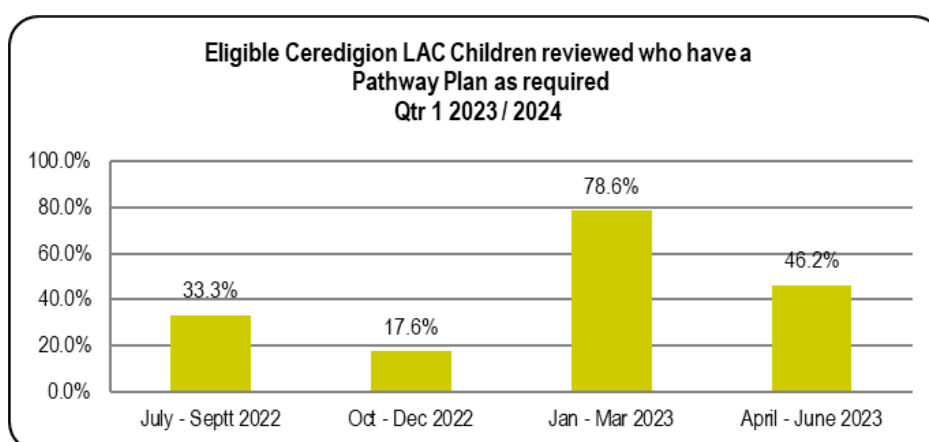
15. Number and percentage of Looked After Children receiving Short Break Care away from Main Carers

- 8 (8.4%) LAC Reviews noted that the child / young person was receiving short break care away from their main carer; all of these LAC Reviews reported that the respite placement was meeting the young person’s needs.

16. Number and percentage of eligible young people who have a Pathway Plan as required.

Target set: 100% Target Achieved 46.2%

- 6 (46.2%) Young People's reviews recorded that there was a Pathway Plan in place and were allocated a Personal Advisor.
- 7 (53.8%) Reviews recorded that the young person did not have a Pathway Plan in place.
- 11 of the above reviews noted that the young persons were allocated a Personal Advisor however 2 reviews recorded that a Personal Advisor was yet to be allocated.



17. Number and percentage of Looked After Children (of appropriate age and level of understanding) who understand the reasons for them being looked after

Target Set 100% -Target achieved 93.2%

- The data for this performance indicator relates to 73 children / young persons as 22 children / young persons were not considered to be of an appropriate age and level of understanding to comprehend the reasons for being looked after.
- 68 (93.2%) Of this group showed some level of understanding about why they were cared for away from their families, which compares to 95.3% in the previous quarter.
- 5 (6.8%) Review reported that Life Journey work needed to be undertaken with the child / young person to support in understanding the reasons for being looked after.

18. Number and percentage of Looked After Children (of appropriate age and level of understanding) understand their Care and Support Plan.

The data for this performance indicator relates to 68 children / young persons as 27 children / young persons were not considered to be of an appropriate age and level of understanding and were therefore not included in the figures.

- 64 (94.1%) of this group showed a level of understanding as to the nature of their Care and Support Plan (part 6).
- 4 (5.9%) Reviews recorded that this needed to be shared with the children / young persons.

19. National Measure 33: Number and percentage of moves for Looked after Children.

- 17 (17.9%) LAC Reviews reported that there was a change in a child's/young person's placement during this quarter; this compares to (6.9%) in the previous quarter.

The reasons for the changes in Placement were as follows:

- There was a planned move for a sibling group of 2 children to a long term kinship placement with family. A further sibling group of 2 children had a planned move from a short term placement to a long term residential placement with 1 further child having a planned move from a short term residential placement to a long term residential placement.
- For 1 Young person there was a planned move from a short term foster placement to a mother & baby residential placement.
- A sibling group of 2 children had an unplanned move to a short break placement due to carer's ill health following which they had a planned move to a long term foster placement.
- 3 Different foster carers submitted notice on their individual placements; for 1 child this resulted in a planned move from a short term foster placement to a further short term foster placement; with 1 other child having a planned move from a long term foster placement to a short term foster placement. A further child had a planned move from a long term foster placement to a long term residential placement.
- 1 Young person had a planned move between relatives, whilst a further young person moved from 1 short term supported living placement to a further short term supported living placement due to incompatibility.
- For 1 young person there was an unplanned move from a short term placement to a further short term placement due to foster carer being unable to manage young person.
- 1 Further young person had an unplanned from a long term residential placement to a short term unregulated placement as the previous placement was unable to meet the young person's needs.

4 Children had an unplanned move, none of the reviews recorded that a Stability Meeting had been held for these children within 6 weeks of moving placement.

20 Number and percentage of placement plans (including education and health provision) that are assessed as meeting the needs of Looked after Children.

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 95.8%

- 91 (95.8%) Placement/care and support plans were recorded as meeting the needs of the children / young people, which compares to 95.0% in the previous quarter.
- 4 (4.2%) Reviews recorded that Placement/care and support plan wasn't meeting the needs of the child / young person. The reasons recorded were: -
 - It was identified that a more nurturing & understanding environment was required for a sibling group of 2 children reviewed due to foster carers' negativity.
 - Even though a placement was meeting the basic needs for 1 young person reviewed, there was a need for a further nurturing single placement to be sought .
 - At a further young person's review the ISRO had concerns regarding the young person's mental health and presentation during and after the LAC Review due to pressures on the young person as a part of assessment expected at placement. The ISRO observed that the young person needed to be supported and cared for and worried that the young person's needs were not being considered.

21. Number and percentage of Safeguarding Concerns identified for Looked After Children during this quarter

- 2 (2.1%) LAC Reviews identified safeguarding concerns for the young person; it was confirmed that the concerns were being addressed.

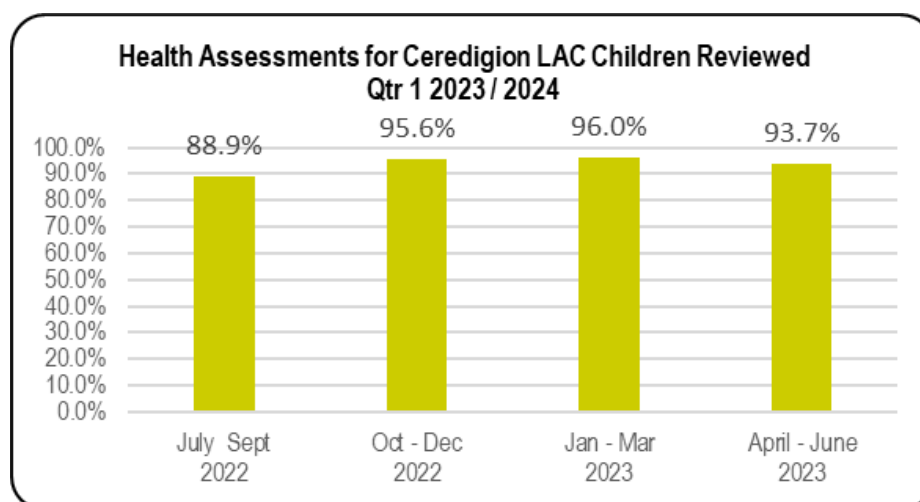
22. Number of Looked After Children's names on the Child Protection Register.

- 5 (5.3%) LAC Reviews during the quarter confirmed that the young person's name was included on the Child Protection Register.

23. Number and percentage of Looked After Children who received Health Assessments in accordance with statutory requirements

Target Set 100%- Target achieved 93.7%

- 89 (93.7%) Children/Young People Looked After had an up-to-date health assessment reported at their review, which compares to 96.0% in the previous quarter.
 - 7 (63.6% First Reviews recorded that the Health Assessment had been completed within 4 weeks of the child becoming LAC.
 - At 4 (36.4%) first reviews it was documented that the Health Assessment had not been undertaken within 4 weeks of the child becoming LAC.
 - 82 (97.6%) Further reviews recorded that Health Assessments were undertaken every 6 months for children aged under 5 and every 12 months for children over the age of 5.
 - 2 (2.4%) Reviews monitored that the Health Assessment had not been completed within 6 months / for children aged under 5 and every 12 months for children over the age of 5.
- 6 (6.3%) Children/Young People Looked After did not have an up-to-date health assessment at their review; however they have all subsequently been completed.



Comment: Delays are often caused by professionals not providing detailed information to enable assessments to be undertaken out of area.

24. The percentage of children registered with a dentist within 20 working days of becoming looked after

Target set: 100% Target Achieved 75.0%

Registered with a dentist

The data for registering a child / young person with a dentist within 20 days of becoming looked after relates to 8 children / young persons.

- 6 (75.0%) Reviews recorded that the child / young person was registered with a dental practitioner within 20 working days of the start of placement.
- 2 (25.0%) Review noted that the child / young person was yet to be registered with a dental practitioner.

Registered with a dentist

The data for this performance indicator relates to 84 Children / Young persons as 11 Children / Young persons having a first LAC Review were taken out of the above equation to coincide with National Measure requirements.

- 70 (83.3%) Children and young people were registered with a dentist. This compares to 84.9% in the previous quarter.
- 14 (16.7%) Children and young people needed to be registered with a dentist.

Comment: All Children have subsequently been referred / registered with a local dentist.

25. National Measure 30: Number and percentage of Looked After Children who have had their teeth checked by a dentist within 3 months of becoming Looked After.

Seen by a dentist

The data for being seen by a dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after relates to 8 children.

- 4 (50.0%) Reviews recorded that the child / young person had been seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming LAC.
- 4 (50.0%) Reviews recorded that the child / young person had not been seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming LAC.

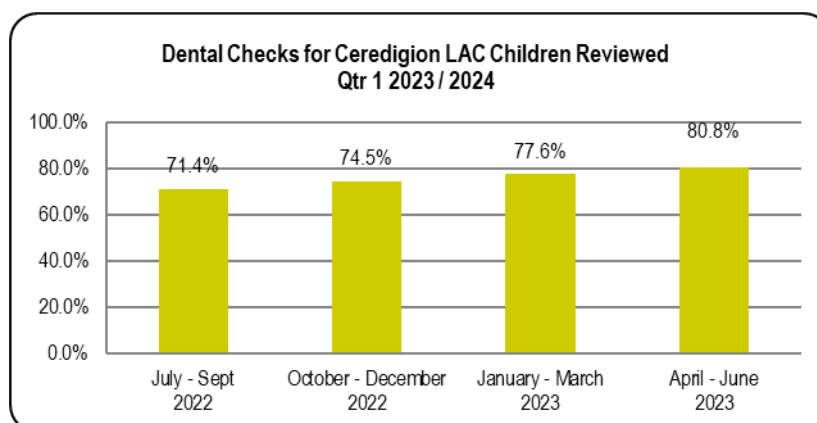
Comment: 2 Of these young people were placed out of county.

Seen by a dentist

Target Set 90% - Target achieved 80.8%

The data for this performance indicator relates to 78 Children / young persons as 17 Children / Young persons were under 2 years of age and / or having their first LAC Reviews and were taken out of the above equation to coincide with National Measures requirements.

- 63 (80.8%) Children and young people were recorded as having a dental check during the preceding 12 months, which compares to 77.6% in the previous quarter.
- 15 (19.2%) Children and young people were recorded as not having had dental checks.



26. National Measure 31: Percentage of children looked after who were registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement

- 21 (80.8%) Reviews recorded that the child was registered with a provider of general medical services within 10 working days of the start of placement.
- 5 (19.2%) Reviews reported that this action remained outstanding at the time of the review. It has been subsequently recorded that a registration with a local GP has taken place for all 5 children.

27. Number and percentage of children looked after who were registered with a GP

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 100.0%

- 95 (100.0%) Children and young people were registered with a GP, which is consistent with the previous quarter.
- 82 (89.1%) Children had their immunisations up to date.
- 10 (10.9%) Children were late in receiving their immunisations. 4 Of these young people are Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) and are offered an accelerated programme as there is incomplete previous immunisation history. Further clarity is required for a few young people who did not have immunisations in place.

3 Reviews were taken out of the equation as the parent / young person was refusing immunisation.

Comment: Updating of immunisation is an ongoing process to be compliant with immunisation schedules.

28. Number and percentage of Looked After Children assessed as requiring CAMHS services that are referred and receive an assessment /service.

Target: 50%

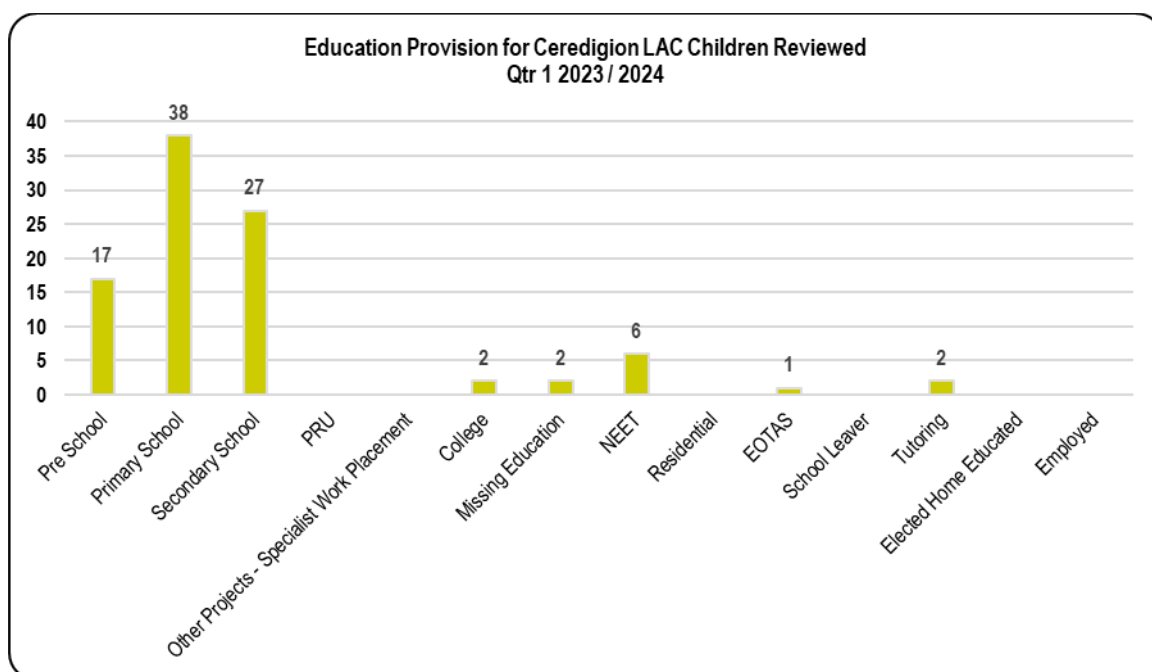
Actual Performance

- 1 (1.5%) LAC Review recorded that a child/young person had been referred to CAMHS, and it was confirmed at this Review that the referral had been accepted for the child/young person.
 - 90 (94.7%) LAC Reviews recorded that children/young people's mental/emotional health had been considered during the Health Assessment and/or during discussions in the meeting.
 - 5 (5.3%) Reviews recorded that the mental health issues had not been considered.
- ****
- 11 (11.6%) LAC Reviews identified that the young person had a current mental health problem.
 - Behavioural issues were identified for 14 (14.7%) children / young people during this period.

29. Nature of Education Provision:

During this quarter the children and young people reviewed were in the following educational provision.

Education Provision	
Pre-school children	17
Primary school pupils	38
Secondary school pupil	27
PRU	
Other Projects-Specialist Work Placement	
College	2
Missing Education	2
NEET	6
EOTAS	1
Residential	
School Leaver	
Tutoring	2
Elected Home Educated	
Employed	
Total	95



30. Number and percentage of Looked After Children of school age who had a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school.

Target Set 70% - Target achieved 93.8%

The data for this performance indicator relates to 65 children / young persons who were of compulsory school age and therefore eligible for a Personal Education Plan.

- 61 (93.8%) Children and young people of statutory school age had an up-to-date Personal Education Plan.
 - 14 (93.3%) Reviews recorded that the PEP had been completed within 20 school days of becoming Looked After or 20 school days of a change in school as required.
 - 47 (94.0%) Reviews recorded that the young person had an up-to-date Personal Education Plan.
- 4 (6.2%) Reviews recorded that the PEP had not been completed within timescales; however 2 of these reviews identified that the PEP was subsequently completed.

- 13 (20.0%) Children and young people attending school/college were identified as having a recognised highest additional learning need.

- 25 (38.5%) Reviews deemed that the children / young persons attending school/college needed additional support educationally. 23 (92.0%) Reviews recorded that the young people were receiving support.
- 2 (8.0%) Reviews identified that the support was not in place.

- 15 (75.0%) Reviews identified that the educational provision had been put in place at the start of the placement
- 5 (25.0%) Reviews recorded that the educational provision was not in place at start of placement.

- 4 (6.2%) Review identified that there had been a period whereby the child / young person had been out of education awaiting a school placement

31. National Measure 32: Percentage of Looked After Children who have changed schools and outside of transitional arrangements

Target Set 0% - Target achieved 0.0%

- 0 (0.0%) Reviews recorded a change of school which was not transitional, which is consistent with the previous quarter.

32. Number and percentage of Looked After Children who were excluded from school

Target Set 12% fixed term exclusion – Target achieved 3.1%

Target Set 1% permanent exclusion – Target achieved 0.0%

- 2 (3.1%) Reviews reported that the young person had been excluded on a fixed term basis during the review period. This compares to 3.2% in the previous quarter.
- 0 (0.0%) Reviews reported that the young person had been excluded from school permanently, which is consistent with the previous quarter.

There were exclusions during this quarter: -
1 session, total of 0.5 days

SECTION THREE

CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

1. **Local Performance Indicator: Number and percentage of Looked After Children of age and understanding consulted by the Social Worker or attended their review**

Target Set 100% – Target achieved 100.0%

The data for this performance indicator relates to 72 reviews as 23 reviews recorded that the children / young persons were not of an age and level of understanding to be included in the consultation process although 2 of these children / young people were present at their review.

- All 72 (100.0%) Reviews recorded that consultation had taken place.

Breakdown of consultation

38 Children / young people attended their review via Hybrid / Teams.

34 Children / young people completed consultation papers spoke with IRO or/and had their views represented by professionals, parents, carers or advocates.

- The IRO had direct contact with 23 children / young persons during the review period outside of the review meeting.

2. **Local Performance Indicator: Number and percentage of Children who were aware of their right for an Advocacy Service / Independent Visitor Scheme**

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 88.3%

The data for this performance indicator relates to 77 reviews as 18 reviews recorded that the children / young people reviewed were not of an age and understanding to be informed about their right for Advocacy / Independent Visitor Scheme and were therefore taken out of the equation.

- 68 (88.3%) Children / young persons were informed of their right for an Advocacy / Independent Visitor Scheme.

3 Local Performance Indicator: Number and percentage of Children informed about the Complaints Procedure

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 95.1%

The data for this performance indicator relates to 66 reviews as 29 reviews recorded that the children / young people were not of the age / level of understanding and were therefore taken out of this equation.

- 65 (98.5%) Children / young people knew about the complaints process, which compares to 95.1% in the previous quarter.
- 1 (1.5%) Reviews recorded that the IRO was unclear if the child / young person knew about the complaints process.

4 Local Performance Indicator: Number and percentage of Parents consulted by the Social Worker before the review or who attended the review

Target Set 80% - Target achieved 100.0%

The data for this performance indicator relates to 84 reviews as 11 reviews recorded that the parents were not involved in the statutory review process and these were therefore taken out of the above equation.

- All 84 (100.0%) Parents completed consultation papers or met with / spoke with the IRO prior and / or after the review or / and attended the review themselves or / and had their views represented by a professional.

Breakdown of consultation

Consultation Papers were sent to all 84 reviews.

45 Reviews confirmed that the parents were present; or spoke to the IRO by phone prior and/or after the review.

5 Local Performance Indicator: Number and percentage of Foster Carers consulted by the social worker or attends the Child's Review

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 100.0%

The data for this performance indicator relates to 86 reviews as 9 reviews recorded that the child was placed with a parent or living independently, these reviews were therefore taken out of the equation.

- 86 (100.0%) Foster Carers completed consultation papers or / and attended the reviews during this period.

6 Local Performance Indicator: Number and percentage of Health Representative attending the Review or Sending a Report

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 93.7%

- 89 (93.7%) Reviews confirmed that information regarding health was available for the meeting.
- 6 (6.3%) Reviews reported that there was no health information at the meeting.

Comment: When young people live out of county, it is more difficult to have the health professionals to attend

7. Local Performance Indicator: Number and percentage of a School Representatives attending a Review or Sending a Report

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 95.7%

- 67 (95.7%) LAC Reviews had a school representative attend or provided a written report, which compares to 94.2% in the previous quarter.

8. Local performance Indicator: Number and percentage of LAC Review Documents completed by the Social Worker prior to the review

Target Set 100% - Target achieved 49.5%

- 47 (49.5%) LAC Reviews confirmed that the LAC Review document had been completed by the Social Worker prior to the review, this compares to 54.5% in the previous quarter.
- 48 (50.5%) LAC Reviews confirmed that the LAC Review document had not been completed by the Social Worker prior to the review.

**SECTION FOUR:
ISSUE RESOLUTION PROTOCOL**

The Issue Resolution Protocol was not initiated during this period for any child by the IRO.

7 Mid-Point reviews took place during this period and where needed IRO were bringing reviews forward when there were concerns.

SECTION FIVE

EVALUATION

This information was unavailable for this quarter.

SECTION SIX

PATHWAY PLANNING

For over 16 years old and not LAC / over 18 year old care leavers

17 Pathway Plan Reviews were held during the quarter.

1 Performance Indicator: Percentage of Pathway Plan Review held within timescales

- 14 (82.4%) Pathway Plan Reviews were held within timescales, which compares to 90.0% in the previous quarter.
- 3 (17.6%) Pathway Plan Reviews were held out of timescales. The reasons recorded were as follows: -
 - 1 Review was rearranged due to young person's / PA's availability.
 - Another review was delayed due to placement availability.
 - 1 Further review was delayed due to Social Worker needing to be a part of the review.

2 Performance Indicator: Percentage of Young Persons with allocated Personal Advisor / Social Worker

- It was identified at all 17 (100%) reviews that all the young persons had an allocated Social Worker or/and Personal Advisor.

3 Performance Indicator: Percentage of Pathway Plan Review Record Completed for the Meeting

- The Review Record had been completed for 16 (94.1%) Pathway Plan Reviews, which compares to 70.0% in the previous quarter.
- 1 (5.9%) Review reported that the Review Record had not been completed at the time of the review.

4 Performance indicator: Percentage of Young People Consulted for the Review Meeting

- 16 (94.1%) Reviews confirmed that the young person had his / her views represented at the review or / and attended the review.
- It was identified at 1 (5.9%) review that the young person had not had his / her views represented at the review or / and attended the review.

- 5 Performance indicator: Percentage of Young People attending their Review Meeting**
- 6 (35.3%) Reviews recorded that the young person attended their review.
 - 11 (64.7%) Reviews recorded that the young persons had not attended their review.
- 6 Performance Indicator: Percentage of Pathway Plan meeting young person's needs**
- 16 (94.1%) Reviews confirmed that the Pathway Plan was meeting the young person's needs.
 - 1 (5.9%) Review noted that there was no Pathway Plan in place
- 7 Performance Indicator: Percentage of Pathway Plans updated prior to Leaving Care/18th Birthday**
- 2 (66.7%) reviews confirmed that the Pathway Plan had been updated prior to the young person leaving care / 18th Birthday.
 - 1 (33.3%) Review recorded that the Pathway plan had not been updated prior to the young person leaving care / 18th Birthday.
- 8 Evaluation This information was unavailable for this quarter.**

SECTION SEVEN

REGULAR SHORT BREAK CARE

There were no Regular Short Break Care Reviews held during the quarter.

SECTION EIGHT

SHORT BREAK CARE

No Short Break Care Reviews were held during the quarter.

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CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 22/11/2023

Title: Minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Working Group meeting for the Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care, held on 12/09/2023

Purpose of the report: To advise the Committee of new arrangements.

Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:
For information

Background

The Mid Wales Healthcare Collaborative (MWHC) was established by the then Minister for Health and Social Services following a study of healthcare in Mid Wales commissioned by Welsh Government and undertaken by Professor Marcus Longley in 2014. The 'Longley Study' made 12 recommendations forming the basis of a work programme for the Mid Wales Healthcare Collaborative arrangement, in seeking to implement the changes required for the Mid Wales population. The Collaborative was established in March 2015 for a period of 2 years, and then extended by Welsh Government and collaborative members for a further 12-month period. In March 2018 the MWHC transitioned to the Mid Wales Joint Committee (MWJC) with a strengthened role in the joint planning and implementation of health and care services across Mid Wales. This was to reflect the changes in the requirements of NHS bodies for collaborative and regional working and NHS bodies and Local Authorities for the integration of care services in order to ensure a seamless approach. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 impacted on the progress of the work of the MWJC due to organisations being required to focus their efforts on planning and responding to the pandemic. In response to these changing service needs, the Lead Chair and Lead Chief Executive requested that a post COVID-19 review be undertaken of the Joint Committee and how it operates. The paper outlining the current arrangements for the Joint Committee, a summary of the post COVID-19 review together with the proposed recommendations for the future arrangements for the Joint Committee was presented and agreed by the Mid Wales Joint Committee at its meeting on 31st October 2022. The Joint Committee also requested a more detailed paper on its future arrangements.

The partners of the Mid Wales Joint Committee (MWJC) are as follows:

- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)
- Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB)
- Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB)
- Welsh Ambulance Services Trust (WAST)

- Ceredigion County Council
- Cyngor Gwynedd
- Powys County Council

Current Situation

The MWJC is and will be chaired by a nominated Chair of a Health Board, working on behalf of other Chairs, in rotation for a period of 2 years.

The Mid Wales Joint Committee will in the future meet bi-annually as follows:

- Annual meeting held in April with its main purpose being a planning meeting for the Joint Committee’s future workplan.
- Annual conference held in November which will provide an opportunity to showcase the work of the Joint Committee and engage with partners and members of the public on its work. The annual conference to be arranged to coincide with the Rural Health and Care Wales conference.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.

N/A

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term:

Collaboration:

Involvement:

Prevention:

Integration:

Recommendation(s):

To note the minutes and the new arrangements.

Reasons for decision:

For the Committee’s information.

Contact Name: Dwynwen Jones

Designation: Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer

Date of Report: 23/10/2023

Acronyms:

None

Joint Scrutiny Working Group



Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Working Group held on Zoom, Tuesday, 12th September 2023 at 10am.

Councillors

10:00am-11:00am

Ceredigion: Caryl Roberts, Ceris Jones.

Gwynedd: Apologies received.

Powys: No representative in attendance.

Officers

Ceredigion: Dwynwen Jones (Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer)

Gwynedd: Bethan Adams (Scrutiny Advisor)

Also in attendance

Peter Skitt, Ceredigion County Director and Programme Lead Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care

Nia Williams, Programme Manager, Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care

1 Welcome and Apologies

Councillor Caryl Roberts, Ceredigion Chair of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Group had not met for a long period of time and this meeting had been convened to discuss and agree on its future arrangements. Councillors Eryl Jones-Williams and Linda Ann Jones apologised for being unable to attend the meeting.

2 Mr Peter Skitt, County Director and Programme Lead Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care

The Chair welcomed Peter Skitt to the meeting to update the Group on recent events regarding future arrangements for the Joint Committee.

Peter thanked the Group for the welcome and confirmed the reason he had been invited to the meeting was to provide an update on what its future arrangements will be.

The Mid Wales Healthcare Collaborative (MWHC) was established by the then Minister for Health and Social Services following a study

of healthcare in Mid Wales commissioned by Welsh Government and undertaken by Professor Marcus Longley in 2014. The 'Longley Study' made 12 recommendations forming the basis of a work programme for the Mid Wales Healthcare Collaborative arrangement, in seeking to implement the changes required for the Mid Wales population. The Collaborative was established in March 2015 for a period of 2 years, and then extended by Welsh Government and collaborative members for a further 12-month period. In March 2018 the MWHC transitioned to the Mid Wales Joint Committee (MWJC) with a strengthened role in the joint planning and implementation of health and care services across Mid Wales. This was to reflect the changes in the requirements of NHS bodies for collaborative and regional working and NHS bodies and Local Authorities for the integration of care services in order to ensure a seamless approach. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 impacted on the progress of the work of the MWJC due to organisations being required to focus their efforts on planning and responding to the pandemic. In response to these changing service needs, the Lead Chair and Lead Chief Executive requested that a post COVID-19 review be undertaken of the Joint Committee and how it operates. The paper outlining the current arrangements for the Joint Committee, a summary of the post COVID-19 review together with the proposed recommendations for the future arrangements for the Joint Committee was presented and agreed by the Mid Wales Joint Committee at its meeting on 31st October 2022. The Joint Committee also requested a more detailed paper on its future arrangements.

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- Powys County Council

The MWJC is and will be chaired by a nominated Chair of a Health Board, working on behalf of other Chairs, in rotation for a period of 2 years.

The Mid Wales Joint Committee will in the future meet bi-annually as follows:

- Annual meeting held in April with its main purpose being a planning meeting for the Joint Committee's future workplan.
- Annual conference held in November which will provide an opportunity to showcase the work of the Joint Committee and engage with partners and members of the public on its work. The annual conference to be arranged to coincide with the Rural Health and Care Wales conference.

The Chair thanked Peter Skitt for attending and advised him and Nia Williams that Dwynwen Jones would be in touch following the groups discussions.

3 Agree on future arrangements and review Terms of Reference

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed by Ceredigion attendees (would need to be shared and agreed by Gwynedd and Powys Local Authorities) as follows:

1. Focusing on encouraging Group Members from the three Counties, namely Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Powys to attend meetings of the Mid Wales Joint Committee, in order to observe and ask questions to the Board when the agenda item - questions from the Public.
2. If any Member wishes to receive more information in the form of a report or presentation after the meeting of the Mid Wales Joint Committee, then a meeting of the Scrutiny Working Group will be arranged and held at that time.
3. The Terms of Reference would be amended to reflect the above.

Joint Scrutiny Working Group

Terms of Reference

Aims:

The aim of the Group is to ensure the best health and care outcomes for the people of Mid Wales by providing good scrutiny of the Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care.

Role:

The role of the Group is to look at the provision of health and care services in Mid Wales and issues that affect people who reside in the relevant areas of Ceredigion, Gwynedd and Powys Counties.

The process provides the opportunity for Councillors from the three Counties to examine health and care service provision, to ask questions on how decisions have been made, to consider whether service improvements can be put in place and to make recommendations to this effect.

Scrutiny plays an essential role in promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the decision-making process.

Effective Scrutiny can lead to:

- Better decision making
- Improved Service Delivery and Performance
- Robust Policy Development arising from public consultation and input of independent expertise
- Enhanced Democracy, Inclusiveness, Community Leadership and Engagement
- Adds a clear dimension of transparency and accountability to the three Councils
- Provides an opportunity for all Members to develop specialist skills and knowledge that can benefit future policy making and performance monitoring processes

Membership:

The Group is for scrutiny members with an interest in health and care

- Up to three scrutiny members from each council including for example the scrutiny chair / convener
- Membership is flexible and replacement scrutiny members will be allowed
- Relevant co-opted members may be invited if they are not part of the Executive of the Joint Committee, the Health Boards, the Councils or Welsh Government.
- Scrutiny Support Officers/Advisors should attend.

Meetings:

- Group Members from the three Counties, namely Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Powys to attend meetings of the Mid Wales Joint Committee, in order to observe and ask questions to the Board under the agenda item - Questions from the Public.
- If any Member wishes to receive more information in the form of a report or presentation after the meeting of the Mid Wales Joint Committee, then a meeting of the Scrutiny Working Group will be arranged and held at that time.

Support:

Support to be provided from the Scrutiny Officer/Advisor of each authority with the Scrutiny Officer/Advisor from the host authority of any meeting providing the support for that meeting.

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Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

REPORT TO: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 22 November 2023

TITLE: Draft Forward Work Programme 2023/24

PURPOSE OF REPORT: Review the current work programme of the Committee

REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION: The forward work programme of the Committee is reviewed and updated at each meeting

BACKGROUND:

Overview and Scrutiny Committees oversee the work of the Council to make sure that it delivers services in the best way and for the benefit of the local community.

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to look at the services and issues that affect people in Ceredigion. The process provides the opportunity for Councillors to examine the various functions of the council, to ask questions on how decisions have been made, to consider whether service improvements can be put in place and to make recommendations to this effect.

Scrutiny plays an essential role in promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the Council's decision making process and the way in which it delivers services.

The main roles of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees:

- Holding the cabinet and officers as decision-makers to account
- Being a 'critical friend', through questioning how decisions have been made to provide a 'check and balance' to decision makers, adding legitimacy to the decision making process
- Undertaking reviews of council services and policy
- Undertaking reviews to develop council services and policies
- Considering any other matter that affects the county
- Ensuring that Ceredigion is performing to the best of its ability and delivering high quality services to its citizens
- Assessing the impact of the Council's policies on local communities and recommending improvement
- Engaging with the public to develop citizen centred policies and services

Effective Overview and Scrutiny can lead to:

- Better decision making
- Improved Service Delivery and Performance
- Robust Policy Development arising from public consultation and input of independent expertise
- Enhanced Democracy, Inclusiveness, Community Leadership and Engagement
- Adds a clear dimension of transparency and accountability to the political workings of the Council
- Provides an opportunity for all Members to develop specialist skills and knowledge that can benefit future policy making and performance monitoring processes
- Creates a culture of evidence based self-challenge

CURRENT SITUATION:

Questions to consider when choosing topics

- Is there a clear objective for examining this topic?
- Are you likely to achieve a desired outcome?
- What are the likely benefits to the Council and the citizens of Ceredigion?
- Is the issue significant?
- Are there links to the Corporate Strategy
- Is it a key issue to the public?
- Have the issues been raised by external audit?
- Is it a poor performing service?

Choosing topics

Overview and Scrutiny Committees should consider information from the Corporate Strategy, the Corporate Risk Register, budget savings – proposals and impact, Quarterly Corporate Performance Management panel meetings and departmental input in choosing topics and designing their Forward Work Programmes, as well as any continuing work.

RECOMMENDATION (S):

To review and update the current Forward Work Programme.

Contact Name:	Dwynwen Jones
Designation:	Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Date of Report:	25 October 2023
Acronyms:	FWP – Forward Work Programme

Committee	Item (description/title)	Invited Speakers	Purpose i.e. monitoring, policy, recommendation
Healthier Communities			
24 May 2023	CSSIW Inspection report and Action Plan	Audrey Somerton-Edwards	
	Update on Domiciliary Care	Donna Pritchard	Committee's request
	Regional Maternity and Early Years Strategy	Iwan Davies/Elen James	Pre-Cabinet
	Joint Adoption Arrangements	Audrey Somerton-Edwards	
3 July 2023	Through Age and Wellbeing Recruitment/Retention	James Starbuck	Committee's Request
	Direct Payments	Donna Pritchard	
	A report on the Housing Register	Llyr Hughes/Cerys Purches-Phillips	Committee's Request
18 September 2023	Housing Strategy	Llyr Hughes	Pre-Cabinet
	IRO	Elizabeth Upcott	Pre-Cabinet

	To present to Committee the outcome of the Ceredigion Dementia Ceredigion Implementation Plan		Pre-Cabinet
22 November 2023	Report on the delivery of food hygiene/standards and animal feed inspections in Ceredigion Pets as prizes CIW update report after six months for a period of one year on action against progress Statutory Director of Social Services Annual Report 22/23 Respite and Day Services IRO	Carwen Evans Heddwyn Evans Ricky Cooper Audrey Somerton-Edwards Donna Pritchard Elizabeth Upcott	Requested by Committee Pre-Cabinet As recommendation
8 February 2024	Budget Preparation		
11 March 2024	Invite: Barcud WWHA Caredig		
Future agenda items	Update on the Support and Intervention Service May 2024 - Report on the 15 points referred to in the 'Pledge' – Domiciliary Care	Gethin Jones Donna Pritchard/Heather West	

Minutes of the Meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Chamber, Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron and remotely on Monday, 18 September 2023

Present: Councillor Caryl Roberts (Chair), Councillors Ceris Jones (Vice-Chair), Amanda Edwards, Elaine Evans, Eryl Evans, Keith Evans, Wyn Evans, Gwyn James, Sian Maehrlein, John Roberts, Mark Strong & Carl Worrall.

Also in attendance: Councillors Ifan Davies, Rhodri Evans, Hugh Hughes & Chris James.

Cabinet Members present: Councillors Catrin M S. Davies, Keith Henson, Wyn Thomas, Matthew Vaux & Alun Williams.

Officers in attendance: Audrey Somerton-Edwards, Interim Corporate Lead Officer- Porth Cynnal; Ricky Cooper, Corporate Lead Officer- Porth Cynnal; Elizabeth Upcott, Corporate Manager- Safeguarding; Greg Jones, Corporate Lead Officer- Porth Cymorth Cynnar; Llyr Hughes, Corporate Manager- Housing Services; Cerys Purches-Phillips, Senior Housing Officer - Strategy & Monitoring; Donna Pritchard, Corporate Lead Officer- Porth Gofal; Nerys Lewis, Corporate Manager- Direct Services; Helen Harries, Project Officer; Wendy Cushley, Business Solutions Officer; Dwynwen Jones, Overview and Scrutiny Officer and Neris Morgans, Democratic Services Officer.

(10.00am- 11.47am)

1 Welcome and Apologies

Councillor Ann Bowen Morgan apologised for her inability to attend the meeting.

2 Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations) **Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.**

- i. Councillor Eryl Evans declared a personal interest under item 4.
- ii. Councillor Alun Williams declared a personal interest under item 5.

3 Independent Reviewing Service Performance Management Report Quarter 4, 2022 - 2023

Councillor Alun Williams (Cabinet Member for Through Age and Wellbeing) presented the Independent Reviewing Service Report Quarter 4 2022/2023. Quarterly reports were taken to the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of an ongoing examination of the topic to ensure that the Local Authority fulfils its duties as the Corporate Parent. The report included national and local standards and targets used to measure outcomes for looked-after children (LAC) and care leavers at the time of their review meeting and includes Welsh Government (WG) Performance Indicators.

Based on the information available and the views expressed during the review meeting, the IRO made a professional judgement about the effectiveness of a child/young person's care plan in meeting their needs and may recommend changes to the care plan. During the review meeting, the IRO considered whether the child/young person required assistance to identify relevant other people to obtain legal advice/take proceedings on their behalf. This action was deemed necessary for 7 young people by the IRO in the period. In addition, the IRO has regard as to whether the child/young person's human rights were being breached in any way and, if so, may make a referral to CAF/CASS Cymru. This action was not required at any of the review meetings in the period.

The reports are considered within Multi Agency LAC Quality Assurance Meetings which met quarterly; these meetings provided an opportunity to identify and act upon performance and other issues with this area of work. The reports were also circulated and reviewed by the Local Authority's Corporate Parenting Group, which took place quarterly. Councillor Alun Williams proceeded to present a Summary of the Key Points noted on page 2 of the report.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions which were answered by Officers present and Councillor Alun Williams. The main points raised were as follows:

- There were many reasons for the increase in the number of LAC, including the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, the complexities involved and an improved response rate to referrals.
- Under WG's plans to eliminate profit-making from the care of LAC, the local authority was in the process of developing internal resources in 3 locations across the county, which were due to open in 2024. Although Ceredigion had fewer out-of-county placements compared to other local authorities, the aim was to enable children to remain in their local communities and to maintain links with family and schools.
- Given the resources required, the lack of detail from the Home Office and the financial pressure on the local authority's budget, concerns were raised with how the National Transfer Scheme Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children operated.
- Additional foster carers had been recruited recently, but the campaign was generally slow and steady. As current foster carers were an ageing cohort, Members were encouraged to recruit in their communities.
- Having a Permanency Plan by the second review if a return home had not been planned depended on many factors such as the need for expert advice, which could lead to a delay. Ensuring the right decision was made as opposed to a quick one was key.
- Schools had identified LAC teachers and a designated safeguarding lead. All schools were focused on the needs of the children and had a duty of care to all.

Following questions by the Committee Members, it was agreed to note the contents of the report and the levels of activity with the Local Authority.

4 Housing Strategy, Setting out Ceredigion's vision and plans for housing in the County for the next 5 years

Councillor Matthew Vaux (Cabinet Member for Partnerships, Housing, Legal and Governance and Public Protection) explained that following agreement from Scrutiny and Cabinet, a public consultation on the Draft Housing Strategy began on 5th May and ran until 30th June 2023. The Consultation Survey asked a total of 10 questions and from the findings, most responses were positive and in agreement with the proposed strategy. Therefore, the Housing Team remained confident that these directions were fit for purpose and did not require changing. A key theme identified from the consultation responses was empty properties. This area had been recognised by the Housing Service and given due consideration and priority within the Housing Strategy and therefore, it was positive to see agreement on this area of work within the responses received. An overview of the additions to the Housing Strategy following consultation and internal reviewing was provided.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions which were answered by Officers present and Councillor Matthew Vaux. The main points raised were as follows:

- Phosphates was a significant issue within the county and prevented development, but it was not within the scope of the Housing Strategy.
- In response to concerns raised that there was less contact with small-scale local builders than in the past, it was noted that the Strategic Housing Partnership's partners included registered social landlords and private developers.
- Members expressed their disappointment with the lack of response to the consultation. Despite this, the nature of the responses was positive. It was suggested there was an issue nationally with low response rates to consultations.
- As it was an anonymous consultation, no demographic details such as the location of the respondent or whether the response was from an individual or an organisation were available.
- The service had identified other initiatives to increase the supply of Housing, such as the Empty Property Action Plan and were included within the National Empty Homes Grant Scheme.

Following questions by the Committee Members, it was agreed to recommend that Cabinet recommend the approval of the Housing Strategy to Full Council and accept the recommendations following the end of the consultation period and approve for full adoption.

5 To present to the Committee the outcome of the Ceredigion Dementia Implementation Plan

Councillor Alun Williams explained that the purpose of the report was to scrutinise the outcome of the public engagement and the Implementation Plan developed and make recommendations if required to Ceredigion County Council's Cabinet. A priority area for Ceredigion County Council was to develop a local dementia Implementation Plan to support the Regional Dementia Strategy. On the 6th of December 2022, Attain were appointed to undertake and facilitate engagement sessions to explore what actions were

needed to support people living with dementia in Ceredigion. The engagement period took place over a 6-week period from 13.02.2023 to 31.03.2023. Over the engagement period, Attain spoke with a wide remit of stakeholders, from individuals living with dementia, their careers, and professionals from across Health and Social Care, including support networks in the 3rd sector. As part of this work, Attain developed a report and an Implementation Plan that would support Ceredigion County Council and Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) to address some of the challenges and gaps identified.

Key findings from the finalised report suggested that the current number of people living with Dementia (PLWD) in Ceredigion was approximately 1,260 and by 2040, the predicted growth of PLWD ranged from 600 to 2000. An overview of the key themes, recommendations and next steps as noted in the report was provided.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions which were answered by Officers present and Councillor Alun Williams. The main points raised were as follows:

- The local authority worked closely with neighbouring local authorities via the West Wales Regional Partnership Board (WWRPB) to ensure there was a consistent approach to the delivery of dementia services and a large proportion of funding was accessed regionally. To ensure the residents of Ceredigion benefited, there was an emphasis on the local delivery plan and consideration was given to the work ongoing with respite and day services too.
- Members felt there were opportunities for the local authority and HDdUHB to work together to ensure dementia patients remained in their local communities. A new dementia residential unit at Hafan Deg Care Home, Lampeter would open shortly.
- It was acknowledged that the diagnostic rate regionally was very low, partly due to the lack of training GPs received to diagnose dementia. In addition, the public's perception of the lack of support available following diagnosis was a key factor. A Dementia Connector role was being developed to support individuals on their journey.
- The Cabinet Member clarified that dementia was included in his role as Ceredigion's Champion for Older People. He was not directly involved in discussions with the HDdUHB, but it was key that the local authority and HDdUHB worked closely at officer level along with the WWRPB.

It was noted that it had been recommended at a previous meeting that when an agenda item involved Hywel Dda University Health Board, Councillor Rhodri Evans as the elected member of the Board should be informed.

The Chair praised the number of organisations involved in the stakeholder engagement.

Following questions by the Committee Members, it was agreed to note the report for information and to recommend that Cabinet approve the Dementia Implementation Plan for Ceredigion, subject to:

- Present the report to the Healthier Ceredigion Strategic Group and create an integrated Health, Social Care and 3rd Sector Development Group to oversee the delivery of the implementation plan.
- To communicate the initial findings of the engagement with the public, and to develop a Communication and Engagement Plan ensuring that the public were aware of the on-going progress relating to the delivery of the implementation plan.
- To return to the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an Annual Progress report.

6 To consider the minutes of the previous meeting on the 3rd of July 2023 and to discuss any matter arising therefrom

It was agreed to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023.

Matters arising: None.

7 To consider the Forward Work Plan 2023-2024

It was agreed to note the contents of the Forward Work Programme presented.

8 Any other business

The Chair extended thanks on behalf of the Committee to Audrey Somerton-Edwards, Interim Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Cynnal for her dedication to the work and wished her well for the future. It was noted that she would be a loss for the local authority. Ricky Cooper, who had recently started in his role as Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Cynnal had left the meeting early and therefore, would be welcomed at the next meeting.

Councillor Alun Williams echoed the Chair's words and stated that it had been a pleasure to work with Audrey Somerton-Edwards who advocated strongly for the needs of the most vulnerable of citizens.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 November 2023

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

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