

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	6 June 2023
Title:	Care Inspectorate Wales Performance Evaluation Inspection Action Plan
Purpose of the report:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To update Cabinet about the steps that are being taken to address the improvements contained in the CIW Report in response to the Performance Evaluation Inspection which took place between 27 February 2023 and 10 March 2023.2. To recognise the strengths contained in the report.3. To agree the timescale for reviewing the Action Plan.
For:	Decision
Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alun Williams, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Through Age and Wellbeing

BACKGROUND:

Care Inspectorate Wales undertook an intense evaluation of performance across Adult and Children's Service from 27 February 2023 to 10 March 2023.

In line with our duties under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 the domains of the inspection evaluated were: **People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Well-being and Partnership.**

There were five Inspectors participating in the inspection which was facilitated virtually and in person.

During the evidence gathering there were 114 individuals engaged in the process including officers, Elected Members, service users, carers, and statutory and third sector partner organisations.

Service users and staff had the opportunity to submit online responses to the CIW survey to express their views on experiences of working across the Through-Age Wellbeing service.

In addition to case file audits key policies and developments were scrutinised. This included supervision files and the revised policy, compliments and complaints, the draft Quality Assurance Framework, the Occupational Therapy consultation and the revised Safeguarding and Mental Wellbeing and Porth Cymorth Cynnar structures. Observations of strategic and operational meetings took place online and face to face.

There was an emphasis on the experience of children, carers and their families and how the service listens to their views. The Inspectors were actively seeking to identify participation of service users in assessments and plans by articulating their own care requirements.

The Inspectors were very keen to understand and appreciate the benefits of the Through Age Wellbeing model.

Verbal feedback was provided by the Inspectorate on 16 March 2023 and the written draft 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 from the perspective of the Local Authority as the content reflected closely the verbal feedback we received.

There were no areas of none compliance identified during the inspection.

An Action Plan has now been formulated to respond to the recommended improvements outlined by CIW in the report.

The overwhelming majority of the actions are already in play as the matters identified by CIW were being addressed before the commencement of the inspection.

The areas that we have sought to improve were reflected in our evidence to the Inspectorate in advance of the commencement of the inspection and the drafting of the final report.

The Action Plan accompanying this report focuses on the areas for improvement. However, to strike a balance between the required improvements and the strengths identified in the report in each of the four domains of inspection.

The CIW report was published on 18 May 2023.

	Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why	No- there are no changes to existing services identified in the Action Plan.
Wellbeing of Future Generations:	Summary: Long term: N/A Collaboration: N/A Involvement: N/A Prevention: N/A Integration: N/A	
Recommendation(s):	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The draft Action Plan to address the issues identified in the CIW report is accepted as a proportionate response to recommendations contained in the report.2. The Action Plan to be monitored after six months through the Healthier Communities Scrutiny	

Committee for a period of one year to maintain progress and momentum through to completion.

Reasons for decision: The reasons for the recommendations are to ensure that the appropriate improvements in line with the CIW are made to continue to operate a robust and safe service.

Overview and Scrutiny: Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (24.05.23)

Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet:

1. Agree the draft Action Plan as a proportionate response to recommendations contained in the report, and,
2. Agree that the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an update after six months for a period of one year on action against progress.

Committee Members wish to take the opportunity to thank staff members for their valued contribution, commitment, and hard work which is evident in this inspection report.

Policy Framework: Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

Corporate Well-being Objectives:

Finance and Procurement implications: n/a

Legal Implications: None

Staffing implications: None

Property / asset implications: n/a

Risk(s): Risk of delay to improvements if the Action Plan is not implemented.

Statutory Powers: n/a

Background Papers: First paper

Appendices: Appendix 1- Care Inspectorate Wales- Performance Evaluation Inspection of Ceredigion County Council

Appendix 2- CIW Inspection Action Plan

Corporate Lead Officer: Audrey Somerton-Edwards, Interim Corporate Lead Officer, Porth Cynnal and Interim Statutory Director of Social Services

Reporting Officer: Audrey Somerton-Edwards, Interim Corporate Lead Officer, Porth Cynnal and Interim Statutory Director of Social Services

Date: 25.05.23



Performance Evaluation Inspection of Ceredigion County Council

March 2023

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Introduction

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 this inspection was to review the local authority's performance in exercising its social services duties and functions in line with legislation, on behalf of Welsh Ministers.

We sought to answer the following questions aligned under the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (The 2014 Act).

1. People - voice and control

How well is the local authority ensuring all people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and can achieve what matters to them?

Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision?

2. Prevention

How well is the local authority ensuring the need for care and support is minimised, and the escalation of need is prevented whilst ensuring that the best possible outcomes for people are achieved?

How well is the local authority promoting resilience within communities and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively encouraging and supporting people who need care and support, including carers, to learn, develop and participate in society?

3. Well-being

How well is the local authority ensuring that people are protected and safeguarded from abuse, neglect and any other types of harm?

How well are people supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own informed decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible?

4. Partnerships

How well is the local authority able to assure itself effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people?

Are people encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners?

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements to help and protect people. The scope of the inspection included:

- Evaluation of the experience of adults and children at the point of the performance evaluation inspection.
- Evaluation of the experience and outcomes people achieve through their contact with services.
- Evidence of the local authority and partners having learnt lessons from recent experiences and plans for service developments and improvement.
- Consideration of how the local authority manages opportunity and risk in its planning and delivery of social care at individual, operational and strategic levels.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The local authority is currently in the second of a five-year transformation strategy under its Through Age and Well-being programme (TAW). The model has a focus on early intervention, prevention and well-being, seeking to minimise the requirement for statutory services. The model is arranged around three 'Porths' - Porth Cymorth Cynnar (PCC) which is the early help and prevention services, Porth Gofal (PG) responsible for triage and assessment, short term intervention and safeguarding, and Porth Cynnal (PC) which incorporates the planned care and support element of social services. The programme forms a key part of one of the local authority's wider corporate objectives of creating caring and healthy communities, as outlined in its Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027.
- 1.2. The TAW model encompasses an 'all ages' approach. The vision is that teams will be able to look at the needs of the whole family and work across adult and children services, but with the recognition that some practitioners will need to retain specialisms.
- 1.3. In common with many local authorities in Wales, Ceredigion County Council is experiencing a challenging time in relation to the provision of social care. Many of the pressures experienced by the local authority reflect national issues including high levels of demand and increased complexity of people's needs, including the impact of the 'cost of living' crisis.
- 1.4. Critical workforce deficits in relation to social work and occupational therapy recruitment and retention, and staff absence had resulted in the loss of experienced staff and an over reliance on newly qualified and agency social workers. There is strong corporate and political support for social services in Ceredigion. The inspection was undertaken at a time when senior leaders, managers and politicians

had recognised the significant action and resource needed to ensure the local authority's ability to deliver all statutory responsibilities in terms of safeguarding children. The local authority commissioned a Managed Care Team consisting of seven social workers, a team manager and administrator to provide additional capacity. Vacancies in adult teams are also covered by agency workers with occupational therapy assessments outsourced to ensure people are getting the right support at the right time.

- 1.5. Following the commissioning of a managed care team most children and young people now receive support and services from the local authority in a timely manner, in their preferred language, are supported to maintain their safety and well-being and their voices are heard.
- 1.6. There is strong senior leadership within social services. We were told by staff, stakeholders and partners that senior leaders are visible, accessible, supportive and approachable. Feedback we gathered indicates a culture which is focused on well-being, building and maintaining relationships and achieving safe outcomes for people.
- 1.7. There are plans to strengthen practice using Signs of Safety (SOS) as a model to underpin the TAW strategy. The aim of SOS training is to build a strong foundation to further develop, enhance and reflect on social work practice. Whilst the strategic vision is clear, and training had been completed before the pandemic, further work is required before full implementation is achieved. It is acknowledged that post-covid recovery, recruitment challenges, workforce fragility and increased demand have all impacted on implementing the TAW.
- 1.8. The local authority demonstrates a strong focus on working in partnership. We heard about enthusiasm and readiness to work together at a strategic level and saw examples where this has benefitted people.

Key findings and evidence

Key findings and examples of evidence are presented below in line with the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

2. People - Voice & Choice

Strengths:

- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Areas for Improvement:

- 2.8. Some people, including carers, told us their social workers took time to listen to them which supported them to build good working relationships. There was some very positive feedback from younger children we spoke with about their social workers, one child told us “*They are funny and they always talk with us*”. Some children expressed the difficulties they have in building relationships when social workers change often. Only 67% of people who responded to our survey said they felt listened to. In addition, the voice of adults was not consistently captured in the proportionate assessments we reviewed. **The local authority must ensure people’s voice is central to the work they undertake with people.**
- 2.9. The local authority must ensure carers are routinely informed of their rights to an assessment and this is understood, recorded and promoted by all staff. The physical, emotional, financial and psychological impact of caring could be better reflected in the records supported by an unequivocal offer of a carers assessment. We spoke with a group of adult carers who shared mixed experiences of accessing support. Most spoke positively of their relationship with their social worker, although we could also see the impact of delays when accessing domiciliary care and occupational therapy adaptations. It is encouraging that there has been a notable increase in the number of carers who have joined the Carers Information Service. **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.**
- 2.10. We heard how the lack of short break provision is adversely impacting people’s outcomes across Ceredigion. Arranging short break provision in advance for adult carers to book a holiday is very difficult, with providers more inclined to fill vacancies permanently. We also heard repeatedly how the availability of respite is an issue in children's services, particularly for disabled children. **The local authority must increase short break provision across the county to help address the well-being needs of parents and carers.**
- 2.11. The Director of Social Services Annual Report is an important way of informing people living in Ceredigion about how well social care service are being delivered. We note the delays in the local authority publishing the Director of Social Services Annual report over the last two years. This is an area requiring improvement as Part 8 of the Codes of Practice for the 2014 Act state that the director of social services must prepare and publish an annual report about the exercise of the local authority’s social services functions. **This annual report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a financial year.**

- 2.12. During 2022 there were critical deficits in the numbers of social workers and occupational therapists because of recruitment and retention issues, and a highly competitive market. The local authority has taken significant action to address these challenges, as already mentioned above. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the performance of statutory responsibilities to children and families being met. Despite this the workforce position remains fragile and an exit plan is needed from this commissioned arrangement. **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.**
- 2.13. Most practitioners reported receiving regular supervision from their managers. However, supervision files viewed varied in content and quality. The discussions largely reflected the challenges and pressures of providing support to people in the current context. The need for improved supervision was a finding from our assurance check in 2021. We understand the local authority has recently developed a supervision policy. **The local authority should ensure robust management oversight of practice and reflective conversations are taking place with sufficient information noted to evidence decision making.**
- 2.14. Feedback from practitioners about the quality and availability of training was variable. People talked positively about the impact of core training, but that more specialist training is needed to support specific roles. We understand a training programme is being developed to support the TAW model which includes management training to support key posts. **The local authority must ensure it has a competent and confident workforce.**
- 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.**
- 2.16. **The local authority must implement and embed a robust quality assurance framework.** This was identified as an area which required improvement at our 2021 assurance check and, following this inspection, it remains to be the case. We are aware that a quality assurance framework has been drafted. We also heard about investment in supporting the local authority's approach to quality assurance with newly appointed posts specifically to focus on this area. WCCIS, the local authority's records management system, is also under development to provide performance management information. These improvements are essential to enable scrutiny of data to drive forward service improvements and ensure managers have better oversight of front-line practice.

2.17. Responding to complaints within statutory timescales has become increasingly challenging for the local authority, due to pressures within the central complaints team who currently manage the process. **The local authority must ensure complaints are consistently responded to in accordance with the prescribed timescales in “The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014”, and lessons learned from responding to complaints drive improvements.**

3. Prevention

Strengths:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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. 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.
- 3.6. 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.
- 3.7. 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.

Areas for Improvement:

- 3.9. People's experience of contacting the local authority is varied. Some people, including carers, told us of the difficulty they experienced in speaking to the appropriate person or receiving a timely response. **The local authority must review its current arrangement to ensure people consistently receive a timely response when they contact them.**
- 3.10. For many adults their assessments and annual review of their care and support plan, are delayed due to waiting lists across teams, including occupational therapy. This risks people's changing needs not being identified and addressed at the earliest stage. It also misses the opportunity for services to end when no longer required which would release capacity. Providers commented on how they are not regularly invited to take part in reviews. **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.
- 3.11. We heard from carers and practitioners about the negative impact of a lack of domiciliary care across the county. This included increased pressure on unpaid carers, people being placed on waiting lists or moving into care homes unnecessarily

due to a lack of care at home. Whilst most people in Ceredigion are receiving some form of care this is impacting on the flow of other services, for example enablement. Whilst a shortage of care is a recognised national issue, there are specific challenges in terms of Ceredigion's geography and demographics which require a robust response. A new Domiciliary Care Commissioning Framework is being developed. The local authority is also working with strategic partners to develop a 'patch based' approach to delivering local services and addressing the challenges. **The local authority should continue to work strategically and operationally with its partners to look for solutions to alleviate the situation.**

- 3.12. The provision of services to people who have visual or hearing impairments must be improved. There is a waiting list to be seen by a Rehabilitation Officer for Visual Impairment and concerns around the availability of British Sign Language, with people telling us they are not aware of any available groups for people with a visual or hearing impairment. **The local authority should engage with people experiencing sensory loss to hear their voice to influence the development of services.**
- 3.13. The local authority is experiencing an increase in contacts and referrals. From records reviewed we mainly observed prompt responses to meet the needs of children. However, in one example we saw many re-referrals where further cumulative assessment of the information would have been beneficial. The local authority is aware and intends to analyse the high re-referral rate (45%) for children who have been assessed as not requiring further statutory intervention. **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.**
- 3.14. There has been a significant rise in the numbers of children looked after in Ceredigion over recent years. We were told the reason for this is a lack of focus on discharging care orders where situations are stable. Positively, additional legal support to discharge the orders has been commissioned. We also saw examples where children should have had legal protections, but these were not in place promptly due to staffing capacity. **The local authority must assure itself the discharge of care orders is prioritised.**
- 3.15. The availability of foster carers and suitable homes for children is an area of challenge given the increase in children becoming looked after by the local authority over recent years. We heard from senior managers about plans to increase the sufficiency of care homes for children and supported accommodation in Ceredigion. **Fostering recruitment should continue to be prioritised.**
- 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.

- 3.17. We heard from practitioners, team managers and IROs that plans are central to monitoring interventions with children on the Child Protection Register (CPR). However, children who are looked after by the local authority do not receive the same approach. The number of children with an updated care and support plan and a pathway plan in place at the date of their first placement is far too low and requires improvement. This performance information reflects messages from young people we spoke to who told us they had not seen their plans. **The local authority must ensure plans are updated in line with statutory standards.**

4. Well-being

Strengths:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.**
- 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.

Areas for Improvement:

- 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.
- 4.6. Partner agencies reported a lack of feedback when reporting adult safeguarding concerns. We also heard that whilst strategy meetings are well attended, there is often a delay in distributing the minutes of these meetings. **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.**
- 4.7. We heard, at times, the capacity of the adult safeguarding team to undertake joint visits with the police and complete timely mental capacity assessments has been limited. We were told of plans to enhance adult safeguarding capacity. **The local authority must ensure there is robust oversight of safeguarding practice to assure itself of compliance with the WSP.**
- 4.8. As part of the new TAW model, strategy discussions are now undertaken by the central safeguarding team. At times we noted a wider group of professionals should have been invited to be involved in the strategy discussion regarding children, such as health or education. The social worker working with the family should also always be invited to contribute as they will inevitably have a wealth of information to inform decision making. The local authority initiates child protection processes in a timely way **but must assure itself multi-agency involvement is considered at the earliest opportunity.**
- 4.9. Our Assurance Check in 2021 found the quality of adult assessments and care and support plans and recording to be varied. This remains the case following this inspection. For many people their voices are heard, and the five areas of assessment are captured in the specialist social care assessment. However, this is not the case in many of the proportionate assessments. In our view many are simply a record of multi-agency triage, communication and decision making rather than an assessment of what matters to the person. **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).**

- 4.10. When completing social care records, it is important practitioners capture the role of people involved in multi-agency discussion. Many of the proportionate assessments only contained the first names of practitioners. **The local authority must review its recording policy to include robust managerial oversight to ensure all records are maintained appropriately.**

5. Partnership and Integration

Strengths:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.

Areas for Improvement:

- 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.
- 5.8. Whilst we heard that the vision of the TAW model is understood by partners and stakeholders at the level of the Healthier Ceredigion Board and Regional Partnership Board, we also heard that wider than this communication needs to be improved. We heard how some members of the public had fed back to the local authority that they were unsure of what the Porth's meant or understand what services they represented. **The local authority should review its communication strategy to ensure that their model is understood and accessible.**
- 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.
- 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.

Next Steps

CIW expects the local authority to consider the areas identified for improvement and take appropriate action to address and improve these areas. CIW will monitor progress through its ongoing performance review activity with the local authority. Where relevant we expect the local authority to share the positive practice identified with other local authorities, to disseminate learning and help drive continuous improvement in statutory services throughout Wales.

Methodology

Fieldwork

Most inspection evidence was gathered by reviewing the experiences of people through review and tracking of their social care record. We reviewed **42** social care records and tracked **10** of these to understand the person's experience in more depth.

Tracking a person's social care record includes having conversations with the person in receipt of social care services, their family or carers, key worker, the key worker's manager, and other professionals involved.

We also;

- interviewed local authority employees.
- interviewed a range of partner organisations, representing both statutory and third sector.
- held focus groups of children, young people and adults who use the services of the local authority.
- all of the above resulting in CIW engaging with **114** individuals.

In addition we;-

- reviewed staff supervision files
- reviewed compliments and complaints
- reviewed supporting documentation sent to CIW for the purpose of the inspection.
- administered surveys to staff, partner organisations and people

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Welsh Language

CIW's commitment to provide an active offer of conducting parts of the inspection in Welsh was met. The active offer was required during this inspection.

Acknowledgements

CIW would like to thank staff, partners and people who gave their time and contributed to this inspection.

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 improvement. 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	RAG	Scrutiny Review 1	RAG	Final Review and Completion	RAG	
People - Voice & Choice	2.8	The local authority must ensure people's voice is central to the work they undertake with people.	DP	*This will form part of the first year cycle of thematic reviews for the QA Officer, but will be highlighted as part of briefing to managers as part of the report feedback process.	30.09.2023		Healthier Communities Scrutiny 22 November 2023		Healthier Communities Scrutiny 11 March 2023		
				*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.							
				*Establish a Care Experience forum - to co produce the Commissioning of services, Policy development, represented on Interviews for key roles.							
				*Adult Service User Engagement Group to be established							
			ASE/EJ	*Extended Support Through Age Engagement Group -sub groups for adults and children *Collaborate with schools to identify and support young carers in education.							
People - Voice & Choice	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.	DP	*This will form part of the first year cycle of thematic reviews for the QA Officer, but will be highlighted as part of briefing to managers as part of the report feedback process.	30.09.2023						
				* Regular reporting on Cares Assessment compliance through the Performance Board by inclusion in Business Plans.							
				* Review all documentation to ensure they reflect the need for a Carers Assessment to be offered Donna Pritchard will be the designated Lead Officer whilst the carers development work is undertaken. This role will be handed to Porth Cymorth Cynnar when the Action Plan has progressed sufficiently.							
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						
			NL	* Eliminating Profits project is focused on recruiting foster carers including short breaks and respite.							
			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.							
People - Voice & Choice	2.11	The Director of Social Services Annual Report - This annual report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a financial year.	ASE	* 2022/23 Report planning has commenced and has been timetabled with Scutiny, Cabinet and Council for publication in October 2023	31.10.2023		31/10/23	31/10/23			
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.	ASE/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		Healthier Community Scrutiny Committee 22 November 2023				
				* Strategy will be reviewed as part of the revised Workforce Plan							
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.	ASE	*Comms has been put in place around updated supervision policy, and also highlighted within the QA Framework.	30.06.2023						
			QA Officer	* Thematic Audit required to allow for full picture to be understood * Recording Policy Needs to be updated							
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						
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.							
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.	30.06.2023						
				* Quality Assurance Officer post out to advert							
				* Quality Assurance Support Officer out to advert * Development of a thematic audit workplan							

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.	ASE	* 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.	30.06.2023					
				* 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						
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					
				* Need to ensure feedback to referrers at point of decision						
				* Need to identify thematic QA for process.						
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.	ASE	* Develop a specific action plan and program of work to resolve backlog	30.06.2023					
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					
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					
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 Traige and Assessment process. The re-referral statistic was identified prior to the inspection.	31.03.2024					
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					
				* 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					
				* Foster Carer Engagement Plan in place to allow for the sharing of innovative ideas between officers and foster carers.						
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					
				* 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.						
Prevention	3.17	The local authority must ensure plans are updated in line with statutory standards.	ASE	* Clients Service Strategies should also determine the need for services	30.09.2023					
				* 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.						
			ASE	* Protocol required for Personal Advisors to improve timescales for care leaver Pathway Plans.						
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/ASE	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					
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 referers are notified at point of decision within Porth Gofal Triage and feedback is recorded.	30.06.2023					

			ASE/EU	Need to ensure that minutes are approved in a timely manner and circulated as required within good practice guidelines.						
			TJ	Develop reporting suite, also need to focus on backlog of case closures						
Well-being	4.7	The local authority must ensure there is robust oversight of safeguarding practice to assure itself of compliance with the WSP.	ASE/EU	Needs to be reviewed						
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					
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					
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					
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.						
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					
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.						
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.						

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

Recording Policy
Carers Policies

Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

REPORT TO:	Cabinet
DATE:	6 June 2023
LOCATION:	Council Chamber/Hybrid
TITLE:	Care Inspectorate Wales Performance Evaluation Inspection Report and Action Plan
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	To provide feedback from the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24 May 2023

BACKGROUND:

Members of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Care Inspectorate Wales Performance Evaluation Inspection Report and Action Plan.

Care Inspectorate Wales undertook an intense evaluation of performance across Adult and Children's Service from 27 February 2023 to 10 March 2023.

In line with our duties under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 the domains of the inspection evaluated were: **People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Well-being and Partnership.**

There were five Inspectors participating in the inspection which was facilitated virtually and in person.

During the evidence gathering there were 114 individuals engaged in the process including officers, Elected Members, service users, carers, and statutory and third sector partner organisations.

Service users and staff had the opportunity to submit online responses to the CIW survey to express their views on experiences of working across the Through-Age Wellbeing service.

In addition to case file audits key policies and developments were scrutinised. This included supervision files and the revised policy, compliments and complaints, the draft Quality Assurance Framework, the Occupational Therapy consultation and the revised Safeguarding and Mental Wellbeing and Porth Cymorth Cynnar structures. Observations of strategic and operational meetings took place online and face to face.

There was an emphasis on the experience of children, carers and their families and how the service listens to their views. The Inspectors were actively seeking to identify participation of service users in assessments and plans by articulating their own care requirements.

The Inspectors were very keen to understand and appreciate the benefits of the Through Age Wellbeing model.

Verbal feedback was provided by the Inspectorate on 16 March 2023 and the written draft 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 from the perspective of the Local Authority as the content reflected closely the verbal feedback we received.

There were no areas of none compliance identified during the Inspection.

An Action Plan has now been formulated to respond to the recommended improvements outlined by CIW in the report.

The overwhelming majority of the actions are already in play as the matters identified by CIW were being addressed before the commencement of the inspection.

The areas that we have sought to improve were reflected in our evidence to the Inspectorate in advance of the commencement of the inspection and the drafting of the final report.

The Action Plan accompanying this report focuses on the areas for improvement. However, to strike a balance between the required improvements and the strengths identified in the report in each of the four domains of inspection.

Following discussion, Members considered the following recommendation:

RECOMMENDATION (S):

1. The draft Action Plan to address the issues identified in the CIW report is accepted as a proportionate response to recommendations contained in the report.
2. The Action Plan to be monitored after six months through the Healthier Communities Scrutiny Committee for a period of one year to maintain progress and momentum through to completion.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The reasons for the recommendations are to ensure that the appropriate improvements in line with the CIW are made to continue to operate a robust and safe service.

Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet:

1. Agree the draft Action Plan as a proportionate response to recommendations contained in the report, and,
2. Agree that the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an update after six months for a period of one year on action against progress.

Committee Members wish to take the opportunity to thank staff members for their valued contribution, commitment, and hard work which is evident in this inspection report.

Councillor Caryl Roberts
Chairman of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee