



# Neath Port Talbot CBC Social Services Annual Report 2009-2010

## Delivering Change to Fulfil Lives and Support Communities

## **Social Services Annual Report 2009-2010**

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## **Social Services Annual Report 2009-2010**

### **Delivering Change to Fulfil Lives and Support Communities**

#### **Introduction**

Directors of Social Services across Wales are now required to produce an annual report on the performance and plans for improvement of the whole range of Social Services functions. This first annual report covers performance in 2009-2010 and maps out the key areas for development and improvement in 2010-11, as well as considering the risks and issues involved.

The annual report is the culmination of the new Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) for Social Services which has replaced both the Joint Review and Annual Performance evaluation processes. It will enable the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to set out its inspection and review plans for the Authority. The format of the report is a matter for each Council, but it must report performance and risk and set out plans for improvement in relation to:

- Getting Help
- Services Provided
- The Effect on People's Lives
- Shaping Services
- Delivering Social Services
- Providing Direction

Social Services' core function is to protect and support vulnerable children, families and adults and it is an essential part of local government's responsibilities for promoting well being, social inclusion and community safety.

The ACRF process and the annual report provides us with an opportunity to reflect on what we have been doing to make a difference to the lives of the most vulnerable citizens of Neath Port Talbot, and to clarify the future challenges and strategic direction we will need to take. There are undoubtedly major resource and financial pressures that all public bodies are now having to face, and the current high quality of service provision and our ability to tackle difficult issues will provide a crucial basis upon which change will need to be delivered.

Fundamentally we will need to sustain our value base of:

- Promoting social justice
- Protecting vulnerable children, young people and adults
- Promoting independence
- Respecting and promoting individual dignity and fulfilment
- Working with and supporting communities

We will continue to work in partnership and accelerate our collaborative agenda. Our staff continue to be our most vital asset both in maintaining service quality and in delivering change.

**Anthony Clements**  
**Director of Social Services, Health and Housing**



## **Context**

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council covers an area which is largely urban with two main populations of Port Talbot and Neath, and with significant rural communities in the valley areas. It has a population of almost 138,000 with a steady increase in the total population since 2001, despite a decrease in the 0-17 population over this time. 98% of the population is from a white background, compared to 97% for Wales as a whole.

There are significant deprivation and health issues within the borough, with above average levels of deprivation for Wales and comparable authorities\*. 19% of Neath Port Talbot's children live in areas that are amongst the top 10% deprived in Wales, compared to 12% of children across Wales and 11% across comparable authorities. In 2008-09, 32% of people in the borough reported that they had a long term limiting illness, compared to 27% across Wales.

In terms of demand, Neath Port Talbot had a higher rate of social care service users aged 0-17 and 18-64 than both the comparable authorities and Wales. The Council prioritised 15% (down from 16% in 2007-08) more spending on social care provision than the level set by the Welsh Assembly Government compared to 13% on average for comparable authorities.

In 2008-09 Neath Port Talbot's number of children and young people being looked after by the authority was significantly above the Welsh average and the comparable authorities' average. In older people services the percentage helped to live at home is less than the Welsh average and comparable authorities with more older people entering residential care. The proportion of spend on the Council's own provision in older people services in 2008-09 was 55% with both Wales and the comparable authorities' average being 45%.

*\* The comparable authorities used by the Local Government Data Unit are Wrexham, Bridgend and Newport.*

## **Overview**

This year has seen an unprecedented level of sustained resource pressures, organisational change and the implementation of work programmes that have the potential to transform how we meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens in Neath Port Talbot. Recognising the challenges that lie ahead, the Council continues to be strident in its focus on quality and in constructively working with all our partners.

Demand upon services, particularly in relation to children needing to be looked after, has required the use of corporate and directorate reserves during the year to address budget pressures. Recognition has also been given to the need to both understand the reasons for the increased levels of demand and to respond strategically to seek sustainable solutions. Similar pressures have also emerged within learning disability services which will require robust management during 2010-11. Additional funding has been made available for 2010-11 to help offset these pressures within children's and learning disability services.

At the same time there have been a number of key senior officer changes. A new Chief Executive took up post in October 2009. Within the Social Services, Health and Housing Directorate, a new Director was appointed in May 2009, a new Head of Community Care Services in June 2009 and a new Head of Business Strategy in September 2009.

Alongside these changes, a framework for fundamentally reviewing and modernising services has been put in place through the Council's tier one transformation programme. The Transforming Older People Services (TOPS) programme has established a policy blueprint with health services for the modernisation of older people services. A comprehensive consultation on taking forward a strategic solution to improving residential care services was put in place during the last quarter of 2009-10. Major decisions on these services and services in the home will be made in 2010-11.

A systems thinking review has been initiated within children and young people services engaging key education, health and police partners in thoroughly analysing the decision making process within children services and amongst partners, with the intention of redesigning operational systems to more effectively meet need. Other components of the children services' change programme include the implementation of the second phase of the accommodation strategy for looked after children and a wholesale review of family support services.

### **Key Achievements for Social Services in 2009-10 include:**

- The opening of the ‘extra care’ housing scheme at Ty Twyn Teg in Caewern in partnership with Coastal Housing.
- The complete refurbishment of the Council’s sheltered housing scheme at Llwynon, Crynant, with additional extra care capacity for the Dulais Valley.
- The successful application to WAG’s Spend to Save funds to support the implementation of the Children Services’ systems thinking review and the second phase of the fostering strategy. This also included the investment by education, health and the police in directly supporting the systems review.
- Despite the increased demand within children services, performance against national PIs has been sustained at an improved level.
- The full operation of the new home care enabling and assessment service (HEAT).
- The establishment of new block contracts with the independent home care sector.
- An excellent Investors in People review.
- The creation of four additional beds at Hillside Secure Unit.
- The establishment with the new Health Board of the community integrated intermediate care service (CIIS).
- The successful convergence fund bid to establish the regional Coastal scheme. The scheme in Neath Port Talbot will enhance the employment opportunities of vulnerable adults and care leavers.
- A positive Disabled Facilities Grant systems review.
- Agreement by Council to the new policy for transforming local health and social care services for older people.
- The implementation of the Telecare service in partnership with Care and Repair Neath Port Talbot.
- The establishment of Tier One Transformation Programme within older people and children’s services which demonstrate whole council response to addressing the needs of vulnerable people.
- Increased investment by all statutory partners to enhance the capacity to deliver the work programme of the Local Safeguarding Children Board for 2010-11.
- Positive regulatory inspections across the range of in-house services including Hillside, the fostering service, home care, the learning disabilities home support service, mental health rehabilitation service and older people residential care services.
- Effective local arrangements for determining individual need in relation to continuing NHS health care, joint and social care responsibilities.

An important and critical component of many of the above achievements has been the delivery of change in collaboration and partnership. This has either been at a local level with our health, third sector and independent partners or through new regional or sub-regional collaborations across local authorities and with the new Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board. They also demonstrate a strong corporate agenda and the willingness of the Council as a whole to embrace the needs of vulnerable people.

Opportunities for collaboration and partnership will now need to be accelerated as resource restraints become more acute and service users rightly demand a more joined up approach to meeting their needs. This has to be coupled with new and different ways of working with service users so that interventions are person centred, timelier, reduce the need for ongoing more intensive support and enable people to maintain or regain their independence. Well being and more general health improvement initiatives will be prioritised and targeted within our health challenge NPT partnership, which will contribute to a developing preventative approach.

There is a growing recognition of the impact of societal issues which are not the preserve of social services alone but have a major influence upon service demand. The growing incidence of substance misuse, domestic abuse and mental health problems provide serious challenges for public services and local communities. The disproportionate impact will be on children, families and individuals where deprivation levels are already most acute. This is being reflected in increased numbers of children being looked after and on the child protection register, and in greater safeguarding and adult protection activity.

The resultant complexity of need that we are now seeing also has to be set in the context of an increasing ageing population and a recognition that older people services continues to represent the most significant spend area for both health and social services. There is also a high incidence of disability and limiting long-term illness within the local population which is creating further demand upon resources.

The Council's five year forward financial plan represents a concerted strategic approach to the harsh reality of a declining resource base as service demand increases. The challenge for social services will not only be in delivering the savings strategies that are required, predominantly within older people and other community care services, but to address the current trend within children and learning disability services of year on year increased spend. The Council will also have to modernise its wider support and infrastructure to keep pace

with the transformational changes needed in service delivery. The Council will also need to consider what services it continues to prioritise.

The sustainability of current service models will therefore need to be challenged as part of the transformation agenda. It is clear that we will need to:

- Ensure that services are redesigned to maximise independence and support users in achieving person-centred goals.
- Be clear about who gets a service.
- Determine who provides what services and at what capacity.
- Decide what we continue to do.
- Ensure service quality is not compromised.
- Have a debate about the appropriate level of resources required to meet specific needs.
- Be clear about the responsibilities of social services in meeting need and the contribution of all partners in preventing the escalation of need.

A person centred approach to this will be critical and it will be essential that managers and staff ensure that front line services deliver what matters to service users and their carers. Our operating principles will need to empower staff to design services to meet the needs of the people who use them, and managers spend time with staff in the workplace to understand how current systems work and remove obstacles that prevent staff doing what matters to service users.

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and understood referral routes into service</li> <li>• Clear eligibility criteria and application</li> <li>• Timely response to assessing need in most service areas</li> <li>• Embedded Integrated Children’s System (ICS), Unified Assessment Process (UAP) and Care Programme Approach (CPA) systems</li> <li>• Good performance in responding to carers assessments</li> <li>• Good range of services with a continued increased focus on promoting or regaining independence</li> <li>• Demonstrable high quality of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed quality evaluation frameworks to ensure consistently good quality assessments and care plans and reviews</li> <li>• Ensure the regular review of all cases in Children’s Services</li> <li>• Address assessment delays in the occupational therapy service</li> <li>• Develop robust risk assessment processes in child and adult protection</li> <li>• Processes are in place to ensure that regular supervision is undertaken of social work and other care management staff</li> <li>• Develop further integration with health services where it is in the</li> </ul>

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>
<p>service provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A number of multi-disciplinary / agency services and teams</li> <li>● Effective processes for managing and reporting complaints</li> <li>● Good multi-agency arrangements for determining child protection needs and robust adult protection procedures</li> <li>● Continued development of a person centred approach with good use made of direct payments, ‘indirect payments’ and the independent living fund</li> <li>● Long term financial plan in place linked to transformation programme</li> <li>● Regular budget reporting and good support from finance team</li> <li>● Good management of major change agenda through a programme management framework</li> <li>● Dedicated capacity to deliver change and sustain a comprehensive consultation and engagement process</li> <li>● Strong partnership working</li> <li>● Cross partnership ownership of the strategic service redesign agenda in both adult and children’s services, particularly through the Local Service Board</li> <li>● Business plans effectively linked to strategic plans and ACRF</li> <li>● Generally high staff morale particularly reflected in 2009 IIP review</li> <li>● Good performance in achieving occupational qualifications and investment in training opportunities</li> <li>● Regular staff supervision and</li> </ul>	<p>service user’s interest to do so</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Further changes to referral and assessment process in children services subject to outcome of systems review</li> <li>● Put in place arrangements to ensure affective engagement of children and young people in assessments, care plans, conferences and reviews</li> <li>● Continue improvements in Independent Reviewing Officer service in line with safeguarding and permanency inspections</li> <li>● Monitor the engagement of partner agencies in child protection conference and review meetings and within the area adult protection committee, and seek improvements to performance where issues arise</li> <li>● Strengthen the interface between children’s and community care services, learning from the evidence arising from the systems review, transition to adulthood process and recent children’s services inspections</li> <li>● Establish a programme for transforming services for vulnerable adults of a working age which will further develop our approach to person centred care and citizen directed support</li> <li>● Ensure that there is a detailed understanding of the unit costs of all provided services to assist both care management and commissioning decisions</li> <li>● Conclude and implement</li> </ul>

STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT
<p>appraisal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedded performance management systems, with regular management information reports</li> <li>• Prepared to be bold in analysis and delivering need for change, as demonstrated by systems reviews and tier one transformation programme whilst engaging positively with staff, service users &amp; carers</li> <li>• Good political and corporate understanding and support</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul>	<p>recommendations arising from the TOPS work regarding services at home and residential care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the review of planning and commissioning services and ensure commissioning strategies are updated and aligned to transformation work outcomes</li> <li>• Revise the workforce strategy to particularly address recruitment and retention of social work staff within children services and succession planning within community care services</li> <li>• Address high levels of sickness absence in directly provided services</li> <li>• Ensure that there is sufficient capacity and resource to review looked after children's needs and quality assure their progress and development</li> </ul>

**Priorities for 2010-11 include:**

Each specific section will provide more detail on the developmental and service improvement priorities for 2010-11, but the following highlight the most significant:

- Ensure robust and ongoing arrangements are in place to manage service budgets and that steps are taken to address areas of potential overspend as a consequence of service demand.
- By the final quarter of the year put in place new service models, systems and quality assurance measures following the completion of the children and young people service systems thinking review.
- By mid-year, there will be a Safeguarding Children Board strategic business manager in post who can further progress and monitor performance across agencies in relation to children's safeguarding.

- Agree, by the summer, the strategic service option for improving residential care services and progress a plan of implementation in accordance with agreed timescales.
- Agree the business case for bringing together the community integrated intermediate care and HEAT service by the end of the year, for implementation in 2011.
- Agree the balance, capacity and scope of the in-house and independent home care services by the end of the summer as part of the TOPS services at home project, to ensure that TOPs strategic outcomes are delivered within the expectations of the forward financial plan and contribute to reducing delayed transfers of care.
- Agree with health colleagues integrated community service networks for implementation from April 2011.
- Ensure that lessons learnt from serious case reviews published in 2010-11 are effectively delivered through partnership action plans and that public confidence in current local arrangements and practice is maximised.
- Ensure associated action plans from children's services inspections during 2010-11 are regularly reported to Members via the scrutiny process.
- By the end of the financial year a care management model is in place that embraces the principles of citizen directed support and builds on the current person centred planning framework.
- The Coastal project provides the impetus to modernise day support services for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems and associated new models of service are agreed by the end of the financial year.
- Plans are in place to improve the performance of the occupational therapy service and that sustainable and measurable improvements are taking place from August onwards.
- Sickness absence rates across frontline services show quarter to quarter improvements.
- Arrangements between health and social services for determining continuing NHS health care and joint packages reflect legal judgements and national guidance and result in timely decisions and outcomes.
- Demonstrate by the end of the year more effective working between children's and community care services, particularly in responding to families in crisis and in transition working.
- The review of commissioning, planning and contracting activity and capacity enables the Directorate to deliver its key strategic goals within commissioning frameworks.
- The social care workforce strategy is updated by October 2010 to help address issues of succession planning and recruitment, the development and retention of a well trained competent workforce.

## Meeting the Challenges and Managing the Risks

CHALLENGES/RISKS	MITIGATION
The number of children needing to be looked after remains at the same level throughout 2010-11 as the previous year, placing considerable pressures on the children and young people service budget	Additional funding has been made available within the base budget to help offset new placements in 2010-11. Gate keeping and monitoring procedures are in place and there will be a greater emphasis on early decisions regarding the need for ongoing placements. Variances to the projected placement/ budget profile will be regularly reported to explore corrective budget action elsewhere in the service
The pace and extent of the change agenda will stretch the capacity and skill mix of key staff taking forward the transformation programme	A review of this is undertaken at each phase of the transformation process. The ongoing availability of corporate capacity to meet this need has been a significant factor in sustaining the momentum of change
The confidence and support of stakeholders is undermined as the change programme progresses	The level of consultation and engagement will be sustained as proposals emerge and full explanations regarding proposed and decided service changes provided
Ownership of what we are doing is not held amongst staff	The communication strategies developed for each change programme will ensure attention is given to involving and listening to staff at each stage
Further budget savings are required in year as a consequence of national savings requirements	This will be kept under review but any actions that are not compatible with our strategic solutions will impact on front line services
Resource pressures amongst key partners will inhibit further opportunities to look outward to grasp opportunities for collaboration and integrated working	Sustaining partnership discussions will be crucial so that joint priorities are progressed and any significant resource decisions shared
Successful succession planning and retention of other experienced staff as changes occur in senior management	A strong focus on leadership and management development by the Council has supported the development

tiers in the directorate	of future senior managers
Management capacity within children’s services is not sufficiently robust to deliver the key service improvement requirements that have been identified	Action is taken to review current arrangements and support is provided to achieve the outcome required

**In summary, the Council continues to have mainly good services and is well placed to sustain and further improve services. Improvements to care management continue to be a priority and quality assessment tools need to be embedded to ensure good consistent practice. Carers support has improved though pressures in some areas, such as the occupational therapy service will need tackling in 2010-11. We continue to provide a very good range of services and there is confidence in the high quality of service provision.**

**Demand pressures upon children and learning disability services require strategic solutions which will also need clear leadership, strong partnership working and innovation in the development of new service models. The Council has demonstrated its ability to make transformation decisions and to work effectively with partners. Management capacity and expertise will need to be kept under review and strengthened to deliver important operational improvements and service change. Commissioning will be strengthened in 2010-11 and service strategies and change programmes will be fully aligned. Engagement with staff, service users and carers will remain a high priority as major change projects are implemented. The challenging financial climate remains the key risk factor in sustaining and delivering our ambitious transformation agenda.**

## **How Good Are the Services?**

### **Themes**

#### **1. Getting Help**

##### **This includes access to services; assessment of need; care management and review**

Public information continues to be reviewed and developed with a growing emphasis on internet and website opportunities. There has been active and effective communication strategies put in place to accompany new service developments, for example the community integrated intermediate care (CIIS) service, and the home care enabling and assessment (HEAT) service and a wide range of publicity developed to promote and explain the new services. A comprehensive carers handbook was produced in 2008 and a second updated version has been printed and distributed.

Contact, referral and access arrangements are generally well established and understood with the Integrated Children System (ICS) and the Unified Assessment Process (UAP) being well developed frameworks for inter agency communication. The systems review within children and young people services may, however, challenge the current system of access to services with a view to streamlining processes and adding value to those who access the service. A risk assessment tool has been introduced in the older and disabled people service contact and access team to ensure more robust identification of people most at risk.

Within children and young people services there has been sustained good performance in relation to the percentage of referrals on which a decision was made within one working day (93.6%), with a slight increase in the percentage of referrals that were repeat referrals within 12 months (up to 18.6% from 17.9% the previous year).

In terms of hospital discharge arrangements in adult services, the rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons was 6.63 per 1000 aged 75 or over which was similar to the 08-09 rate of 6.22 and close to the Welsh average. Discharge planning with health colleagues remains a high priority.

In children and young people services the current assessment and case management processes and divisions of work are all under the consideration of the systems review with significant changes likely following the redesign stage of the review. Quality assurance tools and arrangement have been introduced to

improve the consistency in the quality of assessments in the meantime and this work is ongoing as new staff commence work in the service. The conference and review service for example has established a range of measures to monitor and challenge the effectiveness of practice; however, their capacity to do this has been hampered by the pressures they have faced related to the rise in the numbers of looked after children. This will be followed up with further training and development opportunities to build confidence and expertise. The introduction of legal surgeries over the last year has resulted in improved practice and more prompt interventions. There is a need, however, to improve the consistency of the quality of legal advice particularly in relation to any locum service input.

There is also a need to ensure the systematic and regular review of all cases in children's services. This will be strengthened by ensuring regular, formal supervision is consistently provided across all teams.

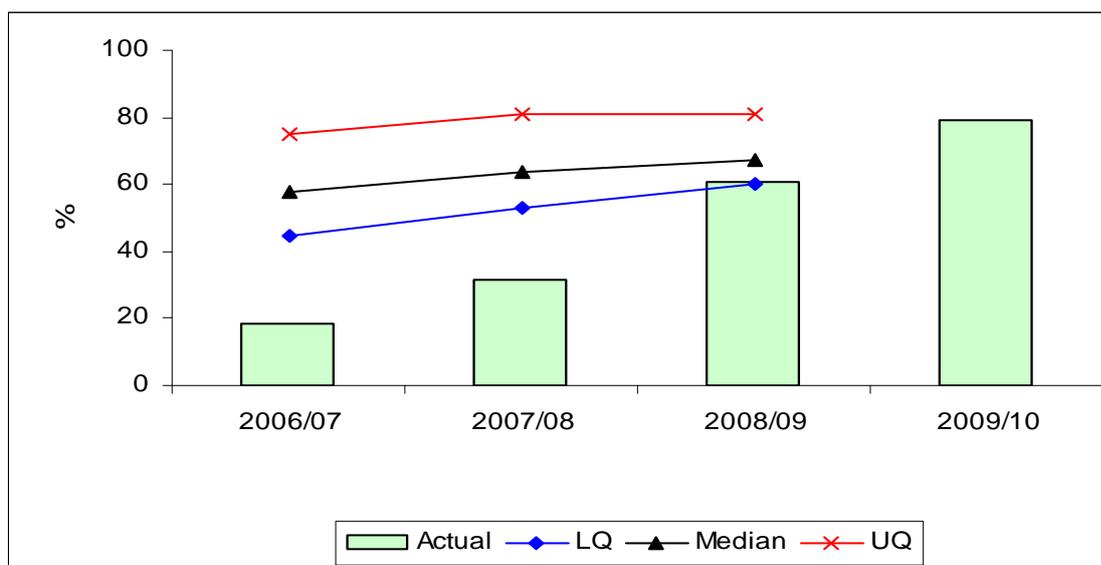
#### **Good Practice: Legal Surgeries for Care Management Teams**

Since the introduction of the Public Law Outline, children and young people services have held regular legal surgeries. A principal officer and a senior lawyer provide advice to social workers, team managers and independent reviewing officers. This legal planning meeting ensures that social workers are aware of the legal requirements when planning for children's futures, ensures there are no breaches of human rights legislation and gives general advice about the direction of the case and future planning. This provides consistent decision making throughout the service and promotes positive permanency planning and best practice. The legal surgery and advice planner has been formulated with the aim of clarifying the issues needing discussion at the surgeries and to capture the information needed to make an application for a Care Order.

Work has been undertaken to raise the profile of young carers through the development of a Young Carers Protocol which highlights the importance of identifying, assessing and supporting young carers and their families through a multi-disciplinary approach.

The percentage of initial assessments carried out within 7 days was on target at 79.4% and significantly above the performance of only 18.65% at the time of the last Joint Review (2006-07 figures).

*The percentage of initial assessments carried out within 7 working days*



	Actual	LQ	Median	UQ
2006/07	18.61	44.94	57.91	75.02
2007/08	31.28	52.72	63.46	81.17
2008/09	60.73	60.31	67.47	80.98
2009/10	79.4			

Some other areas of performance have been affected by the growth in the number of looked after children (from 280 in 2008 to 391 in 2010) and the resultant pressures on activity. This is exemplified by the drop in the percentage of first placements of looked after children that began with a care plan, down from 82.4% in 08-09 to 67.8%. Again, the percentage of looked after children reviews within statutory timescales fell to 81.4% from 91.75 in 2008-09.

The percentage of children looked after who have had three or more placements during the year, however, was at 8.7% down from 10% the previous year. The percentage of open cases of children on the child protection register and those looked after who have an allocated social worker exceeded the previous year's performance at 100% (98.3%) and 98.6% (95.7%) respectively. This was also the case in relation to evidence to show that a social worker had seen the child during initial assessments (98.5% compared to 92.6%) and had seen the child alone (70% compared to 64.3%). It has been identified that further work is required to put in place arrangements to ensure effective engagement of children and young people in the assessment and care planning processes.

In adult services a quality assurance tool has also been developed to support the regular audit of the effectiveness of assessment and care planning. The

timeliness of assessments is good in most areas but particular pressures continue in the occupational therapy services and sensory support service. The occupational therapy service in particular has significant waits for assessments and an action plan has been developed to improve performance. This is highlighted by the drop in performance in the percentage of high priority OT referrals being assessed within designated response times (down to 69% from 85.4% in 2008-09).

There is full participation in assessments for continuing health care eligibility with a commitment to fully implement the new CHC guidance. Carers are now offered an assessment 100% of the time, though the percentage taking up this offer has reduced from 23.8% to 15.9%. Reasons for declining this offer cited in a recent survey of carers indicated that their concerns were discussed when the person they care for has their assessment. Information to encourage the take up of carers' assessments is provided to care managers and assistants on a regular basis through training and quarterly e-bulletins on specific carers' issues.

Care management is generally very positive with some inconsistencies in the older person's mental health service which are being addressed in partnership with health. There is some excellent practice in service user and carer involvement in care management which needs to be implemented in all service areas. There is a well established and effective system of review and monitoring, with some backlogs in reviews having been addressed in 2009-10. 73% of service users had their care plans reviewed within timescales though overall activity suggest that most other reviews are completed within a short period of time after the target.

## **2. The Services Provided**

**This includes both the range of services provided and the quality of those services**

Within children and young people services a wide range of services are commissioned externally and delivered internally. There has been a wide ranging review of family support services this year, as these were developed quite a number of years ago and do not necessarily fit with current need and demand. The review also ensures harmonisation with the Children and Young People Plan. The recent announcement of the withdrawal of Cymorth funding to resource the child poverty measure, needs to be understood as this could jeopardise the full implementation of the review.

Internally the fostering and adoption services are well established and are highly valued. The accommodation strategy for looked after children is in its second phase supported by spend to save monies from WAG. The strategy will reduce dependence on external placements and increase the pool of local foster carers in order to improve the quality of children's experience and reduce costs.

**Good Practice: Adoption Team working arrangements improving adoptions in relation to looked after children population**

The Adoption Team attends all second reviews where adoption may be considered, the team reviews all cases regularly and systematically to avoid drift. The staff are linked to case management teams and provide support and expert advice to case managers throughout the adoption process. The service recruits significant numbers of adopters in a timely manner and there are a high number of adoptions relative to looked after children population.

Hillside continues to have excellent annual inspections and WAG has provided capital investment to expand its provision and in turn, the Youth Justice Board has increased its contractual commitment.

Within adult services there is again a good range of services in place for all service user groups, with inspection reports in directly provided services consistently highlighting the excellent quality of provision.

Services for older and disabled people have a philosophy of promoting independence and reducing dependence, with the development of the community integrated intermediate care service (CIIS) and the home care enabling service (HEAT) demonstrating success in reducing the need for long term interventions. Work is ongoing to ensure the services are operating at optimum efficiency and capacity. There is also an integrated approach with housing services to develop modern supported housing options including extra care.

A Telecare service has been established since October 2010. There are some relatively high levels of nursing and residential care usage and the Transforming Older People Services (TOPS) programme has been developed to rebalance services further towards independence. There is also a need to develop an integrated pathway for older people's mental health services, and

although there is a good range of services in place, more needs to be done to ensure intermediate care options are available to people with dementia.

### **Case Study: Home Enabling Assessment Team (HEAT)**

Mrs A is 89 years old and lives alone with good support from her son. Mrs A was admitted to hospital with a severe ulcerated left leg. She had previously suffered a stroke which had left her with some memory loss and right sided weakness; she suffered with high blood pressure, Osteoarthritis and Diverticular disease. Mrs A was able to mobilise herself by using a Zimmer.

An assessment in the hospital identified that on returning home Mrs A would require a home care service of four calls a day to assist with getting in and out of bed, preparing meals and providing personal care. Arrangements were made by the hospital for a District Nurse to visit regularly and treat the ulcerated leg.

On discharge from hospital she started with the home care enabling assessment team (HEAT). The HEAT occupational therapist (OT) with Mrs A completed a functional assessment and a support plan that identified what difficulties Mrs A was experiencing, the outcomes Mrs A was looking for and how these could be achieved. It was also identified that Mrs A would require assistance with taking her medication and in using the stair lift safely. The enabling assistants carried out the tasks identified in the support plan which were altered on a weekly basis by the OT/supervisor depending on how Mrs A was achieving her goals.

By the end of the 6 weeks of HEAT support Mrs A was able to manage her own medication, prepare her own lunch and tea and get herself dressed in the morning and ready for bed. It was agreed that Mrs A commence one day a week attendance at a day centre with no formal support at home required. Mrs A and her son were happy with the progress she had made and the outcomes achieved.

There is a good range of services for adults with a learning disability, but the convergence funded project Coastal will provide an impetus to modernise services for all vulnerable adults of a working age and provide a greater focus on employment options. Direct payments and the independent living fund are maximised in order to promote choice and flexibility of service delivery, with

person centred planning being the framework from within which more person directed support can be developed.

Mental health services offer a range of internal support, combined with support from the health service and key third sector providers such as HAFAL and GOFAL. Whilst there is a good range of services, Coastal will again provide an opportunity to modernise day time opportunities. Gaps do exist in some service areas such as psychological therapy and advocacy, though advocacy services are currently being developed. There will be a strong focus in 2010-11 to 'repatriate' a number of service users currently in out of county placements as more local accommodation options are developed.

Quality assurance measures are in place across the internal services and well established contractual arrangements exist to encourage good quality standards amongst external providers and monitor performance against these standards.

### **The service user and carer view**

The directorate undertake a wide range of surveys on an ad-hoc, quarterly, annual or biennial basis of its service users, carers and staff. Services are generally highly rated:

- 92% of residential care service user respondents said they felt able to talk to staff about anything, always or most of the time;
- All home care service user respondents were satisfied that their needs had been fully understood by the member of staff that assessed them;
- 81% of the mental health rehabilitation service user respondents stated that they had been given a service user pack by staff;
- The overall message from reablement service users was “the service made me independent, confident and my mobility is much better”

In terms of our complaints and representation process, there were 367 recorded complaints in 2009-10, with 362 resolved at Stage One and five at Stage Two. No complainant felt it necessary to pursue a complaint to Stage Three or to the Ombudsman, the independent panel. The high proportion of complaints that continue to be resolved at the first stage confirms that employees continue to place importance on resolving complaints as early as possible.

Complaints are now matched against the Annual Council Reporting Framework domains.

Over the same period, we received 158 written compliments about service provision, primarily relating to the home care service.

### **3. The Effect on People's Lives - Independence and Quality of Life**

#### **This covers both the arrangements to safeguard and protect vulnerable children and adults and how we promote independence and social inclusion**

The Safeguarding Children Board and the Area Adult Protection Committee work effectively to ensure there is a framework for all relevant partners to oversee safeguarding and protection arrangements and procedures. In the main, recent inspections in these areas have been positive, though there are some children safeguarding arrangements that need attention. Improvements in the conference and review service are being taken forward, and the development of a performance management framework will enhance the accountability of all partners and help monitor expected statutory agency attendance throughout the child protection process. This recognises the need to strengthen multi-agency safeguarding and child protection partnership working, including that of police engagement. Partners have also made an additional financial commitment for 2010-11 to support a business manager to oversee quality performance activity, the delivery of the Board's business plan and co-ordinate the communication strategy.

The percentage of initial child protection conferences due that were held within 15 working days of the strategy meetings saw a drop in performance to 75.9% from 83.5%. The percentage of core group meetings held within designated timescales exceeded the target of 90% at 94.5%. Child protection reviews saw a fall to 96% from 99% in the previous year and a target of 100%.

Within adult protection, new risk assessment and quality assurance tools have been developed to strengthen what are already prompt and efficient responses to adult protection referrals and strong multi-agency working. The integration of POVA and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) administrative and professional resources is being taken forward to ensure a joined up safeguarding function.

There is a strong focus within the Council on maximising independence and social inclusion, and this is reflected throughout social services. This is a key element of the Council's community and other strategic plans with the main

strategic initiatives in relation to systems reviews and tier one transformation programmes aspiring to achieve these objectives.

There are a number of Directorate wide initiatives which are ensuring stronger links between children and adult services, including the re-development of transition to adulthood processes related to disabled children and their families, as well as the systems review work within children services is highlighting the significant contribution required from adult services in supporting parents in crisis.

In particular the Coastal project is providing a greater focus on acquiring work based options for both care leavers and vulnerable adults; an autism spectrum disorder group has been established with the Head of Children and Young People Services taking the lead in progressing both adult and children's service development needs; transition to adulthood plans and procedures for disabled young people moving into adulthood are being taken forward via a strategic group and the formulation of a multi-agency transition panel; a very effective welfare rights team operates from within the Directorate which is developing an expertise in debt advice as well as its key function of maximising benefit update amongst vulnerable groups.

Within children and young people services, independence and social inclusion are particularly promoted through the work undertaken by the leaving care team (Route 16), the child care disability team, the Fairway family intervention team and Hillside.

It is integral to the assessment framework that issues of identity and independence are considered throughout the work undertaken with children and young people. As in adult services, direct payments are increasingly used to provide more flexible support to children and families and more is being done to support carers across the age range. 77% of young carers known to social services were provided with a service in 2009-10.

Whilst the percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the service is in contact with at the age of 19 needs to improve at 83.35%, encouragingly those who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment has increased from 53% in 2008-09 to 65% and above the target of 60%.

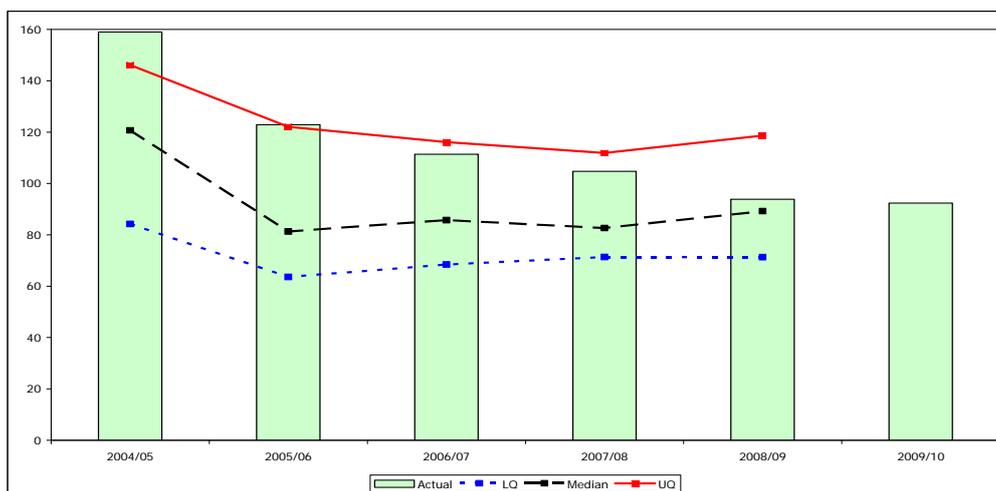
Within adult services a range of services are in place and being developed to maximise independence and promote well being. These have been described in the range and quality of service section, particularly in relation to developing CIIS, telecare, the development of specialist domiciliary services for people

with dementia and further supported housing developments. There are positive examples of working with the third sector to develop preventative services in support of lower level needs.

The systems thinking review of the disabled facilities grant process has significantly improved the time taken to process and complete adaptation works. Once OT assessments are completed, it now takes an average of 50 days to process and complete adaptation works, down from a previous average of 240 days. The average spend on works has also reduced from £7,000 to £4,000 enabling more work to be undertaken for the resources available.

Services for carers have been developed using the carers mental health grant which includes funding for contingency/emergency replacement care. Work has also been undertaken to encourage carers to consider direct payments as an option. To this end an information leaflet has been produced and a users and carers direct payment peer support group has been established. The Council commissions a carers service which has become an invaluable resource to carers in Neath Port Talbot. The service maintains contact with around 1400 carers in the area and provides a range of support services. In addition the young carers forum has produced a 3 year action plan under the umbrella of the children and young people’s partnership.

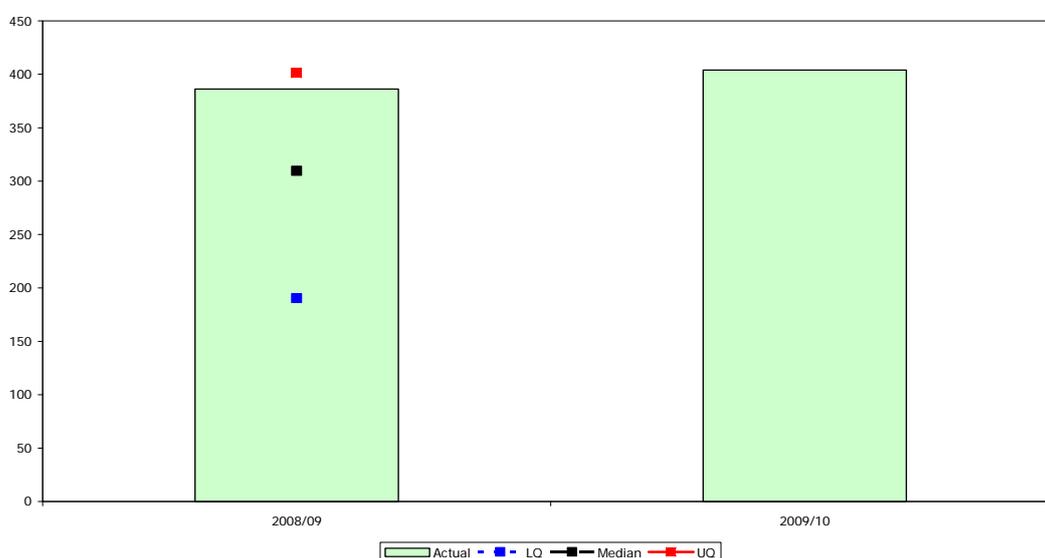
*The rate of older people aged 65 or over supported in the community per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March*



	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Actual	159.00	122.85	111.41	104.75	93.84	92.36
LQ	84.23	63.58	68.42	71.35	71.30	
Median	120.68	81.28	85.72	82.64	89.24	
UQ	146.12	122.10	116.10	111.89	118.63	

The rate of older people helped to live at home remains at a similar level to 08-09 (92.36 per 1000 aged over 65 compared to 93.88) and remains at the Welsh average. Although this has declined in recent years this has been due to national guidance to remove community alarm recipients from the figures, changes to the eligibility criteria for services and in 2009-10, the success of the HEAT service in reducing the number of older people requiring ongoing support. It is encouraging that the percentage of service users who are supported in the community has risen in 2009-10 for both adults aged 18-64 (90.5%) and those aged 65 and over (81%), as has the rate of adults with assistive technology (up from 127 per 1000 to 146) the rate of direct payments (from 386 to 404 per 1000 adults).

*The rate per 1,000 adults (aged 18 or over) supported in the community who receive a direct payment*



	2008/09	2009/10
Actual	386.23	403.98
LQ	190.49	
Median	309.73	
UQ	401.19	

There remains a challenge, however, in reducing the rate of older people entering residential care which has increased from 25.7 per 1000 to 26.2, which is above the Welsh average and there is a priority to develop alternative services through the TOPS programme, especially for people with dementia.

A strong feature of the work across the Directorate is partnership working and ongoing engagement with local communities, service users, carers and representative groups. A person centred approach is now integral to assessing

need and service development, and this will be reinforced through the review of services to adults of working age alongside the impact of the Coastal project.

#### **4. Shaping Services**

##### **This includes our planning and partnership work, commissioning and contracting and resource management**

We are committed to keeping the service users at the heart of our planning and care management processes and we continue to work with our partners to meet the needs of the local population. We have a number of strategic planning mechanisms in place which reflect specific joint agendas and statutory requirements. In addition there are a number of well developed themed planning groups across social services. More latterly our joint planning arrangements have been enhanced by programme and project mechanisms to deliver specific high level service change agendas. This particularly relates to the TOPS programme and the children's and young people systems review. A similar approach will be taken to transforming social care services for adults of working age in 2010-11.

In all this work ongoing engagement with key service user and carer groups, such as the Carer's Action Movement, People First and the Older Person Council is critical in ensuring the voice of service users and carers is heard. Service committees, quality action groups and questionnaires and surveys are further activities which encourage and build on the involvement of service users in improving and developing services.

The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy is crucial in securing wider improvements in health and wellbeing and in articulating our agreed priorities with partners for service change. The updated strategy can be seen as making a further step change in the way in which we strategically plan and deliver health and wellbeing. There is clarity on health and wellbeing needs, including where health inequities are greatest and agreement on the priorities for change. These include important service redesign priorities across health and social care interface, but also crucially address the wider determinants of health. The work on the Local Development Plan is seen as a trail blazing initiative. Health and wellbeing is increasingly being postponed as central to wider community planning and there are explicit proposals to reorganise the partnership to deliver the agreed priorities.

There are effective and strong links between the wider children' and young people planning partnership, the safeguarding children's board and the tier one

children's services change programme. The review of family support services has required a thorough analysis of activity and performance to determine appropriate funding streams, capacity and future commissioning priorities.

Given the challenging financial climate and the need to accelerate the integration agenda, a review of our internal management structures which support planning and partnership will be undertaken in 2010-11. This will be particularly important given the ending of the Joint Working Grant from 2011-12, as a number of current joint posts are funded by this. Other key areas of developments will be to progress locality models of planning and service delivery with colleagues in the new Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, in addition to taking advantage of regional collaborative working. A particular priority will be to strengthen local planning links in relation to substance and alcohol misuse which has been identified by both the Local Service Board and the Safeguarding Children Board as an area that will require specific attention given evidence that this is a significant factor in the increase in looked after children.

To move local and regional services forward, there is strong collaboration across health, social care and housing services and we have a number of effective shared services arising from the developing joint commissioning agenda. There are joint commissioning strategies for all service areas, though it is recognised that work is now required to update these especially as the transformation programme develops and new policies and service options emerge.

Work arising from the TOPS programme and the family support service review in particular demonstrates the delivery of our strategic intentions as important decisions are made regarding the balance and shape of future services. The success in achieving this has been through the expression of jointly agreed intentions and outcomes, robust programme management and the recognition of increased and specialist capacity to deliver change. Corporate as well as partnership ownership of these major change programmes has been key, and the capacity and type of support required will continue to need to be appraised and refined. The Social Care, Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee will also play a key role in scrutinising the business cases for service integration and to hold any resultant new service operations to account.

It is also recognised that the transformational changes that are being taken forward will create some anxieties amongst current service users, carers and staff as well as some of those organisations directly affected. Communication strategies have been developed in all the key change programmes and

consultation and engagement will be ongoing to demonstrate alignment to strategic aspirations and to maintain political and public confidence.

### **Case Study: Consultation ‘Improving Residential Care in Neath Port Talbot’**

In 2010, the Council undertook a 3 month public consultation on a proposal to improve residential care. The consultation document described a preferred option for the Council to enter into a partnership arrangement to transfer all the current homes to a non statutory provider who would design, build, finance and operate 3 new 60 bedded homes to provide residential care, respite care and residential reablement. All the new homes would be built to nursing care standards meaning, over time, nursing care, could also be provided. When the new homes were fully operational, 7 of the 8 current homes would close. Danybryn, the most modern of the Council’s homes would be transferred to, and operated by, the new provider.

The challenges were to get staff residents, their families and the community to support the proposals and to encourage balanced reporting in the media.

Following a thorough consultation process, it was felt that the key principles of the original proposal were sound. However, the main issue arising from respondents was location. In particular, respondents from the valleys communities raised concerns over access issues if one new home was to be shared between the Vale of Neath and the Afan Valley. To address this, the proposal was amended to provide four new homes (instead of the three which were originally proposed).

The next steps in taking the project forward will involve two major pieces of work. A procurement advisor will be assigned to manage the process of identifying a suitable partner which shares the Council’s values and whose core principles serve the interests of the residents of Neath Port Talbot in providing appropriate, sustainable and cost effective residential care. In addition, detailed feasibility studies will be undertaken for the 4 preferred sites of the new homes in order to establish whether they are suitable.

Capacity to oversee our contract arrangements across each service area is in place, though additional procurement expertise will be commissioned during 2010-11 to take forward the proposals for the future of residential care services for older people. Potential changes to the balance of internal and external services will need to consider the level and type of procurement and contracting skills and capacity needed and this will be kept under review. The need to

consider the sharing of contractual expertise with health and on a regional basis has also been identified for the coming year and beyond.

2009-10 has been a most challenging year regarding resource pressures, particularly in relation to the significant increase in looked after children and additional demand within learning disability and older person services. Whilst £1.5m costs have been transferred to the health service following a comprehensive review of service users' needs against the continuing NHS health care criteria, this did not match the £2m indicative target incorporated in the 2009-10 budget guideline. Corporate and Directorate reserves were utilised in year to offset the overspends resulting from the above pressures, with strategic investments made to increase the in-house fostering capacity to reduce the growing costs of external placements, and non-recurring funds to establish the children and young people service systems review. WAG invest to save funds were also successfully obtained for both initiatives. Corporate funds were also approved to establish six new social work posts to meet the workload pressures arising within children and young people services. The systems review will critically examine the ongoing capacity required to deliver a more effective decision making process and assess new models of intervention to reduce the need to remove children from the family setting.

Given the financial challenges facing public services, the council has developed a five year forward financial plan. This will ensure that strategic solutions drive decisions about resource priorities and savings. The TOPS programme is a critical element of the forward financial plan for social services. The delivery of solutions for services in the home as well as within residential care services will need to be agreed in 2010-11 to meet the financial targets of the plan, as well as further rebalancing provision towards support at home and retaining the quality of current services.

Programme and project management will continue to be utilised so that service options and financial appraisal techniques are embedded in service development and commissioning decisions. Corporate reviews of support services including procurement, IT and finance will all be progressed in 2010-11 with the direct involvement and input of key social services managers.

The Council has agreed significant increased investment for 2010-11 within children and adult services to respond to the increased service demand, with robust financial monitoring arrangements in place to highlight concerns regarding spend profiles and to assist the process of redirecting funds when pressures arise. The outcome of our tier one programmes and systems review will, however, need to deliver sustainable models of intervention.

## 5. Delivering Social Services

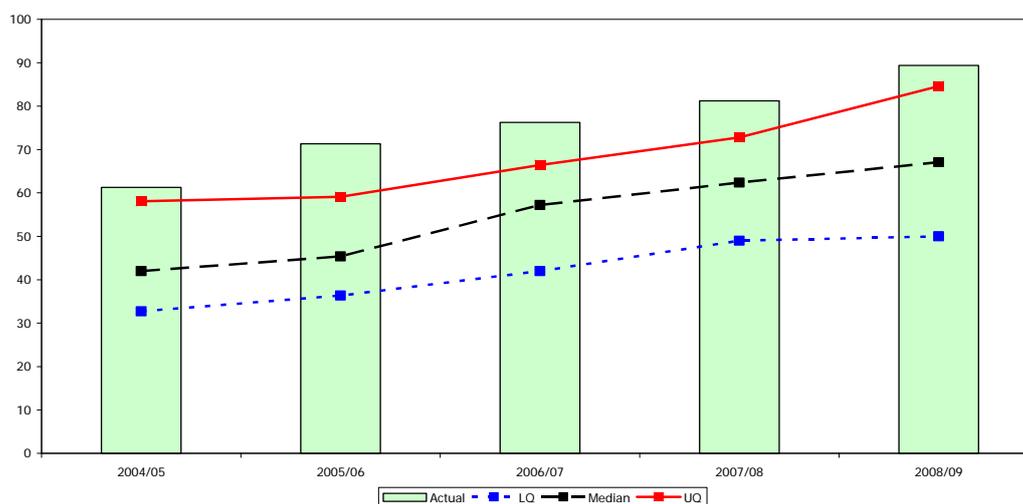
### **This includes workforce management and development, performance management and business planning**

We strive to have a management style and culture which promotes empowerment, delegation, involvement and consultation. Though there is a relatively new senior management team a culture of continuous improvement has been maintained, and we are supported by a well developed and experienced management team.

The Investors in People review in 2009 was particularly positive and emphasised the continued strong commitment and generous resource allocation to staff development. There is a structured and well managed approach to learning and management development has been recognised as a particular strength.

During 2009-10 considerable effort has been put into and progress made towards a ‘one sector, one workforce’ concept through our social care workforce development partnership, and initiatives such as the ‘Care to Make a Difference’ DVD and the Connect to Care project exemplify this.

#### *The rate per 10,000 population of staff holding required or recommended occupational qualifications (total staff)*



	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Actual	61.26	71.31	76.25	81.21	89.37
LQ	32.73	36.35	42.01	49.00	49.99
Median	42.01	45.37	57.21	62.37	67.07
UQ	58.09	59.12	66.43	72.78	84.61

Social work recruitment and retention continues to be a priority for the Directorate, and whilst a number of agency staff was required in 2009-10 within children and young people services to cover vacancies and newly established posts, there has been success in recruiting permanent staff at the beginning of 2010-11. Further work to revise and update the social care workforce strategy will take place in 2010-11.

Key developments and challenges for the new financial year will be to tackle the high incidence of sickness absence, particularly in frontline directly provided services and to help deliver the Council's evolving strategic workforce strategy. There is a need to rationalise and improve support systems across the Council but this will still require these services to be responsive to the needs of the service user. As a consequence of the transformation programme we will need staff to work in different ways. Involving and consulting staff is crucial in the design and delivery of change and we are embedding in our approach the need to ensure staff have the right skills to undertake the new roles we expect of them.

#### **Area for Improvement/Development: Time to Change ..... Sickness Review**

In order to address the Council's sickness absence levels a review has been undertaken with the fundamental purpose to *“manage and support employees to maximise attendance at work”*. The Council wants to be supportive and to help people get back to work when they are recovered. The review will help better understand the reasons behind sickness absence and the actions needed to help people improve their attendance.

The review has consulted with employees, managers, senior managers and is examining the role of Occupational Health Unit, as well as, processes (policy & procedures). The Trade Unions are fully engaged and supportive of the review.

Individual Heads of Service have received lists of people who are currently on long term sickness leave and lists of people who have had three or more periods of absence in the last 12 months. These cases are being examined to determine and understand the underlying causes of the absenteeism, with the support of personnel services, in order to identify the right steps to improve attendance.

The next phase is to identify and roll out new operating principles and put these into practice within the workplace, this will include the redesign of the current management information systems which have been identified as insufficient.

We have robust performance management processes and systems in place and we encourage interaction with service users and staff through consultation events, periodic survey reports, formal planning processes and staff supervision and appraisal. This engagement is crucial at such a time of service development and change.

We will continue to regularly review processes and systems for providing managers and staff with accurate coherent and timely key performance information through monthly bulletins and management performance oversight groups. Of most significance, is the Council's commitment to systems thinking to secure continuous improvement and ensure services reflect the needs and aspirations of service users. This approach empowers frontline staff to critically assess current operational systems and adopt a methodology that reduces bureaucracy and cumbersome decision making. There is a potential tension between the development of outcome measures through our systems reviews and current national performance indicators, particularly if it is felt these do not deliver the services' purpose; however, proposed replacement/additional measures will be robustly implemented. In all instances ongoing dialogue will be maintained with WAG and the Wales Audit Office where it is felt that current PIs need to be reviewed. This dialogue has already begun with WAG and CSSIW in relation to the children and young people service systems review.

The development of the Integrated Children System (ICS) and the Unified Assessment Process (UAP) continues with strong internal and external partnerships. New developments in 2009-10 include the establishment of the integrated CIIS performance system, HEAT IT requirements, telecare, and the child in need census case manager screens. The outcome of the children and young people service systems review and the TOPS programme will influence further development of the respective IT systems in 2010-11.

The emerging threat to the continuation of WAG's performance management development fund and the social care workforce development programme grant are significant risks in sustaining performance management and training capacity.

## **6. Providing Direction**

### **This includes both the leadership and culture within the Directorate and the strength of the corporate and political engagement and support**

As already highlighted, 2009-10 saw a number of key senior management changes within the Directorate and the Council as a whole. The need to provide clear leadership and a good sense of direction for social services has, however, been sustained and this has been confirmed during the past year through the Investors in People (IIP) reappraisal and other inspections and reviews, most latterly the annual draft Wales Audit letter. It is also important to recognise that the responsibilities and accountabilities of the Director are fully in line with expectations contained within the statutory guidance for Directors of Social Services produced in June 2009.

The IIP review concluded that ‘there is no doubt that the Directorate continues to operate within an investors in people culture with the senior management team (SMT) and the managers clearly sharing the strong commitment to the development of the staff and organisation. The restructuring at a senior level, including the appointment of the new Director and Heads of Service, has added strength to the SMT and improved the network of support.’

SMT continues to encourage employees to improve and shape their service through planned time out sessions and the onus on systems thinking has ensured operational principles are driven by service user’s needs and expectations and by empowering staff to take decisions and help formulate new ways of meeting need.

The senior management team understands the need to ensure a strategic framework is in place to transform service delivery and meet the challenging requirements of the forward financial plan and increasing pressures on public service finances. The tier one programmes and systems reviews are now providing this framework as more fundamental decisions about how and what services are delivered and who delivers them. The capacity to deliver the change agenda is being identified via the transformation funds available alongside clear communication strategies to ensure that all interested parties are engaged in and understand the important service remodelling decisions that are required. It is also crucial that management capacity within children’s services, including principal officer level, is strengthened to drive forward the required improvement agenda.

For 2010-11 there will be a need to further embed the new SMT following the recent changes and sustain the change programme momentum. One of the

biggest challenges facing the Directorate will be the continuing resource pressure and the needs to not only implement strategic solutions but to manage the growing demand upon key service areas throughout the year. Our service change capacity and communication plans will continue to be appraised as new phases of the change agenda emerge.

There is a strong and consistent support for social services across the Council with a good understanding of the issues and pressures facing the Directorate. There are good links between the corporate aims of the Council and those for social services, and the revised Community Plan strengthens the focus on maximising independence and safeguarding and protecting vulnerable children, adults and families. Priorities within the Community Plan, the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy and business plans are consistent. The Local Service Board is increasing its importance in ensuring the key partners sign up to and are engaged in the transformation work. This is particularly exemplified through involvement in the children and young people service systems review.

There are good relationships between the Lead Director for the Children Act, the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning and the Director of Social Services. There is a clear link between the children and young people planning process, the Safeguarding Children Board and the tier one children and young people services transformation programme. The Director of Social Services sits on the children and young people strategic planning group chaired by the Director of Education, and likewise the Director of Education is a member of the Local Safeguarding Children Board chaired by the Director of Social Services.

Cabinet leads for Social Care, Health and Housing, and Children and Young People Services are very involved in the issues within their areas of responsibility and continue to show a real commitment to building upon the quality of services provided. The Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health & Housing has played a key leadership role in taking forward the transforming older people services programme.

There is regular engagement with the Leader of the Council, other Cabinet Members, the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors on significant issues and developments affecting social services. Conversely the Director of Social Services has ongoing opportunities to influence broader strategic policies of the Council such as the Local Development Plan, economic development and community safety. There is also a strong recognition within the Council of the well being and prevention agenda with corporate sign up to the Neath Port Talbot health challenge process.

Scrutiny arrangements have been strengthened over the past year following development work undertaken with Cardiff City Council's scrutiny team as part of funding received from the WAG's scrutiny development fund. Further development work has been undertaken that will further strengthen scrutiny.

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