

T: 01495 355100 Ext./Est: 5100

E: leeann.turner@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Democratic Services



**THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND**

6th January 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

**SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee will be held in Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday, 13th January, 2020 at 10.00 am.

***Please note that a pre and post meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start and following the conclusion of the meeting for members of the committee.***

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris  
Managing Director

**AGENDA**

**Pages**

**1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION**

You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh or English. / Croesawn ohebiaith trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg.

2. **APOLOGIES**  
To receive.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATION**  
To consider any declarations of interests and dispensations made.
4. **SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES** 5 - 10  
To receive the Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.  
  
(Please note the Minutes are submitted for points of accuracy only)
5. **EXECUTIVE DECISION SHEET FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** 11 - 12  
To receive the Executive Decision Sheet.
6. **PROGRESS REPORT - SOCIAL SERVICES ASSISTED TRANSPORT PROVISION** 13 - 38  
To consider the report of the Head of Adult Services.
7. **CORPORATE PARENTING PROGRESS REPORT** 39 - 96  
To consider the report of the Head of Children's Services.
8. **REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP UPDATE** 97 - 112  
To consider the report of the Corporate Director Social Services.
9. **SOCIAL SERVICES WORKFORCE SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE** 113 - 120  
To consider the report of the Corporate Director Social Services and the Head of Organisational Development.
10. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - 13TH FEBRUARY 2020** 121 - 124

To receive the report.

To: Councillor S. Thomas (Chair)  
Councillor K. Rowson (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor D. Bevan  
Councillor G. A. Davies  
Councillor M. Day  
Councillor P. Edwards  
Councillor L. Elias  
Councillor K. Hayden  
Councillor J. Holt  
Councillor J. Millard  
Councillor M. Moore  
Councillor J. P. Morgan  
Councillor G. Paulsen  
Councillor T. Sharrem  
Councillor T. Smith

All other Members (for information)  
Manager Director  
Chief Officers

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019**

**REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S.C. THOMAS (CHAIR)**

Councillors: K. Rowson  
 D. Bevan  
 G.A. Davies  
 M. Day  
 P. Edwards  
 L. Elias  
 K. Hayden  
 J. Holt  
 J. Millard  
 J.P. Morgan  
 T. Sharrem  
 T. Smith

**AND:** Corporate Director of Social Services  
 Head of Children’s Services  
 Head of Adult Services  
 Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>No. 1</b>	<p><b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
<b>No. 2</b>	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Moore and G. Paulsen.</p>	

<p><b>No. 3</b></p>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
<p><b>No. 4</b></p>	<p><b><u>SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p><b>No. 5</b></p>	<p><b><u>PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAFE REDUCTION OF CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER STRATEGY 2017-2020</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Children’s Services which was presented to update Members on the progress made in relation to the implementation of the Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2017-2020.</p> <p>The Head of Children’s Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s question regarding special guardians, the Head of Children’s Services said that special guardians were generally extended family members such as grandparents, aunts and uncles.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding the difficulties of recruiting a consultant psychologist. The Head of Children’s Services said that the psychologist role had been advertised on two separate occasions with no applicants. There was a shortage of psychologists and although the Authority were competitive with bandings, grant funding was short term.</p> <p>In relation to the CLA reduction strategy, the Chair commented that the strategy was being independently evaluated by Worcester University and enquired had the Council worked with Newport Council when developing the Supporting Change Team. The Head of Children’s Services responded that the Authority had looked at both</p>	

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Newport and Gwynedd models and had chosen to follow the Gwynedd model.

A Member enquired regarding payments to special guardians and the level of care provided to break the cycle for young people to live a good life and not come back into care. The Head of Children's Services said the level of support to Special Guardians included:-

- The local authority develop a plan outlining the support given to promote a successful placement.
- Allowances to special guardians – the authority would access the financial position of the special guardian and support financially if necessary. This was then reviewed annually.
- If a placement breaks down the team would look at the child's situation and seek another family member to look after them as an alternative to coming into care.

In response to a Member's question regarding the Children's Services legal support, the Head of Children's Services said that soft market testing had been carried out with one private law company and one local authority expressed an interest in delivering future legal services for Blaenau Gwent Council. The Member enquired if there would be cost benefits to employing a Children's Solicitor rather than use costly external solicitors. The Director of Social Services commented that this piece of work had been carried out and there had been difficulties in recruiting Local Authority Child Care Solicitors. He was continuing to explore partner working with other local authorities and was awaiting any interest in supporting Blaenau Gwent in this provision.

A Member enquired why the mediation support worker post was part time. The Head of Children's Services clarified that funding only supported one part time post, however, this was in addition to the full time post already in place.

With regard to early intervention, the Head of Children's Services commented that an Education Support Worker had been established in the Supporting Change Team to offer education support for children and families for children at risk of going into care. The Families first programme

	<p>worked closely with schools to forge relationships and support children showing difficulties in school.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the underspend in Children's Services for quarter 2, the Head of Children's Services said that one area of underspend was staffing, there was currently 8 or 9 social worker vacancies. Difficulties in recruiting externally to Social Worker posts had led to the Department to encourage internal support workers to undertake training to become Social Workers and fill vacant posts. There had also been an underspend in Independent Fostering Agencies costs as the Authority was placing fewer children with external fostering providers. With regard to Residential Placements, Children's Services received a grant of £761,000 and this had been set against the residential placement budget. A Members Briefing session was being held in November on the work of the MyST team, they worked with children in residential care to bring them back to foster care placements to improve outcomes for children and reduce pressure on the residential budget.</p> <p>A Member enquired as the number of children in residential placements was reducing, had the numbers of foster carers in Blaenau Gwent increased. The Head of Children's Services said that within the last six months there had been an increase in fostering enquiries, however, some children had been placed with extended family members and this had resulted in the reduced number of residential placements.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the number of children in foster care to date, the Head of Children's Services confirmed that presently there were 223 children in foster care.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the information contained within the report be approved.</p>	
<p><b>No. 6</b></p>	<p><b><u>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2019/20 (QUARTERS 1 AND 2)</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Social Services which was presented to highlight</p>	



	<p>key points from quarters 1 and 2 of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2019/2020.</p> <p>The Director of Social Services presented the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p><b><u>Children’s Services</u></b></p> <p>The Head of Children’s Services spoke on Children’s Services.</p> <p>A Member commented that it was pleasing to note that the Children’s Emotional Well-being and Mental Health initiative was in place and moving forward.</p> <p><b><u>Adult Services</u></b></p> <p>The Head of Adult Services advised Members that a co-produced Advocacy commissioning strategy for supporting vulnerable adults had been completed and the new advocacy helpline had been launched. Information leaflets would be forwarded to Members in due course.</p> <p>A Member commented that some vulnerable adults cared for children and the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service needed to be promoted to get the message to the public. He enquired regarding the number of beds available for respite care for adults with physical disabilities in their 70’s who cared for an adult with a physical disability. The Head of Adult Services said that in Blaenau Gwent there were no respite beds for adults with physical disabilities, in these cases beds would be commissioned in other Authorities on a case by case basis to meet specialist needs.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2, namely that the report be accepted as provided.</p>	
<p><b>No. 7</b></p>	<p><b><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 13<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2020</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee.</p>	

<p>The Chair advised that the Preventative Model of Service to meet future social care demand would be presented to the March Committee.</p>	
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<p>The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2020 be approved.</p>	
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Report to: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee – 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

Subject: **Executive Decision Sheet**

Item	Scrutiny Committee Recommendation	Executive Decision	Recommendation			Executive Member invited to attend if recommendation accepted in part or rejected
			Approved	Accepted in Part	Rejected	
<p>Executive Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019</p> <p>Welsh Government Childcare Offer – Blaenau Gwent And Torfaen</p>	<p>The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee Option 2 - That Members scrutinise and make recommendations or suggestions to Executive to improve the delivery of the Childcare Offer to both Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen residents; and recommended that the Executive Member for Social Services write to the Welsh Government to express their concerns around the cap in numbers of Flying Start placements for Blaenau Gwent as there are many more communities who would benefit from Flying Start Schemes.</p>	<p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 2, namely the recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee as identified be approved.</p>	<p>Scrutiny recommendation accepted.</p>			<p>No further action</p>

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# Agenda Item 6

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **13<sup>th</sup> January 2020**  
Report Subject: **Progress report - Social Services Assisted Transport provision**  
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor John Mason, Executive Member for Social Services**  
Report Submitted by: **Alyson Hoskins – Head of Adult Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
31/10/19	12/11/19 & 17/12/19				13.1.20	29.01.20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report will be to provide:

- a. An update on the outcome of assessments undertaken during 2019, for eligibility to Assisted Transport.
- b. Outline further options to determine the future Assisted Transport model including the potential consideration to implement a charging mechanism for those who continue to access the in house transport provision.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 In January 2019 the Social Services Assisted Transport policy was approved by Council. This included a recommendation that the Social Services department progress the phased assessments of citizens currently accessing the Community Options transport.

2.2 In addition, members requested that the department return to Scrutiny in the Autumn of 2019 with an update of the outcomes of the assessments including information on:

- a. Details of any citizens who have ceased attending Community Options as a direct result of the implementation of the policy;
- b. Options and costings in relation to the potential for the Local Authority to develop charges for those citizens who are eligible to continue to access transport;
- c. Details of the proposed future model of Assisted Transport in Blaenau Gwent.

2.3 At the time of the meeting in January 2019 Social Services transported approximately 190 citizens 'to and from' Community Options (Day Services) venues. On average this equated to approximately 120 citizens each day. The current arrangements for providing transport meant that none of the citizens transported paid towards the costs of the Community Options transport.

2.4 Members were also informed that the budget allocation for transport within Community Options Service was £366,000. Prior to the conclusion of the eligibility assessments, the service identified efficiencies from April 2019 as demand had reduced and therefore the service relinquished 1 vehicle. This had resulted in voluntary redundancy of a driver and the reduction in management arrangements through the redundancy of the Passenger Service Officer.

2.5 However, the costs of providing assisted transport remains high, the budget allocation for transport within Community Options Service is currently £321,235 (gross) inclusive of staff costs.

- Direct vehicle Costs           £135,590
- Employee Costs                 £173,805
- Total                               £309,395

The remaining £11,840 is budget allocation for vehicle licencing/ maintenance/ supplies and services.

2.6 During the past 8 months staff from across Adult Services Care Management Teams and our Community Options Service has undertaken all of the 149 reviews with citizens and where appropriate their carers. Section 7 below – (supporting evidence), provides a comprehensive analysis of the outcomes of the reviews.

2.7 As a reminder to Members, the assessments were based on the following principals as set out in the Assisted Transport Policy which has recently been updated to reflect current legislation in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, and also to introduce a process to be undertaken if a citizen disagrees with the findings of the assessment.

- a. Assisted transport will only be provided to meet an assessed need, and where there are no other reasonable means for accessing the service.
- b. The principle of promoting individual's independence should be the starting point of any transport requirement.
- c. People who qualify for concessionary travel, or have access to DLA/PIP (benefits provided to support mobility costs) which includes a transport element, have a Motability car or their own car should use these to travel to and from Community Options facilities.

- d. For those passengers deemed ineligible, but who are unable to access public transport or use other reasonable means to attend Community Options, a charge **may** be made for using the Local Authority assisted transport
- 2.8 As a direct result of these assessments 87 citizens are no longer accessing our transport and on conclusion of the reviews, a further 16 will cease to access from January 2020 as alternative options will have been sourced.
- 2.9 Of those assessments that have been completed, we can report that only 1 citizen who was identified as no longer eligible for transport, has chosen to withdraw from the Community Options Service. This individual had previously attended Community Options Outreach Service (Vision House) 1 day per week. Alternative taxi share options along with a travel buddie (Community Support Worker) were offered as a potential solution but the Service User and their family refused any alternative solutions.
- 2.10
- 2.11 Of the 149 assessments completed to date, we have received 6 objections to the policy following the social work visit and information provided to them that they would be ineligible to receive assisted transport in line with the policy. However, it is pleasing to note that following further clarification and a visit from the Community Options Manager where the policy was discussed in greater detail in the main concerns have been addressed and 5 of the outstanding cases are being considered via the exceptional circumstances clause within the policy and 1 has chosen to purchase a mobility vehicle.
- 2.12 **Public Transport/ Taxi costs;**
- 2.13 For the purpose of this report potential charges for accessing Community Options are compared to the cost of citizens accessing public transport although it is recognised that the citizens accessing Community Options are utilising their bus passes and therefore are not paying the cost of the journey.
- 2.14 The costings below have been provided via Stagecoach (prices correct as of 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019). It is suggested that should members not wish to proceed with a full cost recovery model, then a cost model could be based on comparable costs of similar public transport journeys.
- 2.15 **Stagecoach Travel (table 1)**

<b>Journey / Route From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>Return</b>
Abertillery High St	Pond Road Nantyglo	£2.30	£4.00
Ebbw Vale Bus Station	Pond Road Nantyglo	£2.90	£4.90
Tredegar Bus Station	Pond Road Nantyglo	£4.80	£6.50
Tredegar Bus Station	Ebbw Vale Festival Park	£5.30	£8.70 Dayrider

Swffryd	Ebbw Vale Festival Park	£5.40	£7.00 Dayrider
Swffryd	Brynmawr	£4.80	£5.10

2.16 **The table 2 below illustrates the average cost of taxi's as paid by citizens accessing a taxi to attend at present:**

<b>Journey / Route From</b>	<b>To</b>		<b>Return</b>
Abertillery	Brynmawr	Seated passenger	£20.00
Abertillery	Pond Road Nantyglo	Based on 1 wheelchair user- unable to transfer	£30.00
Ebbw Vale	Nantyglo	Based on 4 sharing	£8.00 per person

2.17 The Assisted Transport Policy remains a priority in not only ensuring that the service is efficient but also in ensuring that our support is provided in line with the key themes of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

2.18 The Assisted Transport Policy has a key principle that the decision to provide assisted transport should be based on assessed needs, the balance of personal risks, achieving personal outcomes and on promoting citizens' independence.

2.19 In addition, the Transport Policy suggests that those citizens who are ineligible continue to access transport and would be asked to pay a charge towards the cost of travelling on Social Services assisted transport.

2.20 For the purpose of the report members have previously been informed that we currently operate Assisted Transport on Section 19 and 22 of the Transport Act 1985. These permits cover options for charging. The regulations stipulate that when charging, no profit can be made however we are able to recover the costs of running the vehicle inclusive of any driver/escort salary – full details are available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/section19](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section19).

2.21 The Council's Income Policy 2014 recommends full cost recovery. The total cost of a service (defined as the level of activity at which a charge is made) should include all expenditure required to deliver the service, including all central overheads. The Council will seek to achieve full cost recovery where appropriate unless there are legal, strategic or contractual reasons for not doing so whilst having regard to current market value and benchmarking.

2.22 Based on the numbers of citizens who are currently eligible for transport as outlined in section 7 below – a total of 24 will continue to access assisted transport free of charge and a further 13 who are deemed ineligible could be charged for transport due to exceptional circumstances. The new model also includes a recommendation to reduce the current fleet from 8 to 4 vehicles, -



and reduce the staffing structure from 8 to 5 drivers with 2 escorts which will enable the department to achieve an approximate saving of £116,563

2.23 The proposed new model is based on 2019/20 and the figures are;

- Direct vehicle Costs           £79,597
- Employee costs                 £115,075
- Additional costs                £10,000

Total £204,672

2.24 The approximate £10,000 additional costs as indicated above are made up of vehicle licencing/ maintenance/ supplies and services.

2.25 The table below demonstrates a full cost recovery model based on 2 vehicles which will support the transportation of the 18 paying passengers per day, based on the proposed future model however the full cost recovery model does not include the cost of collecting the charge or collecting any unpaid charges.

Full costs recovery across service	Based on 18 paying passengers per day / across service (250 days per year)	
Cost of Vehicles (2)	£33,758	Full cost recovery:  Daily cost per passenger - £18.26 (£ 9.13 per journey)
Staff costs	£48,390	
Total	£82,148	
Average weekly cost to pay:	£ per week 2 days 3 days 4 days	£36.52 £54.78 £73.04

2.26 The 4 vehicles can potentially provide a total of 48 seats per day however seat numbers are reduced where wheelchairs are needed to be accommodated.

2.27 Members have been previously informed that in the event of agreement being made for any of the above charges being introduced, the department will need to implement a mechanism for collecting the income. This could include invoicing service users. A system will also need to be put in place to collect unpaid debts and pursue non-payments. Additional digital mechanisms for collecting the payment will also be explored including potential to collect the charge alongside any current invoicing for domiciliary care / community options invoices, online payments etc., pre-paid cards etc.

2.28 In the event of any of the above charges being imposed, colleagues in the Corporate Finance department have confirmed that the preference would be to collect the income as an “upfront fee” either at pick up/day care facility, or by utilising all existing payment options, online payments etc. Upfront

payments will negate the need to produce invoices, or establish an account debt monitoring process.

**Members are asked to consider the content of this report and progress to the recommendations below.**

**3. Options for Recommendation:**

3.1 **Option 1** – Members note the progress made in assessing the needs of citizens in line with the Assisted Transport Policy including the outcomes of the assessments. **Plus**, members recommend that only those citizens who remain eligible for assisted transport continue to receive support **free of charge**. And that those citizens who are deemed **ineligible** but have **exceptional circumstance** continue to receive support but at a charge based on a full cost recovery model. The full cost recovery charges will be based on the configuration of transport required to deliver the future model of Community Options services.

3.2 **Option 2** - Members note the progress made in assessing the needs of citizens in line with the Assisted Transport Policy including the outcomes of the assessments. **Plus**, members recommend that only those citizens who remain eligible for assisted transport continue to receive support **free of charge**. And that those citizens who are deemed **ineligible** but have **exceptional circumstance** continue to receive support but at a charge based on similar costs illustrated earlier in the report reflecting public transport rates. The charges will be based on the future configuration of transport required to deliver the future model of Community Options services.

3.3 **Option 1** is the preferred option for direction of travel if the service is to be sustainable moving forward however further work to ascertain the actual charges based on the reconfiguration of the service including review of demand and capacity.

**4 Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

**4.1 Expected outcome for the public**

Citizens of Blaenau Gwent have been appropriately assessed in line with the policy (adopted in January 2019) since February 2019. The assessments have been undertaken by Social Workers / Support Workers independently of the Community Options staff team using the principles of Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

**4.2 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

Consultation, engagement and participation are evidenced throughout this report and attached documents. To capture citizen's thoughts on becoming more independent in accessing services the department approached a number of citizens who have chosen to taxi share their comments were:

#### 4.3 **Quotations from independent travellers-**

- *I enjoy coming to Lake View in the taxi, I can come when I want to and go home when I want to.*
- *I can come in late and get up later – better, better.*
- *I love it, I come in with my butty love.*
- *I love it, it's warmer and quicker, better than the bus.*
- *I get home earlier, it's better than the bus.*
- *I like coming in the taxi it's better than the bus, I haven't got to travel all over the place. I get on with the taxi driver, we have a laugh and a joke.*
- *I don't think I should have to pay for my taxi.*

#### 4.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

The overriding principles within this report focus on maximising and promoting independence wherever possible. It ensures that where transport is required by citizens, that the service is sustainable and cost effective to meet the future model of Community Options.

#### 4.5 **Preventative focus**

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 clearly identifies that Local Authorities should take a preventative approach to the delivery of traditional service provision. It supports the principles of the department undertaking a strengths based approach and that where possible citizens are supported to access their own strengths to meet their care and support needs e.g. utilise their own Motability vehicles etc. or are supported to develop personal skills through travel training to promote their own independent travel.

#### 4.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

A partnership approach has been developed within the consultation process with the inclusion of third sector organisations, advocacy groups etc.

#### 4.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

The development of the policy has been as a result of discussions across colleagues from health, local authorities and the third sector.

### 5 **Implications Against Each Option**

#### 5.1 **Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)**

There is a significant cost in providing assisted transport to all citizens who access Community Options and the implementation of the Assisted Transport Policy has enabled Community Options Service to redesign the model of transport required (see 2.13 above). It is anticipated that the reduction in fleet and staffing from 8 to 4 vehicles will result in a saving of £116,563 Additional income will also be achieved should members decide to

support the recommendation to achieve full cost recovery wherever possible. It is important to note however that if this is the preferred option then some citizen may be charged a fee at a rate higher than the equivalent public transport cost.

5.2 As indicated within the report; in the event of any charges imposed for travelling on assisted transport, the department will need to implement a cost effective mechanism for collecting the charge.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no identified legal concerns in relation to this report and recommendations. The recommendations are in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

5.4 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 is the legislative framework for Social Services to identify an individual's outcomes and assess their need for care and support services. The Local Authority does not have a statutory duty to provide transport, but will have a duty to meet that need if the need cannot be met by the person's own resources or community resources.

5.5 **Human Resources**

The implementation of this policy has resulted in a reduction in demand for transport as citizens' access their own transport or use public transport. This will result in a reduction of staff required to provide transport and full staff consultation on the implementation and consequence of the policy has started. Both Organisational Development and Trade Unions will form part of any potential downsizing of the work force and potential redundancy situation.

6 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

6.1 Risks identified in the previous report include the risk that vulnerable citizens may not choose to attend Community Options due to the charge and that this may increase their vulnerability at home. However, of the 149 assessments completed to date only one citizen has ceased attendance, their previous attendance was for one day per week only. The Community Care Team is supporting this individual and it is not felt that vulnerabilities have increased as a result of their decision to not attend.

6.2 Assessments completed have been strength based assessment 'what matters' conversations utilising on their personal resources including their access to their own Motability vehicle, bus pass or benefit entitlement. As a department we have and continue to support citizens with 'transport training' which promotes safe travel to and from the venues.

6.3 A further risk in implementing any charging for transport is that of potential non-payment of charges and accruing of debt to the Local Authority. This

risk will be monitored by colleagues on the Corporate Resources Team and debts recovered as per current arrangements.

## 7 **Supporting Evidence**

7.1 As stated in 2.7 above during the past 9 months 149 assessments have been undertaken. At the time of Members approving the Assisted Transport policy there were approximately 190 citizens accessing the service via our transport but this number has reduced during the time of the assessments as citizens needs have changed, some citizens are unable to attend due to declining health, some have moved into Care Homes and sadly some attendees have passed away. All new referrals to Community Options have been assessed via the policy and therefore transport demand has reduced.

7.2 The outcome of these 149 social work assessments are as illustrated below:

7.3 A. Eligible for transport:

Following the assessments:

- ✓ 24 citizens have been assessed as eligible for assisted transport; this figure mainly consists of our older citizens and those citizens living with Dementia.

7.4 B. Ineligible for transport:

Following the assessments:

- ✓ 87 citizens are now supported by family/friends/carers to attend Community Options and have begun to access services through alternative means of transport (Motability vehicles/ personal cars etc.). One of the outcomes of this has been that we are seeing an increase in families/carers taking advantage of the flexible opening and closing times within the Community Options provision and this is having a positive outcome for all parties. Of these:
  - 13- are using their own vehicle
  - 3 - access via a taxi (sole occupancy)
  - 15 - access via a shared taxi arrangement
  - 12 - citizens are accessing services via stagecoach travel
  - 43 - access with transport provided by their care provider
  - 1- is transport funded via health

7.5 ✓ 11 tenants of the BG Supported Living – have received an assessment and deemed as not being eligible for Assisted Transport and the service is arranging for the transportation of these citizens as part of the scheme rota as the tenants have access to Motability vehicles.

7.6 ✓ 10 citizens have been assessed as being ineligible for transport but have been assessed as requiring additional support as defined within

the policy (exceptional circumstances category). This means that they have been assessed due to their complexity of need, and inability to access public transport or use other reasonable means. These assessments are being reviewed via a formal process, independent of the original decision maker to clarify that they meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances.

- 7.7 ✓ 8 citizens have been assessed as being ineligible for transport and staff are continuing to work with them to identify potential taxi / public transport options although this is proving challenging due to the low availability of taxi services who are able to support people with mobility issues or require wheelchair access.
- 7.8 ✓ 5 Citizens have received a review under the exceptional circumstances process which has determined that exceptional circumstances do not apply. Therefore, they are not eligible to access Social Services Assisted Transport
- 7.9 ✓ 3 citizens currently access the Community Options Community Support provision whereby staff support in staff cars due to their assessment of needs.
- 7.10 ✓ 1 person has decided not to continue to attend Community options

8 ***EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***  
A full equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and can be found in **Appendix 2**.

## 9 **Monitoring Arrangements**

9.1 The impact of the new policy is monitored via an overarching Assisted Transport Project Board and the Adult Services Department Management Team. It is recommended that regular progress reports will be presented the Social Service Scrutiny Committee. In addition, the Social Services Assisted Transport Policy will be subject to an annual review.

### **Background Documents / Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 Transport Policy
- Appendix 2 EIA Assisted Transport Policy

REF: PR-SSATP.1467



Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol

**Blaenau Gwent**

County Borough Council

## **Assisted Transport Policy for Adult Social Services**

**SOCIAL  
SERVICES  
DIRECTORATE**

<b>Version number:</b>	2	<b>Date Written:</b>	Updated October 2019
		<b>Date Approved:</b>	
<b>Status:</b>	Approved	<b>Date of Issue:</b>	
		<b>Review Date:</b>	November 2020
<b>Approved by:</b>			
<b>Author:</b>	Mark Morris		
<b>Supporting documents:</b>			
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Approved by:</b>		
	<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Change history</b>	<b>Dates reviewed:</b>	<b>Outcome of review:</b>	
	Version 1 August 2018	Updated	

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## **1. Introduction**

This policy has been developed to provide a strategic consistent approach to delivering transport and clearly outlines the framework through which assisted transport is provided.

The Council is committed to promoting independence across all areas of service provision and seeks to ensure as many people live as independently as possible within their own communities and continue to travel as independently as possible.

For some vulnerable adults who access services provided by Adult Social Services the Council will continue to provide specialist assisted transport.

## **2. Legal Framework**

The Social Service and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (The Act) provides a legal framework for improving the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and for transforming Social Services in Wales.

The Act gives people a stronger voice and real control over the support they need to remove barriers to their wellbeing. It focusses on earlier intervention to prevent needs becoming critical, and promotes investment of resources in the short term, to give best value to the public purse overall.

The Act also demands a change in culture to help individuals achieve their wellbeing outcomes - identifying "what matters to individuals?" and secondly by maximising an individual's own support networks and access to community and voluntary resources.

## **3. Assessing Eligibility**

The eligibility decision flows naturally from the assessment process. All five elements must be taken into account in the assessment, and from this a judgement is reached about whether the person has eligible needs.

If the identified need(s) can only be met through a care and support plan or a support plan the need will be eligible.

An individual has an eligible need for care and support if an assessment establishes that overcoming barriers to achieving their personal outcomes requires the local authority to prepare and ensure the delivery of a care and support plan, or a support plan for carers.

#### **4. Principles of Providing Assisted Transport**

The overriding principle is that the decision to provide assisted transport should be based on assessed needs, risks and outcomes and on promoting independence. The requirements for transport will be based on the following principles:

- Assisted transport will only be provided to meet an assessed need and there are no other means for accessing the service.
- The principle of promoting individuals independence should be the starting point of any transport requirement.
- People who qualify for concessionary travel or have access to DLA/PIP which includes a transport element, have a mobility car or their own car should use these to travel to and from Community Options facilities.
- For those who are unable to either access public transport, or any of the other means illustrated above to attend Community Options facilities they may be charged for using assisted transport.

#### **5. Transport Criteria**

Based on the above principles the following guidance will be applied when identifying the need for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council assisted transport.

- Where a person is able to walk, use assisted mobility (motorised scooter, wheelchair/aids) or public transport either independently or with support from family, friends, a support worker or volunteer to get to a local day opportunity venue, assisted transport will not be provided.
- Where a person receives a benefit to facilitate their mobility needs (e.g. Disability Living Allowance where this includes a transport element), this should be fully utilised to support their transport needs to and from day opportunities.
- Where a person has a private car including motability car, it will be expected that this is used to access Community Options. Where a person uses their own vehicle or motability car no petrol costs or other expenses will be considered.

- Where a person contributes to a shared vehicle, this should be used to meet their assessed needs.
- Where a person chooses to attend community activities or college outside of their identified locality and a local service is available to meet their assessed need, the additional cost of any transport considered necessary will be met by the person.
- Part of the person's annual assessment and review will identify their potential to develop road safety and orientation skills so that they can travel independently to and from day opportunities. Arrangements will be made to ensure appropriate levels of support are provided to those who are identified as able to use public transport; this will include opportunities for travel training and completion of a comprehensive risk assessment.

## **6. Arranging Assisted Transport**

- If a person accessing services is eligible to receive assisted transport a risk assessment will be carried out with the individual to understand their own requirements and ensure the safety of all users of the service.
- Continuation of assisted transport provision will be reviewed by Adult Social Care staff through care and support reviews. Any review and proposed removal of transport will be discussed with the individuals and their family or carers where necessary. If appropriate a time limited transition period will be agreed so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- If the individual does not travel on the assisted transport provided for one month, they are contacted and asked to confirm if transport is still required. If the individual does not respond, then the transport provision will be cancelled.

## **7. Exceptional Circumstances**

There may occasionally be circumstances where following an assessment, an individual is deemed ineligible to access assisted transport, and in addition has no alternative means of accessing services. These will be considered on an individual basis as part of our exceptional circumstances criteria (see apex 1 below). And will be considered via a panel consisting of independent Senior Managers. The panel will be arranged in 7 days of the assessment being undertaken, and outcomes determined. The Local Authority Care Manager will be responsible for ensuring the views and needs of the citizen are represented at the panel. In these instances, the Local Authority may levy a charge relative to the support required and travel distance.

## **8. Complaints**

If following the exceptional circumstances decision, a citizen remains unhappy with the outcome then they or their carer will have the opportunity to appeal the decision made. Please refer to the Department's factsheet "How to appeal a decision" in line with the social services complaints procedure. The application to review the decision should be made within 10 working days to their social worker following notification from Social Services.



Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol

**Blaenau Gwent**

County Borough Council

**Assisted  
Transport  
Policy for  
Adult Social  
Services**

**Exceptional  
Circumstances**

**Decision Form for Exceptional Circumstances Review Panel**  
**(Transport Policy) November 19**

This form is to be used to document a request and outcome of applications to access assisted transport via exceptional circumstances. For full details refer to the policy as revised November 19.

The main principles of the policy include:

- Assisted transport will only be provided to meet an assessed need and there are no other means for accessing the service.
- The principle of promoting individual's independence should be the starting point of any transport requirement.
- People who qualify for concessionary travel or have access to DLA/PIP which includes a transport element, have a mobility car or their own car should use these to travel to and from Community Options facilities.
- For those who are unable to either access public transport, or any of the other means illustrated above to attend Community Options facilities they may be charged for using assisted transport. *(this section is yet to be enacted as of November 19)*

<b>A. Details of assessment (to be completed by assessor prior to panel):</b>				
1	Name of citizen			
2	Establishment attending:			
3	Attendance:			
	Number of days:	5	Which days attending:	
4	WCCIS number:		5. Date of Panel:	13/11/19
6	Name of social worker assessing: - Anne James / Sarah Savage		7. Date of assessment:	
<b>B. Outcome of assessment (to be completed by assessor prior to panel):</b>				

8	Is the citizen eligible for transport:	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
	<b>If no what criteria has been used:</b>	<b>Please circle</b>	
8a	Person has access to a Motability vehicle?	Yes / No	
8b	Person is able to use public transport / has concessionary travel pass?	Yes/ No	
8c	Person has the higher rate of mobility (DLA/ PIP) and can access a taxi / public transport to attend?	Yes/ No	
	If any of the answers to questions 8 a, b or c are YES then <u>citizen is not eligible to assisted transport</u> <b>unless</b> exceptional circumstances are identified – please explain below on what grounds exceptional circumstances have been identified e.g. citizen cannot travel unaccompanied due to health needs/ unable to access Motability vehicle etc...		
<b>B Recommendation of panel – to be completed at panel:</b>			
9a	Panel recommends that citizen is eligible for assisted transport	Yes/ No	
9b	Panel recommends that citizen is NOT eligible for assisted transport	Yes / No	

<b>Authorised by panel members:</b>	Signed:
	Signed:
	Signed:
<b>Confirmation as to who is notifying citizen of outcome of panel:</b>	

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# Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form

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## Equality Analysis Screening Questionnaire

Corporate Services & Strategy

10/25/2019

*Please use this form and guidance notes to determine the potential and expected level of impact on protected groups. The outcome of this brief analysis will determine whether you are required to undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment and will guide you on the expected timeframe for EIA completion.*

*Please contact Blaenau Gwent's Equalities Officer for further guidance and support [sarah.keefe@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.keefe@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk).*

## **Equality Impact Assessment Screening Process**

Equality Impact Assessments are in place to ensure that we do not discriminate and/or disadvantage the members of our community who are part of a protected characteristic as outlined in the Equality Act (2010). By taking a wider view of the protected characteristics, Blaenau Gwent Council hopes to encourage a more holistic approach to the needs of all communities in designing and delivering their services. The protected characteristics listed under the Equalities Act (2010) are: -

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership
5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Race
7. Religion
8. Sex
9. Sexual Orientation

*\*For more information on the Equalities Act, please click [here](#).*

An EIA is carried out through formal and systematic analysis of proposed or existing policies, practices and budgetary processes. An EIA encourages a structured approach which establishes and records whether the policy affects different groups in different ways, and takes action to eliminate or minimise any negative impacts on the listed protected groups. EIA's can be a rigorous and lengthy process, however, in order to fully determine if a full EIA is needed, a short screening process must first be completed.

*\* To view the Equality Impact Assessment guidance notes, please click [here](#)*

### **Equality Screening Process.**

A screening process will help you in identifying any potential inequalities on the listed protected groups, and will identify feedback and further guidance on how any improvements can be made. A screening process will introduce a level of accountability in terms of assessing the impact on equality and will identify the priority level for undertaking an EIA.

## Screening Form

<b>Service Area Contact Information:</b> <i>(Please complete all fields)</i>					
<b><u>Name of Person Completing Form:</u></b> Mary Welch	<b><u>Department/Service Area:</u></b> Provider services- Adult Services / Policy	<b><u>Service Manager:</u></b> Mary Welch	<b><u>Date:</u></b> 25/10/2019		
<b><u>Contact Details:</u></b> Mary.welch@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk		<b><u>Name of Proposed Policy:</u></b> Assisted Transport Policy			
<b>Policy Information</b>					
<b><u>Are you screening for the Equality Impact on a new policy, or an existing policy:</u></b> <b><u>Existing Policy</u></b>		<b><u>Comments:</u></b> This brief screening exercise is specifically to identify potential adverse impacts on any protected groups in relation to the changes within the Assisted Transport Policy future services model.			
<b><u>What are the aims and objectives of the policy:</u></b>					
<p>The aim of the policy is to consider potential recommendations in relation to anticipated changes within the Assisted Transport Policy within the context of a future services delivery model.</p> <p>The policy has looked at more creative and effective ways of delivering an effective assisted transport service while also meeting the needs of the current client group and the wider community. This report is also developed in anticipation of any financial efficiency savings.</p> <p>In addition the policy aims to promote greater flexibility in accessing services and encourage independence for those citizens who are accessing the Community Options services</p>					
<b>Assessment of Impact of the Policy / Practice on Protected Characteristics</b>					
Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Provide reasons and any mitigation required	
Age (children, young people, the elderly)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The report indicates a number of positive comments from citizens on how the changes in Assisted Transport has had on the way they access services, although some people have disagreed with the ethos of the policy.	

Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Potential negative impact – The proposal within the report may have adverse effects on people accessing the service, all of which are considered to have a disability. The extent of this impact will need to be considered Mitigation of these potential impacts will be considered during the equality impact assessment process following the outcome of the report
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Pregnancy and Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Religion and Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Sex (male, female)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

**Additional Indicators of Equality Risk**

*Please indicate if you believe this policy / practice has a high, medium or low risk as follows (1 = No Impact; 2 = Minimal Impact; 3 = Potential Impact; 4 = Likely Impact; 5 = Inequality Impact)*

The policy present a low risk of any inequality

Children and / or young people up to the age of 18	No Inequality	<i>Please indicate any planned methods aimed at mitigating these risks</i> Click here to enter text.
The dynamics of a given community	Minimal Inequality	<i>Please indicate any planned methods aimed at mitigating these risks</i> This will be explored during the equality impact assessment process

**Meeting the Equality Objectives**

*Please indicate below if / how your proposal will contribute to the Equality Objectives*

Objective 1 – Making equality vital in decision making and service provision	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Through the inclusion of the client group / participants through the formal assessment process, should the decision be in favour of a charging policy.
Objective 2 – Be an equal opportunity employer, with a workforce that is aware of and understands the equality agenda	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable
Objective 3 – Do our best to engage, protect and support those people in our community that need it the most	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable
Objective 4 – Promote understanding and acceptance of diversity within our communities	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	As above.
<b><u>Evidence and Consultation</u></b>			
Have you undertaken any consultation and engagement activities with protected groups in order to mitigate any risks of discrimination	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>Please describe the engagement activities undertaken as part of this process</i></p> <p>Individual assessments have been undertaken by Social Workers / Support Workers independently of the Community Options staff team using the principles of Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 - A partnership approach has been developed within the consultation process with the inclusion of third sector organisations, advocacy groups etc – In addition Consultation, engagement and participation are evidenced throughout this report and attached documents</p>

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# Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **13th January 2020**  
Report Subject: **Corporate Parenting Progress Report**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr J. Mason, Executive Member Social Services**  
Report Submitted by: **Tanya Evans, Head of Children's Services**  
**Ceri Bird – Service Manager, Children's Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
12.12.19					13.01.20			

## 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the progress made by Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) throughout 2019 to improve outcomes and services for our Children Looked After (CLA).

*\*Looked After Children (LAC) is a reference no longer used.*

*In 2019 this reference has now changed to Children Looked After (CLA).*

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 This report will focus on key achievements and progress made throughout 2019 to date on the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) Action Plan 2019 /2020. Please note there is still another quarter until end of the plan.

2.2 The Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2019/2020 has again been developed in line with the 7 Definitions of Well-being under Section 2 of Part 1 of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, plus one additional outcome that was decided upon at a local level. For the purpose of the action plan the 7 Definitions of Well-being (plus the extra priority) have become key priorities under which fall measurable actions and outcomes thus ensuring we are addressing and monitoring all elements of our looked after children's well-being:-

- All our Children Looked After enjoy good physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing;
- All our Children Looked After are protected from abuse and neglect;
- All our Children Looked After are enabled to reach their full potential in education, training and recreation;
- Our Children Looked After have healthy domestic, family and personal relationships;
- Our Children Looked After secure their rights and entitlements;
- Our Children Looked After enjoy social and economic well-being;
- Our Children Looked After live in suitable accommodation;

- The Corporate Parenting Agenda is owned across the local authority and by partner agencies.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 Option 1 Members acknowledge progress made throughout 2019 and feel confident that the Local Authority and its partners are doing well to improve outcomes for our looked after children as part of our corporate parenting responsibilities.

Option 2 Members acknowledge progress made throughout 2019 and suggest areas for development that the Local Authority could be doing to improve the outcomes of children looked after as part of our corporate parenting responsibilities.

### 4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

Corporate Parenting Action Plan supports the following priorities for Social Services under the Corporate Plan.

- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater;
- To work with our partners including Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support;
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities.
- To put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect from harm.

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

#### 5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

It is not anticipated there will be any additional financial costs associated in taking forward this Corporate Parenting Action Plan. Existing staffing with more innovative, energised and joined up ways of working is being explored rather than new projects having to be funded.

#### 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There are many risks if, as corporate parents we do not strive to support our children looked after adequately and make improvements to improve outcomes. We must endeavour to support our individual children looked after across the 7 areas of well-being to help them overcome the troubles they have already faced in life and become resilient adults.

If we do not support the children looked after adequately they may present risky and vulnerable behaviours later on.



The Social Services Senior Management Team and Social Services staff are committed to working with partners to address and reduce these risks and pursue excellent practice using the Corporate Parenting Board as the vehicle to reduce these risks.

5.3 **Legal**

No legal implications.

5.4 **Human Resources**

It is not anticipated that there will be any staffing / workforce development implications as a result of taking forward this work other than robust collaboration between departments.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

**Update on Progress made under the Action Plan**

The full Corporate Parenting Board Action Plan 2019/20 is attached to this report as *Appendix 1*.

This section of the report will address each key priority in turn and pick out some key achievements, providing a summary of what progress has been made, spotlighting some key headline activities of interest and focus to provide additional information on. The full detail will be in attached Appendices and action plan.

6.2 **Key Priority 1 - All our Children Looked After enjoy good physical and mental health, and emotional well-being**

All children looked after are offered a Health Assessment within 28 days of becoming looked after. Children under 5 are seen by their named Health Visitor whilst those over 5 are seen by the Specialist nurse for Children Looked After. Health assessments may be undertaken at home or in a local clinic. During 2019 progress has been made in securing a regular clinic at Blaina ICC that has enabled children and young people to be seen during the school day.

The assessment waiting list did fall behind in 2017 and 2018 due to a gap in recruitment of the Specialist nurse but are all nearly back up to date. Statistics at the end of November 2019 are as follows:

- 0 (under 5's) initial health assessments outstanding
- 4 (under 5's) review health assessments outstanding
- 0 (5-18 yrs) initial health assessments outstanding
- 13 (5-18 yrs) review health assessments outstanding
- 11 (5-18 yrs) Out of County health assessments outstanding

Our children will now also benefit from the Single Point of Access for Children's Emotional wellbeing, School Nurse Drop In Clinics at Secondary Schools to support with emotional wellbeing, the Paediatric Weight Management Service and the Community Outreach Dental health Practitioner; all these services were launched this year.

The MyST (My Support Team) has been in operation since June 2019. The new team has successfully moved 2 children out of residential care into foster placements by providing intensive support to the child, foster carers and their support networks. They are also working with 2 children intensively to prevent their needs escalating to the point where they need residential care.

6.3 **Key Priority 2 - All our Children Looked After are protected from abuse and neglect**

In 2016/2017 the key priority under this category was the identification of children at risk of sexual exploitation and those displaying sexually harmful behaviour and to audit what was being done to manage and reduce the risk to this cohort of children and young people. The Board decided they would relook at this in 2019/20 and compare with the work carried out in 2016/17. This priority is due to commence in January 2020 by the Safeguarding Manager.

For 2019/20 the Board identified a priority would be to look at localised community behaviour based safeguarding risks which might pose an issue to our Children Looked After and as a result will develop a programme to raise awareness of the issues such as County Lines, Criminal Exploitation, and Social Media Exploitation before these issues escalate. Briefing sessions with children looked after, schools, community groups, practitioners and foster carers are currently being planned by the Safeguarding Manager for 2020 roll out.

6.4 **Key Priority 3 - All our Children Looked After are enabled to reach their full potential in education, training and recreation (ETE)**

This is such a large priority area Appendix 2, 3 and 4 contains a full breakdown of attainment, exclusions and destinations of our children looked after and care leavers. A new subgroup that has been formed in 2019 and this is now led by the Education Directorate.

There are 4 Key Actions :-

Action 1 - Minimise the risk of Children Looked After becoming NEET.

Action 2– Improve communication with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) regarding CLA funding and cluster plans (CLA Pupil Deprivation Grant)

Action 3 – Promote “Children Looked After Friendly Schools”

Action 4 – Ensure we are ready for ALN Act to ensure our Children Looked After have the right support.

Things that have gone well 2019/20: We report on the previous year's academic year due to the different timescales and the academic year covering September 2018 – July 2019.

- During 2018-2019 there has been a decrease in the incidents of exclusions issued in respect of children looked after. The majority of exclusions continue to be issued in respect of secondary aged pupils. There has been a decrease in the number of exclusions being issued for primary aged children.
- There has been a decrease in the number of exclusions being issued for Blaenau Gwent children looked after who have Statements of Special Educational Needs.
- During academic year 2018-2019, 100% of personal education plans for children becoming looked after within the year were updated within statutory timescales.
- The achievements and academic progress of our looked after children continue to be monitored by the Children Looked After education service and recorded throughout each stage of their schooling.
- There has been a slight decrease in the number of Children looked after experiencing a change of school during the year. When a child does have to move school, processes are in place to ensure that delays in admissions are avoided wherever possible.
- Outcomes for our children looked after at the end of key stage 2 were considerably higher when compared with the previous year but lower at the end of key stage 3. A total of 16 children looked after completed their statutory studies in 2018-2019. 9 children looked after achieved recognised qualifications.
- Of the 7 children who left school without recognised qualifications as of September 2019 2 have remained on as year 12 pupils in post 16 special school settings, 2 have continued their placement with a work based learning provider. 1 learner commenced a college placement and 1 has sourced work. Only one of the young people is NEET.
- Our annual celebration of achievement event was held in November 2019. A significant number of our children looked after, 73 in total, were recognised for their achievements both within school and in terms of their participation in extra-curricular activities, including sporting achievements and amateur dramatics.
- During academic year 2018-19, a total of 16 young people who were looked after by Blaenau Gwent completed their statutory school studies. 9 of the 16 young people achieved recognised qualifications.

- Three quarters of the young people who were looked after and completed their statutory studies in summer 2019 had additional learning needs and more than half (56%) had a statement of special educational needs.
- The newly refocused Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Education Group enables clear sharing of relevant information to inform the wider inclusion agenda in Education and into schools.
- The Blaenau Gwent Corporate Traineeship was established in 2017 and to date it has taken 10 young people since it started. To date there are currently 2 young people engaged, one in Housing Solutions Administration Team and one in Carpentry with Tai Calon. One young lady is due to start after Christmas and she is considering what options are available at the moment. In 2020 we hope to review the traineeships and analyse what has been successful and what hasn't. We also hope to write into our plan that we will work with registered social landlords (RSL's) so that the community benefits policy that covers work placements, job experience and help with apprenticeship fees are considered for our children looked after when they are awarded contracts. We also hope to develop a Corporate Traineeship glossy menu of opportunities available within the Authority that will appeal to our Children Looked After
- The Children Looked After Education Coordinator and the 14 Plus Team Manager now attend the Vulnerable Learners sub group to represent CLA in this arena.

#### 6.5 **Key Priority 4 - Our Children Looked After have healthy domestic, family and personal relationships**

A Task and Finish Group has been established to promote healthy and safe relationships and children's health and wellbeing from an early age and at all stages of their life. The group has been established with a range of professionals from the early years ages, through school, college and into youth and adulthood. We will look at what is currently available, if there are any gaps and if our children are accessing this support, a mapping exercise will take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020. The mapping and networking with Health Visiting, other early years professionals, Healthy Schools programme, Youth Service, colleges etc. will to explore how healthy relationships are being promoted at every opportunity and what other provision is out there to support mental health and wellbeing of our children. Is there enough? Do we need to supplement this? Is it easily accessible? What are the access criteria? Are our children accessing it? How do we know?

#### 6.6 **Key Priority 5 Our Children Looked After secure their rights and entitlements**

Ensuring the voice of the child is central to the way in which we deliver our services is extremely important. Over the past few years The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) was commissioned to undertake surveys with our children and care leavers so we could learn from their experiences in care to

shape our service delivery accordingly. Some of the service changes as a result of these surveys have included the restructure of the child care teams to reduce the changes of social workers a child has; the development of child friendly plans; the development of a delegated decision making tool which clearly outlines who can make decisions in relation to the various aspects of the child's life. The aim of this was to reduce delay in decisions being made and where appropriate foster carers taking responsibility for the majority of the decision making for day to day care.

More work is required to ensure we always listen to the voice of the child and they are aware of their rights. A key action under this outcome is the introduction of the National Approach to Advocacy. We ensure every child who comes into the care system has a face to face meeting with an independent advocate who can explain the various ways in which they can access advocacy to ensure their voice is heard. Blaenau Gwent is one of 4 Gwent authorities to develop a regionally commissioned advocacy service from June 2017. The NYAS survey was completed in April 2018 and its recommendations are being taken forward in an action plan by the 14 plus team throughout 2019/20. It is planned to regularly carry out this work and ensure the Childs Voice is at the centre of our planning in Blaenau Gwent. The CLA care plan is currently in process of being changed into a more user and client friendly version. Aim to implement the new form in WCCIS from April 2020.

The development of a child / young person friendly leaflet / policy on what CLA / Carer leavers can access is to be redesigned in Jan/Feb 2020 by 14+ team. When this has been completed, the Care Leavers Forum will help develop the leaflet outlining the entitlements.

### **Key Priority 6 - Our Children Looked After enjoy social and economic wellbeing**

This priority is covered jointly in Priority 3. The actions under this outcome relate to tracking our Children Looked After when they leave statutory school age to ensure they receive as much support as possible to remain engaged with education training and employment as there is a wealth of evidence to demonstrate the benefits of this as opposed to being dependant on benefits.

The actions around scoping hobbies and interests of our Children Looked After to encourage them to join groups and clubs and develop a sense of belonging and purpose has yet to start due to so much activity on other aspects of the plan. We know what we want to do and where we want to go and this will be taken forward in 2020.

Opportunities for our children to enjoy social activities have progressed in 2019. Our Children Looked After have enjoyed trips to the beach, trampolining, visited Big Pit and been away for the night. This has all been planned by the 14 plus team who continue to make a difference to our children's lives.

The team have encouraged our children to join in with the organisation Voices from Care and access the trips, events and activities provided through them has started in 2019. Please see the video clips which will be shown at the end of this report.

#### 6.7 **Key Priority 7 - Our Children Looked After live in suitable accommodation**

This is a large priority area and needed focused work to drive forward, there is a separate subgroup that did meet monthly but now only needs to meet 6 monthly due to the energy and direction embedded and being progressed.

A SWOT analysis and mapping exercise of current accommodation options is undertaken each March to review progress, current picture and change in care leavers accommodation opportunities and the gaps identified as a result of this set the basis for the action plan for the forthcoming year.

The subgroup work to the Barnardo's Model of the 5 steps of excellence local authorities should take to put young people in control of their housing which are :-

- Know the accommodation issue for care leavers within Blaenau Gwent;
- Involve young people in planning their accommodation;
- Train young people on tenancies and the housing market and develop their confidence and skills;
- Reduce the Housing Crisis in Blaenau Gwent by having emergency options;
- Develop a wide range of accommodation options.

The group made progress throughout 2018 but 2019 has seen very successful changes to the sector.

Things that have gone well in 2019:-

1. The new "Move on" Panel established is very successful, all children have been placed in appropriate accommodation this year. There is good identification of need and a new banding system resulting in successful matches with accommodation.
2. A housing complex in Tredegar has been restructured and 10 flats are now ring fenced for young people. A gym has been developed within it which promotes the young person's wellbeing, the bedrooms have all been updated and refreshed and appropriate accessories like games consoles have been introduced.
3. The template for Annual Analysis of Accommodation for care leavers has been updated.
4. The Youth and Temporary Accommodation Officer has provided invaluable communication link between the 14 plus team and Housing Solutions Team, working with young people aged 16, 17 and CLA to look at bespoke housing options – this is proving to be extremely beneficial to outcomes.

5. The Supporting People Team is funding the Housing First Support Model for young people. Housing First is an alternative to temporary accommodation and supported housing.
6. The accredited course “Housemate” on Independent living continues to be delivered and organised by Shelter Cymru’s Education Service. “Housemate” informs and educates young people to avoid future housing problems and homelessness. The course was undertaken by 15 looked after children aged 14-16 at the Ebbw Vale Institute, Ebbw Vale. The course will run on an annual basis each year to start preparing the children for independent living.
7. A cohort of our care leavers will not have Christmas Lunch with family or friends this year, so again this year they will prepare and cook their own Christmas Lunch together (this year at Waunlwyd OAP Hall) with staff from 14 plus team. They will set out a room as dining room, play Christmas themed games, receive Christmas Eve boxes, presents and new pyjamas as they would if they were with their family.

**6.8 Key Priority 8 - The Corporate Parenting Agenda is owned across the local authority and by partner agencies.**

The Corporate Parenting Board continues to have good commitment from Local Authority officers and partner agencies and this year Elected Member representation has been excellent.

A member briefing was held on 22nd August 2017 primarily to update new Members on their Corporate Parent responsibilities and also refresh existing and new members of the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) document “The Corporate Parenting “. This will be revisited in 2020 along with a new approach to educating officers within the Authority on their corporate parenting responsibilities.

Also this is the sixth annual report on corporate parenting delivered to Scrutiny Committee.

**7. *Expected outcome for the public***

Better services for Children Looked After.

**8. *Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

The Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board is made up of elected members, Local Authority officers and representation from partner agencies to ensure that the best possible advice, care and safeguarding of our children is ensured across the 7 areas. Attendance and contributions of all members of the board is monitored to ensure involvement.

**8.1 *Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

Research shows that children and young people who have experienced care or who are looked after have the poorest outcomes of all children and young people in the UK. The Corporate Parenting concept exists to try and improve outcomes for our children and young people for the long-term and improve the level of respect and support from people for the rights of care leavers and

children looked after. Better outcomes for our children looked after in Blaenau Gwent will lead to better outcomes for our community in the long term.

**8.2 Preventative focus**

The Corporate Parenting Action Plan was developed in line with the Definitions of Wellbeing under Section 2 of part 1 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. The plan outlines the additional measures the Corporate Parenting Board is taking to improve outcomes for looked after children in addition to the day to day activity of the individual Children's Services Teams. By adopting the 7 ways of working from the SS&WB act into a Corporate Parenting Action Plan we will ensure the needs of our children looked after are met on all levels to ensure problems do not escalate, become more acute, and more costly, to the detriment to the children, families, carers and the community in the future.

**8.3 Collaboration / partnership working**

The role of the Corporate Parent falls across all the different Departments of the Authority and external services, to ensure its legal responsibility for enabling children to lead happy and fulfilling lives is fulfilled. It is only by working collaboratively we can ensure this. The Corporate Parenting Board and associated subgroups is the vehicle to do this.

**8.4 Integration (across service areas)**

The Corporate Parenting Action Plan is set across the 7 Definitions of Wellbeing under Section 2 of part 1 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014/. This approach will ensure there is integration between all services in the vision to improve outcomes for Looked After children in Blaenau Gwent.

**8.5 EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

Not required.

**9. Monitoring Arrangements**

- 9.1 The Corporate Parenting Board has been re-established for over 2 years. The work undertaken and scrutinised by members of this board are already evidencing improvements in certain areas of looked after children's lives. The challenge for the group is to continually identify actions which will make a positive difference to the day-day lives and outcomes for our looked after children.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Appendix 2 – Educational Outcomes

Appendix 3 – School Leavers

Appendix 4 – Exclusions





Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board  
Action Plan 2019/20





This Plan has been developed in line with the Definitions of Well-Being under Section 2 of Part 1 of the Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014.

The plan outlines the additional measures Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board are taking to improve outcomes in addition to day to day activity of the individual Social Work and Childcare Teams.

<b>Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Action Plan 2019/20</b>				
<b>Priority 1 – All our Looked After Children enjoy good physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing “ I am healthy, happy and active and get the right care and support from the start”</b>				
<b>Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)</b>	<b>Action (what are we going to do?)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary</b>	<b>BRAG</b>
<b>All our Looked After Children enjoy good physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing and there is a well monitored coordinated approach to achieving this</b>	In Partnership with ABUHB monitor all health assessment requirements in relation to CEL 16 to ensure they are achieved.	Monitor quarterly via update to CPB .	All looked after children are offered a Health assessment within 28 days of becoming Looked After. Children under 5 are seen by their named Health Visitor whilst those over 5 are seen by the Specialist nurse for Looked After Children. Health assessments may be undertaken at home or in a local clinic.	
	Develop support to Improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs through earlier intervention, community based support and placements closer to home.	Monitor development of MySt team. Once the team have been inducted they will start working with our complex children (who have already been identified) in an effort to move them out of residential care and into foster care. They will also work with children who are at risk of entering residential care.	MyST has been in operation since June 2019. They have successfully moved 2 children out of residential care into foster placements by providing intensive support to the child, foster carers and their support networks. They are also working with 2 children intensively to prevent their needs escalating to the point where they need residential care.	

	<p>To ensure good mental health and emotional well-being for children young people through effective partnership working.</p>	<p>Explore the option of Psychology input in Placement Team using ICF grant money for prevention. – recruitment for this position was not successful as applicants are reluctant to accept a short term contract; we are currently looking into other options for access to psychology. Meanwhile our foster carers have now access to the MyST foster carer clinics which are led by a psychologist and have the purpose to prevent placements breakdown.</p> <p>Supporting children who are experiencing attachment and trauma based problems by delivering training to Social Services staff across Blaenau Gwent and evaluation how this is being used to support children; - currently Supporting Change Team, Contact Team and Abertillery Locality Team staff has training delivered by the Psychology Service; all these teams will engage now in the follow up program including regular group supervision and reflective practice opportunities.</p>	<p>Recruitment for this position was not successful as applicants are reluctant to accept a short term contract; we are currently looking into other options for access to psychology. Meanwhile our foster carers have now access to the MyST foster carer clinics which are led by a psychologist and have the purpose to prevent placements breakdown.</p> <p>Currently the Supporting Change Team, Contact Team and Abertillery Locality Team staff have had training delivered by the Psychology Service; all these teams will engage now in the follow up program including regular group supervision and reflective practice opportunities.</p>	
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		Explore offering Circle of Security parenting for all Foster Carers.	No progress yet	
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<b>Priority 2 – All our Looked After Children are protected from abuse and neglect “I am safe and protected from abuse and neglect and informed about how to make any concerns known”</b>				
<b>Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)</b>	<b>Action (what are we going to do?)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary</b>	<b>BRAG</b>
<b>All Looked after Children are protected from abuse and neglect.</b>	A designated officer from Locality teams to liaise with team managers and identify those children who are at risk of sexual exploitation and those displaying sexually harmful behaviour.	Report to CPB with numbers of C&YP and detail showing what has been done to manage and reduce the risks to this cohort of children. Compare to previous work	Work to be undertaken by Safeguarding Manager - January 2020	
	Identify and safely manage those CLA where self-harm is a feature of their risk management plan.	Safeguarding - Raise awareness of the issue of County Lines, Criminal Exploitation, Social media exploitation through briefing sessions with children, schools, community groups, practitioners and foster carers.	Work to be undertaken by Safeguarding Manager - January 2020	

Priority 3 – All our Looked After Children are enabled to reach their full potential in education, training and recreation “I can learn and develop to my full potential and I do the things that matter to me”				
Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)	Action (what do we need to improve?)	How	2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary	BRAG
Our children are enabled to reach their full potential in education, training and recreation	Minimise the risk of CLA becoming NEET.	Regular meetings of the Vulnerable Learners Subgroup.  Ensure that Out of County CLA pupils are recorded on the 'Early Identification Toolkit' (EIT).	CLA education coordinator attends the VLSG	
	Improve communication with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) regarding CLA funding and cluster plans (CLA PDG).	Work with schools (CLA Leads/Headteachers) in the development of their cluster bids.  Work with the EAS to ensure that appropriate monitoring and evaluation of cluster plans takes place.  Work with the EAS to ensure a joined up and coordinated training programme.  Establish transparent and equitable sharing of information with the EAS.  Ensure relevant information is shared with Monitoring Evaluation and Review Group / Wider Group and with regional SEWC.	Schools will start to prepare their cluster bids in the Spring term in line with the regional approach. Discussions have taken place with the EAS in readiness for development discussions.  Clusters will be carrying out evaluations of their 19/20 plans in the spring term. The availability of these evaluations will support the planning for 20/21 plans.  Plan is for EAS to facilitate a training session for Designated CLA teachers in Blaenau Gwent in the spring term in addition to the current annual training plan.  The Education Wider Group meeting between the LA and the EAS has been refocused and therefore discussions are taking place as to how best to ensure the sharing of information.  MER group enables clear sharing of relevant information to inform the wider inclusion agenda in Education and into schools.	

	Promote 'CLA Friendly Schools'	<p>Establish Task and Finish Group to implement the action plan.</p> <p>Develop a framework for a 'CLA friendly school'.</p> <p>Test framework on a pilot group of schools and produce evaluation.</p> <p>Use the evaluation to contribute to the production of a 'CLA Friendly School' good practice guide</p> <p>Raise awareness of the 'CLA friendly school' framework.</p> <p>Engage with all schools to participate in the 'CLA friendly school' framework.</p> <p>Deliver training programme to support 'CLA Friendly School'.</p>	<p>T&amp;F group established.</p> <p>Consultation with CLA young people took place on 22.11.19 and 6.12.19. The feedback from the consultation will contribute to the framework.</p> <p>To be tested upon completion of the framework.</p> <p>Not complete.</p> <p>Designated CLA teacher termly meetings have now been established. The work on CLA friendly schools as been disseminated at the first meeting held in November and will be a standing item at future meetings.</p> <p>Preceding actions need to be completed prior to this one.</p> <p>A training presentation has also been developed to raise awareness of CLA with whole school staffing teams. This now needs to be trialled.</p>	
	Our readiness for the ALN Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with the Education Directorate and Regional ALN Transformational Lead to ensure the following groups are ALN Act Ready at the appropriate time:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CLA Team</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The ALN Act implementation has been pushed back 12 months, now commencing in September 2021 with a three year roll out. Key to the readiness is the finalised ALN Code of Practice. This was planned for issue in Jan 2020 but now will be issued 'from 2020 – code and regulations laid before National Assembly'. Regional planning in SEWC has taken the view to continue readiness at the same pace regardless of the delay – what will be good for pupils in Sept 21 will be good for pupils in Sept 2020. Initial training has been provided to schools, CLA team. Further training developed by WG will be rolled out when finalised by WG and Transformation leads.</p>	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- School</li><li>- CLA Leads</li><li>- Social Workers</li><li>- Foster Carers</li></ul>		
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<b>Priority 4 – Our Looked After Children have healthy domestic, family and personal relationships                      “I belong and I contribute to and enjoy safe and healthy relationships”</b>				
<b>Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)</b>	<b>Action (what are we going to do?)</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary</b>	<b>BRAG</b>
<b>Our Looked after children have healthy domestic, family and personal relationships</b>	14+ Team to organise a workshop to seek the views from older LAC regarding developing and strengthening work with LAC on personal relationships	<p>Referrals into NYAS are monitored on a quarterly basis in 2018/19 Qtr 1 <b>42.9% of</b> those eligible were referred to NYAS, this rose to <b>100%</b> in Qtr 2. We await end of year figures This action will roll over to the 19/20 until we are assured automatic referrals into NYAS are embedded in practice</p> <p>14+ are in the process of developing a care leaver forum which will seek to address a range of topics concerning CLA and care leavers. Initially this will focus on CLA language, then moving to planning St David’s expenditure for next financial year, then developing a PA service and entitlement leaflet.</p> <p>Additionally, group work programmes are being developed to undertake work with groups for CLA and care leavers on topics such as personal relationships, friendships, self-esteem, confidence</p>	<p>Automatic referrals into NYAS are still 100%</p> <p>Lack of capacity within the team has prevented this from being progressed but this is currently being addressed.</p> <p>A T&amp;F group has been established to address this.</p>	

		<p>building, independence planning etc.</p>		
	<p>Promote healthy and safe relationships and behaviours from a relevant age for all our looked after children.</p>	<p>A T&amp;F group will be established in 2019 /20 to explore this area in more depth- look at what emotional and wellbeing support is offered to LAC throughout stages of their life in EY settings, schools, colleges, at home, in placement.</p> <p>Also explore through briefing sessions and training for foster carers – do they know what the schools are delivering in? do they understand and compliment this?</p>	<p>A Task and Finish Group has been established and a mapping exercise will take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 to establish what is available at each stage of a child’s life.</p> <p>Discussions with Healthy School, Youth Service etc.to explore how healthy relationships are being included on school curriculum and what other provision is out there to support mental health and wellbeing of our children. Is there enough? Do we need to supplement this? Is it easily accessible? What are the access criteria? Are our children accessing it? How do we know?</p>	

**Priority 5 – Our Looked After Children secure their rights and entitlements**  
**“ I know and understand what care, support and opportunities are available and use these to help manage, achieve and improve my wellbeing”**

Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)	Action (what are we going to do?)	How	2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary	BRAG
<b>Our Looked After Children secure their rights and entitlements</b>	Ensure our children have a voice in the way in which we deliver and shape services.	Each child to be given a child friendly copy of their LAC care plan and provide the opportunity for our looked after children to give feedback on issues impacting them.	The CLA care plan is currently in process of being changed into a more user and client friendly version. Aim to implement the new form in WCCIS is April 2020.	
	Ensure our children know their entitlements and can easily access them	Develop a child / young person friendly leaflet on what LAC / Carer leavers can access.	Policy to be started and will be updated by Jan/Feb 2020 by 14+ team. When this has been completed, the Care Leavers Forum will help develop the leaflet outlining the entitlements.	

<b>Priority 6 – Our Looked after children enjoy social and economic wellbeing</b> <b>“I contribute towards my social life and can be with the people that I choose. I am supported to work and I get the help I need to grow up and be independent”</b>				
Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)	Action (what are we going to do?)	How	2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary	BRAG
<b>Our Looked after children enjoy social and economic wellbeing</b>	Realise the importance of social and economic wellbeing by ensuring our children are engaged with hobbies and interest / activities from a young age by knowing and offering leisure and social opportunities to all our LAC at all ages.	Develop links with Aneurin leisure and other community groups to offer social incentives for LAC Looked after children and young are provided with no cost/low cost.	Links to ABL have yet to progress due to changes in their structure this year but other opportunities for our children to enjoy social activities have progressed in 2019. Our children looked after have enjoyed trips to the beach, trampolining, visited Big Pit and been away for the night. This has all been planned by the 14 plus team who continue to make a difference to our children's lives.	
		Explore scoping what social interests our children looked after have	The actions around scoping hobbies and interests of our Children Looked After to encourage them to join groups and clubs and develop a sense of belonging and purpose has yet to start due to so much activity on other aspects of the plan. We know what we want to do and where we want to go and this will be taken forward in 2020.	
		Placement team to review the way in which take on responsibility for canvassing firms/organisations for tickets to events etc including proportion of tickets for Council / Community organised events are ring fenced for looked after children.	Not yet started.	
		Ensure an officer from Children's Services is linking with "Voices From Care" and maximising all	The team have encouraged our children to join in with the organisation Voices from Care and access the trips, events and activities provided through them has started in 2019.	

		trips and activities offered through this organisation.		
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**Priority 7 – Our Looked After Children live in suitable accommodation  
“I live in a home that best supports me to achieve my wellbeing”**

Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)	Action (what are we going to do?)	How	2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary	BRAG
<p><b>All accommodation provided is suitable to meet the needs of the children and young people</b></p>	<p>Improve and increase the accommodation options available to LAC post 16 years</p>	<p>Deliver the key priorities identified in the Accommodation Action Plan 19/20 which include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating taster flats</li> <li>• Rerun housemate course.</li> <li>• Online virtual tour of Foster carer homes</li> <li>• Create more suitable accommodation offers</li> <li>• More supported lodgings</li> <li>• monitor placement moves</li> <li>• Exception from Council Tax</li> <li>• Cookery courses and independent living courses</li> </ul>	<p>Things that have gone well in 2019:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The new “Move on” Panel established is very proactive, all children have been placed this year. There is good identification of need, new banding system and successful matches with accommodation</li> <li>2. A housing complex in Tredegar has been restructured and 10 flats are now ring fenced for young people. A gym has been developed, the bedrooms updated and refreshed and appropriate accessories like games consoles have been introduced.</li> <li>3. The template for Annual Analysis of Accommodation for care leavers has been updated.</li> <li>4. The Youth and Temporary Accommodation Officer has provided invaluable communication link between the 14 plus team and Housing Solutions Team, working with young people aged 16, 17 and LAC to look at bespoke housing options.</li> <li>5. The Supporting People Team is funding the Housing First Support Model for young people. Housing First is an alternative to temporary accommodation and supported housing.</li> <li>6. The accredited course “Housemate” on Independent living continues to be delivered and organised by Shelter Cymru’s Education Service. “Housemate” informs and educates young people to avoid future housing problems and homelessness. The course was undertaken by 15 looked after children aged 14-16 at the Ebbw Vale Institute, Ebbw Vale. The course will run on an annual basis each year to start preparing the children for independent living.</li> <li>7. A cohort of our care leavers will not have Christmas Lunch with family or friends this year, so again this year they will prepare and cook their own Christmas Lunch</li> </ol>	

			<p>together (this year at Waunlwyd OAP Hall) with staff from 14 plus team. They will set out a room as dining room, play Christmas themes games, receive Christmas Eve boxes, presents and new pyjamas as they would if they were with their family.</p>	
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**Priority 8 – Leadership - The Corporate Parenting Agenda is owned across the local authority and by partner agencies**

Outcome (how do we want it to look in the future?)	Action (what are we going to do?)	How	2019 /2020 Evaluation Commentary	BRAG
<p><b>The Corporate Parenting Agenda is owned across the local authority and by partner agencies</b></p>	<p>Ensure all agencies, members and employees of the local authority are clear of their corporate parenting responsibilities.</p>	<p>Continue to coordinate and organise an annual Corporate Parenting awareness raising event for members, officers of authority.</p>	<p>The Corporate Parenting Board continues to have good commitment from Local Authority officers and partner agencies and Elected Member representation has been excellent during 2019.</p>	<p style="background-color: green;"></p>
		<p>Working between departments goes from strength to strength and the vision for our children is now well known however still way to go until everyone in LA knows about our children. This will be reviewed in 2020.</p>		<p style="background-color: orange;"></p>

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## **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES – 2018-2019**

### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To report the educational attainment of our children looked after during academic year 2018-2019 and to provide an update on the support offered by the CLA education service

### **INTRODUCTION**

At the end of academic year 2018-2019, 153 children of statutory school age were looked after by Blaenau Gwent local authority.

The majority of children who are looked after by Blaenau Gwent continue to be educated within Blaenau Gwent and attend mainstream schools. A small proportion of our looked after children attend more specialist education settings.

43% of our children looked after have additional learning needs and 23% of all our school aged children looked after have a statement of special educational needs.

During academic year 2018-2019, 100% of personal education plans for children becoming looked after within the year were updated within statutory timescales.

There has been a slight decrease in the number of looked after children experiencing a change of school during the year. When a child does have to move school, processes are in place to ensure that delays in admissions are avoided wherever possible.

The achievements and academic progress of our looked after children continue to be monitored by the LAC education service and recorded throughout each stage of their schooling.

Outcomes for our children looked after at the end of key stage 2 were considerably higher when compared with the previous year but lower at the end of key stage 3. A total of 16 children looked after completed their statutory studies in 2018-2019. 9 children looked after achieved recognised qualifications.

A permanent exclusion was issued in 2018-2019 in respect of one Blaenau Gwent child looked after which was later rescinded. There has been a decrease in the incidents of exclusion however an increase in the number of days lost to exclusions during 2018-2019 when compared with the previous academic year.

### **BACKGROUND**

The CLA education service continues to sit within the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team in Children's Services and is line managed by the Education Safeguarding Manager. The team structure comprises of a coordinator and two education mentors.

### **PRESENT POSITION**

### Overview of current LAC school aged population

During academic year 2018-2019, 153 school aged children remained looked after at the end of the school year. This figure remains in line when compared with the previous academic year

Primary aged children	72
Secondary aged children	81

Educated in Blaenau Gwent	87
Educated outside Blaenau Gwent	66

The educational settings of all Blaenau Gwent children looked after of statutory school at the end of the academic year were

<b>Education Setting</b>	<b>Number of CLA</b>
Mainstream	121
Resource Base	7
Special School	8
Pupil Referral Unit	3
Independent School	7
Tuition/ Alternative Education	7

During 2018-2019 a small proportion of our children looked after accessed more specialist education settings however the vast majority continued to attend mainstream school placements. During the year there has also been an increase in the number of children looked after accessing independent school placements. There has been a decrease in the number of pupils accessing alternative provision.

The number of children attending the local authority special school has increased. The number attending resource bases attached to mainstream school settings remains in line with previous years.

### Additional Learning Needs

During academic year 2018-2019, 43% of all statutory school aged children who were looked after by Blaenau Gwent had additional learning needs sufficient for intervention at School Action, School Action Plus or statement level\*. This figure is lower when compared with the previous academic year when the figure was 54%. Of this cohort more than half (53%) have a statement of special educational needs.

In total 23% of children who were looked after by Blaenau Gwent at the end of academic year 2018-2019 had a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This figure is slightly less when compared with the previous academic year.

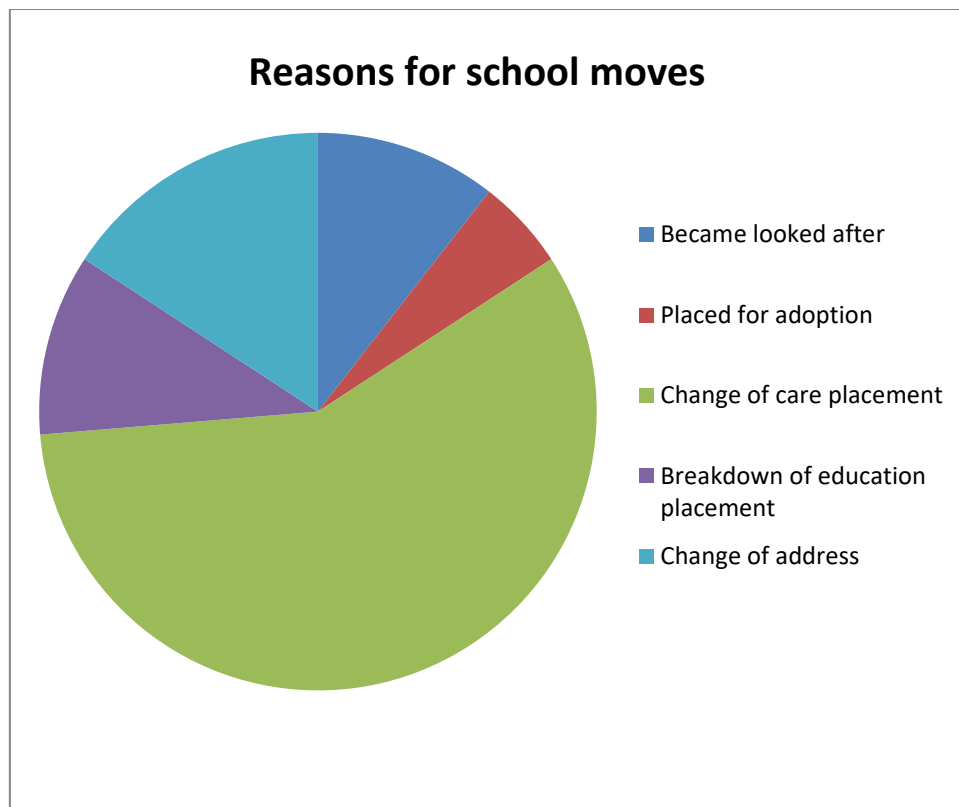
### Personal Education Plans

The Social Services & Well Being Act notes the duty on the Local Authority to ensure that a personal education plan is in place for each looked after child. 'Except where a child enters care in an emergency, the PEP must be initiated as part of the Part 6 care and support plan before the young person becomes looked after. In an emergency placement, the PEP should be initiated within ten working days.

During academic year 2018-2019, 100% of PEPs for newly accommodated children and those who changed school were updated within statutory timescales. This figure remains in line when compared with the previous academic year.

### School Moves

12% of Blaenau Gwent statutory school aged LAC experienced at least one or more non-transitional school moves during 2018-2019. This is a slight decrease when compared with the previous academic year when the figure was 13% in 2017-2018 and a significant decrease when compared with 2016-2017 when 26% of Children looked after experienced a school move.



Three children were required to change school due to a move to a residential care setting. Two children experienced changes to their schooling as a result of their education provisions no longer being able to meet their needs.

### Academic attainments

The academic progress and attainment of our looked after children continues to be monitored by the LAC education team.

In 2018-2019, outcomes for our LAC at the end of key stage 2 assessments were considerably higher when compared with the previous year. 70% [7 out of 10] looked after children achieved their core subject indicator (CSI)\* at the end of key stage 2 in 2018-2019 compared with 12.5% [1 out of 8] of our looked after children who achieved their core subject indicator (CSI)\* at the end of key stage 2 in the previous academic year.

All the children in this cohort attended mainstream schools. Only one child in this cohort has a statement of Special Educational Needs and was provided with full time support in school. This is considerably lower when compared with previous years when 75% of the children in this cohort had additional learning needs with half of the children having statements of special educational needs.

In 2018-2019 outcomes for our LAC at the end of key stage 3 assessments were lower when compared with the previous year. 60% [12 out of 20] of our looked after children achieved their core subject indicator (CSI)\* at the end of key stage 3 in 2018-2019 compared with 67% [6 out of 9] in 2017-2018.

85% of children in this cohort attended mainstream school settings. 9 (45%) of the children in this cohort have additional learning needs with a quarter having a statement of special educational needs.

In 2018-2019 of the 16 looked after children who completed their statutory studies 9 achieved recognised qualifications.

Of the 7 children who left school without recognised qualifications as of September 2019 2 have remained on as year 12 pupils in post 16 special school settings, 2 have continued their placement with a work based learning provider. 1 learner commenced a college placement and 1 has sourced work. Only one of the young people is NEET.

Three quarters of our looked after children who completed their statutory studies in 2018-2019 had additional learning needs and more than half (56%) had a statement of special educational needs. 5 of the 16 children attended mainstream school settings, 3 attended special schools settings, 2 attended independent schools a further 3 attended alternative provisions including tuition and the remaining 3 attended pupil referral units. Of the 5 children who followed the mainstream curriculum none achieved level 2 inclusive\*. However

4 children who attended mainstream school and one child who attended an alternative provision achieved Level 1\*\*.

\*Note: Level 2 inclusive – a volume of qualifications at Level 2 equivalent to 5 GCSE's at grade A\*-C including English or Welsh First Language and Mathematics.

\*\*Note: Level 1 – a volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to 5 GCSE's at grade A\* - G including English or Welsh First Language and Mathematics.

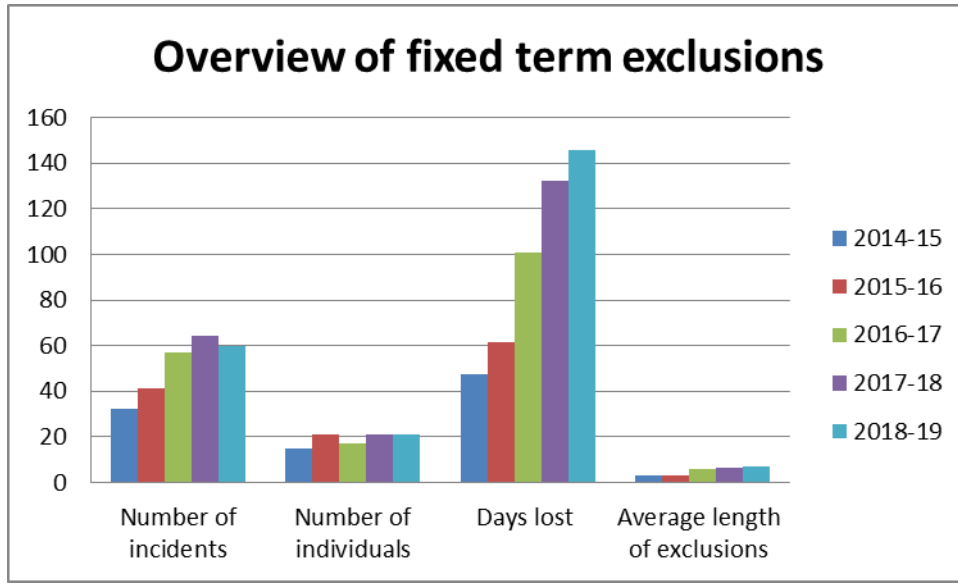
*The academic attainment figures included in this report for the performance indicator return 2019 are subject to change following the end of year validation process, which will take place in April 2020.*

### Exclusions

One child looked after was permanently excluded from school during academic year 2018-2019. The exclusion was later rescinded following the conclusion of the statutory assessment process and offer of additional support in a new school setting. The child is now subject to a Statement of SEN and is attending an alternative mainstream school. In line with the issuing of the Statement of SEN, the child is in receipt of an appropriate level of support in school.

There has been a decrease in the incidents of exclusions issued in respect of children looked after however an increase in the number of days lost to exclusions during academic year 2018-2019 when compared with the previous academic year. The number of Blaenau Gwent children looked after who have received fixed term exclusions during the year has remained the same as the previous year.

60 fixed term exclusions were issued in respect of 21 individual Blaenau Gwent looked after children during academic year 2018-2019. A total of 145.5 school days were lost as a result. This is compared to a total of 64 fixed term exclusions issued in respect of 21 individuals and a total of 132 days lost for the previous academic year 2017-2018.



The average number of days spent out of school for looked after children on fixed term exclusions during 2017-2018 was 6.9 days. This is compared with an average length of 6.3 days for the previous academic year.

The LAC education coordinator and mentors continue to attend re-admission meetings wherever possible. In addition to attendance at meetings advice and guidance is provided to schools with regard to the content and implementation of Pastoral Support Plans.

\*Note: A Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) is a school based programme which is meant to help a child to improve their social, emotional and behavioural skills. A PSP may be necessary if a child’s behaviour at school means that they have been permanently excluded or are “at risk” of permanent exclusion.

LAC Education Service

LAC Education Mentoring

All Blaenau Gwent children looked after continue to be allocated to an education mentor. Where possible and deemed to be necessary our children looked after are offered direct mentoring support. The take up of CLA mentoring support continues to be good. A total of 25 children looked after received direct mentoring support sessions during the year.

Mentoring support continues to be targeted towards those children and young people working towards their end of key stage assessments, GCSE and alternative qualifications at the end of year 11. Of the 25 children looked after who received mentoring support, 7 children were in year 11 and received support which focused on exam preparation and revision. Sessions are also targeted at those children in transition year groups, with 1 year 6 pupil being supported and a further 2 pupils being supported during the autumn term of year 7 to further assist their transition. Sessions were also targeted at those pupils on reduced timetables and those who are at risk of or have been excluded from school, 6 children were mentored from



this cohort of children. Additionally CLA education mentors have supported learners who are engaged with further education courses.

#### Annual Celebration of Achievement Event

Our annual celebration of achievement event was held in November 2019. A significant number of our children looked after, 73 in total, were recognised for their achievements both within school and in terms of their participation in extra-curricular activities, including sporting achievements and amateur dramatics. Out of the 73 children nominated for an award, 43 children attended the celebration of achievement. 27 schools in total, including those within the local authority and neighbouring authorities nominated our children looked after with further nominations being made by independent and special school settings.

The event this year was child led with examples of children and young people's work being shown and performances for those in attendance. The event was attended by representatives from Children's Services including schools social workers, personal advisors, Independent Reviewing Officers as well as foster carers and family members of our children looked after.

The event recognised those children of primary and secondary school age as well as those young people who had completed their statutory studies and moved onto post 16 education and training opportunities. A specific focus was given to those young people who have successfully completed college and university courses and those who have now moved on to further and higher courses.

#### Letterbox

The LAC education service continues to distribute parcels on a monthly basis between May and October with an additional festive parcel roll out in December each year to our children looked after in year 1-2, year 3-4, year 5-6, year 7-8. A total of 24 Blaenau Gwent children looked after received parcels during the course of the 18-19 programme.

#### Designated Teachers for CLA

Half termly meetings are held with Designated CLA Leads in each of the secondary school settings. The meetings offer the opportunity to consider the progress of each child looked after and address any issues or concerns. The meeting ensures that our CLA are prioritised for interventions where necessary. From January 2020 this opportunity will be offered to Special Schools and Primary schools on a cluster basis.

#### Cath Edwards

Children looked after education coordinator

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## **Report to Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board 09.12.2019 re: children looked after who left statutory education in summer 2019**

During academic year 2018-19, a total of 16 young people who were looked after by Blaenau Gwent completed their statutory school studies. 9 of the 16 young people achieved recognised qualifications.

Three quarters of the young people who were looked after and completed their statutory studies in summer 2019 had additional learning needs and more than half (56%) had a statement of special educational needs.

5 of the 16 children attended mainstream school settings, 3 attended special schools settings, 2 attended independent schools a further 3 attended alternative provisions including tuition and the remaining 3 attended pupil referral units. Of the 5 children who followed the mainstream curriculum none achieved level 2 inclusive\*. However 4 children who attended mainstream school and one child who attended an alternative provision achieved Level 1\*\*.

\*Note: Level 2 inclusive – a volume of qualifications at Level 2 equivalent to 5 GCSE's at grade A\*-C including English or Welsh First Language and Mathematics.

\*\*Note: Level 1 – a volume of qualifications at Level 1 equivalent to 5 GCSE's at grade A\*- G including English or Welsh First Language and Mathematics.

### **Learner 1**

Learner 1 has been looked after since May 2011 and is subject to a Care Order.

Learner 1 has remained in the same foster placement since becoming looked after, but has experienced one change of school in July 2013, which was in line with the young person's long term foster placement.

Learner 1 attended a mainstream education provision but appeared on the SEN Code of Practice due to having additional learning needs in relation to cognition.

Learner 1 left school with recognised qualifications achieving GCSEs in line with their ability. Since September 2019, Learner 1 has accessed a health and social care course at Coleg Gwent.

### **Learner 2**

Learner 2 has been looked after since April 2015 and is subject to a Care Order.

Learner 2 remained in the same foster placement since becoming looked after until returning to the care of their birth mother in April 2019. Learner 2 did not experience any changes of school other than for the purpose of transition.

Learner 2 attended a mainstream education provision and does not have any additional learning needs.

Learner 2 left school with recognised qualifications achieving GCSE qualifications in line with their ability. Since September 2019, Learner 2 has accessed a course at Coleg y Cymoedd and has sourced a part-time job within hospitality.

### **Learner 3**

Learner 3 has been looked after since September 2012 and is subject to a Care Order.

Learner 3 has remained in the same care placement since becoming looked and resides with their paternal grandparents.

Learner 3 attended a mainstream school provision throughout their primary and key stage 3 studies and does not have any additional learning needs. During key stage 4, Learner 3 was placed at the school's own alternative provision on a bespoke timetable which included accessing core subject lessons within the mainstream setting.

Learner 3 left school with recognised qualifications in line with their ability and is now studying a full time course in hairdressing at Coleg Gwent.

### **Learner 4**

Learner 4 has been looked after since October 2008 and is subject to a Care Order.

Learner 4 had remained in the same foster placement and school since becoming looked after until moving to an alternative foster placement in October 2018. Learner 4 has since experienced a further breakdown in foster placement and is currently residing in a supporting living placement locally.

Learner 4 has a statement of special educational needs and a primary educational need of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Learner 4 attended a mainstream school provision throughout their primary and key stage 3 studies. However during key stage 4, Learner 4 was placed at the school's own alternative provision.

Learner 4 left school with recognised qualifications, in line with expected outcomes. Learner 4 started on the corporate traineeship scheme and more recently has sourced employment in construction.

### **Learner 5**

Learner 5 has been looked after since May 2019 and is subject to an Interim Care Order. Learner 5's episode of care coincided with the beginning of the year 11 examination period.

Learner 5 has remained in the same mainstream school since becoming looked after. Learner 5 has no additional learning needs and left school with a number of recognised qualifications, achieving GCSEs in line with their ability.

Since September 2019 Learner 5 has attended a training scheme in the local area to where they now reside

### **Learner 6**

Learner 6 has been looked after since 2009 and is subject to a Care Order. Learner 6 has experienced a number of placement moves before returning to the care of their birth mother.

Learner 6 has a statement of special educational needs with a primary educational need of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Learner 6 attended specialist education settings throughout their primary and secondary education. Learner 6 attended a specialist independent school outside the local authority area for children with social emotional and behavioural difficulties until key stage 4. Following the breakdown of their specialist school placement Learner 6 attended the local authority's SEBD special school where they accessed a work based learning provision off site.

Learner 6 left school without gaining recognised qualifications however returned to the work based learning provision as a post 16 pupil in September 2019.

### **Learner 7**

Learner 7 has been looked after since July 2016 and is subject to a Care Order. Learner 7 has experienced 3 changes of foster placements since becoming looked after before returning to the care of family.

Learner 7 has a statement of Special Educational Needs with a primary educational need of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Learner 7 experienced two changes of school placement, including a move to the Local Authority Pupil Referral Unit. In line with a change of care placement, Learner 7 attended a PRU in a neighbouring Local Authority where they remained for the final year of their statutory studies.

Learner 7 left school with a number of recognised qualifications in line with their ability. Learner 7 is engaged with a post 16 training provider.

### **Learner 8**

Learner 8 has been looked after since 2013 following the breakdown of their adoptive placement. Learner 8 remains voluntarily accommodated.

Learner 8 has a statement of special educational needs and a primary educational need of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Learner 8 has previously attended a resource base for children with complex needs at a local secondary school before moving outside the local authority area and being

offered a placement at the local Pupil Referral Unit. Despite continued attempts to re-engage, the learner was persistent in their non-attendance. Learner 8 left education without recognised qualifications and remains NEET.

### **Learner 9**

Learner 9 has been looked after since June 2012 and is subject to a Care Order.

Learner 9 has remained in the same foster placement since becoming looked after. Learner 9 has experienced one change of school in line with their educational needs.

Learner 9 has a statement of special educational needs with a primary educational need of Global Developmental Delay and Autism. Learner 9 has attended a special school where they have remained throughout their secondary school education.

Learner 9 did not achieve any recognised qualifications but has remained as a year 12 pupil at the local authority's special school for children with complex needs.

### **Learner 10**

Learner 10 has been looked after since 2003 and experienced a number of foster placement moves since moving to their current long term foster placement in 2008 where they have remained since.

Learner 10 has a statement of special educational needs with a primary educational need of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Learner 10 has previously attended resource bases attached to mainstream primary and secondary schools within the local authority area. Learner 10 moved to the local authority's special school for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in the final year of their statutory studies where they accessed a work based learning provision off site.

Learner 6 left school without gaining recognised qualifications however returned to the work based learning provision as a post 16 pupil in September 2019.

### **Learner 11**

Learner 11 has been looked after since June 2006 and is subject to a Care Order.

Learner 11 has remained in the same placement since becoming looked after.

Learner 11 has a statement of special educational needs with a primary educational need of social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. Learner 11 has attended a mainstream setting with full time support in school for the duration of their secondary schooling. .

Learner 11 left school with a number of recognised qualifications in line with their ability. Learner 11 is now engaged with a course at Cross Keys College

### **Learner 12**

Learner 12 has been looked after since 2017 and remains voluntarily accommodated. Learner 12 has experienced a number of care placements since moving to a residential care setting in January 2018 with the plan for them to remain there until reaching independence.

Learner 12 has a statement of special educational needs with a primary educational need of social, emotional and behaviour difficulties.

Learner 12 has attended specialist education provision both in and outside the local authority area. Learner 12's placement at a specialist independent school came to an end part way through their final year of study and moved on to access a bespoke package of tuition.

Learner 12 has particularly complex educational needs and whilst they left school without recognised qualifications engaged fully in the package of education offered via tuition. Learner 12 returned to attend a course at Gower College in September 2019.

### **Learner 13**

Learner 13 has been looked after since 2016 and is subject to a full Care Order. Learner 13 has experienced a number of care placement changes since becoming looked after before moving to the residential care setting where the plan is for her to remain until independence.

Learner 13 does not have a statement of special educational needs but does have additional learning needs. Learner 13 has accessed both mainstream and more specialist education settings. Learner 13 completed their statutory studies in a specialist independent school setting outside the local authority area.

Learner 13 left school with a number of recognised qualifications and is now engaged with a post 16 training provider.

### **Learner 14**

Learner 14 became looked after in October 2015 and is subject to a Care Order.

Learner 14 has experienced one change of care placement since becoming looked after. Learner 14 has had one change of school placement in July 2016 in line with their long term care placement.

Learner 14 has no additional learning needs and left school with a number of recognised qualifications, achieving GCSE qualifications in line with their ability. As of September 2019 Learner 14 is attending a course at Coleg Gwent.

### **Learner 15**

Learner 15 became looked after in July 2015 and is subject to a Care Order.

Upon becoming looked after, Learner 15 was placed within a residential care placement and accessed an independent school setting. Since completion of statutory studies, Learner 15 has moved into an independent living setting.

Learner 15 does not have a statement of special educational needs but does appear on the SEN Code of Practice, with a primary need of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result of complete refusal to attend the independent school setting at the end of the first year of their key stage 4 studies Learner 15 accessed a bespoke tuition package via a neighbouring local authority Pupil Referral Unit.

Learner 15 disengaged from education during year 11 and did not achieve any recognised qualifications. Since finishing statutory school learner 15 has sourced employment.

### **Learner 16**

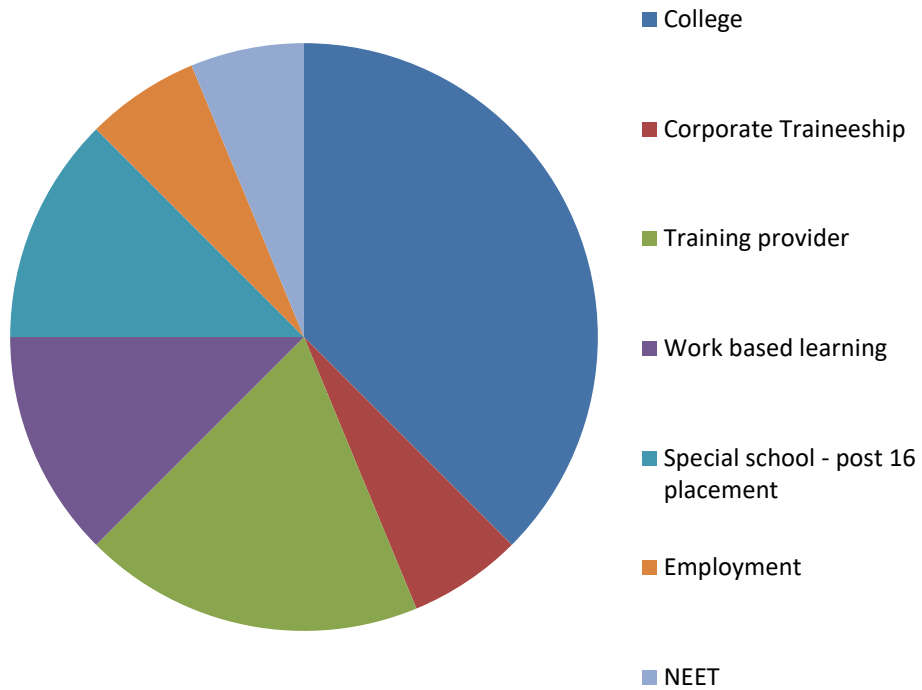
Learner 16 became looked after in 2014 and has experienced a number of care placements before moving to a residential care setting in 2015 where they remained until moving to a long term foster placement in 2019 where the plan is for them to remain until independence.

Learner 16 has a statement of special educational needs with a primary educational need of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Learner 16 accessed the independent school setting linked to their residential placement before moving to an alternative school placement in line with their educational needs during key stage 4

Learner 16 left school without recognised qualifications however has remained on at school as a post 16 pupil with a view to completing GCSE qualifications in year 12.



### Destinations of school leavers summer 2019



## Key messages

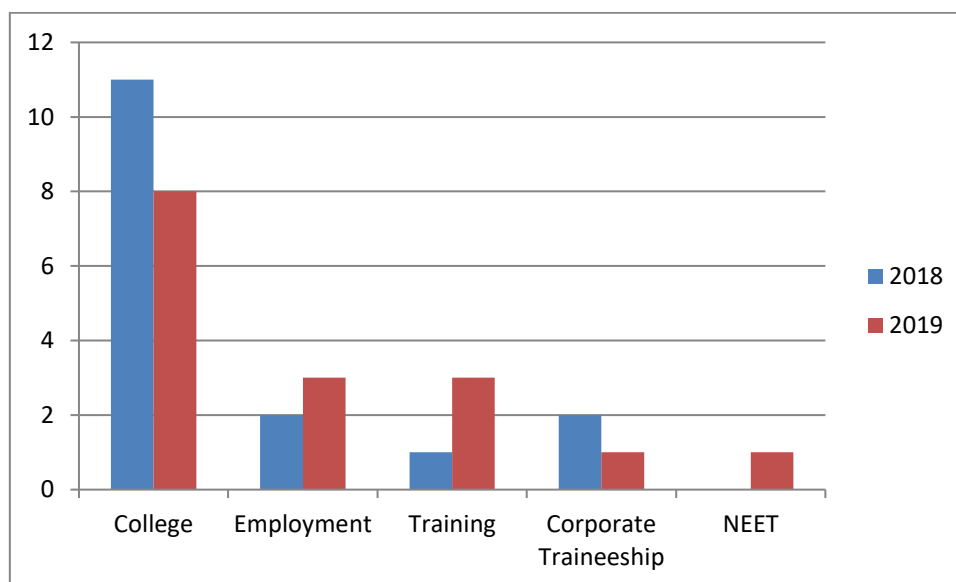
- One learner became looked after during the final year of their statutory studies. The learner did not experience a change of education placement as a result of becoming looked after. The learner has engaged with a post 16 training provider after completing their statutory studies
- Of the learners who did not achieve recognised qualifications all but one experienced changes to either their care or education placements during the course of their key stage 4 studies
- Of the learners who experienced changes to their care placements in the final year of their statutory studies all but one are now engaged with post 16 education, training or employment opportunities
- The impact upon learner outcomes is less when changes of care placement occur at either an earlier point in the young person's schooling and/ or allow the young person to continue to attend their original education provision.

Catherine Edwards

Children looked after education coordinator

## Update to Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board 09.12.2019 re: CLA who left statutory education in summer 2018

A total of 16 looked after young people completed their statutory school studies in summer 2018



- All but one of the learners remain engaged with post 16 education, training or employment
- A total of 6 learners who completed their education in summer 2018 have experienced changes to their destination
- Of the 11 learners who were attending college, 8 continue to attend. One learner has now moved onto the corporate traineeship; one has moved onto a training provider and one has secured employment
- One learner who had attended the corporate traineeship has now secured employment
- One learner has left employment and is now NEET

Catherine Edwards

Children looked after education coordinator

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# **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S EDUCATION – EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHOOLS** **2018-2019**

## **SUMMARY REPORT**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report and monitor the frequency and length of fixed term exclusions for Blaenau Gwent children looked after during academic year 2018-2019 to the Corporate Parenting Board.

### **BACKGROUND**

Welsh Government no longer publish Council comparison exclusion data but they do publish national data. Nationally, fixed term exclusions of all pupils have increased over the last three years and pupils with Special Educational Needs have higher rates of exclusion than those without.

In Blaenau Gwent the total incidents of exclusions for the whole population of secondary aged pupils has recorded an increase in the number of days lost over the last four years.

An evaluation was undertaken at the end of academic year 2017-2018. A revised action plan for 2018-2019 was agreed which has informed the forward work plan of the CLA education service in addressing the issue.

### **SUMMARY**

During 2018-2019 there has been a decrease in the incidents of exclusions issued in respect of children looked after. The number of individual children looked after who have received fixed term exclusions has remained the same when compared with the previous year. The total number of days lost to exclusions has however increased when compared with the previous academic year.

The majority of exclusions continue to be issued in respect of secondary aged pupils. There has been a decrease in the number of exclusions being issued for primary aged children. There is an even split of exclusions being issued by schools in Blaenau Gwent and those outside the Blaenau Gwent area. Exclusions issued by schools outside the Blaenau Gwent area are on average longer in duration than those issued by Blaenau Gwent schools.

There has been a decrease in the number of exclusions being issued for Blaenau Gwent children looked after who have Statements of Special Educational Needs.

For those children looked after who have received fixed term exclusions from school there has been a decrease in the number experiencing a change of education

placement during the year however an increase in the number of children experiencing a change of care placement.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Blaenau Gwent Corporate Parenting Board notes the decrease in incidents as well as the increase in the length of exclusions being issued in respect of Blaenau Gwent children looked after to fixed term exclusions during the year.

It is also recommended that the work plan for 2019-2020 is agreed with the aim of reducing the duration of exclusions and further reducing the incidents of exclusions issued in respect of Blaenau Gwent children looked after.

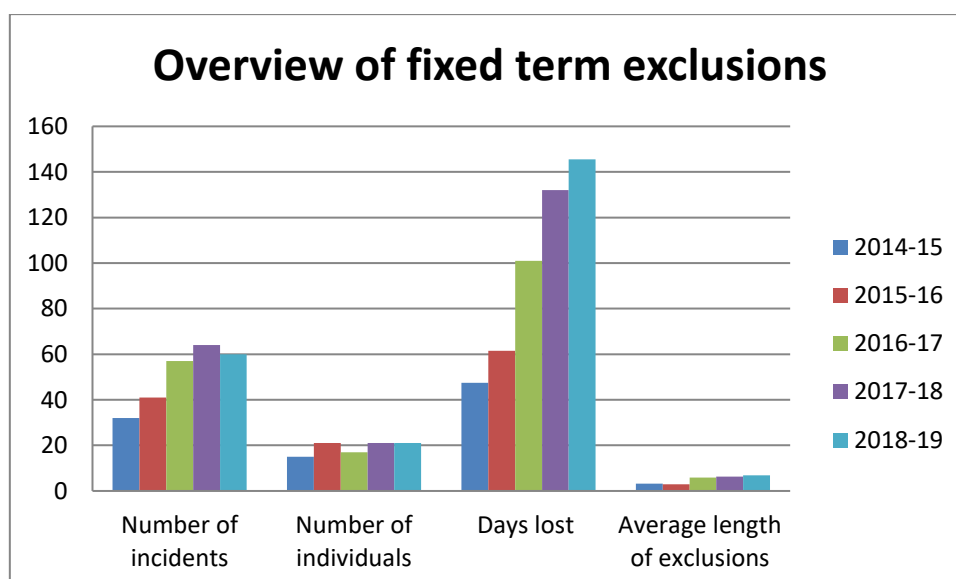
## DETAILED REPORT

### PRESENT POSITION

#### Number and length of fixed term exclusions

60 fixed term exclusions were issued in respect of 21 individual Blaenau Gwent children looked after during academic year 2018-2019. A total of 145.5 school days were lost as a result. This is compared to a total of 64 fixed term exclusions issued in respect of 21 individuals and a total of 132 days lost for the previous academic year 2017-2018.

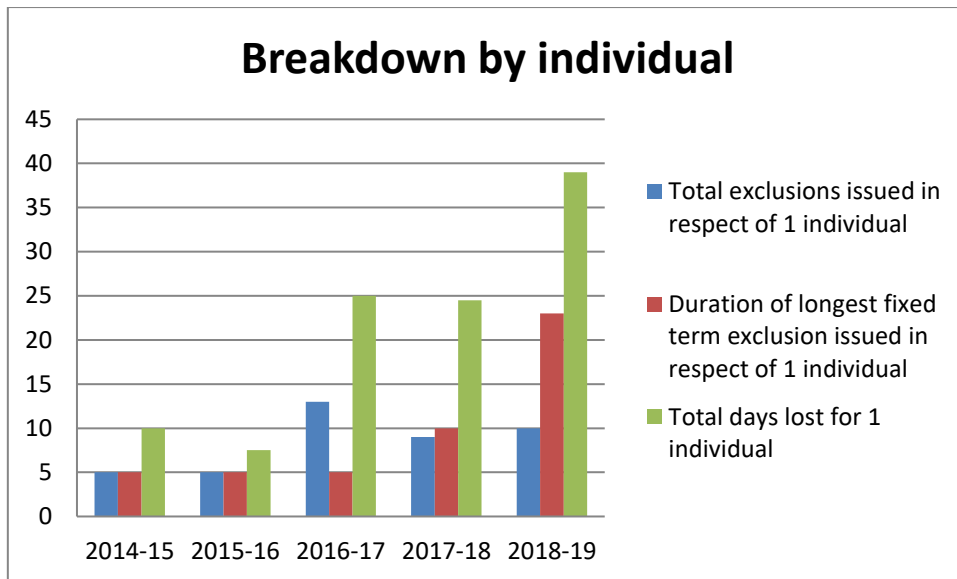
The average number of days spent out of school for an individual child looked after on fixed term exclusions during 2018-2019 was 6.9 days. This is an increase when compared with an average length of 6.3 days for the previous year.



The highest number of fixed term exclusions issued in respect of one child was 10. This figure is an increase when compared with the previous academic year when the highest number issued in respect of one child was 9 exclusions.

The longest duration of a single fixed term exclusion issued in respect of one child looked after during academic year 2018-2019 was 23 days. This figure is a significant increase when compared with the previous year when the figure was 10.

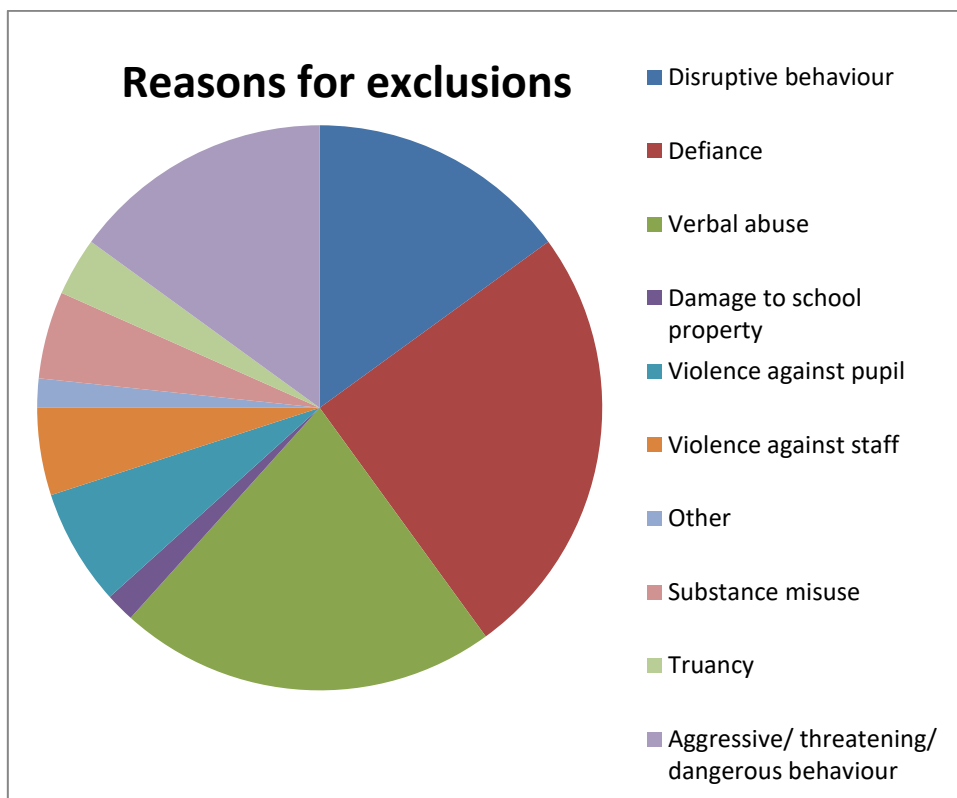
During academic year 2018-2019 the total number of days lost for one looked after child as a result of repeated exclusions was 39 days. This figure is an increase when compared with the previous academic year when the figure was 24.5 days.



Of the 21 individual Blaenau Gwent looked after children who received fixed term exclusions from school, 16 (76%) received more than one fixed term exclusion during the year. This figure is higher when compared with the previous academic year when 62% of our children looked after received more than one fixed term exclusion.

#### Reasons for fixed term exclusions

The primary reasons for the majority of the exclusions issued during academic year 2018-2019 were defiance and verbal abuse towards staff.





## Exclusions for primary and secondary aged looked after children

Of the 153 children of statutory school age who remained looked after at the end of the school year 2018-2019 there were slightly more children of secondary school age than primary.

Primary aged pupils	72
Secondary aged pupils	81

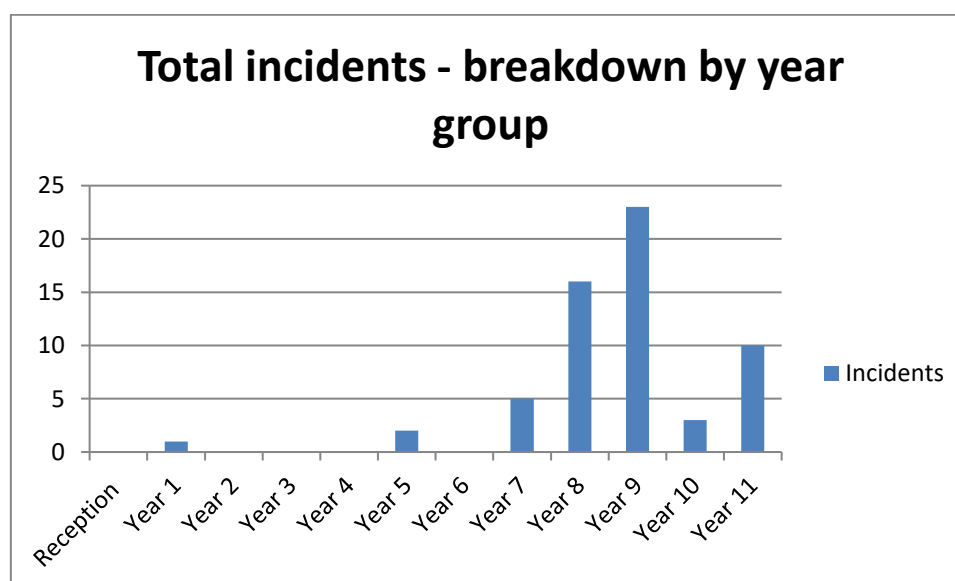
95% of all fixed term exclusions (57 out of 60 incidents) for Blaenau Gwent children looked after were issued in respect of secondary school aged children during 2018-2019. Only 2 children of primary school age received fixed term exclusions during academic year 2018-2019. This is a decrease when compared with the previous academic year when 5 children of primary school age received fixed term exclusions.

## Exclusion incidents by year group and gender

During 2018-19 - year 1 was the lowest age that a child looked after was excluded from school. There is no real pattern in primary schools given the very low numbers involved.

Of the 19 individuals of secondary school age who received fixed term exclusions during the year, 6 children were in key stage 3 (13 incidents) and 13 were in key stage 4 (44 incidents). 18 of the 44 (41%) exclusions issued in respect of children in key stage 4 can be attributed to two children.

There is no discernible difference between female and male pupils receiving exclusions with an almost even split.



## Exclusions for children attending Blaenau Gwent schools

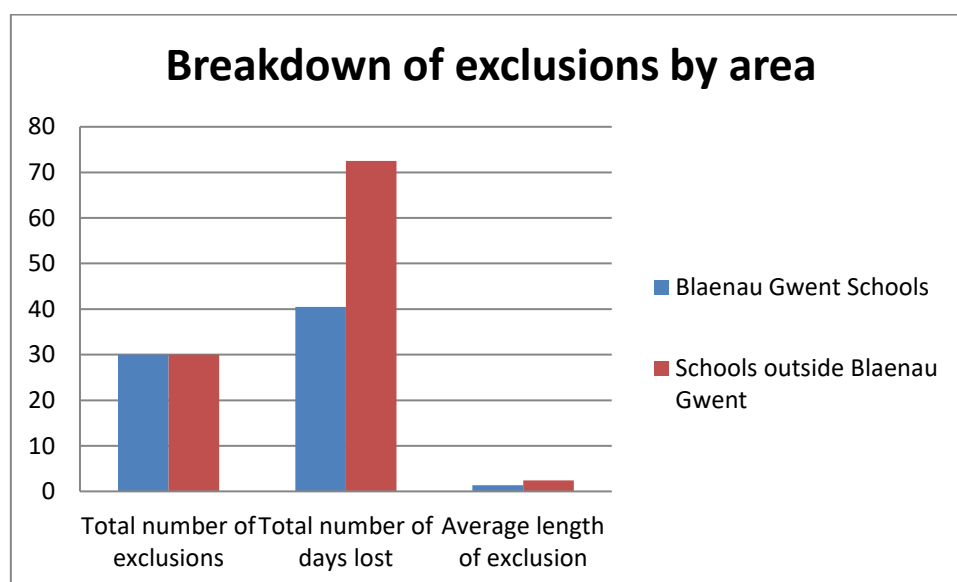
Of the 153 children of statutory school age who remained looked after at the end of the school year 2018-2019 the majority continue to be educated in mainstream school settings and in Blaenau Gwent.

Educated in Blaenau Gwent	87
Educated outside Blaenau Gwent	66

During academic year 2018-2019 half of the fixed term exclusions were issued in respect of our looked after children attending Blaenau Gwent schools (total 40.5 days lost) of this 87% of fixed term exclusions were issued by mainstream schools.

Over a quarter of all fixed term exclusions issued by mainstream secondary schools in Blaenau Gwent were attributed to one child looked after.

The average length of fixed term exclusions issued by schools in Blaenau Gwent was 1.35 days and 2.4 days for schools outside of Blaenau Gwent.



#### **Breakdown of exclusions from mainstream secondary schools in Blaenau Gwent**

School	Number of pupils excluded	Number of incidents	Number of days lost	Average days lost per incident of exclusion
Abertillery Learning Community - Secondary	3	7	7	1
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community – Secondary	2	10	11	1.1

Brynmawr Foundation School	2	3	8	2.6
Tredegar Comprehensive	1	3	5.5	1.8

### Breakdown of exclusions from special school settings in Blaenau Gwent

School	Number of pupils excluded	Number of incidents	Number of days lost	Average days lost per incident of exclusion
The River Centre	2	4	6	1.5

### Breakdown of exclusions issued by schools outside the local authority area in respect of Blaenau Gwent children looked after

Half of all fixed term exclusions were issued by schools outside Blaenau Gwent (total of 72.5 days lost) of this more than a third (37%) were issued in respect of one child.

Local Authority	Education setting	Number of exclusions	Number of days lost	Average days lost per incident of exclusion
Bristol	Special School	2	8	4
Caerphilly	Mainstream	4	39.5	9.9
Carmarthenshire	Mainstream	10	16	1.6
Pembrokeshire	Mainstream	3	4	1.3
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Pupil Referral Unit	4	13	3.3
Swansea	Independent School	1	17	17
Torfaen	Mainstream	7	8.5	1.2

Of the exclusions listed above, 3 children have undergone statutory assessment which has resulted in either a change of school placement to a more specialist setting, for the academic year 2019/20 or an enhanced level of support.

### Fixed term exclusions for looked after children with special educational needs

Of the total number of children looked after who received fixed term exclusions from school during academic year 2018-2019, 8 (38%) had statements of special educational needs. This is a decrease when compared with the previous academic year when almost half (48%) of all children looked after who received fixed term exclusions from school had statements of SEN.

Of the children who were excluded who had statements of SEN the primary educational need for all of these pupils was social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The primary reason why Blaenau Gwent children looked after with statements of SEN were excluded from school was for violence against other pupils.

27% (16 out of 60 incidents) of the overall exclusions issued were in respect of children who had statements of special educational needs.

### **Breakdown of exclusions by individual school settings**

The majority of fixed term exclusions (82% - 49 incidents) continue to be issued by mainstream schools. The remaining exclusions were issued by alternative settings.

A total of 4 exclusions were issued by Pupil Referral Units. 1 fixed term exclusion was issued by an independent school setting outside the local authority area. 6 exclusions were issued by special school settings for children with social, emotional and behavioural needs.

The number of exclusions issued by Pupil Referral Units is slightly lower when compared with the previous academic year when the figure was 5. The number of exclusions issued by independent school settings during the year has also decreased when compared with previous years.

### **Changes to education placements following fixed term exclusions**

3 of the children who received fixed term exclusions in 2018-2019 experienced changes to their education placement following the exclusions prior to the end of the academic year 2018 19. This is lower when compared with previous years when the figure was 9 in 2017-2018 and 7 in 2016-2017.

<b>Number of pupils</b>	<b>Change of education placement</b>
1	Mainstream to Pupil Referral Unit outside Blaenau Gwent
1	Mainstream to Special school setting in Blaenau Gwent
1	Mainstream to alternative package of education - tuition

These children were responsible for 12% of the overall exclusions issued in respect of Blaenau Gwent children looked after in 2018-2019 and 29% of the total days lost during the year.

In all three cases there have been no further exclusions issued in respect of any of the above children following the change to their education placement.

### **Placement breakdowns following fixed term exclusions**

Of the 21 children looked after who received fixed term exclusions during 2018-2019, 10 experienced permanent changes to their care placements during the course of the year. This higher than the previous year when the figure was 5 in 2017-2018.

<b>Number of pupils</b>	<b>Care placement at end of academic year</b>
1	Independent Living
5	Foster placement
1	Placement with family member
3	Residential

Catherine Edwards

CLA Education Coordinator

## **Action Plan 2019-2020**

### **Evaluation:**

- Incidents of exclusions are still too high
- A very small number of children are responsible for a significant proportion of the overall exclusions
- Monitoring of pupil level exclusion data is embedded within the LAC education team and is effective in informing Officer work and dialogue with schools
- Transition to secondary school and within year groups is a key area for monitoring and action
- Some secondary school settings issue longer exclusions in duration on average than others. This is particularly evident when considering schools outside the Blaenau Gwent area
- The proportion of exclusions from Blaenau Gwent schools issued in respect of children looked after has decreased when compared with the previous academic year
- There is a correlation between care placement instability and exclusions.
- The use of exclusions by independent specialist out of county schools has considerably reduced and no longer appears to be impacting on the vulnerability of placements in the way that they previously.

### **Actions:**

- Wider representation at re-integration meetings by appropriate agency supporting the child/young person
- Share good practice in the development and coordination of effective Pastoral Support Plans, promoting school to school working.
- Scrutinise exclusion data with relevant education officers on a regular basis
- Termly meetings with secondary schools to include a focus on those children at risk of exclusion and those who have experienced exclusions.
- Evidence of good practice and challenges in relation to exclusions are reported to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting group and Wider Group
- Share the exclusion report with schools and education directorate

- Overview of exclusions to be considered by the Vulnerable Learners Sub-group with a view to providing additional support for learners at risk of further exclusion attending Blaenau Gwent schools.

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# Agenda Item 8

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **13<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

Report Subject: **Regional Partnership Update**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**

Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director of Social Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	17.12.19				13.01.20	29.01.20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of the Report is to update Members on the work and decisions taken over the last 6 months by the Regional Partnership Board, developed under statutory guidance Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act).
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The SSWB Act came into force in April 2016, Part 9 of the Act sets out statutory requirement for a Regional Partnership Board (RPB), along with the required minimum membership and a regional Citizen Panel, regional Provider Forum and regional Leadership Group (senior officer group) which have all been established.
  - 2.2 The Regional Partnership Boards have been established on current local health board footprints – so the Gwent regional partnership board includes Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen local authorities.
  - 2.3 The regulations also set out required membership of Regional Partnership Boards. The Executive member in each local authority, with responsibility for health and social care, sits on the Regional Partnership Board. In a similar vein, non-executive members of the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board also sit on the Regional Partnership Board.
  - 2.4 The Regional Partnership Board is an advisory body, that does not take away the existing responsibilities of the individual statutory bodies, but it is expected to take oversight of and provide direction to, any areas of integrated working across health and social care.
  - 2.5 Social Services Scrutiny Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017 agreed for the Executive Member of Social Services and Director of Social Services to

report back to Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. This approach was endorsed by Executive Committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

- 2.6 The Regional Partnership Board has met on one occasion since the last report to Scrutiny Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019. There were a number of areas which have occupied the Regional Partnership Board at this meeting. Firstly, the Transformational Offer which sets out the proposals of the Gwent Regional Partnership Board, to support the continued development of a '*seamless system*' of care, support and wellbeing in Gwent, in response to the Welsh Government's new long term plan for health and social care 'A Healthier Wales'. Secondly, the Integrated Care Revenue and Capital Fund which has considered the reallocation of underspend on current proposals. Thirdly, it has considered the Integrated Winter Plan for 2019/20. Finally, the Regional Partnership Board has an update on the Bevan Commission and Social Care Wales work to help develop future models of services across the Boards area.
- 2.7 Members may recall from previous reports that the Regional Partnership Board had successfully developed and submitted a 'Gwent transformational offer' to Welsh Government which was approved and granted the Gwent RPB £13.4 million of new limited funding over a two-year period. Members may also recall that this was in response to 'A Healthier Wales' which set out a new £100 million transformational programme. It has the expectation that transformational change delivers a 'seamless system of health and social care'. The new plan emphasises the role of the Regional Partnership Boards in setting the strategic change agenda and providing the collaborative leadership required to deliver system change through the 'Area Plan'. The new transformation fund is intended to provide additional funding to catalyse 'whole system change', driven through the Regional Partnership Boards with an expectation that each region develops a 'transformational offer'.
- 2.8 The offer in Gwent related to four areas, derived from the priority areas within the Area Plan and the considered directions of the Regional Partnership Board. These include:
- The development of early intervention and prevention services (Integrated Wellbeing Networks);
  - The development of primary and community care services (Compassionate Communities);
  - The redesign of child and adolescent emotional and mental health services (Iceberg model);
  - The development of an integrated 'Home First' discharge model;
  - The development of workforce planning and organisational development to underpin transformational activity.
- 2.9 A summary of the different projects was previously provided at the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019 Scrutiny Committee but is attached again at Appendix 1 to remind Members of the projects.

- 2.10 The transformation programme continues to deliver the agreed priorities at pace, given the extremely short and testing time frame provided by Welsh Government of 2 years. Compassionate Communities are now dealing with on average 120 patients per month. Work is underway to track outcomes and build a profile of 'patient experience' to demonstrate the impact and effect Compassionate Communities is having on patients. The Integrated Wellbeing Networks held a seminar at national primary care conference demonstrating the importance of improved wellbeing on demand for and access to primary and community services. Wellbeing offers are now under development and are a core element of 'Building a Healthier Gwent'.
- 2.11 Homefirst has been successfully implemented using a 'Trusted Assessors' model allowing patient to return home as soon as possible with support before they are assessed in their own home. HomeFirst has dealt with over 1000 patients and are now scoping out what an integrated model could look like to include all four recognised discharge pathways.
- 2.12 The Iceberg model continues to be successfully implemented a 'Single Point of Access'(SPA) for GP's and Families and feedback is that it is making a considerable difference in improving access, making families feel more supported and able to access the system more easily. They have started to activate additional capacity in schools to deliver the 'whole schools' approach as the next part of the system and enabling access through the SPA.
- 2.13 All four programmes have commissioned the evaluation of the models, with the Institute of Public Care being successful for place based care, integrated wellbeing networks and Homefirst and Cedar Associates are leading the evaluation of the ICEBERG model.
- 2.14 One of the difficulties with the Transformation funding continues to be recruitment to specialist posts, with staff reluctant to leave existing posts for a short term funded post. This has been fed back to Welsh Government and hopefully will be taken on board for future funding streams.
- 2.15 The Regional Partnership Board is the body who sign off and agree the Integrated Care Fund revenue and capital proposals. We do not intend to go into detail of the funding obtained and the bids made as they were presented at Scrutiny Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Local authorities across Gwent had requested that any slippage funding within existing projects be used for Children with Complex Needs to meet demand for the remainder of this year. Regional Leadership Group endorsed the approach for any ICF revenue slippage to be utilised for Children with Complex Needs. Quarter 2 reporting has provided an updated slippage figure of £450,000, requested to be shared on an equal basis with all Local Authorities in Gwent which has resulted in an additional £90K for Blaenau Gwent.
- 2.16 Winter Planning is an integral part of the Health and Social Care system responsibility and this year's plan has been developed, in line with Welsh

Government guidance, with all partners within the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) who have agreed to recommend a number of the activities in order to support patients within the Gwent area. The plan has been developed with colleagues across the Health Board and partners in Social Care, third sector and Welsh Ambulance Service. The RPB signed off and agreed to submit the RPB Winter plan to the Welsh Government.

2.17 The key themes within the Welsh Government's guidance for the use of the £3.252 million funding provided to the Regional Partnership Board was:

- Optimising cross organisational and sector working to support resilience;
- Urgent Primary Care / out of hour's resilience;
- Preventing Unnecessary Conveyance and Admission to Hospital;
- Discharge to Assess/Recover;
- Community Step Down Capacity;
- An enhanced focus on the respiratory pathway;
- An enhanced focus on the frailty pathway.

2.18 Blaenau Gwent bid for and obtained £133K funding to flexibly spot purchase step up/step down beds, to purchase additional domiciliary care packages, to purchase additional social work capacity over bank holidays and weekends and funding for hiring an additional 4x4 vehicle for adverse weather conditions. There were also some separate bids for additional health capacity locally and some Gwent wide bids for equipment e.g. single handed hoists.

2.19 One of the challenges for this year is medical, social care and nurse staffing to enable the increase in the Health Board's bed capacity and enhance community services. The current staffing gaps and high numbers of unfilled nursing posts presents a real risk to effective delivery of this part of the Winter Plan.

2.20 To enable the RPB to oversee service transformation and the successful delivery of 'A healthier Wales' development sessions are held on a regular basis to support members to build trust, enable critical challenge and scrutiny. To help the Board to continue this they have mandated a programme of organisational development to be facilitated by the Bevan Commission and Social Care Wales to co-create with the RPB an options paper to set out potential options for future service delivery models, which will be effective and sustainable in the Gwent context. The final meeting is set for the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020 after which the Bevan Commission and Social Care Wales will provide a report of the possible future service delivery models for Gwent.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The options for consideration are:

Option 1 – to scrutinise the report and to support the decisions of the Regional Partnership Board.

Option 2 – to scrutinise the report and propose an alternative approach to Executive Committee in relation to the options taken by Regional Partnership Board.

**4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

The report is fulfilling our statutory functions under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 and accompanying regulations.

The report is also fulfilling a number of the Social Services aims within the Corporate Plan:

- To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own wellbeing;
- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater;
- To work with our partners including Aneurin Bevan Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support;
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities.

A number of the areas being progressed by the Regional Partnership Board will support us to achieve two of the Wellbeing Plan objectives:

- The best start in life for everyone;
- To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the place that they live, learn, work and play.

**5. Implications Against Each Option**

Option 1 - The Regional Partnership Board have statutory responsibilities laid out within the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 and Ministers expect to see the Regional Partnership Boards, maturing into a vehicle for more integrated commissioning, transformation and improvement across health and social care, with an emphasis on providing more care closer to home, maintaining independence and reducing unnecessary hospital admissions. Therefore, by implementing the Gwent transformation offer the Regional Partnership Board are complying with the legislation and Ministerial expectations.

Option 1 – Welsh Government have also determined that the use of the Integrated Care Capital and Revenue Fund, the new Transformational fund and new Integrated Winter Planning fund which will have oversight by the Regional Partnership Board. All these funding sources are to assist with the integration of health and social care across the Gwent Regional footprint. It is essential that the Regional Partnership Board has oversight of funding proposals and subsequent use of these funding streams, and have approved the proposals before they were submitted and agreed by Welsh Government.

Option 2 – The Regional Partnership Board are made up of a number of organisations who collectively make decision for the good of the region. If Scrutiny were to recommend alternative approaches, then it would need the support of neighbouring authorities and the health board to obtain consensus. Failure to do this would mean being in breach of legislation and could result in Welsh Government intervention. Whilst failure to comply with the requirements of the Integrated Care Capital Fund and Revenue Fund, Transformational fund and Integrated Winter Planning fund could result in the withdrawal or ability to receive funding for the Blaenau Gwent and Gwent region respectively.

#### 5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no immediate impacts on the budget, the Integrated Care Capital Fund is provided on an annual basis to fund innovative projects within Health and Social Care until the term of the current Welsh Government. The transformation fund is to develop new models of transformation at pace and has been agreed for a two-year period. These are all additional funding coming into the system.

The Integrated Care Capital and Revenue Fund provides significant investment to develop a number of projects across Blaenau Gwent and Gwent as a whole and should this funding be removed at the end of the Government's time in the Assembly then this may have significant consequences going forward. In addition, the transformation fund is a time limited fund intended to replace or reconfigure existing services not adding an extra layer; therefore, there is an expectation that these models will be funded from core budgets going forward.

#### 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

#### 5.3 ***Legal***

The Legal department becomes involved in considering and advising on any legal agreements before signing such as the Section 33 Agreement.

#### 5.4 ***Human Resources***

The Gwent Transformational Team support senior officers and elected members to deliver and implement the priorities of the Regional Partnership Board. In addition, they administer the Regional Partnership Board and Leadership Group. The Gwent Transformation Team is hosted by Torfaen County Borough Council.

### 6. ***Supporting Evidence***

#### 6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Not applicable.

#### 6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The role of the Regional Partnership Board is to ensure more seamless provision of health and social care services across Gwent.

- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***  
The Regional Partnership Board has involvement from the third sector and representation from the Citizens Panel to ensure engagement and involvement in its direction.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***  
The Regional Partnership Board provides the opportunity to work collectively and have a long term vision to progress integration and partnership across the Gwent region.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***  
The Regional Partnership Board within its strategic intent statement will be considering how Health and Social Services can work together in a more preventative way.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***  
The role the Regional Partnership Board is to work collaboratively across boundaries to benefit citizens requiring health and social care services across Gwent.
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***  
The purpose of the Regional Partnership Board is to foster integration between Health and Social Services.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The monitoring arrangements for the Regional Partnership Board are through the Social Services Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee on a quarterly basis.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

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### Transformation Offer Report Summary

This offer sets out the proposals of the Gwent Regional Partnership Board, to support the continued development of a *'seamless system'* of care, support and wellbeing in Gwent, in response to the Welsh Government's new long term plan for health and social care 'A Healthier Wales'.

The offer has been developed through the Regional Partnership Board mechanism, with a dedicated transformation leadership group, established to act as the brokers of change, and determine the content of the offer.

The offer demonstrates the shared drive in Gwent to *'Step up to change'*, rather than continuing to *'observe the system struggle'*, to deliver a system, predicated on pace, traction and agility, within the context of austerity and rising demand.

The proposal is constructed in two parts- the first *'Delivering an early intervention, prevention and improved population Wellbeing system'* focused on the development of new integrated services, specifically Integrated Wellbeing Networks, and Primary Care Transformation. The second, *'Creating integrated models of health and social care'* focuses on the service redesign of existing service models, in CAMHS and Hospital Discharge. Taken together these two elements of what will be the substantive 'transformation' programme, will provide the foundations for a seamless system of care, and address the need to remodel at pace specific services to address sustainability and demand concerns.

The transformation fund will provide the capacity, capability and resource to develop a truly integrated commissioning approach, through design, planning, delivery and management of services able to make the most impact on improving wellbeing across health and social care, and as a result, the achievement of a more 'seamless system'.

Specifically, this offer seeks to deliver transformational change in the following areas:

- The development of a new model of prevention and wellbeing services.
- The development of primary and community care.
- The development of new pan Gwent 'Home First' discharge services.
- The development of a pan Gwent integrated system of emotional and mental wellbeing for children and young people.
- The development of a programme to create a Gwent 'Wellbeing workforce'.

The new models proposed are in areas of shared significant challenge, in terms of demand, capacity, access and financial sustainability, and where the additional capacity, and leadership that will be achieved through the transformation fund, will make a significant difference to the *'whole system'* over time. It is in these identified areas, where the biggest difference can be made at pace, in creating a seamless patient pathway across health and social care.

At the heart of integrated service delivery is the continued development of the Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCN) Model, which is unique to Gwent and where we are able to direct resources around

community need, support improved healthy behaviours and create new integrated pathways into primary and community care.

The NCNs are the footprint for the development of a sustainable, social model of primary care to support people to better manage their own health and wellbeing, be independent and resilient for longer in their own homes and localities.

Through the new transformation fund, there is an opportunity to build the pace of delivery of the required whole systems change, by funding dedicated work to develop, and implement a place based integrated service model. We have undertaken work to assess the delivery of services at the right level i.e. regional, borough and neighbourhood to ensure we are able to provide access to services in the right place, at the right time.

### **The development of a new model of prevention and wellbeing services**

The Integrated Well-being Network (IWN) concept provides the framework for establishing integrated, place-based well-being systems across GP clusters in Gwent. Bringing together a holistic range of assets that contribute to positive health and well-being on a place-basis will enable people to find the support they need to stay well within the community, reducing the need to access the care system.

This will support the evolution of a more socially centred model of Primary Care through the Compassionate Communities model, focussed on a more proactive and preventative approach, empowering patients and carers to find non-medical information and support in the community. Signposting and active linking of patients to community well-being assets will be an important part of the multi-disciplinary team activity in primary care, and the development of a rich and diverse well-being network will be the foundation upon which this activity can operate.

The NCNs have been identified as they are aligned to developments that can provide a focal point for the IWN concept to progress, as well as implementation of the Compassionate Communities approach:

- Caerphilly North (aligned with Bryntirion primary care transformation developments).
- Newport East (aligned with Ringland Health and Well-being Centre development).
- Blaenau Gwent East (aligned with Brynmawr Resource Centre development).
- Monmouthshire South (aligned with the South Monmouthshire Health, Well-being and Social Care Project).
- Torfaen North (aligned with Blaenavon place-based pilot).
- Blaenau Gwent West (aligned with Tredegar Health and Well-being Centre development).
- Caerphilly South (aligned with Lansbury Park Deep Place Plan).

IWN has the following objectives:

#### **Establish place-based co-ordination and development of well-being resources**

- Engage organisations in a co-ordinated place-based ‘well-being community’ which aims to improve co-ordination, alignment and visibility of existing well-being resources in order to enable timely and seamless support for people.
- Facilitate an Assets Based Community Development (ABCD) network which will engage organisations with community development functions in order to develop the ABCD approach and create links with well-being networks.
- Develop a range of methods for communicating with the community about available well-being resources, to develop a shared sense of ownership and responsibility.

#### **Establish systems for linking Primary Care with well-being resources**

- Ensure professionals are able to effectively triage/signpost patients to information, advice and assistance using electronic technologies.
- Develop and evaluate a range of ways to link patients with the ‘well-being community’ attached to the NCN (including reception navigation or community connector roles).

#### **Develop the well-being workforce**

- Identify, develop and deliver a range of interventions which support an intentional whole system transition towards the shared values and practice underpinning our whole system approach. Staff across the whole system will be encouraged to ‘live and breathe well-being’, changing the conversation towards what matters to people and what they can do to improve their own health and well-being. In addition, staff working across the system will have the knowledge and skills to improve well-being (e.g. supportive signposting, behaviour change, mental well-being).

#### **Communication and engagement to support whole system change**

- Organisational development and leadership programme which creates an enabling environment for the workforce to focus on outcomes and what matters to people.
- Engage local communities in changing the way they receive support.

#### **Identify ways that hubs can be centres for well-being resources in the community**

- Maximising the well-being potential of Health & Well-being Centres.
- Joining up hubs to make best use of the range of well-being resources in local communities.

#### **The development of primary and community care**

A strong Public Health approach, provides the foundation and context for the delivery of ‘*A Healthier Wales*’, improving population wellbeing, so that more people are supported to stay healthy and well and more effectively manage their health, is the biggest challenge the system currently faces, it is also the biggest opportunity.

It is estimated that 20% of patients present to their GP with underlying social problems such as debt, housing or social isolation, and this is often the case with patients who attend frequently.

The second part of this programme, will work in tandem with the development of an Integrated Wellbeing Network approach, to construct a new place based approach to the delivery of primary and community services in Bargoed (Bryntirion Surgery), before scaling up and expanding wider across Caerphilly North.

It is our intention to use this transformation approach to stimulate widespread adoption of the new model across five NCN areas which present the greatest sustainability challenges, areas which include:

- Blaenau Gwent (West and East NCNs)
- North Caerphilly
- East Newport
- North Torfaen

The areas prioritised described above are a combination of Health Board managed practices and independent practices that are experiencing sustainability challenges. The transformation funding will allow us to proactively support areas that most need this new model of care.

People are accessing their primary care settings for support with numerous situations and not just for healthcare. For most people, their principal contact with the NHS is via their GP Practice. In order to provide a sustainable solution for the future, the service needs to adapt to provide services outside historic opening times and deliver services and information via different modalities (e.g. telephone, internet) to meet the growing needs of the population through a prudent approach.

The increasing demands on primary care services in addition to the on-going fragility of workforce, requires General Practice to evolve from single-handed uni-professional care to a system based on teams of professionals working collaboratively in primary care teams.

Gwent intends to adopt the 'compassionate communities' model in the five identified NCNs with greatest sustainability challenges. Compassionate Communities builds teams around general practice, operating a "hub" for about 10,000 population. The approach requires a systematic approach to well-being in care and treatment plan enable through a web-based directory of well-being support and services (i.e. DEWIS), health connectors, community connectors and a local community development service.

In Gwent there is now widespread acknowledgement and commitment that we need to integrate social care provision, community health services and third sector wellbeing support through a single point of access and place based working, as evidenced by this offer. This requires a more streamlined, responsive and relationship-based approach where families receive the right support first time reducing unnecessary hand offs.

#### **The development of new pan Gwent 'Home First' discharge services**

We propose to develop a 'Gwent wide intensive domiciliary support service 'Home First''. The additional capacity provided through the transformation fund will allow, dedicated work at pace to implement solutions that will mitigate pressures in advance of winter 2018/19.

The evidence from across Gwent suggests that it is both the frailty and acuity of patients that makes discharging them complex, when community and social care is also under pressure to maintain a growing number of older people safely at home. Therefore, Regional partnership board, through a working group of Health Board and local authority heads of service, as part of the Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership, has developed a “Home First” solution to implement a Gwent wide, integrated model of discharge to recover and assess. The proposed model can be scaled up to a regional or national level, and combines the dedicated capacity, resource and expertise needed across health and social care, to safely discharge people from hospital. The service model supports an integrated approach to service provision providing an opportunity for local authorities to work across organisational boundaries for the first time providing accelerated assessment and short term care packages for citizens receiving care in the Royal Gwent and Nevill Hospital (in the first instance) irrespective of their normal place of residence.

The service model supports an integrated approach to service provision providing an opportunity for local authorities to work across organisational boundaries for the first time providing accelerated assessment and short term care packages for citizens receiving care in the Royal Gwent and Nevill Hospital (in the first instance) irrespective of their normal place of residence. The service is developed to complement existing step up/down facilities with clear pathways. The scheme will also provide a bridging service to enable people to be discharged earlier than planned from the wards, for example where a care provider has been identified but cannot start for several days the services will be accessible to main hospital discharge teams/area staff to facilitate discharge and provide the care until the identified long term care provider is in place. This aims to reduce length of stay and provide better outcomes for people and their carers.

### **The development of a pan Gwent integrated system of emotional and mental wellbeing for children and young people**

This proposal focuses on the implementation of a new service model for emotional and mental resilience for children and young people, redrawing the current landscape, to provide a more sustainable model of care, by working in a different, expansive and more integrated model.

The proposed new iceberg model has been developed as a shared public service response. It is driven by striving to provide the right services at the right time, thus preventing long waits for specialist clinical services, and a context where too many children and young people access assessment without meaningful follow-up support.

Fundamentally, this approach will ensure that only the children and young people who need the specialist intervention provided by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and related services are able to access that service promptly and will do so by re-designing the current tiered approach, to:

- Develop frontline capacity to understand children, and young people’s distress within a normative, contextual, developmental and relational framework and to implement intervention plans on the basis of this understanding.

- To increase access to the right evidence-based psychological interventions within the children and young people's communities and homes, with interventions provided at the lowest level of intensity that is consistent with achieving positive outcomes ('do what is needed').
- To co-produce and develop intervention services that are based on a whole family approach, drawing on a systemic and relational understanding of how the problems have evolved, and a whole family and community approach to designing the interventions that fall out of this formulation.
- To increase frontline staff's access to highly qualified and experienced mental health professionals who are embedded in community services able to support frontline staff and join with partner agencies in the design and delivery of services.
- To provide effective mental health 'in reach' to school/college staff and leadership teams at pre-school, primary and secondary school level, with access to specialist consultation, training and support to enable them to support the well-being of pupils at both an individual pupil and a whole-school level.

It builds on the very strong collaborative working relationships between Health, Local Authorities, Education and the Third Sector. Furthermore, the proposal supports and strengthens three planned developments in Gwent. Firstly, through mental health-ring fenced transformation funds, ABUHB has invested in co-ordination capacity to enable Locality-based, multi-agency single points of access for all children and young people with mental health and wellbeing. This is an essential element of the wider 'iceberg' model described in the current proposal. Secondly, through ICF resource (with longer-term sustainability to be achieved through a reduction in out-of-area placements), partners working under the Gwent Strategic Partnership for Children and Young People are finalising the model for a multi-agency resource 'hub' that aims to provide care close to home for our most vulnerable and complex children and young people, who are currently often sent out-of-area to specialist placements that deliver poor outcomes at considerable cost. Thirdly, new mental health monies that are being invested in CAMHS provision are being directed to the Primary Care Mental Health Service and Specialist CAMHS, with both service areas using this resource to provide support and access to consultation to communities and/or to support local place-based working. All three of these developments will support and strengthen, and will in turn be supported and strengthened by, the transformational changes described in the current proposal.

In Gwent, we are committed to intervening much earlier, addressing the seeds of distress before they take root, and to do this will require radical, and transformational change, developing the new iceberg model, in the context of a new framework for children and young people's services, based on prevention, early intervention and timely targeted support. The new approach will adopt an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) informed approach, and be delivered in conjunction with the Gwent ACE's programme.

This new integrated model will ensure there is more proactive support to children and young people, providing them with opportunities to build their own resilience, recognise their need earlier, encouraging them to support one another and feel comfortable talking about their issues. If they need to access services they can do so when, where and how they choose to.

### **The development of a programme to create a Gwent 'Wellbeing workforce'**

The creation of an integrated wellbeing workforce is perhaps the most challenging area of this transformation offer, if a step change in the pace of workforce planning and development cannot be achieved and a more multi-disciplinary approach adopted as standard, then transformation will stall.

Critical to the success of this '*systems alignment*', is the development of the 'wellbeing workforce' in tandem with service realignment and remodelling. Training opportunities must be created, in order to ensure the workforce of the future is available to deliver this model. This will require a 'grow your own' model and, as such, it will be necessary to develop an academy-type approach alongside work already underway to establish an Academy for Health & Social Care.

Effective transformation work also needs to address career pathways spanning health and social care, with clear opportunities for progression. Good links with higher and further education bodies to ensure the right core skills training have been made and additional capacity will enable development of a career approach that can benefit employers, individuals and the training providers.

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# Agenda Item 9

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **13<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

Report Subject: **Social Services Workforce Sickness Absence Performance**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**

Report Submitted by: **Andrea J Prosser, Head of Organisational Development**  
**Damien McCann, Director of Social Services**

Reporting Pathway								
DMT	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	17.12.19				13.01.20			

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members of specific scrutiny committees the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge relevant Directorate sickness absence performance and the proposed actions for improvement.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 Staff attendance is critical in delivering services and the Council's priorities and is a key performance indicator reflected in the quarterly Finance and Performance report. Improving attendance remains a key priority for the Council and is linked to the need to create efficiencies and improve service delivery.

2.2 Sickness absence within the Authority is identified as a key risk and it is acknowledged that high levels of sickness absence will have a detrimental impact on the ability of the Council to deliver services effectively. Therefore, the need to reduce the impact and cost of sickness absence has been identified as a corporate priority.

### 2.3 Performance Information

2.3.1 The overall year end outturn figure for 2018/19 the Council was 12.66 days per full time equivalent (FTE) employee. An increase from the previous year's outturn of 11.2 days and exceeds the target set of 8.5 days.

2.3.4 Whilst sickness levels remain high it is important to note that the majority of employees have little or no sickness absence and attend work regularly. The vast majority of Council employees have excellent attendance levels as data indicates that 2463 employees attended work every day during the period from April 2018 to March 2019 with the Council having an attendance level of 94.3%.

2.3.5 A report reviewing workforce Sickness Absence Performance for the Council that went to the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019. The Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations for improvement and also recommend the following; that processes be put in place for individual Directorates to report quarterly to their specific scrutiny committees for challenge and scrutiny on Directorate's sickness absence performance; and that the Executive Committee also have the opportunity to review this report.

2.3.6 **Appendix 1** outlines the sickness performance information for the Social Services Directorate for quarter 1 and 2 of 2019/20 as well as summarising the position in 2018/19.

### 3. **Directorate Comments/Actions for Improvement For discussion at Social Services management team**

#### 3.1 **Comments**

- Evidence of managerial action in managing sickness
- Provider Services sickness absence performance is high for all Councils in the Gwent region

#### **Actions**

- Targets and improvement objectives set for each Head of Service area
- Case conferences to be held with Head of Adults and Children's with Head of OD to review long term sick
- Provider Services identified as a 'hotspot' – monthly meetings Head of Service/Team Manager and OD to focus on reducing sickness absence
- Focussed quarterly session Social Services Management Team and OD to review sickness absence and application of the Managing Attendance Policy
- Continued awareness raising with managers at Directorate manager's briefings on the critical importance of application of the Managing Attendance Policy and the timely updating of ITrent
- Review of sickness absence to be added to all managers 121 sessions
- Training for managers on managing sickness will be facilitated jointly with OD in new year
- Review of staffing structure in Adult Services and redefining of roles – continued priority to manage sickness
- Social Services Senior Management Team to monitor agreed actions – sickness absence to be a regular item on the management team agenda

### 4. **Options for Recommendation**

#### 4.1 **Option 1**

That the Scrutiny Committee having scrutinised the sickness absence performance information and proposed arrangements to improve attendance rates within the Social Services Directorate identify any further areas for improvement in order to drive forward performance improvement.

- 4.2 **Option 2**  
That the Scrutiny Committee endorse the report and proposed arrangements to support the improvement in attendance.
4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 ***Impact on Budget*** (short and long term impact)  
There are direct and indirect costs of sickness absence which are a key driver in the Council's approach to effectively improve attendance at work.
- 4.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***  
The underperformance in relation to the high levels of sickness absence does present a significant risk in terms of the impact on front line service delivery and continuity through lost time and staffing changes. In addition, the financial implications associated with sickness absence directly impact on the Council's financial efficiency targets and the level of financial savings that the Council needs to achieve. Mitigating actions are detailed within the report.
- 4.3 ***Legal***  
There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 4.4 ***Human Resources***  
The staffing implications are detailed within the content of the report.
5. **Supporting Evidence**
- 5.1 ***Performance Information and Data***  
The detailed performance evidence is detailed in appendix 1 as well as the actions taken to address the level of underperformance.
- 5.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***  
Information included within the report will provide opportunity for the public to scrutinise the Council's performance and provide accountability across the Council.
- 5.3 ***Involvement*** (consultation, engagement, participation) – Trade Union have been consulted on the sickness absence performance and are committed to working with the Council to improve attendance.
- 5.4 ***Thinking for the Long term*** (forward planning)  
Options detailed in this report contribute directly to enabling the workforce for the future.
- 5.5 ***Preventative focus***  
The review of the Organisational Development Strategy will focus on prevention.

- 5.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**  
There are regular discussions with the national Human Resources Directors Network and regionally in terms of good practice or emerging practice in reducing sickness absence. There are early discussions with the WLGA to launch a project to learn from England any initiatives in relation to wellbeing.
- 5.7 **Integration** (across service areas)  
NA
- 5.8 **EqlA** (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)  
The review of sickness absence performance was carried out and included all employees of the Council.
6. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 6.1 Sickness absence statistics are reported to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis and an annual performance report is presented to Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee. Directorate positions and actions for improvement will be reported to specific scrutiny committees. Biannual workforce profiles are discussed with Managers and Headteachers.

#### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Sickness Absence Monitoring Quarters 1 and 2

## Sickness Absence 2019/20 (Quarter 1 & 2) - Social Services Directorate

Corporate Director - Damien McCann  
 Head of Adult Services – Alyson Hoskins  
 Head of Children’s Services - Tanya Evans

### Total Days lost per FTE Employee (Annual Council Target 11 days per FTE Employee)

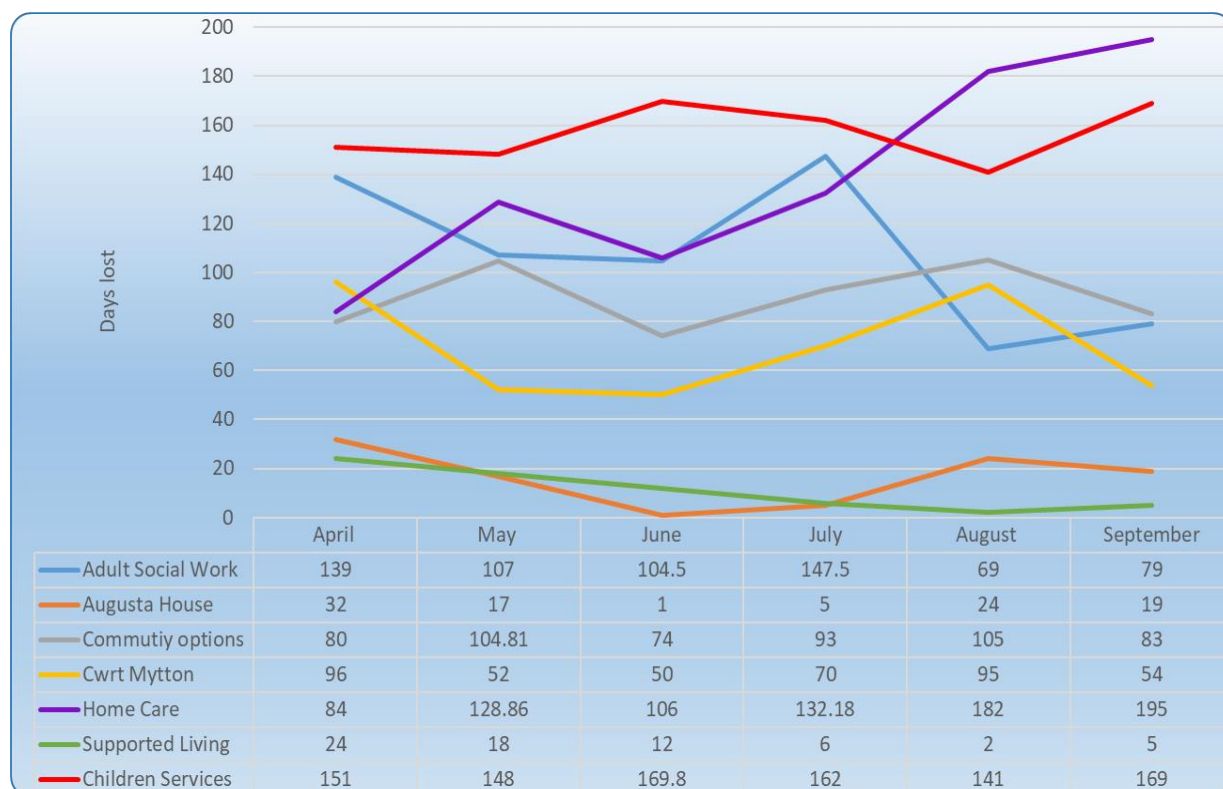
2019/20	Qtr1 (Target 2.75)	Qtr2 (Target 5.50)
Council	3.06	5.93
Corporate Services	1.71	4.34
Regeneration & Community Services	3.78	7.09
Education	2.84	5.09

2019/20	Qtr1 (Target 2.75)	Qtr2 (Target 5.50)
Social Services	3.62	7.45
Adult Services	4.34	9.16
Children’s Services	2.57	5.03
Senior Management	0.00	0.00

- 2018/19 – Annual Review Social Services
- 18.19 FTE days lost ( Quarter 1 - 4.46, Quarter 2 - 9.80)
  - 61.6% of absences were long term
  - 93 employees with one or more absences - mental health
  - 3917 calendar days lost - mental health
  - 12 employees with more than 6 calendar months sickness
  - 5 employees disciplined for sickness absence

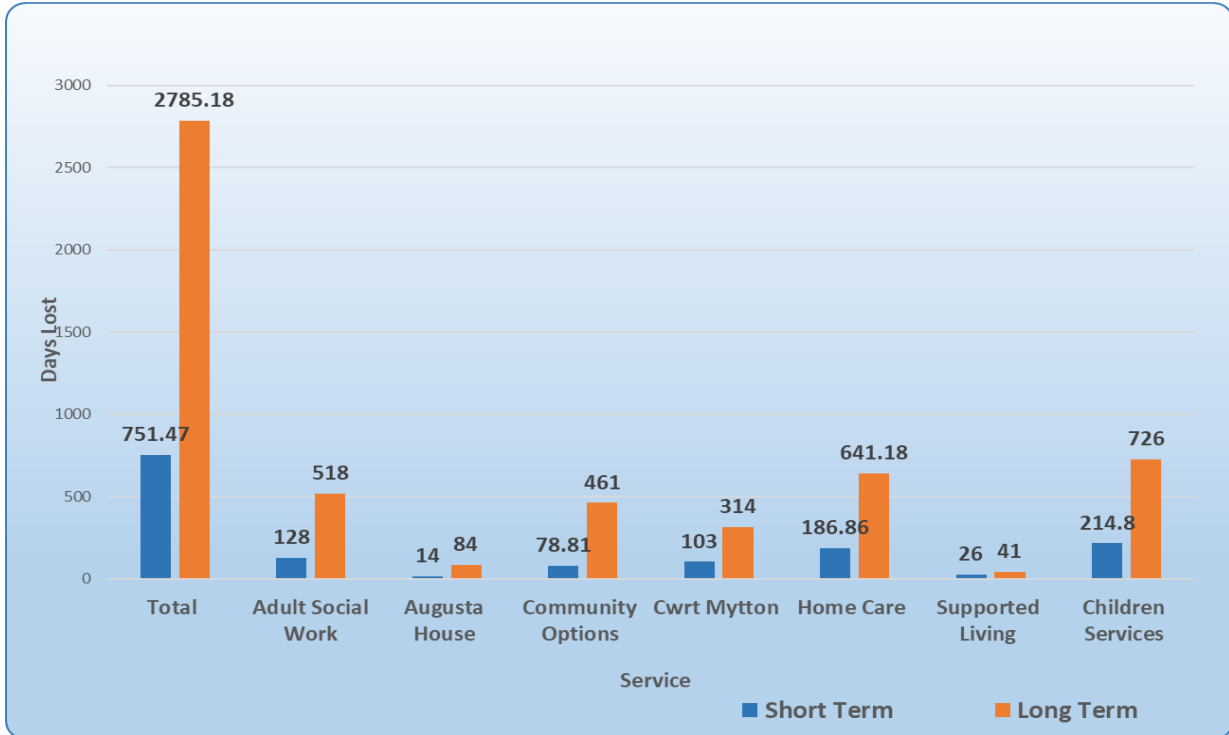
### Total Working Days Lost - 01.04.19 – 30.09.19

- 3536.65 working days lost to sickness absence (25606.71 hours)



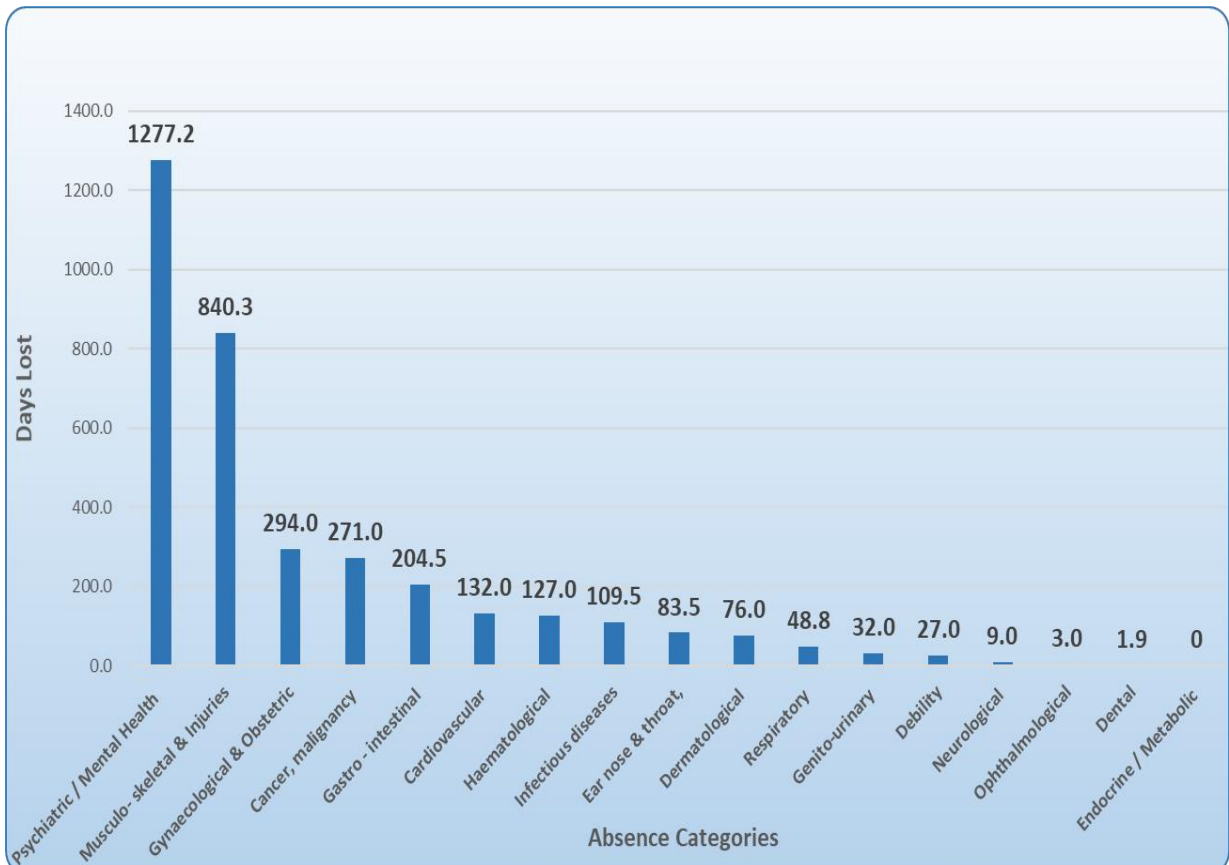
## Total Working Days Lost - Short Term / Long Term

- 78.8% of absence is long term



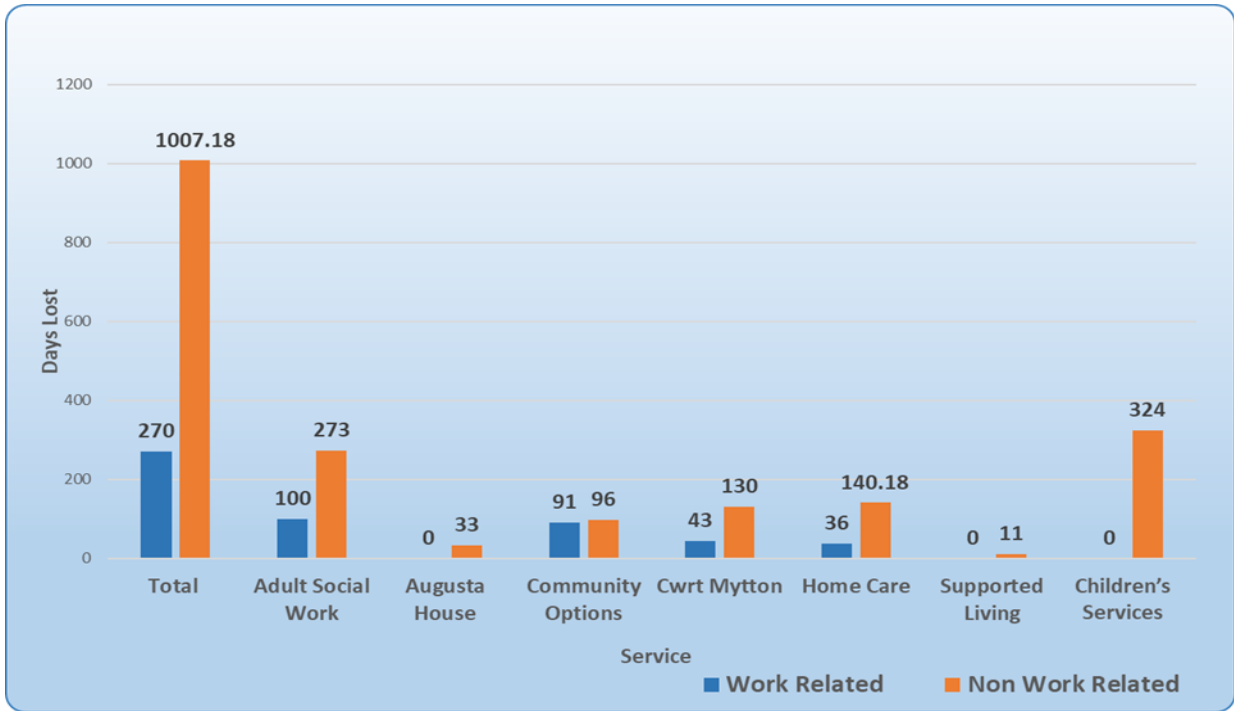
## Total Working Days Lost by Reason

- Top 3 reasons - Psychiatric/Mental Health, Musculo-Skeletal & Injuries, Gynaecological
- 1277.2 working days lost to Psychiatric / Mental Health



### Total Working Days lost Psychiatric / Mental Health (Work / Non Work Related)

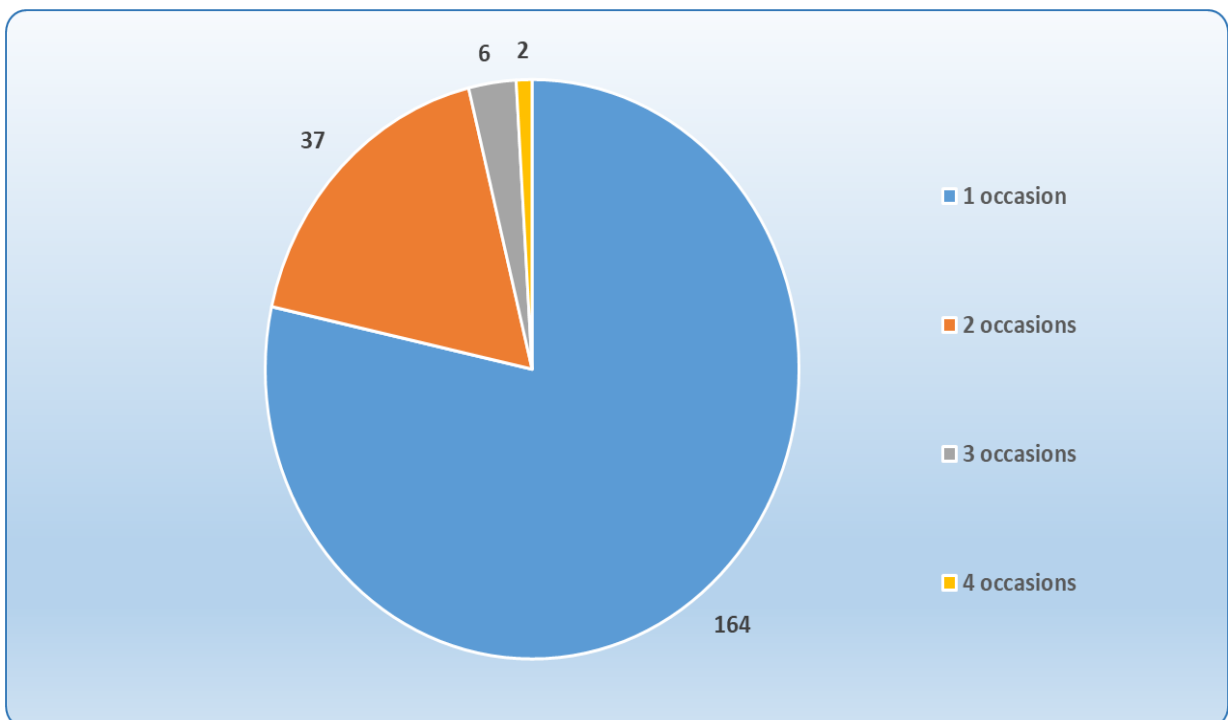
- **21%** of days lost to Psychiatric / Mental Health identified as work related
- **43** employees with one or more absences - Mental Health
- **47** occasions of absence - Mental Health



### Number reporting sickness

- Number of staff reporting sick – **209**
- Number of occasions of sickness absence - **264**

### Number of occasions of absence per employee



## Impact - Financial / Staff Resources

- The cost of lost time for the six-month period is estimated at **£306,768** based on an average salary of **£23,107.11 – £11.98** per hour (Average Salary - Pay Policy calculation excluding staff on the Teachers pay and conditions). These costs do not include on-costs, cover arrangements or management time to manage the sickness.
- This equates to **26 FTE** employees being absent for the full 6 months.

## Management of Sickness Absence

- **30** open sickness cases as at 30.09.19
- **57** Occupational health referrals made during the period
- Number of Trigger Breaks based on the most recent absence in the period for each employee (however they may have broken more than one trigger in the rolling year)
  - **13 employees - 3 or more occasions**
  - **59 employees - 10 or more days absence**
  - **62 employees - 3 or more occasions & 10 or more days**
  - **75 employees - Did not hit a trigger**
- **45.5%** of Return to Work meetings required have been recorded on iTrent
- **5** Written Warnings issued
- **1** Dismissal on Medical Capability



# Agenda Item 10

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **13<sup>th</sup> January 2020**  
Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**  
Report Submitted by: **Cllr Steve Thomas, Chair of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
x	x				13.01.20			

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To present to Members the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020 for discussion and to update the Committee on any changes.
  
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Scrutiny Work Programmes are key aspects of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and support the requirements of the Constitution.
  - 2.2 The topics set out in the Forward Work Programmes link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans. Effective work programmes are essential to ensure that the work of scrutiny make a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
  - 2.3 The Committee's Forward Work Programme was agreed in July 2019, recognising the fluidity of the document to enable the Committee to respond to urgent and emerging issues, and included timescales when reports will be considered by the Committee. The work programme is managed and implemented by the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer under the direction of the Chair and Committee.
  - 2.4 The forward work programme for the forthcoming meeting will be presented to Committee on a 6 weekly cycle in order that Members can consider the programme of work; request information is included within the reports, as appropriate and / or make amendments to the work programme.
  
3. **Options for Recommendation**
  - 3.1 **Option 1:** The Scrutiny Committee consider the Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020, and:
    - Make any amendments to the topics scheduled for the meetings;

- Suggest any additional invitees that the committee requires to fully consider the reports; and
- Request any additional information to be included with regards to the topics to be discussed.

3.2 **Option 2:** The Scrutiny Committee agree the Forward Programme for the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020, as presented.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme - Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Social Services Scrutiny Committee**  
**Forward Work Programme**

**Scrutiny Meeting Date:** Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Scrutiny Deadline to receive reports:** Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Report Title	Lead Officer	Purpose of Report	Method/ Expert Witness/Exec Member	Latest CLT Sign Off Date	Executive Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
Living Independently in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Alyson Hoskins	<b>Monitoring</b> Members to consider progress against the 8 priorities over the previous 12 months and beyond which are part of the overarching approach to service development.	Agenda Item	28.01.20	11.03.20	N/A
My Support Team (MyST)	Tanya Evans	<b>Monitoring</b> To update Members on the work undertaken and progress made by the My Support Team.	Agenda Item	28.01.20	Info Item – 11.03.20	N/A
<b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b>						
Annual Independent Reviewing Officer report	Tanya Evans	<b>Information</b> Statutory responsibility.	Information Item	28.01.20	Info Item - 11.03.20	N/A

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