

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **22nd April 2021**

Report Subject: **Living Independently in the 21st Century Strategy – Annual progress update 2020/21**

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

Report Submitted by: **Alyson Hoskins – Head of Adult Services (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)
25/03/21	6/04/21	13.04.21			22.04.21	FWP 2021/22		

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides an overview for Members on the 'Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century' Strategy. It considers the progress against the 8 priorities of the Strategy over the previous 12 months, including how the strategy continues to influence and drive the strategic priorities of Adult Services. It also highlights:

- The impact of the COVID pandemic has had on the key 8 priorities.
- Where the department has utilized available external funding to support these priority areas during the COVID pandemic
- Our planned partnership approach with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) to jointly review this strategy during 2021/22 due to the scheduled review not being undertaken this year due to COVID19 pandemic prioritisation of work load demands.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 Previous annual reports have identified the history of the Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century' strategy (appendix 1) since it was agreed by Council back in November 2006. The last report submitted prior to this report was January 2020.

2.2 Members are aware that it was developed with an emphasis on ensuring as a Local Authority we were in a position to address the increasing demands for services to older people over the next 15 years due to people living longer, with different aspirations and often complex illness. The strategy was developed with a strong emphasis on supporting citizens of Blaenau Gwent to live safely in their own home for as long as possible.

2.3 The 'Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century' Strategy was revised in 2012 in anticipation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales)

Act 2014 and a further revision was due to have been undertaken during 2020/21 at the end of the 15-year lifespan with a view to relaunching a further 5 to 10-year strategy from April 2022.

- 2.4 Unfortunately, this work was impacted by the COVID pandemic and capacity within Adult Services to undertake this significant and important task. However, the Local Authority has recently worked with colleagues in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) to secure funding, via the Welsh Government Transformation Grant, to employ a project lead to support this review. The post is currently being advertised by ABUHB and partnership approach to both the revision of the Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century' Strategy and the ABUHB Place Based Care Strategy is due to commence in May 2021 with a view to publishing the revised Strategy from April 22.
- 2.5 The Strategy identifies 8 priorities as part of the overarching approach to service development which are outlined below:
- **Priority 1 Long term care:** jointly with Health and other partners, make arrangements to meet the nursing, residential and dementia care needs of the older person population
 - **Priority 2 Reablement/Enabling services:** further develop this approach and recognise the contribution of other organisations, in progressing this service
 - **Priority 3 Day Opportunities/Community Options:** continuing development of everyday activities and opportunities to learn new skills or re-acquire skills through confidence building and tuition measures
 - **Priority 4 Assistive Technology:** promote and expand assistive technology supported by a rapid response service, capable of containing situations where no family carers are available
 - **Priority 5 Direct Payments:** promote and expand direct payments and empowering people to take responsibility for arranging their own care and support requirements
 - **Priority 6 Accommodation:** recognising the key role that appropriate housing plays on the well-being of older people. Work closely with partners to develop a range of suitable housing in Blaenau
 - **Priority 7 Carers:** providing accessible and timely support services responsive to individual need
 - **Priority 8 Domiciliary Care:** Ensuring provision of appropriate, reliable, quality services.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to scrutinise the report and how in future they would wish to receive through a reporting mechanism progress of this strategy.

3.2 **Option 1**- Endorse the report and the evidence provided to support progress in the 8 priority areas, albeit within the context of the unique 12-month period of the 2020/21 COVID pandemic, and for us to continue to provide progress updates on an annual basis to the scrutiny committee as outlined in this report.

3.3 **Option 2** – Members to recommend any additional information and/or an alternative methodology for reporting progress, challenges and opportunities during 2021/2022.

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

4.1 **Corporate Plan – 2018 to 2022.** The Living Independently in the 21st Century Strategy links to the key themes of the Corporate plan and in its promotion of resilient communities.

4.2 Blaenau Gwent Well-being plan

Priority area - enabling older people to feel valued and empowered to maximise their independence and lead healthy and engaged lives- this strategy is key in delivering this Wellbeing outcome including:

- **Thinking in the Long Term** - The strategy provides effective cooperation and partnership working between all agencies and organisations, including health, and is a key element of meeting the needs of older people living in Blaenau Gwent.
- **Taking an integrated approach** – The strategy promotes an integrated approach across Health, Social Care and the Third Sector.
- **Taking a preventative approach** – The strategy promotes preventative services including reablement and assistive technology as a model that promotes personal independence and management of a person's own wellbeing. The strategy delivers a preventative and early intervention approach to minimise the escalation of need and dependency on statutory services.
- **Collaborating** - The Strategy is clear that implementation is not only the responsibility of Social Services department but the whole Council and also of its partners including Health and Housing.
- **Involvement** - A key aspect of the strategy is ensuring people have a voice and control over their care and support to achieve the outcomes that are important to them.

5. Implications Against Each Option

- 5.1 **Option 1** – this will result in a report for 2021/22 being developed using a similar approach and methodology to that used for 2020/21. However, it is important to note that the overarching Strategy is due for a full review during 2021 and therefore it is anticipated that the report presented to Scrutiny in January 2022 will include a revised Living Independently in the 21st Century Strategy outlining priorities for future years.

During 2021/22 updates will continue to be provided using information contained in the tier 1 and 2 business plans, team briefings, progress reports and data from our Corporate Performance Team and feedback from any relevant regulatory reviews.

- 5.2 **Option 2** – the format and reporting mechanism for future reports will be amended to reflect additional information as requested by members.

- 5.3 **Legal** – there are no legal implications associated with this report. This strategy supports the delivery of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

- 5.4 **Human Resources** – there are no OD implications associated with this report. However, it is important to note that as previously reported to scrutiny we have a number of the posts funded using external funding (Integrated Care Fund/ Pace Setters funding / Transformation Funding) and we continue to have uncertainty from Welsh Government as to the availability of ongoing funding for these posts after March 2022. However a number of service reviews are due to be completed within Adults Services during the first 9 months of 2021/22 and these will propose a number of sustainability models for continuation funding for posts / services that are currently funded via temporary grant funding.

6. Supporting Evidence

Appendix 2 to this report provides a summary of activity relating to each of the 8 priority themes of the Strategy.

6.1 Expected Outcomes for the public

This strategy focusses on the development of services that promote Wellbeing and independence in their own homes which may or may not include a Care Home. It utilised the key principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 including:

- a. **Voice and control** – putting the individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control over reaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being.
- b. **Prevention and early intervention** – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need.
- c. **Well-being** – supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support.

- d. **Co-production** – encouraging individuals to become more involved in the design and delivery of services.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 An annual report to scrutiny/ executive is submitted. Progress is also monitored via the Adult Service Business Plans (tier 1 and 2) and Integrated Partnership Board Action plan.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Living Independently in the 21st Century Strategy (last updated in 2014)
- Appendix 2 - **Progress update 2020/21 - Living Independently in Blaenau Gwent in the 21st Century' Strategy**