



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION**

**SUBJECT:** Director of Social Services Annual Report

**PURPOSE OF ATTACHED REPORT:**

The Welsh Assembly Government published Statutory Guidance in June 2009 regarding the Duties and Accountabilities of Directors of Social Services in Wales. Amongst the Guidance was a requirement for the Director of Social Services to publish an Annual Report on the delivery, performance, risks and planned improvements of the Social Services function in the Council.

The attached report is the third RCT Director's Annual Report. The report is required to be subject to scrutiny and challenge by all stakeholders before presentation to the Cabinet for Final approval in July 2012.

**DELEGATED DECISION (Date):**

Approval is given for Consultation with staff, service users, carers and other stakeholders on the Director of Social Services 3rd Draft Annual Report.

  
Chief Officer Signature

Kent Griffiths  
Print Name

29.05.12  
Date

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.



Amelia Davis

28.5.2012

CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE

DATE

Michael Josey

28.5.2012

CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE

DATE



29<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

OFFICER CONSULTEE SIGNATURE

DATE

Directorate:	Community & Children's Services
Contact Name:	Ellis Williams
Designation:	Group Director, Community & Children's Services
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**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2012-13**  
**REPORT TO ACCOMPANY DECISION OF**  
**GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

<b>Part 1</b> <b>(Non-Confidential)</b>
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<b>DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES</b> <b>ANNUAL REPORT</b>
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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The Welsh Assembly Government published Statutory Guidance in June 2009 regarding the Duties and Accountabilities of Directors of Social Services in Wales. Amongst the Guidance was a requirement for the Director of Social Services to publish an Annual Report on the delivery, performance, risks and planned improvements of the Social Services function in the Council.
- 1.2 The attached report is the third RCT Director's Annual Report. The report is required to be subject to scrutiny and challenge by all stakeholders before presentation to the Cabinet for Final approval in July 2012.
- 1.3 In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended Officer decision of the Group Director, Community and Children's Services as described below.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that approval is given for Consultation with staff, service users, carers and other stakeholders on the Director of Social Services 3rd Draft Annual Report.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Welsh Assembly Government issued Statutory Guidance in June 2009 regarding the Duties and Accountabilities of Directors of Social Services in Wales. Under this Guidance each Local Authority in Wales is required to appoint a Statutory Director of Social Services.
- 3.2 In Rhondda Cynon Taf, the duties of the Director of Social Services are located within the role of Group Director (Community & Children's Services).
- 3.3 Amongst the duties laid out in the Guidance is the requirement for the Director of Social Services to produce an Annual Report.

3.4 The Guidance states,

*“The Director of Social Services must report annually to their Council on the delivery, performance and risk as well as plans for improvement of the whole range of Social Services functions. The report will have an important role in the development of the Council’s overarching Improvement Plan (WPI). The report and the underpinning evidence will inform the development of the CSSIW work programme for the authority including the overarching authority wide regulatory plan. It will be important that the report and underpinning evidence is shared at appropriate points in the cycle with CSSIW.”*

3.5 Each Authority has discretion as to the format of the report but it must: -

- be published as soon as possible after the end of the financial year to which it refers;
- report performance and risk and set out plans for improvement.

3.6 This is the 3rd Annual Director’s report published in Rhondda Cynon Taf and, at this stage, it is draft and yet to be subjected to the scrutiny and challenge process of all of the stakeholders interested in the performance of Social Services in the County Borough.

3.7 It is a draft and it will change as comments are received and amendments made before Cabinet deliberations and agreement to its content at its meeting in July 2012.

**Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
Director of Social Services Draft Annual Report  
2011/12**

Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Director of Social Services Annual Report for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Following the positive response to last year's slimmed down version of the Director's Annual Report I have decided to keep to that format and style. People seemed to welcome its brevity and clarity of purpose.

Social Services is a vitally important part of the services provided by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to promote the independence and protect the safety of vulnerable people in our communities, both young and old.

We employ over 3,400 people and spend about £150 million every year in every part of our Community. That is a big business in anyone's terms.

What we do matters to people and it is up to people like me and the entire team of staff at Rhondda Cynon Taf to make sure it is the best possible service it can be. We don't do this in isolation, we do our work in partnership with a whole range of agencies, carers and service users. We work best when we work together.

Inside the report I briefly summarise some of the main achievements from last year and look ahead to what we need to do in 2012/13.

The report is in draft while we undertake a period of Consultation on its contents. The final report will be published after people in Rhondda Cynon Taf have had opportunity to comment on it and changes made.

Let me know what you think about the report by e-mailing me at:

[acrf.challenge@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:acrf.challenge@rctcbc.gov.uk)

or by mail to: -

The Director of Social Services  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
The Pavilions  
Cambrian Park  
Clydach Vale  
CF40 2XX

I would be pleased to receive your comments by Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2012

**Ellis Williams**  
**Director of Social Services &**  
**Group Director (Community & Children's Services)**

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# **Director's Summary**

## **National Context**

Social Services continues to find itself in a period of change and challenge.

In February 2011 The Welsh Assembly Government, as it was then, published "Sustainable Social Services for Wales – A Framework for Action", sometimes referred to as the "White Paper" – a radical and comprehensive strategy for the future of Social Services in Wales with important and significant statements about the national, regional and local direction for the regulation, commissioning and delivery of services in the future.

Just over a year on, the Welsh Government published its consultation on the first Social Services (Wales) Bill in its history converting the aspirations of the White Paper into proposed legislative action. Significantly this was launched here in Rhondda Cynon Taf at the service user run DEWIS (Centre for Independent Living) in Nantgarw by the Deputy Minister.

Local Government responded positively to the proposals in the White Paper and is now engaged at the highest level in working with Government to deliver on its aspirations.

Local Government is being expected to deliver collaborative services nationally and regionally and reduce the number of Partnerships it operates with. It is not expected that Social Services will in future be organised and delivered by 22 separate Departments of Social Services.

Progress on this national agenda has not been without teething problems although some of the infrastructure at the highest level has been established – a National Safeguarding Board for Adults & Children and a Ministerially led National Social Services Partnership Forum. The more operational elements such as the establishment of a National Adoption service, a National Contract for residential and non-residential services, a National Outcomes Framework for measuring performance and a National Eligibility Framework are still work in progress. We have seen progress however with the establishment of a National Career Pathway for Social Workers, now agreed nationally by the Association of Directors of Social services Cymru, and shortly to be considered by the Joint Council in Wales.

On a regional basis where Welsh Government expect to see regional commissioning of specialist services, regional support service infrastructure and regional Local Safeguarding Children Boards, we have made good progress. Agreement has been reached to merge the Merthyr Tydfil & Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and full merger will take place in the summer of 2012. The two Authorities Adult Safeguarding Boards have already merged. 2011/12 also saw the emergence of another Regional resource based in Aberdare – the Regional Adult Service Procurement Service which will procure and commission specialist Adult provision on behalf of 10 Local Authorities in South Wales.



On a local basis there are no proposals to change Local Authority accountability for Social Services but there are expectations regarding reductions in complexity, reinforcement of the need for integration with Health in Adult Services, a drive for citizen run services and the development of social enterprises. We have devoted significant time and resources in working on the Health Integration agenda in the last year.

## **Review of Achievements in 2011/12**

In Children's Services the pressure has been relentless on front line staff and their managers. As with the rest of Wales, indeed the UK, we have continued to see increased numbers of children & young people needing the care of the Local Authority and child protection registrations are at record levels. There has been some easement of the rate of growth in these numbers put given the continuing poor economic outlook and concerns about the impact of the Welfare Reforms, there's little room for optimism that we are through the worst of the storm. Where we have been successful in 2011/12 has been in recruiting and retaining qualified social work staff in RCT. They form the bedrock of our response to front line pressures so very low levels of vacancies is very good news indeed. It is vital we continue to be successful in this work and we are working hard locally to ensure excellent Continuing Professional & Learning Opportunities are provided for our staff to ensure their development & retention. Childrens Services continues to play an active role in Regional and Local initiatives and are key players in the support to Families First initiatives such as "Team around the Family" which is in the process of being rolled out to CANOPI areas in RCT.

In Adult Services we have been taking really important strides forward in our integrated working with Health, particularly around Hospital Discharge, where we have been actively promoting Reablement services to people leaving Hospital with really encouraging results. On a wider front throughout 2011/12 we have been working with Health on the development of a more integrated model of working which will strategically locate the independence agenda right at the heart of Adult Services. Always looking to innovate, the Service has been piloting work with the Alzheimers Association with people with dementia in residential settings and early signs of the "Butterfly project" promise benefits to service users and staff. Other evidence of innovation include the introduction of the electronic social care record across adult services which will be completed during 2012 and in August 2011 the Team Managers developed a set of 10 Quality Assurance standards as part of a wider Quality Assurance programme to promote person centred approaches to their work. The Council also published and consulted on its 2011-2104 Adult Commissioning Strategy after extensive service user involvement in its development.

On the Partnership agenda, the LSB Strategic Review of Partnerships has moved from analysis to action and foundations have been put in place for the creation of the Single Plan to replace existing Statutory plans such as the Children & Young people's Plan & the Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Strategy. The transition from Cymorth funding to Families First funding has been managed with significant change to many, but with the minimum of fuss. The Council established a Scrutiny Working party of Members to review the Governance of Fframwaith and a set of

recommendations for the Children & Young People's Partnership to consider in 2012/13.

Finally some good news to report with regard to external acknowledgement of the quality of our services. RCT was successful in two of the eight award categories at the 2011 Social Care Accolades event having been shortlisted in three. These are highly esteemed awards and we are very proud of all the finalists and particularly pleased to have two winners of course:-

- "Together Improving Life Skills' project where staff worked closely with people with learning disabilities to help them learn the skills needed to live independently. Staff received training to enable them to deliver a wide variety of teaching methods to help users gain a nationally recognised qualification in Practical Life Skills.
- The Staff Development & Training Team at Heddfan for their successful development of post-qualification social work training at the University of Glamorgan meeting practice needs based on discussions with staff. The training has helped to maintain high standards of service delivery and improve the quality of frontline social work practice to ensure users receive the best support possible.

## **Challenges Ahead**

Last year I made mention of any reference to the future being set within the most demanding of economic circumstances for services users, their families, voluntary organisations, statutory bodies, private contractors and indeed the Council. This context hasn't changed and certainly hasn't improved.

Welfare Benefit Reforms have been estimated to cause a potential loss of income in the County Borough of £30 million which, if realised, will have a profound impact on our hard pressed communities and their need for our services. It makes it even more important that we, in Social Services, make sure we spend wisely every pound we have, promote our agenda for promoting independence to build resilience in our communities and our agenda for public protection such that the most vulnerable are cared for in these difficult times.

As an organisation we need to listen to the messages given to us by our Inspection bodies, make those policy, procedural and organisational changes deemed necessary to ensure we are fit for purpose across all our services and most importantly listen to our service users so that we are providing the person centred service that they need and require.

The Welsh Government's White Paper "Sustainable Social Services: Framework for Action" and The Social Services (Wales) Bill which will convert its aspirations into a new legal framework will present Local Government Social Services with an unprecedented spectrum of challenges and changes which we need to negotiate and deliver in the best interests of the people of Rhondda Cynon Taf. I believe, despite the issues we will have to overcome, we are in good shape to meet that challenge.

## **Priority Actions for 2012/13**

We are required, as a Social Services Authority, to carry out an annual self assessment of our aims, strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities and it is from this analysis that our priority actions are determined. In this process we take into account our understanding of future trends, pressures and demands, the views of our inspectors, our staff, our service users and other interested stakeholders.

Not every action is presented in this report, indeed the report itself is a high level summary of a much more detailed set of actions being carried out by individual Services in the Group. But the report should give you a clear sense of what we collectively, and by service, are concentrating our efforts on.

Specific Service Priority Actions are located in the Children and Adult Services sections of this report but there are a small number of priority actions which cut across all services which are managed at Group Management Team level: -

- We need to ensure value for money and deliver operational efficiencies that protect front line services
- We need to continue to seek out opportunities where collaboration with other Agencies would deliver efficiencies and service improvement
- We need to ensure that we have good quality assurance processes operating in services to deliver the best quality services we can
- We need to ensure the voice of service users and carers are heard and in particular that they are able to communicate with us in the language of their choice

## **Adult Services**

The aim of Adult Services is to support people in Rhondda Cynon Taf to lead independent and healthy lives in strong and vibrant communities and to provide protection to vulnerable adults living in the County Borough.

### **Achievements in 2011/12**

This year has seen considerable pressures on our key budget areas of domiciliary and residential care resulting from demographic pressures and changes in policy e.g. Continuing Health Care policy. It's pleasing to report that the number of people receiving a direct payment has increased by 6% this year which represents about 11% of people who receive a domiciliary or day service from the Council.

We continue to develop our reablement service and this year has seen a 20% increase in re-ablement packages. We have piloted in one of the District General hospitals changed pathways for hospital discharge directly to a single point of access within the reablement service. This is leading to earlier discharge for patients with 40% of people going to the reablement service and being discharged within one day of referral. The savings to the LHB has been at least 850 bed days. In November we extended the pathway to include a person with a cognitive impairment.

The waiting list for people with a sensory disability has reduced from 213 people to 100 people. The number of people waiting for a Community Occupational Therapist assessment reduced by 100 this year. A third of the COT assessments are completed within 28 days of referral. Despite 55% of referrals for more simple equipment being completed within 28 days there continues to be an increase in demand for this service placing considerable pressure on resources

Existing partnership arrangements have been strengthened and coordination improved by replacing the RCT Area Adult Protection Committee with a Joint Adult Safeguarding Board for RCT and Merthyr Tydfil with representation from all appropriate agencies

In Learning Disability Services we have developed two new models of extra care type support in Penygraig, Rhondda and Ynysybwl in the Cynon Valley. We have developed, in conjunction with the local college, Coleg Morgannwg, a qualification framework for people with learning disabilities. We have also established an Older Carers Support scheme in partnership with the voluntary sector to support older carers.

### **Priority Areas for 2012/13**

- Implement changes to the Adult Service structure to promote independence and integration of services with Health
- Implement the Welsh Government Mental Health Measure in partnership with Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- Implement the Adult Services Commissioning strategy
- Develop new community based services that provide an alternative to hospital admission
- Develop opportunities for extending the use of Telehealth technology through integrated working with the Health Board.

# Children's Services

Children's Services are at the heart of the Council's business. As such, one of the Council's key priorities within its Wales Programme for Improvement plan is: -

*"Keeping all children and young people safe and improving the life chances of vulnerable children"*

## Achievements in 2011/2012

Staff at levels of Children's Services have been subjected to very significant increases in demand in 2010/11 but have responded magnificently to that challenge. Two figures are particularly significant - The numbers of Initial assessments which increased by 24% and the number of children subject to Child Protection Registration which increased by 47% in the period December 2010 – December 2011. Despite the scale of this additional demand, teams achieved excellent results in achieving and exceeding targets in front line services such as reducing re-referrals by 6%, Core assessments exceeded by 24% and initial Child Protection Conferences exceeding target by 15%. Overall Children's Services achieved 83% of performance targets, a further 4% of targets were within 5% and 13% did not achieve target by more than 5%.

The efforts of staff have been appreciated by the Council and additional resources have been made available to the Service Director for Children's Services, despite the stringent budget difficulties facing the Council, as part of a comprehensive £1 million service investment programme for Looked After Children. We have strengthened our management of preventive services by the creation of a new post of Head of Prevention which should give us additional capacity to support front line services.

Despite all the additional pressures we have not lost our focus on ensuring the protection of children and, working with other agencies in and outside of the Council, our Safeguarding Action Plan continues to drive our work on ensuring compliance with recommendations of the Victoria Climbié, Baby Peter and outcomes of Serious Case Reviews.

## Priority Areas for 2012/13

- Increase the ratio of qualified to unqualified workers;
- Develop new preventative initiatives based on best-practice and contribute to the CANOPI and Team Around the Family (TAF) strategies
- Pilot the new Care & Social Services Inspectorate (CSSIW) sponsored Serious Case Review framework
- Integrate the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Safeguarding Children Board with Merthyr Tydfil
- Introduce new procedures for responding to and reducing the significant harm to children resulting from neglect.