



Annual Report on 'Social Services' 2016 / 2017

**This Report is available in other languages and
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Contents

Section 1:	Welcome and Introduction	3 4
Section 2:	Director's Summary of Performance	5 6
Section 3:	How are people shaping our services	7
Section 4:	Promoting and Improving the wellbeing of those we help	8 26
■	Working with people to define and co-produce personal wellbeing outcomes that people wish to achieve	8 - 12
■	Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing	12 - 15
■	Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm	15 - 18
■	Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society	18 - 21
■	Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships	21 - 23
■	Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic wellbeing have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs	23 - 26
Section 5:	How we do what we do	27 29
■	Our workforce and how we support their professional roles	27
■	Our financial resources and how we plan for the future	28
■	Our partnership working, political and corporate leadership, governance and accountability	28 - 29
Section 6:	Accessing further information and key documents	30

Section 1: Welcome and Introduction

As our Council's Chief Officer (Statutory Director) of Social Services, it is part of my job to report to you every year on how well our Social Services department is working and how well we are performing in helping to provide services to those who need care and support.

This year's report for 2016 to 2017 looks and feels different from previous reports as we are setting out our achievements in how we have promoted and improved the well-being of those people we help. As part of this report, I set out how we are performing, the developments and challenges we have encountered, and our priorities for the next 12 months.

All local authorities continue to face significant financial pressures and we have been working hard to achieve the savings the Council needs whilst doing our best to ensure that the services we provide to you are not adversely affected. Changing the way we work, doing more across the wider region with other public bodies, service providers and the third sector is one way of being smarter in how we deliver. This is in line with the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act which was implemented in April 2016. As you will be aware from last year's annual report this was a significant piece of legislation designed to change the relationship between the Local Authority, its partner organisations and you.

We have taken steps to ensure that whichever type of care and support you need, we start by asking what is it about your relationship, community and life that matters to you and we will focus on your well-being and quality of life. The principles of voice and control, prevention and early intervention, well-being, co-production, and integration are at the heart of this new legislation. We want to help people to achieve a higher level of well-being. It also means helping people to help themselves, to make better choices and access different types of support.

As part of the new Act, the information we collect and the way in which we collect has changed. We have been gathering additional information and reporting on the difference we are making on peoples' lives, which has contributed to how we are judging our performance. The use of "well-being standards" means that we take a wider account of the impact that our services are having on people's lives, their place in their communities, family relationships, access to work and education, protecting people from harm. Because of doing things differently we are recording different information and considering the impact of services on people, asking ourselves "*what difference have we made to people's lives?*"

It is worth noting that 2016 also saw the introduction of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The Act aims to improve the social, economic and cultural well-being of Wales by placing a duty on public bodies to think in a more sustainable and long term way. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals that public bodies must work to achieve and take into consideration across their decision making. The Act has been put in place to make sure that public services are doing all that they can to support people using care and support services to have their say and get involved in managing their own wellbeing. It means that public services will need to make sure that the right support is available for the people who need it at the right time and in the right way. This act will have an impact on how we work moving forward as we need to consider the impact that decisions will have on people living in Wales in the future.

As a result of the two Acts that were implemented in April 2016 (the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act) population needs assessments were completed during the year, with a view to drawing up a well-being plan for the future based on the population needs.

The Population Needs Assessment was undertaken on a regional basis across the Cwm Taf region of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf and considered the following:

- the needs for care and support, and the support needs of carers;
- the extent to which those needs are not being met;
- the range and level of services needed to meet those needs; and
- how services are delivered through the medium of Welsh.

As part of our joint working arrangements on a Cwm Taf regional basis, we have been collecting lots of information as part of the Assessment, from a variety of sources. This includes the people making policy and commissioning decisions about services, the people delivering services and the people receiving services. In order to look at all of this information in an organised way, we used the seven 'client' groups of the Act:

- Carers;
- Children and young people;
- Learning disability;
- Mental Health;
- Older people;
- Physical disability and sensory impairment; and
- Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We then spent some time, talking with these people about the headlines that emerged and really thinking about how they affect people and what we in public services can do to meet the needs of people using our services, in the best possible way, now and in the future.

As a result of this work and the needs of the service we have set a number of priorities for next year, which are outlined in the report below.

Finally, I would like to offer my personal thanks to all the dedicated staff who work very hard to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. This year has been particularly challenging with the introduction of two major pieces of legislation, but staff have embraced the changes and worked hard to ensure that we are compliant with the Act. Thank you to everyone.



Mrs Lisa Curtis-Jones

Chief Officer (Social Services) - Statutory Director of Social Services

Section 2: Director's Summary of Performance

As outlined above last year saw the implementation of the SS & WB (Wales) Act 2014. As a council we undertook a significant programme of preparation in 2014 and 2015 in readiness for commencement of the new legislation from April 2016. This included strengthening governance and performance management arrangements, putting Community Coordinators in place to support people to access services in the Voluntary Sector, establishing a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), developing a Joint Commissioning Statement for Older people and developing an Information and Advice service. Also preparatory work took place for the new statutory Partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the Cwm Taf University Health Board which was completed and established from May 2016. At the end of March 2017 we undertook an evaluation of the progress we have made in the implementation of the Act. The evaluation highlights some of the areas we have made significant progress in and those we need to progress further in the future. An action plan has been developed and these areas are now being addressed as a priority.

Both pieces of legislation require us to work more closely with our partners and collaboration. I feel this area of work has made good progress over the last year. There is more of a dialogue now with partners and working together at every opportunity. The Intermediate Care Fund has enabled us to work together with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Cwm Taf University Health Board to develop new initiatives to provide better services to the public. The population needs assessment were completed together and plans have been drawn up on a local and regional basis for future working in Merthyr Tydfil and Cwm Taf as a whole. Many of our services are run on a collaborative basis now making it more effective and efficient, examples include the Integrated Family Support Team, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board, Workforce Development Team, Youth Offending Team, Deprivation of Liberty service, Adoption Service and the new Stay Well @ Home service.

Overall our social services team alongside our colleagues across the council and in partnership with others has delivered effective services to a wide range of people. One of our goals is to ensure that people in Merthyr Tydfil are helped to lead independent and fulfilled lives and can enjoy doing the things that are important to them and be full and active citizens in their local communities. This means that we will always strive to work with you to identify "what matters" to you, to avoid crises, and how we and our partners can help you achieve your personal outcomes.

Tackling poverty is one of the Council's corporate priorities and one which we in Social Services are proud to contribute to. This year has seen the setting up of the Tackling Poverty Steering Group and Board which consists of representatives from the third sector, health, leisure, housing, social services, environmental services, social and economic regeneration and education colleagues. The steering group and board completed a piece of significant work to develop a wider understanding of all the grant resources received by the council to address the poverty agenda. Alongside this the prevention and early intervention resources have been mapped against the individual priorities of the grants or have been identified locally. The information collated was shared with an internal working group which consisted of representatives of directorates across the council in order to consider the future direction of the poverty programmes.

As a result of the new structure and the Tackling Poverty Strategic Group it is intended that more efficient and effective use of resources can be developed to drive key priorities for the council and the poverty agenda by investigating opportunities for joint commissioning of preventative services. The Strategic group will be seeking to agree a set of shared outcomes across the tackling Poverty agenda in order to support a Tackling Poverty Action plan for Merthyr Tydfil. This will equip the strategic group with the ability to measure the impact of the approach being taken and of how this has impacted on the desired outcomes. The group will also be striving to establish value for money assessments against service areas and the potential cost benefit analysis of the preventative approach.

Employability programmes are part of the tackling poverty agenda and helping people get better access to employment, education and housing are all ways in which we can promote people's independence, improve their wellbeing and quality of life. As part of our reporting we have set out how we are contributing to this measurement of a person's wellbeing.

As part of our strategic planning we said that by 2017 we wanted to see a gradual improvement in the proportion of the adult population that could live independently in their own communities, where they feel safe and can contribute. We said that we would try to achieve this, using preventative and early intervention services, and reducing the numbers of people who need to move to new areas and homes. The report sets out a range of activities where this has been achieved.

We are also ambitious about the opportunities and future of children in Merthyr. As part of our overall plan we wanted to ensure that vulnerable children in Merthyr Tydfil:

- live healthy, safe and fulfilled lives;
- have access to effective early intervention and prevention services to support more children at an early stage before problems escalate; and
- we reduce the levels of children in need, looked after children, and children on the child protection register, which are currently among the highest in Wales.

We said we would aim to achieve this by improving practitioner tools for making sound judgements when children are at risk of abuse or neglect, delivering an effective Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service for Children and their Families, further developing our Enhanced Children in Need (ECIN) Service, and continuing the work of the Looked After Children Preventative Strategy. Again, I am pleased with the progress we have secured and this report sets out how and why.

You will see that included in this report is some of that information and how it is different to the information we have collected in previous years. In Merthyr, we believe that the value of this information, is how we use it to improve your experiences and how the services we provide can be truly person centred to help you achieve your wellbeing.

Section 3: How are people shaping our services?

We place a high value on the engagement we have with local people, not just in evaluating how successful we are in delivering services that they need but in helping us to design what we are able to provide at the start.

People can help shape the services they use in a variety of ways. As part of our commitments under the new law we have set up, in partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and Cwm Taf University health board, a new Citizen's Panel to help us understand if what we are doing works, and to ensure that people contribute to the big issues we face. During 2016/17 we engaged with people through:

- A young people's citizen panel to consider the perspective of looked after children which led to the development of the Life Journey Project for children and young people who are looked after.
- Involving looked after young people in developing a Strategy for Success and made sure that they influence what we are doing to make sure looked after young people achieve well in education and have a pathway to work.
- Listening to what young people told us about how they would like to receive information, advice and assistance.
- An adult citizen panel that considered the perspective of service users and carers with regards to integrated services. The outcome of this has supported the development of the Stay Well @ Home service and reinforced the need to ensure that we are linked into the new WCCIS system.
- An adult citizen panel that considered the perspective of service users and carers to support the wider engagement of the public with regards to the development of the Population Needs assessment which will have a big impact in understanding our area, demands and requirements for services.
- An adult citizen panel that considered the perspective of services users and carers regarding the workforce and workforce development. The outcome of which will be used as part of the training needs analysis for the Social Care Workforce Development Partnership.

Also as part of the new performance indicators looking generally at performance across the service a number of surveys were sent out to service users so we could gather their views and feedback about the services they have received. Unfortunately we didn't have a high number of returns on these surveys that could be of value to assist in future development of services. We will need to explore in the following year alternative methods to engage with the public in a more effective way.

Section 4: Promoting and improving the wellbeing of those we help

The well-being of those we help and outcomes that people want to achieve are at the heart of our approach to delivering sustainable social services. Because of the new legislation we have been working hard to ensure that we are equipped to meet its aim of supporting the well-being of people who need care and support and carers who need support. We want to ensure that citizens have a voice and real control over their own lives, where they can inform us about those things that matter to them. This means working in partnership across other council departments, and with external partners, shaping local services according to local needs and circumstances.

This section is the main part of the report setting out our performance in promoting and improving the well-being of local people who need care and support. All local councils are now required to demonstrate how their work is linked to the six National Quality Standards for wellbeing, and in doing so set out the priorities we identified for delivery over the past 12 months, plus additional priority actions related to new ways of working. Importantly this is about outlining how we have made progress, provided evidence and real life examples of the impact on people, as well as setting out priorities for 2017/18.

One of our goals is to ensure that people in Merthyr Tydfil are helped to lead independent and fulfilled lives and can enjoy doing the things that are important to them and be full and active citizens in their local communities. This means that we will always strive to work with you to identify “what matters” to you, to avoid crises, and how we and our partners can help you achieve your personal outcomes. Importantly we will continuously strive to improve the quality of services we provide.

Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

What did we plan to do last year?

Last year we wanted to make sure that what we did made a real difference to people's lives. This meant helping people to solve their problems as quickly and effectively as possible. For example, we gave Information, Advice and or Assistance to people and helped them find their own solutions. 85.35% of adults who contacted us didn't need any further help from us in the following year.

In 2016/17 we identified the following priority areas of work:

- Implementation of the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service to help people access support before problems become worse.
- Improving the process of hospital discharge as ways we would help people to become more independent.
- Further develop the enhanced child in need service to make sure that we could provide the right intensive support to families whose children might otherwise have been on the 'edge of care'.

- Improve practitioner tools for making sound judgements when children are at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Continue the work of the Children Looked After Prevention Strategy to make sure we fully consider every opportunity for a child to live safely with their family in their home community.

Our plans for last year focused on making sure that we had a robust Information Advice and Assistance service in place for April 2016. It was also important that all our staff had the right skills and resources to help people identify “what matters” to them.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

In implementing an effective IAA service, we have recruited two support workers into the ‘front door’ to deal with children services queries and information, advice and assistance. This links with the Children’s Intake and Assessment team and the preventative service known as MIA. We have also refined our arrangements for the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance for adults in Merthyr Tydfil. The aim of this service is to help people resolve their queries and improve their circumstances as quickly as possible, by signposting and connecting people with local community services. Work has been undertaken to improve access to information and advice which has included the updating of the information available on the MTCBC website and the regional implementation of the DEWIS information website. There is also ‘our Cwm Taf’ portal where information can be accessed regards the Public Service Board and the Population Needs Assessments.

The Adult Duty Team acts as the gateway to Adult Social care and provides Information Advice and Assistance. In 2016, the information and advice services received 1123 requests for information from people in Merthyr Tydfil. Of those people 701 (62%) received advice or assistance and did not need any further help from Social Services for at least a further 6 months.

As well as staff based in social services Community Co-ordinators have also been employed in the Initial Support Service to support people in accessing the right amount of support in their local communities. Their role is to work with people in local communities to access community and voluntary services and to help establish new groups and services that meet people’s needs.

We also reviewed the provision of Information Advice and Assistance to see how well it was performing and what further improvements could be made. This will help us in developing and extending the service, particularly in relation to regional collaboration with Cwm Taf partners and agreeing an IAA strategy and commissioning plan.

During this year staff began using the new eligibility criteria and working with you to co-produce and agree your personal outcomes, so that we support you to achieve your well-being. This has meant our assessment forms and Care and Support plans, or Support plans if you are a Carer, look very different to the old style we used. If you already have services, when we review your Care plan, we will have a “what matters” conversation with you then and record your views, using the new Care and Support plan.

In 2016-17 we sought the views of adults who had a care and support plan to give us some detailed feedback about their experience.

In our surveys and conversations with people receiving support from us, we asked how those services and support could be improved, what you would like us to do more of and what you would like us to do differently.

In the boxes below are some of the questions we asked you about your experience and your answers.

Collecting this information is important to us, so we can try and put it right when you tell us you are not happy with your services or experience or you would like them to be different. We also need to know when we are successful to ensure that the services you are receiving are effective.

Key:



people were happy with the service



people were sometimes happy with the service they received



people were unhappy with the service they received







people weren't sure about the quality of the service they received, or didn't answer the question

Out of the 315 adults we asked only 149 people replied and they said if they ...	You said you were:				We will/did
knew who to contact about their care and support.	112	9	16	12	Increase the information we provide; how you can find it and increase the number of Community Coordinators to help you.
had the right information or advice when they needed it.	113	16	5	15	Make sure we ask you how.
had been actively involved in decisions about how their care and support was provided.	104	22	8	15	Make sure we ask how you would like to be involved more.
were treated with dignity and respect.	119	8	0	22	Make sure our staff continue to do this and ask people at the time if they are happy with the way they are spoken to.
were happy with the care and support they had.	121	15	4	8	Ask you would have made a difference.

In 2016 we improved our performance in relation to the number of assessments we completed within the specified timescale. We are very proud of our performance in this area, which has been consistently high.

For children and young people:

- Between April 2016 and December 2016 97% of our assessments for children were completed within the statutory timescale.
- During the year we initially saw a reduction in the number of children who were looked after. Part way through the year the service faced an increase in the number of children for whom there was no safe alternative but to become looked after leading to an increase in the number of looked after children from 141 on March 2016 to 146 in March 2017.
- We invested in 2 new social workers and a support worker in the Early Intervention Team (which is the new name for the Enhanced Child in Need Service) to make sure that as many families as possible would benefit from this way of working.
- We have also developed new guidance for practitioners involved in assessments and decisions about safeguarding risks to children.

We Asked 91 children (age 7-18) if....	You said you were:				We will/did
					
they had the right information or advice when they needed it.	38	1	10	42	Continue to develop IAA and listen to young people about what matters to them. Work has been undertaken with Young people in Merthyr Tydfil to help design a wellbeing website.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

As part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring that we work with people of all ages to identify their personal outcomes and work with them to co-produce a plan of how these will be met we will:

- Maintain our good record of assessing the needs of children within the required timescales.
- Continue to improve the information advice and assistance services to provide people with greater control over how their care & support needs are met.
- Work with you to find better and more immediate ways in which you can tell us what you think about our services and how we can improve our conversations with you, during our assessments, care and support planning and reviews of services. This will involve thinking of different ways in which we can communicate, using the wide range of face to face, written and electronic technology to help us.
- Develop our arrangements for an Independent Professional Advocacy service for adults to ensure we are supporting adults in this area and that our approach is consistent with the new law.
- Carry out further work aimed at reducing the number of children who need to be looked after.
- Work in a co-productive way to improve our Information, Advice and Assistance service to children and families so that they have the right early help at the right time.
- Improve stability for looked after young people and the number of foster carers that are available to look after them so that there are fewer unplanned moves for looked after young people.

- Make sure that looked after young people and care leavers have the educational support that they need to be successful and ready for work.
- Continue development of the stay well @ home service to ensure that people receive the right care at the right time in the right place and prevent inappropriate admissions to hospital.

Links to Wellbeing Objectives:

Best Start to Life

BS 1 Children get the best start to life

Living Well

LW 3 People live independently

Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

What did we plan to do last year?

Last year we said we would:

- Continue to work across the region with our partners in Cwm Taf University Health Board and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the Third Sector to improve outcomes for older people, those with a learning disability and carers.
- Help people avoid being admitted to hospital and to be able to safely leave hospital, more quickly by using our Reablement and Hospital Discharge services better.
- Want to achieve sustainable levels of exercise and physical activity and have positive improvement in the health and wellbeing of residents in Merthyr Tydfil.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

During 2016/17, we have been working with local people to find out what it is that will help people become healthier, happy and are able to lead fulfilled lives. As part of our development of the Statement of Intent for services for people with a Learning Disability we have undertaken focus groups with service users and their carers across the region to find out how these services can be improved to support them to achieve what matters to them. The meetings were very productive and the views of the people participating in the focus groups have been incorporated in to the future shape of services for people with a learning disability.

Throughout the past year we have been working with Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC; Cwm Taf University Health Board and 3rd sector partners on a variety of different initiatives. Some of these included:

- Joint commissioning of a new domiciliary care contract with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council that is more outcome based. This has allowed us to work with providers to deliver a sustainable and secure range of services that supports people in their own homes. It has also provided employment and financial stability to people working in Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf area.
- Undertaking the preparatory work for the development of the Stay Well@Home service- this is a regional service to prevent people from being admitted to hospital, by identifying people in A&E or on assessment wards who may need support to be safe at home, but who don't need to stay in hospital. It involves social workers, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists and uses support from community nursing services and Age Concern Hospital Discharge service to get people back into their own home as soon as possible and on the way to regaining their independence. It has also meant that alternative provision and capacity for people to stay in their own homes and communities has been achieved, as well as helping people to stay in control of their lives and need less long term help from Health or Social Services.

This year we have used money from Welsh Government's Intermediate Care Fund to extend our Reablement services. This service is a vital part of the Council's preventative strategy and is about helping people in Merthyr to be as well, as they can be, have as much choice and control over their lives, for as long as possible. Reablement services gives people the confidence to look after themselves, so they either need less help, or are completely independent and don't need any long term support from local authority services. This has meant we have been able to both avoid people being admitted to hospital unnecessarily and reduce the number of people whose discharge from hospital was delayed, despite increasing demand on Cwm Taf University Health Board.

Here are some of the things you said about our Reablement service.





Quote from someone who used the Reablement service:

"I was surprised and delighted with the service from the Reablement team. They have made all the difference in the world to me. After I had a fall there was no-one to help me and I was on my own for over 20 hours. Once the Reablement team stepped in, they have helped me rebuild my confidence; I now have rails upstairs so I can get from the bathroom to my bedroom safely and if I do fall again, I now have a Falls bracelet so someone will know when I need help and will contact my neighbor. It means that both my son and I have peace of mind."

We are also pleased to report that over the past 12 months we have continued to:

- Support more people to live independently without a statutory care and support package.
- Increase the number of carers who were assessed or re-assessed in their own right during the year who were provided with a service.
- Reduce the number of people in residential or nursing homes despite the increasing age of the over 65+ population.
- Provide services to children and young people where our staff have worked hard to ensure that over 90% of children have been registered with a GP within 10 working days of their placement in care. However, we have only been able to ensure that 50% of those children who were looked after, have been registered with a dentist within 3 months of being looked after. This is something we are not satisfied with and will be working hard to improve this performance in 2017/18.

Information we received when asking adults about their care and support plans:

We asked you if...	You said you were:				We will/did
					
you can do the things you like to do.	70	17	2	2	Continue to explore the things you like to do when developing your care and support plan.
you know who to speak to about your care and support plan.	77	5	4	5	Make it clearer who people need to speak to about their care and support.
your views about your care and support have been listened to.	65	12	4	10	Work with staff to ensure that people's views are taken into account.
you were treated with dignity and respect.	84	5	0	2	Continue to treat people with dignity and respect when working with them.

In promoting physical health, the sports development team has been working with children as young as 12 months. This work takes place in traditional settings like leisure centres and non-traditional settings such as libraries and pre-school provision. The work in the non-traditional settings involves developing the physical literacy approach of providing the children with fundamental movement skills around running, jumping, catching, throwing etc. The aim is to build confidence and social abilities.

The Sports Development Team aims to build capacity within providers to ensure consistent delivery of the physical literacy approach across Merthyr Tydfil. This involves working with schools. The support to schools includes training and mentoring to develop capacity and a consistent pathway through the physical literacy journey, from nursery through to primary schools to enthuse young people about the health benefits of sport and activity.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

In 2017-18 it is our intention to:

- Continue to work in partnership to develop services to support people to be more independent to prevent reliance on services and achieve more control over their lives.
- Increase the number of people who don't need ongoing support for more than 6 months after they have had a rehabilitation service.
- Increase the number of people we support, who are caring for an adult or older person.
- Develop a regional statement of commissioning intent for people with a learning disability of all ages.
- Develop a regional market position statement of the care home sector to provide a basis for the future development of a range of care homes to meet the future needs of the people living within Cwm Taf.

- Undertake a pilot scheme providing social care support officers in GP practices so that they can receive advice and assistance before reaching crisis.
- Ensure we provide the right accommodation to meet peoples' needs to support them to live independently.
- Maintain the progress we have made in relation to GP health care for our Looked After Children.
- Increase the number of Looked After Children registered and able to access dental care.
- Support a greater number of young people using the IAA and preventative services.

Links to Wellbeing Objectives:

Best Start to Life

BS 1 Children get the best start to life

Working Life

WL 1 Making skills work for Merthyr Tydfil: Developing the workforce of the future

Living Well

LW 2 People have good physical and mental health

LW 3 People live independently

Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

In Merthyr we believe that all children, young people and adults at risk have the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve to be free from abuse. We have a range of duties to help safeguard: children; people with physical, visual mental or learning disability; older people who are frail or ill, people in houses or relationships where there may be domestic violence; and, children who may be sexually exploited. We have set out that by 2018, we want to have effective early intervention and preventative services that help reduce the levels of children in need of care and support, looked after children, and children on the child protection register, which are currently among the highest in Wales.

In collaboration with our partners in the Cwm Taf region we ensure that:

- We respond promptly to new concerns about adults and children at risk.
- Our staff are training to spot the signs of abuse and know what action they need to take.
- We ask people who have experienced the safeguarding service for their views and how it could be improved.
- We regularly review what we have done and challenge ourselves to find ways in which we can improve.
- All staff who are employed by us are safe to work with children and adults at risk.

What did we plan to do last year?

These were the priorities we identified for delivery in 2016/17:

- Continue the work under the Looked After Child Prevention Strategy, making sure that we always consider family first and placements close to home.
- Maintain and improve our performance in safeguarding vulnerable people and children, through continuous learning of staff and extending their understanding of safeguarding responsibilities under the new Act.
- Implement the review of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and collaborations with our Cwm Taf regional partners.
- Implement *In search of Accountability* review.
- Work with families and young people to minimize risks and avoid crises through the Integrated Family Support Team to help families experiencing difficulties, especially people affected by domestic violence and Substance Misuse.

Did You Know?

The Cwm Taf Integrated Family Support Service is an integrated service with Rhondda Cynon Taf. It supports families who are affected by substance misuse (alcohol and or drugs) and people experiencing violence from an intimate partner. It aims to reduce the risks people face, help protect children and make sure they can grow up in a healthy and caring environment. The team also give advice and support to other professionals working with children and their families, as well as being a specialist teaching and learning resource.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?





In Merthyr we have continued to consolidate the progress that had been made in relation to safeguarding by the introduction of the MASH. In 2016, the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board, commissioned an independent review of the arrangements to ensure that they were working effectively and to make further improvements in safeguarding of children and adults at risk and have been putting into place the recommendations that will help us improve our safeguarding arrangements even further.

Our Safeguarding performance this year has maintained our progress and the additional investment in the MASH has supported this. In 2016, we achieved an average of 92.06% of assessing our adult protection referrals within 7 days of receiving them. This is in line with the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 which introduced a new set of requirements to meet our adult at risk responsibilities. We will be monitoring our performance next year to continually ensure that we are responsive to Adult at Risk reports. We continually review the way in which we respond to Adult Safeguarding reports in line with guidance issued.

We have been successful in responding to new child protection concerns, making sure that we arrange the required multi-agency meeting with the family within the statutory 15 days – achieving 100% between April and June in 2016 and 96% in July to September and 97% up to December 2016. This means we have been able to identify with families and most importantly with children the most effective strategy that will protect them and minimize the emotional, physical and educational disruption to their lives. Our performance has been consistent over the last 6 years and we will continue to work hard to maintain this level in 2016-17.

Despite this success, the overall numbers of children in Merthyr who were on the child protection register remains high. In 2016, the average length of time for a child to be on the register was 313.7 days. Whilst this is an extensive length of time, Child Protection conferences must balance the level of risk, emotional and physical well-being of the child and make appropriate decisions.

Survey with service users in respect of if they felt safe following intervention:

	We asked you if you ...	You said you were:				We will/did
						
	Felt safe					
Children		80	8	1	2	We will ask children why a small number didn't feel safe and what we need to do to ensure they feel safe in future.
Adults		109	21	10	9	We will ask adults why a small number didn't feel safe and what we need to do to ensure they feel safe in future.
Carers		40	5	1	1	We will ask carers why a small number didn't feel safe and what we need to do to ensure they feel safe in future.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

In implementing Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) we will have a new system for collecting and sharing information which will support staff to work better together in providing the coordinated services people need. Moving to the new system is a big task but will have benefits for people needing our help and staff working to make a difference.

2017/18 we will also set out to achieve the following priorities:

- **Safeguarding Practice**
 - Implement the new national Protection Procedures for both Adults and Children including the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Framework.
 - Improve our quality assurance protocols by learning lessons from Challenging Cases protocols, quality assurance work, sharing this learning across Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards across Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**
 - Use Review of adults and children's safeguarding processes and thresholds for decisions when new national guidance is available.
 - Ensure robust performance management system in place for MASH.

- Ensure MASH MHub data sharing information supports adult safeguarding practice.
- Review the relationship between MASH and domestic violence/ sexual abuse protection agencies to avoid duplication and increase co-ordination.

Links to Wellbeing Objectives:

Best Start to Life

BS 1 Children get the best start to life

Living Well

LW 1 Developing safer communities

Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

What did we plan to do last year?

- Develop Reablement services to enable people to be as independent as they can be, for as long as they can.
- Help people return home from hospital as quickly and as safely as they can.
- Use the Intermediate Care Fund to help people find support and services in their local communities, using the Community Co-coordinators and Early Stroke Discharge service.
- Review community day services so that there are more community opportunities available for people to avoid social isolation.
- Improve services and support to Carers by increasing the number of people who were offered an assessment and increasing the number of carers who were assessed as needing a service.
- Maintain our successes in helping our Looked after Children get a job or further education after 16.
- Involve looked after young people in service development.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

In 2016, we worked with a group of enthusiastic young people who helped us make a video. The title is Lost and Found and young people told us that:

- Things that would make it better included:-
 - ❖ Photographs of myself as a baby (said by teenager).
 - ❖ Life Story Work.
 - ❖ Explaining (to me) why I am looked after.
 - ❖ Talking to somebody else who is in the same boat (also looked after).
- The young people told us that every young person who becomes looked after should have the following help:-
 - ❖ Photographs of the place where you will live. Every foster carer should have a book so you know about them before you go there.

- ❖ Meet the foster carer before moving to live there.
- ❖ Have an explanation of what is happening so the young person can understand.
- ❖ (Let me) Know there is somebody there who can help me.
- ❖ Help (me) to learn from (my) mistakes.
- ❖ Help (me) to be aware of the people I can trust.
- ❖ Help (me) to be aware of my surroundings.
- ❖ Support (me) so I am able to be my own person.
- ❖ Support (me) so I am able to tell you where I am going.
- ❖ Support (me) so I am able to choose my friends wisely.

This has led to a real change in the way we help looked after young people understand their family history.

We feel proud of looked after young people's achievements.

We have also been working with young people who are helping us change the way we provide information so that it is more appealing to their age range and contains information that is useful to and relevant to their interests and needs.

The role of the Community Co-ordinators has helped connect people with similar interests together and sign post people to local community groups of interests to them, diverting away from long term statutory provision. For those who are contacting us about their needs, our staff have been having a "what matters" conversation with service users and their carers to explore the social and emotional needs. This has included considering what community based resources there are to help people.

Care and Support plans now include non-commissioned services alongside community based activities - e.g. local sewing/knitting groups/ men's dens/ lunch/coffee at the local pub. In addition, we have integrated our planning for both carer and cared for, reflecting the inter-dependency of peoples' needs.

The link between stability of placements and educational opportunities and achievement is important to us, along with our contact with children and young people who very often want to stay near to family and friends.

In partnership with our education colleagues we are committed to ensuring that we are able to jointly identify vulnerable young people who are disengaging from education and are at high risk of becoming Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET). This early identification of young people at risk is a critical aspect of our NEETS preventative agenda, for all young people and ensures that young people educated within Merthyr Tydfil who require additional support within school, receive this in line with their needs and that their progress is reviewed at least termly.

For 2016, the published Welsh Government NEET figure for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council was 1.03%, equating to 6 young people, which placed the local authority joint first. Through the in house tracking of school leavers no looked after children Educated within Merthyr Tydfil left school without a destination in place and at October 31st 2016 was recorded as NEET. These improved outcomes and improved targeting of support for those young people most at risk of becoming NEET has had a substantial and sustained impact on the NEETs figures within recent years.

We have undertaken a review of the day service provision for Adults who need care and support and will be developing an action plan based on the outcome of the report in 2017-18.

In line with our intention to help people to return home from hospital as quickly and safely as they can we have worked with our regional partners of Rhondda Cynon Taf and Cwm Taf University Health Board to develop the Stay Well @ Home service. In addition to the development of the hospital based team that can now offer advice and support in A&E departments, we have developed an enhanced community based service that responds in a timelier manner. This service will be operational in April 2017 and will be reported in the next annual report.

Last year we asked you if you felt could do the things that are important to you?

Out of 149 adults:

59 said you were able to do the things that were important to you

46 said sometimes you could do the things that were important to you

31 said you couldn't do the things that were important to you

13 said they didn't know or didn't answer

This year we will ask these questions again and find out more information about how we could improve on your experience and the support we provide.

We also asked Carers if they could do the things that were important to them

27 people said they could do the things that were important to them

16 people said they could do the things that were important to them

3 people said they could do the things that were important to them

1 person didn't answer

This year we will ask these questions again and find out more information about how we can improve on your experience and what action we can take to improve the support.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

During 2017/18, our priorities will be to:

- Ensure that we promote Carers Assessments and the right to care and support for those who carers who need our help.
- Work with carers and partners to review the services we provide for carers and identify how they can be improved.
- Support a diverse range of community based options that encourage participation in local services, building and maintaining family and community resilience including step down facilities away from universal services.
- Support to maintain and develop the Reablement service.
- Listen to families to improve our understanding of 'what good looks like' for children, young people and their families. This will help us develop clear outcomes for the children, young people and families we work with.
- Work with partners on our Corporate Parenting Board to make sure that we are challenging ourselves to constantly improve the lives of looked after young people.

- Make sure our Regional Partnership Board and Safeguarding Board focusses on children and involves them in the work we do and reflects their concerns more extensively.
- Review current systems of tracking the post 16 plans of children who are looked after, pilot a Year 11 CLA focus review meeting format to confirm post 16 plans and identify potential barriers to progression.

Links to Wellbeing Objectives:

Best Start to Life

BS 2 Children and young people are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals

Working Life

WL 1 Making skills work for Merthyr Tydfil: Developing the workforce of the future

Living Well

LW 1 Developing safer communities

LW 2 People have good physical and mental health

LW 3 People live independently

Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

We are committed to ensuring that children and young people can have the best start in life. We do recognise that some families need support from us and our partners to support families to remain together in a healthy domestic environment. We also know that on occasion we must intervene where issues arise when it is in the best interest of children to do so.

What did we plan to do last year?

In 2016/17, we have been working hard to work with families to help them to have positive relationships with each other. This has been a challenge for us and we recognise that there are still many other changes that we need to make. We set out to:

- Increase the number of families the Enhanced Child in Need Service worked with to make sure that families had every opportunity to achieve lasting change.
- Continue the work under the Looked After Child Prevention Strategy, making sure that we always consider family first and placements close to home.
- Recruit more Foster Carers to make sure that there are enough placements for the types of situations and children and young people who need foster placements close to home.
- Improve the time taken to complete the adoption process.
- Listen to families to improve our understanding of 'what good looks like' for children, young people and their families. This will help us develop clear outcomes for the children, young people and families we work with.
- Work with partners on our Corporate Parenting Board to make sure that we are challenging ourselves to constantly improve the lives of looked after young people.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

The Act puts an emphasis on early intervention and prevention and we recognise that it is in children's best interest to feel safe, secure and where possible live with their family or certainly within the community they grow up. This year we have improved relationships between the prevention services and social services and have endeavoured to offer support to families at the earliest opportunity. There is now a much stronger link between the MIA service, which is funded via Family first and the intake team. A children's strategy has been developed across Cwm Taf which outlines a pathway for intervention and the key is to offer services at the earliest opportunity not wait until the child or family is in crisis.

This year we have invested in the Enhanced Child in need service due to the success of the team in previous years, and the impact it had on our Looked After figures and outcomes for our young people. The team has two extra social workers and a support worker who are able to offer more intensive support to families and fits with the ethos of early intervention and prevention.

Here is one of the examples where we have developed our approach to helping families in need of support:

A family asked for help due to the health of the mother, which was affecting both parent's ability to look after their child, "T". Both the parents and the child's teachers were concerned about the effect this was having on their son and his ability to concentrate at school. He had begun to worry about his mum when he was at school and was providing a lot of care for her when he was at home.

They were referred to the Multiple Intervention Assist service who arranged for support from Barnardo's Young carers project. A key worker provided some intensive support to the family which included:

- Supporting the mother to attend health appointments.
- Information and support to access all financial benefits and with budgeting their income.
- Information about alternative housing.
- Encouragement and support to help the family establish routines, managing the house and make sure attendance at school improved.
- Active involvement in a Young Carers' support has allowed "T" to explore his role as a young Carer and have a better understanding of his mum's health needs.

Most importantly for "T" has been the opportunity to take a break from his caring role. He now goes to an After-School Club and has been able to have outings in the school holidays with other children of a similar age. One year after their involvement with the Multiple Intervention Assist Service the family feel able to manage on their own. They have been able to sustain the changes in their daily life, have moved in to a new home and "T" is attending school regularly and is making good progress in his education. His mother feels well, has more confidence and has begun to make new friends and develop social links in the local area. He continues to access the Young Carers service.

What are our priorities for next year and why?

Our aims for 2017/18 include:

- Continuing to work to reduce the need for Statutory Services by ensuring that children, young people and families have coordinated integrated family support earlier and access to bespoke services earlier when it is appropriate to needs.
- Supporting children who cannot live with their own parents so that they are able to live in suitable accommodation in the area to help maintain the important links between young people and their communities.
- Supporting children and young people who need care and support, and carers who need support, to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships. Improve the safety of victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence and reduce the impact this has on their lives of the victims and perpetrators and wider families.

Link to Wellbeing Objectives:

Best Start to Life

BS 1 Children get the best start to life

Living Well

LW 1 Developing safer communities

LW 2 People have good physical and mental health

Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

What did we plan to do last year?

Promoting independence is a key priority for us, to help an increased proportion of the adult population to live independently and for us as a Council to be in the top half of local authorities in Wales. Our aim was to ensure that 96.9% of the adult population could live independently, with 100% of carers offered an assessment of their needs.

Being able to live in a place that helps people feel safe and is accessible is critical to keeping people in their community and being as independent as possible. It's not always possible to keep people in their own home but we recognise how important this is, maintaining family and neighbourly connections which often help people remain part of their community.

In 2016/17, we said we would:

- Work with our regional partners to continue the implementation of the regional older peoples commissioning statement to pursue:

- the development of new service models for home care.
- accommodation with support and day services.
- Continue the emphasis on the reablement and intermediate care services and provide further support to social enterprise and the third sector to develop the resilience of community networks of support.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Last year our services worked with individuals to help them identify what was important to them and where it was needed, and helped them find solutions. All our staff from those people working in the Initial Support service and our community teams have been trained and supported to have a “what matters” conversation with children, young people and with adults. This has involved making sure people are receiving all the financial benefits and help to which they are entitled and are able to develop the right skills to have a job.

Youth unemployment has been decreasing since 2012; however, during 2015 this rose sharply and will continue to be a focus for improvement through the range of employability programmes for young people aged 16+ and adults aged 25+ which have been secured through European resources and focus on those furthest from the labour with multiple barriers to employment. Recent research has identified that there are several key issues impacting on our young people between 16-18 which are contributing to multiple periods of being NEET, and which potentially establish the trend of their future access in or out of employment and learning. These areas are identified as mental health and well being and substance abuse which is compounded by a lack of information on their needs being shared between a range of service providers. The LA has secured 5 grant funded programmes to ensure that support is available to young people aged 16-24 who are unemployed and for adults 25+ to improve outcomes and enable individuals to reengage in learning or to secure employment.

The regional older people’s commissioning statement was agreed and signed off by cabinet and work has continued to look at the priorities within this report. This year has seen the development and implementation of the stay well @ home service to help prevent delays within the hospital setting and try to maintain people within their homes for a longer of period of time, and to return home quicker from hospital following assessment.

Accommodation continues to be an area we need to consider to ensure we can meet people’s needs now and in the future. We are working with Supporting People colleagues and housing department to consider this area.

This year we have used money from Welsh Government’s Intermediate Care Fund to extend our Reablement services. This service is a vital part of the Council’ preventative strategy and is about helping people in Merthyr to be as well, as they can be, have as much choice and control over their lives, for as long as possible. Reablement services gives people the confidence to look after themselves, so they either need less help, or are completely independent and don’t need any long term support from local authority services. This has meant we have been able to both avoid people being admitted to hospital unnecessarily and reduce the number of people whose discharge from hospital was delayed, despite increasing demand on Cwm Taf University Health Board.

In 2016/17, we supported 2 young people to remain in fulltime education after they left care. We have been proud of the achievements of all our young people who we look after. Congratulations go to two of our young people who were part of team GB and won medals for skiing in the winter Olympics.

Did you know?

Our Occupational Therapy service, works with both children and adults to live as independently as possible, overcoming any disabilities they may have.

Social Services staff in Merthyr have Occupational Therapists working with the Children with Disabilities Teams and Adult Community Care teams who provide solutions to a range of different problems from equipment that helps people with daily living activities, e.g. key safes; hand rails, stair lifts and alarms and even to adapting the layout of a home to make life easier for people.

Where the changes can't be made, they will work with Housing partners to arrange alternative accommodation.

In 2016/17, our Occupational Therapy service worked with people to improve their accommodation and to keep people safe at home, helping those in need of support to access a range of equipment, Disabled Facilities Grant funded works and re-housing applications.

Standard	Yes	Sometimes	No	Don't know
Adults reporting that they live in the right home for them.	116	11	7	15
Children and young people reporting that they are happy with whom they live with.	83	6	1	1
People reporting they have received care and support through their language of choice.	133	2	1	13
Young adults (aged 16-17) reporting they received advice, help and support to prepare them for adulthood.	13	3	1	73 <i>** majority of young people didn't respond to this question.</i>
People reporting, they chose to live in a residential care home.	32	2	10	105 <i>** again majority didn't respond to this question or didn't feel it applied to them.</i>

What are our priorities for next year and why?

- Develop a wider range of accommodation as alternatives to residential care.
- Work with Cwm Taf University Health Board to identify how we can pool our resources to provide residential and nursing care, through developing a statement of agreement and a joint commissioning structure to ensure the care we commission is of the highest quality.
- Increase foster carers available to children in Merthyr Tydfil.

Link to Wellbeing Objectives:

Best Start to Life

BS 1 Children get the best start to life

BS 2 Children and young people are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals

Working Life

WL 1 Making skills work for Merthyr Tydfil: Developing the workforce of the future

Living Well

LW 1 Developing safer communities

LW 2 People have good physical and mental health

Section 5: How we do what we do

Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

Supporting our workforce is fundamental to delivering good quality care to those in Merthyr Tydfil who need our help with last year seeing the implementation of a new shared service across Cwm Taf with Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC. The newly formed Cwm Taf Social Care Workforce Development Plans will continue to improve the quality and management of social services provision through a planned approach to learning, development and qualifications to increase the take-up of learning and development across the care sector. Last year we set out and met the following objectives:

- To support staff across all partner organisations engaged in duties delivered under the new social services law to have the knowledge, skills and competencies and that the necessary cultural changes are driven forward.
- To ensure that all core learning and development, including induction and qualification training, is reframed to reflect the new legal framework.
- To continue the current support for both Social Work qualifying training and post-qualifying training in Wales.
- To support frontline social care workers to develop their skills overall in relation to social care.
- To support the infrastructure for learning and development across Wales, including local and regional partnership and joint working.

We will continue to further the scope and reach of the learning and development provision building on the initial approach of single service provision across the region and extend this to working in partnership with other partner Regions to build on the strengths of collaborative and shared delivery. Our objectives for the forthcoming year are that we will:

- Continue to support social care staff engaged in duties delivered under the new Act to have the knowledge, skills and competencies required.
- Support the implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act by supporting the domiciliary care workforce to prepare for registration and supporting knowledge of responsible individuals.
- Support efficient approaches by drawing upon and working with the Social Care Wales national plans/ programmes: including Step Up to Management; Social Services Practitioners; Middle Manager Development Programme; Team manager development programme; and learning and development programme for the Acts.
- Support the Social Work qualifying training and post qualifying training in Wales; support frontline social care workers to develop their skills overall in relation to social care, and support introduction of the revised induction framework from September 2017; and support the infrastructure for learning and development across Wales, including local and regional partnership and joint working.

Our Financial Resources and How We Plan For the Future

We continue to face financial pressures and have been working hard to achieve savings the Council needs whilst doing our best to ensure that the services we provide to you are not adversely affected. On the whole last year we have managed to achieve this.

We have used the Intermediate Care Fund over the past year to plan and develop projects working across the region which will directly impact the public and provide better services. This funding has allowed the development of new initiatives like the stay well @ home service, which will reduce the delayed transfers of care from hospital and have better outcomes for the population of Cwm Taf.

We are in a period of austerity and we continue to have to make savings, but we are looking at this in a strategic manner and looking at the services we need, at what the population needs assessment tell us. We are looking to do things differently and more efficiently and ensure the public get a better service.

We have invested in the regional adoption team this year, and in the enhanced child in need service, which we hope the latter will have a positive impact on our looked after population.

We anticipate there will be an impact from the diminishing Communities First funding but we are working to prevent negative outcomes where possible. This will be reviewed and monitored by the Anti-Poverty Board.

A lot of our work is now undertaken on a collaborative and regional basis which assists with cost pressures and assists with resilience of services.

Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability

Partnership working across the wider region is strong, with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, the university health board, service providers and the third sector. Whether it's planning our workforce needs and training requirements, integrating our service provision or responding to region wide challenges, we are doing more collectively to deliver better services.

The Council continues to provide strong leadership and support to staff at all levels, giving direction, undertaking scrutiny and considering how social services contribute to the promotion of wellbeing. Reports are presented regularly to the Scrutiny Committee and to Cabinet updating members on progress, how the financial and demographic challenges are being tackled and how the Council is transforming services with its partners.

We work well across the Cwm Taf region with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, the Local Health Board, providers and the third sector. The regional working through for example the Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Board has identified a range of priorities for us to deliver and over the past year the partnership has overseen the following preparatory project work:

- The development of a common Contract and Service specification for Care homes across the region which is currently under discussion with providers.
- The development of a Market Position Statement for the Care Home market due for completion in 2017.
- Participation in the National Commissioning Board Market Analysis for care homes, which assisted in developing the evidence base for the Market Position Statement.
- Facilitation of a Regional workshop (with support from the National Commissioning Board) to initiate consideration to the options available for the Pooled fund arrangement.

Specifically, in support and services for Carers the regional partnership has:

- Developed a network of Carers Champions to raise awareness and profile the role of Carers. There are already over 300 Champions in settings across health, social care, education, housing, leisure, Job Centres and in the voluntary sector.
- Developed an e learning tool for training staff across all sectors to raise awareness and knowledge of Carers issues.
- Undertaken training for students (nursing, social care and teacher) at the University of South Wales, Coleg y Cymoedd and Merthyr Tydfil College so our future workforce is Carer aware.
- Developed a Teacher's Guide.
- Developed a range of digital Carer Stories for use in raising awareness and training.

Additionally there is the Cwm Taf Public Services Board (PSB), which is a merged Public Service Board covering the areas of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf. The PSB aims to act as the principal strategic leadership forum for the planning, commissioning and delivery of public services across organisational boundaries to achieve better outcomes for the people of Cwm Taf. It will seek to understand the major issues faced by each partner organisation, to become a more transparent Board through publishing data and performance and will move from a reactive to a preventative agenda.

The Board's aims are:

- To improve the quality of life and outcomes for citizens of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf (the Cwm Taf area).
- To improve proactive, collective leadership in tackling the most challenging issues facing public services in the planning, commissioning and delivery of services to the citizens of Cwm Taf.
- To stimulate dialogue, co-ordination, and co-operation between local, regional and national organisations to improve and integrate service delivery for the citizen.
- To remove 'blockages' or other obstacles by minimizing bureaucracy and the preventative effectiveness of organisational boundaries.
- To celebrate success in the delivery of services for citizens of Cwm Taf.
- To consider 'best value' and prudence in the expenditure of public service resources and to explore areas where collaborations/integration would provide greater efficiencies and improved outcomes.
- To involve citizens in influencing how we deliver Public services.

Section 6: Accessing further information and key documents

This report has been written to give an overview of the success of the Council in delivering effective services, and we have used a lot of information, data, reports, surveys etc. to demonstrate what we have done.

This report is not the only source of information available to members of the public, key partners and service providers. We have a significant amount of background information that sits behind this report and that provide a lot of additional detail about what we do and how we do it. Importantly if something is not mentioned in this report as a key priority it doesn't mean we're not doing it, as there is a lot of activity across social services that plays a part in helping us to provide for some of the most vulnerable groups in our community.

To access further information about what we do then these are some of the documents that will provide more detail:

- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Corporate Plan.
- The Cwm Taf Population Needs Assessment.
- The Cwm Taf Wellbeing Assessment.
- Departmental reports.
- CSSIW reports.

Getting in Touch

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