



HEAD OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND INNOVATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2013 – 2014

The report from the Business Management and Innovation Division looks at the areas of corporate and political support, leadership and culture, financial stability and resources, planning and partnerships, commissioning and contracting, workforce development, management, performance quality/information systems, equality and diversity (including use of the Welsh Language in the provision of services), protecting vulnerable people services.

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CONTEXT

1. The range of services managed within the Division has changed during 2013/2104 with the Head of Service taking a prominent role in moves to deliver services in partnership with other organisations such as the University Health Board and Cardiff Council.
2. During 2013/2014, spending on social services in the Vale of Glamorgan Council amounted to £51 million. This compares with £48m in 2012/2013. This funding was used to provide adult and children services and the organisational arrangements required to support the two operational divisions. There is a Budget Programme Board in place which supports the Directorate to deliver its statutory responsibilities within the budget set by the Council.
3. Resource management within social services remains inherently problematic and complex. During 2013/2014, there was significant pressure on the Directorate to remain within the budget set, including a requirement to make a further £2 million efficiency savings during the year. Further details about the effective work done to deal with this financial challenge can be found later in this report. The key priority has been to minimise any adverse impact of inevitable changes on service users and carers.
4. The ongoing challenges for Social Services include:
 - **developing closer partnership working in order to deliver new models of care and support services across the whole range of need (including work to help deliver more preventative services and early intervention);**
 - **providing effective support for a rising proportion of very old people in the Vale population, for children and other people with increasingly complex health conditions and for families experiencing periods of difficulty and vulnerability;**
 - **managing reductions in funding while minimising wherever possible the impact on front line service delivery; meeting new service requirements**

with limited public sector resources available to implement the changes, including those arising from;

- the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014;**
- ensuring quality of care, managing risks of service failure and increased safeguarding responsibilities; and**
- reducing unnecessary bureaucracy so that we get help to people more quickly and provide staff with more time for direct work.**

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CORPORATE AND POLITICAL SUPPORT

5. The key strategic plans for the Social Services Directorate in 2013/2014 were the Directorate Service Plan 2013-17 and the Budget Programme, which has been in place since November 2011. The Service Plan provides a four year overview of the Directorate's work and sets out our contribution towards achieving the Council's key outcomes and objectives, as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2013-17.
6. This is the first time that the whole Directorate has combined to produce a unified service plan. It outlines what the Directorate is trying to achieve, why this is important, how it will be achieved, how we will monitor progress and what success will look like. The plan combines service planning with other key planning documents - the Social Services Change Plan 2011-14, the Social Service Budget Programme, the Director's Annual Report 2011-12 and the three Heads of Service Annual Reports, and the recommendations from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance.
7. Helping to implement these plans has been a priority objective across the Council and representatives from across all directorates have been actively involved. The Director is responsible for reporting progress on the plans through the corporate and political processes within the Council. Actions within the Directorate Service Plan are reported through the political process on a quarterly basis. The Budget Programme is reported on a monthly basis.
8. Senior staff in the Directorate have a defined role in meetings of the Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee and the Council. At the level of governance, the Director of Social Services is encouraged to play a key role in advising the Executive on policy-making and budget-setting. During the year, the Director held meetings on a monthly basis with the Leader of the Council and provided regular briefings to Cabinet Members. The Heads of Service also met regularly with

their Cabinet members to ensure that they were fully aware of issues affecting social services at all times.

9. During 2013/2014, the revised corporate management structure within the Council was fully operational. The Council remains strongly compliant with the statutory guidance on the role and accountabilities of the Director of Social Services issued by the Welsh Assembly Government in June 2009 and Social Services continue to be managed in one Directorate. The Director is a member of the Corporate Management Team and acts as Deputy Managing Director on a rotational basis with the other Service Directors.
10. Recent inspections confirm that the Directorate continues to benefit from stable and effective political and corporate support in delivering its responsibilities. Managers work hard to ensure that the Executive, Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Management Team receive the best possible professional advice and information on all Social Services matters. This includes identifying priorities, challenges and risks.
11. Governance arrangements for managing the extensive programme of collaborative working with the NHS, Cardiff Council and the Third Sector has been clarified and strengthened during the year. All the partners have signed a wide-ranging collaborative agreement.
12. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/2014 and the progress made.
 - **We have helped the Council to make and implement difficult decisions, including savings proposals and service redesign.**
 - **We have ensured that the actions detailed in the Directorate Service Plan and the Budget Programme were delivered in accordance with the agreed timescales.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will continue to work effectively with Elected Members on the Social Services priorities by providing timely information and professional advice.**
- **We will continue to make a positive contribution to the effectiveness of the new corporate management structure by attending and contributing to Corporate initiatives and meetings.**

LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

13. The overall senior management structure for the social services directorate has been stable. There has been a change within the senior management team with a new Head of Children and Young People's Services appointed in September 2013.
14. The Social Services Management Team consists of the Director, Heads of Service and Operational Managers from across the Directorate. The team has met on a regular basis, ensuring that the key strategic and service issues for social care are debated and appropriate decisions made to support service delivery and improvement. There is a strong professional culture and a willingness by staff to accept responsibility for their own practice and learning. We strive to ensure that there is a clear vision and direction for Social Services in order to gain staff commitment to high standards and continuous improvement. Our work with Welsh Government policy and professional leads, the service and workforce regulators, audit and inspection bodies is characterised by mutual respect and a willingness to cooperate in improvement activity.
15. The Council is committed to collaborative action where this benefits our residents and helps to ensure good use of resources, effectiveness and consistency. The Directorate continues to show commitment and leadership with regard to partnership working with the Local Health Board and Cardiff Council, the third sector and private providers. Governance arrangements for integrated working rest with the strategic leadership governance board for social care and health. This management structure includes the most senior political and corporate leaders across the two local authorities, the health board and the local third sector organisations.
16. This partnership working has been imperative to enabling the Council to make best use of the funding made available through the Regional Collaboration Fund to support the remodelling of Adult Social Care Services across Cardiff

and the Vale of Glamorgan. This will be further enhanced through the receipt of funding from the Intermediate Care Fund during 2014/2015.

17. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/2014 and the progress made.

- **We have increased the range of services delivered on a regional basis through the SEWIC framework where there has been a business case that demonstrates this will improve quality and/or efficiency.**

What are our new improvement priorities?

- **We will continue to work within the SEWIC framework and support service improvements where there has been a good business case that demonstrates this will improve quality and/or efficiency.**
- **We will work with partners to further integrate health and social care service through the RCF and ICF programmes.**
- **We will work with our partners as appropriate to ensure the timely implementation of the requirements of the Social Care (Wales) Act.**

PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY / INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND MANAGEMENT

18. Managers within the Directorate have introduced and maintained effective systems for managing performance, monitoring outcomes, achievements and shortfalls, and taking corrective action as required. As required, we present to Council, publish and report an annual report which includes a statement of plans for performance and improvement. Audit, inspection and other external reports on performance are reported; in response to their findings, action plans are produced, monitored and reported to corporate management, the Executive and Scrutiny Committees. One example of this is where the Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee considered a report outlining the findings of the annual inspection of Fostering Services in July 2013.
19. Performance is a regular item on the agenda for meetings between the Director and Heads of Service and for Divisional Management Teams. The content of the management information reports has been revised to enable managers to access timely management information as they require it. These reports are produced on a monthly basis and are widely circulated within the Directorate. We continue to report performance information to the Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.
20. We remain part of the SWIFT Consortium, a group of local authorities that use the same management information system and work together in making sure that it can record all activity within the service and report in a timely manner on those activities. Work has been done in the past year to simplify the IT system to enable timely and accurate recording of information within the Unified Assessment Process (UAP) and the Integrated Childcare System.
21. In partnership with Cardiff Council and as part of a national initiative, the UAP system has been simplified, with the development of new forms for completion by social workers. A revised Unified Assessment process has been prepared in line with recently published Welsh Government guidance and training is

being rolled out. On completion, service users will receive a speedier, more streamlined and integrated assessment from health and social care professionals. Work was started during the year to modify the IT system to support these new ways of working.

22. As part of our commitment to shifting power to service users and carers wherever possible and to engaging them in the evaluation and design of services, we have improved our consultation framework. It is now organised to reflect service priorities, and consultation exercises are now timed to support any service reconfiguration work being undertaken within the Directorate. Each exercise considers the most appropriate method of engaging with that service user group, with flexibility to adapt methods for individual service users as required. An annual report outlining the findings of the consultation work has been considered by the Social Services Management Team for the first time in 2013/2014. The report outlines a number of issues, in summary ;

- Service users are generally satisfied with the services that they receive.
- The information received regarding services is generally appropriate.
- There are gaps in services, particularly with regard to respite services.

23. We have continued to undertake audits of services during the year to ensure the quality of services and to assist with proposed changes to ways of working. During the year an audit was undertaken with regards to out of county placements for working aged adults and for processes within the Learning Disability Services. Both of these reviews have been used to review practice within these teams.

24. The Directorate continues to review the monitoring arrangements for complaints received by the service. Monthly reports track how complaints are dealt with and have assisted in improving significantly compliance with timescales for resolution. During 2012/2013, 79.6% of complaints at the first stage of the process were addressed within the statutory timescales whilst all complaints at Stages 2 and 3 were addressed within timescales. The performance has improved within 2013/2014. An increasing number of

enquiries are effectively dealt with through early resolution, resulting in better outcomes for service users. Mediation work undertaken by the complaints officer and the Heads of Services has also assisted in identifying solutions to complaints prior to the complainant escalating the complaint through the process.

25. There is an extensive range of policies and procedures in place across the Directorate, which establish quality standards for the service. These are readily available to staff. A review framework is in place to ensure that policies are updated at least every three years and more regularly where policy and legislative changes dictate. Policy consultation arrangements are in place, together with robust process ratification via the senior management team.

26. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/14 and the progress made.

- **We have worked as part of the SWIFT Consortium to review the UAP and ICS systems to ensure that the system is less bureaucratic and time consuming.**
- **We have ensured that the new performance management system has been implemented in social services with information being reported to elected members within agreed timescales.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will continue to work as part of the SWIFT Consortium to ensure IT is able to support the working of the Directorate**
- **We will develop a Quality Assurance Framework for the delivery of care services in partnership with service providers.**

COMMISSIONING AND CONTRACTING

27. We have continued to work on the development of commissioning strategies for all services. These set out how the Council intends to secure the services that people will need (both now and in the future), whether these are provided by social services directly, by the third sector, by the private sector or by organisations such as stakeholder cooperatives. We seek to ensure that improvements in the range and quality of services are based on robust information about need, demand, performance, costs and potential service providers. Commissioning is a key priority for social services and a number of actions within the Service Plan relate to developing this area of work.
28. Commissioning strategies are already in place for Older People's Services and for Children and Young People Services. During 2013/2014, a Commissioning Strategy was finalised for Adults with a Learning Disability.
29. Reshaping care and support services through improved commissioning requires a whole system approach involving the Council and its partners (including the NHS, the third and private sectors). In the Vale, there has been considerable progress made in planning and redesigning services, including a focus on getting best value from the resources available. For example, the commissioning strategy for older people's services and the programmes associated with it (such as the Integrating Health and Social Care Board, the Social Services Change Plan, the Wyn Campaign, the Regional Collaboration Fund and the recent Dementia Action Plan) are helping us move towards a co-ordinated and community-based system of adult social care and community health services which provide prevention, early intervention, reablement, intermediate and long-term care. The programme of change is underpinned by joint planning, service integration, explicit governance arrangements and the commitment of resources to joint commissioning.
30. The fact that we have developed in the Vale a completely integrated approach to reablement services over the past year is indicative of our ability to turn

intent into service remodelling. Staff have been provided with joint training, single management and one base. As a result, they have very quickly broken down unhelpful boundaries and started to deliver co-ordinated care. The Regional Collaboration Fund (RCF) has been used to develop additional joint services including reablement and to establish a regional joint commissioning unit across social care and health.

31. We can demonstrate then that our ambitious programmes of change are having an impact at the front-line and on outcomes, making a real difference to people's lives. The independent and voluntary sectors and other potential service providers have a clear understanding of the intentions of the local authority and its partners and there is constructive dialogue with them. For example, prevention and early intervention are a major theme within the range of contracts in place with third sector organisations and in innovative voluntary services such as those in Dinas Powys and the Friendly Advantage befriending schemes funded by Big Lottery. All Service Level Agreements with the third sector have been reviewed regularly to ensure that they do meet the requirements of the commissioning strategies. We have concentrated on maintaining good relations with third sector organisations through engagement from both operational and contracting staff, and at a strategic level through the work on remodelling adult social care.
32. There are strong bridges between service and financial planning. As a consequence, we can provide good evidence about our work in reviewing, planning and developing services that deliver best value for money and improve outcomes for service users and carers. Where their use can be justified, pooled budgets between health and social care have been used - for example, in the joint equipment service, Phase 1 of the Wyn Campaign and commissioning services from the third sector.
33. We continued to work with Cardiff Council and the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to overcome problems we all face in securing sufficient long-term nursing home placements. During 2013/2014, the two local authorities began looking at collaborating in procurement of domiciliary care services and this will

be continued in 2014/2015. A template for developing a Market Position Statement was agreed during the year and this will be completed in 2014/2015.

34. The Provider Performance Protocol was used on a number of occasions during the year as providers had failed to meet the quality standards required. The protocol enabled the Local Authority and its partners to deal with issues of poor performance in a considered and timely manner.

35. These were our improvement priorities for 2012/13 and the progress made.

- **We have completed service models and commissioning plans for three key service areas.**
- **We have completed the actions with regard to commissioning of services that were detailed in the Directorate's three-year Change Plan.**
- **We have continued to work with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board and Cardiff Council on joint commissioning.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will complete the work with Cardiff Council with regard to the procurement of domiciliary care.**
- **We will complete the joint Market Position Statement with Cardiff Council and Cardiff and Vale UHB.**
- **We will review the Provider Performance Protocol to ensure it is fit for purpose, based on the experience of having used it on a number of occasions in 2013/2014.**

PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS

36. We have continued to support joint appointments and there are now three senior posts within adult services that are joint appointments with either Cardiff Local Authority or Cardiff and Vale UHB.
37. The key partnerships in which Social Services play a lead role continue to work well. These include the Health Social Care and Well Being Partnership, the Children and Young People's Partnership, the Area Adult Protection Committee (AAPC) for adults and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). During the year, the AAPC and LSCB were re-launched as regional Boards covering the Vale and Cardiff. The Council also has a very active Corporate Parenting Panel, to make sure that all the children and young people it looks after receive the support, care and protection they deserve. During 2013/2014 the Panel received reports on educational attainment and how the education of children is supported through Personal Education Plans, allegations against professionals, the work of our independent advocacy service, end of year performance and foster carer recruitment, quality of care and inspection.
38. The Council remains committed to the work of the Integrated Health and Social Care Programme Board, with senior political and corporate management representation at all levels. During the year, the governance arrangements for integrated working have been revised to increase the pace and scale of change. The structure also includes representation of the third sector. These arrangements will assist in how we plan how we can work together to help shape health and social services for our communities over the next three to five years and beyond.
39. The Public Health and Wellbeing Board was established in 2011/2012 and representation at a senior level across local authority services has been maintained. Joint arrangements are also in place to support a number of initiatives for improving support to carers and a joint response was made to the Welsh Government with regards to implementing the Carers Measure.

40. Work has progressed during 2013/2014 to deliver improved service models for service users in the area which is funded through the Regional Collaborative Fund. This work is being undertaken with Cardiff Council with the Vale Council acting as the lead agency for this initiative.
41. We continue to be an active member of the South East Wales Improvement Collaborative (SEWIC) for social services. SEWIC brings together directors of social services from ten local authorities in the area to review and develop new services that require cooperation across the region. The collaborative now has an extensive programme including the Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4Cs), which helps us to find good quality external placements for children who are looked after, an in-house fostering development project, regional adoption services, a regional brokerage and a procurement hub for high-cost adult placements. This programme is underpinned by new models of service provision, improves the availability of appropriate placements for very vulnerable service users and enables us to influence the costs charged by independent care providers.
42. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/2014 and the progress made.
- **We have continued to work with Cardiff Council and the University Health Board to develop and implement integrated services.**
 - **We have led the Regional Collaboration Fund initiative to ensure the project delivers the anticipated outcomes within the timescales agreed.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will work with Cardiff Council and the University Health Board to develop and implement integrated services, including the Community Resource Teams and the completion of the work with regard to the Unified Assessment process.**
- **We will act as the lead organisation with regard to the Regional Collaboration work, ensuring all work streams complete on time and within their agreed budget.**
- **We will work within the SEWIC collaborative arrangements to ensure more effective use of resources.**

+FINANCIAL STABILITY AND RESOURCES

43. Resource management is a key priority for Social Services. The establishment of the Budget Programme Board has ensured that the financial position within Social Services continues to be monitored and managed at a senior level across the Council.
44. After a prolonged history of significant overspends in social services effective implementation of the first three-year Change Plan between 2008 and 2011 then enabled the Directorate to deliver its statutory responsibilities within the budget set by the Council and to meet a substantial savings target.
45. 2013/2014 proved to be a very difficult financial year for social services. As well as dealing with increased demand for services, Social Services was also required to make cost savings of over £2m as part of the Social Services Budget Programme. Detail of expenditure in 2013/2014 is shown below.

Service	Budget (£'000)	Spend (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
Children and Young People	15,083	15,138	(55)
Adult Services			
Elderly	14,529	14,299	230
Physical and Sensory Disability	4,742	4,740	2
Mental Health	1,636	1,674	(38)
Learning Disability	10,998	11,249	(251)
EMI	5,062	4,949	113
Total Adult Services	36,967	36,911	56
Business Management and Innovation	298	294	4
Directorate Total	52,348	52,343	5

46. In Children's Services, cost pressures arose from an increased number of Looked After Children. In Adult Services the key pressures were the demographic pressures in relation to older people and the above inflation increase in fees for care home placements. Following a rigorous dialogue with the Welsh Government concerning the impact of the cap on charging for non residential care services, a one off payment was received during the year which went part way to meeting the loss of income experienced by the Council. This level of grant funding will not be sustained into 2014/2015.
47. While 2013/14 ended with a favourable financial position, it should be seen in the light of savings to be achieved in future years. Social Services continues to have to make savings in the coming financial years although the savings target for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 has been reduced, taking account of the pressures being faced by the service.
48. The severe financial pressures have been reported regularly to Cabinet and the Budget Programme Board has continued to meet during 2013/2014. The board comprises the Managing Director, the Director of Social Services and senior officers from across the Council. Budget recovery plans have been produced and these are closely monitored by the Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Management Team.
49. Managers have continued to receive very detailed and timely management and financial information to assist them in managing their services.
50. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/2014 and the progress made.
- **We managed the budget recovery plans rigorously and the actions required to meet the budget target for the year were achieved.**
 - **We have developed proposals for new affordable service models of care through the service reconfiguration programme.**
 - **We have worked with the South East Wales Improvement Collaborative SEWIC on regional commissioning of services.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will continue to manage the budget recovery plans rigorously and identify the actions required to meet the budget target for the year.**
- **We will ensure the grant funding made available through the RCF and is spent appropriately and meets the agreed outcomes for the workstreams**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

51. The Directorate has in place and delivers whole sector workforce plans which demonstrate that we are implementing measures to ensure that a sufficient, skilled, safe and focused workforce is available to meet assessed needs. These address issues of recruitment and retention, vetting, registration, competences, qualifications, skill-mix, training needs and support requirements.
52. The Performance Development and Review System (PDRS) is in place for individual staff and, in 2013/2014, 100% of staff completed the process. An annual qualification and training needs audit is completed for all Vale commissioned social care sector providers and an analysis of the audit and PDRS data enables training to be planned on the basis of the needs of the whole social care sector in the Vale.
53. The process assists in monitoring the qualifications of staff within the regulated services and provides training to support them to meet their targets. We can demonstrate that 27% of all training provided during 2013/2014 was delivered to the independent/voluntary sector, exceeding the 25% target.
54. The annual training programme is responsive to the developmental requirements of the social care workforce. In the main, staff provide positive evaluations regarding training opportunities made available to them. Feedback from the Welsh Government about the way in which the Vale uses central government workforce development grants indicates that the work in the Vale is moving in the right direction. Further work is needed to evaluate long term effect on practice.
55. New managers are supported in their role and equipped with the necessary skills to undertake that role. Potential managers are also encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities, which assists with succession planning. To date three team managers, five practitioner managers and one assistant team manager have successfully completed the Team Management Development

Programme. In addition, two managers are being supported to undertake Level 5 QCF in Leadership and Management and three are being supported to undertake the Institute of Leadership and Management QCF Level 3 Management.

56. Resources are used to support staff who are required to meet Welsh Government qualification targets and the percentage of staff qualified in the key groups continues to be stable. Managers and staff are very mindful of the need to promote a culture of continuous learning and evidence-based practice at all levels and to adapt social work practice in the light of relevant research.
57. During 2013/2104, we have worked with ICT and Corporate Training to promote and encourage greater use of e-learning through advertising, presentations, direct support and reporting. We have also increased the level of access to the Learning Pool to support this initiative. This is a cost effective and time efficient method of delivering basic awareness training and some more intensive courses. Once course packages are in place and/or license fee paid, outgoings are reduced in terms of staff time and training costs.
58. Training is delivered in partnership for courses which are not viable on a single local authority basis. We have a Workforce Development group which includes representation from the third sector, private providers, the local further education college and the wider Council. The Vale has continued to be actively represented on the Practice Assessment Panels and Programme Management Committees of our partners (i.e. Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the Open University) and contributes to the South East Wales Education and Training Group. These arrangements help us to secure a sufficient supply of qualified social workers and practice learning opportunities. A sub group of the Local Service Board has been established to share training opportunities across the key partners in the Vale of Glamorgan.
59. The Council has a range of policies in place which provide support to staff, including flexi-time, special leave scheme; career break scheme; job share. These all contribute to creating a settled and productive workforce. The

Directorate experienced a lower level of absence due to ill health during 2013/2014 than in the previous financial year. The Council has established a corporate safeguarding group to ensure that its personnel policies reflect the requirements for a safe workforce and take full account of the requirements that flow from the employment of a regulated workforce and registered individuals. The group produced an action plan and Cabinet agreed a Safer Recruitment Policy for the Council and Schools in January 2013. Of the 60 actions identified in the action plan for improving corporate safeguarding, 57 have been completed (95%), with only 3 actions outstanding.

60. The Corporate Safeguarding Group continues to monitor the safeguarding arrangements, including recruitment within the council and schools. Monitoring of the Safer Recruitment Policy in respect of new and existing employees is undertaken by Transact and Human Resources on a scheduled basis and by Internal Audit as part of their ongoing audit programme. The monitoring of safeguards in respect of volunteers and contractors is undertaken by Internal Audit as part of the scheduled audit programme of schools, to ensure compliance with the policy.

61. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/2014 and the progress made.

- **We started to develop an evaluation tool for training.**
- **We worked with the wider care sector to ensure the training provided meets their requirements.**
- **We have supported and encouraged the uptake of e-learning.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will complete the development of an evaluation tool for training**
- **We will consider the options for increasing the scale on which social care training is delivered in partnership with other local authorities.**
- **We will plan a programme of training to support implementation of the Social Services and Well-being Act for the future of training**

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

62. Equality and diversity form an integral part of our service planning. The Council has a range of Policies in place to ensure equality including policies regarding the Welsh Language, Equal Opportunities' and Race Equality. Progress against the actions detailed in each policy is required from the Directorate. All divisions within the Directorate are working towards the Vale Equalities Scheme which has identified four levels of achievement.
63. In December 2012 the Deputy Minister for Social Services launched "More Than Just Words..." which is a strategic framework to strengthen welsh language services in health, social services and social care. The strategy confirms the Welsh Government's commitment to strengthen Welsh Language services to service users and their families. A three year action plan is contained within the Framework and all local authorities are required to report their progress as against the targets within the Framework. There is a commitment to working with SEWIC to coordinate our progress against the national action plan.
64. At the end of the first year of the action plan, progress has been made in identifying the welsh language speakers within the workforce so that service users and their carers can work with the service in a language of their choice. Work is ongoing to analyse the data received by the Council with regard to the prevalence of Welsh Speakers in the Vale of Glamorgan
65. As well as distributing information throughout the community, we continue to make available a range of leaflets through the corporate contact centre to provide enquirers and those referred to social services with a bespoke set of information. The Vale of Glamorgan Care Directory, available at a range of outlets, offers advice and signposting to people looking to address their own care needs independently. It remains our most requested publication. The Council relaunched its website in 2013 and we were active participants in the redevelopment work.

66. The Department continues to work with its partners to produce joint information and signposting where practicable.

67. All service changes within Social Services have been the subject of an Equality Impact Assessment and these are now included as appropriate in Cabinet Reports.

68. Service area plans will be developed to ensure that the service responds to the needs of Welsh speakers in line with the strategic guidance document from Welsh Government “More than Just Words”.

69. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/14 and the progress made.

- **We have completed the review of information available to those who require support from social services.**
- **We have completed Equality Impact Assessments for proposed changes in the service.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will ensure that the Social care web pages are developed and promoted.**
- **We will ensure that all leaflets and fact sheets on the web and in hard copy are updated, distributed and promoted.**
- **We will ensure we meet the requirements of More than Just Words ...**

INVOLVING USERS AND CARERS

70. The consultation framework has been reviewed and is now organised to reflect service priorities. Each consultation exercise considers the most appropriate method of consultation for that service user group, with the flexibility to adapt methods for individual service users as required. Reports and issue logs are prepared and shared with service areas to identify recommendations and existing good practice to inform service improvements. Consultation exercises are now timed to support any service reconfiguration work being undertaken.
71. Our performance in completing carers' assessments has remained at a very high level. The Council has received very positive comments from carers in relation to this work. Services continue to be developed to support carers in their caring role. In recent years we have organised a Carers Day during National Carers Week. In 2013, this was planned and delivered with Cardiff Council; the event was well attended and we received positive feedback. Outreach has been provided at a number of carer events including World Mental Health Day, regular participation in Alzheimer's Society Carers' Information programme, and carers' meetings at the Morfa Day Unit at Barry Hospital. We worked with the University Health Board and Cardiff Council to develop and finalise the local response to the new Carers Measure and to implement its requirements. There have been two recent wide-scale carer consultations.
72. A Carers Support Officer has been in post since 2008. The primary purpose of this post is to create additional and specialist capacity to undertake carers assessment within the Community Mental Health Team for Older People. The post has also assisted with meeting requests for carers' assessment from the Adult Community Care Team where there is a diagnosis of dementia. This will include people caring for someone with young onset dementia. The Carers Assessment process is based on an internationally recognised model of assessment.

73. In the nine months to December 2013, 213 Carers' Assessments were completed across the Adult Services division and a total of 296 services provided. Services provided via a Carers' Assessment include Carers' Support Fund up to £300 (most often used to enable carers' breaks), Carers' Emergency Fund (funding contingency care) and Therapies. The full range covers all the support and service areas identified in the Welsh Government Carers Strategy and the former Welsh Government Carers Grants guidance.
74. There are carers' services, funded by the Carers Services Budget, available to carers of people with dementia which do not require an assessment of either the carer or cared for: Vale of Glamorgan Crossroads (respite), Age Connects (Hospital Discharge Service for Carers/respite), Carers Advocate, Carers Handyman, Training, Carers' Emergency Card.
75. The Vale of Glamorgan commissions externally a Young Carers Project delivered through Action for Children. This service provides opportunities for young carers to participate in social activities, events and short breaks outside the school and home environment. In November 2012, the Children and Young People Partnership commissioned Action for Children to carry out a scoping exercise that would help to identify the potential number of young carers in primary and secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.
76. More than 2,000 children were surveyed: 179 of them believed that they were a young carer and another 214 were unsure if they were a young carer. Hence, 10% of young people indicated that they had some caring responsibility, although only 8.3% considered themselves to be young carers. These percentages are in line with similar research elsewhere. Extrapolating from these figures suggests that the Vale of Glamorgan has as many as 1800 young carers.
77. To take forward recommendations from the scoping exercise and to make progress with the requirements of the Carers Measure, a Young Carers Group was formed in January 2013. It included representatives from health and social services, the Children and Young People's Partnership, the Learning and Skills Directorate, a Deputy Head Teacher and young carer service

providers from the Third Sector. As part of the group's objectives it was agreed that a new service/project should be commissioned for Young Carers, building on the existing service and introducing more individual case work to support young carers improve their educational attendance and attainment. Work on a procurement exercise has started.

78. The Family Information Service continues to provide a valued service with a positive audit report received on how it meets its statutory requirements. The Older People's Forum in the Vale continues to be very active advocates and provide an important voice in service development issues such as the new extra care scheme.

79. These were our improvement priorities for 2012/13 and the progress made.

- **We have continued to work with partners to implement the Carers Measure.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will plan and deliver a new range of events to celebrate Carers Week in 2014.**
- **We will review the way in which we deliver carers assessments.**

SAFEGUARDING

80. We have a central safeguarding unit within the Directorate which is now well established. The unit ensures that learning and experience is being transferred between the child and adult protection processes. We provide Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee with regular reports to demonstrate our effective operational and strategic management of the multi-agency responses to allegations of abuse and neglect, our monitoring activity and plans for improving child and adult protection and safeguarding systems. As part of the ongoing cycle, safeguarding training was provided to elected members during 2013-14.
81. The number of children and young people whose names are included on the Child Protection Register (CPR) has fallen to 86 as at 31 April 2014 following a sustained rise from 73 in 2011, 114 in 2012 and 124 in 2013. During 2013-14, 97 initial child protection conferences were held compared to 124 during 2012-13, representing a 22% decrease. A 30% decrease in the number of children's names placed on the child protection register follows with 105 children's names added during 2013-14 compared to 149 during 2012-13. There was minimal variation in the number of names deregistered; 144 in 2012-13 and 143 in 2013-14. Such fluctuations are not unusual and they usually have many causes. However, it is evident from inspection, audit and quality assurance processes that our work in multi-agency assessment, decision making and planning continues to ensure that the most vulnerable children and young people are identified and supported appropriately. A review of the structure for the Independent Reviewing Officer function was completed during the year in order to provide additional capacity when numbers increase and the new structure was implemented in 2013/2014.
82. All initial and review child protection conferences have been held within statutory timescales. All children on the register have a child protection plan and we have further improved our performance for core groups taking place within 10 working days of the initial conference to 95.12%. This is slight reduction on last year. For adult protection, we are able to demonstrate that in

100% of adult protection referrals the risk was managed and vulnerable adults were satisfied or very satisfied with the protection service they received.

83. During 2012/2013, we undertook our first service user satisfaction survey for individuals who had been referred as part of the Protection of Vulnerable Adults process. The potentially sensitive issues surrounding the POVA process meant sample selection was difficult but the information that was gathered has been very useful. This process was repeated at the end of 2013/2014. The sample size was very small with only 4 individuals completing the exercise. Of these 75% were satisfied with the response made by the authority in dealing with their issues. Work was completed during 2013/2014 to undertake the same exercise with children who have been subject to child protection proceedings.
84. There are established single entry referral points in both Adult and Children and Young People Services. Where referrals include concerns about risk, these are progressed as a priority. Within adult services, access to services has been made easier with the introduction of a single telephone number. All contacts and referrals for Children and Young People Services are managed through the division's Intake and Family Support Team. We have maintained good performance for initial decision making with 98.88% of referrals receiving a decision within one working day.
85. There are designated leads for child and adult protection in Social Services and designated officers provide contact points for advice and expertise to staff within and outside the Council, wider agencies and the general public. They work hard to raise the profile of national and local guidance on child and adult protection and to ensure all staff in the Council and in other agencies understand and operate high standards of risk recognition and safeguarding practice. While all staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable people, the Director of Social Services is acknowledged as being the senior officer within the Council with final accountability for this area of work.

86. The Adult Area Protection Committee and Local Safeguarding Children Board both have a well functioning set of sub groups which include mechanisms for multi-agency audit of compliance with the All Wales protection procedures.
87. Both the AAPC and LSCB merged to become regional boards with Cardiff during 2013/2014. A review of governance and membership arrangements has been completed as part of this process. Each Board includes representation at a senior level from the Vale of Glamorgan. The Director is the current chair of the LSCB and vice chair of the Adult Safeguarding Board.
88. These regional boards are responsible for coordinating the work of partner agencies to protect those at risk of neglect or abuse and to ensure suitable arrangements are in place to prevent people becoming victims of abuse.
89. Collaboration between staff involved in Protection of Vulnerable Adults Arrangements (POVA), complaints administration and contracting has been strengthened during the year to ensure timely sharing of information and action if required. We are aware of the important role that the Council plays in monitoring the quality of care provision and ensuring the safety of vulnerable people in the community. This collaborative work has enabled social services and its partners to take the action necessary to address short comings within the care sector in the past year.
90. The Cardiff and Vale Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS) /Mental Capacity Act Team has been operational since the implementation of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards in April 2009. The service is managed via the Vale of Glamorgan Council by a tripartite management board consisting of representation from the Vale of Glamorgan Council, the University Health Board and Cardiff Council. It has developed a methodology and work load management processes in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the DoLS Codes of Practice.
91. The team provides coordination of Best Interest Assessments, advice and support to health and social care teams across the sector and training for CSSIW registered care homes and all inpatient sites across the hospitals of

Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan areas. The team received a total of 101 referrals during 2013/2014, which is a slight increase from the previous year.

Safeguarding Children

92. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/14 and the progress made.

- **We concluded discussions with Cardiff and the two LSCBs were merged during 2013/2014.**
- **We introduced a consultation process for children on the Child Protection Register to learn from their experiences.**
- **The new staffing structure for the IRO service was implemented during the year.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will work with Cardiff Authority and other partners to ensure the new LSCB is well managed and effective.**
- **We will implement any recommendations that are made following the inspection of Safeguarding and Care Planning of Looked after Children and Care Leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours by CSSIW.**

Protecting Vulnerable Adults

93. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/14 and the progress made.

- **We have reviewed the performance information available regarding POVA issues.**
- **We did not deliver POVA investigation training to relevant staff and this will be undertaken during 2014/2015.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will review the structure for ensuring POVA issues are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.**
- **We will work with Cardiff Council and other partners to ensure the new Regional Adult Safeguarding Board is effective.**
- **We will train appropriate staff in investigating skills.**

Shared Safeguarding

94. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/2014 and the progress made.

- **We have worked with Cardiff to merge the AAPCs for each area into a regional Adult Safeguarding Board.**
- **We will be considering the options for providing the Adult Safeguarding Board with business manager capacity during 2014/2015.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will be consider the options for providing the AAPC with business manager capacity during 2014/2015.**

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

95. These were our improvement priorities for 2013/14 and the progress made.

- **We have drafted an Operational Policy which describes the scope and remit of the team was presented to the Team Steering Group in September 2013. But this has not yet been ratified by the Cardiff and Vale MCA/DoLS Partnership Board and requires some**

- **A major recruitment of Best Interest Assessors has taken place during the year. An additional 20 health and social care professionals have been trained to provide the service on a rota basis.**

What are our new improvement objectives?

- **We will continue to raise awareness through education and training of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and DoLS across health and social care through formal training and advice.**
- **We will ensure that systems are in place for individuals and families to be kept informed of their rights under the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding processes.**
- **We will develop a business case for additional BIA resources for the team so that the team is better able to meet the statutory obligations and ensure that people are safeguarded.**