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Bridgend County Borough Council



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Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643147 / 643694

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: democratic services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Friday, 29 January 2021

Dear Councillor,

CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING

A meeting of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting will be held remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 4 February 2021 at 14:00.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 8
To receive for approval the minutes of 26/11/20
4. Update on Bridgend Youth Justice Service Improvement Plan 9 - 56
5. Independent Reviewing Service (IRO) Report 57 - 94
6. Urgent Items
To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should be reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: Please note: Due to the current requirement for social distancing this meeting will not be held at its usual location. This will be a virtual meeting and Members and Officers will be attending remotely. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

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Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal, HR & Regulatory Services

Councillors:

NA Burnett

N Clarke

HJ David

J Gebbie

T Giffard

Councillors

CA Green

RM James

D Patel

RL Penhale-Thomas

JC Radcliffe

Councillors

CE Smith

DBF White

HM Williams

RE Young

Agenda Item 3

CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING - THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2020

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING HELD IN REMOTELY VIA SKYPE FOR BUSINESS ON THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 14:00

Present

Councillor – Chairperson

NA Burnett	N Clarke	HJ David	DK Edwards
J Gebbie	T Giffard	CA Green	RM James
D Patel	CE Smith	HM Williams	RE Young

Officers:

Nicola Echanis	Head of Education & Family Support
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Laura Kinsey	Head of Children's Social Care
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Michael Pitman	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive

213. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

214. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting dated 4 March 2020, be approved as a true and accurate record.

215. SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN DURING COVID 19

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing presented a report, the purpose of which, was to provide Members with an overview of the support and continuity planning for our most vulnerable children during Covid-19.

She commenced her report, by paying tribute to the vulnerable children and their families in the Bridgend County Borough, for the way they had positively reacted in what had been to date a very pressurised and at times distressing and difficult year for them due to the pandemic.

The report she felt, reflected a comprehensive assessment of how the Authority worked as a 'One Council' when it adapted very quickly last March to the threat of the virus. In accordance with Welsh Government guidance Social Services and its partners continued the safeguarding of the most vulnerable and their families, through largely new digital methods, as face to face contact was in most cases not possible due to Covid-19.

Though most staff supporting clients had to work from home like the majority of other Council staff, the MASH team continued to operate on a reduced team from the office in Ravenscourt, Bridgend.

Paragraph 3.3 of the report, provided in table format data on Children's Social Care activities during the period from April to September 2020. The data shown in this part of the report, gave a positive picture in terms of the high levels of performance that were

maintained in lockdown, in respect of assessments, visits to children (mostly remotely) and holding of Child Protection Conferences within the required statutory timescales.

As alluded to above, the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing confirmed that the MASH team together with general enquiries staff to answer queries and calls, were office based. There were also remote meetings with children and their families etc, which although serving their purpose, were more challenging than face to face interactions as would be the case in normal pre-Covid circumstances.

Paragraph 3.6 of the report outlined the support avenues in place for vulnerable learners via Education and Family Support Teams and Children's Social Care, for Members information.

The most recent version of the full Safeguarding Service Plan was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

In light of the Welsh Government Announcement that a "Circuit Breaker Lockdown" or "Fire Break" would come into force between 6pm, Friday 23rd October 2020 until Monday 9th November 2020, the decision was made to review and update the Children's Services Service Plan in line with the Guidance that had been issued. An addendum outlining temporary changes in approaches was implemented for this specific period and could be found as an Appendix (to the report).

In addition to the statutory services/functions covered in the Service Plan, the Council also responded to the need to provide support to our most vulnerable children and young people during the school holidays and established bespoke provision to achieve this.

The Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate was able to make good use of Welsh Government funding to provide activities and support during the summer period, explained the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing. 20 days of activities were provided, supporting 39 young people who were registered or classed as vulnerable, and with 259 sessions provided to young people over the four week period.

Additionally, she advised that a programme was supported for young people with additional needs who would normally have accessed the Discovery Days respite programme during the summer period.

The Chairperson commended the report and she was aware of the casework Officers had been undertaking, since lockdown commenced and the enquiries and referrals Members had also dealt with, particularly with regards to concerns over potential lack of contact between statutory support agencies and LAC. The report however, set out how these concerns could now be allayed and that support has been maintained for our most vulnerable in society, though in a different way to that previously, in light of coronavirus.

A Member asked how Covid-19 and its restrictions had affected LAC's etc everyday life activities, ie the extent of interruptions to their normal routine as part of everyday life.

The Head of Children's Services advised, that Foster families and Residential Care support avenues had continued as before Covid and apart from the social distancing restrictions and any interruptions to education, normal routines had applied. There were some restrictions however, that everyone else had also had to face, such as visits to the dentist and GP where PPE equipment had had to be worn for any invasive treatment/procedures.

The Head of Children's Services added that she was pleased to inform the Committee that statutory reviews for LAC had also been maintained since the end of March and within the relevant timescales also.

RESOLVED: That Members noted the report.

216. CARE INSPECTORATE WALES (CIW - FORMERLY CSSIW) INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES

The Head of Children's Social Care presented a report, in order to share with Cabinet Committee, reports and associated Action Plans following the CIW inspections regarding Maple Tree House (September 2019, February 2020 and August 2020) and Harwood House (July 2019).

By way of some background information, she advised Members that Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) were responsible for inspecting all regulated care and support services, including Children's Homes, in Wales. Inspections consist of four key stages: 1) inspection planning and preparation, 2) the inspection visit, 3) feedback, and 4) reporting. During the process, inspectors would make judgements as to how well the service is performing under four core themes: 1) well-being; 2) care and support; 3) environment; and 4) leadership and management.

In the case of children's homes, CIW would make annual inspections as part of their rolling programme. There were two main types of inspections, namely Full and Focused and an explanation as to what was entailed in respect of each of these, was contained in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

Paragraph(s) 4 of the report, then gave a summary of the findings of the CIW inspections of each of the premises in question, with the Full Inspection Reports attached as Appendices to the covering report.

The Head of Children's Social Care referred Members to paragraph 4.6 of the report, where the CIW acknowledged that certain improvements listed here, had been made at Maple Tree House, following a further CIW inspection of this Home.

She then referred to the section of the report headed recommendations and next steps.

Action Plans had been developed in response to the recommendations made by CIW in respect of the Homes and these were attached at Appendices 5 and 6 of the report. These were monitored by the Group Manager - Placements and Provider Services Team, during supervision with the Residential Manager(s) and the Responsible Individual through their routine visits. As shown in the report, there were no outstanding actions for Harwood House and there was a comprehensive action plan and support package driving forward the changes and improvements required at Maple Tree House.

The Head of Children's Social Care advised that since the report before Members had been written, a further unannounced inspection had been made by CIW at Maple House and the Inspector had informed Social Services that massive progress had been made there since the original inspection was undertaken. The Improvement and Enforcement Panel since this had taken place, had also met and decided to lift restrictions they had previously put in place at Maple House (due to the improvements that had been achieved). The Panel had decided to take no further action due to previous non-compliance issues now having been met. The CIW Inspector had since submitted a written report, following this latest inspection, acknowledging the positive changes that had been put in place confirming that improvements in all areas of the home had been made, aside of in a small number of areas which was work in progress.

Members welcomed this update and the Leader asked if all the action points illustrated in the relevant agreed Action Plan, had now been carried out.

The Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services confirmed that most of these had been finalised and completed, though there was a few areas where work was still ongoing. He added that all four homes were now fully compliant in terms of regulations laid down by the CIW. These standards would be maintained, he assured Members.

The Deputy leader referred to paragraph 4.1.3 of the report, where it outlined that there was a new facility planned at the site of the former Brynmenyn Primary School. He asked if the date for the opening of this new facility was still on target and what would the benefits of this facility when compared to the one it was replacing.

The Head of Children’s Care confirmed that planning permission had now been granted for the new facility and that it was on target to open next year. She added that this would be in an improved more semi-rural location, with improved outdoor open space, which would assist children’s emotional and physical wellbeing. The building was also bigger than the current facility at Maple House and there would be an extra emergency bed provided there totalling three beds, whereby at the current facility there was only two.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Committee received and approved the updated Action Plans, as attached to the report.

217. **APPROVAL OF THE STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE FOR CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES**

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to provide Members with the revised statements of purpose for the current children and young people’s residential services provision in Bridgend County Borough Council. It was a requirement under the Council’s constitution that these are presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee to approve.

He advised Members, that Bridgend County Borough Council currently has four children’s residential homes delivering services to children and young people aged 0-19 years, namely:-

- Maple Tree House;
- Sunny Bank;
- Bakers Way; and
- Harwood House

The introduction of The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) came into force on the 2nd of April 2018. The purpose of the Act, was to build on the success of regulation in Wales and reflected the changing world of social care. It places service quality and improvement at the heart of the regulatory regime and strengthens protection for those who need it. Such regulation would move beyond compliance with minimum standards, and focus more on the quality of services and the impact which they have on people receiving them.

The Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services confirmed, that in the Autumn of 2018, all of the Council’s social services were registered to meet the requirements of the new legislation. Each in-house service provision has its own statement of purpose and these were attached at Appendices 1 – 4 of the report.

He advised the Committee that in terms of the above mentioned premises, Sunnybank and Maple Tree House, had the same Manager.

In line with the Regulations, the Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services confirmed, that the Statements of Purpose had now been subjected to their annual review and changes to the statements were detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report. The revised Statements now more reflected a level of consistency across the 4 Homes, than had possibly previously been the case, he added.

The Chairperson confirmed that the report was very timely and made for interesting reading. Together with the supporting Statements of Purpose, it had put ambitions for our Care Homes firmly in place, with there being a clear perspective now in terms of aiming for the high standards in these facilities, the Directorate needs to be working to.

In terms of the revised Statements of Purpose, the Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations asked if the staff at the Care Homes had been advised of these, as well as if there were any changes to their terms and conditions as a result of them being brought in.

The Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services confirmed that each of the Residential Managers at the Homes had confirmed any such changes that had been put in place to the staff that worked there. In terms of Maple Tree House and the revised staffing structure there, consultation had taken place with employees there regarding this.

The Leader asked if our children and young people had some involvement in the revised Statements of Purpose for reasons of service development, as well as receiving some recognition that ‘their voices were being heard.’

The Head of Children’s Social Care confirmed that this was the case. She then gave some examples of how children and young people were involved and listened to by the service, for the benefit of Members. She added that, their involvement was also registered in their records, which also formed part of any report’s to the CIW.

RESOLVED: That Members noted the content of the report and approved the Statement of Purpose for each of the 4 residential service provisions.

218. REVISED STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE FOR CHILDREN'S FOSTERING SERVICES

The Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services presented a report, in order to provide Members with the revised Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service in Bridgend County Borough Council. It was a requirement under the Council’s Constitution that these are presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee for approval.

He explained that the Fostering Service provided a range of foster care to children and young people who are looked after by Bridgend County Borough Council. The service offers the types of family care to children and young people from birth to 18 years of age, as were highlighted in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

The relevant provisions of The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA), came into force on 2nd April 2018. The purpose of the Act was to build on the success of regulation in Wales and reflected the changing world of social care. It placed service quality and improvement at the heart of the regulatory regime and strengthens protection for those who require this. Regulation will move beyond

compliance with minimum standards, and focus more on the quality of services and the impact which they have on the people receiving them.

The Local Authority Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2018 came into force on 29th April 2019 and sets out the Requirement of the Local Authority to prepare a Statement of Purpose and to keep it regularly under review, on an annual basis.

In line with the guide to compiling a Statement of Purpose that was provided under the above Act by Care Inspectorate Wales (April 2019), Bridgend Fostering Service had prepared its Statement of Purpose and this was included at Appendix 1 to the report.

In April 2020 the Statement of Purpose has been subjected to its annual review and changes to the statement were described in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

The Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services, then shared some of the salient points and key features of the Revised Statement of Purpose with Members.

The Leader asked if any further feedback could be given on the impact of Covid-19 on Foster Carers, as these were providing care for the majority of children we were supporting in their own homes. He added also, if any different support mechanisms that may have been put in place for these children since the pandemic came about, needed to be reflected in the Fostering Service Statement of Purpose.

The Group Manager – Placements and Provider Services, confirmed that Foster Carers were doing an incredible job particularly since the pandemic.

They had shown a very high level of resilience supporting their children during the hardest time imaginable, whilst also still having their other worries to deal with. Social Services staff have since last March, been monitoring how Foster Carers and Foster Children had been coping at least on a weekly basis through contact mainly by telephone or email, etc. The department had also developed a RAG status, in order to categorise different levels of support these families may have required during the ongoing crisis, in case any urgent home visits were required for priority placements by Social Workers, based on necessity.

He added that weekly newsletters had also been issued to Foster Carer families, highlighting updates and changes to the way services available were being provided, as well as giving them examples of ideas of activities that could be undertaken when families were subjected to periods of isolation during times of full lockdown.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Committee noted the content of the report and approved the revised Statement of Purpose for Bridgend Fostering Service.

219. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 16:00

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE
4 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

UPDATE ON BRIDGEND YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Corporate Parenting Committee on progress with implementing the Bridgend Youth Justice Service improvement plan which was developed following a Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspection of Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service in December 2018.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective/objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Bridgend Youth Justice Service (Bridgend YJS) is a statutory multi-agency partnership that has a legal duty to co-operate in order to secure appropriate local youth justice services. The service is funded from a variety of sources

including UK Government, Welsh Government and statutory partners (ie Bridgend County Borough Council, South Wales Police, the Probation Service and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board).

3.2 Statutory duties to prevent offending are outlined in criminal justice and civil legislation. The principle aim of Youth Justice Services in England and Wales is to prevent offending and re-offending by young people in accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Local authorities in Wales also have statutory duties to provide preventative services contained in Section 15 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Local authorities must provide services to:

- encourage children not to commit offences;
- avoid the need for children to be placed in secure accommodation; and
- enable people to live their lives as independently as possible.

3.3 The Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service (WBYJEIS) was subject to a full joint inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in December 2018, the findings of which were published in March 2019. The inspection concluded that the WBYJEIS received an overall rating of inadequate. The findings of the HMIP inspection concluded that nine of the twelve inspection domains were rated as inadequate, one was adequate, one was good and one was outstanding. The inspection report is available online at www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk .

3.4 On 19 April 2019, Cabinet agreed to the disaggregation of the WBYJEIS and that the new arrangement would be for the Bridgend's Youth Justice Service to sit within the portfolio of an existing group manager within the Education and Family Support directorate.

3.5 The service continues to be subject to monitoring by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and significant scrutiny from a variety of sources including UK Government and Welsh Government. However, due to the impact of COVID-19 it is presently unknown when a re-inspection of Bridgend YJS will be undertaken.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 A restructure of Bridgend YJS was concluded in September 2019. This restructure led to the service becoming a part of the Integrated Multi-Agency Prevention of Complex Cases Teams (IMPACCT) hub working closely with the edge of care teams. This move has provided better joint working, sharing of skills and resources and reduced duplication of work for children, young people and families. The restructure also led to the creation of lead practitioner posts which provide the service with the opportunity to deliver robust supervision, quality assurance of work and line management of staff. These were areas highlighted within the inspection as a cause for concern. The lead practitioner posts were recruited to in October 2019, with both lead practitioners in post in January 2020.

- 4.2 Quality assurance work has commenced within the service. Feedback from this has highlighted that there is an improving picture in respect of the quality of assessments. However, further work in addressing risk of harm and safety and wellbeing has been identified. In response to this, independent training approved by the YJB has been commissioned to support staff in this area. In addition to assessments, development of need led plans that are timely and address issues highlighted within assessments has also been identified as an area for improvement. Developing interventions and programmes that reduce risks of re-offending are also ongoing areas for the service to enhance.
- 4.3 The lead practitioners have begun to implement approaches in response to the above. This has included the Bridgend YJS being involved in practice issues sessions with other services. In these sessions sharing of skills, knowledge and expertise takes place between staff within edge of care teams and the Bridgend YJS with particular focus on evidenced based practice. Furthermore, a partnership has been built with a local community organisation offering young people known to the service the opportunity to engage in a six to eight week programme using sport to improve social and emotional skills. Closer links with the Fire Service has also been developed leading to opportunities for young people to engage in fire cadets. Developing these areas provides the service with support that can assist young people in reducing their risks of offending or anti-social behaviour, areas that were identified within the inspection report as inadequate.
- 4.4 Bridgend YJS has improved relationships with partners since the restructure in 2019. This has led to the appointment of a specialist health worker into the service. This was an area identified within the inspection as a cause for concern. Relationships with the Probation Service are also improving with monthly meetings being held to review young people transitioning to adulthood and ensuring support needs continue. The Bridgend YJS relationship and joint working with children's social care is also improving with better representation at risk management meetings between the two agencies. This ensures that the needs of young people and their families are being addressed and the risk of duplication is reduced.
- 4.5 A self-assessment of the Bridgend YJS was conducted in April 2020. Areas identified for improvement have been added to the Improvement Plan attached at appendix 1. Areas identified within this plan include the ongoing improvement of assessments, support plans, interventions, partnership working and evaluation and feedback forms from young people.
- 4.6 There have been a number of challenges as part of the improvement journey for the Bridgend YJS, in particular the impact COVID-19 has had on the pace of progress in addressing some of the practice issues. The service, like others, had to adapt to restrictions and develop practice and support not commonly offered to children, young people and their families. It is positive to report that a number of staff within the service adapted to this and supported the authority with some of the priorities at that time ie childcare hubs and free school meal deliveries. However, COVID-19 has impacted on the lead practitioners' ability

to affect change in some areas due to remote working, changes in practice, staff sickness for example.

- 4.7 Attached at appendix 2 is the performance framework report which is considered at monthly Youth Justice Service Management Board meetings. The Management Board is jointly chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Communities. Terms of reference for the Management Board are attached at appendix 3.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no effect on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 Summary on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment is listed below:

Long-term	The long term aim of the service is to improve outcomes for children, young people and families by reducing first-time entrants into the youth justice system, reducing re-offending rates and reducing the use of custody for young people.
Prevention	The focus of the service is to prevent offending and re-offending by young people under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
Integration	The service is a multi-agency partnership where integration is key to good service delivery arrangements.
Collaboration	Collaboration will be critical to deliver the inspection recommendations.
Involvement	Participation and engagement arrangements will be strengthened as part of the new working arrangements.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications linked to this report.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- notes the contents of the report; and

- provides comments/recommendations.

Lindsay Harvey
Corporate Director Education and Family Support

Contact officer: Mark Lewis
Group Manager (Integrated Working and Family Support)
Telephone: (01656) 642679
Email: Mark.Lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
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CF33 4WB

Background documents: HM Inspectorate of Probation – an inspection of youth offending services in Western Bay

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Appendix 1

**Bridgend County Borough Council
Bridgend Youth Justice Service (YJS) – Improvement Plan**

October 2020

Shown below is the improvement/action plan that has been developed in response to the full joint inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation. In addition, the plan includes operational priorities identified by staff within the Bridgend Youth Justice service and areas for development identified by the National Standards Self-Assessment 2019-2020.

All actions and recommendations that have been completed have been removed to ensure focus remains on outstanding actions and identified areas for development. However, these recommendations and activities are archived in a separate document and are available on request.

Service Area	Bridgend Youth Justice Service (YJS)
Head of Service and Strategic Lead for Bridgend YJS	Nicola Echanis

Improvement plan

RAG Code	Definition
GREEN	Action on target
AMBER	Action off target
RED	Action overdue

HM Inspectorate of Probation inspection report recommendations

Bridgend Youth Justice Service Management Board should:					
Recommendation	Action	Who	Target date	RAG code	Progress Update
3. Develop effective oversight of the service's work and effective challenge to partners	Agree a robust and meaningful performance framework to allow the management board to hold the service to account including staff sickness data.	Bridgend Youth Justice Service Management Board	September 2019	Green	16.9.20 – It is felt that a robust framework is in place to allow the management board to hold the service to account. Whilst the performance framework will evolve to meet emerging needs the management board are asked to confirm whether the framework is fit for purpose at this point in time.

Bridgend Youth Justice Service Manager should:					
Recommendation	Action	Who	Target date	RAG code	Progress Update
7. Make sure that all staff have appropriate supervision and management oversight.	Complete skills audit of YJS staff and board members	Service Managers	September 2019	Red	16.9.20 – A presentation outlining the journey of the child to be made to the Management Board at the November meeting. 25.8.20 – Staff audit complete and training/development plans in place. Management board members were requested to complete a skills audit which was circulated on 22.6.20 and 10 were returned. Based on the returned submissions a training/development plan is being put in place for board members. Staff audit complete and

					training plan in place
Director of Bridgend Children's Services should:					
Recommendation	Action	Who	Target date	RAG code	Progress Update
Improve the quality of assessments and risk management processes	Ensure risk is appropriately assessed and schedule risk assessment training for all YJS staff	Service Managers	September 2019	Green	<p>16.9.20 – Lead Practitioners to develop guides for assessing risk of harm, safety and wellbeing and thresholds for assessments by end of October 2020.</p> <p>25.8.20. Virtual refresher training to be offered to relevant staff on 8, 22 and 29 September 2020.</p> <p>Management oversight and appropriate challenge in</p>

					place.
	Ensure plans developed meet the needs of young people and there is no drift in respect of support offered to children and young people who become involved with the service	Lead Practitioners	March 2021	Green	<p>16.9.20 – Prevention Co-ordinator has developed a review process for bureau interventions. Lead Practitioners to review the process for statutory interventions to ensure reviews are incorporated by the end of October. To be rolled out to staff in November.</p> <p>25.8.20 - Feedback from young people open to the service as 31.5.20 is included in section 3 of the performance framework which has been shared with the management board.</p>
	To improve the analysis and action planning to tackle any disproportionality	Lead Practitioners	March 2021	Green	<p>16.9.20 – Data around gender, ethnicity, offences and type of disposal received over a three year period have been analysed. The findings will be presented to the management board at the October meeting</p> <p>25.8.20 - This work continues to be progressed as part of the quality</p>

					assurance framework.
	Develop an agreed model of intervention	Service Managers	September 2019	Red	<p>16.9.20 – This will be an ongoing piece of work around driving practice, improving assessments and care planning.</p> <p>25.8.20 – Work commenced and task and finish groups conducted. Work has been delivered to staff around the integrated family support services model and use of motivational interviewing and solution focused brief therapy. Further work being undertaken around developing other interventions within the service. This will be an ongoing process.</p> <p>Consideration to be given by the management board as to whether this action can be archived.</p>
The local authority education services should:					
Recommendation	Action	Who	Target date	RAG code	Progress Update

<p>13. Develop a literacy and numeracy strategy to support children and young people to develop these skills to improve the chances of desistance.</p>	<p>Develop and agree appropriate strategies</p>	<p>Service Managers</p>	<p>July 2019</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>16.9.20 – DW to map process linking in with the Education Engagement Team of the Directorate. Consultation has commenced with aim of creating new post within Education Engagement team and ensure support in place for learners open to YJS.</p> <p>25.8.20 – Work ongoing to identify and map the level of literacy and numeracy support and wider education offered to young people open to the service.</p>
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Additional areas for development (not referred to above) identified by YJS staff at development session on 11 April 2019

Bridgend YJS staff recommend:					
Recommendation	Actions	Who	Target date	RAG code	Progress Update

<p>Page 22</p> <p>Develop a more robust supervision process and increase personal development opportunities.</p> <p>Increase opportunities for partnership working as identified in the self-assessment standard 1.</p>	<p>Schedule a workshop with relevant safeguarding and early help (EH) colleagues to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) agree relevant training and personal development opportunities for YJS staff; and (b) a development day to improve interface and service awareness between YJS, safeguarding and the wider early help service. 	<p>Service Managers</p>	<p>August 2019</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>16.9.20 – An online event will be held in January with members from safeguarding teams, YJS, Early Help teams to raise awareness of roles, responsibilities and increase opportunities for joint working.</p> <p>25.8.20 – Dates that were scheduled for April 2020 to meet with operational children social care colleagues and wider teams were cancelled due to COVID.</p> <p>These will be re-scheduled in due course.</p> <p>However, regular supervision and personal development plans in place for the service.</p>
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<p>Participation and victim satisfaction</p>	<p>Ensure victim satisfaction feedback is collated and reviewed by service managers</p>	<p>Prevention Coordinator</p>	<p>August 2019</p>	<p>Red</p>	<p>16.9.20 – Victim Officer to attend Management Board meeting in October to outline her role and provide feedback on victim satisfaction. Victim data to be incorporated into the performance framework.</p> <p>25.8.20 – Due to the relatively low numbers of feedback questionnaires returned, a review of both the content (simplified) and means of circulating (now via email) has taken place. Since 'lockdown', 11 questionnaires have been circulated but the response rate (one) has been disappointing. More work will be actioned with a view to more pro-actively engaging with victims. Future updates (quantitative and qualitative) will be built into the performance management framework.</p>
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	Establish a children/young people's participation group	Service Managers	September 2019	Green	<p>16.9.20 – Information gathered from children and young people by the Participation Workers has been incorporated into the Quality Assurance Framework and will be reported to the board bi-annually.</p> <p>Lead Practitioners in the process of developing feedback forms for children, young people and parents/carers by October 2020.</p> <p>25.8.20 - See feedback from young people in section 3 of the performance framework circulated to the board.</p>
	Leaflets to be developed and shared with children, young people and families who become involved with the service. As identified in self-assessment Standard 2.	Lead Practitioners	Sept 2020	Green	<p>16.9.20 – Leaflets have been completed.</p> <p>25.8.20 - This work is in progress and draft leaflets will be available for the next board meeting in October</p>

	Consider developing a more appropriate drop in location for young people	Head of Education and Family Support	September 2019	Red	<p>16.9.20 – Board members are asked to identify/agree (a) an interim drop in location for young people and (b) whether Ravens Court remains a viable option in the medium to long term</p> <p>25.8.20 – The move to Ravens Court has been delayed due to the pandemic. Plans will be re-instated once safe to do so. This was also identified as an area for development within the self-assessment (standard 1).</p>
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Additional areas for development identified by National Standards Self-Assessment 2019-2020

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RAG Code	Definition
Green	Action on target
Amber	Action off target
Red	Action overdue

Area for development	Action	By Who	Target Date	RAG	Progress Update
Standard 1 – Out of Court Disposals					
Develop restorative approaches training within schools following an increase in request	Lead Practitioners along with Prevention Co-ordinator to develop an offer to schools in the restorative approaches model.	Lead Practitioner sand Prevention Co-ordinator	March 2021	Green	16.9.20 - Develop a process for schools to request support for RA. Overview to be provided to schools with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What RA is • How RA can be implemented within schools • Commitment in respect of training requirements.
Review the effectiveness of Police Restorative Justice Disposals and the impact of the Knife Crime Programme	South Wales Police (SWP) alongside YJS to review how police restorative justice disposals are delivered and what impact they have on young people.	SWP/YJS	March 2021	Green	16.9.20 – A process is almost finalised and will be completed by end of October 2020 to highlight clearly how the Police and YJS Police officer will work together

Area for development	Action	By Who	Target Date	RAG	Progress Update
Page 27	SWP alongside YJS to review the delivery of the knife programme and impact on young people.	SWP/YJS			in the delivery of Restorative Justice. 16.9.20 - The Police Officer within the YJS has developed worksheets and activities that can be delivered to young people around the risks of this offending behaviour. This work can be delivered when required to do so.
	Report to be provided to Management Board on both areas by March 2021	SWP/YJS			
Create an Out of Court Disposal (OCD) Scrutiny Panel to ensure consistency of approach to interventions	Police and Crime Commissioner's office, SWP and YJS to consider how an OCD panel could be implemented.	PCC and SWP	March 2021	Green	16.9.20 – Meeting has been arranged for 18 October 2020 with PCC and Safer Wales to review support and interventions available
Ensure there is good multiagency representation at risk management panels and actions as to how risk are managed are clearly recorded and progressed	Guidance to be written and clear to demonstrate how risk management in relation to safety and wellbeing is managed and shared across partners.	Lead Practitioners	December 2020	Green	16.9.20 – Lead Practitioners to complete guidance by end of October 2020.
Create a resource of Volunteer Mentors to support young people who become known to the service	Prevention Co-ordinator and Reparation Worker to increase and train volunteer pool who can safely and effectively support young	Prevention Co-ordinator	March 2021	Green	16.9.20 - A recruitment drive was undertaken in February where a number of volunteers were recruited.

Area for development	Action	By Who	Target Date	RAG	Progress Update
Page 28	people who become known to the service.				However, with the impact of COVID, the ability to deliver some of the training for volunteers was affected and some of those volunteers are no longer available to assist. However, a number are still keen to support the YJS and the service will continue to work with these volunteers in respect of Referral Order panels. A further recruitment drive will take place in the new year.
Standard 2 – At Court – Strategic Self-Assessment					
Ensure that specialist support is offered to young people in a timely way	A preferred provider list to be created and shared with the courts so there are opportunities to identify the best possible specialists that can ensure good quality assessment is conducted.	Children Social Care/Lead Practitioners	September 2020	Green	16.9.20 Bridgend legal department has advised that there is no specific provider list however, they will assist the YJS should the need for a specialist assessment be required.
Ensure there is no justice by geography, interventions offered via an OOCd in other local areas need to be replicated across regions	SWP to explore interventions and actions undertaken in other forces to ensure that children residing in Bridgend have the same opportunities	SWP	March 2021	Green	16.9.20 - DW to follow up with SWP.

Area for development	Action	By Who	Target Date	RAG	Progress Update
<p>Do not gain feedback from the courts in respect of the quality of support offered to young people that assists the courts in making sound decisions.</p>	<p>as others. Court feedback form developed and to be issued after submission of reports to the court.</p>	Courts/YJS	March 2021	Green	16.9.20 - This has been implemented and forms that are being returned from courts are being held centrally on the children's records.
Standard 4 – In Secure Settings – Strategic					
<p>Service quality</p> <p>To review understanding of the role and responsibilities of management board members to ensure appropriate challenge is offered to the service.</p>	<p>YJB to undertake a review similar to that completed in January 2020</p>	YJB	Sept 2020	Amber	16.9.20 – YJB will conduct a brief review of progress w/b 23 November 2020. This work will review current policies, procedures, short staff interview and observations on practice to comment on any changes noted since the review undertaken in January 2020
Standard 4 – In Secure Setting - Operational					
<p>Communication and information sharing</p> <p>To make sure that communications and information exchange, through use of the Youth Justice Application Framework (YJAF), are in</p>	<p>For Lead Practitioners to familiarise themselves with the YJAF system and develop their knowledge of this by working closely with YCS and YJB</p>	Lead Practitioner/YJB/YCS	March 2021	Amber	16.9.20 – Lead Practitioners to link with YJB to discuss further. Meeting to be held to understand roles and responsibilities in more detail.

Area for development	Action	By Who	Target Date	RAG	Progress Update
Page 30 The with Youth Custody service requirements.					

BRIDGEND YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

FOR MANAGEMENT BOARD 14 OCTOBER 2020



1 PERFORMANCE DATA

Performance data in this section relates to current cases open to the Youth Justice Service as at 31 August 2020.

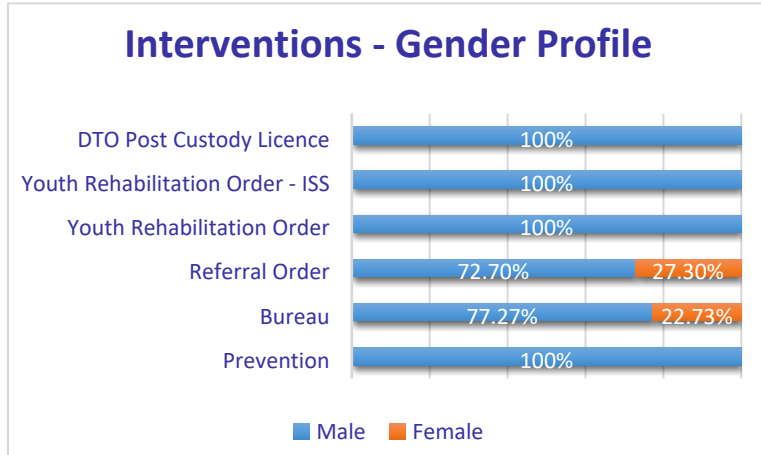
Page 3

1.1 Current Interventions

There were 43 cases open to the Youth Justice Service as at 31 August 2020. This includes 2 caretaking cases overseen on behalf of another local authority areas. 16 (37.2%) of the cases are for statutory interventions and 27 (62.8%) are for non-statutory interventions. There are currently no young people on the active caseload who have requested a service in welsh.

Number of cases open as at 31.8.20	Intervention type	Number of interventions	Male	Female
43	Prevention	5	5	-
	Bureau (includes 1 caretaking case)	22	17	5
	Referral Order (includes 1 caretaking case)	11	8	3
	Youth Rehabilitation Order	2	2	-
	Youth Rehabilitation Order with Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS)	2	2	-
	Detention and Training Order Post Custody Licence	1	1	-
	Total	43	35	8

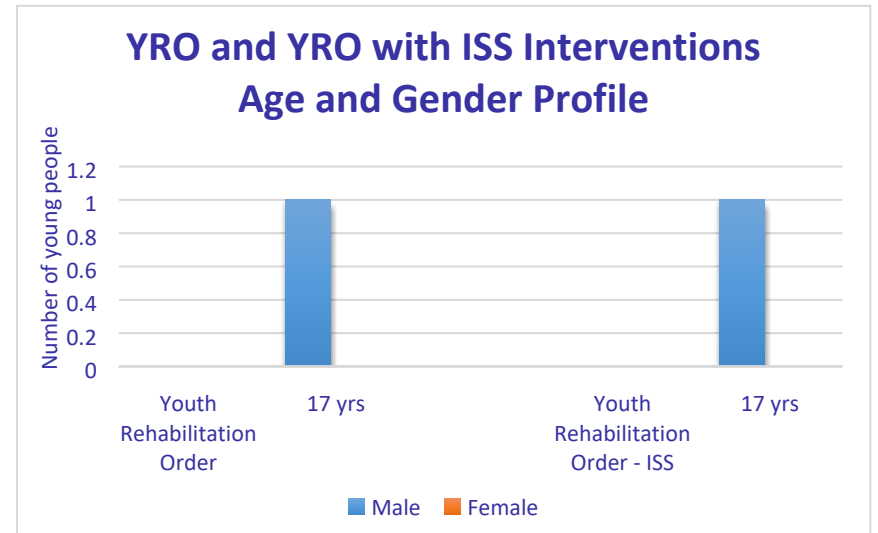
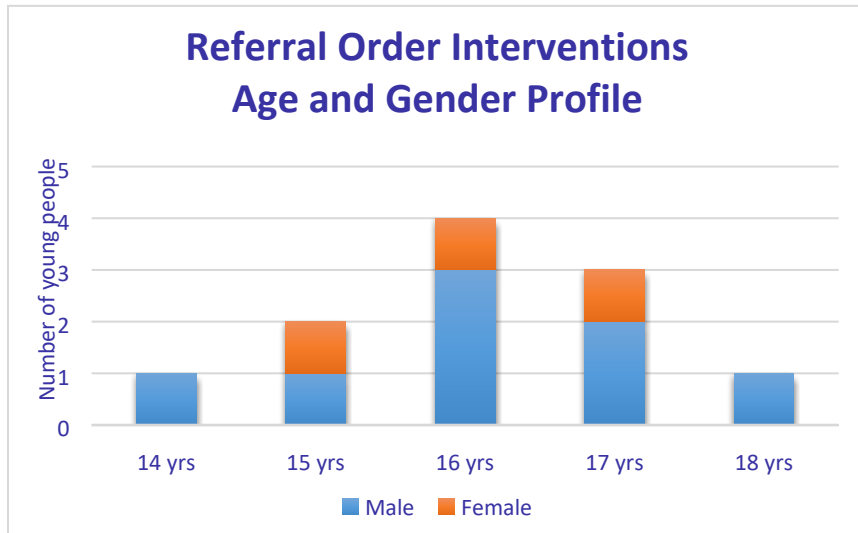
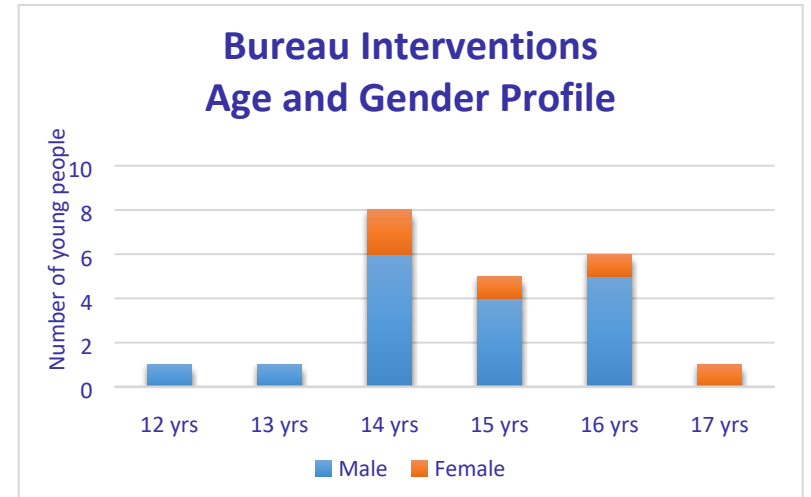
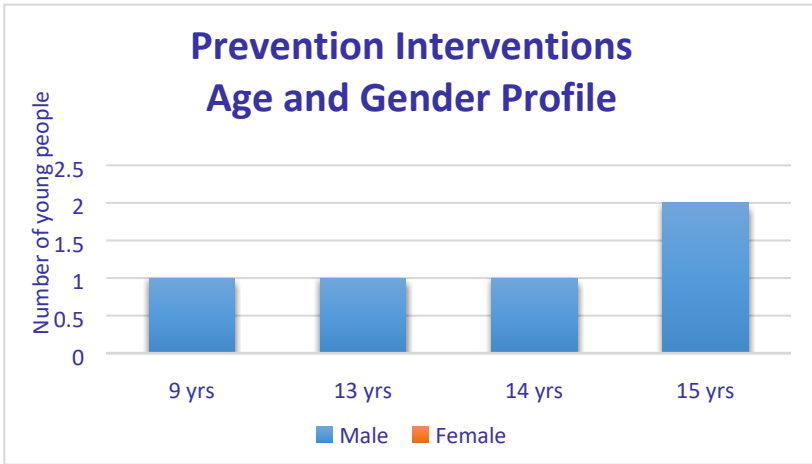
81.4% of the caseload are male and 18.6% are female.

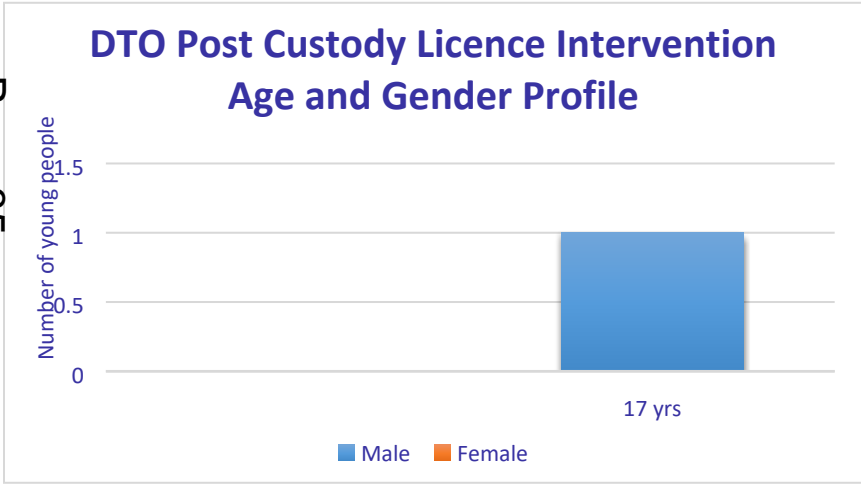


An age profile of the young people who are open to the service at 31 August 2020 is appended below.

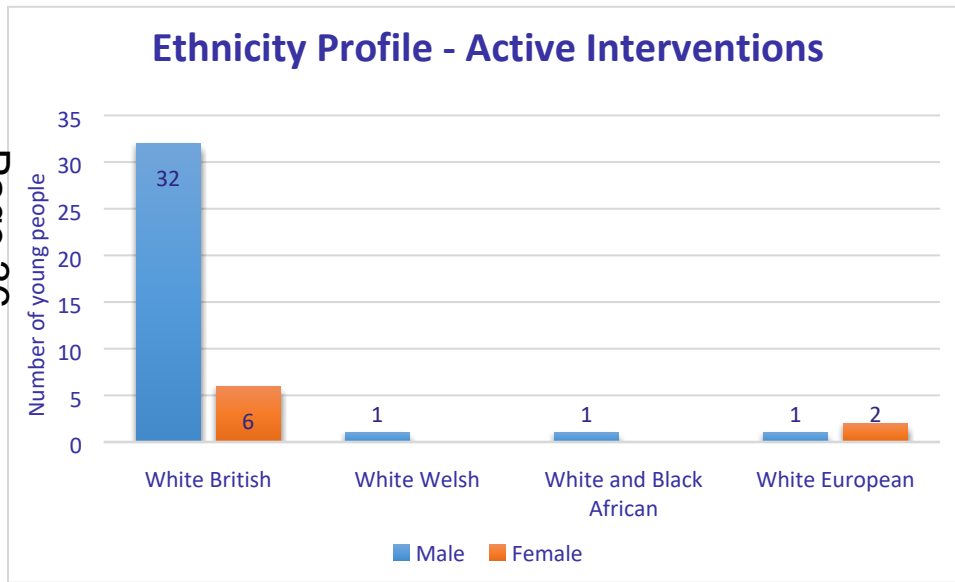
- 1 (2.3%) is aged 9
- 1 (2.3%) is aged 12
- 2 (4.7%) are aged 13
- 10 (23.3%) are aged 14
- 9 (20.9%) are aged 15
- 10 (23.3%) are aged 16
- 9 (20.9%) are aged 17
- 1 (2.3%) is aged 18

The following graphs outline the age and gender profile for each active intervention type.





The graph below outlines the ethnicity profile for the active interventions as at 31 August 2020.



The following table outlines support young people are receiving from services within Bridgend County Borough Council

Type of service within BCBC	Number of young people receiving additional support
Looked After Children	9
Care and Support	8
Child Protection Register	3
Early Help only	5
Youth Justice Service only	18
Total number of young people	43

Offending Behaviour

Current Offences

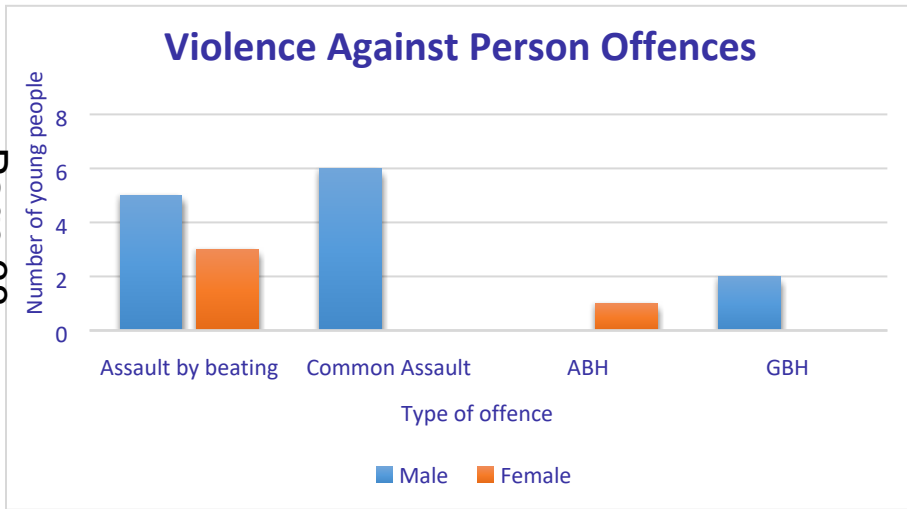
5 of the 43 active interventions are not included as young people referred to prevention have not gone through the criminal justice system. Of those 38 young people who had committed an offence 78.9% were male and 21.1% were female.

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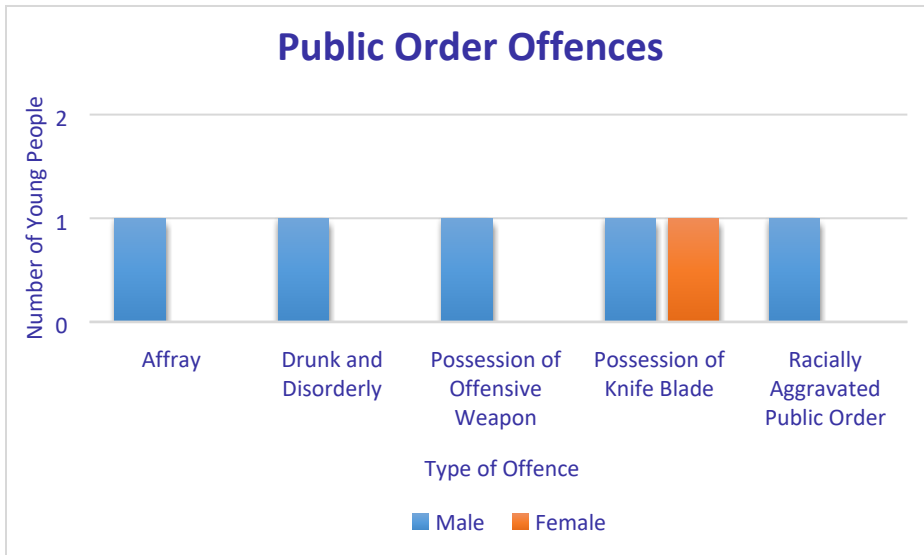
The table below outlines the main offence committed by a young person that has resulted in them receiving their intervention. The main offence is determined by the gravity factor which provides offences with a score, which is calculated based on the seriousness.

Intervention type	Main offence																Total number of young people
	*Public Order		*Violence Against Person		Robbery		Criminal Damage		Dugs Offences		Burglary		Theft		Breach of Order		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Bureau (includes 1 caretaking case)	4		7	3			1		2	2	2		1				22
Referral Order (includes 1 caretaking case)	1	1	4	1	2				1			1					11
Youth Rehabilitation Order															2		2
Youth Rehabilitation Order with ISS			1		1												2
Detention & Training Order			1														1
Total	5	1	13	4	3		1		3	2	2	1	1		2		38

*A further breakdown of the violence against person and public order offence categories are provided in the graphs below



44.7% of the main offences committed by young people were violence against the person offences. 76.5% were committed by males and 23.5% were committed by females



15.8% of the main offences committed by young people were public order offences. 83.3% were committed by males and 16.7% were committed by females.

The tables below outline the total number of offences each young person has committed which has resulted in their Youth Justice Service intervention.

Bureau Interventions

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Bureau (22 young people)	Public Order		Violence Against Person		Burglary non domestic		Criminal Damage		Drugs Offences		Theft		Vehicle Interference		Total number of young people
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Young people committing 1 offence	3		1	3	2		1		2	2	1				15
Young people committing 2 offences			1				1								1
			2												1
			1										1		1
			1				1								1
			1				1								1
	1		1												1
2														1	
Total														22	

Referral Order Interventions

Referral Order (11 young people)	Public Order		Violence Against Person		Theft and Handling		Criminal Damage		Drugs Offences		Burglary		Robbery		Total number of young people
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Young people committing 1 offence			1									1			2
Young people committing 2 offences		1		1											1
		1										1			1
Young people committing 3 offences			1						3				1		1
	1				1								1		1
Young people committing 4 offences			4												1
	2		1				1								1
Young people committing 6 offences							2								1
	2						1								1
Total														11	

Youth Rehabilitation Order Interventions

Youth Rehabilitation Order (2 young people)	Public Order	Violence Against Person	Theft and Handling	Criminal Damage	Breach of Statutory Order	Total number of young
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	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	people
Young people committing 3 offences	1								2		1
Young people committing 7 offences			2		3		1		1		1
Total											2

Youth Rehabilitation Order with ISS Intervention

Youth Rehabilitation Order with ISS (2 young people)	Public Order		Violence Against Person		Criminal Damage		Robbery		Breach of Bail		Theft		Total number of young people
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Young people committing 6 offences	1		4		1								1
	1						1		3		1		1
Total												2	

Detention and Training Order Post Custody Licence

Detention and Training Order Post Custody Licence (1 young person)	Public Order		Violence Against Person		Total number of young people
	M	F	M	F	
Young people committing 2 offences	1		1		1

Asset Plus Assessments

Assessments are used to help improve knowledge of a child's situation and the reasons for their offending behaviour, including experience of trauma and exploitation. The aim of Asset Plus is to deliver a nationally consistent and up to date evidence based assessment and planning interventions framework for Youth Justice Service (YJS) and secure establishments. The assessment framework incorporates a strengths based approach that identifies, risk, need and a child focused response that manages risk and facilitates desistance from crime. This enables the practitioner to reach defensible conclusions in reports for courts or panels regarding the likelihood of future offending behaviour, and of the risk of harm the child may pose to others, for example.

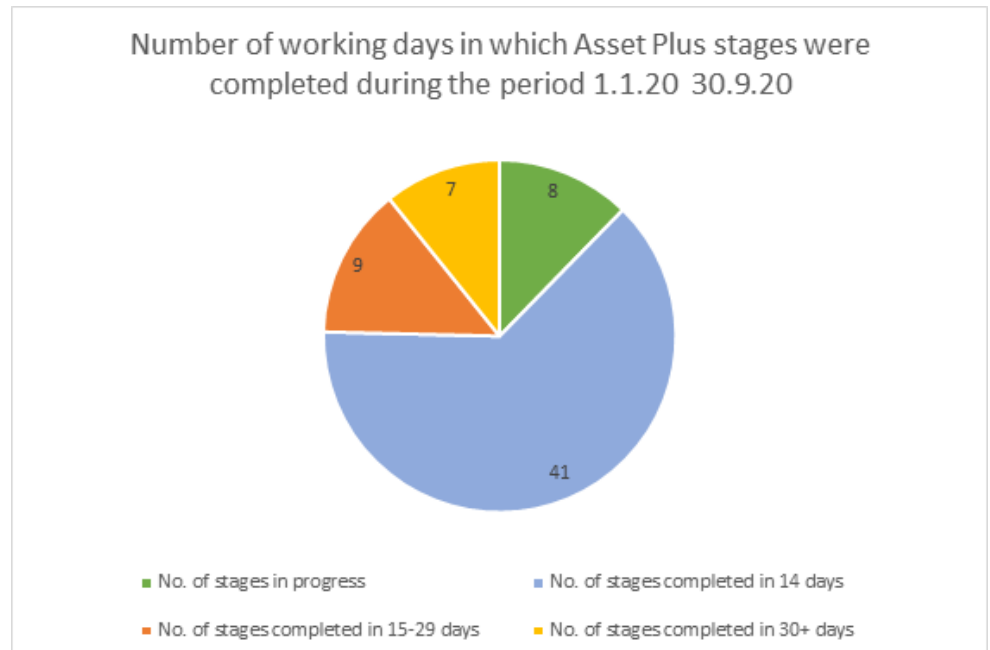
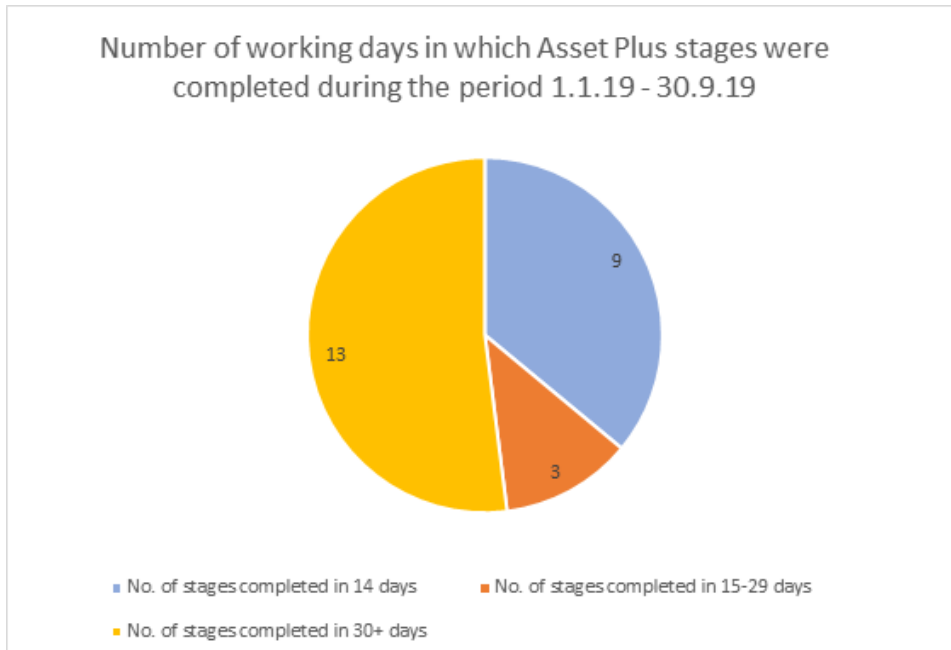
Asset Plus assessments are generated at the start of a young person's order and reviewed quarterly, or at times when significant changes to the young person's circumstances become evident. Progress towards desistance is evaluated at these review points and at the completion of the young person's involvement with the YJS.

A comparison of the Asset Plus stages completed during the period 1.1.20 to 20.9.20 compared to the same period the previous year has been carried out.

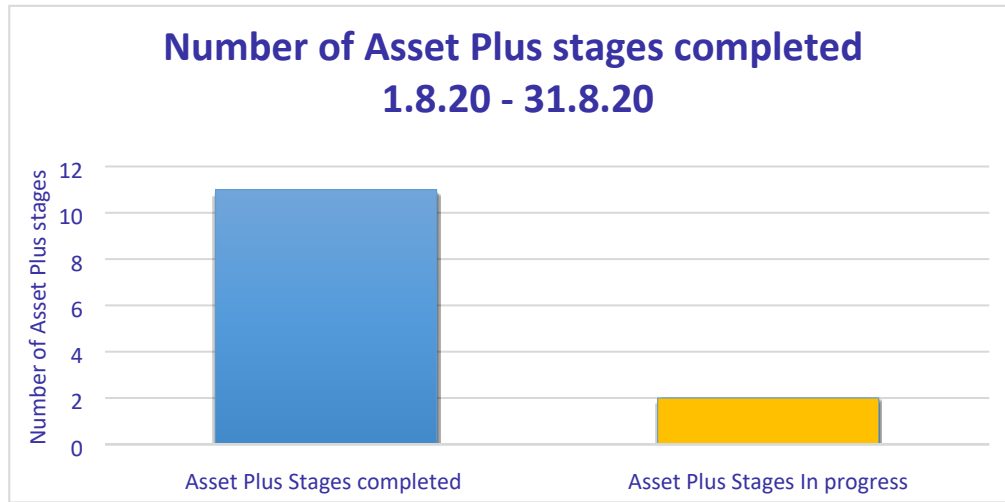
25 asset plus stages were completed during the period 1.1.19 to 30.9.19. 9(36%) were completed within 14 days, 3(12%) were completed within 15-29 days and 13(52%) were completed in 30+ days.

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For the same period in 2020, 65 stage were completed, 8(12%) are still in progress, 41(63%) were completed within 14 days, 9(14%) within 15-29 days and 7(11%) were completed in 30+ days.

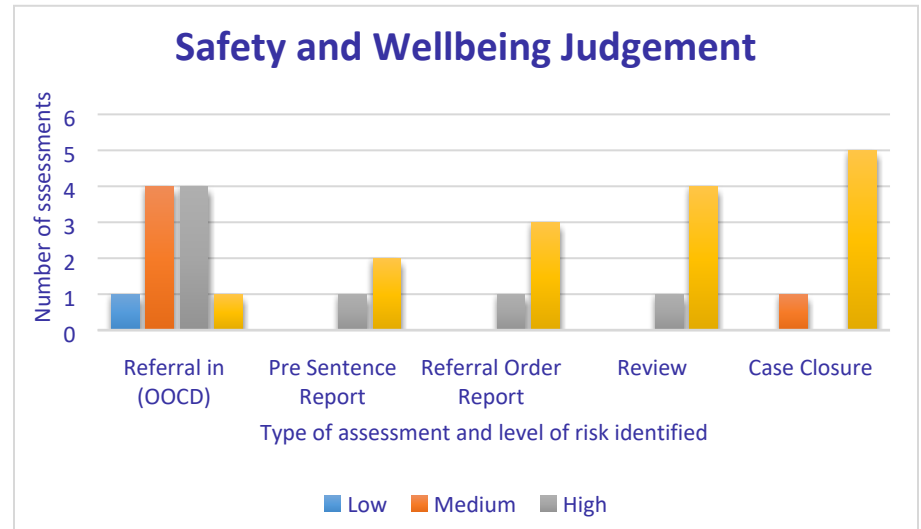
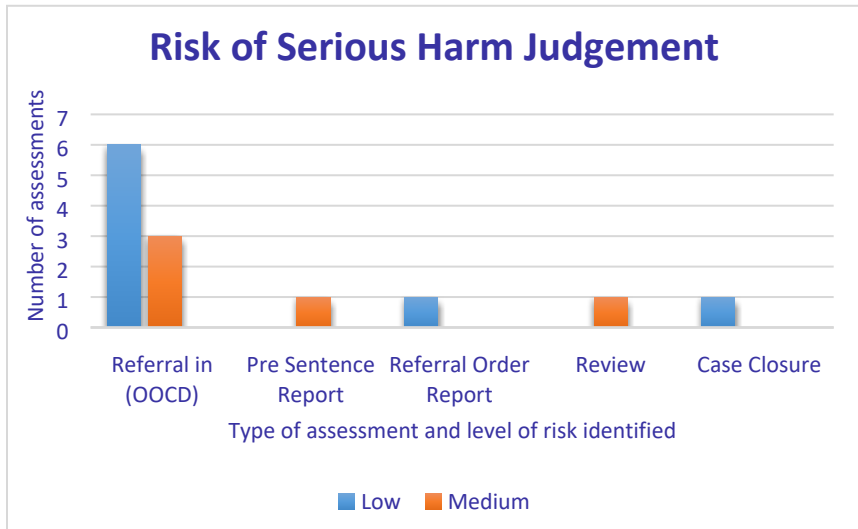


The graph below outlines the number of Asset Plus assessment stages completed by practitioners for the period 1.8.20 – 31.8.20. The average number of days a stage was in progress before completion was 9 days.



In comparison 11 Asset Plus assessment stages were completed during the same period the previous year and the average number of days a stage was in progress before completion was 71.5 days.

The graphs below outline the levels of risk of serious harm and safety and wellbeing judgements identified in relation to the Asset Plus assessments completed during the period 1.8.20 – 31.8.20.



Education information

Young people of statutory school age by school/provision attended

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Total number of interventions open as at 31.8.20	Total number of young people of statutory school age	Name of school provision	Number of young people
43	28	Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	1
		Brynteg Comprehensive	3
		Bryntirion Comprehensive	1
		Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	4
		Maesteg School	1
		Oldcastle Primary School	1
		Pencoed Comprehensive School	1
		Porthcawl Comprehensive School	1
		The Bridge Alternative Provision	1
		Ysgol Bryn Castell (YBC)	7
		Bridgend College – alternative school provision	1
		Pencoed College – Junior Apprenticeship alternative school programme	2
		Headlands School	1
		Educated other than at school (EOTAS)	3
		Total	28

Young people of statutory school age - number of school hours attended at school provision

Number of ETE hours attended at provision	Number of young people	Narrative
25	23	
20	1	EOTAS tuition – case has now closed
15	1	Full timetable (25 hrs) offered at YBC – Case has now closed.
14	1	Caretaking case – EOTAS provision arranged by home YOT
10	2	1 young person has 10 hours EOTAS provision as he has been excluded from mainstream education following assaults on teaching staff. The other was on a reduced timetable of 2 hrs a day until he started college

		which was delayed due to the Covid 19 pandemic. This case has now closed.
Total	28	

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Young people above school age by training/employment provision attended

Total number of interventions open as at 31.8.20	Total number of young people above school age.	Type of Education Training Employment (ETE) or Not in Education Training or Employment (NEET)	Number of young people
43	15	Attending further education	3
		Attending 6 th form	1
		Building Skills Project	1
		Engaged with training provider	3
		NEET	7
		Total	15

Young people above school age - number of hours attended at training/employment provision

Number of ETE hours attended at provision	Number of young people	Comments
25	3	
19	1	Attended 6 th form at YBC – case now closed
16	1	Engaged with a training provider
6	1	Attends Building Skills
3	1	Attends part time training.
2	1	Engagement with Moving Forward Project
0	7	6 young people are NEET. 1 case has been closed.
Total	15	

Caseload information by primary case workers

The information below reflects primary case worker allocations and other team practitioners who are also providing support to individual cases as at 31.8.20.

Primary Case worker	Number of statutory cases	Number of non-statutory cases	Non key responsible team members co-working statutory cases	Non key responsible team members co-working non statutory cases	Total number of young people
Social Worker 1	9	8	Reparation Coordinator - 6 WCADA Worker - 2 Specialist Health Worker - 5 Court and Bail Coordinator - 1 Training and Employment Officer - 1	WCADA Worker – 1 Specialist Health Worker – 2	17
Social Worker 2 (sick)	0	0			0
Social Worker 3	5	5	Reparation Coordinator – 5 WCADA Worker – 3 Specialist Health Worker – 3 ISS Support Worker – 1 Court and Bail Coordinator - 1	Specialist Health Worker – 4 WCADA Worker - 2	10
Social Worker 4	1	1	Reparation Coordinator – 1 Specialist Health Worker - 1	Court and Bail Coordinator - 1	2
ISS Support Worker	0	1			1
Early Intervention Worker	0	5		WCADA Worker – 1 Specialist Health Worker - 2	5
Parenting Co-ordinator	0	4		Specialist Health Worker – 1 YOS Police Officer - 1	4
Reparation and Unpaid Work Co-ordinator	1	2		Specialist Health Worker - 1	3
Victim Officer	0	1			1
Total number of young people	16	27			43

The information below reflects the total number of cases that multi agency workers are providing support for.

Multi Agency Worker	Number of statutory cases co-working	Number of non-statutory cases co-working	Total number of cases co-working
Specialist Health Worker	9	10	19

WCADA Worker	5	4	9
Speech and Language Therapist	0	0	0
Probation Officer	0	0	0
YOS Police Officer	0	1	1

Interventions Closed

1 August 2020 to 31 August 2020

8 interventions were closed during the period 1 August 2020 to 31 August 2020, 2 (25%) were for statutory cases and 6 (75%) were for non-statutory cases as outlined below.

Type of intervention	Number of interventions closed	Outcome of intervention
Prevention	1	Not started programme no longer appropriate as family receiving appropriate support from Social Services.
Bureau	5	3 completed 1 not completed as young person missed sessions 1 not completed young person reoffended and appeared at bureau again for further offences.
ISSP Programme Condition of Bail	1	Completed
Youth Rehabilitation Order	1	Not completed young person reoffended and was sentenced at court to a YRO with 30 day tag and 80 days reparation activity requirement
Total number of interventions	8	

In comparison, 24 interventions were closed during the same period the previous year 1 August 2019 to 31 August 2019 of which 19 (79.2%) were for non-statutory cases and 5 (20.8%) were for statutory cases.

- For the non-statutory cases 11 were recorded as being successfully completed, 1 not started due to non-engagement, 1 not started programme no longer appropriate, 1 not completed as young person reoffended and 5 had no outcomes recorded.
- For the statutory cases 2 were completed, 1 breached and was resentenced to custody, 1 not completed as young person reoffended and 1 had no outcome recorded.

Interventions Opened

1 August 2020 to 31 August 2020

11 new interventions were opened during the period 1 August 2020 to 31 August 2020. 9 (81.8%) were for non-statutory cases and 2 (18.2%) of the interventions were for statutory cases. Of the new interventions that were opened during this period 11(100%) were male.

Type of intervention	Number of interventions opened	Male	Female
Prevention	2	2	-
Bureau	7	7	-
Youth Rehabilitation Order	1	1	-
Youth Rehabilitation Order ISS requirement	1	1	-
Total number of interventions	11	11	-

1 August 2019 – 31 August 2019

In comparison, 16 new interventions were opened during the same period the previous year 1 August 2019 to 31 August 2019 of which 10 (62.5%) were for non-statutory cases and 6 (37.5%) were for statutory cases. 8 (50%) were male and 8 (50%) were female.

Type of intervention	Number of interventions opened	Male	Female
Prevention	2	1	1
Bureau	7	3	4
Referral Order	5	2	3
DTO Custody Programme	1	1	-
Voluntary Support	1	1	-
Total number of interventions	16	8	8

1.3 Staffing Update for BYJS Management Board as at 30 September 2020

POST	STATUS	Comments	RAG	DATE OF LAST SUPERVISION
Lead Practitioner 1	In post			2 September 2020
Lead Practitioner 2	In post			2 September 2020
Prevention Coordinator	In post			Scheduled for 2 October 2020
Parenting Coordinator	In post			19 September 2020
Social Worker 1	In post			2 September 2020
Social Worker 2	Long term sick since 18.4.20	Current paper to expire on 6.11.20		2 April 2020
Social Worker 3	In post			21 September 2020
Social Worker 4	In post			Scheduled for 2 October 2020
Education Officer	Vacant post	Restructure to commence 5.10.20		n/a
Training and Employment Officer	In post			14 September 2020
Reparation and Unpaid Work Coordinator	In post			9 September 2020
Victim Officer	In post			19 August 2020
Early Intervention Worker	In post			14 September 2020
ISSP Support Worker	In post			8 September 2020
Court and Bail Coordinator	In post			17 September 2020
Referral Order Coordinator	Vacant			n/a
Senior Practitioner – Parc Prison	In post			28 July 2020
Substance Misuse Worker – Welsh Centre for Alcohol and Dependency and Addiction (WCADA)	In post			15 September 2020
Seconded Police Officer	In post			28 August 2020
Seconded Probation Officer	In post			14 February 2020
Speech and Language Therapist	Vacant	Recruitment underway		n/a
Specialist Health Visitor	In post			Scheduled for 2 October 2020

1.4 FINANCE UPDATE

YOS MANAGEMENT BOARD FINANCE UPDATE

A finance update will be provided to the Board meeting in December.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE WORK BRIDGEND YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

As per the quality assurance framework within the YJS, the management board will be updated twice a year in terms of the quality assurance work that is being undertaken within the service. Lead Practitioners continue to gate keep reports and assessment and quality assurance work is undertaken on a monthly basis on closed cases. Feedback from this work is given to staff in terms of strengths and areas for development.

The next report to board on quality assurance work will be given in December 2020

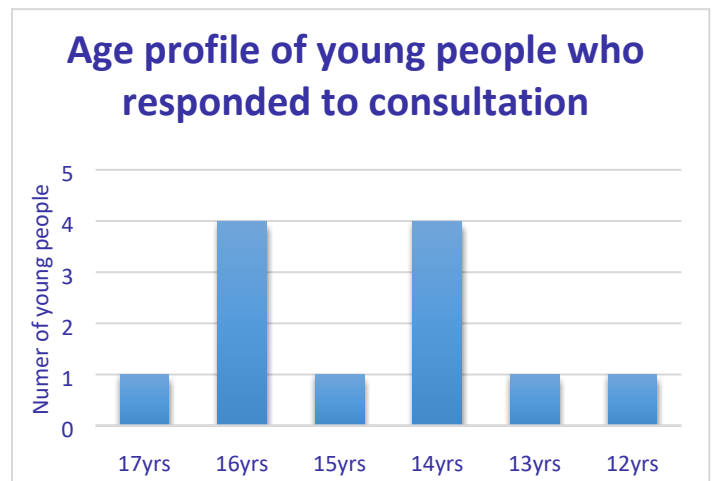
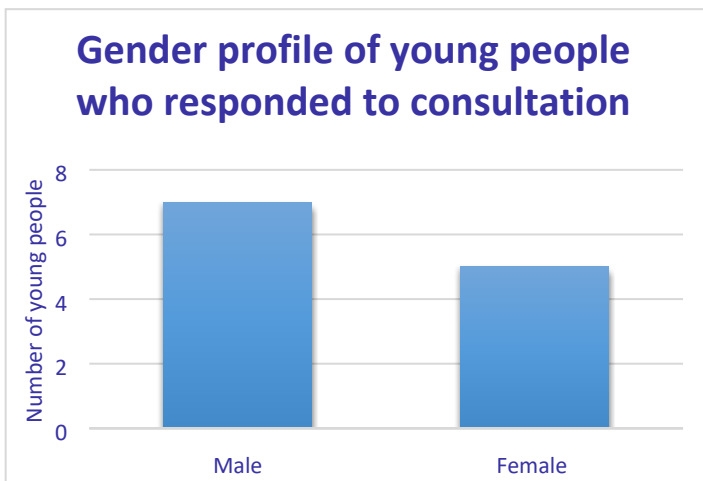
3. YOUNG PERSON AND VICTIM FEEDBACK

3.1 VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

During June 2020, the Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS), supported by the Children’s Rights and Participation team, undertook a consultation to gather the thoughts and experiences of young people that had recently been through, or were currently going through, an intervention from the BYJS team.

The questions were developed through the senior management team within the BYJS, and were focussed on enabling young people to provide feedback on both positive and negative experiences of their respective interventions in order to help inform future delivery and practice.

Interviews were conducted over the phone to account for the restrictions imposed in the Covid-19 pandemic. Each young person was asked the same open ended questions to allow participants the opportunity to develop their answer should they choose. In total, 12 young people participated, and due to the phrasing of the questions, many of the responses were narrative.



A summary of the responses are detailed in

the following report.

Question 1 What did you like about the support you received from the Youth Justice Service?

8 of the 12 young people that took part in the consultation described their experience of being supported through the BYJS as positive. Comments included:

“It’s alright, all good”

“They were helpful with jobs, connected me with job projects”

“Enjoyed working with Chris”

“She was nice” (x2)

“Techniques given to stay out of trouble”

“Really supportive, listened to me and answered my questions”

“Helpful worker, supportive”

The other young people either didn’t have an opinion, or weren’t able to articulate their experience as a positive or negative.

Question 2 What didn't you like?

With the exception of 2 young people, who replied *"didn't like talking to them"* and *"didn't pay attention"* respectively, the cohort offered no comments for this question.

Question 3 What do you think could have made the support better?

8 of the 12 young people who participated didn't think support could have been made better. 2 of these were because they felt that the support they received was really good and could not have been improved. Other comments included:

"If the process was speeded up"

"Don't ring when I'm sleeping"

"Only so much can be done"

Question 4 What did your worker do that helped?

The prevailing answer given by young people was that they appreciated having someone to talk to, and be listened to. Comments included:

"Kept me out of trouble, had someone to talk to"

"Really helpful to talk to, transferred to mental health service and drug support"

"Takes me home from college and chats while we travel"

"Let me talk to her and really listened"

"Listened to me"

In addition, young people enjoyed learning more practical examples/techniques of how to manage their behaviour.

"Provided guidance and helped me learn right from wrong" (x2)

"Papers to write, topics to talk about"

Other comments included:

*"Hasn't done much, same s**t as previous worker – all the same"*

"No, likes to do own thing"

"No idea"

"Nothing really"

Question 5 How has your situation changed since support?

9 of the 12 young people that participated identified that their behaviour, and their personal situation, had improved as a result of their respective interventions. Comments included:

"Gone better, behave a lot better"

"A lot better, stay down Bridgend, getting a house and a job"

"Got better, not got in trouble"

"Changed a lot, feeling more confident, changed behaviour – think more about what he's doing"

"Still with worker – fortnightly conversation, managing to stay out of trouble through own choices, still hanging around with same people"

"Still with worker, more aware of behaviour, staying out of trouble more"

“Definite changes – more aware of behaviour and what she does, improved relationships with family and friends”

“Staying out of trouble, more mindful of behaviour” (x2)

Question 6 What impact has being in lockdown had on you and how could support have been best offered during this period?

5 of the 12 young people highlighted that while they were staying at home, the contact they received from their individual workers was welcomed. Comments included:

“Not too bad, getting worse as it’s going, support through text and phone calls”

“Worker has been messaging me to see about my future”

“Staying in and playing games. Still receiving telephone support which is helpful”

“Staying in. Continued support which has helped” (x2).

The other young people advised that while they were not staying at home, they were aware of how to ensure they were staying safe:

“Goes out sometimes, social distancing though”.

“Not staying in, a bit more aware of distancing” (x2)

“Been going out seeing friends, no support required”

Question 7 The Youth Justice Service would like to hear from young people regularly. What do you think is the best way for the views of young people to be gathered...social media, apps, letters, event?

Utilising social media platforms by the BYJS team was the biggest suggestion from young people, with 7 of the 12 participants highlighting this as their preferred method of communication. Other suggestions included, phone calls (3 young people) and don’t know (2 young people).

Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) Management Board

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To bring together the statutory partners as identified in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and non-statutory partners who make a significant contribution to the delivery of youth justice services in Bridgend County Borough
- 1.2 To work collaboratively to prevent and reduce youth crime in Bridgend County Borough
- 1.3 To ensure the statutory duties set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and subsequent reviews are met
- 1.4 To contribute to the Wellbeing Objectives detailed in the Wellbeing Plan for Bridgend

2. Vision

- 2.1 Together we will support children and young people to prevent offending behaviour by enabling them to respond positively to their communities and reach their full potential.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Bridgend Youth Justice Management Board will:
 - Set out a strategic direction for the local delivery of a 'Justice Service for Young People' to ensure that statutory requirements are met and key plans are developed and delivered effectively.
 - Support BCBC's Chief Executive in their duty to formulate and implement the annual youth justice plan. This plan sets out how youth justice services in Bridgend are composed, provided and funded; how the BYJS will operate and what functions it will carry out.
 - Ensure the YJS tailors its services to the needs of local young people and that they have an opportunity to shape the services and interventions they receive
 - Hold accountable the YJS and partner agencies for their contribution to performance against the Wales Youth Justice Indicators and other local measures.
 - Implement appropriate staff, management and infra structure arrangements to be able to deliver the statutory duties and obligations of the service
 - Take responsibility for ensuring that the actions undertaken by the BYJS protects the safety, of children and young people, the staff who work with them, and members of the public
 - Embed the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people in the work of relevant strategic partnerships including, but not limited to, the

Bridgend Public Services Board, the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board

- Take a lead role in scrutinising the YJS's response to Community Safeguarding and Public Protection incidents. When a safety or public protection incident occurs the YJS must inform the YJB and undertake a review of learning, causes and key areas for improvement. The board is responsible for monitoring all actions and learning for the BYJS and for sharing learning with local partners, including local safeguarding boards
- Scrutinise the arrangements in place for children and young people involved in the Youth Justice system to have access to universal and specialist services delivered by partners and other key agencies
- Address and solve any difficulties that the BYJS and its partners face when planning and delivering reintegration and resettlement support.
- Agree resources to be allocated from partner agencies
- Agree an information sharing protocol and designate a liaison officer in each member organisation
- Report progress to Bridgend Public Services Board, through the performance management system bi annually or as requested by the board
- Report to the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee or other Scrutiny Committees as requested

3. Sustainable Development

3.1 The Bridgend Youth Justice Management Board will act in accordance with sustainable development principle, ie working to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Board will:

- Think about the long term
- Look to prevent problems
- Work towards the seven wellbeing goals as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in all that they do
- Work with each other
- Work with people and communities, by involving them

The Seven Wellbeing Goals

A Prosperous Wales	A Resilient Wales	A Healthier Wales	A More Equal Wales	A Wales of Cohesive Communities	A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language	A Globally Responsible Wales
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4. Membership

4.1 In line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the statutory funding members are:

- Bridgend County Borough Council
- South Wales Police
- National Probation Service
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board

4.2 The Management Board has the power to co-opt additional members. Co-opted members are:

- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- Career Wales
- Bridgend College
- WGADA
- WLGA
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner

4.3 Members will be at senior officer level, with the authority to make decision.

4.4 Deputising Arrangements

- Members will identify a nominated deputy to attend where the member is not available.
- That deputy should be fully briefed and have all powers delegated for the purposes of the activity of partnership
- A list of members is attached.

5. Chairing Arrangements

5.1 There will be co-chairing arrangements for the first year of operation

5.2 Both chairs will be elected annually from one of the statutory members

5.2 The maximum term of office for a chair is 2 years

5.3 In the unlikely absence of both chairs a deputy will be selected from members present

6. Task and Finish Groups

6.1 The board may establish task and finish groups to address specific issues

6.2 Membership of task and finish groups to be agreed by the partnership

6.3 Terms of reference, including the expected life of the task and finish group will be developed in all cases.

7. Frequency of Meetings

- 7.1 The Partnership will meet monthly for the first year, then quarterly to coincide with Community Safety Partnership meetings.
- 7.2 Meetings to be held prior to Public Service Board meetings, with sufficient time to allow for preparation of reports
- 7.3 Additional meetings may be arranged at the discretion of the chair

8. Review

- 8.1 The Partnership's operation and terms of reference will be reviewed annually

9. Co-ordination/Support

- 9.1 To be provided by the PSB partnership support team

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

4 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE (IRO) REPORT

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members of Corporate Parenting Committee the Independent Reviewing Service (IRO) Report in line with The Independent Reviewing Officers Guidance (Wales) 2004 along with the IRO Service Action Plan.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-
1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
 2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
 3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

This report is connected to all corporate well-being objectives relating to care experienced children, its central objective being to achieve best outcomes for those children and young people through high quality care planning, which in turn helps to ensure they live in stable placements with plans for permanence in place. The care planning for these children and young people is integral to Welsh Government's commitment to reduce the number of care experienced children and young people in Wales.

3. Background

- 3.1. The appointment of Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO's) by Local Authorities is a legal requirement and their core functions are governed by legislation and guidance as follows:

- The Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- The Independent Reviewing Officers Guidance (Wales) 2004.

3.2 The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service has an authoritative role, in assuring the quality of care planning is achieved. The Independent Reviewing Officers Guidance (Wales) 2004 states this report must identify good practice but must also identify issues for further development, including those where urgent action is required. The guidance urges the Local Authority to make effective use of the reports from its IRO service so that it can be satisfied that its services can achieve best outcomes for the children and young people concerned.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The Independent Reviewing Service report (**Appendix A**) covers the work of the IRO service from April 2019 to March 2020. The report contains performance information in respect of the statutory reviewing of children who are Looked After, including children with plans for Adoption and Young People with Leaving Care LAC/Pathway Plans (under 18) by Bridgend County Borough Council. It also includes information on children subject of a child protection plan and reviews of these plans at Child Protection Case Conferences.

4.2 The report also includes information that relates to regulatory requirements in respect of: resolution case disputes, IRO caseloads, participation and consultation of young people in their Reviews, challenges and achievements in the reporting period and service priorities for 2019-20.

4.3 In addition to the guidance referred to in paragraph 3.1 additional IRO guidance and practice standards were introduced at the beginning of 2019. IRO's have worked to improve tracking and monitoring as advised within the Practice Standards and Good Practice Guide.

4.4 As described in the report the IRO's chaired/reviewed 2,022 meetings between April 2019 and March 2020. 1,506 quality assurance audits were completed relating to these meetings.

4.5 The audits highlighted that consultation with children and young people needs to be improved to ensure their voice is being heard. Whilst the IRO service has worked to improve the consultation document for children and young people, challenges remain in encouraging them to complete it. Similarly, children and young people's participation at both their Child Protection Review and Looked After Child Review is hugely important and this is an area for improvement in Bridgend as it is only a very small proportion of children and young people who are attending their meetings. Consequently this is a priority and the team are committed to developing more creative ways of engaging with and encouraging participation of all children and young people.

4.6 The IRO service have continued to work with the safeguarding teams to improve practice around child protection conferences and this has been extended through to other agencies such as the Health Visiting services, School Nurses and Midwifery Services. The next stage is to work at improving the quality of Looked After Children reviews on a multi-agency basis.

4.7 Continuous service improvement is always sought after and as such the Independent Reviewing Service aims to continue to have a greater impact in terms of improving the quality of the lives of care experienced children and young people. The IRO Service Action Plan (**Appendix A**) reflects the areas of focus for improvement over the next 12 months for the service which will be under constant review.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no impact on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality impacts arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The implementation of the duties and responsibilities under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) (SSWBA) 2014, in turn, supports the promotion of two of the seven goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 within the County Borough of Bridgend. By promoting an environment that maximises people's physical and mental well-being and by supporting children, young people, adults and their carers and families to fulfil their potential no matter what their circumstances, the wellbeing goals of a Healthier and more equal Bridgend and Wales are supported.

7.2 The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with five ways of working to guide how the Authority should work to deliver wellbeing outcomes for people. The following is a summary to show how the five ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been considered in this report:

- **Long Term** – the IRO Service has a legal requirement to assure the quality of care planning is achieved for children and young people enabling them to reach their full potential in life.
- **Prevention** –the IRO service works closely with safeguarding practitioners and Early Help services in developing a comprehensive outcome focused plan for the child or young person, to maximise their opportunities and identify focused support at the earliest stage.
- **Integration** – the implementation of the SSWBA requires local authorities to work with partners, to ensure care, support and protection of all and more specifically it's most vulnerable. The report evidences consultation between professionals and partner agencies with a specific focus to the safe care planning and protection for children and young people within the Borough of Bridgend.
- **Collaboration** – this is currently managed in order to provide the best possible intervention for children and people across Bridgend.
- **Involvement** – the key stakeholders are the care experienced children and young people of Bridgend. The IRO service's engagement with these individuals is essential to ensure their voices are heard and included in their meetings. The IRO service speak with children and young people and utilise consultation documents, quality monitoring forms, complaints process and advocacy services to support this. The provision of accessible information and advice helps to ensure that the voice of children and young people is heard and responded to.

8. Financial implications

8.1 All work will be carried out within existing budgets and therefore there are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the Independent Reviewing Service report and the IRO service action plan (**Appendix A**)

Claire Marchant
CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING
January 2021

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Background documents: NONE

Appendix A

Independent Reviewing Service Report from April 2019-March 2020



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Report Context:

- Introduction
- Legal Context
- Core IRO Functions
- Composition of IRO Team
- Reviewing Activity : Child Protection
- Reviewing Activity : Looked After Children
- Number of Reviews and timeliness
- Reviewing Performance
- Caseload
- Business Support

General Themes

- Consultation
- Case Dispute Resolution and Complaints
- Achievements & Challenges
- IRO Service Development and Achievements
- IRO Service Priorities

Introduction

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service has an authoritative role, in assuring the quality of care planning is achieved. The Independent Reviewing Officers Guidance Wales 2004 states this report must identify good practice but must also identify issues for further development, including those where urgent action is required. The guidance urges the Local Authority to make effective use of the reports from its IRO service so that it can be satisfied that its services can achieve best outcomes for the children and young people concerned.

This Independent Reviewing Service report focuses upon the work of the IRO service from April 2019 to March 2020. As part of the services quality assurance role, the report contains performance information in respect of the statutory reviewing of children who are Looked After, including children with plans for Adoption and Young People with Leaving Care LAC/Pathway Plans (under 18) by Bridgend County Borough Council. It also includes information on children subject of a child protection plan and reviews of these plans at Child Protection Case Conferences.

The report also includes information that relates to regulatory requirements in respect of: resolution case disputes; IRO caseloads; participation and consultation of young people in their Reviews, challenges and achievements in the reporting period and service priorities for 2019-20.

Legal Context

The appointment of IRO's by Local Authorities is a legal requirement and their core functions are governed by the legal regulatory framework outlined below:

- The Adoption and Children Act 2002 detailed the requirements on Local Authorities in respect of the appointment of IRO's.
- The Independent Reviewing Officers Guidance (Wales) 2004.

The Independent Reviewing Service has an important quality assurance function and works towards ensuring all children within the care of Bridgend County Borough Council has a robust effective care plan. This plan is aimed towards improving outcomes for children and young people in providing a stable and secure childhood where their health, education and emotional wellbeing is promoted through effective care planning. It is the function of the Independent Reviewing Service to ensure the care plan is appropriate and progresses safeguarding for children and young people whilst ensuring all their identified needs are being met.

Independent Reviewing Officers are required to independently review the care plans of all Looked After children and those children with a Child Protection Plan and subject of the Child Protection Register. The Review meeting will include consultation with and attendance of relevant agencies (health, education and Police etc) and will usually include the child/young person, their Social Worker, carers and family members. Time scales for Reviews are set out in the Children Act 1989 & part 6 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014, with the first Review taking place within 20 working days, the next Review is held within three months following the initial and then subsequent Reviews are held six months from the second Review. Subsequent Reviews are held every six months unless there has been an unplanned change of placement where a Review must be held within 20 working days.

Within Bridgend County Borough Council, the IRO Service has the following roles and responsibilities:

- The IRO service has a statutory responsibility under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, Wales Safeguarding Procedures and the IRO Guidance for Chairing all Child Protection Conferences and multi-agency Looked After Children Reviews, including those children placed for Adoption.
- To Review and oversee the effectiveness and the appropriateness of Care Plans for those Children and Young People the Council has responsibility for who are subject of a Child Protection Plan, those children and young people within its care.

- The Independent Reviewing Service are responsible for ensuring all Looked After Children Reviews and Children Protection Conferences take place within compliance as outlined in regulations and to provide a report on each Looked After Children Review to include recommendations to any changes to the child/young person's Care Plan and to monitor the progress of the Care Plan by tracking cases between Reviews.
- To ensure the child/young person's rights are protected and enhanced.
- To ensure the voice of the child is heard throughout the care planning process and to monitor the child's wishes and feelings have been recorded and documented throughout the Care Planning process.
- To support and advise through a mentoring and coaching role to social work staff in relation to effective care planning.
- To raise IRO concerns through the agreed Resolution Protocol and to escalate unresolved concerns regarding care planning to the appropriate level of the Local Authority's management structure. To consider the need to seek independent legal advice and possible referral of a case to Cafcass. The quality assurance function of the IRO service aims to highlight concerns around specific cases and also any trends relating to care planning practice. It also has a duty to highlight good practice.
- To ensure all care experienced children and young people are subject to Health Plans to promote their health and development. The IRO's have responsibility to ensure the Health Plans are monitored and meeting the children's needs within the Looked After Children Reviewing process.
- All care experienced children and young people are subject to a Personal Education Plan (PEP). The IRO is responsible for ensuring this is in place and are regularly reviewed to ensure all educational needs are being met.

- Under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014, the role of the IRO have expanded to cover responsibility for the child's case and the not just the Review and this is set out in the IRO Standards.

Composition of the IRO Service

Over the last year, there have been some changes to the composition of the service. The Independent Reviewing Service consists of a full time Team Manager, four full-time and four part-time IRO positions. The current IRO cohort have a wealth of experience and all have been qualified Social Workers for a substantial period of time. The IRO Service Manager has been in the post since June 2019.

Caseloads

There have been some changes made to the IRO Caseloads since the previous annual report and this is as a result of IROs no longer reviewing post 18 plans. This has helped to address concerns by the team regarding capacity to implement the IRO Practice Guidance Standards which brought more activity to their workload.

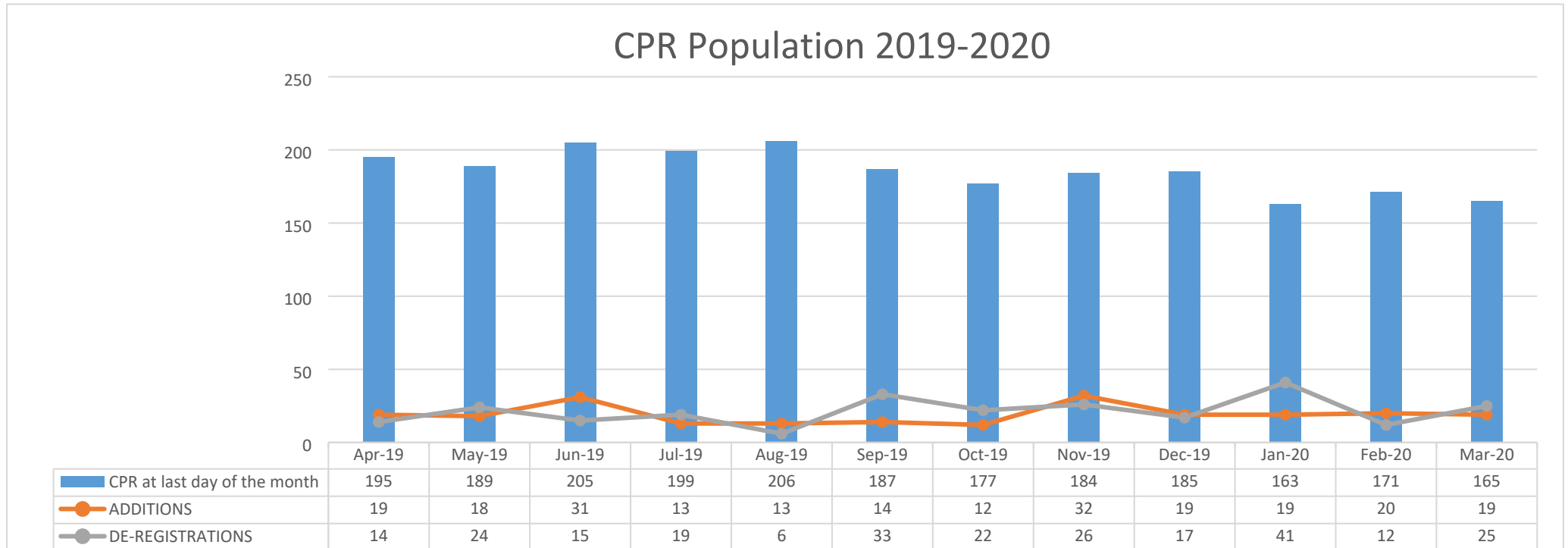
The average full time IRO caseload is currently between 90–100 cases whilst part-time staff are holding average caseloads of 65. The service would ideally like a full time caseload to be 90 for each IRO as this will allow sufficient time to be given to each case to effectively monitor and review and address any issues that may arise. It has been a committed principle of the service to maintain the same IRO wherever possible so that valuable information held by IROs, particularly knowledge of the child's history and family dynamics is not lost. This means that care experienced children have had an element of continuity in their lives, with their IRO often being the only person who has remained consistent for the child through changes of team structures, placements and often their social workers.

Child Protection Register (CPR) Population.

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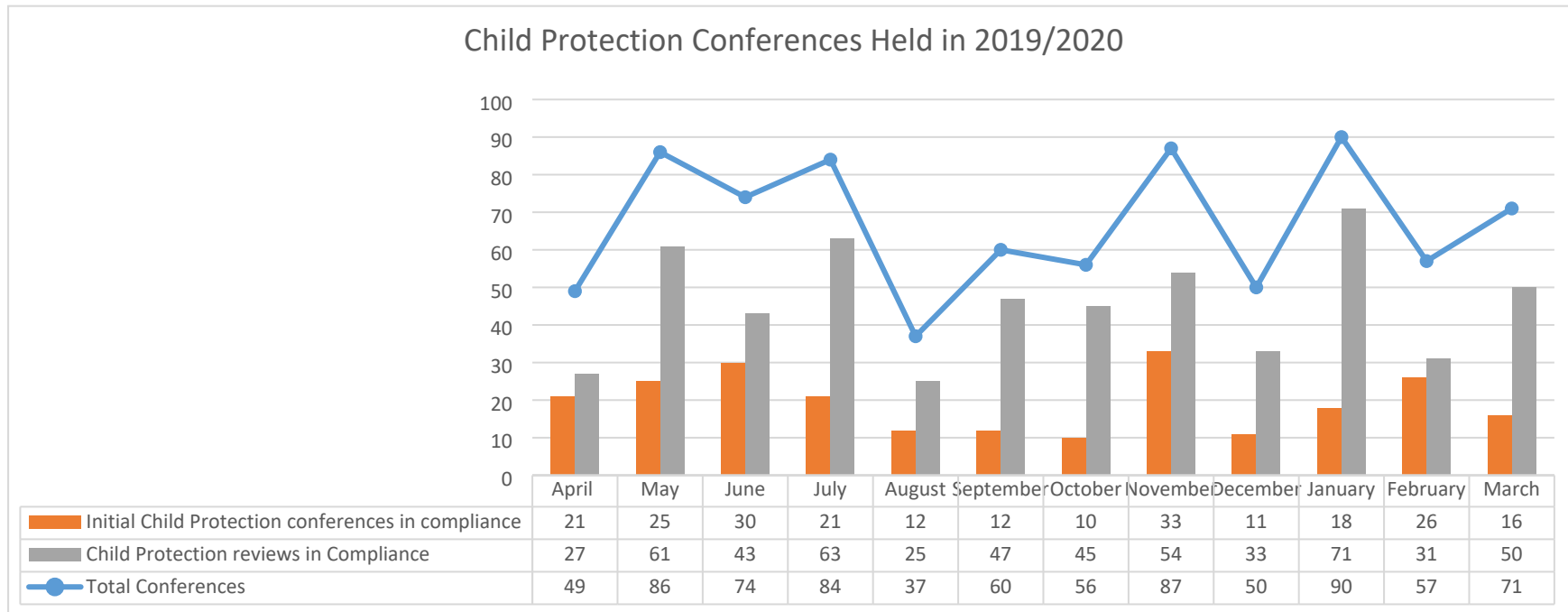
Children subject to the CPR in this period has continued to fluctuate however the average monthly number has been 185 as noted in chart 1 below.

Chart 1



The IRO Service held 235 Initial Child Protection Conferences and 595 Review Child Protection Conferences between April 2019 & March 2020 shown in chart 2. The total number of child protection conferences held in compliance is 98%.

Chart 2



Page 9
Chart 3 below identifies it is age groups 5-15 years who are the largest proportion of children subject to Child Protection registration. The smallest age group is 16-18 yrs.

9
Chart 3

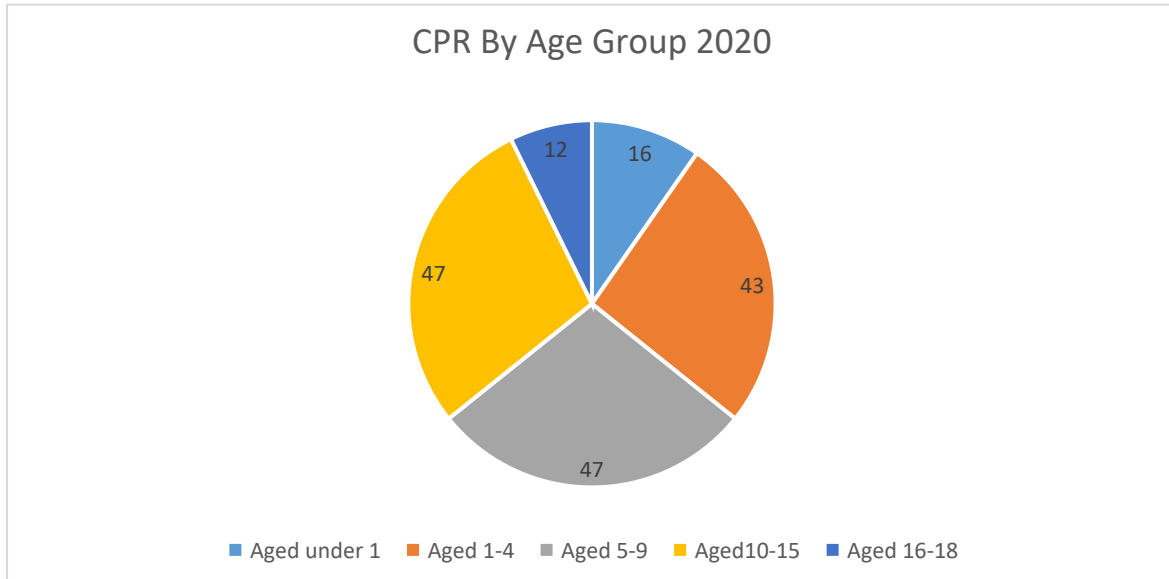
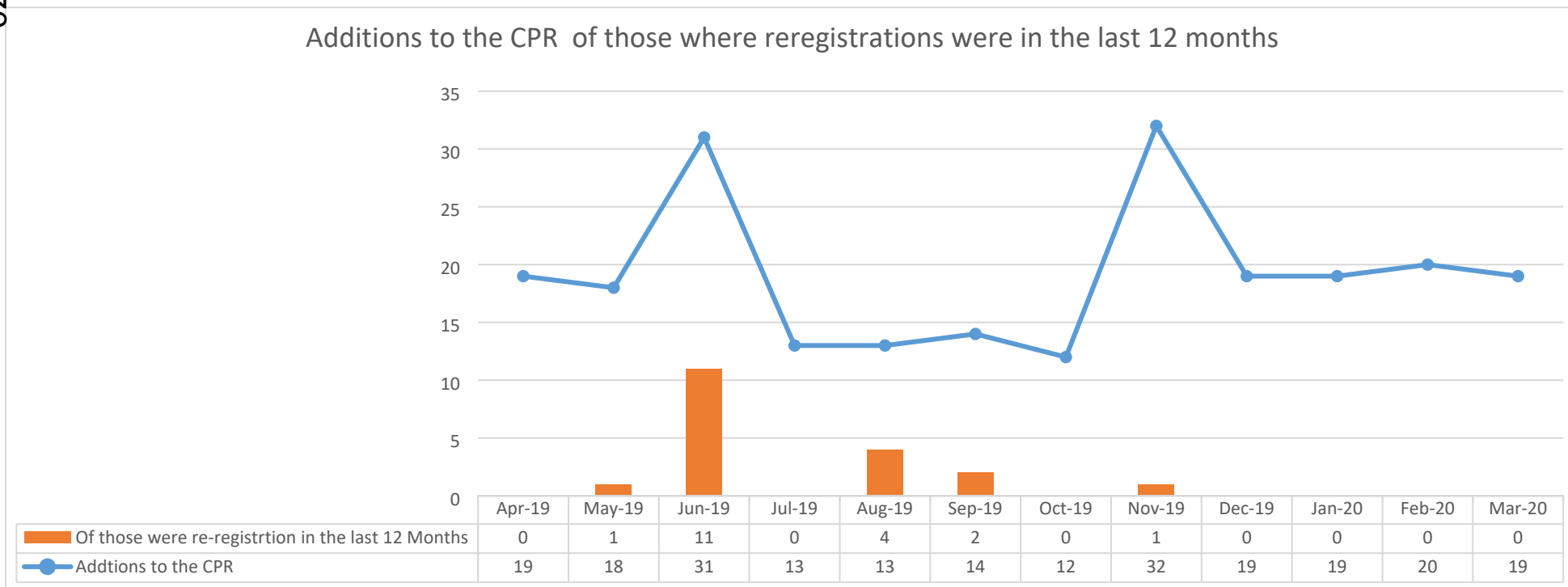


Chart 4 below records an increase in the number of children being re-registered within a year of de-registration.

Chart 4

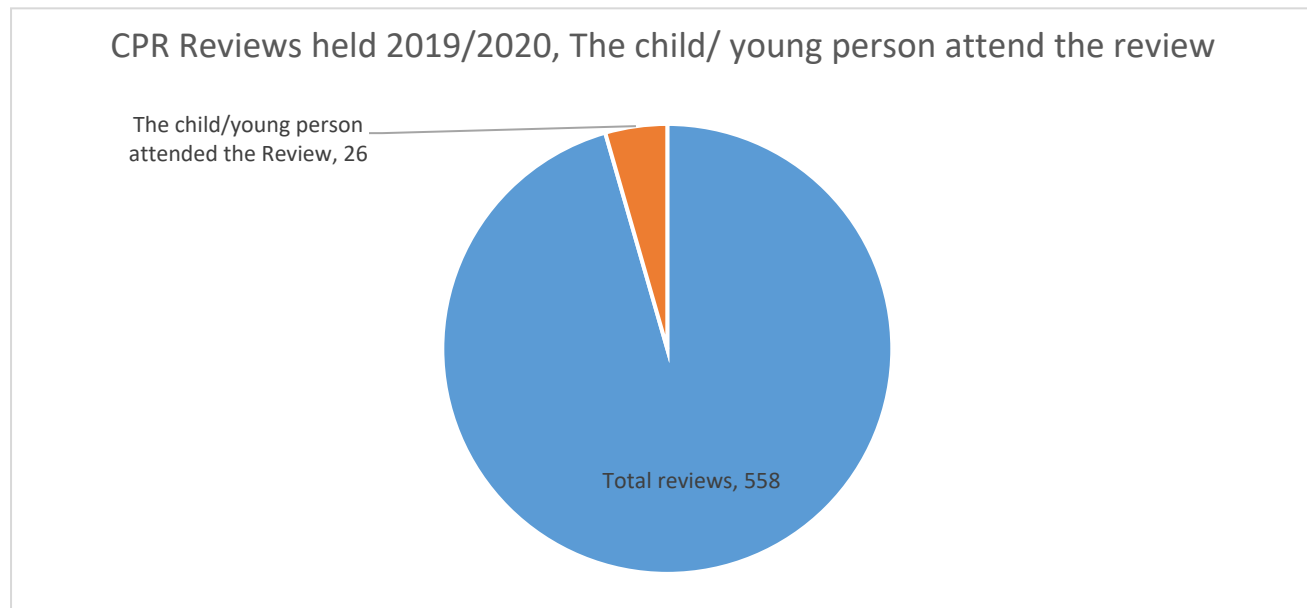


The number of re-registrations to the child protection register has increased between April 2019 and March 2020 from 14 to 19 however it is noted there was a large sibling group who were re-registered in June 2019. On further scrutiny it was concluded that some of these cases returned to the conference arena as a result of disguised compliance at the point of their earlier de-registration and some as a result of being closed prematurely once stepped down to Care and Support. It was noted that, of the children who were re-registered within one year of de-registration, a high proportion were cases where Domestic

Abuse was the main safeguarding concern. From scrutinising these cases it became clear the children were de-registered because the parents had either separated or completed work around the effects of domestic abuse on children and following a period of no domestic abuse incidents the children were removed from the CPR. However many were then re-registered within one year because there had been a further incident of domestic abuse, some of these were where the parents had resumed their relationship. The IRO Service will continue to recommend at RCPC where a child is de-registered that their case remain open on a Care and Support basis for at least 3 months and the case is not to close without a Care and Support meeting taking place. Any case that returns to an Initial Child Protection Case Conference (ICPC) within 12 months of being de-registered will be audited by the IRO Service Manager to scrutinise the processes that were followed and consider any lessons that can be learnt. The audit will be provided to the Safeguarding Team Manager and Senior Management Team.

Children's participation at Child Protection Review Conferences.

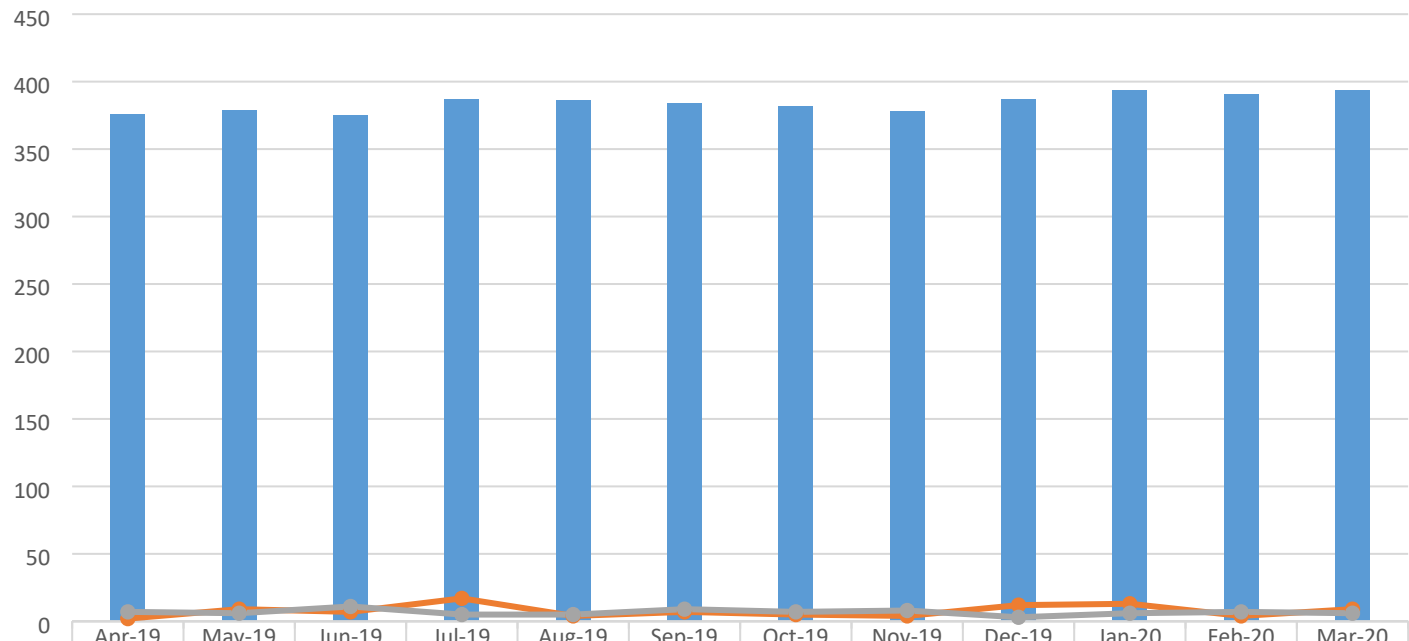
Chart 5



Children's participation at their Review Child Protection Case Conference (RCPC) is hugely important, however it is recognised it may not be appropriate for children or young people to attend any or all of the meetings but there are mechanisms in place to enable them to attend part of the meeting and meet with the chairperson separately. This is an area for improvement in Bridgend as it is only a very small proportion of children and young people who are attending their meetings. The Wales Safeguarding Procedures have placed greater emphasis on the importance of the child's attendance at their conference and Bridgend are rolling out training to practitioners currently with part of this training focussing on how children can participate in their conference and have their voice heard.

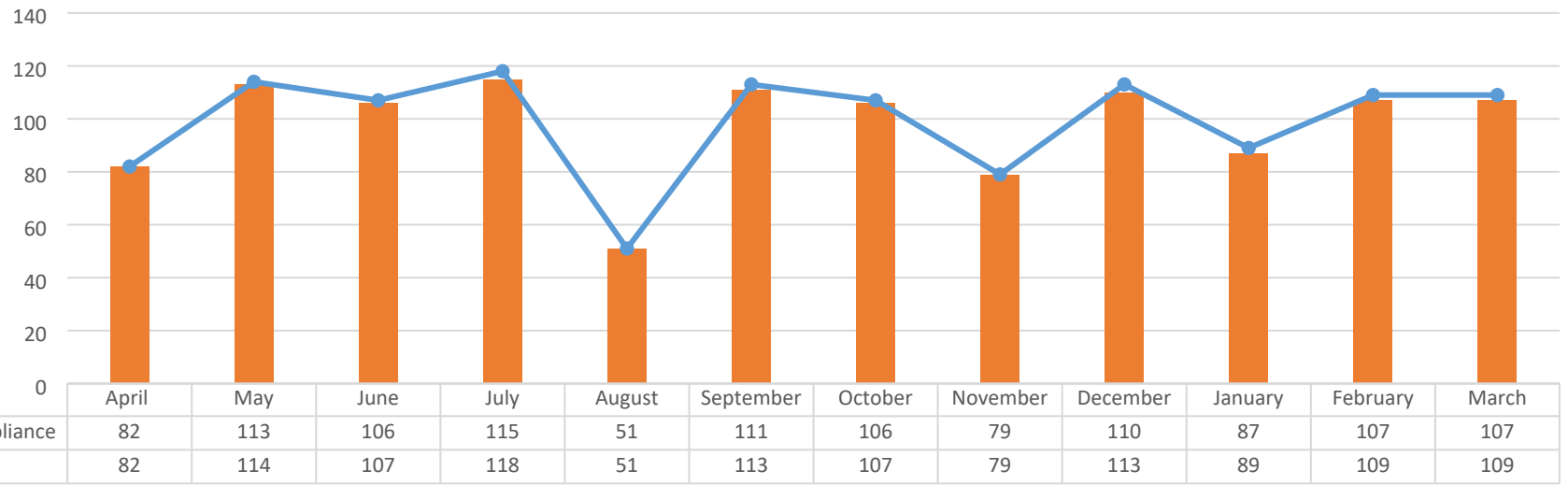
Chart 6

Care experienced Population in 2019-2020



	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20
LAC at last day of the month	376	379	375	387	386	384	382	378	387	394	391	394
Children become looked after in the month	2	9	7	17	4	7	5	4	12	13	4	9
Children ceased to be looked after in the month	7	6	11	5	5	9	7	8	3	6	7	6

Looked After Reviews Held in 2019/2020



Held in Compliance	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
No	0	1	1	3	0	2	1	0	3	2	2	2
Yes	82	113	106	115	51	111	106	79	110	87	107	107
Grand Total	82	114	107	118	51	113	107	79	113	89	109	109

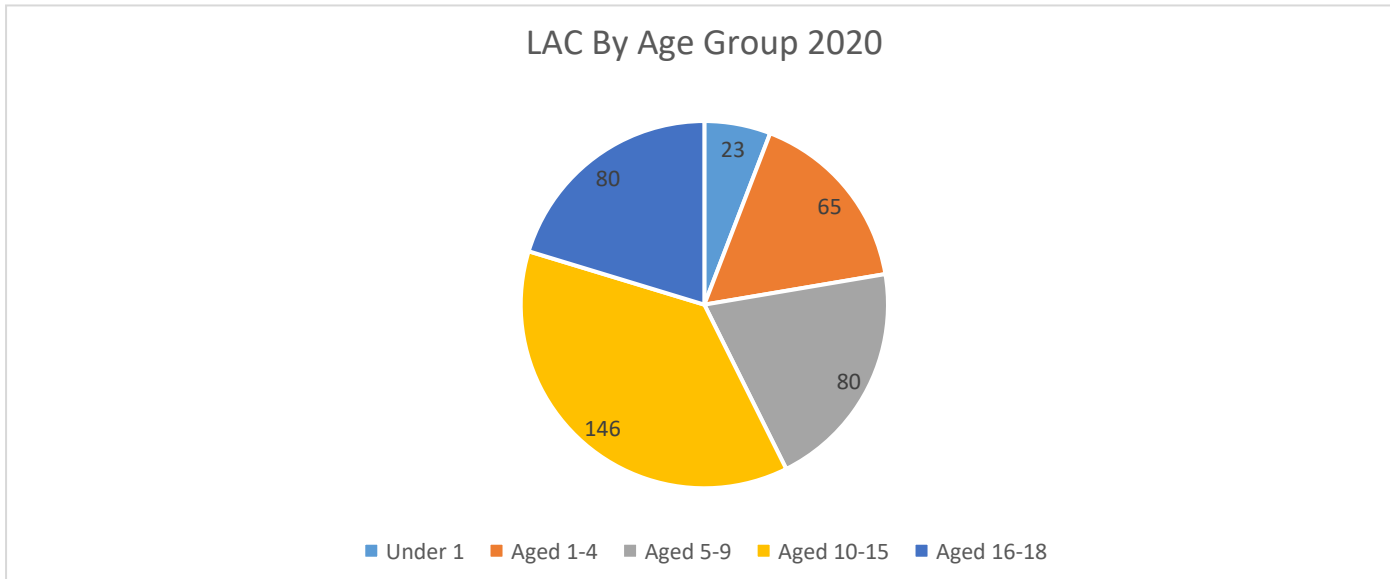
Chart no 7 above shows how care experienced children numbers have continued to fluctuate over the last year. There have also been a large number of unplanned placement breakdowns which has put increased demands on the reviewing service.

Since the reporting period four Reunifications Workers have been recruited to support children's foster placements.

There were a total of 17 Reviews of children who have experienced care held out of compliance between 2019/20. Scrutiny of these figures show that the majority of Reviews convened out of timescales were as a result of the 'change of circumstances' form not being completed in a timely manner by the Social Worker within the Safeguarding Teams. It is this form which alerts the IRO Service to an unplanned placement change and the need for a further Review meeting. However this form has recently been simplified for completion on the WCCIS and is now a much shorter document. It is hoped this will result in its completion in a satisfactory timescale. The importance of this matter and its impact upon the IRO service has been raised with Safeguarding Team Managers. More importantly children and young people have a right to have their review within a timely manner.

However, there were a small number of LAC Reviews that were not completed within compliance due to IRO sickness and lack of capacity within the team to cover these Reviews at such short notice. Since the implementation of the IRO Standards, it is good practice to hold a mid-point review meeting to ensure progress is being made and this also assists in early identification of issues rather than waiting for the Review itself to note outstanding concerns or drift in a child care plan. The IROs are holding mid-point meetings via telephone, virtual platform and email and the feedback is positive in terms of identifying drift earlier.

Chart 8



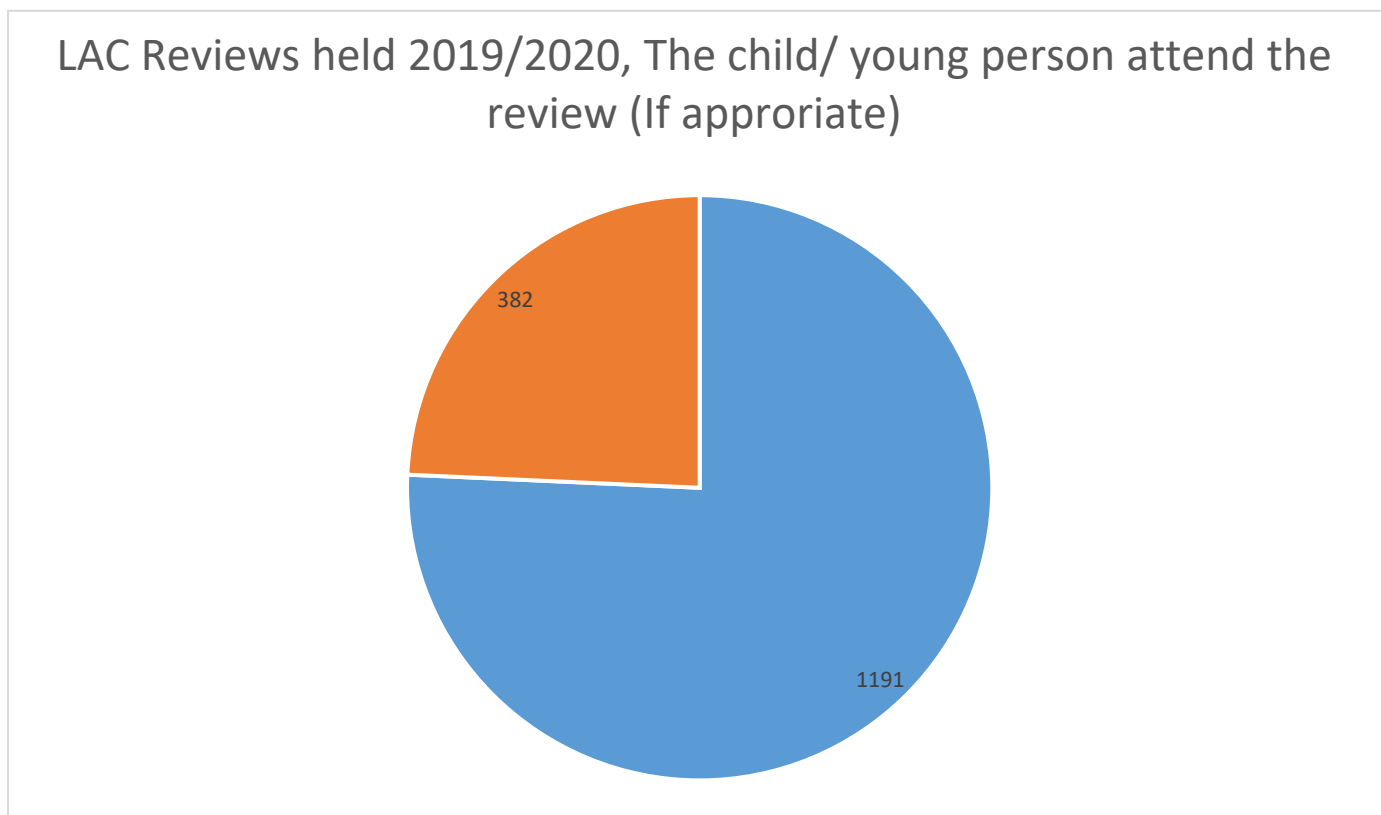
As can be seen in chart 8 above, the largest proportion of care experienced children are in the age category of 10-15 years and the smallest proportion being under 1 year old. Bridgend has an in-house service called Baby in Mind, this is a

pioneering programme designed to prevent new-born children entering into the care of the Local Authority. This service commenced in 2018 and comprises of a specialist team including practitioners whose backgrounds include Health Visiting, Social Work and family support workers.

In its first year the service worked with 38 families and 87% of the babies worked with remained out of the care system.

The service has continued to see successes but at the time of writing they have not published the latest figures. However it is clear this service has greatly reduced the numbers of under 1 year olds becoming accommodated in foster placements and mother and baby placements.

Chart 9



It is clear from chart 9 above that further work is required to encourage children who are looked after to attend their review meetings where appropriate. To encourage this the IRO Service may need to give greater consideration to the timing and venue of the meetings and explore these issues with the young people when they consult with them and younger children through direct work their Social Workers. As a service we would wish to see these numbers increase and will consult with the Fostering Team to explore how we can together encourage foster carers to support young people to attend their Review meeting. Since the report period and as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic, consultation has been taking place virtually and the anecdotal feedback from the IRO's is positive with many young people preferring this method of communication.

Advocacy.

In the period of April 2019 – March 2020 a total of 203 referrals were made to Tros Gynnal Plant Advocacy Service for ongoing advocacy support. It remains a priority for the IRO Service to ensure all children involved in the child protection process or care experienced children have the opportunity to access advocacy support. The IRO's ensure they discuss this when they consult with children and young people. They raise the issue of advocacy at all meetings and record advocacy numbers in the quality assurance audits. The IRO's ensure every child or young person receives an Active Offer for Advocacy services. The Active Offer ensures the Social Worker has explained what Advocacy is and how it can support them. Children and young people who become looked after and/ or are being discussed at a Child Protection Conference are entitled to receive an Active Offer of advocacy support. However the Active Offer should be consistently and regularly revisited with children and young people.

Business Support.

There have been changes to arrangements for Business Support supporting the IRO Service. Previously the service was supported by four child protection clerks and one fulltime and one part time Business Support staff to assist with facilitating Looked After Children Review meetings. The service has been realigned resulting in the child protection clerks being separated from the LAC support team, who are now part of the central Business Support Team. The child protection clerks have been reduced from four to three clerks. This has impacted upon the efficiency of the service and the IRO service have

noticed an increased pressure on the child protection clerks in meeting increasing demand i.e. increase in child protection conferences being held and an increase in the number of children on the child protection register. The clerks are also committed to supporting other services which has reduced their availability to the IRO service. The IRO Service and Business Support have agreed to have a quarterly interface meeting to address any challenges and monitor any issues of compliance.

Team Meetings

The IRO Service have held monthly team meetings with regular attendance by other services/agencies e.g. Western Bay Adoption Service, quarterly meetings with Cafcass, Vulnerable Groups, Disabled Children's Team, Permanency Team, Voices from Care, Legal Department and Commissioning service. There have also been meetings held between the IRO's and the Head of Service on a quarterly basis.

Case Dispute Resolution and Complaints

Between April 2019 & March 2020, the IRO's raised concerns on 9 cases under the IRO resolution protocol. These were primarily as a result of concerns the young person's Care Plan was not being progressed and in some instances identified work not being completed and the completion of documents outstanding. Disputes were resolved at Team Manager and Group Manager level. The IRO service have continued to escalate cases to the Senior Management Team where compliance has not been met in terms of frequency/timeliness of statutory visits and core groups.

There were no complaints in relation to Child Protection Conferences that required resolution via an independent panel.

Previously the IRO Service reviewed the arrangements for Consultation with children and young people and completed a small survey with care experienced young people seeking their views on an effective consultation document. The general theme was that they reported they would like to have an App. They also said they would like to be able to see their Social Worker more often.

Changes were made to the electronic consultation document and it was hoped the process was more user friendly ensuring children and young people are engaging in their reviews and their voices are being heard throughout the care planning

process. However an improvement in the number of consultation forms completed was seen but overall this statistic remained low. Enquiries of such an App had taken place, looking at the possibility of an interactive App which would enhance consultation and obtain the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people even further. There are two Apps currently in development, one is called Mind of My Own and the other is MUSE. We had hoped to make further progress with this but this particular App was deemed not suitable to and further progress has been delayed due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The active participation of care experienced young people in planning their care should contribute to improved outcomes. To ensure that the views of children and young people are listened to, good practice dictates they should either attend and/or participate in their review meetings or should at least be able to express their view by some other appropriate method. It is imperative that work continues to grow and develop better means of accessing the voices of children.

IRO Quality Assurance Audit

The IRO's chaired/reviewed 2,022 meetings between April 2019 and March 2020. 1,506 quality assurance audits were completed relating to these meetings. The service aims to complete a quality assurance audit following every meeting as this identifies good practice and where practice needs to improve, where processes haven't been adhered to and any pertinent themes that may require further exploration.

The IRO service have continued to work with the safeguarding teams to improve practice around child protection conferences and this has been extended through to other agencies such as the Health Visiting services, School Nurses and Midwifery Services. The next stage is to work at improving the quality of Looked After Children reviews on a multi-agency basis.

The quality assurance audit form provides data on practice standards and captures data and information relating to the IRO standards. Once completed by the IRO following the meeting, the form automatically goes to the Safeguarding Team Manager of the case holding team for their scrutiny and management oversight. This form also alerts the Safeguarding Team Manager to any outstanding pieces of work, compliance issues and identifies areas of good practice.

Challenges and Achievements

The IRO guidance and practice standards were introduced at the beginning of 2019. IRO's have worked to improve tracking and monitoring as advised within the Practice Standards and Good practice Guide. Arrangements for Independent legal advice for IRO's have been agreed with a reciprocal arrangement between Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot legal departments. The IRO's have accessed this support on a number of occasions. However, the standards have introduced a new process to completing Looked After Children reviews which includes the involvement of the Team Managers. This is achieved when the IRO sends the Team Manager the meeting recommendations within 5 days of completing the Review and that Team Manager has 5 days to respond to these recommendations. This is now embedded and working well within the service quickly identifying any area of disagreement and enabling these issues to be resolved at the earliest stage. IROs are holding mid-point meetings with the allocated Social Worker and this is also supporting the identification of drift early.

Consultation with children and young people needs to be improved to ensure their voice is being heard. Whilst the IRO have worked to improve the consultation document for children and young people, challenges remain in encouraging them to complete the document. The IRO service is to ensure this is a priority to develop creative ways of engaging and encouraging participation of all children and young people. The development of an App may well improve consultation and participation. IRO's routinely check that children and young people know about advocacy and how it can support them in having a real say in decisions affecting their lives. Our rates of referrals to the TGP Advocacy Service are very pleasing.

The IRO service has a direct relationship with the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) and can, if required, refer matters of concern or report directly to CAFCASS where deficits in care planning for care experienced young people cannot be resolved locally but are sufficiently significant as to impact on the outcomes for children and young

people. To date, the IRO service has had no cause to refer to CAFCASS but liaises with them regularly on individual cases within the public law arena. IROs in Bridgend work to a standard that has improved liaison between the CAFCASS children's guardians and Safeguarding Social Workers within family proceedings. As a result IROs are alerted more quickly to issues arising in the court process and can liaise at an earlier stage where disputes arise with the Local Authority. This relationship provides Guardians Ad Litem with the means to communicate issues arising directly with the IRO that are relevant to the on-going development and monitoring of a care plan, either during proceedings or following an order being granted.

The IRO Team meet with CAFCASS on a quarterly basis to discuss practice, themes and good practice examples.

The IRO Service has also been involved in rolling out training across the directorate and Education by facilitating the Working Together programme and by attending Team Meetings to support practitioners in the writing of child protection conference reports.

Service Priorities

- To increase the contact between the IRO with children and young people.
- To work alongside safeguarding colleagues to achieve permanency for all children and reduce the numbers of care experienced children within a safe and appropriate plan.
- The development of child consultation and participation through a more accessible medium.
- To work alongside Safeguarding Teams and Social Care Development Workforce Team (SCDWP) to improve practice around Looked After Children Reviews and the Care Planning Process.
- To ensure appropriate care plans are progressing in a timely manner to prevent and avoid drift in children's cases.
- To continue to focus on increasing participation of children and young people at Looked After Children Reviews.
- To ensure every care experienced child and young person has a stand-alone and in date Care Plan.

- To collate thematic practice issues identified from the QA's and use these to develop learning themes and improve practice
- IROs will continue to promote advocacy services and the active offer to children and young people and make these referrals where consent has been given to support the child/young person's voice.

Appendix 2 ACTION PLAN

Please see below service priorities Action Plan

B	Completed
R	A problem needs serious attention and action now
A	Issues are being managed and if addressed should not affect delivery
G	On track, in progress, any minor risks/ issues being managed
NYS	Not Yet Started

Independent Reviewing Service Action Plan 2020/2021

IRO Service								
	Owner	Due date	Recommendation	Action	Evidence	Update	Last RAG	RAG

1	IRO Service Manager and each IRO.	Nov 2020	To increase the contact between the IRO with children and young people.	<p>IRO Service Manager will continue to be involved in the progress of the MUSE App.</p> <p>Each IRO will ensure they give the child/YP the opportunity to meet with them to discuss their LAC review or CP Conference.</p>	<p>IRO Service Manager will attend all consultation meetings in relation to the development of this APP.</p> <p>Data collection of consultation rates will be included in the 6 monthly IRO Report.</p>	<p>Some progress is being noted during this Covid pandemic as young people appear to prefer consultation over the phone or virtually using Skype or MS Teams.</p> <p>Low rates of consultation documents. Service Manager has liaised with the Fostering Team to ask Foster Carers to encourage the children in their care to complete the consultation form.</p>	N/A	Amber
2.	IRO Service Manager and each IRO.	Nov 2020	To work alongside safeguarding colleagues to achieve permanency for all children and reduce the numbers of care experienced children within a safe and appropriate plan.	<p>IROs to ensure at the 2nd LAC Review the plan for the child is clear. If the plan isn't clear, the IRO will monitor and track the case and inform the appropriate Safeguarding Team Manager.</p> <p>IROs to ensure they consider all</p>	<p>IRO Service Manager to attend the LAC reduction Strategy Meeting held on a bi-monthly basis.</p> <p>During Supervision with IROs the IRO Service Manager will discuss alternative orders and options of care and add these identified</p>	This process is currently working well. IRO Service Manager has identified a number of cases where alternative care options could be considered resulting in the child no longer being Looked After.	N/A	Green

				appropriate options for care experienced children such as SGOs.	cases to the discussions at the LAC Reduction strategy Meeting.			
3.	IRO Service Manager	Nov 2020	The development of child and young person consultation and participation through a more accessible medium.	<p>IRO Service Manager will continue to be involved in the progress of the MUSE App.</p> <p>Each IRO will ensure they give the child/YP the opportunity to meet with them to discuss their LAC review or CP Conference.</p>	<p>IRO Service Manager will attend all consultation meetings in relation to the development of this APP.</p> <p>Data collection of consultation rates will be included in the 6 monthly IRO Report.</p>	This has been on-hold due to Covid 19.	N/A	NYS
4.	IRO Service Manager and each IRO.	Nov 2020	To work alongside Safeguarding Teams and SCDWP to improve practice around care experienced children and their Looked After Children Reviews and the	IROs will ensure they complete the IRO Quality Assurance document following every LAC Review. This will automatically be sent to the Safeguarding	The rates of completed QA forms will increase in the next year and the data will be included in the IRO 6 month report. IRO Service Manager will	<p>IRO Service Manager continues to raise cases of concern at the weekly Team Managers meeting.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager continues to present training alongside the training department and is facilitating introductory</p>	N/A	Amber

			<p>Care Planning Process.</p>	<p>Team Manager for their scrutiny.</p> <p>Should the IRO identify concerning practice, they will raise this with the IRO Service Manager and the Safeguarding Team Manager. They will track the progress to a resolution and initiate the IRO Protocol where necessary.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager will facilitate training alongside the Training Department to support and improve practice.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager will facilitate induction sessions to new starters and newly</p>	<p>attend all IRO protocol Meetings to support the IROs and facilitate resolution.</p>	<p>sessions to new starters and newly qualified staff.</p>		
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				qualified Social Workers to support their professional development.				
5.	IRO Service Manager and each IRO.	Nov 2020	To ensure appropriate care plans are progressing in a timely manner to prevent and avoid drift in children's cases.	<p>At every LAC Review the IRO will check the child has a Care Plan that is up to date and meets the child's needs. The IRO will recommend at each LAC Review that the Care Plan is updated to reflect the changes agreed at the current LAC Review.</p> <p>The IRO will track each child and ensure their Care Plan has been updated. The IRO will hold mid-point meetings to prevent drift and</p>	<p>The rates of IRO Quality Assurance forms being completed is increasing and this will continue moving forward.</p> <p>IROs are holding mid-point meetings for each child who is Looked After however there are times the child's SW does not respond. In these cases the IRO will raise this with their Service Manager and the safeguarding Team Manager.</p>	<p>Each IRO is currently compiling lists of all the children who have out of date Care Plans and is making the Safeguarding Team Manager and Social Worker aware and is tracking the case to ensure the Care Plan is completed.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager ensures when attending the LAC Reduction Strategy meeting and monthly Performance meeting that for any child who is discussed, the date of their Care Plan is checked to ensure it is up to date and where not it is flagged with the Safeguarding Team Manager.</p>	N/A	Amber

				<p>take action where drift is identified.</p> <p>Each IRO will complete the IRO Quality Assurance form following each LAC review as this informs the SW and their Team Manager of any out of date Care Plans.</p>				
6.	IRO Service Manager and each IRO.	Nov 2020	To continue to focus on increasing consultation and participation of children and young people at Looked After Children Reviews.	<p>IROs to ensure they offer to consult with each LAC child as appropriate for their age and level of understanding and to use a means of communication that the child chooses. This includes face to face meeting, phone, Skype and MS Teams.</p>	<p>The IRO Quality Assurance form captures the consultation data and this will be included in IRO 6 month report.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager will during Supervision sessions discuss the importance of consultation and ensure it remains a priority for each IRO.</p>	<p>Since Covid restrictions have been in place IROs have found many young people prefer to be consulted via virtual means such as Skype.</p> <p>IROs report many young people have attended their LAC reviews while in the lock down period as they have had greater availability to attend.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager has added Consultation as a Supervision agenda item to ensure it is discussed in Supervision sessions with each IRO.</p>	N/A	Amber

7.	IRO Service Manager and each IRO.	Nov 2020	To ensure every care experienced child and young person has a stand-alone and in date Care Plan.	<p>At every LAC Review the IRO will check the child has a Care Plan that is up to date and meets the child's needs. The IRO will recommend at each LAC Review that the Care Plan is updated to reflect the changes agreed at the current LAC Review.</p> <p>The IRO will track each child and ensure their Care Plan has been updated. The IRO will hold mid-point meetings to prevent drift and take action where drift is identified.</p> <p>Each IRO will complete the IRO Quality Assurance</p>	<p>The rates of IRO Quality Assurance forms being completed is increasing and this will continue moving forward.</p> <p>IROs are holding mid-point meetings for each child who is Looked After however there are times the child's SW does not respond. In these cases the IRO will raise this with their Team Manager and the safeguarding Team Manager.</p>	<p>Each IRO is currently compiling lists of all the children who have out of date Care Plans and is making the Safeguarding Team Manager and Social Worker aware and is tracking the case to ensure the Care Plan is completed.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager ensures when attending the LAC Reduction Strategy meeting and monthly Performance meeting that for any child who is discussed, the date of their Care Plan is checked to ensure it is up to date and where not that this is flagged with the Safeguarding Team Manager.</p>	N/A	Amber
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				form following each LAC review as this informs the SW and their Team Manager of any out of date Care Plans.				
8.	IRO Service Manager and each IRO	Nov 2020	To collate thematic practice issues identified from the QA's and use these to develop learning themes and improve practice.	The data will be scrutinised for the 6 monthly IRO Report.	Any practice themes identified will be provided to the Training Department and Team Managers at the weekly Team Meeting. If required the IRO Service Manager will be available to support the Training Team in facilitating training sessions to address these deficits.	The Quality Assurance forms are being used currently to identify out of date Care Plans as a theme and this is being addressed by the IROs with the Social Workers and their Team Managers.	N/A	NYS
9.	IRO Service Manager and each IRO.	Nov 2020	IROs will continue to make children and young people aware of the advocacy service.	This is currently monitored via the IRO Quality Assurance form and will be scrutinised for the	The referral numbers to Tros Gynnal from Bridgend are the highest in the Western Bay area.	BCBC rates of referrals to advocacy support are pleasing currently and have increased in the last year.	N/A	Green

				<p>IRO 6 month report.</p> <p>IROs will ensure when consulting with young people they ask if they would like the support of the Advocacy Service.</p> <p>IRO Service Manager will liaise with the Group Manager for Case Management and Transition periodically to check the referral rates have not decreased.</p>	<p>IROs report good evidence of advocacy discussions and offers being made between Social Workers and Children.</p>			
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