

Public Document Pack
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
Bridgend County Borough Council



Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB / Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich dewis iaith.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please let us know if your language choice is Welsh.



Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513
Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:
Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Monday, 6 January 2025

Dear Councillor,

CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING

A meeting of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB on **Friday, 10 January 2025 at 10:00.**

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 - 6

To receive for approval the minutes of 04/09/2024

4 Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023 - 2024

7 - 26

5 Care Inspectorate Wales (Ciw) Inspection of Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) Regulated Services in Children's Social Care

By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £01.36 in printing costs

- 6 A 3 Year Sustainability Plan to Improve Outcomes for Children and Family Services in Bridgend - Mid Year (2) Report on Progress - 2024/25 39 - 68
- 7 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: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend / Remotely via Microsoft Teams. 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 would like to view this meeting live, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / 643159.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

F D Bletsoe

E L P Caparros

P Davies

M J Evans

N Farr

J Gebbie

D M Hughes

M Jones

J Llewellyn-Hopkins

J E Pratt

JC Spanswick

A W Ulberini-Williams

HM Williams

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor J Gebbie – Chairperson

P Davies
T Thomas

M J Evans

N Farr

J E Pratt

Present Virtually

RJ Collins

HM Williams

Apologies for Absence

E L P Caparros, M Jones, Lindsay Harvey and JC Spanswick

Officers:

Steve Berry	Corporate Parenting and Participation Officer
Lisa French	Independent Reviewing Service Manager
Raeanna Grainger	Group Manager, IAA & Safeguarding
Gemma Hayne	Employability Programme Team Leader
Mark Lewis	Group Manager - Integrated Working
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Oscar Roberts	Business Administrative Apprentice - Democratic Services

Declarations of Interest

None.

53. Approval of Minutes

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the Committee approved the minutes of the 08/05/2024 as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	4 September 2024

54. Employability Bridgend Update For Care Experienced Young People

Decision Made	<p>The Employability Programme Team Leader presented the report updating the current status of Employability Bridgend's service delivery and progress in supporting people in Bridgend into finding work and obtaining qualifications.</p> <p>Committee members posed questions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How engagement rates with care-experienced children can be improved.• Whether any common flaws with engagement have been.• Potential causes of non-engagement.• Any further plans for collaboration between Employability Bridgend and BCBC Directorates. <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> The Committee noted the report, noting also that the benefits of the service are great but that increased take-up should be encouraged. The Committee also asked for a further update in future with additional details on care-experienced children who are not engaging with the service.</p>
Date Decision Made	4 September 2024

55. Regional Children's Advocacy Service

Decision Made	<p>The Group Manager, IAA & Safeguarding gave this report outlining progress in Bridgend's regional referral service, showing an overall reduction in usage however providing underlying context and reasoning behind some of the changes in figures. Some feedback from young people over the last year was also presented, which was overwhelmingly positive.</p> <p>Members asked questions on the subjects of:</p>
---------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons behind a decrease in referrals. • Potential availability to children with Care and Support Plans. • How further feedback can be gathered. • Any issues with residential care as previously raised. • Measures being taken to ensure feedback from social workers. • Any results of a review of the service. <p>RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report.</p>
Date Decision Made	4 September 2024

56. Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2023-2024

Decision Made	<p>The Group Manager, IAA & Safeguarding delivered this report recapping the work of the Independent Reviewing Service from April 2023 to March 2024, focusing on good progress made on numbers of children on the Child Protection Register and care-experienced children, maintaining a high 90% compliance rate.</p> <p>Members had a question about the report on whether Tros Gynnal Plant is still involved with the service, which was answered by the Group Manager, IAA & Safeguarding.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report, acknowledging the incredible work that Children’s Services as well as the wider Social Services and Wellbeing directorate has done in this progress and thanking them for their dedication and commitment.</p>
Date Decision Made	4 September 2024

57. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None.
Date Decision Made	4 September 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 11:00.

Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING
Date of Meeting:	10 JANUARY 2025
Report Title:	BRIDGEND CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING
Responsible Officer:	STEVE BERRY, CORPORATE PARENTING & PARTICIPATION OFFICER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There are no implications for the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	The Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board was established in November 2022 and this report outlines its activities and achievements which are detailed in its first annual report for the period April 2023 - March 2024

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting endorse the 2023-24 Annual Report of the Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board (**Appendix 1**).

2. Background

- 2.1 The Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board was established in 2022 and comprises agencies who have specific responsibilities for care experienced children and young people and other organisations that work to help those agencies fulfil their duties. The Board works closely with a group of care experienced children and young people, called the Bridgend Youth Voice Forum, to make sure that the work that they do fits well with the priorities, needs and ideas of children and young people. The Board and the forum worked closely together to agree the things that should be worked on and this was put together in a plan called the Bridgend Corporate Parenting Strategy. A special event to inform people about the strategy was held in April 2023 where the youth forum introduced different guests and speakers including the Childrens Commissioner for Wales. The most important part of the strategy are the Board priorities as these were the things that both adults and their children and young people valued most. These were as follows:

- Having a voice.
- Good health and well-being.
- A comfortable, safe, stable home whilst in care and afterwards.
- Educational achievement, training, and employment.

- Getting ready for independent living.
- Celebrating our children and young people's important achievements and events.

2.2 Whilst the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting has received an update report at previous meetings this is the first formal Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Board since its establishment in November 2022.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 The Corporate Parenting Board met regularly throughout 2023-24 and shared information and ideas on how they can work together to agree priorities to improve the lives of care experienced children and young people. It is very important to the Corporate Parenting Board that the children and young people they support feel valued and when they do something well this is recognised. To reflect this, in September 2023, the Board held a celebration event to praise those young people who had success in education, training or employment.

3.2 The annual report contains information about Board member roles and achievements including:

3.2.1 Children and Family Services - the local authority has statutory responsibilities towards all care experienced children. Care experienced children under 18 years old have allocated social workers and care leavers have allocated personal advisors until they reach the age of 25 years old. The allocated worker is responsible for developing, and overseeing care plans to ensure that all children and young people are working towards their identified outcomes and having their needs met. There were 370 care experienced children and 226 care leavers open to the local authority on 31 March 2024. There has been a 47% reduction in children experiencing 3 or more placements over the course of the reporting year which was a significant improvement. This provided children with stability within their home network. The majority of children who experienced 3 or more placement moves were those aged between 13 and 15 years of age.

3.2.2 Education - the Education Engagement Team works with school clusters to develop a clear and coherent plan to support our care experienced children and young people via their Pupil Deprivation Grant. The team offers a range of support schemes which are detailed in the report. As of 31 March 2024, there were 234 care experienced statutory school age learners. The team also support children placed in Bridgend by other local authorities. Each school has a designated co-ordinator as a point of contact.

3.2.3 Youth Justice Service - The Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) is dedicated to addressing the unique needs and strengths of every child it encounters. Notably, care experienced children are disproportionately likely to engage in offending or harmful behaviours. These children often present with more complex needs, prompting the BYJS to enhance its interventions to effectively manage risks and provide comprehensive care and support. BYJS were working with 92 children as of 1 April 2024. Among these, 12 (13%) were classified as care experienced.

- 3.2.4 Housing - The housing department oversees the Council's statutory responsibility for homelessness, rehousing and housing support. Applications for the above services are received directly from care experienced children, young people and care leavers. In 2023-24, 27 care leavers presented as homeless. Of these only 16 were assessed to be either homeless or threatened with homelessness. 16 homelessness duties were accepted and appropriate support provided. In 2023-24, Cabinet approved a Housing Support Programme Strategy. In developing this Strategy a comprehensive Statement of Need was undertaken, which included looking at data relating to homelessness applications by Care Leavers.
- 3.2.5 Health - The Health Board are responsible for completing the health assessments required under the Social Services and Wellbeing act. Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board currently collects information on the number of health assessments completed, along with the number of care experienced children who attend our emergency departments. This will include the number of children registered with General Practitioners and Dental services. During the reporting period 347 Health assessments were completed.
- 3.2.6 Advocacy - Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP) Cymru is the statutory independent advocacy service commissioned for care experienced children and young people in Bridgend. Within this role 25 care experienced young people were referred for the 'Active Offer' of advocacy and 65 care experienced young people were referred for issue-based advocacy. TGP Cymru also facilitate the care experienced youth forum (Bridgend Youth Voice) and ensure children and young people are reminded of their rights and entitlements at regular intervals and referring into advocacy service or other support services as and when required.
- 3.2.7 South Wales Fire and Rescue - South Wales Fire and Rescue provide a number of prevention programmes which are detailed in the report. Whilst they do not currently target or record numbers of care experienced children and young people, their services are nevertheless available to them.
- 3.2.8 Bridgend College - Bridgend College take on a pivotal role in supporting our care experienced children, young people, and care leavers, ensuring that they receive consistent and professional support throughout their educational journey. Along with curriculum-based support, their responsibilities include regular liaisons with their social workers, support teams, and foster carers. During the 2023-24 academic year the College were aware of 43 students who were in care with three learners withdrawing from their programme during the first 56 days (this is the Welsh Government measure in education for retention), but with all other learners (93%) being retained on their programme after the first 56 days of the programme start date. Attendance for students who are in care was 89.4%, which is just above the overall College attendance, typically with the first part of the week seeing greater attendance (90%+).
- 3.2.9 Awen Cultural Trust - Awen works with partners to ensure that care experienced children can access, feel safe and enjoy cultural opportunities that will support social development and career pathways. Over the past year, Awen has supported the Corporate Parenting Board to further its celebration of the achievements of care experienced young people, while at the same time developing its own policies and activities that fosters better opportunities for young people, carers and families. The Santa Appeal promoted and managed by Awen in 2023 was one of the most successful to date. Awen is also an official Fostering Friendly employer, demonstrating their commitment to supporting colleagues who are considering fostering, or have

existing foster care responsibilities, with extra leave and flexible working arrangements.

- 3.3 The Board has agreed that their priorities for 2024-25 are to develop a clear action plan underpinned by a performance framework that can reflect how board member agencies are meeting the rights and needs of our children and evidence this in an outcome focused way. Alongside this, ways of celebrating children's wider achievements are also being developed.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, or socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 Long term – the establishment of the Corporate Parenting Board will address how agencies can address their responsibilities for Corporate Parenting in a strategic manner to make robust plans for the future.

- 5.2 Prevention – the proposals that have been made mean that the responsibilities we all have for Corporate Parenting are identified and established into what we need to report on. Measuring and reporting on these responsibilities through the Corporate Parenting Board will enable us to take early action on any issues identified.

- 5.3 Integration – the Corporate Parenting Board has a multi-agency membership, along with an extended multi-agency membership through its 5 sub-groups. This membership is intended to provide sufficient representation to cover who has specific responsibilities for our children and young people in particular circumstances. The purpose of the next Board meeting and the sub-group meetings being held in this quarter, is to identify where professionals and agencies need to work together in the future to forge a coherent approach to the care of our children and young people.

- 5.4 Collaboration – the success and effectiveness of our Corporate Parenting in Bridgend is dependent on how well agencies work together to achieve shared goals and aspirations for our children and young people. These goals and aspirations are cited within the ['Bridgend Corporate Parenting Strategy – Our plan for you....'](#)

- 5.5 Involvement – due consideration has been given to how different 'providers of care' are involved in the proposals around Corporate Parenting. Specific attention and proposals are given to enabling the voice and lived experience of our children and young people.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 There is no direct impact on Climate Change through the implementation of this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 All safeguarding implications have been fully considered within Corporate Parenting development. No safeguarding issues were raised within the work cited in this report.

7.2 The subject matter of this entire report relates directly to corporate parenting and any implications are discussed within it.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

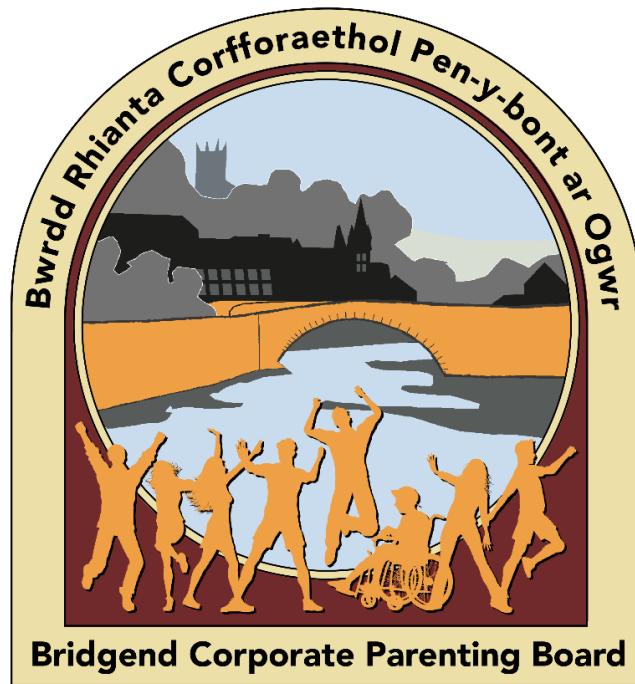
9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Committee endorse the content of the Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board's first Annual Report (**Appendix 1**).

Background documents

None

This page is intentionally left blank



BRIDGEND CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

2023 - 2024





Introduction – the Corporate Parenting Board

In Bridgend County Borough, we are the champions from different departments and organisations who are the corporate parents for care experienced children and young people and care leavers (our children and young people). We meet regularly, in a Corporate Parenting Board to discuss how we can work together to provide our children and young people with all the things they need to live happy and healthy lives.

We, the Corporate Parenting Board, have agreed to focus our work on a list of the most important topics, known as priorities, that were decided by our children and young people in their Corporate Parenting Strategy launched in 2023:

Our Priorities

1. Having a voice.
2. Good health and well-being.
3. A comfortable, safe, stable home whilst in care and afterwards.
4. Educational achievement, training, and employment.
5. Getting ready for independent living.
6. Celebrating our children and young people's important achievements and events.

The Work of the Board

The Corporate Parenting Board met 6 times from April 2023 – March 2024.

Attendance of Board members

[Table key: **Y** – attended **N** – no attendance **Rep** – represented by a colleague of their organisation]

Board member	5 th May	22 nd June	14 th September	16 th November	18 th January	7 th March
Corporate Director, Social Services & Well Being Directorate, Bridgend CBC (chair)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Corporate Parenting Officer, Bridgend CBC (board support)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Deputy Head Children Social Care, Bridgend CBC	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Rep
Head of Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate, Bridgend CBC	N	Rep	Rep	Y	Rep	N



Group Manager - Education Early Years and Young People Directorate, Bridgend CBC	Y	-	-	-	-	-
Group Manager - Prevention and Wellbeing, Bridgend CBC	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Head of Partnership Services, Bridgend CBC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Group Manager, Learning Disability, Mental Health and Substance Misuse, Bridgend CBC	N	N	N	N	N	N
Employability Programme Leader, Bridgend CBC	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Head of Safeguarding and Looked After Children, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board	Rep	Rep	Rep	N	Rep	Rep
Detective Chief Inspector, South Wales Police	Y	Rep	Y	Y	Y	Rep
Vice Principal Learner Journey, Systems and Inclusive Practice, Bridgend College	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Station Commander, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service	Y	Rep	Y	N	Y	Y
Chief Executive, Awen Cultural Trust	N	Rep	N	N	Y	Y
Team Manager, Tros Gynnal Plant	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Partnership Manager, Halo Leisure	N	Y	Y	N	N	N

It must be noted that each of the above meetings had additional non Board members invited to present or to attend for their expertise on a topic being discussed.

During this time the Board has discussed a wide range of issues, received a variety of presentations and information relating to achieving the following 4 milestones:

- Launch of the [Bridgend Corporate Parenting Strategy](#) – the event was facilitated by our care experienced youth forum with Rocio Cifuentes, Childrens Commissioner for Wales, and Julie Morgan, Deputy Minister for Social Services as guest speakers in the presence of other dignitaries.
- Action planning event – this event provided a platform for staff, managers and leader from a range of organisations to explore the opportunities for our children and young people through collaborative working categorised by our 6 priorities.
- Celebration Awards for achievement in education, training and employment – this prestigious event recognised the achievements of 30 young people in the presence of Board members, Welsh Government Ministers and local politicians.
- The Board member agencies declared their commitment to their children and young people through the signing up to the [Corporate Parenting Charter – A Promise from Wales “A SHARED PARENTING PLEDGE”](#).

Bridgend Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting

Whilst the Corporate Parenting Board is not a statutory body, it is closely aligned with Bridgend Council’s governance through its relationship with the Cabinet Corporate Parenting Committee that



receives reports that provide oversight and accountability to the Councils' statutory functions in regarding care experienced children, young people and care leavers.

Children and Family Services and other Council departments report to the Cabinet Corporate Parenting Committee on a quarterly basis and reports that are taken to the Cabinet Committee are either shared either directly with the Corporate Parenting Board, given as a presentation or produced by the Board prior to Cabinet, these include:

- Corporate Parenting quarterly update
- Employability Service update • Basic Income Pilot
- Youth Justice Service update
- Children & Families 3-year Plan
- Independent Reviewing service Annual Plan
- Annual Report of Inspections
- Regional Advocacy Service Annual Report
- Regional Adoption Service Annual Report
- Inspection updates
- Foster Wales Bridgend Annual report
- Policy and strategy updates
- Annual report of Inspections on BCBC registered homes
- Housing Pathways for Care Experienced Children children's homes and Young People

Listening to the views of our children and young people

The Board has ensured that its work is underpinned by and where possible is co-produced with care experienced children, young people and care leavers they are responsible for. All of the work with children and young people has been co-ordinated by the Corporate Parenting and Participation Officer with much of the activities facilitated through by TGP Cymru Specialist Youth Participation Service who host a youth forum for care-experienced children, young people and care leavers.

Whilst the youth forum undertakes topic specific work relating to issues raised by its members, consultation activity for outside agencies such as Foster Wales, Voices from Care, Bridgend Children and Family Services and Welsh Government, the forums activity has been closely aligned to informing and influencing the Corporate Parenting Board through:

- Designing the Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board logo along with the forum logos with another care experienced young person who at the time studying design.
- Identifying the priorities of what is important to children and young people when they are in care.
- Providing feedback following on from the Board Promise Event:
 - *"The promises were all good and are real and can be done".* ○ *"All achievable so no excuses".*
 - *"Let's see if the promises are kept and if not, we know we can challenge this and will happily raise in forum".*



- Sharing their views on what they felt should be incorporated in the Board strategy.
- Facilitating the Launch of the Bridgend Corporate Parenting Board Strategy by providing presentations and introducing all guest speakers and presenters which was held in the Heronston Hotel in April.
- Identifying the award categories for the Corporate Parenting Achievement Awards.

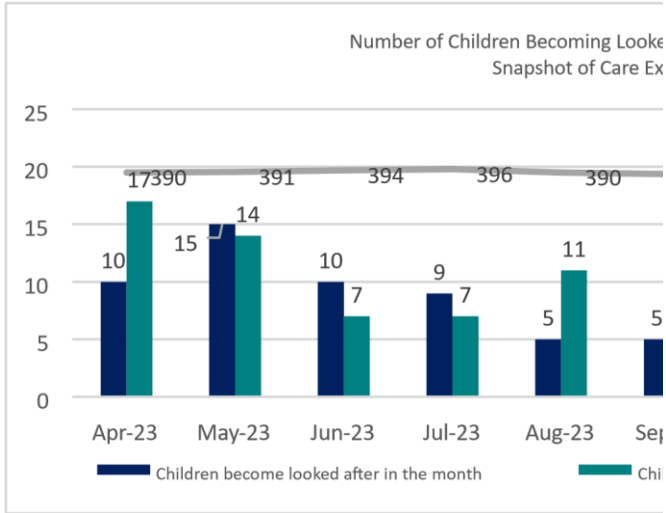
The forum is very passionate about their work and have stated the following in relation to the forum:

- *“We are the experts and the ones in care or leaving care so should be fully involved.”*
- *“I feel we are taken seriously and not just a tick box.... Zoe wouldn't let that happen anyway!!!”*
- *“Other young people coming into care will be happy and reassured I think that children and young people have been fully involved and not just the adults sorting this stuff out”.*
- *“I love group and the people in it, they all know how hard in can be being in care and leaving care”?*
- *“I feel my voice can make a difference”.*
- *“I always look forward and having this group has saved me from deep depression”.*
- *“I can be a right pain in the a** and have some behaviour problems but that is never been an issue in group and that's because I am listened too and taken seriously”.*
- *“I can just be myself”.*

Board Member support for our children and young people

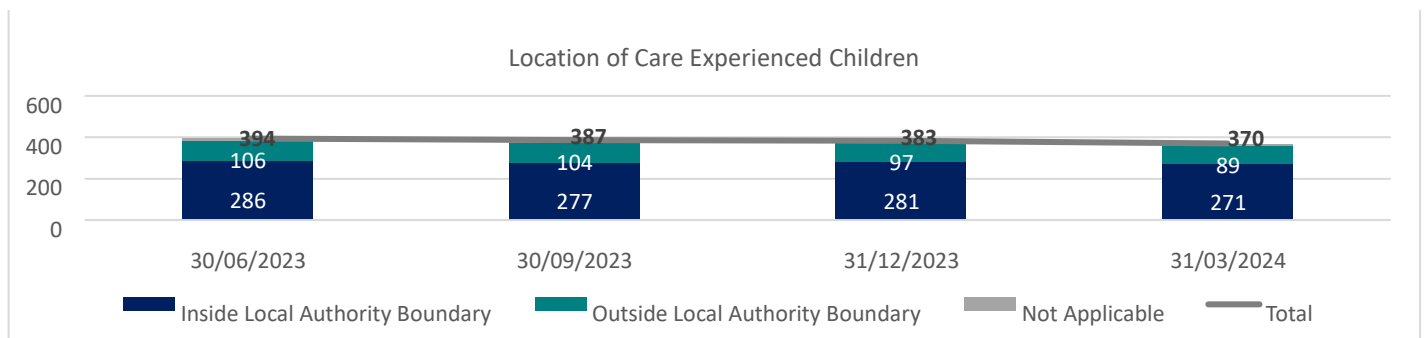
Children and Family Services

The local authority has statutory responsibilities towards all care-experienced children. Careexperienced children under 18 have allocated social workers and care leavers have allocated personal advisors. The allocated worker is responsible for developing, and overseeing the care plans to ensure that all children and young people are working towards their identified outcomes and having their needs met. There were 370 care experienced children and 226 care leavers supported to the local authority on 31 March 2024.

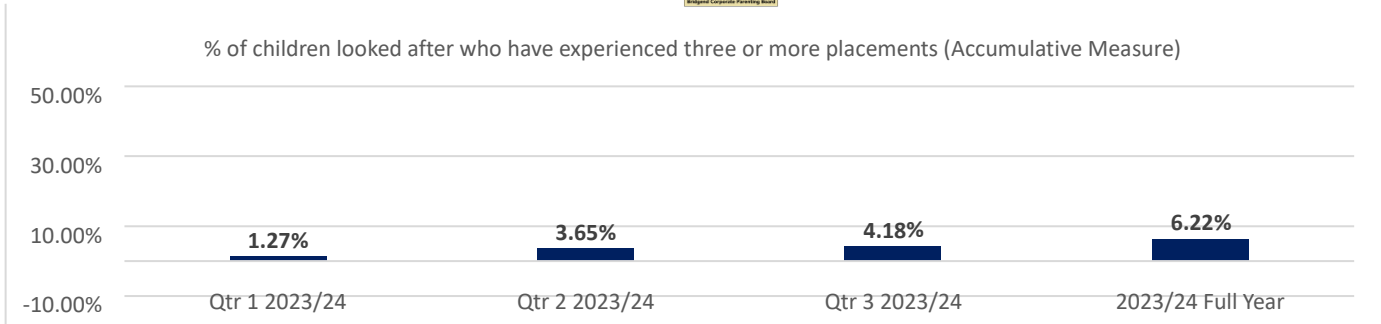


The number of care experienced children has steadily decreased over the course of the year. At its highest in March 2023, the number stood at 402, in March 2024, the number of care experienced children was 370. The two primary factors contributing to this decrease was work to prevent children and young people being care experienced and children ceasing to be care experienced through the timely progression of care plans and discharge of orders where safe and appropriate to do so.

The implementation of the Signs of Safety model of practice is changing how Children and Family services work with families and supporting them to find solutions within their own resources. This is resulting in children and young people remaining in the care of their families and not becoming care experienced. Increased staff stability is resulting in higher quality social work with timely progression of care plans. There is a systemic and co-ordinated approach to the process of discharging care orders which provides clear expectations for social workers when undertaking this activity. There is joint working between the Care Experienced Children’s Team, Kinship and Permanence Team and Independent Reviewing Services which supports working together to ensure high quality care planning and timely progression of care plans. The safe reduction of care experienced children strategy is in the process of being finalised and is expecting to be operational by the end of 2024. This will further drive the safe reduction of the numbers of care experienced children, supporting more to live with their families where safe to do so.



Of those children and young people living outside of Bridgend 44% live with family members, 73% of children and young people live in Bridgend with 21% living out of county but within Wales. 3% live outside of Wales. There has been neither a significant increase or decrease in any of these figures since the previous year where figures at the end of 2023 were 72%, 22% and 4% respectively.



There has been a 47% reduction in children experiencing 3 or more placements over the course of this year compared with the previous year which is a significant improvement. This has provided children with stability within their home network. The majority of children who have experienced 3 or more placement moves are those aged between 13 and 15 years of age.

Within the 16+ Team in Children and Family Services, all young people are allocated a Personal Advisor (PA) up until the age of 25. Legislation dictates that pathway plans only have to be reviewed up until this age unless a young person is being supported through a programme of education (largely university). The PA service is now fully staffed with an additional post added to the team over the past year. This has resulted in caseloads being more manageable and PA's being able to effectively review pathway plans and ensure that young people have a pathway in relation to education, training and employment. The 16+ team within have been implementing the Basic Income Pilot for Care Leavers. All our care leavers who were eligible for the scheme signed up. Benefits have been seen for our young people in this scheme and plans are in place to ensure there is no ongoing impact when the pilot ends. In addition, there is a Multiply worker based within 16+ solely to support care leavers to develop numeracy skills and received a recognised accreditation for this. Young people aged 16-25 have access to the St David's Day fund which is used to support with access to opportunities to assist with their development and successfully transition into adulthood. This is often used for course fees and study materials, equipment, transport etc.

BCBC (and all UK local authorities) is part of the Home Office National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for unaccompanied (asylum seeking children and young people. The NTS is a United Kingdom (UK) government scheme which enables the planned transfer of an unaccompanied seeking child from one LA to another. All LAs in the UK are subject to a mandatory duty to comply with the scheme. The purpose of the NTS is to ensure a fairer and equitable distribution of care to unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people. In Bridgend, 19 of our care experienced population are unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people.

There is ongoing recruitment activity to increase the number of high-quality foster carers for children and young people. Foster cares have access to their own supervising social worker and training packages and events to ensure they are supported and have opportunities for development. There are opportunities for planning for placements within out monthly placements planning meetings and out of authority panels. Children services are in the process of recruiting a When I'm Ready and Supported Lodgings Social Worker dedicated to recruiting and supporting providers of this service to enable stable and secure placements as the young person makes the transition into adulthood.

Education



The Education Engagement Team works with school clusters to develop a clear and coherent plan to support our care experienced children and young people via their Pupil Deprivation Grant. Examples of some of the support provided by the team can include:

- Supporting the Person Education Plan process including training.
- Delivering training packages to schools and governors on role and responsibilities, PEPs and safeguarding.
- Attending Care-Experienced Children Team (CECT) meetings.
- Oversight out-of-county placements.
- Attend Out-Of-County Panel and Out-Of-County Finance.
- Attending the Additional Learning Needs Panel.
- Providing a single point of contact for all agencies including schools, Children's Social Care and other services for information, training and guidance for vulnerable learners including careexperienced children.
- Manage Pupil Deprivation Grant (DPG) Funding.
- Attend reviews of care experienced children where required.
- Pre-admissions meetings/transition meetings and or planning.
- The Education Engagement Team works with school clusters to develop a clear and coherent plan to support care experienced children via their PDG and this can include:
 - the appointment of a school-based counsellor to acknowledge the impact becoming looked after can have on learning.
 - learning support officers delivering 'Thrive' training to promote educational attainment and mental health; and o trauma training for staff to consider how behaviour can present itself for children who have entered the care system.

As of 31 March 2024, there were 234 care experienced statutory school age learners, the team also support children placed in Bridgend by other local authorities. Each school has a designated coordinator as a point of contact.

Bridgend Youth Justice Service

The Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) is dedicated to addressing the unique needs and strengths of every child it encounters. Notably, children with care-experience are disproportionately likely to engage in offending or harmful behaviours. These children often present with more complex needs, prompting the BYJS to enhance its interventions to effectively manage risks and provide comprehensive care and support. To better serve all children, especially those with complex needs, the BYJS has implemented the following developments:

- Individualised Trauma Support and Planning: Tailored assistance to help children process and recover from traumatic experiences.
- Enhanced Speech and Language Support: Improved services to address communication difficulties.



- Education, Training, and Employment Support: Programmes to ensure children have access to educational opportunities and job training.
- Mental Health and Substance Use Support: Specialised care to address psychological wellbeing and substance use issues.
- Resettlement and Transition Planning: Comprehensive planning to support children transitioning back into the community.
- Exploitation Planning, Safeguarding Support, and Planning: Measures to protect children from exploitation and ensure their safety.
- Referrals to External Partners: Coordinated efforts to connect children with specific support services when needed.
- Every child undergoes a thorough assessment to create a personalised plan and intervention strategy tailored to their unique needs. Central to this process is incorporating the voices of the children and, when appropriate, their carers. This ensures that the interventions are not only effective but also resonate with the children's personal experiences and perspectives.

Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) worked with 92 children as of 1 April 2024. Among these, 12 (13%) were care experienced children

Bridgend Council Housing Department

The housing department oversees the Council's statutory responsibility for homelessness, rehousing and housing support. Applications for the above services are received directly from care-experienced children, young people and care leavers. The department, in conjunction with colleagues in Children and Family Services complete a quarterly return with regards to care leavers who have presented throughout the year.

In 2023/24, 27 care leavers presented as homeless, and of these 16 were assessed to be either homeless or threatened with homelessness. 16 homelessness duties have been accepted and appropriate support provided. In 2023/24, Cabinet Approved a Housing Support Programme Strategy. In developing this Strategy a comprehensive Statement of Need was undertaken, which included looking at data relating to homelessness applications by Care Leavers.

Health

Cwm Taff Morgannwg University (CTMUHB) health board provides all universal and secondary health services to care experienced children within its footprint and is responsible for any health referrals to regional centres of care. The health board are also responsible for completing the health assessments required under the Social Services and Wellbeing act. CTMUHB currently collects information on the number of health assessments completed, along with the number of care experienced children who attend our emergency departments. This will include the number of children registered with the General Practitioners and Dental services.

347 Health assessments were completed, of the 369 children looked after in Bridgend, 361 were registered with a doctor at the time of their health assessment.



TGP Cymru is the statutory independent advocacy service commissioned for care-experienced children and young people in Bridgend. Within this role 25 care-experienced young people were referred for the 'Active Offer' of advocacy and 65 care experienced young people were referred for issue-based advocacy. TGP Cymru also facilitate the care experienced youth forum (Bridgend Youth Voice) and ensuring children and young people are reminded of their rights and entitlements at regular intervals and referring into advocacy service or other support services as and when required. Bridgend Youth Voice (BYV) Forum has a regular cohort of children and young people aged between 12 and 22yrs old who meet on a monthly basis and school holidays. There have been 115 attendances over the last year. Young people also developed the words for the [mural to break the stereotypes](#) of young people in care with the poet laureate.

TGP Cymru actively promotes rights around education, training and employment via independent advocacy provision. Our care experienced children and young people presented with six education issues for advocacy support last year. BYV Forum regularly explore this area and TGP Cymru offer support to any issues raised in meetings and signpost to relevant agencies along with an offer of advocacy support. BYV Forum facilitated the Corporate Parenting Strategy Launch and were supported develop skills relating to the day. They have also signposted some young people to the Multiply service.

South Wales Fire and Rescue

South Wales Fire & Rescue provides a number of prevention programmes such as REFLECT (*engagement of 1874 children and young people, April 2023- March 2024*), Phoenix project (*engagement with 216 children and young people, April 2023- March 2024*) and Fire Cadets, which are tailored to reduce various risks involving children and young people and work with young people to reduce deliberately set fires and anti-social behaviour. Targeting those who have offended or are known to be at risk of offending, the programmes are customised to build up individual resilience, self-worth and confidence and raise awareness through workshops, Fire Fighter for a Day, Street Fire Fighter and Doorstep Sports activities. It must be noted that South Wales Fire & Rescue does not currently target or record numbers of care experienced children and young people, nevertheless their services are available to them.

South Wales Fire & Rescue offer the following educational opportunities through their youth intervention projects and programmes and these:

- Enhancing key citizenship skills and build confidence.
- Developing transferable, practical skills for future training or employment.
- Gaining a nationally recognised BTEC qualification.
- Playing supportive roles in their local community and develop positive peer relationships.
- Attending a local fire station one evening a week, work alongside SWFRS
- Representing SWFRS at prestigious events.



Bridgend College

Bridgend College take on a pivotal role in supporting our care-experienced children, young people, and care leavers, ensuring that they receive consistent and professional support throughout their educational journey. Along with curriculum-based support, their responsibilities include regular liaisons with their social workers, support teams, and foster carers. This collaboration helps in maintaining a unified approach to each student's welfare. Each care-experienced student is assigned a safeguarding lead, and has a safeguarding lead care experienced champion, enhancing the personalised care by establishing a reliable point of contact for students to approach when in need. These leads play a crucial role in managing the students' reviews and fostering a supportive environment where students can develop trust and rapport.

Over the past year, from April 2023 to March 2024, Bridgend College have actively engaged in providing essential services like advocacy and housing support and have directed students to necessary external agencies for further assistance, such as ARC and Barod. This comprehensive support structure not only addresses immediate educational needs but also ensures a broader spectrum of welfare and guidance, reinforcing our commitment to the well-being and success of our care-experienced students. The College were aware of 43 students who were in care (note: 2023-24 academic year, not financial year), with three learners withdrawing from their programme during the first 56 days (this is the Welsh Government measure in education for retention), but with all other learners (93%) being retained on their programme after the first 56 days of the programme start date. Attendance for students who are in care was 89.4%, which is just above the overall College attendance, typically with the first part of the week seeing greater attendance (90%+).

Below is a case study example provided by Bridgend College highlighting the educational, pastoral and multiagency support that is has been made available to our care experienced young people.

S1 is an 18-year-old transitioning from foster placement to supported living. S1 struggled with substance abuse and was at risk of being withdrawn from their course. The Wellbeing Team collaborated with the curriculum staff to develop a balanced approach to the situation while managing the risks. The staff recognised considerable potential in this young learner.

Substance misuse led to a breakdown in S1's placement. The college worked alongside the social worker to devise a plan that would allow S1 to remain in college while ensuring safety, readiness, and respectfulness. It was evident that S1 did not recognise the issue with their substance misuse and was not ready for change. It would have been easier for us as a college to withdraw the student; however, we believe in the potential of all our students and strive for them to achieve their full potential.

The college and social worker conducted sessions on choices and consequences, which included S1's exclusion from college trips due to their substance use. When S1 faced difficulties or received negative responses, they would become aggressive. Over time, with the support provided, S1 became more aware of their actions and increasingly respectful, feeling "at last being heard."

The Wellbeing Team continued to advocate for S1, addressing the growing concerns from the curriculum area about their substance misuse. S1 felt "supported and was ready to improve their own chances," S1 is now enrolled in a drug program and is on track to complete their course and obtain their GCSEs and has been supported with independent living skills.

This case example demonstrates effective collaboration among services, clear communication, and the importance of acknowledging the continuum of need based on S1's perspective—even when not aligned with their best interest. It emphasises that placing the student at the centre of their own plan and controlling it is vital. The case exemplifies how students come from diverse backgrounds with varying life chances, making it essential in any situation to tailor an individualised plan that balances risks and strengths, enabling students to reach their full potential.



AWEN Cultural Trust

Awen Cultural Trust works with partners to ensure that care-experienced children can access, feel safe and enjoy cultural opportunities that will support social development and career pathways. Over the past year, Awen has supported the Corporate Parenting Board to further its celebration of the achievements of care-experienced young people, while at the same time developing its own policies and activities that fosters better opportunities for young people, carers and families.

The Santa Appeal promoted and managed by Awen was one of the most successful to date. 300 gifts and over £4000 in donations. In addition, Awen supports the Corporate Parenting Board and its initiatives through social media channels and the physical network of services throughout Bridgend. Awen used Carers Rights Day (23 November 2023) to spotlight the partnership with Bridgend Carers Centre, Inclusability and Special Families e.g. an exclusive Alice in Wonderland Trail at Bryngarw Country Park, relaxed cinema screenings, free tickets for carers for specific shows. Awen is an official Fostering Friendly employer, this demonstrates their commitment to supporting colleagues who are considering fostering, or have existing foster care responsibilities, with extra leave and flexible working arrangements.

Awen became a Fostering Friendly Organisation this year, having the policy in place means that they:

- offer flexible working for foster carers and those going through the approval process.
- can allow up to 5 days of paid leave. This could be for foster carer training, meetings with social workers or settling a child into their new home for instance.
- will promote Foster Care Fortnight™, The Fostering Network's annual campaign, which raises the profile of fostering.

Western Bay Adoption Service

Western Bay Adoption Service provides the adoption service for Bridgend. The service recruits and assesses any potential adopters from Bridgend, twin tracks and family finds for children in Bridgend who have a plan of adoption being considered or agreed by the court and provides an adoption support service to adoptive family and birth parents who reside in Bridgend.

From April 2023 to March 2024, the service worked with 42 twin tracking (potential adoption) referrals, 15 Bridgend children were made subject of a placement order, ie had an agreed plan of adoption and the service placed 15 children. The service recruited and approved 8 adoptive families. The service has a wide variety of support services available to adopted children and their families, including Virtual Hub consultations, birth parent support groups which are held monthly, access to a youth club specifically for adopted young people, support with life-journey work and identity, play group for adoptive families, and numerous support events in which adoptive families can come together. They also offer support to adopted adults to access their adoption information.



Barnardo's

Barnardo's are commissioned to provide two services via the Families First Grant in Bridgend. These include Atebion, a Disability Family Support Service and Practical Home Management (PHM). Whilst the primary focus of these services is not to support care-experienced children, young people and care leavers, we recognise that some of the individuals supported may be. As an organisation, Barnardo's ensures that all colleagues and volunteers complete Trauma training as part of the mandatory induction as this provides an insight into trauma as a whole, and in relation to care experienced individuals and care leavers. The Bridgend team work closely with Barnardo's Swansea, who offer a range of support services to care experienced children, young people and care leavers so their resources, expertise and support can be accessed when needed.

Celebrating our children and young people's important achievement and events

Bridgend Children services hosted an Education, Training and Employment Celebration Event for our care experienced young people. The event celebrated over 30 young people for their achievements in education, training or employment and was supported by the Leader and Deputy Leader of Bridgend Council, the Deputy Minister for Social Services and a range of Welsh Government Officials.



Next steps for our priorities, the coming year

In the coming year, Board member agencies will continue to share how they are working to support our children and young people through presentations at meetings with view to improving collaborative working and identifying opportunities to benefit our children and young people.

It is hoped that the Board will be able to produce a performance framework that can reflect how board member agencies are meeting the rights and needs of our children and evidence this in an outcome focused way.

The main ambition for the Board for 2024 – 2025 is to work together to improve outcomes for care experienced children and young people. It is anticipated that continuing to listen to, and act on, the priorities that our children and young people advise us of, use of better data and information, will mean that the benefits of multi-agency working will make us even better parents to our care experienced children in Bridgend in future years.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 5

Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING
Date of Meeting:	10 JANUARY 2025
Report Title:	CARE INSPECTORATE WALES (CIW) INSPECTION OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S (BCBC) REGULATED SERVICES IN CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING
Responsible Officer:	DAN BOLTON GROUP MANAGER, PROVIDER SERVICES
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules
Executive Summary:	<p>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) are the independent regulators of social care and childcare services in Wales and inspect care service providers against the requirements of relevant legislation including the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.</p> <p>CIW are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out functions on behalf of Welsh Ministers to provide assurance on the quality and safety of services • Decide who can provide services • Inspect and drive improvement of regulated services and local authority social services • Undertake national reviews of social care services • Take action to ensure services meet legislative and regulatory requirements <p>This report provides the Committee with information on the regulatory activity undertaken by CIW across Bridgend County Borough Council's Children's Residential Services in 2024.</p> <p>The inspections in the accommodation services report against the following core themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-being • Care and Support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management • Environment <p>Summaries of the inspections are contained in this report and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key findings of how we have performed against standards in our residential regulated services. • Activity undertaken to meet regulatory standards. • Actions to address areas of improvement and non-compliance notices.
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the outcome of the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspections of Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) Regulated Services in Children's Social Care in 2024. This report relates to inspection activity detailed below:

Service	Visit Date
Sunny Bank Medium to long term residential service	15/01/24
Golygfa'r Dolydd (Meadow's View) Assessment and Emergency Service	19/09/24
Harwood House	05/06/24

2. Background

- 2.1 CIW undertake inspections in line with their Inspection framework for accommodation-based services, to evaluate the service's adherence to legislative and regulatory requirements, principally The Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017, the conditions of registration and the individual service's statement of purpose. The inspections also evaluate the service's ability to provide the Welsh Language active offer. In doing so, CIW are aiming to ensure that people using the services are supported to achieve the best possible quality of support, achieve their identified outcomes, are not placed at risk and do not experience harm. The inspections are undertaken in consideration of four core themes:

- The wellbeing of individuals receiving care and support
- The quality of care and support provided to individuals.
- The leadership and management of the service
- Environment

The inspection reports are presented with a short summary, followed by findings under these core themes.

- 2.2 The Residential provisions that were inspected during 2024 are as follows:

Sunny Bank – This service provides four placements of varying lengths to children/young people in the age range of 8 to 17 years who cannot live with their own immediate or extended family. Young people moving into adult services / independent living may remain at Sunny Bank post 18 for up to 7 days to support their transition plan.

Harwood House – This service provides a high quality 52-week residential service for up to three children/young people with complex needs, including learning disability, aged from eight to nineteen years (nineteen age limit applies to any young person with Additional Learning Needs.) Children/young people are usually enrolled in Heronsbridge School.

Golygfa'r Dolydd – This service has been designed to provide a home for up to seven children/young people and is set up as two separate services or provisions within the same building, each having their own entrance and both being self-contained. The Emergency provision of the home can provide accommodation for up to three young people for up to 28 days. The Assessment provision of the home is split over two floors. This side of the service provides placements for up to four children/young people for up to 12 months.

- 2.3 During the inspection, the inspectors review a range of information including policies, statements of purpose, written guides, complaints information, incident reports, supervision data, training data, safeguarding referrals and quality assurance reports. The inspector may ask for this information to be provided electronically and uploaded onto the secure portal CIW Online. Inspectors aim to engage with individuals in receipt of care and support and professionals to gather first-hand feedback about the services they receive.
- 2.4 All reports are initially received prior to publication from CIW along with an Inspection Response Form, which can be used to comment of the factual accuracy or the fairness and proportionality of findings within the reports.
- 2.5 There is a requirement under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) to have a nominated Responsible Individual (RI) which for these services is the Group Manager for Provider Services. The RI is legally accountable for the provision of care and support and is required to have oversight of the running of the services. In addition, there are also registered managers (RM) in post, who are suitably qualified and registered with Social Care Wales as required under RISCA.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 The inspection reports have identified that the residential services all provide care tailored to meet the needs of the children and young people they support, helping them build independence, confidence, and positive relationships. Staff work hard to ensure that young people's voices are heard, and their well-being is prioritised, with strong input from families and other professionals. There have been improvements in training, oversight, and the quality of the environments, creating safe and supportive homes. While some areas still need attention, like better aligning plans with children's

progress, all three services inspected this year are committed to making a positive difference in young people's lives.

- 3.2 There are some areas for improvement identified within the reports, which will be addressed at the individual service level.

Key inspection findings for Sunny Bank:

- 3.3 Since the last inspection on 4th August 2022, the three areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been met. Improvements have been made to the service provider's admission process, children are receiving more continuity in care with a reduction of agency staff use, and care staff are receiving regular support and training to develop in their roles and meet children's needs. Children feel their voices are heard and external professionals have provided positive feedback on how care staff support children to achieve their personal outcomes. Continued improvements are being made to the home environment and a number of facilities are available to children to support their well-being.
- 3.4 Children's voices are heard, and they are encouraged to make decisions that affect their lives. Children are happy to speak to care staff and make decisions on what they eat and what activities they want to complete. Minutes of these meetings are on display, to remind children of their choices and these are listened to.
- 3.5 The physical, emotional, and mental health of children is promoted. They are registered with local health services. Care staff are supporting children, to help them understand the benefits of engaging with services and reduce anxiety. Care staff have a good understanding of children's needs and work with other professionals and family members to promote their emotional and physical well-being. Children are developing independence skills, appropriate for their age and in line with their wishes. Care staff work closely with multi-agencies to support children and to reduce risks to their well-being. They are trained in safeguarding and understand their role and responsibilities in keeping children safe. Care staff are confident in using a trauma informed approach when supporting children. Numbers of incidents have reduced significantly, and care staff are receiving further training to understand children's needs.
- 3.6 **Care and Support** – Children can be confident; care staff have up to date guidance on how they should support them to achieve positive well-being. Children's personal plans include information on their history, strengths, needs, likes and dislikes, hobbies and aspirations. These are reviewed regularly. Children have told the service provider they feel their voices are heard and they make decisions about the care and support they receive. Children's views, wishes and feelings recorded in their records require further strengthening. Children receive support from care staff which aims to build their self-esteem, confidence and reduce risks to their well-being. Support plans are reviewed regularly to consider their effectiveness. Children are supported to better understand and process their past experiences. They are supported to develop their independence skills, including self-care and budgeting. Children told us they feel they receive good care and support, and care staff have helped them see their family. External professionals have provided positive feedback. They told us care staff support children to have daily routines, ensuring they are at the centre of decisions and plans about their life, and they are making positive progress.

- 3.7 **Environment** – Children live in a home which meets their needs. The home is clean and regularly redecorated. There are daily tasks for care staff to complete, which maintain good standards. Children make choices on the colour of their bedrooms, which are decorated, prior to them moving in. On arrival, children are supported to personalise their bedrooms further. They have adequate storage for belongings and a desk is available in their bedroom to complete schoolwork. Adaptations have been made to some children’s bedrooms to support their well-being. There are several areas to socialise or have privacy when needed. There are two lounges available which are warmly decorated and have a television and sofas. An education/games room is available to complete schoolwork and socialise.
- 3.8 **Leadership and Management** – There are effective governance arrangements in place which support the smooth operation of the service and ensures children receive good quality care and support. The registered manager is no longer overseeing the management of another service. They have the knowledge, experience and good oversight of the running of the home. The RI visits the home monthly, speaks with children and care staff, and reviews a selection of records. They identify actions and review if these have been achieved at follow up visits. Children can be confident there is thorough oversight of the service and their views are used to support continuous development and improvement of the care and support they receive. Reviews of the quality of care provided to children are carried out in line with regulation.

Key inspection findings for Harwood House:

- 3.9 Young people are supported to make choices and have control in their day-to-day life. They are provided with a range of activities and opportunities to achieve positive well-being.
- 3.10 **Care and support** – Is delivered to young people by those who know them best. Care staff are motivated and feedback from external professionals regarding the quality of care and support is positive. Plans provide care staff with guidance on how to meet young people’s needs and keep them safe, but these have not always been followed. Care and support is designed in consultation with those that know them best. The views of young people’s families and key professionals are sought when developing and reviewing personal plans. Young people are supported to make as many choices as possible and have control in their day-to-day life. We observed young people making choices in the activities they undertake. Young people receive care and support from skilled care staff who know them well. Personal plans provide care staff with the information they need to meet their needs. This includes information about what is important to young people, their likes and dislikes, and how best to prevent and respond to behaviours which challenge. Risk assessments are detailed giving clear guidance to care staff. External professionals have provided positive feedback on the care and support delivered to young people. They told us they regularly undertake unannounced visits and have no concerns. They told us *‘Care staff are always positive, motivated and care a great deal about the well-being of young people’*. They regularly receive feedback from young people’s families, who are happy with the communication and care and support delivered.
- 3.11 **Environment** - Young people live in an environment which is safe, clean and meets their needs. There are clear arrangements in place for the oversight and quality assurance systems which drive forward improvements. Care staff feel supported

through regular supervision and training. Young people live in a home which supports them to achieve positive well-being. Care staff photographs are on display as you enter the home. This helps young people to know who will be working with them. There are two lounge/dining room areas on the ground floor which young people use to socialise with care staff, watch television, enjoy meals, complete activities and relax. These are decorated warmly, with photographs of young people completing activities on display. Each young person has a dedicated space which is personalised for them and includes sensory toys. Each communal space has adequate seating and has been adapted to meet the needs of young people. The kitchen has all the equipment required to meet young people's needs. The garden is secure and has a range of activities which young people can use, including sensory equipment and a paddling pool in warmer weather. Young people enjoy using this space.

- 3.12 **Wellbeing** – Young people receiving care and support are non-verbal but are supported to make choices and have their views understood. Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) are used to communicate with young people and their choices are listened to. Young people's families are regularly involved in discussing and planning the care and support delivered. Young people are supported to manage their money. They have savings and make choices on how they want to spend their pocket money. Young people do things which matter to them and have consistent predictable routines. They attend education. Care staff work closely with education professionals to develop and review plans to ensure young people reach their full potential. Young people are supported to develop independence skills and do things which make them happy. They engage in activities daily which support positive well-being. This includes going on well-being walks, the cinema, trips to castles, meals out, trips to farms and a range of sensory activities. Care staff have recently supported young people to go on their first holiday abroad to Disneyland. Photographs are regularly taken of young people completing activities to keep as memories of their time living at the home.
- 3.13 **Leadership and Management** – The service provider has clear arrangements for the oversight and governance of the service. The Responsible Individual (RI) visits the service every month and completes checks as required by regulation. This includes observing young people, speaking with care staff and reviewing a section of records. Actions are identified with timescales and reviewed at subsequent visits. Quality of care reviews are carried out every six months and take into consideration actions identified during internal audits. These consider how young people's voices are heard, if they are happy and supported, safe and protected from abuse and neglect and how the environment supports their well-being. Feedback is sought from families and external professionals. Feedback regarding the RI is positive. Care staff told us, the RI is approachable, knowledgeable and provides support to drive forward improvements. The RI acts, when incidents occur, to ensure lessons are learnt and steps are taken to reduce risks.

Key inspection findings for Golygfa'r Dolydd:

- 3.14 **Wellbeing** – Children receive a written guide to the service outlining their rights and entitlements, with a version suitable for all ages being developed. Care staff discuss the guide with children to ensure understanding, and children have regular visits from advocates. Their views are considered in house meetings where they plan meals, activities, and discuss goals. However, children's involvement in developing and reviewing their personal plans is limited.

- 3.15 Children are encouraged to stay healthy and active through home-cooked meals, sports, and activities like horse riding and bike rides. They also have access to local leisure facilities, which positively impacts their well-being. While children are supported to attend education, disruptions occur, and the manager works with professionals to resolve these issues. A token economy system is used to incentivise positive behaviour. Children maintain connections with important people in their lives, and memory books capture their time at the service. Care staff, trained in safeguarding, collaborate with behaviour analysts who assess children's needs and provide guidance.
- 3.16 Care and Support – The admissions procedure is followed with decisions made by the Manager and Responsible Individual (RI) on whether the service can meet children's needs, based on provider assessments. However, children are staying longer than outlined in the Statement of Purpose (SOP) due to placement shortages, and assessments are not updated to reflect the impact of these extended stays. Staff raised concerns that delays may hinder children's progress, and managing the needs of up to seven children is challenging. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.
- 3.17 An external behavioural analyst supports the emergency provision weekly, while an onsite analyst assesses children in the assessment provision, identifying work to reduce risks and plan for future placements. Weekly therapeutic sessions complement the support provided by care staff, who follow the Trauma Reparative Intervention Behaviour Evidence (TRIBE) care model, focusing on positive reinforcement. Although care staff report warm interactions and high standards, some question the model's effectiveness, and additional training is being provided. Some areas of improvement noted were there are inconsistencies in incident recordings, and children do not receive debriefs after incidents. Personal plans lack children's input and do not reflect progress in achieving outcomes, though improvements are planned. Care staff are not consistently documenting that they have read and signed important guidance, and medication records need more detail on safe administration.
- 3.18 **Environment** – Golygfa'r Dolydd is a large, two-story building with separate emergency and assessment provisions. The emergency provision is on the ground floor, and the first floor includes a large office space, occasionally used for parties and activities. The assessment provision spans two floors. While some efforts have been made to soften the service's appearance, it lacks the domestic feel of a nurturing home. Children noted the environment does not feel like a home, with communal seating being uncomfortable, and the staff entrance resembling a commercial building.
- 3.19 Children have personalised bedrooms with ensuite facilities, along with a bath in the assessment provision. Each kitchen and lounge is well-equipped, but there is insufficient space for all children and staff to eat together. Efforts to make the space more welcoming include paintings in the corridors, a games room, and therapy room. The outdoor areas feature a BBQ, pizza oven, garden huts for storing belongings, raised beds for gardening, and an outdoor games court.
- 3.20 **Leadership and Management** – The Responsible Individual (RI) plans to review the Statement of Purpose (SOP) to ensure the service provided aligns with its description. Monthly meetings have been introduced by the Local Authority to prevent delays in children's care planning. While most staff fitness checks are completed before

starting work, there is a need to ensure full employment histories are recorded. Although agency staff have been used, the provider has mitigated risks by using consistent personnel, and most positions are now filled, with no permanent staff leaving since the service opened.

- 3.21 Staff receive thorough inductions, core training, and shadow shifts, with opportunities for ongoing learning and development. Most staff are registered with Social Care Wales and are working toward relevant qualifications. The RI regularly visits the service, engages with staff and children, and reviews records. Actions are taken to address improvements, with findings feeding into the quality-of-care review.

Areas of Improvement and Priority Actions Notices

- 3.22 It is pleasing to note that the inspections did not result in the issue of any Priority Action Notices across services and that previous areas of improvements had been addressed in all cases.

- 3.23 The report for Sunny Bank did not identify any Priority Action Notices and previous Areas for Improvement had been actioned.

However, there was one area of improvement highlighted during this visit –

Area for improvement – Sunny Bank	
Regulation	Summary
35	<p>The service provider does not have a rigorous selection and vetting system in place to enable them to make a decision on the appointment or rejection of all staff. This includes the information set out in schedule 1 of the Regulations.</p> <p><i>This new area for improvement was due to our staff files not being available on the day of the inspection, this has since been addressed with HR and a much more robust process is in place for our own staff files.</i></p>

- 3.24 The report for Harwood House did not identify any Priority Action Notices and noted that previous actions for non-compliance with Regulation 12 (Policies and procedures) had been completed.

It did however identify new Areas for Improvement these being: -

Area for improvement – Harwood House	
Regulation	Summary
21	Young people have not received care and support in accordance with their personal plan.

	<i>The RI has put measures in place to review and monitor that care plans are delivered in line with identified need.</i>
35	<p>The service provider has not ensured agency staff have the same checks as permanently employed staff and have evidence to demonstrate checks have been undertaken. This may include confirmation and checklists supplied by any agency.</p> <p><i>The RI has put in place checklists to ensure the relevant checks are in place and the agencies the service works with has also been advised of expectations.</i></p>

3.25 The report for Golygfa'r Dolydd (Meadow's View) did not identify any Priority Action Notices.

It did however identify new Areas for Improvement these being: -

Area for improvement – Golygfa'r Dolydd	
Regulation	Summary
18	<p>The service provider has not reviewed the provider assessment when timescales for children's stays have been extended, to ensure the service remains suitable. Childrens views have not been considered as part of the provider assessment.</p> <p><i>Impact risk assessments and provider assessments have been updated moving forward to mitigate this area of improvement.</i></p>
21	<p>Childrens views are not included in the planning and review of their care and support. Reviews of plans, do not consider the progress being made by children to achieve their personal outcomes.</p> <p><i>Child friendly personal plans were in development at the time of inspection which CIW were made aware of and are now in operation.</i></p>
43	<p>The service provider must ensure the premises, facilities and equipment are suitable for the service and meet children's needs.</p> <p><i>An ongoing review of the internal environment has been made and will continue for the future linked to individual children's needs.</i></p>
6	<p>The service provider has not ensured the service is provided with sufficient care, competence and skill, having regard to the statement of purpose.</p> <p><i>A review of the SOP is taking place and will be concluded by March 2025.</i></p>

3.26 The areas for improvement are being addressed and achievement of the actions is monitored through the Council's regulatory tracker which is reported to Governance and Audit Committee and through the Corporate Performance Assessment process.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

4.2 Despite no equality impact assessment being conducted the information contained in the report positively describes support being made available to those providing care.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The implementation of the duties and responsibilities under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA), 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.

5.2 The Well-being 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 - Develop sustainable residential care strategies that provide stability and continuity for children and young people, ensuring their long-term well-being and successful transitions into adulthood.
- Prevention – Implement proactive measures to reduce placement disruptions, focusing on early intervention and support for children and families to avoid crises requiring emergency placements.
- Integration – Strengthen the coordination between residential services, education, health, and other agencies to ensure seamless delivery of care that addresses the holistic needs of children accessing our services.
- Collaboration – Foster partnerships with external professionals, families, and communities to enhance the quality of care and ensure children's voices are central to all decisions affecting their lives.
- Involvement – Ensure children's voices are at the heart of all decision-making processes by engaging them meaningfully in the planning, reviewing, and

development of their care plans. Actively seek their feedback and input to shape services that reflect their needs, wishes, and aspirations, empowering them to have a direct role in decisions that affect their lives.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 It is a regulatory requirement that BCBC's Safeguarding Policy meets Part 8 of The Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017 which is to ensure service providers have in place the mechanisms to safeguard vulnerable individuals to whom they provide care and support. This includes arrangements that:

- Support vulnerable individuals using the service;
- Support and underpin staff knowledge, understanding and skill in identifying risks and action to take where abuse, neglect or improper treatment is suspected or identified; and
- Ensure the service provider works collaboratively with partners to prevent and take action where abuse, neglect or improper treatment is suspected or identified.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 Corporate Parenting Committee is recommended to note the outcome of the CIW Inspections of the Council's Regulated Services in Children and Families Service.

Background documents

None

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6

Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING
Date of Meeting:	10 JANUARY 2025
Report Title:	A 3 YEAR SUSTAINABILITY PLAN TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES IN BRIDGEND MID YEAR (2) REPORT ON PROGRESS - 2024/25
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING
Responsible Officer:	LAURA KINSEY HEAD OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules
Executive Summary:	The 3-year sustainability plan to improve outcomes for children and families in Bridgend was approved by Council in the autumn of 2023. This report outlines progress against milestones and actions within the year 2 action plan for improvement in Children's Social Care Services within Bridgend County Borough Council between April – September 2024.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the service progress against milestones identified for improvement within the sustainability plan to improve outcomes for Children and Family Services in Bridgend 2024/25 as at the end of September 2024. The Action Plan is found at **Appendix 1**.

2. Background

- 2.1 Although the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement check which took place in November 2022, recognised progress since the 'serious concerns' that were identified in the Performance Evaluation Inspection undertaken in May 2022, it was clear that services for children and families continued to require improvement to be sustainable and achieve better outcomes for children and families.

- 2.2 The analysis undertaken by the Institute of Public Care (IPC) identified that a number of things needed to change for sustainable improvement including:
- Sufficiency of workforce.
 - A changed operating model between prevention (early help) and statutory services which provides an integrated service in which more children and families with complexity of need are supported preventatively where families are motivated and consent to change.
 - Continued focus on implementing the Signs of Safety and Wellbeing model of practice.
 - Commissioning the right quantum and quality of service.
 - Enhanced working in partnership with professionals and partners and co-productively with children and families
- 2.3 Therefore, the 3-year sustainability plan sets out a sustainable future operating model for Children's Social Care in Bridgend, which is based on:
- A realistic assessment of the staffing capacity and associated financial investment required to meet demand to the required standards.
 - Lessons learnt from a strong evidence base, experience and best practice elsewhere in terms of the Council-wide service, workforce and financial strategy to best improve outcomes for children and families in a way which reduces the need for statutory intervention.
- 2.4 The 3-year sustainability plan is the Council's response to the expert analysis on how Bridgend achieves sustainable improvement in outcomes for children and families. The action plan is split into 7 overarching themes. Each theme has a number of objectives and associated actions with timescales attached.

3. Current situation/ proposal

- 3.1 The Action Plan is split into the following key themes:
- Hearing and acting on the voice of children and families
 - Securing a stable well-supported, motivated and permanent workforce
 - Improving Practice
 - Maximising the impact of services and interventions
 - A more effective response to families with complex needs
 - Seamless working with partners
 - Better intelligence and information systems
- 3.2 Each theme identifies a number of key actions. The Action Plan identifies key progress to date, and the associated Red, Amber, Yellow, Green, Grey (RAYG) status.
- 3.3 A number of key metrics are included in the Action Plan associated with the relevant theme.

3.4 Of the 42 actions in the plan for this period 18 have been completed and we are making good progress with 7. However, although significant work and progress has been made within the service and with key partners including across the regional footprint, a number of areas are still not fully implemented and/or embedded. Those we would categorise as only achieving adequate or unsatisfactory progress include the following areas:

- Further strengthening an embedding of the Quality Assurance (QA) framework
- Finalising our parents charter and achieving more consistent engagement with children and young people across agencies
- Review of our supervision policy and underpinning systems
- Development of the updated commissioning strategy for family support services
- Work with regional partners to ensure sufficient quantity and quality of provision for children whose needs cannot be met in standard residential or fostering provision
- Work with Foster Wales to recruit enough foster carers within the local authority and enhance the support offer to carers
- The risk to being able to deliver social care services safely if a replacement system is not fully implemented in a timely way

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 A summary of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment is listed below:

Involvement	There has been detailed engagement in the development of this plan from key stakeholders including children and families, workforce, Welsh Government and partners.
Long term	The plan sets out to identify the long-term structures and plans for children and families over a 3 year period.
Prevention	To prevent challenges and issues that have arisen in Children's Social Care (CSC) over recent years and provide greater safeguarding and support to children and young people across Bridgend County Borough.
Integration	The plan sets out more integrated support arrangements for children and families with a range of partners who work to support children and families in Bridgend.

Collaboration	The plan identifies areas where improvements to working collaboratively with a range of partners and working regionally can benefit the lives of children and families within Bridgend County Borough.
---------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 There is no impact or link to Bridgend County Borough Council’s climate change aspirations as a result of this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 This 3-year sustainability plan outlines and proposes changes, reflecting expert advice, which are required to maintain our statutory safeguarding accountabilities. Implementation of the plan will ensure effective safeguarding arrangements and support the wellbeing of care experienced children (CEC) for whom the Council is corporate parent. The elements of the plan are based on a robust evidence base of what works in safeguarding, protecting, and improving outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The 3-year sustainability plan to improve outcomes for Children and Family Services in Bridgend was approved by Council on 20th September 2023, with a budget virement of £1 million approved for Children’s Services and the additional use of up to £2.5 million of earmarked reserves whilst a more permanent funding solution was sought.
- 8.2 Council approved £2.5 million as the balance of the £3.5 million budget pressure on the 28th February 2024 as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28, £2 million for Social Services and Well-being and £500k for Education and Family Support.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 The Committee is required to note and make comment on the progress made by Children’s Social Care Services against the milestones identified in the Action Plan.

Background documents

None

Bridgend County Borough Council
Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate, Children’s Social Care Service
Think Family – A 3-year Plan to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families in Bridgend
Action Plan – Year 2 2024-25 (with metrics) Updated November 24

RAYG STATUS	
RED	Unsatisfactory
AMBER	Adequate
YELLOW	Good
GREEN	Excellent
GREY	Completed

THEME 1: Hearing and acting on the voice of children and families

OBJECTIVES:

- **Work with children and families in a co-productive way based on mutual respect and an emphasis on strengths.**
- **Have better arrangements in place which enable all staff to work in this way.**
- **Ensure that all staff can take account of the experience and perspective of children and families they work with.**

YEAR 2: 2024-25

REF.	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS	RAYG
------	--------	-----------	-------------	----------	------

Y2/1/01	Implement the advocacy, engagement, and involvement framework.	March 24	GM Case Man & Transition/Corporate Parenting Officer (CPO)	Young people forum established, meets regularly. Care Experienced Children (CEC) have opportunity to have their voices heard and express wishes and feelings and to be involved in shaping service delivery. Further opportunities for engagement will be developed by CPO and GM. Strategic framework in place and continues to run.	Completed
Y2/1/02 (CPA Ref:1.1.5.1 & 1.1.6.2)	Apply the revised Quality Assurance (QA) framework	Dec 24	QA Officer/Policy Officer	An internal audit of our Quality Assurance Framework and its effectiveness was undertaken in July 2024. The auditors were reasonably assured, identifying some key strengths and areas for improvement. Internal audit outcome action plan will be implemented; a wider review of the QA framework will commence and particularly focus on wider activity that is needed in addition to case file audits.	
Y2/1/03	Develop a Corporate Parenting Strategy which is led by the children and young people for whom the Council is their corporate parent, ensuring all parts of the Council and partner agencies understand what matters to care experienced children and young people.	March 24	GM Case Man & Transition/Corp Parenting Officer	Corporate Parenting Strategy was launched in April 2023	Completed

Y2/1/04 (CPA Ref:4.9.2.2)	Develop a parent's participation charter so the experience of the families who work with children's social care is understood and used enhanced practices and interventions	March 25	GM Case Man & Transition/Corp Parenting Officer	Work to develop the charter will commence by the corporate parenting officer. A draft version has been produced. Further work will be undertaken in partnership with TGP Cymru to develop a final version in March 25.		
Y2/1/05	Celebrate the achievements of our children and families with an annual celebration event.	March 24	GM Case Man & Transition/Corp orate Parenting Officer	First achievement event was held in Sept 2023. An education achievement event due to be held in the Spring of 24. Annual celebration events to be held thereafter.	Completed	
Y2/1/06 (CPA Ref:4.9.2.1)	Monitor Corporate Parenting Action Plan in relation to Priority 1 'having a voice'.	March 25	GM Case Man & Transition/Corp orate Parenting Officer	The action plan is monitored by the Corporate Parenting board which ongoing. The Corporate parenting officer is collating action plans for other partner agencies and as part of this work will ensure the voice of the child is included in the plans. Further discussion to take place at board in relation to action plans and data sets to inform the Annual report. Voice of child to be consistently captured as part of ongoing engagement.		
Reference	Metric Description	2023/24 Actual	Qtr 1 2024/25	Qtr 2 2024/25	Qtr 3 2024/25	2024/25 Actual
SSWB55	The percentage of eligible carers offered a carers assessment (to exceed 80%).	100%	100%	100%		
CH/042	The percentage of visits to children experiencing care which are timely (to exceed 80%).	85.31%	88.95%	86.80%		

CH/030	The percentage of visits to children on the child protection register which are timely (to exceed 80%).	86.77%	91.46%	86.39%		
CH/056	The total number of children during the year who received the Active Offer of advocacy.	71	18	TBC		
CH/057	The total number where an Independent Advocate was provided.	64	12	TBC		
CH/057 (repetition)	The number of children and young people who access independent advocacy to support their rights (to exceed 185).	64	12	TBC		
CA/011	The total number of contacts to statutory social services by young carers or professionals contacting the service on their behalf received during the year.	113	61	26		
CA/014	The total number of young carers needs assessments undertaken during the year.	94	31	31		
CA/017	The number of young carers with a support plan	0	0	0		

THEME 2: Securing a stable well-supported, motivated, and permanent workforce

OBJECTIVES:

- Improve staff terms and conditions so they are competitive with other Welsh local authorities.
- Get the right balance of skills and experience in our teams.
- Attract and recruit the most able staff to our service.

YEAR 2: 2024-25

REF.	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS	RAYG
------	--------	-----------	-------------	----------	------

Y2/2/01	Review skill mix in children's social care and develop a workforce plan for the optimal numbers of social workers, consultant social workers, social work support officers, social work assistants, social services practitioners, support officers, business support, other professionals such as mental health specialist workers, behaviour analysts.	April 24	Dep HoS/HoS	A review has been completed on operational and management arrangements of CSC. A restructure report has been submitted and once agreed will progress to implementation.	Completed
Y2/2/02 (CPA Ref:1.1.4.1)	Review impact of new structures skills mix and market supplements.	March 25	Dep HoS/HoS	<p>The Directorate wide workforce board has been established and will meet monthly to Monitor and oversee workforce performance data and analysis - understanding trends and themes with a focus on what is working well and areas for improvement in key areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Retention and recruitment o Agency usage o Workforce wellbeing including sickness rates o Disciplinary and resolutions o Workforce morale and wellbeing. <p>This will in turn enable the Board to oversee workforce planning for the social care and social worker workforce in Bridgend, through the development of comprehensive workforce plans which plan for future requirements through analysis of workforce data and evidence including age profile of the workforce,</p>	

				workforce turnover, workforce requirements, and career pathways.	
Y2/2/03 (CPA Ref:1.1.4.1)	Implement workforce plan. Review impact of 'Grow Our Own Social Work Programme'.	March 25	Workforce Development Manager SCDWP	Funding agreed for continuation of the 'Grow our own social worker' programme for the academic year 2024/25. 7 staff will be undertaking a social work degree through a combination of routes, which include traineeships and secondments. 6 staff seconded on to the BSc Social Work who qualified in June 2024 were appointed to social work posts, 4 within Childrens Social Care.	
Y2/2/04	Ensure timely and effective trauma-informed support to workforce including through effective line management support, peer support and timely access to specialist support.	March24	Corporate Human Resources	Support for staff is available and accessible when required, including access to specialist support.	Completed
Y2/2/05 (CPA Ref:1.1.4.1)	Continuously improve our recruitment processes, drawing on marketing expertise to enhance campaigns and ensure the most efficient selection processes.	March 25	Corporate Human Resources/Corporate Communications teams	The Directorate wide workforce board has been established and will meet monthly to Monitor and oversee workforce performance data and analysis - understanding trends and themes with a focus on what is working well and areas for improvement in key areas including: o Retention and recruitment o Agency usage o Workforce wellbeing including sickness rates o Disciplinary and resolutions o Workforce morale and wellbeing.	

				This will in turn enable the Board to oversee workforce planning for the social care and social worker workforce in Bridgend, through the development of comprehensive workforce plans which plan for future requirements through analysis of workforce data and evidence including age profile of the workforce, workforce turnover, workforce requirements, and career pathways.			
Reference	Metric Description	2023/24 Actual	Qtr 1 2024/25	Qtr 2 2024/25	Qtr 3 2024/25	2024/25 Actual	
	Reduce the proportion of social work staff on temporary or agency contracts (to below 20%).	27%	23%				
	A reduction in the proportion of posts which are unfilled or vacant at any one time	Childrens SW Trend Analysis Establishment Current Occupancy FTE Agency FTW	<u>21.6.24.</u> 175.10 136.80/78% 41/23%	<u>20.8.24</u> 175.10 136.13/78% 26/16%			
	The percentage of staff completing safeguarding awareness training (100%).	84.01%	85.63%				
	Increase in the level of positive staff feedback about working in Bridgend.	Waiting for results of Staff Survey					
	Reduction in the level of stress-related absences	Metric being developed with HR colleagues					

	Increase in the proportion of staff able to speak Welsh.	Metric being developed with HR colleagues				
	An increasingly equal opportunity, diverse and inclusive workforce as measured by annual HR survey	Metric being developed with HR colleagues				

THEME 3: Improving Practice

OBJECTIVES:

- Ensure that staff and partners are all working within a common 'Signs of Safety and Wellbeing' framework and that this is seen as a valuable approach.
- Successfully develop and disseminate clear guidance for managers and workers on key areas of practice including re-unification, learning from practice reviews and family group conferencing, strength-based reflective practice and supervision.
- Successfully develop and implement a framework for practice quality assurance.

YEAR 2: 2024-25

REF.	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS	RAYG
Y2/3/01 (CPA Ref:1.1.4.4, &1.1.6.3 & 1.1.6.4)	Delivery of the 'Signs of Safety' (SoS) Programme as planned across the service (in line with the principles and standards of any national model).	March 25	Principal Officer Transformation	Childrens Social Care continues to offer 'Back to Basics' training providing a foundation for strength-based practice within safeguarding. To date 178 Childrens Social Care staff have also attended two-day SofS Risk Assessment training and 141 have attended five-day SofS	

				<p>working with Families to develop safety plan training.</p> <p>In addition to this following the launch of the Signs of Safety strength-based model of practice in March 23.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency briefing workshops have taken place. • A Signs of Safety on-line padlet resource has been developed. • Signs of Safety Learning & Development Group established. • Signs of Safety Training Strategy and plan for 2024/25 is agreed • Signs of Safety Learning & Development Group meets monthly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several forms have been built, tested and are now live on WCCIS. • Consultant Social Worker has started in post. • Appreciative Inquiries have begun taking place with families. • Child Protection Case Conferences have returned face to face using SofS methodology. Parent/Carer surveys being completed following conferences. • Partner agency surveys being added to conference minutes when distributed. <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of Safety to continue to be discussed as part of Childrens Social 	
--	--	--	--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

				<p>Care Continuous Improvement Group (CIG) to ensure Team Mangers are aware of interim arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champions to attend CIG to share their good practice initiatives. • Weekly reflective sessions introduced to develop practice further and focus on depth of practice. • Quarterly Multi agency partner briefings to continue. • Consultant Social Worker to develop metrics to measure the good impact of the post. • Audit of Care and Support Assessments to be completed. 	
Y2/3/02	Delivery of a comprehensive ongoing training and development Programme to ensure effective and consistent implementation of the preferred strength-based model of social work practice.	Sept 24	Workforce Development Manager SCDWP	<p>Childrens Social Care continues to offer 'Back to Basics' training providing a foundation for strength-based practice within safeguarding. Following the launch of the Signs of Safety strength-based model of practice in March 23.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency briefing workshops have taken place. • A Signs of Safety on-line padlet resource has been developed. • Signs of Safety Learning & Development Group established. • Signs of Safety Training Strategy and plan for 2024/25 is agreed • Signs of Safety Learning & Development Group meets monthly. <p>Programme for 2024/25 includes:</p>	Completed

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Practice model – Adult Social Care and Childrens Social Care for newly qualified social workers and international workers. • 2-day introductory training • 5-day advanced training / 4-day condensed • Partnership workshops • Senior Management Team workshops. • Practice intensive workshops – specific teams • Development of e-learning (awareness level) package 	
Y2/3/03	Review the effectiveness of the framework to enable practitioners to make good judgement about the potential for safe reunifications with families for children who become care experienced.	March 25	GM Case Management & Transition/GM Placement & Provider Services	The Framework has been agreed and distributed and is part of discussions within the continuous improvement with Group with Team Managers to embed into practice across the local authority teams.	Completed
Y2/3/03	Ensure that learning from CPRs and other in-depth analysis is systematically embedded through learning, training and development and follow up quality assurance and review with partners.	March 24	Workforce Development Manager SCDWP		Completed
Y2/3/04 (CPA Ref:1.1.5.1, &1.1.6.2)	Ensure the effective implementation of the agreed quality assurance framework across the service.	March 25	Workforce Development Manager SCDWP/QA Officer	An internal audit of our Quality Assurance Framework and its effectiveness was undertaken in July 2024. The auditors were reasonably assured, identifying some key strengths and areas for improvement.	

				Internal audit outcome action plan will be implemented; a wider review of the QA framework will commence and particularly focus on wider activity that is needed in addition to case file audits.	
Y2/3/05	Review the implementation of the agreed quality assurance framework across the service.	March 25	Workforce Development Manager SCDWP/QA Officer	The internal audit between April – July 24 identified areas for improvement that are already underway through its “Reasonable Assurance” audit outcome, and this will underpin the imminent review of the QA Framework	
Y2/3/06	Review the implementation of the agreed supervision policy and whether it promotes strength based reflective supervision and focus on quality.	March 25	Workforce Development Manager SCDWP/QA Officer	Policy is scheduled for review February 2025. Business process for supervision and related quality assurance activities are to be included in the WCCIS replacement system.	
Y2/3/07	Undertake a review of integrated family support service and family group conferencing, arrangements within Bridgend with a view to determining if this whole family approach can be expanded for working with more families.	Sept 2024	GM Locality Hubs	Integrated family support service and family group conferencing in place	Completed
Y2/3/08	Monitor all Children Services contributions and responsibilities to the Corporate Parenting action plan.	Ongoing	GM Case Management and Transition	The mechanism is established for the CPO to feed into and embed into current and future strategic plans across the Directorate and this is therefore ongoing.	Completed
Y2/3/09	Provide quarterly reports to the Corporate Parenting Board	Ongoing	GM Case Man and Transition/Corporate Parenting	A rolling programme of multi-agency reporting, and key performance indicators is established, this will continue in line with the work plan.	Completed

		Officer/Performance Team Manager					
Reference	Metric Description	2023/24 Actual	Qtr 1 2024/25	Qtr 2 2024/25	Qtr 3 2024/25	2024/25 Actual	
	Overall compliance with the QA Framework will exceed 80%	Metric being developed					
	Metrics listed in section 4.6 concerned with numbers of contacts, referrals, interventions and court proceedings for children and young people.	As below	As below	As below	As below	As below	
	Positive evaluation of the impact of the Signs of Safety approach through staff feedback and formal evaluation.	Metric being developed					

THEME 4: Maximising the impact of services and interventions

OBJECTIVES:

- Review needs and services in key internal and commissioned service delivery areas to ensure they are operating cost effectively and drawing on latest evidence of impact.
- Ensure that where there are gaps in provision or emerging needs they are addressed.
- Ensure that we work closely and effectively with key partners to deliver these services.

YEAR 2: 2024-25

REF.	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS	RAYG
------	--------	-----------	-------------	----------	------

Y2/4/01	Implement the commissioning strategy for family support services and for children with disabilities.	March 25	Children's Commissioning and Sufficiency Lead	Commissioning Strategies have been developed for Children, Young people and Transition Services with priority areas identified. The Commissioning strategies cover a 5-year period setting out commissioning intentions for these services during this time	Completed
Y2/4/02 (CPA Ref:1.1.3.2)	Develop an updated commissioning strategy for family support services.	March 25	Dep H o S/ Children's Commissioning and Sufficiency Lead	The commissioning strategy is in development supported by IPC. Review and associated Commissioning strategy to be finalised.	
Y2/4/03 (CPA Ref:1.1.1.4)	Review family support and early help needs and trends and develop a development and delivery plan for these services.	Dec 24 and ongoing	HoS/Dep HoS	A new family support services manager has been appointed who will work with others to finalise the operating model. A commissioning strategy is being developed supported by IPC which will analyse needs for early help and edge of care services and set out commissioning priorities. Operating model review and associated commissioning strategy to be finalised	
Y2/4/04 (CPA Ref:1.1.7.3)	Work with national and regional partners through the National Fostering Framework to increase the	March 25	GM Placement and Provider Services	A dedicated recruitment officer in place to coordinate recruitment activities that are scheduled throughout the year with support from Foster Wales. Whilst there are increases in the numbers of assessments, we are not recruiting sufficient carers for a net gain of placements. A Fostering Board is being developed in order to enhance recruitment and retention of foster carers	

	numbers of Bridgend foster families, including Carers who have additional skills and experience in caring for children who would otherwise require residential care, or are transitioning from such provision.			<p>within BCBC alongside the ongoing work of foster Wales.</p> <p>A Regional Approach to the recruitment and support of parent and child carers has been drafted alongside 'Support Care', which aims to provide fostering support to children in the care of their family in order to prevent them from becoming care experienced. Both drafts will be subject to foster carer consultation prior to presentation to Cabinet for consideration. Additionally, we are seeking to enhance peer support to foster carers by adopting the Pioneer Carer scheme. This will increase the support available to carers by having a more targeted approach that utilises the skill sets of specific carers.</p>	
Y2/4/05 (CPA Ref:1.1.7.10)	Continue work with regional partners in Cwm Taf Morgannwg ensure there is sufficient quantity and quality of flexible provision for children who's needs cannot be met in standard	March 25	Childrens Commissioning and Sufficiency lead	<p>A Business Justification Case has been developed and approved by the relevant boards in respect of increasing capacity of provision in this area.</p> <p>Property has been identified for a multi-occupancy residential and offer accepted pending minister approval and planning. Search continues for the second property.</p>	

	residential or fostering provision.							
Y2/4/06 (CPA Ref:1.1.7.7)	Commission and implement a placement support service to ensure the right multi-agency therapeutic input for children, young people, and their carers.	March 25	GM Placements and Provider Services/ Childrens Commissioning and Sufficiency lead	Unable to secure an organisation to create the Placement support service, therefore an in-house service is being developed, however recruitment issues attached to funding limitations prevented the team from being progressed. An alternative local provider has been commissioned to deliver the services to families and a meeting is in placement with a clinical psychologist to discuss how they may support the local authority with placement stability.				
Reference	Metric Description	2023/24 Actual		Qtr 1 2024/25	Qtr 2 2024/25	Qtr 3 2024/25	2024/25 Actual	
CH/001	The number of contacts for children received by statutory social services during the year	11940		3168	3654			
CH/005a	The number of contacts and referrals where physical punishment by a parent or carer was a factor.	157		80	45			
CH/003	The percentage of children safeguarding referrals	99.69%		99.94%	99.92%			

	immediate response within 24 hours (to reach 100%)																																																
SSWB62	The percentage of child protection investigations in statutory timescales.	Establishing Baseline	Annual	Annual	Annual																																												
CH/007a	The total number of new assessments completed for children during the year where needs were only able to be met with a care and support plan, and where needs were able to be met by any other means.	Care & Support Plan – 614 Any other Means - 1018	C&S- 147 AOM -278	C&S- 80 AOM- 202	C&S- AOM -																																												
CH/019c	The number of reviews of care and support plans or support plans that were completed in time.	92.87%	94.38%	95.58%																																													
CH/015	The total number of children with a care and support plan.	1353	1422	1293																																													
CH/022	The total number of Section 47 Enquiries completed during the year that progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference.	376	87	40																																													
CH/023	The total number of children that were placed on the Child Protection Register by category.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category of Abuse</th> <th>2023/24</th> <th>Qtr1 2024/25</th> <th>Qtr2 2024/25</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>a) Neglect</td> <td>72</td> <td>15</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) Physical abuse</td> <td>100</td> <td>33</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) Sexual abuse</td> <td>20</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d) Emotional abuse</td> <td>65</td> <td>9</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e) Financial abuse</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f) Neglect and physical abuse</td> <td>41</td> <td>20</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g) Physical and sexual abuse</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>h) Neglect and sexual abuse</td> <td>20</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>i) Neglect, physical and sexual Abuse</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>328</td> <td>78</td> <td>32</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category of Abuse	2023/24	Qtr1 2024/25	Qtr2 2024/25	a) Neglect	72	15	3	b) Physical abuse	100	33	12	c) Sexual abuse	20	1	0	d) Emotional abuse	65	9	4	e) Financial abuse	0	0	0	f) Neglect and physical abuse	41	20	13	g) Physical and sexual abuse	10	0	0	h) Neglect and sexual abuse	20	0	0	i) Neglect, physical and sexual Abuse	0	0	0	Total	328	78	32			
Category of Abuse	2023/24	Qtr1 2024/25	Qtr2 2024/25																																														
a) Neglect	72	15	3																																														
b) Physical abuse	100	33	12																																														
c) Sexual abuse	20	1	0																																														
d) Emotional abuse	65	9	4																																														
e) Financial abuse	0	0	0																																														
f) Neglect and physical abuse	41	20	13																																														
g) Physical and sexual abuse	10	0	0																																														
h) Neglect and sexual abuse	20	0	0																																														
i) Neglect, physical and sexual Abuse	0	0	0																																														
Total	328	78	32																																														

CH/030	The total number of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year that were completed within approved timescales.	86.77%	86.57%	89.32%		
Local	The percentage of children on the CPR for more than 12 months (to be less than 14%)	8.47%	8.88%	N/A		
CH/037a	The number of children becoming looked after during the year.	84	20	15		
CH/040	The number of children receiving (S76) short breaks.	2	4	0		
CH/037b	The number of new episodes of children becoming looked after during the year.	86	20	15		
CH/047	The total number of children looked after who are placed within Wales, but outside of Bridgend.	78	76	73		
CH/046	The total number of children looked after who are not placed with parents, family or friends.	190	186	188		

CH/054b	The percentage of care leavers who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in 24 months since leaving care (to be above 65%).	57.69%	70%	75%																						
CH/052	The percentage care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year (to be less than 10%)	7.17%	1.80%	4%																						
CH/051	The total number of young people that required allocated a personal advisor during the year.	28	7	TBC																						
CH/031	The total number of reports of children who go missing during the year.	472	119	199																						
CH/034	The total number of reports of child exploitation received during the year by categories.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2023/24</th> <th>Q1</th> <th>Q2</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The total number of reports of child exploitation received during the year that were:</td> <td>118</td> <td>22</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>a) Child sexual exploitation</td> <td>76</td> <td>7</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) Child criminal exploitation</td> <td>48</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) Child trafficking</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						2023/24	Q1	Q2	The total number of reports of child exploitation received during the year that were:	118	22	17	a) Child sexual exploitation	76	7	3	b) Child criminal exploitation	48	13	14	c) Child trafficking	6	2	0
	2023/24	Q1	Q2																							
The total number of reports of child exploitation received during the year that were:	118	22	17																							
a) Child sexual exploitation	76	7	3																							
b) Child criminal exploitation	48	13	14																							
c) Child trafficking	6	2	0																							
CH/055	The number of young people leaving care who	7	2	0																						

move into a 'When I am Ready' placement.					
------------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

THEME 5: A more effective response to families with complex needs

OBJECTIVES:

- Reduce the proportion of children who experience safeguarding and care interventions and keep more children safely with their families.
- Respond more effectively to families who require support, particularly those with more complex or long-term problems.
- Improve the systems and processes which ensure that families get the right response at the right time.

YEAR 2: 2024-25

REF.	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS	RAYG
Y2/5/01	Implement revised integrated management arrangements.	April 24	HoS/Dep HoS	IPC completed a review of the current Early Help model, recommendations accepted by Corporate Management Board (CMB). Consultation has concluded followed by implementation in April 2024	Completed
Y2/5/02 (CPA Ref:1.1.1.2)	Review how whole system partners work most effectively together to improve outcomes for children and families, across the tiers of need, from universal to highly specialised. This will be based on best practice in Wales and ensure there is integrated working of all partners on a locality/ cluster footprint	Dec 24 and ongoing into 25/26	HoS/DepHoS	Ongoing review continues to be undertaken of Early Help following restructure and new referral pathways being developed and agreed with partners. This will inform how the front door operates through into statutory and non-statutory support. Investment into Early Help and Edge of Care has been completed.	

				IPC to complete review of front door arrangements. SPACE panel to be introduced.	
Y2/5/03	Redesign the websites and telephone routing systems	March 25	GM Safeguarding	New call system implemented and data capture system in place to inform us of demand and where calls are moving through the organisation.	Completed
Y2/5/04 (CPA Ref:1.1.1.3)	Develop and Implement arrangements for a single point of access for all children and family services and a single no wrong door process for families and professionals including schools.	Oct 24	Dep HoS	Staff are now collocated following restructure. Operating models and underpinning processes/panels to be finalised.	
Y2/5/05 (CPA Ref:1.1.8.2)	Offer a more extensive range of responses at level 3 of the continuum of need.	March 25 and ongoing into 25/26	Dep HoS	EH and Edge of Care became a part of SSWB 1 April 2024. Since this time, ongoing review of current referral process and practice has been undertaken. New referral processes have been agreed. A new model will be proposed in November 2024 with the aim of going live in March 25. This model will improve support for children and families on the cusp of becoming known to statutory services.	
Y2/5/06	Work with regional partners in Cwm Taf Morgannwg to ensure there is sufficient quantity and quality of flexible provision for children whose needs cannot be met in standard residential or fostering provision.		HoS	The regional children's board have agreed an ambition to develop a regional residential accommodation facility for children and young people with complex emotional wellbeing needs. To support this, three Project Managers are being sought to work with partners to develop facilities across CTM; one will focus on children's residential accommodation, and	

	Explore the potential for partnerships with the voluntary sector to manage and deliver services for families with complex needs.			the other two will be available to support the findings in the 10-year Regional Capital Strategy.				
				As above				
Y2/5/07 (CPA Ref:1.1.2.6)	Develop more flexible and effective use of national grants to address the needs of children and families with more complex needs.	March 25	Childrens commissioning and sufficiency lead / Dep H o S	Ongoing work to review grants and eligibility continues to be undertaken in partnership with the Central Grants Team To review spend on additional services to determine whether grant would have been eligible elsewhere within the system				
Y2/5/08	Implement the Direct payments operational guidance	March 25	GM Case Man & Transition	The policy is in place, and the project group meets every fortnight to progress implementation of the operational guidance. The operational guidance is now developed. There will be some final reviews by staff to consider the document before communicating to parents and carers some changes to the process. The intention is for the guidance to go live in November 2025.				
Reference		Metric Description		2023/24 Actual	Qtr 1 2024/25	Qtr 2 2024/25	Qtr 3 2024/25	2024/25 Actual
CH/039		A safe reduction of the number of care experienced children to below 374		370	368	359		
CH/026		A safe reduction of the number of the number of children on the child protection register to below 270.		189	169	125		

	Improvements in the attendance and attainment rates of children supported by early help and social care.	Metric being developed				
	Proportion of our expenditure spent on supporting families through early help, safeguarding, residential and fostering care experiences respectively.	Metric being developed				

THEME 6: Seamless working with partners

OBJECTIVES:

- To work more effectively with partners at operational service and strategic levels to agree shared priorities for service improvement and implement them.
- Ensure there is no wrong door for access to help and support in Bridgend

YEAR 2: 2024-25

REF.	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS	RAYG
Y2/6/01	Agree and implement a single Programme of shared priorities with partners for children in the County Borough.	March 2025	Dep HoS	Work has commenced on the development of multi-agency threshold guidance. This is intended to assist professionals identify where support for children and families is best placed and refer appropriately to these services. The timeline for go live is now March 2025, but this work will be ongoing and aligned to regional priorities, in particular, around placement sufficiency and reducing the number of children in care.	

Y2/6/02	Put arrangements in place to ensure that senior health, education, housing, NHS and partners work with children's social care services strategically and operationally to deliver the priorities in this plan.	April 2024	HoS/Dep HoS	IPC completed a review of the current EH model, recommendations accepted by CMB. Consultation has concluded with senior managers and phase 2 of the consultation is underway followed by implementation in April 2024	Completed
Y2/6/03	Building on the MASH partnership model, develop business cases for integrated multi-professional locality teams to meet the needs of children and families with care and support needs, children with disabilities and child protection needs including the integration of mental health professionals, substance misuse workers and specialist therapists	March 25	HoS/Dep Hos	Significant work will be required to achieve this milestone. The pressures in all partner agencies will make this challenging, however, the local authority is committed to developing integrated responses to reduce the level of statutory support being generated.	
Y2/6/04	Provide representation and resources to work collaboratively on multiagency workstreams to implement the Corporate Parenting action plan.	March 2024	GM Case Man & Transition/ Corporate Parenting Officer	There is representation on the corporate parenting board and sub-groups by Directorate officers. Work is underway with partners to ensure shard ownership of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.	Completed
Y2/6/05	Implement multi-agency exploitation strategy both regionally and pan Wales.	March 24	GM Locality Teams	The regional approach is currently being agreed, and a pan Wales exploitation exchange and best practice forum is being developed to support the work around exploitation.	Completed

THEME 7: Better intelligence and information systems

OBJECTIVES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the information that operational staff and managers are using is of the highest possible quality. • Ensure that information can be shared appropriately more often and more usefully with partners 					
YEAR 2: 2024-25					
REF.	ACTION	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS	RAYG
Y2/7/01	Agree strategy for longer-term use of information systems in Bridgend.	March 2025	Director/HoS/GM Business & Performance	<p>The Connecting Care Project is now moving at pace, with the Council working in a collaborative procurement arrangement with the Cwm Taf region, the Vale Of Glamorgan Council and 6 authorities from North Wales. The procurement phase commenced August 2024 and it is anticipated that contracts will be awarded to the preferred supplier(s) by 5th November 2024. Work to prepare for migration to the new system is ongoing with a focus on data validation and business process mapping. A paper is to be presented to Cabinet on 24th September to provide an update on the project and request authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing in consultation with the Chief Officer, Finance, Housing and Change and the Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services to accept the most economically advantageous tender received and to enter into a contract to mitigate the risks of failing to award a contract in line with the procurement timescales.</p> <p>The risk to being able to deliver social care services safely if a replacement system is not identified and fully implemented in time is high</p>	

				and this is now identified as a high corporate risk on the Authority's risk register.			
Y2/7/02	Continue to implement and improve live performance dashboards.	Ongoing	HoS/GM Business & Performance	Dashboards have been established broken down to team level to provide oversight and monitoring of services, these are reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of the service	Completed		
Reference	Metric Description	2023/24 Actual	Qtr 1 2024/25	Qtr 2 2024/25	Qtr 3 2024/25	2024/25 Actual	
	Improved satisfaction with information systems and infrastructure shown in staff surveys.	Metric developed being					
	Improved confidence of senior officers in the data, dashboards and reports from information systems as shown in annual evaluation and review	Metric developed being					