

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. Rhwch 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:** Thursday, 30 October 2025

Dear Councillor,

**SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
(FORMERLY SUBJECT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2)**

A meeting of the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Formerly Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2) will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 6 November 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 (including whipping declarations)

3 Approval of Minutes

5 - 14

To receive for approval the minutes of a meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 of the 11/09/2025 and the 25/09/2025

**By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £1.48 in printing costs**

4     Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2024/25 15 - 44

Invitees

Councillor Jane Gebbie - Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Claire Marchant - Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

Kelvin Barlow - Head of Adult Social Care

Laura Kinsey - Head of Children and Family Services

Raeanna Griffiths – Group Manager, IAA & Safeguarding

5     Community Hubs Strategy 45 - 54

Invitees

Councillor Jane Gebbie - Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Claire Marchant - Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

Sophie Moore – Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing

6     Conclusions and Recommendations

7     Forward Work Programme Update 55 - 74

8     Urgent Items

To consider any 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 by 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](mailto: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:

S Aspey

F D Bletsoe

S J Bletsoe

C Davies

S Easterbrook  
P Ford  
GC Haines  
D M Hughes  
RM James  
P W Jenkins  
W J Kendall  
M Lewis  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins  
R Williams

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (FORMERLY SUBJECT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2) HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor F D Bletsoe – Chairperson

S J Bletsoe

S Easterbrook

GC Haines

D M Hughes

Present Virtually

C Davies  
W J Kendall

P Ford  
M Lewis

RM James

P W Jenkins

Apologies for Absence

Councillor R Williams

Invitees:

Councillor Jane Gebbie

Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Claire Marchant  
Kelvin Barlow  
David Wright  
Sarah Tripp

Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing  
Head of Adult Social Care  
Deputy Head of Children and Family Services  
Compliments and Complaints Resolution Manager

Officers:

Jessica Mclellan  
Meryl Lawrence

Scrutiny Officer  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Declarations of Interest

RM James – Personal – Wife is the Chairperson of the Bridgend Fostering Panel

**41. Approval of Minutes**

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u>  That the minutes of the meeting of Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 9 July 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	11 September 2025

**42. Draft Social Services Annual report 2024-25**

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u>  The report was welcomed as an excellent picture of the service provision and in some areas, such as the workforce, for example, even excellence. The Committee wanted to pass on their thanks to Officers within the Directorate for the good work undertaken.  However, the Committee expressed concern regarding financial considerations, in particular, the reliance on grant funding and were keen that the Directorate maintain momentum to ensure sustainability of the level of excellence that it is reaching and striving towards within budgetary constraints.  Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member and Senior Officers, the Committee made the following recommendations and requests for additional information:  <b>Recommendations:</b>  1. Members were advised that the Early Intervention and Prevention Hub operates an answerphone service and returns calls within set timescales which allows them to have detailed and meaningful discussions to enable proportionate assessments and that there is an alternative number for
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	<p>emergencies. The Committee expressed concern that the information on the Council's website does not make this clear and <b>recommended</b> that the information relating to the Hub be updated to provide clarity for the public.</p> <p>2. The Committee <b>recommended</b> that correspondence be sent to the Welsh Government expressing the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The sustainability of service delivery which is often reliant on grant funding including short term funding when recurring funding is required, e.g. Elimination of Profit Grant Funding;</li> <li>b. Short notice of funding impacting on the Council's financial planning and implementation;</li> <li>c. That national policy commitments resulting from legislative changes should be fully funded both in terms of capital funding and ongoing revenue funding including a commitment to fund employer national insurance payments for individuals employed by agencies who provide services to the Council;</li> <li>d. The unavailability of all-Wales. comparative data.</li> </ul> <p><b>Requests for Additional Information:</b></p> <p>3. The Committee <b>requested</b> weekly costs for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Foster Placement and Residential Placement for a Care Experienced Child; and</li> <li>b. Residential Placement for an adult (including information regarding contributions from Health).</li> </ul> <p>4. The Committee <b>requested</b> sight of the Council's Fostering Strategy and welcomed the offer for this to be included as an Appendix to the <i>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025</i> report scheduled to the meeting of the Committee on 25 September 2025.</p> <p>5. The Committee <b>requested</b> that the <i>Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays</i> report presented to the Committee on 23 September 2024 to be circulated to Members of the Committee.</p> <p>6. The Committee requested a written briefing paper to better understand the proposed 'core and cluster' model of supported living for people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>7. The Committee <b>requested</b> an all-Member Briefing detailing the <i>Building Resilient and Co-ordinated Communities</i> programme and highlighting the role of the Local Community Connectors, Navigators and Co-ordinators.</p>
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	<p>8. The Committee queried how the Council is making the public aware of and encouraging them to utilise community-based services and requested that consideration be given to using the Council Communications team and social media to raise awareness.</p> <p>9. The Committee <b>requested</b> further information regarding the Australian 2.0 step care model relating to mental health referenced during the meeting.</p> <p>10. The Committee <b>requested</b> that future Annual Social Services Reports contain comparative data from comparable Welsh local authorities, where available.</p>
Date Decision Made	11 September 2025

**43. Social Services Representations and Complaints Annual Report 2024-25**

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member and Senior Officers, the Committee made the following requests for additional information:</p> <p>11. In relation to Table 4 – Complaint Themes, the Committee <b>requested</b> the number of complaints for each of the percentages shown.</p> <p>12. The Committee <b>requested</b> that future Annual Reports contain comparative data from comparable Welsh local authorities, where available.</p> <p>13. The Committee <b>requested</b> copies of the Accessible Complaints Information referred to in the Objectives section of the report and the Child-Friendly version that has been produced.</p>
Date Decision Made	11 September 2025



#### **Forward Work Programme Update**

Decision Made	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b></p> <p>The Committee approved the draft Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A subject to the inclusion of the recommendations below, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP would be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information together with those from the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Committee requested that the following items be added to their Forward Work Programme:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Future Arrangements for Advocacy for Adults and Children;</li><li>b. A closed session detailing confidential information presented to Social Services Improvement Board including anonymised live case studies.</li></ol></li><li>2. The Committee requested that Care Experienced Young People be invited to attend for the Support for Care Leavers report, when scheduled.</li></ol>
Date Decision Made	11 September 2025

#### **45. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	11 September 2025

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

The meeting closed at 14:03.

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (FORMERLY SUBJECT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2) HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 10:00**

**Present**

Councillor F D Bletsoe – Chairperson

S J Bletsoe

S Easterbrook

GC Haines

D M Hughes

**Present Virtually**

S Aspey

RM James

W J Kendall

M Lewis

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillors P Ford and R Williams

Suzanne Pile - Regulation Inspector – Care Inspectorate Wales

**Invitees**

Councillor Jane Gebbie

Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Claire Marchant

Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

Daniel Bolton

Group Manager - Provider Services

Alex Williams

Group Manager - Locality Hubs

Ben Anderson

Care Inspectorate Wales

**Officers:**

Jessica Mclellan

Scrutiny Officer

Meryl Lawrence

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Declarations of Interest

RM James – Personal – Wife is the Chairperson of the Bridgend Fostering Panel

**Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check of Childrens and Family Services June 2025**

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member, Senior Officers and Invitees, the Committee made the following recommendation and request for additional information:</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Committee discussed the regional operating arrangements of the Emergency Duty Team and were advised that the arrangement was to be reviewed exploring what constitutes emergency out of hours social work and to provide clarity to prospective callers of the appropriate service to contact when necessary. The Committee <b>recommended</b> that Members are engaged in the review for their views.</li> </ol> <p><b>Additional Information Requested</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The Committee discussed the resources required to implement the fostering aspects of the Action Plan and to recruit more in-house foster carers and <b>requested</b> a Briefing paper for all Members highlighting the importance of promoting becoming a foster carer for Bridgend.</li> </ol>
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

**47. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025**

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member, Senior Officers and Invitees, the Committee made the following recommendations and request for additional information:</p>
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	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The Committee <b>recommended</b> that the abbreviations and acronyms in the Foster Care Recruitment Strategy in Appendix 3 are removed or that a glossary be added to assist the Committee and the public.</li> <li>4. The Committee expressed concern regarding the impact on service delivery of the Directorate's reliance on grant funding and <b>recommended</b> that this be added to the topics for discussion at the Deep Dive Group and requested that a list of all grant funding the Directorate has received in the last financial year and a breakdown of which services are funded by which grants, and which are one-off grants and which are recurring be provided to the Group and Members of the Committee.</li> <li>5. Having discussed their concerns regarding the reliance on grant funding in the above point, the Committee <b>recommended</b> that consideration be given to a zero-based budgeting exercise being undertaken exploring the possibility of bringing the services or parts of the services supported by grant funding into the Directorate's core budget, where possible.</li> </ol> <p><b>Additional Information Requested</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. The Committee discussed the improvements made in relation to workforce and recruitment which has resulted in a substantial reduction in agency staff and an increase in newly recruited or qualified social workers being employed. The Committee were mindful that there is a period of supervision and training which requires time to embed and expressed concern that this could be impacting on consistency of practice identified by the Inspectorate and <b>requested</b> a written update be provided.</li> </ol>
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

**48. Information Report - Quarter 4 / Year End Performance 2024-25**

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the content of the Quarter 4 / Year End Performance 2024-25 report, the Corporate Performance Dashboard Quarter 4 2024-25 and the Regulatory Tracker updated for Quarter 4</p>
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	2024-25 within the remit of the Committee, had regard to the dashboard and the tracker when considering the Committee's Forward Work Programme report and made the following request for additional information:  7. The Committee expressed concern regarding the continued downward trend in relation to sickness absence and <b>requested</b> an update on any actions being taken to try and improve the position.
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

#### **49. Forward Work Programme Update**

Decision Made	<b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b>  That the Committee approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A subject to the inclusion of the recommendations below, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP as approved by the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee:  1. Review of the Regional Operating Model of the Emergency Duty Team; and 2. Review of the Fostering Service (in 9-12 months)
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

#### **50. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	None.
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

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

The meeting closed at 13:06.

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

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>6 NOVEMBER 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>ANNUAL CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2024/25</b>
<b>Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member</b>	<b>CLAIRE MARCHANT</b>  <b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING</b>  <b>COUNCILOR JANE GEBBIE</b> <b>DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>RAEANNA GRAINGER</b> <b>GROUP MANAGER SAFEGUARDING, MASH, IAA, IRO SERVICE</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>This report provides details of the corporate safeguarding activity undertaken for the year 2024-25 including data on the number of safeguarding referrals to both adults and children's services. It outlines the way in which Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) directorates have worked to safeguard its citizens along with information on future planned work.</b>

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to provide the Committee with an overview of the Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report for 2024-25 for consideration and comment.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect. It is a corporate

responsibility for BCBC to safeguard vulnerable individuals from harm, abuse, and neglect.

- 2.2 Under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Section 7 refers to safeguarding and created new legislation against which the Council is required to function regarding safeguarding. It provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales. The Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report attached as **Appendix 1** provides details as to how the Council has performed against those statutory duties.

### **3. Current situation/ proposal**

- 3.1 The Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report includes details on:

- Adults Social Care
- Children and Family Services
- Education, Early Years and Young People
- Workforce
- Housing
- Partnership and Community Safety and Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
- Placement Sufficiency, Out of County Placements and Operating Without Registration (OWRs)
- Other areas of key focus

- 3.2 The report highlights the changes to both Adults and Children and Family Services operating models and restructures that have been completed. Referrals continue to be high across both services, however, this increased demand continues to be processed and managed successfully within compliance targets.

- 3.3 The report details information regarding the number of safeguarding referrals made to both adults and children's teams, including those where thresholds were not met. It provides information relating to the number of Adult Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) that have been applied for.

- 3.4 Provided in the report is information as to how many children have been placed on the Child Protection Register (CPR) throughout this time period, as well as providing information relating to how Public Law Outline (PLO) and Care Proceedings (CP) have been processed and supported.

- 3.5 The report contains details relating to concerns held by the Education, Early Years and Youth Services directorate relating to increasing rates of both Permanent and Fixed Term exclusions from schools, along with details of the number of children and young people that are Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS) and Electively Home Educated (EHE).

- 3.6 The report provides information relating to the new DBS process being followed in relation to DBS renewals and how HR/OD continue to provide workforce information to the Corporate Safeguarding Board, including data on training completion rates.



- 3.7 The report highlights the leveling off of numbers of people living in temporary accommodation, and where work has been completed to cross reference these individuals with the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate.
- 3.8 The report contains information relating to work completed by the Community Safety Partnership, including ASB diversionary activities, such as the successful 'Tackle After Dark' and 'Caerau Kicks' with the Ospreys and Cardiff City football club respectively.
- 3.9 Details of placement sufficiency, out of county placements and placements operating without registration are contained and discussed within the report as well as details relating to the work undertaken to support reductions and interventions for child exploitation.

#### **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. 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, on 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 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report,

Involvement	In the formation of this report, relevant officers from the Corporate Safeguarding Board, which is formed of officers and representatives from across the Council's directorates, have contributed to the final version.
Long term	This Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report provides an overview of the safeguarding activity from the previous year. This allows the Council to project what future safeguarding activity and requirements may be required of the Social Services and Wellbeing (SSWB) Directorate and thus provide additional safety to our most vulnerable individuals in Bridgend.
Prevention	The report highlights developments by the Directorate in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. These developments help the Council improve its

	safeguarding processes and responses to safeguarding matters and thus preventing the likelihood of additional harm coming to vulnerable individuals.
Integration	Safeguarding is a mandatory corporate training module for all to complete and to integrate the learning and understanding across the Council.
Collaboration	Work continues in collaboration with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Board (CTMSB), as well as multi-agency working with South Wales Police, social landlords, health colleagues, and the third sector.

## **6. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications as a result of this report.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 Details provided within the Annual Report on how staff are supported and continue to improve and strengthen safeguarding arrangements is a key theme throughout the Annual Report and remains a key priority for 2024/25. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all Council Directorates. With a view to promoting awareness of this and raising the profile of Safeguarding across the whole of the Council.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications from this report, the medium- and long-term sustainability of statutory services provided by the Council continue to present growing challenges on the Council to meet these responsibilities and deliver a balanced budget.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the 2024-25 Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report and provide any comments as necessary.

## **Background documents**

None

**Bridgend County Borough Council**  
**Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr**



[www.bridgend.gov.uk](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk)



# **Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report**

**2024-2025**

### 1. Introduction and Background:

The purpose of this report is to provide information relating to Bridgend County Borough Council's (the Council) performance regarding safeguarding vulnerable individuals across the services provided by the Council's directorates. This report sets out how each area has been performing regarding the following areas:

- Adult Social Care
- Children and Family Services
- Education, Early Years and Young People
- Workforce
- Housing
- Partnership and Community Safety and Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
- Placement Sufficiency, Out of County Placements and Operating Without Registration (OWRs)
- Other areas of key focus

Safeguarding all remains a key priority of all services provided by the Council with the focus being put on ensuring and protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, whilst enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

The implementation of Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014) (the act), set out responsibilities for Local Authorities and relevant partner agencies to work together to safeguard vulnerable individuals at risk. The Council forms a part of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board (CTMSB). For more details on the activity of CTMSB, it's annual report can be found [here](#).

### 2. Adult Social Care:

The last 12 months has seen the strengths based outcome focused practice model being embedded into everyday practice within Adult Social Care.

The three tier model of practice including the new Early Intervention and Prevention Hub (EIPH) front door has been fully implemented which has built on the strengths of those we support and identifies the right support at an early stage.

Within this Safeguarding team, a new consultation process has been identified in order to identify and appropriately support Adult at Risk referrals into the team, and to provide advice and guidance in order to make the best and correct decision. Processes have been identified to support the team in dealing with email consultations, Adult at Risk reports, Professional Concerns, requests for checks to be completed, and telephone contacts for consultation appropriately.

The Social Services Wellbeing Act 2014 (SSWBA) places a duty on all to report an "adult at risk". Local Authorities must make enquiries where it has reasonable cause to suspect that a person within its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there) is an adult at risk. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect the Local Authority has a duty to undertake section 126 safeguarding

enquiries. These should be completed within seven days and enquiries should be made to determine what actions may be required to support the adult at risk and any ongoing protection planning that may be required.

These enquiries should be person centered and ensure that the adult is consulted and spoken with to determine their understanding of the situation, and any support needs they may have, as well as considering potential risks. These additional duties placed on the Local Authority have resulted in a significant increase in the number of safeguarding enquiries being undertaken. This has resulted in increased numbers of citizens coming to the attention of the department.

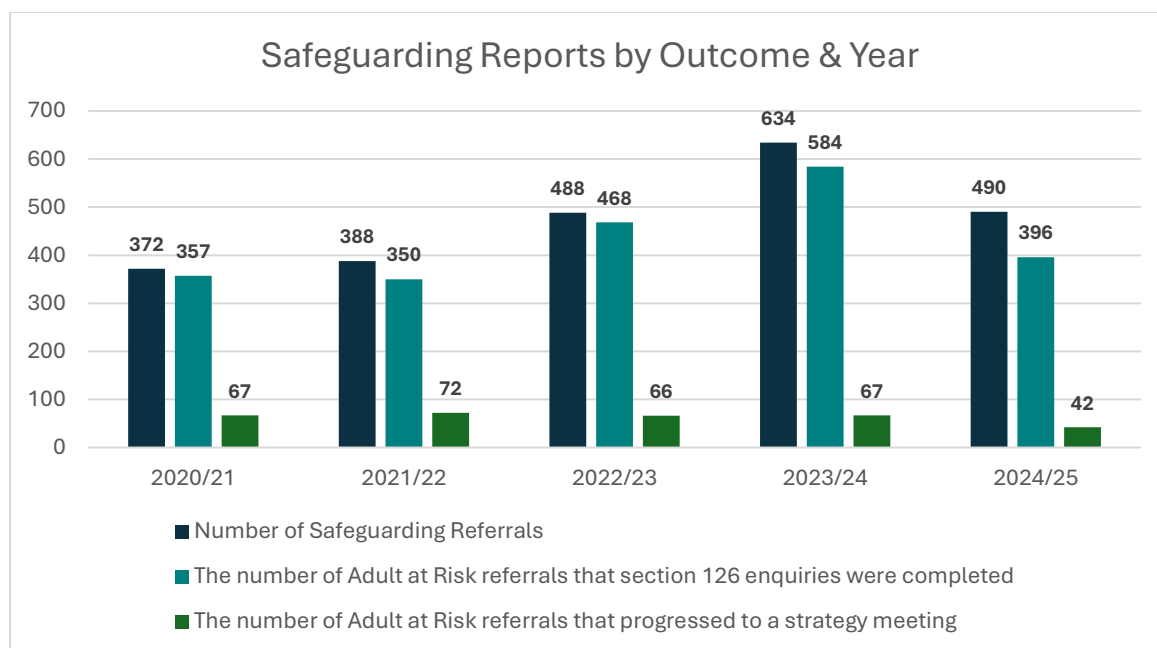
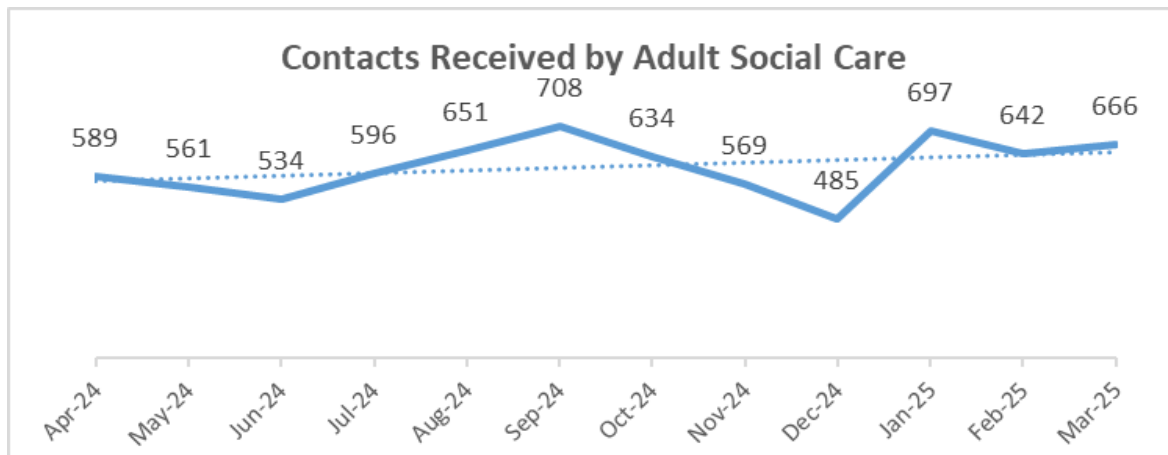


Table 1, above, shows comparative data from the previous 5 years of the number of safeguarding referrals received, as well as the number of referrals that have progressed through the relevant stages, demonstrating the reduction in numbers of contacts and subsequent enquiries that have been completed.

The total number of safeguarding referrals for adults shows that for the previous 4 years there was a consecutive increase in the number of referrals received, the past year saw a measurable decline. This follows the implementation of a new practice model and a focus on outcomes by the safeguarding team whilst addressing the safeguarding concerns. As noted above we have implemented a consultation process. Any consultation requests are considered, and the team aim to provide a response within the same day. Not only does the reduce inappropriate demand on our service, but it is more time efficient for service providers and prevents lengthy forms being completed/submitted when they are not needed. This also provides the opportunity for early advice and guidance.

With regards the contacts received into adult social care the services have remained at a consistent level across the year as can be seen from the below graph.



The following chart provides a breakdown of the category of abuse for adult safeguarding referrals by year, showing that neglect and physical abuse are consistently the highest categories for referral.

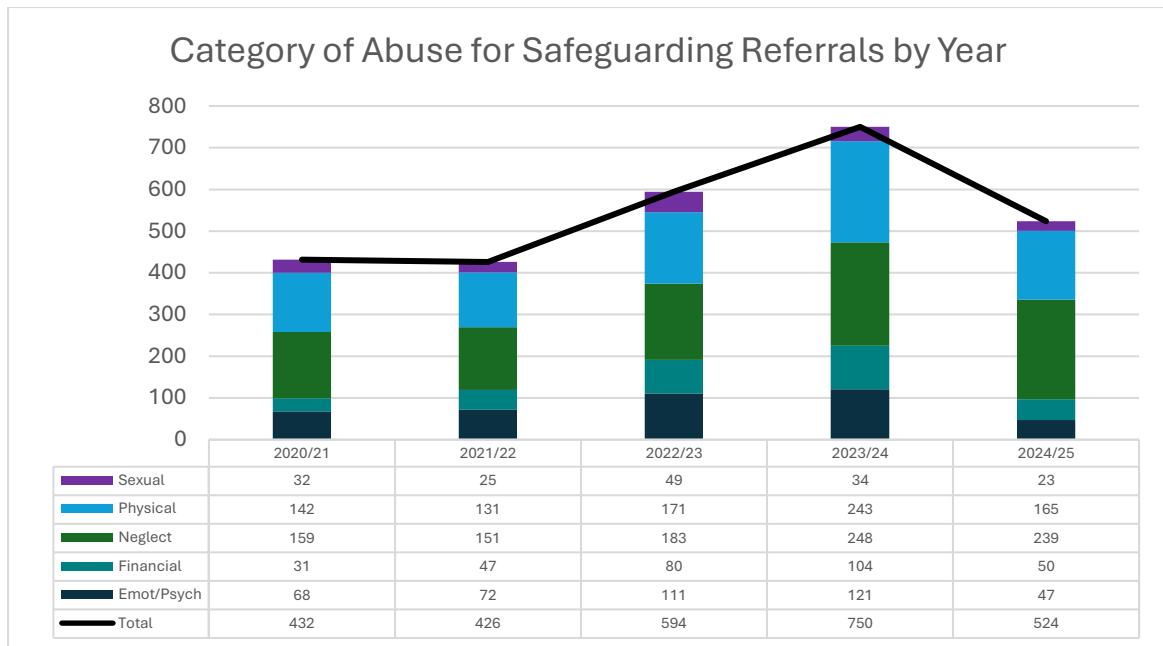
### Advocacy

Advocacy Support for Adult Safeguarding is provided by the Advocacy Support Cymru (ASC) Service.

Advocacy Support Cymru (ASC) is a registered charity based in Wales, and is a charitable organisation that prides itself on its independence and effective delivery of advocacy to people who find themselves experiencing mental health issues. Advocacy referrals are offered as part of the safeguarding process.

Advocacy gives a voice to people to make themselves heard. It is an essential process of supporting and enabling people to:

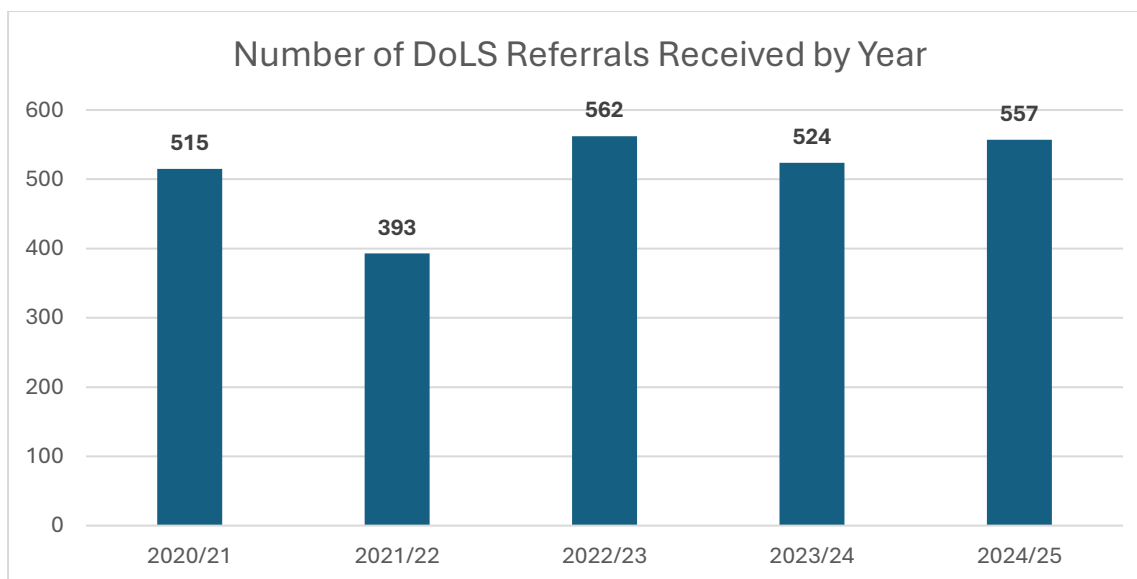
- Express their views and concerns.
- Access information and services.
- Understand and promote their rights and responsibilities.
- Explore choices and options



The number of initial professional abuse strategy meetings held in adult's services generally show a downward trend and reduction in numbers over the past 5 years as can be seen from the following graph. This is despite a slight increase in strategy meetings from 23/24. The highest referrer remains health. Over the last year 40% of allegations were substantiated, 13.3% were unsubstantiated and 26.7% are ongoing investigations.



Court of Protection Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) referrals across Adults Services have remained at a relatively consistent level.



### Adult Safeguarding case study

**Situation:** A referral was raised by the sister of a 36-year-old woman with a diagnosis of Down syndrome, reporting poor home conditions, limited food, and neglect. The mother was the main carer and prevented professionals from accessing the home to consider the concerns. Further concerns were that the individual appeared withdrawn and unclean and was prevented from seeing her. The mother subsequently withdrew her from day services, following the social worker meeting the women there without the mother's consent, increasing concerns of isolation and neglect.

**Task:** The Lead Coordinator's responsibility was to assess risk, ensure the individual's safety, and promote her rights and wellbeing in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, while managing significant barriers to engagement from the mother.

**Action:** S126 enquiries were completed and multi-agency professionals' meetings with police, day services, and legal services convened, which included formal strategy meetings as it was determined the adult was at risk as we could not obtain her views and wishes. We attempted to encourage engagement through announced and unannounced visits utilising the lead practitioner, joint visits with partner agencies, and maintained clear communication across professionals. When access was repeatedly denied, legal advice was sought regarding an Adult Protection and Support Order (APSO) to ensure all options to establish safety were considered. Alternative approaches were also explored, including a change of Lead Practitioner and a referral to the Local Community Connector (LCC), on the recommendation of the Authorised Officer for the APSO, recognising that relationship-based practice was key to engagement as mother had noted a mistrust of professionals.

**Result:** Through sustained multi-agency collaboration and persistence, a further social worker and the LCC achieved some positive engagement. The engagement was not however sustained, interrupted through unexpected leave of the LCC. Whilst further consideration for an APSO was discussed at Strategy, using this tool



prematurely would further isolate the adult at risk and erode any possibility of developing a working relationship in the future. After initial attempts to re-engage failed, a final attempt with the Lead Coordinator making an unannounced visit was made. Whilst there was initial resistance from mum, the adult at risk was seen safe and well, expressed her wishes to remain at home but also to increase social contact and future opportunities. Advocacy and community supports were put in place to promote her voice and autonomy. The case was appropriately closed to safeguarding, with continued oversight from the Peoples First Advocacy Service and LCC teams to ensure ongoing wellbeing and engagement. The services were advised to contact safeguarding should disengagement from mother resurface as the adult's views and wishes had been obtained. This illustrates how the person has remained the centre of all decision making and the efforts that workers have gone to ensure her voice is heard and to enable a positive outcome.

### **HMP Parc**

In April and May 2024 there was a cluster of deaths within the Secure Estate. A multi-agency response was provided to the escalating concerns which saw the Implementation of the working group. Its purpose was to have timely and effective involvement from agencies around any concerns within Parc Prison, to ensure robust support and monitoring through a safeguarding lens and within a multi-agency approach. More recently the group has expanded to consider the needs of the young offender's wing within Parc and whilst no concerns were identified it was felt that when considering safeguarding in parc, this should be approached holistically. The working group meeting will continue a quarterly basis and in addition to identifying any areas of concern it is also tracking the progress being made. It is noted that there have been no deaths from suicide or a result of substances since May 2024 highlighting the significant improvements that have been made. Safeguarding leads from all agencies in the prison form part of the working group and are committed to attendance. The working group chair and prison safeguarding manager provide regular updates are being received by the Regional Safeguarding board.

Within HMP PARC a Significant Attempts of Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Rapid Response meeting has been developed and implemented. This considers the needs of those who have engaged in a significant attempt and had it not been for an intervention there would be the risk of death. The response to this has been positive and is again shown the good practice within the prison highlighting the quick responses from prison staff in ensuring the prisoners are safeguarded and risk management plans agreed. Appropriate referrals are being made, and this is ensuring a bespoke response is being provided to those considered within the forum. The meeting is led by the service manager with a focus on prisoner wellbeing. Whilst this is still in its early days, patterns and themes have already highlighted which has enabled a targeted response.

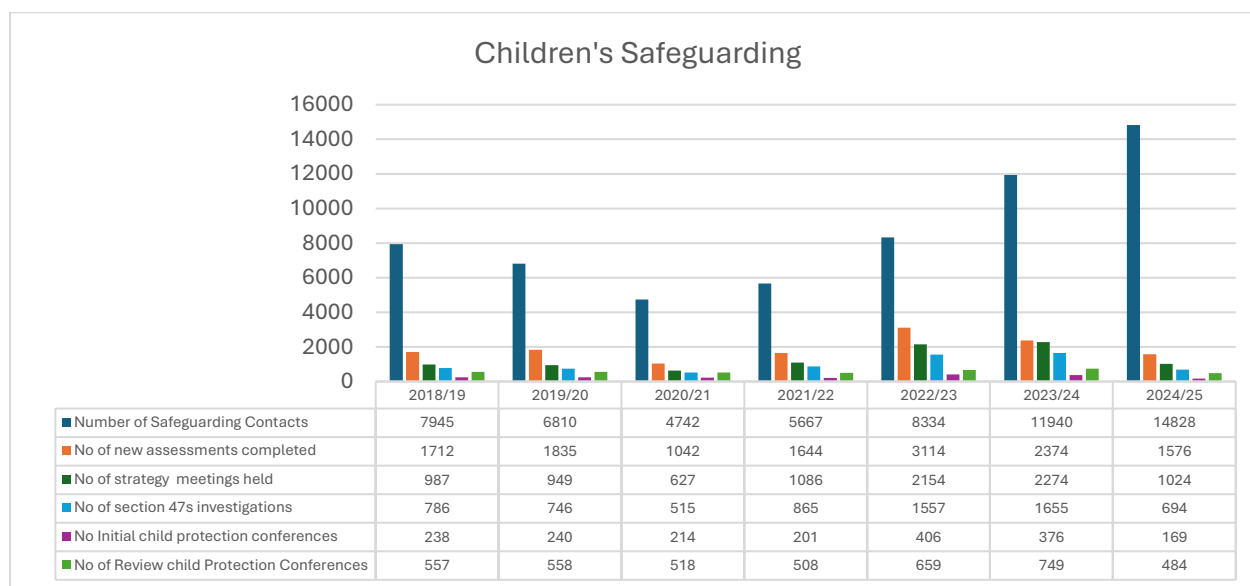
Adult Services continue to chair the community Significant Attempts of Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Rapid Response meeting, this considers all incomplete suicides

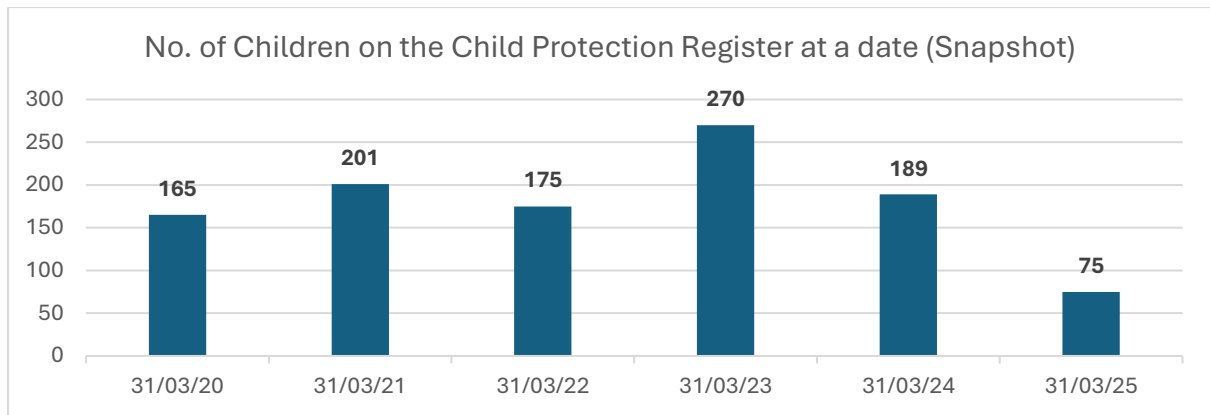
and seeks to share learning and prevent similar attempts in our community. Oth the community and prison forums will remain and key priority and focus going forward.

## 3. Children and Family Services

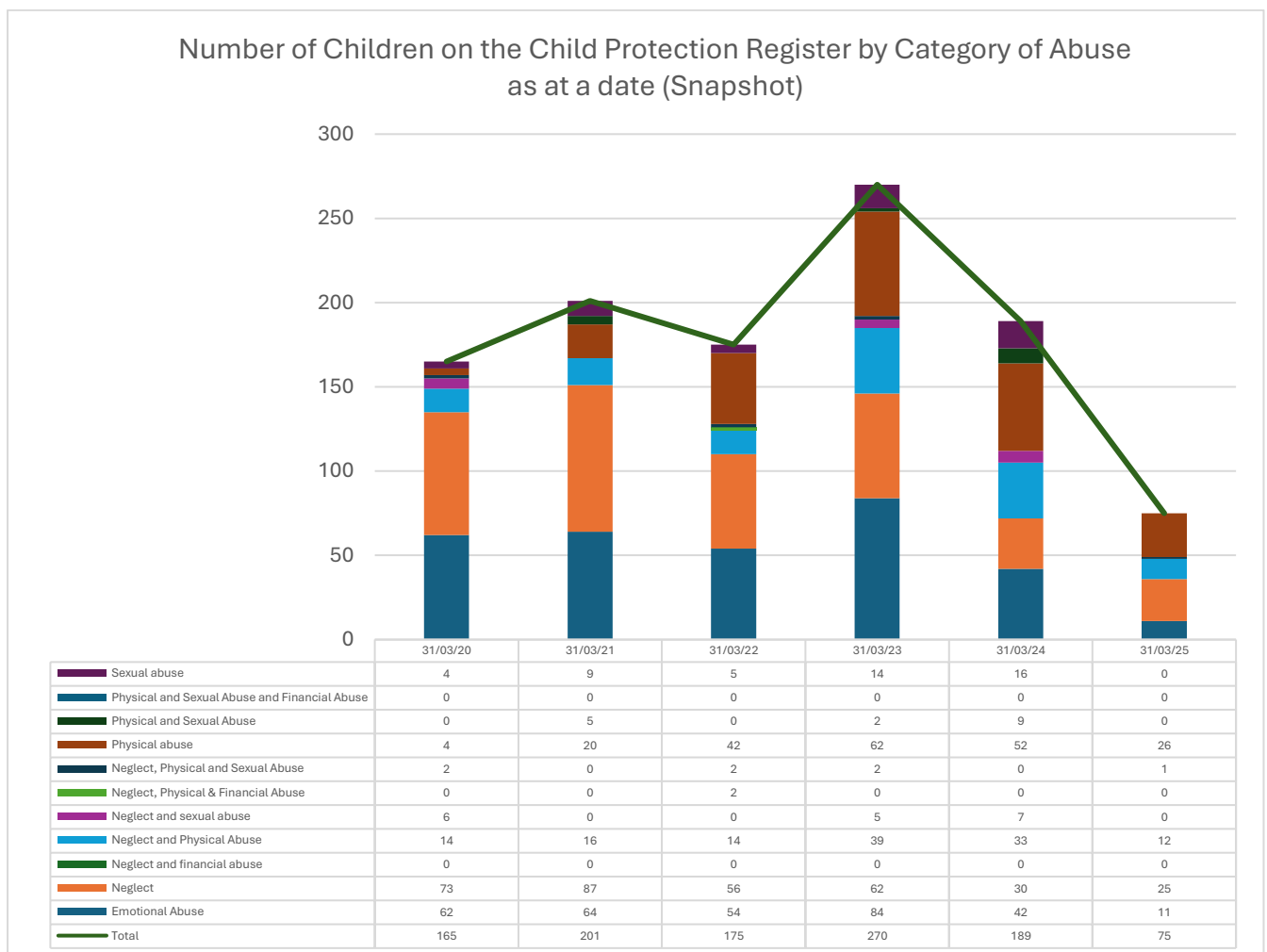
There has been an increase of 2888 referrals (24%) over the last 12 months, A proportion of these referrals will be Early Help referrals now being included in the data. The decrease in assessments is largely as a result of our Signs of Safety screening tool and Signs of Safety mapping which is assisting us in clearer decision making and also providing strengthened direction when further enquiries are being undertaken alongside our drive for early intervention via non statutory support for children and families.

A breakdown of the total contacts received by Children and Family Services can be seen in the table and graph below showing the comparative data from the past 5 years for the number of contacts received, assessments completed, strategy meetings held, section 47 safeguarding enquiries undertaken, number of initial child protection conferences and number of child protection review conferences held.





The following chart provides a breakdown of the reasons for registration on the Child Protection register by category, where across the past year physical abuse has been the primary reason for the registration with neglect and physical abuse the second most prevalent category.



The following table provides a breakdown of the numbers of children and young people registered on the Child Protection Register by age and by category of abuse.

Row Labels	Age Group					Total
	Under 1	1-4	5-9	10-15	16-18	
Emotional Abuse	2	1	3	5	0	11
Neglect	1	6	6	12	0	25
Neglect and Physical Abuse	2	4	4	2	0	12
Neglect, Physical and Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	1	0	1
Physical abuse	3	7	4	10	2	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>75</b>

## Child Protection Registration – Progress and Impact

Historically, the local authority has recorded disproportionately high numbers of children subject to Child Protection Registration (CPR) when compared with other Local Authorities. Over the past period, we have achieved a targeted and sustained reduction in these numbers through strengthened processes, improved practice, stable workforce, better integration with early help and prevention and a more proportionate approach to safeguarding intervention.

Significant progress has been made with partners to ensure that only those children who require statutory intervention become subject to the CPR. Updated forms, enhanced training, stable workforce and strengthened decision-making processes within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) have been instrumental in achieving this improvement. These measures have enabled more robust screening of referrals, ensuring that only cases requiring statutory intervention progress to a Care and Support Assessment or Strategy Discussion.

As a result, decision-making is now more informed and proportionate, reducing unnecessary Section 47 safeguarding enquiries and ensuring that resources are focused on children at highest risk. This approach prevents families from being escalated unnecessarily, thereby avoiding the emotional distress and practical disruption associated with child protection processes.

Further progress has been achieved through ‘What Matters’ conversations within MASH. These conversations explore families’ lived experiences and consider what support exists within their own networks and communities and preventative services to help them address challenges. By prioritising early help and community-based support, practitioners are able to provide proportionate responses rather than defaulting to statutory child protection pathways.

Where a Care and Support Assessment is required, practitioners are increasingly using tools such as mapping and family network meetings to ensure families and their wider support systems are actively involved in planning solutions. This inclusive approach promotes family ownership of change and reduces dependency on statutory services.

Strong and effective multi-agency partnership working continues to be a cornerstone of our approach. Improved coordination between partners ensures that support is holistic, reduces duplication, and allows children's needs to be met earlier. This has had a direct impact on CPR figures by preventing case drift and deterioration, reducing the need for children to become subject to child protection processes.

The Signs of Safety (SoS) practice framework underpins this transformation. It provides a strengths-based, solution-focused approach that helps practitioners and partners balance strengths, risks, and worries with clarity. This has enabled targeted and timely interventions, ensuring that safeguarding activity remains focused on what will make the most significant difference to child safety and wellbeing, while avoiding unnecessary registration.

There has also been a strong focus on workforce stability and professional development. Efforts to secure a permanent, experienced, and stable workforce have enhanced the quality and consistency of practice. Stable relationships between practitioners, children, and families foster greater trust and more sustainable progress. Experienced practitioners bring professional confidence to risk assessment and decision-making, while strengthened management oversight ensures consistency in thresholds, planning, and review activity.

Collectively, these improvements have created a more proportionate, family-focused, and strengths-based safeguarding system. The implementation of the Signs of Safety model has contributed significantly to the reduction in CPR figures by enabling children to be safeguarded effectively without over-reliance on registration.

Quality assurance and audit activity, including dip sampling, continue to monitor decision-making, identify learning themes, and promote good practice. These checks ensure that decisions remain safe, consistent, and reflective of best practice.

As a result of these combined efforts, the number of children subject to the CPR is now aligned with both regional and national (Welsh) averages. Ongoing audit and learning activity will continue to ensure that progress is sustained and that our safeguarding practice remains both effective and proportionate.

### **Advocacy:**

We continue to work with Tros Gynnal who provide our advocacy service. In this period they have worked with 199 children/young people. This has included 66 children via the Active Offer of advocacy and 133 for Issue Based Advocacy.

There has been an increase in Active Offer referrals from 27% to 50% this year which highlights an increased awareness of the Advocacy service.

133 children and young people accessed the Issue based advocacy, presenting with 172 issues. The number has decreased slightly by 8% compared to the previous year, whereby 145 accessed the service.

81 supported children/young people were care experienced, 29 were subject to child protection procedures, 13 were open to the LA on a care and support basis and 10

were care leavers over the age of 18. The most prevalent issue the child/young person wanted support with was 'family time, previously referred to as 'contact' and issues relating to their foster placement.

An advocate attended 59 meetings in the period to support the voice of the child/young person.

TGP continues to visit our Residential Homes to reach out to children and young people and ensure the children are aware of their service, their rights and how to refer themselves.

### Young Carers:

We continue to discharge our statutory responsibilities in regards to young carers.. We are currently working with education partners and the Education and Engagement Team to promote our offer and to ensure partners are aware that even without the co-ordinator post we still assess and provide a service for young carers.

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
No. of Young Carers Assessments Completed	111	94	96

This year 693 Young Carers in Bridgend have received a young carers ID card, the card offers recognition and wellbeing support opportunities to young carers. Many of these Young Carers have also received a Halo membership.

The Prevention and Well-Being Service continues to have a positive relationship with both primary and secondary schools, Bridgend College, Young Adult carers, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations and also a partnership with Bridgend Young Carer Network.

There is a growing group of Young Carers ambassadors within each comprehensive school, who are the voice of other young carers. Ambassadors have monthly meetings, and their role is enabling them to create a platform for Young Carers in Bridgend.

Further support provided this year has included Young Carers days at Margam Park And Bridgend Young Carer Network Days.

### Exploitation:

The Council remains committed to providing a coordinated, multi-agency response to children, young people and vulnerable adults who are currently at risk, or likely to be at risk of, Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, County Lines activity and gang affiliation.

To progress the multi-agency management of exploitation a panel has been established. The panels have been ongoing since June 2023. The impact of the

exploitation screening tools and multi-agency collaboration is already evident. The safeguarding exploitation senior social worker has continued to raise awareness of exploitation and supports teams and agencies to complete safety mapping tasks as well as developing the relationships between the multi-agency partners and in particular the development of the missing protocol and continues to support frontline practitioners in completing the exploitation screening tools.

The Regional Exploitation Pathway has now been implemented, and this will be reported on in next year's report.

Since June 2023, there have been 85 cases discussed at the Exploitation Prevention Panels and the panels have taken place monthly, apart from January 2024, June 2024 and September 2024.

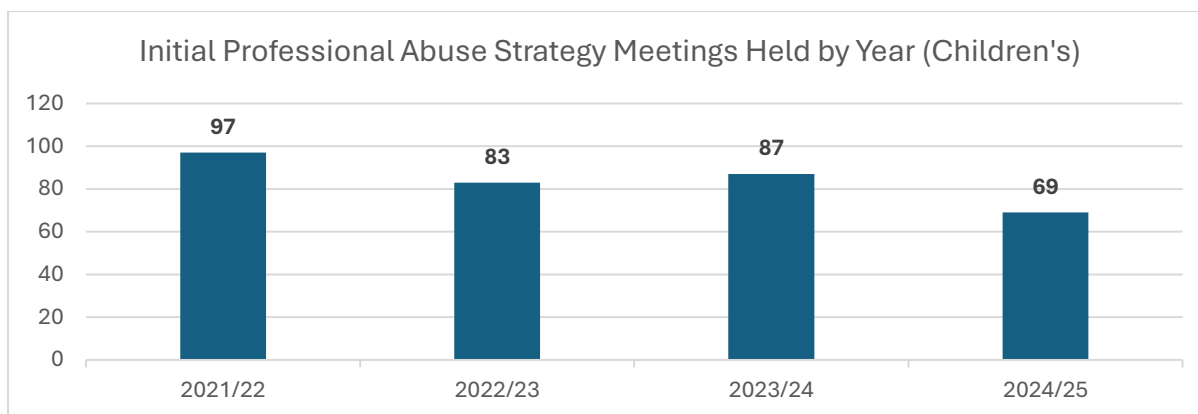
The multi-agency response panel consists of partnership agency attendees from:

- Police
- Youth Justice Service
- CAMHS
- Education Engagement Team
- Schools
- School Health Nurse
- Choices Programme
- Independent Child Trafficking Service
- BAROD
- Community Partnership Team
- Adult Services
- Health and Wellbeing Team
- Housing

Work continues to be completed to ensure and monitor the safety of vulnerable individuals to exploitation.

### **Professional Concerns:**

Across the past year, there were 69 Professional Abuse Strategy meetings held as shown by the below graph, which is a slight reduction on the previous two years. However there remains no current identifiable pattern due to monthly referral fluctuations. Professionals across education remain the dominant profession to see referrals from.



### Children's Case Study:

Rise is an Edge of Care service in Bridgend, Rise provides practical and emotional support, to women and their partners who have experienced the compulsory removal of a child from their care. Parents are supported for up to eighteen months and are given tailor-made help ranging from counselling to debt management.

Rise will give parents the chance to take control over their lives and break a destructive cycle that causes both them and their children deep trauma.

Below is written by two parents who were supported by Rise:

*There are no bad changes all positive, like the well-being walks just nice to get out and go for a walk, especially with our Rise support worker. You can also clear your head, if you're having a bad day, you can just go for a walk somewhere and even the sessions where we just sit and do a little bit of colouring, have a chat, have a cuppa. She's (Rise practitioner) helped us understand the judgement that we were given so it helped us work through all of our problems and issues that were raised. If we have any problems she will sit there and listen to us rant she's wicked, she's brilliant.*

*We are more confident to talk about certain situations especially with the social, yeah it's easier to open up and we have a better understanding of what's happened and what's going on.*

*I don't feel as anxious going out now because before I refused to leave the flat now what don't mind it as much. Yeah, most definitely giving you that little boost. For me, it is just getting out being with other people socialising, I'm a people person.*

*It's helped us understand it a bit more it was easier to talk about yeah specially with people who understand. Cause you never know who's going for the exact same thing. It's nice to have someone who can relate and knows what you are going through, you don't have to explain your feelings. Rise listens and she doesn't judge, she's just there to support and not tell us what we're doing wrong. I mean even if it is something that we're not doing 100% (Rise Practitioner) has a nice way of putting it without making you feel bad, It's like you realise and you recognise oh yeah I could have done it that way, that would have been a bit better. In a less judgemental way. Thanks to Rise it's*



*helped us loads, it's helped with my mental health, it's helped us understand what's happened, why it's happened and obviously helped us with what we needed to do.*

*Having Rise with us, because with everything we've been through it's just nice to be able to laugh with some people. After so long with like everything that's gone on, there's been a lot of heartache, tears and sadness so it's just nice to have a change and have a bit of a laugh.*

### 4. Education, Early Years and Youth Services:

The past school year has marked the highest number of permanent exclusions the directorate has ever recorded. The following table shows the trend of permanent exclusions across the past six years. Please note data is not available for 2019-2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	2018-2019	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	01/09/2025 to 22/10/2025
Primary	1	0	1	7	6	0
Secondary	7	9	13	23	26	7
Special	0	0	1	0	1	2
Total	8	9	15	30	33	9

This trend has continued into 2025-2026 school year, with nine permanent exclusions recorded to date. A review of permanent exclusions from the previous school year has been undertaken. Schools are increasingly managing complex situations both in number and severity. The Directorate's focus remains on supporting schools to address issues early, before they escalate.

The Directorate continues to undertake targeted work to understand the complexities of the situation, as well as to review and consider the systems implemented by other local authorities. The Directorate has implemented a Managed Move Panel held every fortnight. This process allows secondary schools to discuss and agree managed moves as well as consider 12-week revolving door provision at The Bridge.. To date there have been a total of eight managed moves agreed. One has succeeded, two have failed and the remaining have not yet hit the six-week review to conclude. It is an aim for a directory of local authority approved providers to be created that schools can utilise as alternative provisions to assist.

Moving forward, Cabinet have agreed a £1m non-recurring budget to support schools in reducing permanent exclusions. A proposal has been developed in partnership with schools and is due to be approved in November 2025.

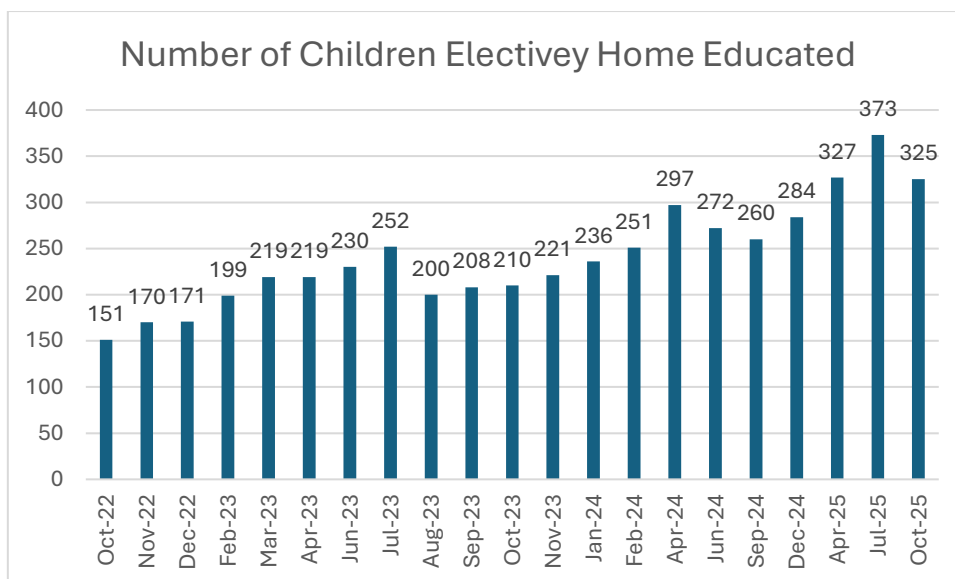
## APPENDIX 1

Following a similar trend, the number of fixed-term exclusions has consistently continued to rise over the past few years as shown in the table below. However, the total number of days lost has decreased compared to 2022/23.

		2021-2022 School Year	2022-2023 School Year	2023-2024 School Year	2024-2025 School Year	01/09/2025 until 17/10/2025
Primary	Number of exclusions	166	248	280	262	53
	Number of days lost	351.5	441	553	427	76
Secondary	Number of exclusions	1224	1355	1309	1440	255
	Number of days lost	2395	2574.5	2400.5	2252.5	346.5
Special	Number of exclusions	74	67	97	141	18
	Number of days lost	124.5	152.5	204.5	191.5	44.5
Total	Number of exclusions	1464	1670	1686	1843	326
	Number of days lost	2871	3168	3158	2871	467

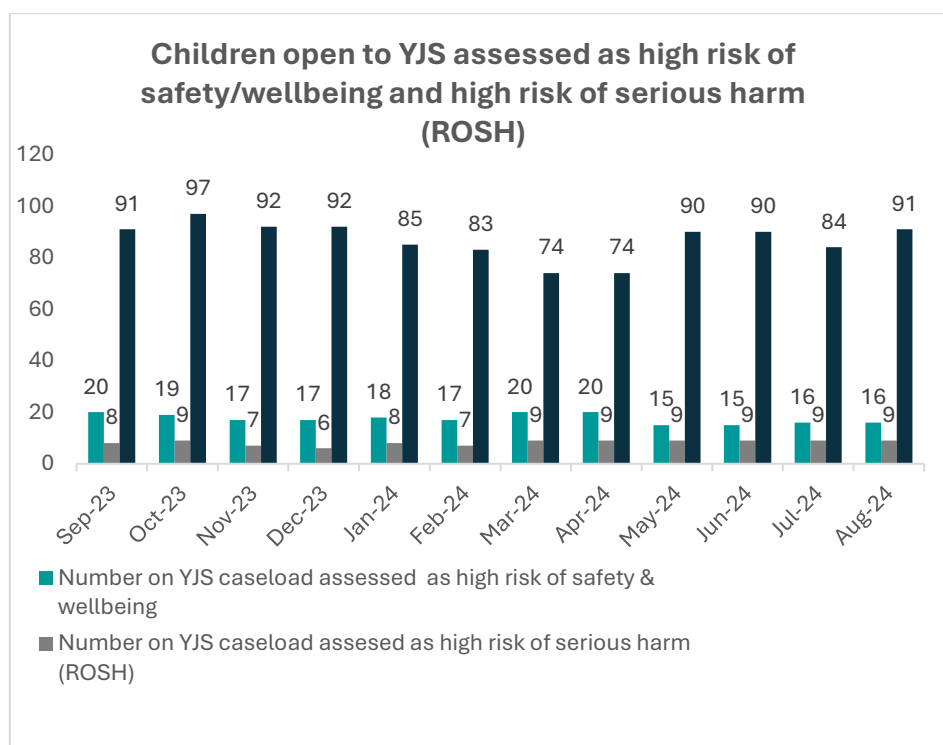
Having reviewed the last academic year this current academic year, emphasis will be placed on reviewing pastoral support plans and reduced timetables. This aims to ensure that reviews are conducted regularly, decisions are made in the best interests of the child, and safeguarding implications are appropriately considered when children are not in school. Attendance will remain a priority with specific initiatives and continual monitoring to improve persistent absenteeism figures across the local authority.

The number of children who are electively home educated has continued to increase with the current total standing as 325 as at the 23 October 2025. A seasonal decline is typically observed each June, corresponding to a number of learners reaching non statutory school age (on the last Friday in June). Allocated co-ordinators maintain ongoing efforts to meet with families annually to review the education provided, supplemented by coffee mornings and information sessions and attending workshops and events that our electively home educated learners are accessing. Nonetheless many families opt for online only engagement.

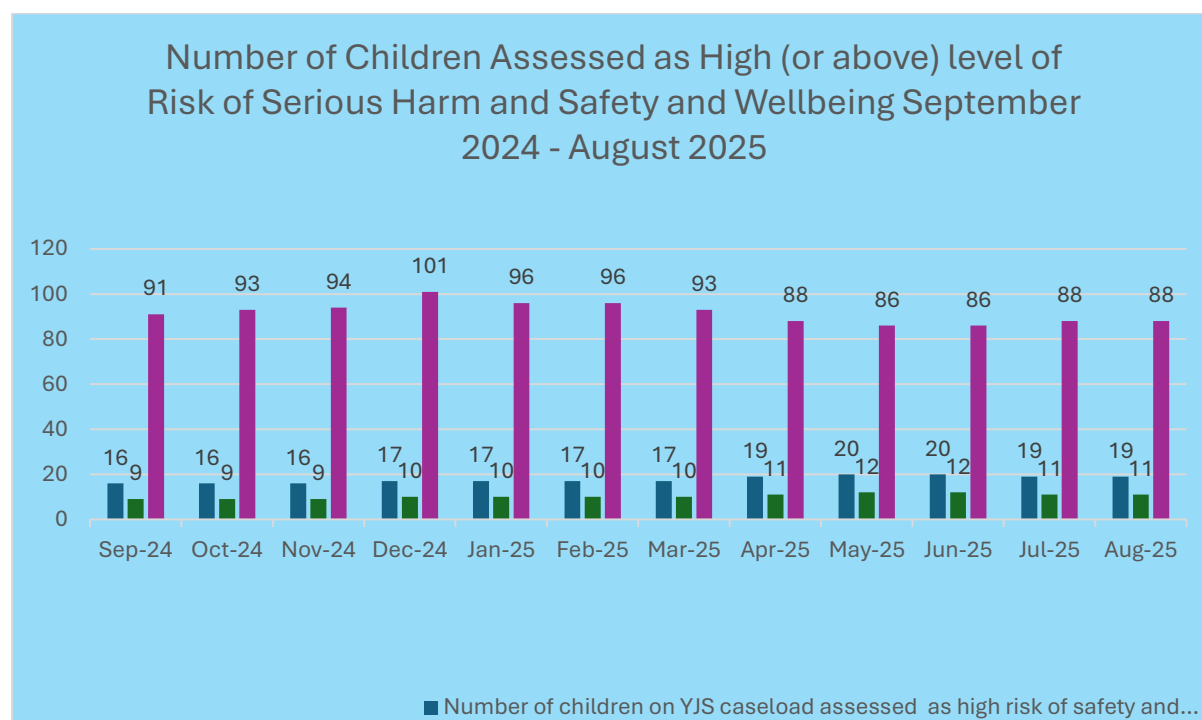


Findings from school safeguarding audits for the 2024-2025 school year highlight that 56 education settings have rated themselves as green and 4 education settings have rated themselves as amber. No school has rated itself as 'red' during the 2024-2025 school year. This represents an increase of two schools who are now rated as green having moved from amber. The school safeguarding audits are due to be completed by December 2025 for the 2025-2026 school year.

Across the year, the number of children and young people that have been open to the Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) has reduced. However, the numbers of children and young people on the BYJS caseload that are assessed as having a high risk to their safety and wellbeing, along with those assessed as being at a high risk of serious harm (ROSH) has increased.



Across the year, 2024 to 2025 the number of children and young people that have been open to the Bridgend Youth Justice Service (BYJS) has remained consistent to the previous year. The numbers of children and young people on the BYJS caseload that are assessed as having a high risk to their safety and wellbeing, along with those assessed as being at a high risk of serious harm (ROSH) has also remained consistent. With the highest percentage of children being high risk of serious harm as 23% of the caseload (20 children) and high risk of their safety and wellbeing being 14% of the caseload (12 children).



### 5. Workforce:

Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR/OD) provide workforce information to the Council's Safeguarding Board which meets monthly. The information includes a monthly update on the status of DBS checks and renewals as well as quarterly data relating to completion rates for safeguarding training.

An appropriate escalation process has been agreed by the Corporate Safeguarding Board to deal with non-completions and non-renewal of applications. Escalation reports are provided to Heads of Service and Group Managers for action.

In relation to Safeguarding e-learning, this is monitored by the Learning & Development team and escalation reports are issued to managers for action on a quarterly basis.

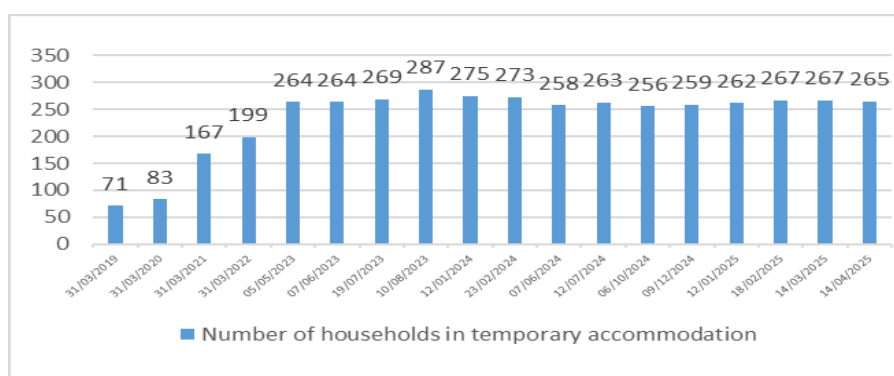
The Council also has a Recruitment and Selection Protocol to support managers when undertaking recruitment. It is expected that all managers who participate in recruitment complete the mandatory e-learning programme.

## 6. Housing:

The number of households in temporary accommodation has remained relatively stable over the year. Whilst numbers are consistent with recent years the pressure on this service represents a significant increase compared to pre Covid 19 pandemic levels. A number of measures are in place to both improve the suitability of and reduce the use of temporary accommodation.

In 2024-25, we saw a slight increase in care leavers experiencing homeless, although the figure is still lower than 2022/23. A corporate working group is set up to ensure close joint working between housing, Youth Support Services and social services. The council, to support care leavers agreed a motion to ensure care leavers and care-experienced children as a protected characteristic and therefore an attempt to help with some of the challenges faced by our care-experienced children.

Across the year, as demonstrated by the following graph, the number of individuals in temporary accommodation is stabilising, following a period of significant increase in recent years. Temporary Accommodation numbers are a corporate concern with numbers and costs having gone up a lot in recent years. Whilst we have had a slight decrease in numbers, the overall picture is still very high compared to previous years.



Analysis of these individuals in temporary accommodation has been undertaken and will continue to be undertaken at quarterly intervals in order to understand the numbers of individuals that are open and known to Adults and Children's Services. Since the initial set of analysis has been completed, the number has halved. More work is needed to understand this further. The sharp increase in temporary accommodation placements in 2020/21 was largely due to emergency legislative guidance, from Welsh Government, leading to increased statutory duties to provide temporary accommodation. This legislative change is now permanent and as such still impacting on the number of placements, however wider issues such as the cost of living crisis and the particularly challenging private rent market are significant factors, causing both increase in demand and making it harder for households to move on from temporary accommodation.

The following table shows the percentage of care leavers experiencing homelessness during the year. This is an accumulative total across the year and so the current position shown is only anticipated to rise across the year.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
The Percentage of care leavers who experience homelessness during the year	8.23%	10.27%	7.17%	9.96%

## **7. Partnership and Community Safety and Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)**

Bridgend Community Safety Partnership (CSP) involves various agencies from the public, private and voluntary sector that work together to reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime locally, in order to improve the quality of life and to create a safer living and working environment.

Over the last few years there has been an increased level of regional working at a Cwm Taf Morgannwg level, i.e. Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf. There is one regional Public Services Board (PSB), and one strategic Community Safety Partnership which is aligned to the PSB. Both Boards have a regional strategy, but a local delivery model to meet the needs of our communities. Recent reviews of the governance structures have also taken place.

Local community safety structures remain in place, including town centre anti-social behaviour (ASB) management meetings for Bridgend and Maesteg. These groups are well attended from a diverse range of agencies and meet to resolve problems. Successes over the last twelve months include working to address anti-social behaviour concerns in Caerau, bringing partners together to address 'lock outs' affecting waste and emergency vehicles and community clear up events in Pyle and Maesteg, the latter involving Parc Young Offenders Institute. We continue to utilise our youth outreach team to attend hot spots for youth ASB and engage in diversionary activities, such as the successful 'Tackle After Dark' and 'Caerau Kicks' with the Ospreys and Cardiff City football club respectively.

Reports of ASB are generally reducing which is positive, but we continue to encourage communities and residents to report their concerns to the Police through online reporting and 101. Our activities are undertaken using ASB as an evidence base, so this reporting is vital for us understanding and addressing the challenges seen in our communities and supporting these communities to feel safe and inclusive. Mobile CCTV cameras are deployed throughout Bridgend County Borough to address ASB concerns.

'Trecco Watch' continues to address concerns in Porthcawl, and associated family fun days are well attended. Work on the 'Clear, Hold, Build' initiative in Wildmill continues and the second Crimestoppers zone has been launched in Brynmenyn.

Assia domestic abuse service has undergone a restructure resulting in a second team leader post and opportunity for development from within the team. The service continues to offer diverse range of bespoke support to meet the wide range of service users. This includes a male victim IDVA, and there has been an increasing number of male victims coming forward to receive support. A male victim service user group is

working well. There is also a dedicated older persons independent domestic violence adviser (IDVA). The high quality of service provided has been recognised by Assia achieving 'Leading Lights' accreditation, making it the only council-led provision in Wales to hold the standard.

The following two graphs provide a current breakdown of the reasons for MARAC's being convened along with a breakdown of the age ranges of individuals involved, both victims and perpetrators.

Reported Circumstances	
Verbal	1
Ongoing Physical	4
Emotional	0
Sexual Assault	2
Strangulation	5
Assault/ABH	14
Stalking	8
Breach of Order	1
Criminal Damage	5
Harassment	5
Financial Abuse	0
Coercive Control	0
Threats	5

Note: Some PPNs record more than one offence for charging.

Age Range	Victim	Perp
0-18	4	4
19-25	8	8
26-30	9	9
31-40	11	10
41-50	3	4
51-60	3	4
61-70	4	2
71-80	2	0
81-90	1	1

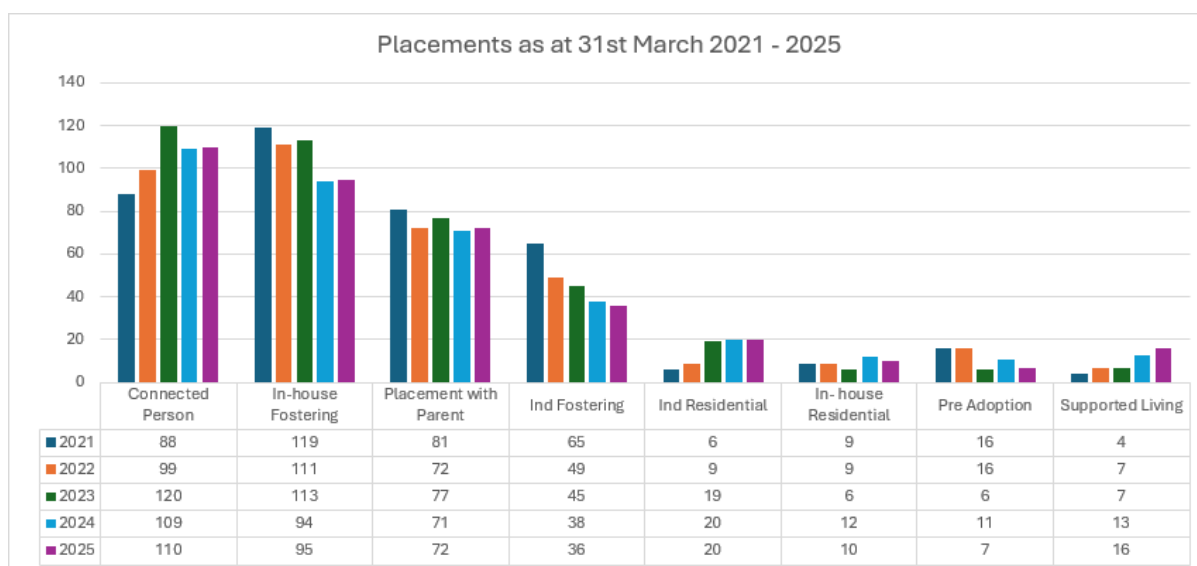
### 8. Placement Sufficiency, Out of County Placements and Operating Without Registration (OWRs)

In 2022, Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board undertook a Population Needs Assessment, and a Market Stability Report produced, to assess current and future needs which contributed to informing local and regional strategies. A Children, Young Person and Transition Commissioning Strategy 2023-2028 has been developed by the Council which outlines the plan on how Bridgend will address these challenges, with a key priority being placement sufficiency across fostering, residential and supported accommodation. In addition to this, the Council is required by Welsh Government to have a Placement Commissioning Strategy (PCS) which is also been drafted and pending cabinet approval. The PCS sets out how the Council will meet our

sufficiency duty. It focuses on assessing the needs of care experienced children and the demand and supply of placements for our children who are care experienced or leaving care to ensure there is a clear vision which underpins our approach to commissioning. It is intended to:

- Shape our internal services to maximise the benefits of public sector provision in terms of quality and value for money.
- To work in collaboration with public sector partners across the regional footprint where this offers identifiable benefits.
- To increase placement choice supplemental to our sufficiency duty to enable good matching.
- To co-produce outcomes focused services acknowledging that there are a range of different methods for strategic commissioning with multiple partners who may be co-operatives, charities, not for profit agencies.
- Identify and engage with commercial providers who will collaborate / convert to not-for-profit provision.

The following graph shows the position and trend of different types of placements utilised across Children and Family services in Bridgend.



We have seen a reduction in children becoming care experienced and targeted work has been undertaken to return children to their families where safe and appropriate. However, for children that cannot remain in the care of their parent/s it is pleasing to see a continued increase in the number of children being placed within their own family network (connected person placements) as opposed to traditional fostering arrangements.

A degree of placement movement is healthy, indicating a progression in care and support plans in a timely manner which is in the best interests of a child as their placement needs change. This planned movement is most likely in the first 6 to 12 months of a child becoming care experienced as their permanence plans are determined. Where a child's plan for permanence is to remain care experienced, long term stability is evidenced to deliver best outcomes. Lack of sufficiency and placement



choice can have dual impact on stability; a reduction in planned moves due to lack of appropriate match to move a child onto in their best interests, or an increase in unplanned and emergency moves where a child has been placed in an inappropriate match unable to meet their needs, resulting in disruption.

Placement sufficiency across the county borough remains an area of concern and will continue to be monitored and actioned. Further information relating to the ongoing work and plans to improve placement sufficiency can be found in the both Placement commissioning strategy (2025-2030) and Children, Young Person and Transition Commissioning Strategy 2023-2028 .

	As at 31/03/24	As at 31/03/25
Placements out of Bridgend but in Wales	77	73
Placements outside of Wales	12	12

35 of the children placed out of county currently, are residing in Foster Wales Bridgend placements with General and Connected Persons carers.

15 of these children are placed with their parents. 16 are placed with independent fostering providers.

Across the past year there has been work undertaken looking at the number of placements for children and young people who are placed outside the boundaries of Bridgend County Borough. It is an unfortunate position that most Local Authorities find themselves in regarding requiring placements outside their local authority borders but this can be related to a number of factors and not just solely availability of suitable placements.

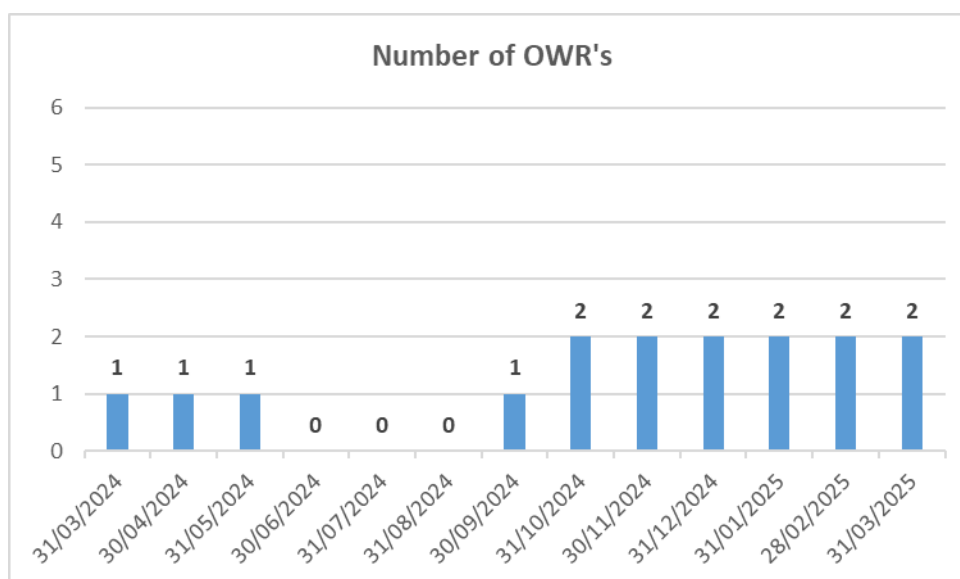
The needs of Children and Young People will dictate as to whether an Out of County Placement is required, this could be to manage and mitigate risks associated with the individual, or in order to access specialist support which is unavailable within the county borders. BCBC strives to provide and identify suitable placements for care experienced children and young people within its county borders, if individual children or young people do not meet the threshold for an out of county placement in order to mitigate risks or access specialist services, an out of county placement will only be used if there is no other possible placement available. As can be seen from the below graph, the number of Care Experienced Children and Young People placed outside of Bridgend but inside Wales, as well as those placed Outside Wales have reduced across the past year.

Operating Without Registration (OWR) placements are emergency placements made where the provider is not registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in accordance with legislation.

Local authorities place children within such arrangements when there is an overriding need for a placement and where there are no other options available. Such considerations are subject to the highest levels of scrutiny and can only be agreed by the Director of Social Services and Wellbeing or the Head of Children's Services in their absence. In all cases CIW are notified of the placement and regular updates provided evidencing the additional oversight in place to support and safeguard the child, and the continued search activity of the Placement Team to secure a registered provision. These arrangements can vary:

- In some cases, the local authority places children with a provider who is in the process of setting up a new residential home but has not secured registration at the point this is needed.
- A child may also be placed in a home that is rented by the local authority with the care and support team recruited from an agency who has experience of delivering residential care.

The following graph shows the trend of OWR placements from across the past year.



### 9. Priorities 2025/26

The level of demand continuing to be received into Children's Social Care continues to be exceptionally high. PPN's continue to be a main source of the high levels of demand. Meetings with South Wales Police have been held to look at how the demand can be best managed. Representations have been made to South Wales Police from Heads of Children Services in regards to the level of demand being created. A series of meeting are being held with South Wales Police to develop a consistent approach across the South Wales Police footprint.

Early Intervention and Prevention will continue to be key for the council in coming months and years. All directorates working together to maximise the resources available to support local communities developing their own resilience has to be a key approach the council takes forward to improve outcomes for the residents of Bridgend.

There continues to be challenges related to children in out of county residential placements. The Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2025 has come into effect and consideration will need to be given in the coming years as to how the local authority can develop resources that can meet the needs of those children within Bridgend.

We continue to work with Tros Gynnal to further develop Parental Advocacy, we have seen increases in parental advocacy in the Child Protection arena, we will be extending this to parents/carers who work with us on a Care and Support basis.

Work has been undertaken this year to progress the Safeguarding Self-assessment toolkit, this will be utilised across the council in the next financial year.

Our Digital System Replacement remains a priority for next year. The Council is facing a number of challenges and risks in relation to a new system for its current safeguarding and case management IT System. A new system has been procured but there is a significant amount of work to be undertaken to move from the current WCCIS system to the new Mosaic system. This is an area of significant concern which will be closely monitored corporately through our corporate risk register throughout 2025-26. Implementing a new digital system which will modernise the way our workforce practice, whilst we support them to prepare for social care being at the fore of the Council's digital strategy.

Supporting workforce wellbeing, retention and recruitment to continue to achieve a highly motivated, well supported skilled workforce.

Embedding our models of practice and using our quality assurance and learning and development programmes to address variation in quality.

Enhancing our prevention, early intervention and edge of care services to support more people to live independently and well and for children to live safely with their own families.

Embedding our operating models in adults, children and families and prevention and wellbeing which have early help and prevention at their core.

Hearing and acting upon the voice of the people we work with and alongside. Addressing deficits in the sufficiency of services, particularly children's not for profit residential and fostering services and supported living, shared lives and extra care for adults.

Understanding better current and future needs and projections for social services and wellbeing services, including the impact of new legislation and demographics, to align service and financial plans which mean we are as best placed as possible to achieve sustainable social services at a cost affordable to the Council.

Investing in partnerships with other public services, the third sector and community groups to improve outcomes for individuals and families in the most effective and cost-effective way.

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>6 NOVEMBER 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>COMMUNITY HUBS STRATEGY</b>
<b>Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member</b>	<b>CLAIRE MARCHANT</b>  <b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING</b>  <b>COUNCILOR JANE GEBBIE</b> <b>DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>SOPHIE MOORE</b> <b>GROUP MANAGER PREVENTION AND WELLBEING</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p><b>This report presents the recommendation of a strategic transformation programme to develop multi-agency community hubs across Bridgend County Borough. The proposed model aims to modernise community facilities, improve accessibility to services, and promote wellbeing through collaboration between the Council, health partners, leisure and cultural organisations, registered social landlord's and the voluntary sector.</b></p> <p><b>Public engagement undertaken in 2025 showed strong community support, with nearly 70% of respondents finding the concept of multi-agency community hubs appealing. Residents valued modern, flexible, and locally tailored services that combine traditional library functions with wider wellbeing, advice, and support provision.</b></p> <p><b>The strategy builds on successful models elsewhere in Wales and aligns with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership's Integrated Health and Care Hub programme. It promotes a "No Wrong Door" approach—ensuring that residents can access the right support through co-located or outreach services.</b></p> <p><b>A phased implementation is proposed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Phase 1: Needs assessment and engagement with communities and partners.</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Phase 2: Pilot hubs established in priority areas—particularly the Garw Valley, where there is significant unmet need.</b></li> <li>• <b>Phase 3: Evaluation and scaling to other localities.</b></li> <li>• <b>Phase 4: Development of a sustainability plan and long-term partnership arrangements.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>The programme supports the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, embedding long-term, preventative, and collaborative approaches. By integrating services, maximising existing assets, and aligning with regional health and care developments, this transformational strategy offers a sustainable and equitable model for community support, strengthening resilience, reducing inequalities, and improving wellbeing across Bridgend County Borough.</b></p>
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## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the recommendation of a strategic transformation programme to develop multi-agency community hubs across Bridgend County Borough.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 In May 2024, Cabinet considered a report on the future of the Council's partnership with Awen Cultural Trust. At that meeting Cabinet determined that public engagement should be undertaken to inform the development of a strategy for community hubs, library and cultural services. A further report on the strategy will be presented to the Committee at a later date.
- 2.2 The model of integrated community hubs is well-established across Welsh local authorities. These hubs bring together services such as libraries, housing and tenancy support, healthcare, early years provision, social support and employment assistance under one roof. Through inter-agency collaboration, hubs provide holistic, efficient and accessible support to communities in addition to fostering and promoting community involvement in order to achieve better outcomes for residents with particular emphasis on the vulnerable.
- 2.3 Cardiff City Council's community hub network demonstrates the positive impact that well-designed hubs can have on community life. Their latest Hubs and Libraries Strategy sets out ambitious plans for further development. A key lesson from Cardiff and elsewhere is that no two hubs are identical; each is tailored to the needs and demographics of its community. Some hubs have libraries as an anchor service, while others integrate leisure, youth or older people's services.
- 2.4 Several community facilities currently sit within the Social Services and Wellbeing portfolio. Many of these are valued, community-based assets but are ageing and operating without any strategic investment or development programme. A long-term, coordinated approach is now needed to modernise facilities and maximise their contribution to community wellbeing.

2.5 Between June – August 2025, Bridgend County Borough Council undertook public engagement on the future of libraries, community hubs and cultural services. Respondents were asked, *“A community hub model would bring together library services with additional community support services (e.g. council services, social events, workshops). How appealing do you find this concept?”*

- 69.3% of respondents found the concept appealing
- 20% were neutral
- 10% did not find it appealing

When asked, *“How would you feel about expanding the Books on Wheels outreach service to maintain access in communities without a nearby community hub?”*

- 65.4% supported the idea
- 27.9% were neutral
- 6.7% opposed

These results demonstrate broad support for the development of community hubs and outreach services within the County Borough.

Survey findings from Stage 1 of the consultation provide a strong evidence base for moving towards a multi-agency community hub model. Almost seven in ten respondents (69.3%) found the idea appealing, while Welsh-language respondents indicated even stronger support at 80.8%. This suggests that residents value the concept of centralised, multi-service spaces provided they are responsive to specific local needs.

The data also highlights service priorities. Alongside traditional library functions, residents placed emphasis on modern, flexible provision. For example, 75.1% supported extending opening hours over lunchtime and evenings, making services more accessible for working people, families, and young adults. Overall, the consultation results paint a clear picture: residents are open to, and in many cases enthusiastic about, a multi-agency community hub model. However, success will depend on implementation that is sensitive to accessibility, equity, and community identity. A well-designed model should therefore combine the co-location of public services (e.g. health, social care, housing support, advice and information) with outreach and digital access, ensuring efficiency, inclusivity, and improved outcomes for residents — particularly those within vulnerable groups.

2.6 The engagement complements work undertaken by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership in August 2024 to develop a regional strategy for integrated community hubs. That strategy emphasises:

- Co-location of services wherever possible
- Using existing assets in preference to new build where appropriate

- Expanding digital and remote access for those who prefer it
- Hub-and-spoke models to concentrate core services while running peripatetic and outreach services elsewhere
- Local service networks linking integrated hubs with other provision
- A “No Wrong Door” approach ensuring people are signposted to appropriate support
- Locating specialist services within hubs where specific needs are identified
- A graduated response to reflect differing community needs, from general information to specialist services
- Aligning hub locations with town centre and regeneration plans
- Proportionate investment for refurbishment and repurposing as well as new build
- A commitment to decarbonisation and Net Zero Wales

2.7 Based on LSOA (a measurement of social or economic conditions and requirements at the Lower-layer Super Output Area ) - level need and current service provision, the regional strategy identified the following priorities for Bridgend County Borough:

- Bryngarw: Integrated hub supporting employment, training and education, including for people with learning disabilities, mental health conditions and care leavers.
- Caerau: Consideration of a specific integrated hub as a spoke to Maesteg facilities which are not accessible to all.
- Cornelly / Pyle: Significant need suggesting a dedicated hub or improved coordination.
- Maesteg East: Redevelopment of the community hospital and other facilities to support a hub-and-spoke model.
- Nant-y-Moel, Ogmere Vale and Blackmill: Dedicated hub facilities, possibly on a hub-and-spoke model serving the Valleys.
- Porthcawl: Dedicated hub facilities serving communities in West Bridgend.

These priorities are not exhaustive and reflect the work undertaken by the Regional Partnership at that time.

#### 2.7.1 Garw Valley service need

The Garw Valley currently represents a significant gap in community-based service infrastructure within the County Borough. While local facilities in Sarn, Bettws, Llangeinor, Pontycymmer and Blaengarw provide important community spaces, these operate in isolation and lack the co-location of health, social care, and wellbeing services seen elsewhere.



Socio-economic indicators for the Upper and Lower Garw communities show higher levels of deprivation, poorer health outcomes, and reduced access to services compared to the county average. There are also limited transport links to Maesteg and Bridgend town, which restricts access to centralised provision.

Establishing a dedicated multi-agency hub within the Garw Valley would help address these inequalities by bringing services closer to residents, supporting early intervention, improving community wellbeing, and strengthening local resilience.

Such a hub could integrate:

- Primary and community health services (GP outreach, community nursing, mental health and wellbeing support)
- Social care access and advice
- Family and youth services
- Digital access and employability support
- Voluntary and community sector activity coordinated through BAVO

In addition to direct service delivery, a Garw Valley hub would support preventative health programmes and serve as a local base for multi-disciplinary teams under the Integrated Health and Care Hub model. This approach would ensure access across valleys communities and contribute to the Council's wider aims of reducing inequalities and strengthening community cohesion.

- 2.8 Business cases for capital funding for integrated community hub development can be submitted to the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership. Section 106 funding may also be appropriate where community hub development forms an essential placemaking element of new housing developments. Revenue funding for hub operations would be drawn from existing service budgets. Successful implementation will require Council services and partners to change existing operating models, redirect resources, increase community presence and work more seamlessly across services.

## 2.9 Integration with Health and Care Hubs

The proposed multi-agency community hub model is closely aligned with the emerging regional programme for Integrated Health and Care Hubs being developed through the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board (RPB). These hubs are a cornerstone of the Health and Social Care Regional Integration Fund (RIF), which seeks to transform community-based services through co-location and collaboration across health, social care, and third sector partners.

Bridgend County Borough has been actively engaged in the regional workstream led by Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, which is developing a network of Integrated Health and Care Hubs across the region. These hubs will act as multi-disciplinary bases where health and social care teams can jointly deliver preventative, community-focused, and intermediate care services.

The proposed community hub model complements this agenda by:

- Embedding health and wellbeing functions within broader community spaces rather than restricting them to clinical settings.

- Supporting the shift from hospital to community care, consistent with the ambitions of A Healthier Wales and the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.
- Enabling joint working between Council teams and health professionals through shared spaces, integrated referral pathways, and aligned community engagement frameworks.
- Providing access points for early intervention and preventative services, including wellbeing checks, social prescribing, community nursing, and public health programmes.
- Offering a foundation for the 'One Workforce' approach, fostering joint training, cross-sector collaboration, and streamlined service delivery.

### **3. Current situation/ proposal**

- 3.1 It is proposed that a strategic transformation programme be established to lead the development of multi-agency community hubs across the County Borough. This programme would build on existing assets and develop new assets in a small number of cases with a key focus on fostering local partnerships, enable preventative services, address local needs, and increase the accessibility of support networks. The programme will particularly address geographic inequalities in access to services, prioritising areas such as the Garw Valley, where there is clear unmet need and an absence of integrated community infrastructure.
- 3.2 The programme would:
- Build on existing assets while developing new facilities where necessary
  - Foster partnerships with key agencies (e.g. Health Board, Awen Cultural Trust, Halo Leisure, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO)).
  - Enable preventative services and address local needs
  - Increase accessibility of public services and community support
  - Strengthen alignment with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Integrated Health and Care Hub programme, ensuring consistent principles of co-location, multidisciplinary working, and community-based prevention.
  - Alignment with the Integrated Health and Care Hub strategy provides access to potential Regional Integration Fund (RIF) and Health Board capital investment streams, maximising opportunities for joint funding and reducing duplication of estate expenditure across partners. Collaborative capital planning will be essential to ensure value for money and avoid parallel developments.
  - Prioritise development of a pilot hub proposal within the Garw Valley to address long-standing service gaps and test the effectiveness of the integrated model in a rural/valley context.

- 3.3 The development of multi-agency community hubs would follow a phased approach:

**Phase 1 – Needs Assessment (0–6 months)**

- Community-level partner engagement to assess potential for remodelling use of existing facilities
- Community consultation and data analysis to identify local needs and service gaps
- Feasibility studies on current and potential developments
- Development of quality and performance frameworks to evaluate impact using metrics such as service uptake, user satisfaction, and community outcomes (e.g. reduced demand on statutory services, improved employment rates)

**Phase 2 – Pilot Phase (6–18 months)**

- Establish 2–3 pilot hubs
- Develop business justification cases addressing capital and revenue implications
- Ongoing citizen and partner engagement

**Phase 3 – Evaluation and Scaling (18–36 months)**

- Evaluate pilot hubs
- Refine the model based on feedback and scale to additional locations

**Phase 4 – Sustainability Plan**

- Establish long-term partnership arrangements to ensure the sustainability of operating models
- Foster community ownership of hub services so they continuously evolve to meet the needs of local communities

**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.

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

5.1 The proposals directly contribute to the five ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- **Long-term:** Establishing sustainable, co-located community hubs supports long-term community resilience and the shift from reactive to preventative services.
- **Prevention:** Early intervention and multi-agency access points will help prevent escalation of need, reduce reliance on statutory services, and promote wellbeing at an earlier stage.
- **Integration:** The model integrates health, social care, housing, and cultural services, aligning with regional priorities and BCBC's corporate plan objectives.
- **Collaboration:** Developed jointly with the Health Board, Awen Cultural Trust, Halo Leisure, Registered Social Landlords, and the voluntary sector, reflecting a strong partnership approach.
- **Involvement:** Residents and stakeholders have and will continue to co-designed the model through engagement and consultation, ensuring that community needs and identities remain central to hub development.

The programme aligns with Bridgend County Borough Council's well-being objectives, particularly:

- Supporting communities to be more healthy, resilient, and connected
- Reducing inequalities and improving wellbeing
- Delivering efficient and sustainable services
- Contributing to decarbonisation and the green agenda through modernised, energy-efficient facilities

## **6. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

6.1 The development and refurbishment of community hub facilities will be undertaken in line with the Council's Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan, supporting the goal to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Projects will:

- Prioritise the reuse and adaptation of existing buildings to minimise embodied carbon.
- Incorporate energy-efficient design and renewable energy technologies in new or refurbished sites.
- Encourage sustainable transport access (active travel, EV charging, public transport).

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 The programme will fully comply with Bridgend County Borough Council's Safeguarding Policy and the Council's duties as a corporate parent. All hub developments will:

- Ensure environments are safe, accessible, and inclusive for children, young people, and adults at risk.

- Embed safeguarding awareness and reporting mechanisms across all partner organisations.
- Support the wellbeing of children in care and care leavers through access to co-located services and opportunities within the community hub network.
- Require all staff and volunteers operating within hubs to be trained in safeguarding and information-sharing protocols.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The Social Service and Wellbeing Directorate currently operates a number of valued community-based assets; however, many of these facilities are ageing, under-utilised, and lack a strategic investment or development programme. At present, there is no long-term budget in place to support the sustainability of community provision. Without coordinated planning and investment, the Council risks being left with empty or deteriorating community buildings, duplication of services across localities, and missed opportunities to maximise efficiency and partnership working. Establishing a strategic transformation programme and moving towards a multi-agency community hub model provides an opportunity to develop a sustainable, long-term financial and operational framework for community facilities, ensuring they continue to deliver value to residents and contribute to wider preventative and wellbeing objectives.

Alignment with the Integrated Health and Care Hub strategy provides access to potential Regional Integration Fund (RIF) and Health Board capital investment streams.

- 8.2 Business cases for capital funding for integrated community hub development can be submitted to the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership. Section 106 funding may also be appropriate where community hub development forms an essential placemaking element of new housing developments. Revenue funding for hub operations would be drawn from existing service budgets. Successful implementation will require Council services and partners to change existing operating models, redirect resources, increase community presence and work more seamlessly across services.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the content of the report and provide feedback to be considered in preparation for the establishment of a Strategic Transformation Programme for the development of multi-agency community hubs in Bridgend County Borough.

### **Background Documents**

None

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<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>6 NOVEMBER 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL &amp; REGULATORY SERVICES, HR &amp; ELECTORAL</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – SCRUTINY</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>The work of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council's Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p><b>The Council's Constitution requires each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.</b></p> <p><b>The Committee is asked to consider and agree its Forward Work Programme, identify any specific information it wishes to be included in and any invitees they wish to attend for the reports for the next two Committee meetings, identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the criteria set out in the report, and consider the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for this Committee.</b></p>

## 1. Purpose of Report

### 1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Forward Work Programme attached as **(Appendix A)** for consideration and approval;
- b) Request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Request the Committee to identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.5 of this report;

- d) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- e) Advise that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as approved will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) for information, together with those from the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution requires each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.
- 2.2 It also provides for the Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework. Where a matter for consideration by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee also falls within the remit of one or more other Committees, the decision as to which Committee will consider it will be resolved by the respective Chairs or, if they fail to agree, the Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### Best Practice / Guidance

- 2.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the Forward Work Programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 2.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximize the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.
- 2.5 The CfGS's guide to effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

*'Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well it can help lay the foundations for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.'*



### **3. Current situation / proposal**

- 3.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 14 May 2025, the standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees of: the Corporate Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget, Performance and Budget Monitoring, etc. have been mapped to the appropriate timely meeting dates into a Forward Work Programme.
- 3.2 The Forward Work Programmes for each Scrutiny Committee have been prepared using a number of difference sources, including:
- Corporate Risk Assessment;
  - Directorate Business Plans;
  - Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / minutes;
  - Committee / Member proposed topics;
  - Policy Framework;
  - Cabinet Work Programme;
  - Discussions with Corporate Directors;
  - Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.
- 3.3 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g., the MTFS including draft budget proposals scheduled for consideration in January 2026, following which COSC will make conclusions and recommendations in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2026.
- 3.4 An effective Forward Work Programme will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The Forward Work Programme will remain flexible and will be reported to each COSC meeting for information.

#### Identification of Further Items

- 3.5 The Committee are reminded that the Scrutiny selection criteria used by Scrutiny Committee Members to consider, select and prioritise items emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation to maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. The criteria which can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, are set out below:

#### Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| PUBLIC INTEREST:   | The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;                        |
| ABILITY TO CHANGE: | Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence, and add value to; |

PERFORMANCE:	Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council is not performing well;
EXTENT:	Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough, or a large number of the Authority's service users or its population;
REPLICATION:	Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

#### Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

- The issue is already being addressed / being examined elsewhere and change is imminent.
- The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and can be referred there).
- Scrutiny involvement would have limited / no impact upon outcomes.
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic and needs refining / scoping.
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year.
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change / reconfiguration.

#### Corporate Parenting

- 3.6 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards care experienced children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'Corporate Parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for care experienced children and young people in Bridgend.
- 37 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 3.8 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.
- 3.9 The Forward Work Programme for the Committee is attached as **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.
- 3.10 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings is attached as **Appendix B**.
- 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.

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

5.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 Ways of Working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 Ways of Working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
- Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service and Elected Members.
- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

5.2 When setting its Forward Work Programme, the Committee should consider how each item they propose to scrutinise assists in the achievement of the Council's 4 Wellbeing Objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** as follows:

1. A prosperous place with thriving communities
2. Creating modern, seamless public services
3. Enabling people to meet their potential
4. Supporting our most vulnerable

## **6. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

6.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects climate change, the Council's Net Zero Carbon 2030 target and how it meets the Council's commitments to protect and sustain the environment over the long term. There are no Climate Change or Nature Implications arising from this report.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way the Committee can assist in these areas. Safeguarding is everyone's business and means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications arising from this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 The Committee is recommended to:
- a) Consider and approve the Forward Work Programme for the Committee in **Appendix A**.
  - b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
  - c) Identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.5 of this report.
  - d) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in **Appendix B** to track outstanding responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
  - e) Note that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as approved will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information, together with those from the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

## **Background documents**

None.

**Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
**2025-26 Forward Work Programme**

Wednesday, 9 July 2025 at 10.00am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Regional Partnership Agreement	Pre-Decision	<p><b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Head of Adult Social Care; Group Manager – Integrated Community Services Manager; and</p> <p><b><u>External</u></b> Regional Integrated Services Director for Cwm Taf Morgannwg; and Director, Primary Care, Community &amp; Mental Health – Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board</p>

Thursday 11 September 2025 at 10.00am		
Report Topics	Any Specific Information Requested	Invitees
Social Services Annual Report 2024-25	Pre-Decision	<p><b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing;</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing; Head of Adult Social Care; Head of Children and Family Services. Group Manager - Prevention and Wellbeing; Group Manager – Commissioning; and Group Manager - Business Strategy, Performance &amp; Improvement.</p>
Social Services Representations and Complaints 2024-25	Pre-Decision	<p><b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing;</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing.</p>

**APPENDIX A****Thursday, 25 September 2025 at 10.00am**

<b>Report Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<b>Care Inspectorate Wales Improvement Check of Children and Family Services - June 2025</b>  <b>and</b>  <b>Care Inspectorate Wales Fostering Service Inspection - June 2025</b>	CIW to present the Improvement Check report to the Committee.	<b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing  <b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Head of Children and Family Services; Deputy Head of Children and Family Services;  <b><u>External</u></b> Representatives from Care Inspectorate Wales

**Thursday, 6 November 2025 at 10.00am**

<b>Report Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<b>Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2024-25</b>		<b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing  <b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Head of Adult Social Care; Head of Children and Family Services; Group Manager – Information, Advice and Assistance and Safeguarding; Team Manager – Older People Mental Health; and Education and Community Safety Leads
<b>Community Hubs Strategy</b>	Including Libraries post consultation.	<b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing  <b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; and Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing.

**APPENDIX A****Thursday, 4 December 2025 at 10.00am**

<b>Report Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<b>Halo, Leisure Arrangements and Wellbeing</b>	Including plans and various programmes provided e.g. carer's offer.	<p><b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing;</p> <p><b><u>External</u></b> Active Communities Manager – Halo Leisure</p>

**Thursday, 12 March 2026 at 10.00am**

<b>Report Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<b>Assisted Transport Policy Implementation Progress</b>	Post implementation progress report	<p><b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Head of Adult Social Care; Policy Officer – Social Care;</p> <p><b><u>External</u></b> Representatives from People First</p>
<b>Learning Disability Transformation Programme Progress</b>	Post implementation progress report	

**Monday, 27 April 2026 at 10.00am**

<b>Report Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<b>Provision of Accommodation Based Regulated Support Services in Bridgend</b>	<p>Post implementation progress report</p> <p>To include information setting out the provision of accommodation based regulated support services in Bridgend to include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>whether they are private, public or charity sector;</li> <li>how staff are contracted; and</li> <li>the ownership of the buildings.</li> </ol>	<p><b><u>Cabinet Member</u></b> Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing</p> <p><b><u>Officers</u></b> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Head of Adult Social Care.</p>

**Briefings and Workshops:**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>	<b>Invitees</b>
<b>Overview – Social Services &amp; Wellbeing Directorate / Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act</b>	Attendance from: Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing Head of Adult Social Care Head of Children and Family Services Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing	<b>To be scheduled.</b>
<b>The Replacement System for CareDirector (WCCIS)</b>	The Committee requested a briefing on COR-2024-01 on the Corporate Risk Assessment: The threat to business continuity if the Council is unable to procure and implement major ICT systems which support critical services such as a replacement system for CareDirector (WCCIS). <i>CareDirector</i> is a Cloud-based case management solution for social care organisations that supports integrated working across health and social care.	<b>Members and officers for the Briefing and Workshop – TBD.</b>  <b>To be scheduled in early 2026 in partnership with IT.</b>
<b>Use of Artificial Intelligence within Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate</b>	The Committee <b>recommended</b> that there be an all Member briefing on the use of artificial intelligence within the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate and how it is envisaged it could safely aid a reduction in staff numbers.	<b>This will form part of the Digital Strategy which will be reported to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Pre-Decision.</b>  <b>To be scheduled after the Digital Strategy has been considered at COSC.</b>

**Items to be Scheduled to the Committee's Forward Work Programme**

- Support for Care Leavers (including input from Employability and Housing).  
The Committee have requested that Care Experienced young people be invited for this item.  
  
(Will be a joint report between Social Services, Health and Wellbeing and the Communities and Housing Directorates)
- Regional Partnership Agreement Progress Update (12 months from July 2025)
- Future Arrangements for Advocacy for Adults and Children
- A closed session detailing confidential information presented to Social Services Improvement Board (including live case studies)



- Review of the Regional Operating Model of the Emergency Duty Team
- Review of the Fostering Service (9-12 months from October 2025)

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**Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET 2025-2026**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Response</b>
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	Members were advised that the Early Intervention and Prevention Hub operates an answerphone service and returns calls within set timescales which allows them to have detailed and meaningful discussions to enable proportionate assessments and that there is an alternative number for emergencies. The Committee expressed concern that the information on the Council's website does not make this clear and <b>recommended</b> that the information relating to the Hub be updated to provide clarity for the public.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee <b>recommended</b> that correspondence be sent to the Welsh Government expressing the following concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The sustainability of service delivery which is often reliant on grant funding including short term funding when recurring funding is required, e.g. Elimination of Profit Grant Funding;</li> <li>b. Short notice of funding impacting on the Council's financial planning and implementation;</li> </ul>	Scrutiny/Chair of Committee	Letter sent. Response Awaited.	Follow link <a href="#">here</a>

## APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. That national policy commitments resulting from legislative changes should be fully funded both in terms of capital funding and ongoing revenue funding including a commitment to fund employer national insurance payments for individuals employed by agencies who provide services to the Council;</li> <li>d. The unavailability of all-Wales comparative data.</li> </ul>			
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	<p>The Committee <b>requested</b> weekly costs for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Foster Placement and Residential Placement for a Care Experienced Child; and</li> <li>b. Residential Placement for an adult (including information regarding contributions from Health).</li> </ul>	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Head of Adult Social Care / Deputy Head of Children and Family Services	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee <b>requested</b> sight of the Council's Fostering Strategy and welcomed the offer for this to be included as an Appendix to the <i>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025</i> report scheduled to the meeting of the Committee on 25 September 2025.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Deputy Head of Children and Family Services	Included in the <a href="#">Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025</a> report to Committee on 25 September 2025.	Follow link <a href="#">here</a>

## APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee <b>requested</b> that the <i>Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays</i> report presented to the Committee on 23 September 2024 to be circulated to Members of the Committee.	Scrutiny	Complete	Follow link <a href="#">here</a>
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee requested a written briefing paper to better understand the proposed 'core and cluster' model of supported living for people with learning disabilities.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Head of Adult Social Care	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee <b>requested</b> an all-Member Briefing detailing the <i>Building Resilient and Co-ordinated Communities</i> programme and highlighting the role of the Local Community Connectors, Navigators and Co-ordinators.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee queried how the Council is making the public aware of and encouraging them to utilise community-based services and requested that consideration be given to using the Council Communications team and social media to raise awareness.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Head of Adult Social Care	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee <b>requested</b> further information regarding the Australian 2.0 step care model relating to mental health referenced during the meeting.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	

**APPENDIX B**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Response</b>
11 Sep 25	Draft Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee <b>requested</b> that future Annual Social Services Reports contain comparative data from comparable Welsh local authorities, where available.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Social Services Representations and Complaints Annual Report 2024/25	In relation to Table 4 – Complaint Themes, the Committee requested the number of complaints for each of the percentages shown.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Compliments and Complaints Resolution Manager	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Social Services Representations and Complaints Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee requested that future Annual Reports contain comparative data from comparable Welsh local authorities, where available.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Compliments and Complaints Resolution Manager	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
11 Sep 25	Social Services Representations and Complaints Annual Report 2024/25	The Committee requested copies of the Accessible Complaints Information referred to in the Objectives section of the report and the Child-Friendly version that has been produced.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Compliments and Complaints Resolution Manager	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	

## APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
25 Sep 25	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check of Childrens and Family Services June 2025	The Committee discussed the regional operating arrangements of the Emergency Duty Team and were advised that the arrangement was to be reviewed exploring what constitutes emergency out of hours social work and to provide clarity to prospective callers of the appropriate service to contact when necessary. The Committee <b>recommended</b> that Members are engaged in the review for their views.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided.	
25 Sep 25	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check of Childrens and Family Services June 2025	The Committee discussed the resources required to implement the fostering aspects of the Action Plan and to recruit more in-house foster carers and <b>requested</b> a Briefing paper for all Members highlighting the importance of promoting becoming a foster carer for Bridgend.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided.	
25 Sep 25	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025	The Committee <b>recommended</b> that the abbreviations and acronyms in the Foster Care Recruitment Strategy in Appendix 3 are removed or that a glossary be added to assist the Committee and the public.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing / Group Manager – Provider Services	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided.	
25 Sep 25	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025	The Committee expressed concern regarding the impact on service delivery of the Directorate's reliance on grant funding and <b>recommended</b> that this be added to the topics for discussion at the	Scrutiny/Chair of Deep Dive Group / Corporate Director – Social	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided.	

**APPENDIX B**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Response</b>
		Deep Dive Group and requested that a list of all grant funding the Directorate has received in the last financial year and a breakdown of which services are funded by which grants, and which are one-off grants and which are recurring be provided to the Group and Members of the Committee.	Services and Wellbeing		
25 Sep 25	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025	Having discussed their concerns regarding the reliance on grant funding in the above point, the Committee recommended that consideration be given to a zero-based budgeting exercise being undertaken exploring the possibility of bringing the services or parts of the services supported by grant funding into the Directorate's core budget, where possible.	Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change / Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided.	
25 Sep 25	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025	The Committee discussed the improvements made in relation to workforce and recruitment which has resulted in a substantial reduction in agency staff and an increase in newly recruited or qualified social workers being employed. The Committee were mindful that there is a period of supervision and training which requires time to embed and expressed concern that this could be impacting on consistency of practice	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided.	



**APPENDIX B**

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		identified by the Inspectorate and <b>requested</b> a written update be provided.			
25 Sep 25	Information Report - Quarter 4/Year End Performance 2024-25	The Committee expressed concern regarding the continued downward trend in relation to sickness absence and requested an update on any actions being taken to try and improve the position.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided.	
25 Sep 25	Forward Work Programme Update	The Committee requested that the following items be added to their Forward Work Programme:  a. Review of the Regional Operating Model of the Emergency Duty Team; and  b. Review of the Fostering Service (in 9-12 months)	Scrutiny / Chair of Committee	Scrutiny to action in Work Planning Meetings with the Chair and Corporate Director. Item added to the Committee's Forward Work Programme.	

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