

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

10 NOVEMBER 2021

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING EMBEDDING STRENGTH BASED PRACTICE IN ADULTS' AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee with progress in implementing and embedding outcome focused / strength based practice in Adults' and Children's Social Care and to seek feedback on the identified priority actions.

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

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
 - **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

Outcome focused practice approach

- 3.1 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 requires the Local Authority to focus on people's well-being, and to put them at the centre of their care and support planning. Applying an outcome focused approach to practice starts with the person themselves and considers their strengths and capabilities and what matters to them, and how their family, friends and local community play a part in their life to help them reach their personal outcomes.
- 3.2 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has made significant progress in applying the fundamental principles of the Act into social work and social care practices. The approach does not focus on one specific model of practice, it is flexible relationship-based working which is strength-based, collaborative and co-productive.

- 3.3 The Remodelling Adult Social Care programme (RASC) and the Remodelling Childrens' Social Care (RCSC) programmes provided strategic leadership at a programme level to progress developments which supported the service in taking forward and embedding outcome focused practice. This included changes to organisational culture, systems and processes and building practitioners' skills, confidence and capabilities in strength-based working.
- 3.4 Adult Social Care were selected by Social Care Wales to pilot the National Collaborative Communication skills training which supports the development of skills and capabilities of the workforce to deliver outcomes focused strength based practice. This took place during 2015 and enabled Adult Social Care to progress with the implementation of an outcome focused way of working in advance of Children's Social Care.
- 3.5 The journey so far in Adult Social Care has included:
- In 2016 the delivery of Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act training modules produced by Social Care Wales. The content and focus of these modules emphasised the aims, principles, duties and responsibilities of those exercising functions under the Act, including a focus upon well-being, outcomes, strengths, independence, prevention, choice, voice, and control.
 - 2017-18 Reinvigorating Social Work. Initiative to embed the approach in practice to include a programme to support Team Managers, Assistant Team Managers, and Senior Practitioners as leaders of practice in the workplace. Introducing Action Learning as a team-based learning tool to share practice experiences. A revised Supervision Policy that explicitly focuses upon outcomes, strengths, and reflective practice. Delivery of a series of two-day skills-based 'Collaborative Communication Skills', now established annually for newly qualified staff and new starters.
 - A Quality Assurance Framework was launched that included case file analysis designed to track evidence of a shift in practice, and impact upon individuals, carers, and families. This showed that recording of practice was inconsistent, although understanding and delivery of the required approach was well developed.
 - 2018-19 Continuation of Reinvigorating Social Work and Consolidation Year. The Reinvigorating programme continued into 2018, culminating in a Celebratory Event for over 80 staff with contributions from the Director, Head of Service and Group Manager, and front-line staff. The event celebrated stories from practice following the implementation of the Act.
 - Consolidation included the start of work to re-design assessment and care and support planning documentation to provide a tool that assisted practitioners to better record their assessments of strengths and outcomes. A programme of supervision training has also been delivered based specifically upon BCBC's supervision policy, for supervisors and supervisees.

- 2019-20 Sustaining Social Work. Initiatives aiming to support outcome focussed strength based practice including a review and revision of the e-Practice Guide for Social Work, learning and sharing good practice across teams, and improving processes and recording of assessments. Learning and development activity this year also included a continuation of supervision training, continuation of Collaborative Communication training, and training on case recording, and working with and supporting carers.
- 2020-21 The advent and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted but did not halt the journey. Reflective on line sessions were available to staff. Collaborative Communications training for newly qualified staff in outcome focussed/strength based approaches, with refresher courses for those previously trained.

3.6 The journey so far in Children's Social Care has included:

- In 2016: The delivery of Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act training modules produced by Social Care Wales. The content and focus of these modules emphasised the aims, principles, duties and responsibilities of those exercising functions under the Act, including a focus upon well-being, outcomes, strengths, independence, prevention, choice, voice, and control.
- In 2017: Engaging Well: Defining, Capturing and Recording Outcomes. Training for Team Managers, Deputies and Seniors. Set against the requirements of Welsh Government to score, monitor and track progress of people's outcomes following the 'Recording Measurement of Personal Outcomes' guidance. Followed by Outcomes focused practice using collaborative communications skills training for staff across the service.
- In 2018: The introduction of the BBAART model (Brain, Behaviour, Attachment, Assessment, Resilience and Trauma), a whole systems approach to improving outcomes for Children and Young People.
- In 2019:
 - Development of the Children's social care intranet site to include practical resources to support embedding outcomes and strength based practice.
 - Supervision skills training: a person centred approach to supervision which highlights why supervision is important in ensuring positive outcomes for children, young people, families and carers.
- In 2020:
 - Development of new WCCIS documents to better support practice. Best Practice in Outcomes Focussed Assessment workshops were held.
 - Official Launch of the Outcome Focused Approach Framework

- In 2021: Workshops on “Capturing and Recording Outcomes” in order to further embed the model within practice and allow practitioners opportunity to focus more exclusively on planning and the voice of the child.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The outcome focused approach has been developed to enhance professional practice, which is supported by the organisation’s systems and process. The strength based practice project of the BCBC Transformation programme “Improving Outcomes for the Jones” programme board has a focus on embedding outcome focused strength based social work practice across adults and children’s social care; ensuring ‘what matters’ to the individual, and the outcome people want to achieve for their own lives are at the heart of practice and care and support planning and is reflected in training, supervision, quality assurance and performance.

4.2 The embedding strength based work stream has been established to review activities that support outcomes focused, strength based practice and has identified the following priority areas:

- An audit of supervision practice and review of the supervision policy to ensure it is delivered consistently and is focussed upon making sure that practice remains outcomes and strengths based.
- Responding to CIW Inspectors comments that case recording could be more consistent, to revise BCBC’s case recording policy and align it to guidance on outcome focussed recording produced by Social Care Wales in September 2021 – ‘Friend not Foe’.
- An evaluation of learning and development activity from induction to skills based training, to improve and refresh content and delivery, and ensuring that outcomes focused practice is embedded throughout.
- Including outcomes focused practice throughout our professional development and training programme.
- Review and revise the Assuring Quality framework. To ensure that audit and quality assurance processes consider whether good outcomes are being achieved and evidenced; and if outcomes focused work is embedded in practice.
- To undertake an evaluation of the introduction and application of the framework from the perspective of practitioners.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

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

6. **Equality Act 2010 implications**

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that the Outcome Focused Framework does not itself have any negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage, or the use of the Welsh language. Promoting equality and valuing diversity is central to strength based practice and to supporting the well-being of people who need care and support, or carers and young carers who need support. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this proposal.

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

- 7.1 The outcomes focused / strength based approach impacts on a number of the Well-being of future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- **Long term** - outcomes focused / strength based practice is in keeping with the principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 – Voice and control, Prevention and early intervention, Well-being and Co-production. By focusing on what matters most to people, working with people using a strength based approach to practice is appropriate for the longer-term well-being of individuals and communities.
- **Prevention** – A strength-based approach aims to protect individual's independence, resilience, ability to make choices and well-being, allowing them to take responsibility for, and influence their own lives. Strength based approaches encourage the involvement and of children, young people and their families in decision-making, so they are more in control of the support they receive. And can help prevent the development of further needs.
- **Integration** - Outcomes focused, strength based practice promotes shared values and consistent ways of working across agencies.
- **Collaboration** – Strength based approaches to practice are grounded on close collaboration between people with care and support needs and carers with support needs, workforce, social care teams, wider stakeholders and communities.
- **Involvement** – Key stakeholders will continue to be involved in the journey to embed outcome focused, strength based practice across adults and children's social care. Adopting a whole system, co-produced approach. Views and experiences from individuals, families and carers, practitioners and managers are a resource to help improve systems and processes; we can learn from existing practice about what works well. People can be enabled to use their strengths and assets to support and train staff.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no direct financial consequences from the continuation of the implementation of the practice framework for strength based practice across Adult and Children's Social Care, as it will be managed within the current Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate resources.

9. Recommendations

9.1 The Committee is requested to:

- Consider the contents of this report and supporting presentation
- Comment on the identified priorities

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Background documents:

None