

# **Wrexham Social Services: What we do and the difference it makes**

**Director of Social Services Annual Report**

**2023 - 2024**

This document is also available in Welsh



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# Introduction

2023/24 marks a further important year of development for Social Care in Wrexham. As a department Social Care has a lot to celebrate and the positive outcome of our inspection in November 2023 confirms how far we have travelled, and the improvements we have made.

This report provides you with an overview of our achievements against the 6 standards that we measure our achievements against. Collectively there are areas where we reflect a significant degree of pride in our achievement in supporting people.

In Children's we have successfully expanded the involvement and consultation with young people in the Children in Care Council, including them at every stage. The Life Journey work designed to support every child to understand their story has been further strengthened with workshops and training to make sure we do this well. Pre- Birth work has also continued with the launch of Pre-Birth Liaison meetings to support expectant parents when they need our help.

In Adult Services there has also been positive improvements. We are rightly proud that our Occupational Therapy waiting list has been reduced by 70% and contributed to better outcomes for people. Likewise our reablement team has enhanced their work at our local acute hospital, Wrexham Maelor Hospital, leading to swifter assessment of people who are inpatients supporting their discharge home. Our offer to unpaid carers has also improved with more support available out of hours and more assessments being completed.

Our goals for 2024/ 25 are ambitious ones as they should be. In Children's Services we intend to continue to enhance our fostering offer and continue to expand our in-house residential offer for children. Our Kickstart programme offering accommodation and support for care leavers will also grow in a measured way. Importantly, we will also work with partners to develop our disruption approach for missing and exploited children. Implementing this approach is essential if we are to keep our young children safe.

In Adult Services we are committed to launch our Early Intervention Team taking a strengths based approach to all citizens referred to us. Our Provider Services are also being restructured to support a wider range of services and to ensure our capacity to manage this range is improved. We will also review our Mental Health Services to ensure our offer remains the right one.

Wrexham Social Services are committed to develop and deliver the support needed to strengthen our communities and help to deliver the outcomes that matter to people.

**Alwyn Jones,**

**Chief Officer Social Services**

# Summary of performance

## Background

At the end of each financial year, every council in Wales must publish a report about its social services. This is our report.

The aim is to evaluate how well our services have been delivered, and highlight any improvements needed.

It is also a chance to explain how we're going to help people over the coming year – both people who need care and support, and unpaid carers who need our help.

As you read through these pages, you will notice we talk about six 'quality standards.' These are part of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (we will just call it 'the Act' from now on).

The format of this report reflects the requirements of the Act, and the need to measure the performance of social services around these six standards.

It also feeds into the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales – helping to create a place where we all want to live. Both now and in the future.

Finally, you will notice we talk about 'outcomes' a lot. This is because so much of our work is focused on helping people achieve the end results they want to achieve.

## Complaints and Compliments

Complaints are dealt with in accordance with the statutory social services complaints procedure, which is managed by a centralised complaints team in the council. The team have an excellent working relationship with senior managers across the department and liaise regularly to address complaints.

A full report on complaints and compliments is presented to the relevant scrutiny committee on an annual basis and subsequently published on the council's website. This ensures appropriate scrutiny of the complaints received by members and offers transparency for the public (whilst ensuring complainant details remains strictly confidential).

During 2023/24, the number of complaints received has increased, with 75 being received compared to 56 received during 2022/23.

6 complaints were investigated independently at Stage 2. This is consistent with the 6 from the previous year.

37 compliments were received during 2023/24, highlighting the appreciation from service users and families for the support provided. Two of these are as follows:

## Adult Social Care

"Can I express mine and Xs thanks for your consistent and positive support throughout this process. It's a massive deal but we feel you have supported us as well as you have. To see X settled so happily, in addition to him being so close to us, is a dream come true. You played the crucial role in this. Many, many thanks from us both."

## Children's Social Care

"I take this opportunity to express our grateful thanks to you for the help and support given to us throughout this difficult time. X has settled well with us and seems a lot happier than she had been for a long time. Again, our sincere thanks to all involved."

# What people tell us about our services

Listening to the people we support is crucial. It's how we make sure we're delivering services that help them achieve what's important to them.

We're developing our approach to 'co-production' – where people and organisations work together to come up with ways to shape our services at every stage.

## Jargon Buster - 'co-production'

'Co-production' refers to work undertaken with the full and equal involvement of service-users. In other words, people who use services are given an equal say in decisions and changes that affect them.

## Dementia - Our Journey

In Wrexham we have been on a journey to fully understand the ways in which dementia affects our communities and citizens. We have engaged with a number of organisations and groups to expand our knowledge and understanding of how dementia can impact families and how we can support them to live well with dementia.

Some of the work we have been involved in is listed below;

- After talking with and listening to [unpaid carers and people living with dementia](#) (PLWD) there is now a link on our website and access to information in one place.
- We have been announced as finalists for the Social Care Wales Accolades awards for our dementia work and investment in RITA (Reminiscence Interactive Therapy Activity). RITA is now available at 38 locations across Wrexham helping PLWD to access therapeutic reminiscence activities.
- We hosted the Dementia Virtual Tour Bus at Wrexham Wellbeing Hub in July 2023. We repeated the success of previous years with 32 people attending the sessions, including carers, support workers, and care managers. A [review of virtual bus](#) was undertaken.

## Feedback

Feedback gathered from some of the events listed above are:

### Dementia Bus Session

- "Very useful and informative"
- "Yes, gave a great insight into how"
- "An insight into dementia was offered and has proven how overwhelming dementia can be and how environments can make it worse"
- "I now understand dementia and now know new ways of how to support with dementia"
- "It was a good experience to learn a little of how people we look after daily can feel. Hopefully we can work towards making life better for these people."

### The Palace Day Centre

- "The users and staff here in The Palace Day Centre all enjoyed being a part of the RITA trial and we look forward to joining again on the next session. If they weren't singing then they were tapping their feet or clapping hands, or tapping their chair and very much enjoying the session."

### Standards of Wrexham Services Group

The SWS (Standards of Wrexham Services) are a diverse group of adults who use social care services and work alongside the PCP (Person Centred Planning) team who support us in this volunteering role. The SWS look at different ways to improve the support offered by WCBC to people with disabilities.

Over the past year we started creating digital stories about many different subjects and have created our own [YouTube channel, Wrexham SWS](#).

We also saw the premiere of our latest film, Sexual Graffiti which is also on the YouTube channel. We are currently working on revamping My Staff My Say a group that gives people who receive help from social services the opportunity to interview those people who will be helping them, this is a really good way to ensure compatibility between the person and their carer and will be helping to recruit support workers and managers in the coming months.

We organised a family fun day in August to raise funds for the Safe Places scheme which we are still managing on a weekly basis. The family fun day has become an annual event that we organise together with the PCP team. We also saw the second of our low Noise Fireworks events, which is now also a successful annual event.

We have a new gaming group which we have set up to encourage people to meet, make friends and enjoy gaming together. Our technology drop in sessions in the Wellbeing Hub have been well utilised. We also started a Friendship Cooking Session once per month, where friends get together, plan their meal, purchase the ingredients and cook the meal together before enjoying it in the Wellbeing Hub kitchens. As part of the [friendship hub](#), we plan activities and meet up regularly to have fun and make friends.

## Working With The Third Sector

We enjoy a close working relationship with our County Voluntary Council (CVC) the Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham (AVOW).

The Gwersyllt Hub (Hub) has now become a community asset delivered by AVOW in partnership with WCBC in offering citizens of Wrexham a vibrant, safe place to socialise, connect with others and participate in many activities and groups to support people to achieve their own self-care and health and wellbeing goals. By listening to needs of the community, a multi-generational Hub has been created through coordination and co-production of primary, statutory and third sector services, offering a

wide range of activities and groups to all ages. Activities have included digital inclusion, cooking sessions, over 75's chair yoga, Tai Chi, preschool and after school family sessions, with the Hub Officer actively engaging with new organisations to deliver more diverse activities such as green social prescribing.

Green social prescribing is the practice of supporting people to engage in nature-based interventions and activities to improve their mental and physical health. Social prescribing link workers (and other trusted professionals in allied roles) connect people to community groups and agencies for practical and emotional support, based on a 'what matters to you' conversation. The Hub has been strengthened by the recruitment of volunteers, many of whom were and still participate in Hub activities. This has seen the volunteers flourish in confidence, communication skills and self-esteem.

We have also worked closely with our Welsh Government colleagues this year to maximise access to Welsh Government Grant funding. AVOW has facilitated the awarding of grants to combat loneliness and isolation in the community. AVOW's unique reach into the wider community meant the grants funded a range of needs from Tai Chi and dance sessions in the community to lunch clubs, health and wellbeing support sessions as well as increasing accessibility to Wrexham City Centre for those citizens of Wrexham who may feel socially isolated.



## The Wellbeing Hub

The Wellbeing Hub is a partnership between Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham (AVOW). The Wellbeing Hub is driven by prevention, tackling health inequalities in the population and the wider social determinants of health and wellbeing.

The Wellbeing Hub opened to the public in October 2022 and in its 18 months has progressively seen an increase in the number of activities taking place each month. The available rooms and spaces are used by a variety of organisations delivering early prevention activities. The Wellbeing Hub facilitates activities that are person-centred and strengths based to deliver the services that matter to citizens.

Feedback we have received includes;

'Our clients have been able to access many other services in addition to our group sessions in a friendly, safe and warm environment. Several of our clients have become volunteers in the Wellbeing Hub which has increased their confidence and improved their mental wellbeing. Other clients have accessed the foodbank, attended several information days where they have been able to access advice about money worries, health concerns and much more. The Wellbeing Hub is a valuable addition to the Wrexham community and our clients know that it is a safe place that they can go to if they need further advice and support' - iCan Connector KIM Inspire

'I used to love playing Football and Rugby, these days running, jumping and catching are difficult but even in my advancing years agility and posture continue to be important. The Chair Exercise classes at the Wellbeing Hub have been really beneficial..... I always feel revived and more energetic after each session and those of us who attend the session are usually happier and more confident than before.' Citizen Feedback

## Care Inspectorate Wales

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) is the independent regulator of social care and childcare. Following the inspection in June 2022 and the resulting report there were several areas requiring improvement in children's services and adult services.

During October and November 2023 Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) visited Wrexham to review the local authority progress against those areas that required improvement. The review acknowledged the challenges experienced and recognised that progress had been made resulting in developments to practice and better outcomes for children and adults.

- Performance information and quality assurance audits continue to drive improvements in children's services.
- Positive developments implemented to address waiting lists and to ensure a sustainable model of delivery is embedded to assist people to live independently.

- The social services emergency duty team provides a timely and proportionate response to emergencies that occur outside of normal opening hours.
- Practitioners developing professional working relationships with people built upon co-operation and shared understanding of what matters.

We will continue to work on all the areas for improvement identified.

# Improving well-being (Six Standards)

These are the six standards we mentioned earlier.

There's a lot of information here, so we've split them into two sections to reflect our two social care areas within the Department - adult social care and children's social care.

## Standard 1: Helping people achieve the well-being outcomes they want

This sounds complicated, but it's simple really.

We're talking about helping people improve their situation in a way that takes account of how they feel, and what they want.

### Adult Social Care

#### This is what we said we'd do

- Evaluate the effectiveness of 'micro-commissioning'
- Implement a Performance Framework to measure achievements in Adult Services. Review, redesign and implement a new process to audit the quality of services.
- Further develop our recruitment and retention strategy for Social Care
- Recruit and employ a specialist mental health and wellbeing Occupational Therapist to address our current waiting list

#### This is what we did

##### Evaluate the effectiveness of 'micro-commissioning'

Wrexham County Borough Council, Adult Social Care continues to work with Community Catalysts to develop the Community Micro Enterprise market (CME) in Wrexham. There has been significant success in recruiting new CME's to deliver personal care to citizens either on a private agreement basis or via a direct payment. Over the last twelve months Wrexham County Borough Council has continued to successfully work alongside Community Catalyst to support the development of small, social care enterprises or businesses.

Our collaboration with Community Catalysts over the past twelve months has been instrumental in empowering individuals and communities across the County while also generating some cost savings for the council. Funded through the Regional Integration Fund, our partnership has enabled us to identify service gaps and address them through the support of micro-enterprises. This approach has not only met the diverse care needs of our residents but has also resulted in approximately £300,000 in savings. 81 individuals are accessing direct payments to purchase 1,075 hours of micro care support. A positive evaluation of outcomes and cost benefit analysis means we will be able to continue our successful partnership with Community Catalysts in this coming financial year.

### Jargon Buster

Micro commissioning is where care is sought on an individual level from small often independent or third sector organisations or sole traders. [Community Catalysts Wrexham](#).

## Implement a Performance Framework to measure achievements in Adult Services

During the 2023/24 reporting year, significant progress has been made in Adult Social Care. The Department formed the Practice, Performance and Quality Assurance (PPQA) Project to focus on the review of operational business processes, to include a

review of all social work documentation (forms) and recording practices, working toward the full implementation of a robust performance framework to measure achievements in services.

Through the work of this project, a robust audit programme is now in place across the Department, a suite of team performance reports are available to management teams through an online reporting portal, and business process reviews have been successfully conducted, resulting in the development of new forms and recording practices to support the Department's Quality Assurance Framework.

Whilst it is recognised that progress needs to continue into the next reporting year, the work completed has already begun to show value by providing management teams with performance data and analysis which aids in the understanding of referrals, assessments, packages of support and reviews across the Department.

## Further develop our recruitment and retention strategy for Social Care

Our recruitment process has undergone a change in relation to advertising our vacancies to improve our reach. The development of a Social Care Recruitment tab on our website 'working for us' has enabled the provision of additional tailored information about working in social care in Wrexham. Extending our use of recruitment videos/blogs, highlighting benefits for working and living in Wrexham is also becoming our new standard.

Our use of Agency staff to support our workforce has also reduced in Social Care with more permanent staff taking up vacant posts. During 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024 we saw a 56% reduction in agency staff compared with the previous year working across Social Care.

We have been reviewing the full range of standardised employment packages offered, including work-life balance options or relocation packages. Also developing a jobs pages on the We Care Recruitment portal with links to WCBC's jobs pages/Social Care recruitment website is still in progress.

### **Recruit and employ a specialist mental health and wellbeing Occupational Therapist to address our current waiting list**

We have been unable to recruit a specialist Occupational Therapist after multiple attempts. The project was amended to employ a Social Care Assessor who could look to utilise the Occupational Therapy approach and practice to support citizens with Mental Health issues to develop strategies to manage and improve their wellbeing. We have successfully appointed to this post.

### **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- To manage demand through a continued programme of early intervention, prevention and effective reviewing
- To manage the challenging social care budget to be able to continue to deliver statutory services

## **Children's Social Care**

### **This is what we said we'd do**

- Develop a robust transfer process for young people transitioning from Children's Services to Adult Social Care
- Fully embed the Extra Familial Harm Protocol and continue to engage with national and regional partners, continuing to engage in adoption of screening tools and safety plans
- Full review of the Children's Services Threshold document

## **This is what we did**

### **Develop a robust transfer process for young people transitioning from Children's Services to Adult Social Care.**

To support the transition of young people in the transition from Children's Services to Adult Social Care, the Department formed a task and finish group with representation from all areas of the service including Looked After Children, Leaving Care, All Age Disability, Young Carers, Safeguarding, Adult's Single Point of Access, and Community Wellbeing.

The group took part in robust discussions and input into a Department-wide Transition Policy which not only recognises the importance of information sharing at the earliest stage, but sets out roles and responsibilities as we support our young people in navigating their transition to Adult Social Care.

### **Fully embed the Extra Familial Harm Protocol**

Following the successful launch of the Department's Extra Familial Harm Protocol in the 2022/23 reporting year, progress has continued in ensuring the principles of the protocol are upheld with Children's Services membership on regional forums (i.e. Modern Slavery Forum, VAWDASV and MARAC Steering Group, North Wales Vulnerability and Exploitation Board and the Regional Safeguarding Board). Consistent representation at these regional groups ensures that issues surrounding extra familial harm are addressed frequently and can all be brought together to the Council's Community Safety Partnership with any areas for improvement or development considered as part of the Council Plan.

### **Full review of the Children's Services Threshold document**

Having originally launched our Children's Services Threshold document in September 2021; the Department took the opportunity to fully review the content in the 2023/24 reporting year, having been in operation for over 12 months. Whilst this review did not require any major changes to the document, it was felt that as the policy sets out an approach to providing support to families which encourages more opportunity for prevention and helps to prevent inappropriate escalation, the revised policy was published in October 2023 as "Getting it right for families, right support - right time."

## **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Develop a robust transfer process for young people transitioning from Children's Services to Adult Social Care
- Implement Trauma Informed Approach across Children's Social Care;
- Implement a child centred approach across Children's Social Care

## Standard 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote physical, mental and emotional well-being

This means helping people look after their physical, mental and emotional health.

### Adult Social Care

#### This is what we said we'd do

- Embed an outcome and strength based approach to practice
- Remodel our Single Point of Access Service to further focus on prevention and wellbeing, making best use of community assets and enable increasing numbers of people to meet their wellbeing outcomes outside of statutory services provision.

#### Jargon Buster -

SPoA is the first point of contact for anyone wishing to make a new referral into Services, including partner agencies and members of the public.

#### This is what we did

##### Embed an outcome and strength based approach to practice

Citizens continually tell us through, local, regional and national research and feedback that they want to live as independently as possible, as long as possible in a home of their own; supported to make use of the skills and assets available to them. To this end, and in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, we have rolled out a programme of Outcome Focussed, Strength Based Assessment Training across Adult Services. The training is upskilling practitioners (old and new) to focus on what matters to citizens, beginning from a strength based discussion. This means that people should only then be prescribed the right amount of formal care services that they need which enables people, families and communities to do as much as they can do for themselves with access to appropriate information, advice and assistance.

To this end, we continue to invest in prevention services, services to support unpaid carers and advances in telecare and we'll have more on how this is working next year.

To support our strength based practice including our work on prevention we have committed to using assistive technology as a tool to help us.

We purchased a device called a RITA, developed by My Improvement Network (MIN), it is a Therapeutic digital system which allows citizens to engage with therapeutic interventions such as historical media to promote wellbeing and provides access to a range of therapeutic activities via a user friendly touchscreen device. This device has been specifically created to assist those with dementia and dementia related illnesses to improve their overall health, wellbeing, and communication.

'RITA is aimed at offering support for older people, people with mental health issues and Learning difficulties and brain injuries patients as a means of supporting them and reducing their agitation, isolation, depression and delirium.' - My Improvement Network.

To ensure we are consistently delivering our strength based values and putting these into practice, we also introduced a community care panel this year. The panel helps to ensure that every care plan is outcomes focussed, is person centred and starts from a strength based approach. Panel is also supporting us to manage our resources more effectively and fairly. Practitioners have welcomed the opportunity to learn from each other about new and innovative ways to support citizens to achieve their wellbeing outcomes often in alternative ways to invasive or over prescribed domiciliary care. In doing so, we have also supported Adult Services budget management during exceptionally challenging times.

## **Remodel our Single Point of Access Service**

A decision was taken to separate the functions of our Single Point of Access (SPoA) front door service to ensure that we are responding to citizens with the appropriate levels of support to enable them to access the correct pathway of help. Remodelling the service in this way will provide a more tailored approach and ensure the right services are engaged for the right people.

We undertook a consultation exercise with people who use services to ensure that this was the correct way forward and by listening to our citizens it became clear that we needed to have different model to ensure that accessing services was simplified, and reduced the need to repeat information.

By creating a specialist team to support those citizens with more complex needs we can direct them to the services they need more quickly. With a focus on early intervention and a strengths based approach this will help people to achieve their personal outcomes and get the right access to what matters to them.

Also, improving our 'front door offer' is our integrated Wellbeing Hub, which we opened to the public in October 2022 and has progressively seen an increase in the number of activities taking place each month. The available rooms and spaces are used by a variety of organisations delivering early prevention activities. The Wellbeing Hub facilitates activities that are person-centred and strengths based to deliver the services that matter to citizens.



During the first year of operation 1367 planned activities were held and 1279 informal drop in sessions and we look forward to inviting more organisations and more citizens into the Wellbeing Hub over the next twelve months. The Wellbeing Hub also creates a simple and clear access point to support citizens to make healthier lifestyle choices rather than the multiple traditional, single issue services that can cause confusion for both referrers and the public alike. In the first year of operation the Wellbeing Hub team received 423 requests for information.

Feedback we have received includes;

'...a further benefit to working from the Wellbeing Hub is the ability to seamlessly transition someone straight from their psychology appointment immediately into the caring hands of the Hub staff who can support them to access all kinds of additional services and resources. Our patients experience smooth and consistent support and our staff feel more satisfied that we are providing holistic and needs led support to our patients. We really value being able to work from the Wellbeing Hub and the support and access the staff provide. Our patients consistently report the same.' - BCUHB Long Covid Service.

'...we have made regular use of hiring the wonderful spaces as well as making the use of the open spaces.

Running Health and Wellbeing sessions in the community requires accessible, welcoming venues, both of which are found at the Wellbeing Hub. The front of house staff and management have always proven caring and easy to work alongside, helping the public with their wellbeing needs. - BCUHB Health Improvement Team

## **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Launch our Early Intervention Team (EIT) taking a strengths based approach
- Develop our Prevention Services to provide an enhanced model to support citizens as early as possible in their journey
- Develop and implement an information Portal that will allow citizens to access information about Adult Social Care and community services

## **Children's Social Care**

### **This is what we said we'd do**

- Expand involvement of the Young People in Care Council to include participation in staff interviews and review/development of departmental policies
- Continuously promote the importance of Life Journey Work through annual conferences and workshops

## **This is what we did**

### **Expand involvement of the Young People in Care Council**

Wrexham's Young People in Care Council (YPiCC) has gone from strength to strength in the last twelve months with young people actively involved in policy reviews, staff interviews and department developments.

Through the groups' linked Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer (ISRO), the YPiCC are made aware of department policies which are due for review and create a schedule of consultation where they are given the opportunity to actively take part in the content of the policy, empowering them with the ability to "have their say" in areas which affect their lives.

### **Promote the importance of Life Journey Work through annual conferences and workshops**

The promotion and importance of Life Journey Work continue to be at the forefront of Children's Services. The development of the Children's Services Life Journey Work Policy received positive feedback from the National Adoption Service. The Annual Conference was attended by over 100 people including third sector representatives, social workers, and support workers.

This approach continues with the new development of a bespoke training package, designed by the Life Journey Work working group, specifically to promote the importance and responsibility of foster carers in this important area. The group were

supported by a foster carer, who was able to provide live experience of life journey work with our children in care. This involvement allowed for the package of training to be tailored to the needs of the foster carer, whilst enforcing the importance that life journey work holds for the children we support.

The development of the foster carer training package is envisaged to be complete in April 2024 with rollout to foster carers later the same year.

## **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Implement a good practice for working with fathers
- Develop and enhance our in-house placement offer for fostering and residential care.

## Standard 3: Safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm

This means helping to protect people who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or other forms of harm or exploitation.

Our priority continues to be, safeguarding people and families and utilising all resources available to us.

Both the adult safeguarding team and children's safeguarding and quality assurance teams continue to respond quickly and flexibly to rapidly changing scenarios. The approach has been innovative and flexible by using virtual meetings, being creative with the way in which we conduct and facilitate contact, whilst remaining focussed on the safety of our citizens and staff.

### Adult Social Care

#### This is what we said we'd do

- Redesign of an effective and efficient Single Point of Access (SPoA) for Adult Social Services.
- Undertake engagement with stakeholders to review the sustainability of our Occupational Therapy services and reduce waiting lists

#### This is what we did

##### **Redesign of an effective and efficient Single Point of Access (SPoA) for Adult Social Services.**

Over this last year we have undertaken development of a more effective way of providing our Single Point of Access (SPoA) Service to the citizens of Wrexham.

We looked at all the functions of our existing SPoA provision and separated them out to ensure more clarity. This has not only enabled us to ensure that citizens are directed to the service they need first time it has also helped us to prioritise the critical functions of SPoA to make it more efficient and easier to use. The redesigned service was launched in February 2024 and we expect that the changes made will be well received.

Alongside these changes we have also implemented an improved Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service by bringing all external calls to social care directly into the department. By no longer using the Contact Centre to filter and redirect calls it provides a more seamless journey for those citizens needing our services and support.

## **Review the sustainability of our Occupational Therapy services and reduce waiting lists**

We have made huge strides to improve our Occupational Therapy (OT) offer this year reducing our waiting list by 70% resulting in improved waiting times and outcomes for citizens

Committing resource to assessing our current waiting lists, taking a strengths based approach has allowed us to reduce the number of citizens waiting for services. Identifying those who may need alternative service support such as housing assistance could lead to not only a further reduction in the waiting list but also ensure that they are not waiting for the wrong services.

We have also developed some important self-help tools so that those people who can self-manage have the right information, advice and assistance to do so and prevent the need for statutory intervention. This approach is working well, with people supported to remain independent and in control of their support needs.

- Citizen one comments: "I feel like I am managing tasks more easily and not needing the support I did from family so much. I am more confident at home and know where to get support to help me return to doing some of the things I enjoy. I really appreciate the support I was given."
- Citizen two comments: "I feel everyone helped me following my fall and I am now managing to do everything I need too and go out on the bus to get out and about like I did before my fall. Everyone was so kind and helpful and I really appreciate the support I was given."
- Citizen three comments: "I can't fault any of the help and support I have received, it's been first class - Thank you"
- Citizen four comments: "Now I can clean myself properly I feel more confident going out and seeing people."

We have also undertaken the development of the Integrated Prevention Service (IPS) which is dedicated to the provision of short term Occupational Therapy support (OT) and is fully operational working closely with the reablement and prevention services teams to support with admission avoidance or safe and timely discharge from hospital and enabling those citizens who are able, to continue to do things for themselves.

## **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Undertake a review of the Adult Care Panel and its effectiveness as a way to safely commission eligible care in the context of reducing budgets
- Raise awareness of the Section 5 (Persons in a Position of Trust) - for adults at risk referral process, determining the appropriate way forward with all agencies working together to ensure clarity and best practice.

## Children's Social Care

### This is what we said we'd do

- Formally adopt and launch the Prevent, Modern Day Slavery and Channel Panel policies.
- Develop a disruption approach for missing and/or exploited children
- Prepare for the implementation of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (LPS)

### This is what we did

#### **Formally adopt and launch the Prevent, Modern Day Slavery and Channel Panel policies.**

Linked to the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Board, three policies were created, in consultation with colleagues across the Council, external partners and trade unions to formally recognise the importance of recognising early signs of concern in these areas, ensuring there are effective pathways to report concerns, and make certain all staff, across the Council are adequately trained and informed.

In January 2024, all three policies were approved at the Council's Executive Board and are set for review in 2025.

#### **Develop a disruption approach for missing and/or exploited children**

Children's Services have been actively involved in a task and finish group, working to identify the needs of a child where disruption approach takes place. This is not only for missing and exploited children, but for all children across the whole continuum of care. This project involves working closely with the four providers delivering disruption services across North Wales and England. This project is expected to run for 2-3 years with the first year mapping developments and determining the scope of the project having gone very well to date. The next steps are to determine what funding is available and who will deliver it.

#### **Prepare for the implementation of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (LPS)**

In response to the proposed Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (LPS), task and finish groups were identified and scheduled well in advance of LPS and the implementation of the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 (the 2019 Act) with active participation across the Department, Human Resources and Legal.

In April 2023, this work ceased with the delay in publication of guidance in relation to LPS and the subsequent notice from Lynne Neagle, Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing on 5 April 2023. The notice received confirmed that the UK Government had announced their intention to step away from the introduction of LPS.

### **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Develop a disruption approach for missing and/or exploited children
- Launch the effective child protection conference model

## Standard 4: Helping people to learn, develop and participate in society

This standard is about encouraging people to take part in society - helping them learn, interact with other people and be part of their communities.

### Adult Social Care

#### This is what we said we'd do

- To achieve Age Friendly status from The World Health Organisation. - They are the United Nations agency that connects nations, partners and people to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable - so everyone, everywhere can attain the highest level of health (WHO)
- Develop a Strategy for Autism and review the Code of Practice to understand how it can benefit our communities

#### This is what we did

##### To achieve Age Friendly status from The World Health Organisation

Wrexham are on the path to attain Age Friendly status from the World Health Organisation. We are diligently gathering evidence and establishing forums to reinforce our forthcoming submission.

Evidence of actions taken to implement the strategy will include development projects, policy changes and social programs. There will need to be measurable outcomes and progress to track the effectiveness of the initiatives. The initiatives or services will need to be in place to address social isolation and loneliness among older residents, improving their health and well-being.

There has to be evidence of community engagement and inclusion of older adults in a consultation process to determine what is important for ageing. Collaboration and stakeholder involvement, especially from health and local authorities is key in applying for the status to ensure where possible all community needs are met.

Additionally, we are currently establishing an Ageing Well Forum. A public consultation for people aged 50+ is being conducted to gauge what residents of Wrexham consider to be vital for ageing well. The outcomes of this consultation will inform the creation of an Ageing Well Strategy and an Intergenerational Strategy.

## Develop a Strategy for Autism and review the Code of Practice

We are working with the Regional Collaboration Team to develop and test our compliance with the Autism Code of Practice (COP). We are aware that despite the work we are doing, there are families in our community that are not getting the support they need as a result of lack of information about what is out there to help them. We are working to ensure that we change this with our citizens. 'Your Space' is an autism charity that we are working with to develop further support. Over the past year they have;

- Offered counselling services to 27 individuals of which 23 were children or young people.
- Received 19 Outreach referrals since November 2023. From those 3 are receiving support, 3 have appointments and are waiting to be seen and the remaining 13 are waiting for appointments to be booked in.
- Received 49 registrations from Young people for activities. From these 20 have returned completed applications and visits have been arranged, 12 are due to be contacted, the remaining 16 are on a waiting list for space at sessions

## This is what we want to do in 2024-25

- Undertake a Mental Health Review to include current delivery of services, prevention models and development of our in house provision
- Use the outcome of the review to inform the development of a new service offer working with the third sector to revise/restructure our current support services for people with low level mental health needs.

## Children's Social Care

### This is what we said we'd do

- Progress to next stage of development of the Wellbeing Hub, including third sector involvement, functioning café, and review of opening times
- Full review of the pre-birth offer in Children's Services
- Improve communication and information sharing regarding children not currently in education



## **This is what we did**

### **Progress to next stage of development of the Wellbeing Hub**

Following the successful opening of the Wellbeing Hub in October 2022, the Hub has gone from strength to strength with a number of activities being held each month and rooms being utilised by an array of organisations delivery early prevention activities.

In 2023, the Hub opened its Wellbeing café and welcomed third sector organisations such as KIM Inspire, Advanced Brighter Futures and Adferiad, who all run regular sessions to improve early access to prevention and mental health services.

In its first year of operation, the Hub has hosted over 1,300 planned activities and new partnerships with additional third sector organisation continue to be established.

### **Full review of the pre-birth offer in Children's Services**

As part of the review of the pre-birth offer in Children's Services, a successful task and finish group was put in place to create a partnership between Children's Services and our health and midwifery colleagues to further support expectant mothers and unborn babies.

Through this work, the Pre-Birth Liaison Meetings were successfully launched. They have worked to identify vulnerabilities and provide preventative support for expectant mothers, whilst facilitating the sharing of information at the earliest possible opportunity.

To continue the emphasis on this area of work, a further review of the pre-birth process is planned for 2024/25.

### **Improve communication and information sharing regarding children not currently in education**

Throughout the year, Children's Services have worked to improve communication and information sharing regarding children not currently in education. This has included establishing links through operational Looked After Children meetings which now include officers from Education Services and where we regularly discuss any children who are not currently in education. This approach has helped to strengthen relationships between Corporate Parenting and Education, and included the addition of the Head of Service for Inclusion and Additional Learning Needs to the Department's Accommodation Panel considering those children becoming Looked After by the Local Authority.

The Schools Improvement Officer and Head of Service for Inclusion and Additional Learning Needs have also joined the Children's Senior Management Team monthly meetings to ensure effective communication and information sharing regarding children not accessing education or children educated at home.

## **This is what we want to do in 2024- 25**

- Expand our kick start provision for care leavers enabling them to step out of care and live independently
- To work with education and health in the repatriation of looked after children who are out of county to ensure the health and education needs continue to be met locally

## Standard 5: Helping people maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

This standard is about helping people achieve healthy relationships at home and with the people they're close to.

### Adult Social Care

#### This is what we said we'd do

- Develop a more robust Unpaid Carers' offer including a new contract and service specification
- Communication strategy to be developed to allow unpaid carers to identify themselves and seek intervention
- Improving uptake of Unpaid Carers Assessments
- Working with employers in Wrexham to develop support for employees who identify as unpaid carers

#### This is what we did

##### Develop a more robust Unpaid Carers' offer

We have undertaken a lot of work to develop a more robust Unpaid Carers offer. A new service specification has been developed after extensive consultation work with unpaid carers in the community and via our Unpaid Carers Survey. The new service specification will focus on providing services for unpaid carers outside of normal office hours, as well as promoting the importance of carers' needs assessments and the identification of unpaid carers in Wrexham.

We have also been working closely with our adult unpaid carer service and young carer service provider to develop a smoother transition from young carer to adult unpaid carer. We have an intergenerational event planned for May 2024 which will see young carers, and adult unpaid carers come together to share experiences at an informal and fun event at Ty Mawr Country Park.

The introduction of a new 'Unpaid Carer Forum' offers unpaid carers the chance to voice their opinions and give feedback on services they have accessed. There is also a 'Dementia Forum' and a 'Disability Families Forum' where the experiences of unpaid carers helps to inform improvement.

## Communication strategy to be developed for Unpaid Carers

A communication strategy for unpaid carers has been developed and implemented. The strategy will be updated every six months and takes into account national days (Carers Week, Carers Rights Day etc). The strategy provides instructions on how messages should be delivered to the public. Going forward the focus will be on digital content and in particular videos, as well as continuing to promote the services that are available to unpaid carers in Wrexham and the right to a carers needs assessment.

## Improving uptake of Unpaid Carers Assessments

During the summer 2023, NEWCIS and the Unpaid Carer Development Officer visited over 15 different locations across the county borough taking information and advice to harder to reach areas, and to groups and organisations holding activities and meetings in community centres, libraries, pubs and garden centres. We provided information directly to 147 unpaid carers and a further 49 new unpaid carers were registered with NEWCIS. Our young carers service WCD, also attended many of the dates across the county to give information and advice to young carers in the communities.

The roadshows were an overwhelming success and as a result more dates were set in the autumn for Carers Rights Day.

## NEWCIS staff member feedback

"The staff really enjoyed doing it. Getting out and about and meeting people in their own communities. We had lots of positive feedback from carers, mostly around meeting us and getting that initial conversation/information going with us. Staff have also mentioned to me that a few of the carers they are still working with really have heavy caring roles and had not reached out previously so there is evidence that the approach works to find carers who are not on our radar. Also helping to speak to those carers who don't identify as such."

## Community Agent feedback

"I believe the session you held at the OJ Dolywern was very useful and needed, it gave people an opportunity to recognise just what a carer is and does! It surprised some as they realised they are indeed carers. For me it is very important to acknowledge the importance of caregivers and to let them know what and who is available to help those in their role as for too long people have been left unaware of services available to them, leaving the caregiver to become very isolated and alone. More power to you for getting the word out there and making people aware, and thank you so very much for visiting us."

## Develop support for employees who identify as unpaid carers

Wrexham County Borough Council is now a member of Carers Wales, Employers for Carers scheme. The scheme provides support to unpaid carers who are staff and juggling full and part time work with their caring roles. Being a member enables our staff to access a portal dedicated to unpaid carer support. The online portal is full of practical guides, e-learning modules and toolkits to help support unpaid carers and line managers.

We have also facilitated workshops for staff on various topics such as “Managing Guilt and Knowing Your Rights as an Unpaid Carer”. We also held a workshop for our wellbeing champions to help them to learn more about how to support unpaid carers. We also hold a monthly unpaid carers café in our Wellbeing Hub for staff to access peer to peer support, and get advice and information from NEWCIS and Wellbeing Champions.

### Jargon Buster

Wellbeing Champions - are people embedded within our organisation who are there to listen and to signpost to services and support where needed.

## This is what we want to do in 2024-25

- Commission an enhanced and improved carers service
- Hold more Dementia Friends Sessions in our communities raising awareness which aligns to Dementia Friendly Communities Scheme

## Children's Social Care

### This is what we said we'd do

- Review policy and approach for Domestic Abuse and reduce the use of victim blaming language
- Increase commissioning of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
- Progress improvements in SPOA to include involvement of North Wales Police

### This is what we did

#### Review policy and approach for Domestic Abuse

Aligned to the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Board, the Department undertook a review of its Domestic Abuse Policy, focussing on the identification and support to staff who may have or are actively experiencing domestic abuse.

To support this work a task and finish group was set up to include Workforce Development (training), Practice Development (policy and procedures) Human Resources (staff support), operational Team Managers (early identification) with oversight and involvement from the North Wales Violence Against Women, domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Lead. This has produced a revised policy that covers all aspects of domestic abuse

### **Increase commissioning of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes**

Discussions supported through the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) and VAWDASV Steering Group have been included in the commissioning of a full service review, looking at perpetrator work in more detail across North Wales. This will include all levels of perpetrator from high risk or high harm perpetrators down to those coming to the attention of services for the first time, and includes targeting groups in schools and colleges.

This review is being undertaken by the North Wales VAWDASV team, and it is hoped that recommendations from this review will guide commissioning of perpetrator interventions going forward into 2024/25.

### **Progress improvements in SPOA**

Improvements have been made in SPOA as a result of the North Wales Police and Social Care Working Group, set up in 2022/23.

This group was put in place to establish better links between the Children's Services "front door" and North Wales Police at the earliest opportunity. Following the successes of this group, North Wales Police now have a virtual presence in SPOA daily with effective virtual communications and strategy discussions. This has aided in the timeliness and consistency in decision making. Children's Services SPOA benefit from daily support and communication from a dedicated Detective Sergeant, reinforcing early information sharing and collaboration, where necessary.

### **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Embed Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) Fit model to expand its reach
- Develop MST CAN model working with children and families in their homes

## Standard 6: Helping people achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

This means helping people improve their income. As well as helping them benefit from a social life and a suitable place to live.

### Adult Social Care

#### This is what we said we'd do

- Explore alternative models of delivery for day service and work opportunities to enable greater independence for those with learning disabilities
- Review of Brokerage model to expand brokerage functions to ensure effective and efficient placement commissioning; making better use of our resources and give greater choice to the people of Wrexham.
- Pilot Positive Behaviour Support App in Community Living Service and to better support citizens, increasing responsiveness and accessibility of support plans
- Joint working between reablement and prevention services to strengthen and unify service delivery for our citizens

#### Jargon Buster - 'brokerage'

Brokerage is about sourcing a range of suitable support options that meet the needs of the client and enables the most suitable provision to be made.

#### This is what we did

##### Explore alternative models of delivery for day service and work opportunities

Some years ago we operated a supported work opportunities service and we had number of internal business that allowed us to deliver the service internally, we no longer have these small businesses.

Following the completion of an independent review report which looked at the existing provision in Wrexham; we now have a clear pathway of how to develop our offer of support. The recommended approach is to retain the Day Services and Respite provision as an in-house service provided by our existing support and outreach services, allowing further development.

In relation to work opportunities elements, the recommendation was to seek an external provider to undertake delivery.

Our aim is to develop a work opportunity provision offer that will enable citizens of Wrexham who have a learning or physical disability or both to access meaningful work opportunities that are, where possible, commensurate with their aspirations. The support will enable citizens to access educational pathways and voluntary placements that may in the longer term lead to paid employment depending on their abilities.

We are now well underway with a tender exercise to appoint a provider and look forward to launching the new provision in the autumn.

### **Review of Brokerage model to expand brokerage functions**

We have been doing a lot of work this year to make sure resources are in the right place to best support citizens to achieve their wellbeing outcomes. One of the ways we have done this is by ensuring our experienced Care Brokers support social work teams and the families they are supporting to find care home placements. This frees up social workers to do more of what matters to citizens in helping people to assess what they need and help to plan how they can achieve these. This has worked well, and is fully rolled out but we still have a long way to go in making sure our teams are as well-resourced as they can be to support citizens as demand continues to increase.

### **Pilot Positive Behaviour Support App in Community Living Service**

Our Community Living service is part of a pilot funded by the Learning Disability transformation grant to test out a care planning and support App with the people they support. Feedback from the staff team and the people they support has been positive, they have told us "it's easy to use, gives a full picture of support needs and contains meaningful information". The information recorded on the App gives a holistic, person centred view of the individuals we support, it also supports communication, and effective evidence based record keeping and quality assurance. We continue to explore how this or a similar approach can be rolled out across services.

### **Joint working between reablement and prevention services**

Our in house Reablement Service have been working more closely with Wrexham Maelor hospital, and a member of the team is based there daily to enable swift assessment and hospital discharge.

The Reablement Service helps people who are experiencing difficulties with everyday activities to regain their independence. The aim of reablement is to support people to improve skills and confidence so they can complete necessary daily living skills such as getting washed and dressed, preparing meals or even help with getting around the house so that they are able continue to live in their own home.



Reablement is available to Wrexham residents aged 18 and over with an assessed need.

Working more closely with the hospital is reducing waiting times for hospital discharge, and receiving reablement support is showing benefit not only for the individual but also reducing pressures on the hospital too.

### **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Implement the recommendations of the Day and Work Opportunities review report for future service
- Develop a Supported Living Strategy and review the current service specification to align more closely with the regional progression model
- Mental Health Supported living - formulate a plan to expand recovery services by increasing our own provision in Wrexham to allow citizens to stay in the community and reduce high cost placements out of county.
- Restructure of provider services - The revised structure was approved in January 2024. Once implemented it will provide more robust leadership and management, improving efficiencies, quality of care and workforce culture.

## **Children's Social Care**

### **This is what we said we'd do**

- Review the use of Family Group Meetings to look at alternative accommodation needs for children and supporting families to remain together using local community networks.
- Further develop the Care Closer to Home project
- Review and improve pathways for unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Develop and define the model of delivery for our childrens service to include a strengthened trauma informed approach

### **This is what we did**

#### **Review the use of Family Group Meetings**

Throughout the year, there have been many successes resulting from the review of the use of Family Group Meetings. These successes have ranged from prevention of children entering care - enabling them to remain with their families and aiding children to step down from services.

We have extended the Family Group Meeting programme into the prevention area by launching a self-referral facility to families and third sector partners through the Department's IEG online portal.

### **Further development of the Care Closer to Home project**

As part of the Department's commitment to its Care Closer to Home project, Wrexham Children's Services have engaged in a joint venture with Flintshire to open a combined emergency placement and therapeutic, educational, therapy home. This has resulted in successful placements for children, enabling their rehabilitation home.

To further support this project, a review of fostering rates for foster carers has resulted in positive local recruitment. The introduction of the Champion Foster Carer Model serves as an alternative to residential care for children with complex needs, ensuring they can remain in a family home, whilst offering foster carers 7-day a week support.

In addition work continues with our capital investment plans to acquire another two properties in 2024/25. We also secured additional Welsh Government Funding to develop a number of small children's homes, one per year for 2024, 2025 and 2026 to enable children and young people to remain or move back to their home town.

### **Review and improve pathways for unaccompanied asylum seeking children**

Children's Services are fortunate to have a social worker dedicated to supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). This ensures that these young people are allocated to one specific worker, providing them with consistency and support.

In addition to the above, the successful implementation of the Departments first phase of its Kickstart project now includes additional phases which include considering the needs of UASC in accommodation. The Department is also actively involved in development groups across the region considering a strategic and regional pathway for unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

### **Develop and define the model of delivery for our children service**

Much work has been undertaken throughout the year to define the model of delivery for Children's Services. This includes, but is certainly not limited to reviewing the language we use in communications to and about our young people and their families. We've made great strides in using child friendly language and promote an approach of writing our reports about our young people to our young people, endorsing our method of building strong life journey work throughout their involvement with us.

Strategically, the Department has invested in enhanced trauma informed training with some staff already having taken part, supported by a 5-year implementation plan which will take forward a trauma informed approach across the department.

## **This is what we want to do in 2024-25**

- Further develop and improve pathways for unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Continue to enhance and further development of the Care Closer to Home project

# How we deliver for our citizens

## Developing Our Workforce

Our workforce development team continues to offer a range of online training sessions, eLearning modules and face to face training for the social care sector. The regional Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) 2024/25 application has been submitted with Wrexham's grant allocation (which includes 30% match funding) is the same as this year £472,012.

Training and qualifications are made available to the social care workforce development partnership, whose membership is detailed in our communication plan.

As part of the department's drive to grow our own social care professionals and tap into the talented and committed employees we already have working for the council; Social Care has committed to sponsoring up to eight employees to study for a BA Degree in Social Work on an annual basis. This year, which marks our second cohort of the new grow our own scheme (2023/24) eight employees were successful in their application and started their degree. This follows on from the six students we are supporting from cohort one. We are due to start the application process for the 2024/25 cohort. The Social Worker course is three years of full time, long-distance learning via the Open University.

Also as part of the Grow our Own scheme we are into our second cohort for individuals to study for a BA Degree in Occupational Therapy with a guaranteed job as a Social Worker or Occupational Therapist at the end. Four students are supported in this intake which follows on from the three students from the previous year. The Occupational Therapy course is four years of part time study at Glyndwr University.

We have made a significant investment in Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) Training for social care workers in provider services. We will continue this in 2024/2025.

By embedding the train the trainer approach, we may be able to apply for regional funding as this is seen as best practice across Wales.

Due to local governments challenging budget situations detailed work has been undertaken to improve the way we deliver our service. As part of the Workforce Development review, job roles within the team have been re-designed to accommodate the increasing training and development demands from the social care sector with the intention to reduce commissioned spending and increase our internal delivery, working with in-house services to meet the development needs within the required budget.

More information about [regional and local training and qualification priorities, emerging effective practice and training initiatives](#) can be found on our website.

## Finances and planning for the future

The 2022/23 budget pressure for Social Care of £17 million reflected the demand pressures we currently face. Given the nature of the pressures it was inevitable that this would have an impact on the 2023/24 financial year and work started early in the year to address the situation. A range of budget mitigation measures were put in place to reduce his pressure and works continues to reduce it further

Based on the latest position, the 2023/24 forecast outturn is expected to be a budget pressure of around £11.6 million. This underlying pressure is expected to continue into the medium term and has been reflected in the 2024/25 budget for Social Care which includes additional investment of £7.1million plus inflationary pressures of £8.1 million - an overall increase of £15.2 million. The 2025/26 to 2026/27 Medium Term Financial Plan includes a further investment of £5m over the next two financial years, over and above inflationary pressures.

## Political leadership, governance and accountability

On a political level, the council is supported by an executive group of councillors - called 'lead members' - who make key decisions. They're supported by scrutiny committees. Social services comes under the Safeguarding, Communities and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

On a management level, the director of social services (Chief Officer) reports directly to the chief executive of the council, and they are supported by a departmental management team. Councillors and senior managers with these lead-responsibilities understand the importance of social services, and council policy states that we'll prioritise services that support vulnerable people when setting budgets, making savings and changing how we do things.

The Social Care Improvement Board (SCIB) comprises the two Lead Members for Social Care, the Chief Executive and Senior Officers from across the Council who can support the improvement work, including from Children's Social Care, Legal, HR and Finance. The Board meets every two months to review progress against the SCIB Action plan, with regular reports provided to the Leader, Deputy Leader and Lead Members and end of phase reporting to all Members. The senior political and officer leadership provided is crucial in underpinning the sustained positive changes that are being achieved.

## Partnership working

Wrexham County Borough Council is a partner of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board (RPB). This is a board consisting of all 6 local authorities, health board and third sector partners from across the region. They provide a collective approach to the development of services and oversight of regional monies provided by Welsh Government. Where possible they are there to look for ways to deliver projects and solutions on a North Wales wide footprint.

To inform this work, RPBs must produce regional Population Needs Assessments, Market stability Report and annual reports on progress against key pieces of work. These must demonstrate citizen engagement and co-production.

Further sub regional (Wrexham and Flintshire - East Area) groups are in place that feed information into the North Wales wide work. and then there are forums set up local to Wrexham, focussing on areas such as Dementia and Unpaid Carers so that the lived experience an Unpaid Carer voice can be heard alongside Local authority, Health and third sector partners.

## Safeguarding arrangements

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and to minimise the effect of abuse and supporting vulnerable people who are affected. We also ensure children and vulnerable adults wellbeing are promoted, taking into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on action.

Grounded by the principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019), we ensure safeguarding is at the forefront of everything we do and value the relationships and partnerships we have established with our multi agency partners and voluntary organisations.

Our commitment to safeguarding is supported by investment in workforce training. Working in partnership with Human Resources and Organisational Development, we ensure safeguarding training is delivered throughout the year which covers basic safeguarding awareness and multi-agency working and sharing of information, including individual targeted subjects where trends or patterns are emerging locally or nationally.

Safeguarding is embedded in the day to day work of all our teams from our preventative services to those teams responsible for undertaking longer term assessments and care and support services working with children/young people and vulnerable adults. Social Care is supported by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team, which brings together several roles to ensure there are robust arrangements for oversight, quality assurance and challenge over all statutory processes.

The Department's Adult Safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team ensure that adults at risk receive support within statutory timescales, investigations are coordinated and timely and safeguarding plans are in place to protect adults.

The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) are part of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The safeguards aim to make sure that people in care homes and hospitals are looked after in a way that does not inappropriately restrict their freedom and the DoLS framework is to protect a person who lacks capacity to consent to their care, accommodation care and treatment in order to keep them safe from harm.

# Further information

This final section lists where you can find more information about some of the things mentioned in this report.

- [Council Structure](#)
- [Council Plan](#) - Overarching plan that defines where the council focuses its energies.
- [Future Generations Commissioner for Wales](#)
- [North Wales Safeguarding Board](#) - Helps ensure children and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and neglect.
- [Performance Evaluation Report 2020](#)
- [Report On Regulated Care Services In Wrexham](#)
- [Council Complaints and Compliments](#)
- [Dewis Cymru](#)

## Council reports and documents

- [Charging Policy](#)
- [Wrexham Council Workforce Strategy](#)
- [Workforce Development Training Plan, Brochure and Mid-Year Report](#)
- [Welsh Language Standards](#)
- [Transport Web Pages](#)
- [Wrexham Travel Plan - Wrexham Connected](#)



# Appendix 1

## Performance Measurement Framework

### Standard 1: Helping people achieve the well-being outcomes they want

Performance Metric	2023-24 Out-Turn	Comment
AD/002 - The number of contacts for adults received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided	Data is not currently reportable	None
CA/002 - The total number of contacts to statutory social services by adult carers received during the year where advice or assistance was provided	9,226	Data provided by Unpaid Carers Lead
CSC/014 - Percentage of assessments completed within statutory timescales	87.91%	An improvement on 22-23 (76.78%)

### Standard 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote physical, mental and emotional well-being

Performance Metric	2023-24 Out-Turn	Comment
AD/032 - The total number of adults during the year where the need for an independent professional advocate was identified and AD/033 - Total number of adults during the year where the need for an independent professional advocate was identified and provided	AD/032 - 110 AD/033 - 94	Data provided by commissioned providers
CSC/0010a - Percentage of assessments completed where there was evidence of the Active Offer of Welsh	99.73%	Remains static performance from 22-23 (99.31%)
CSC/034 - Percentage of initial core group meetings held within timescale	94.59%	Improvement from 22-23 (69.95%)

### Standard 3: Safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm

Performance Metric	2023-24 Out-Turn	Comment
CSC/033 - Percentage of initial child protection conferences held within timescale	92.16%	Improvement from 22-23 (75%)
AD/023 - Total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk where it is necessary for enquiries to be made and AD/024 - Total number of enquiries completed within 7 working days from the receipt of the reported alleged abuse	AD/023 - 933 AD/024 - 852	Data provided by Social Care Services

### Standard 4: Helping people to learn, develop and participate in society

Performance Metric	2023-24 Out-Turn	Comment
CSC/054a - Of Care Leavers (Categories 1, 2 and 4), the % who have completed at least 3 months of consecutive employment, education or training in the 12 months since leaving care	47.83%	Drop in % - down from 57.14% in 22-23
AD/010 - Percentage of packages of reablement completed during the year which reduced, maintained or mitigated the need for support	Reduced - 1.8% Maintained - 12.3% Mitigated - 86%	Data provided by Occupational Therapy Team

## Standard 5: Helping people maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

Performance Metric	2023-24 Out-Turn	Comment
CSC/038 - Percentage of children looked after at 31st March who were registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement	100%	Remains positive performance from 22-23 (100%)
CSC/042 - Percentage of health assessments for LAC due in the year that have been undertaken	78.95%	Drop in % - down from 88.93% in 22-23
CSC/052 - Percentage of Young People that required and were allocated a personal advisor	100%	Improvement from 22-23 (97.93%)

## Standard 6: Helping people achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

Performance Metric	2023-24 Out-Turn	Comment
CSC/055 - Percentage young people leaving care who move into a "When I am Ready" placement	23.08%	There was an error in how the % was calculated for 22-23. This should have been 57.14%, not 63.16%. However, 23-24 is still a drop in percentage from 22-23.
AD/015a - Percentage of Residential Care services started during the year	40.55%	Percentage of residential care services that started in the year relative to the total services of this type in the year
AD/015b - Percentage of Domiciliary Care services started during the year	67.86%	Percentage of domiciliary care services that started in the year relative to the total services of this type in the year

## CSC/055

Percentage of young people leaving care who move into a "When I am Ready" placement 23.08%  
There was an error in how the percentage was calculated for 22-23. This should have been 57.14%, not 63.16%. However, 23-24 is still a drop in percentage from 22-23.

In 23-24, young people leaving care moved in to other types of placements. Including:

- E4 (Returned home to live with parents, relatives, or other person with parental responsibility) - 19.23%
- E5 (Moved into independent living arrangement and no longer looked after: supportive accommodation providing formalised advice/support arrangements) - 38.46%
- E6 (Moved into independent living arrangement and no longer looked after: accommodation providing no formalised advice/support arrangements) - 11.54%.