



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH NOVEMBER 2020

DRAFT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, COUNCILLOR GERAINT HOPKINS AND COUNCILLOR CHRISTINA LEYSHON

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 includes in Part 8 a Code of Practice with regards to the role of the Director of Social Services.
- 1.2 This replaces Statutory Guidance issued in June 2009 regarding the Duties and Accountabilities of Directors of Social Services in Wales and includes an ongoing requirement for the Director of Social Services to publish an Annual Report.
- 1.3 The new code of Practice states that the Director of Social Services must prepare and publish an annual report about the exercise of the Local Authority's social services functions and that this annual report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a financial year.
- 1.4 The annual report must evaluate the performance of the Local Authority in relation to the delivery of its social services functions in respect of that year and include lessons learned. It must also set out objectives in relation to promoting the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, for the forthcoming year.
- 1.5 Despite the current circumstances this report provides a first for Cabinet consideration prior to its content being made available for public consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

2.1 Note the draft Rhondda Cynon Taf Director of Social Services Annual Report (Appendix 1) and scrutinise its contents.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To provide Cabinet with the Director of Social Service's report on Social Services Functions.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 The Director of Social Services must prepare and publish an Annual Report about the exercise of the Local Authority's Social Services functions. This annual report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a financial year and address the following requirements:

- It must evaluate the performance of the local authority in relation to the delivery of its social services functions in respect of that year and include lessons learned.
- It must set out how the Local Authority has exercised relevant requirements contained in the code of practice so as to provide:
 - a) Assurances in terms of structural arrangements within the Local Authority that enable good governance and strong accountability.
 - b) Assurances in relation to effective partnership working via Partnership Boards.
 - c) Assurances in relation to safeguarding arrangements.
 - d) Information in relation to the performance of the handling and investigation of complaints and representations.
 - e) A response to any inspections undertaken in relation to social services functions.

4.2 The Welsh Government is committed to the delivery of high quality health, social services and social care services that are centred on users' needs. "*More than just words*" is its strategic framework to realise this aim.

4.3 Directors of Social Services are, therefore, required to provide an update on Welsh language provision and their implementation of "*More than just words*" as part of the annual report.

4.4 It is important that the views of service users in relation to the way the Local Authority has discharged its social services functions are included in the annual report. People, including children, who have experience of using care and support services, the parents of children who have care and support needs, and carers in the local authority area must be engaged in the process of producing an annual report and the annual report must set out how the Local Authority has engaged with people in its production.

4.5 Annual reports are a key way for local authorities to demonstrate accountability to citizens and should, therefore, be accessible to people, including service users. The Director of Social Services should, therefore,

ensure that annual reports are not overly long and are written in a clear and concise way.

- 4.6 To ensure effective accountability, the annual report must be presented to the Council by the Director of Social Services, a copy of the published annual report sent to Welsh Ministers and copies made available on the local authority website.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no implications associated with this report

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This report will be subjected to scrutiny by Cabinet and relevant Scrutiny committees. Consultation on the draft report has been made difficult by the ongoing pandemic restrictions. However, the views of people, including children, who have experience of using care and support services, the parents of children who have care and support needs, and carers in the local authority have been considered in the process of service delivery and the report sets out how the Local Authority has engaged with people.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The Annual Director's report is required under Part 8 of The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 9.1 The Annual Director's Report publishes the delivery, performance, risks and planned improvements of the Social Services function in the Council. As such it provides the public with a summary of the Directorates performance in meeting the corporate priorities for its Social Services.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Director of Social Services Annual Report sets out how the Council's Social Services performed last year, highlighting the direction and priorities we have set for the year ahead.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Background Papers:

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 Part 8 Code of Practice on the Role of the Director of Social Services

<http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/160322part8en.pdf>

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