

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

23RD SEPTEMBER 2021

DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS CLLR HOPKINS and CLLR 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 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 The purpose of this report is to present the final draft of this revised reporting framework for consideration prior to its publication.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Approve the Rhondda Cynon Taf Director of Social Services Annual Report (Appendix 1).

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To meet the statutory requirements on the Director of Social Services in respect of the publication of the annual report.

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 should be presented in such a way as to set out how the Local Authority has achieved the four quality standards described in the *Code of Practice in relation to the performance and improvement of social services in Wales* issued under 145 of the Act.
- It must include details of the extent to which the authority has acted in accordance with relevant requirements for assessing and meeting needs (Part 3 and 4 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014)
- 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 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.

- 4.3 Annual reports are a 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.

- 4.4 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 / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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.

7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 7.1 A draft report was considered by the Health and Well-being Scrutiny Committee on 19th July and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 21st July 2021. In addition the report has been shared with key partners and stakeholders in the region and with our staff.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

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

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

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

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

- 10.1 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.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The Director of Social Services Annual Report 2020/21 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

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Part 8

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