



Flintshire County Council Social Services

Annual Performance Report 2012-2013

Making next year even better with Flintshire County Council



Designed by  DoubleClick
Design



Page 2. [Introduction](#)

Page 6. [Council Leadership](#)

Page 10. [A Stronger Voice And Real Control For Citizens](#)

Page 20. [Smarter Commissioning](#)

Page 23. [Evidencing Our Improvement](#)

Page 27. [A Strong And Professional Workforce](#)

Page 30. [Stronger Safeguarding](#)

Page 31. [Driving Foward More Intergrated Services](#)

Page 39. [What We Will Do In The Coming Year To Make Things Even Better](#)

Page 41. [Glossary](#) (See words in green and underlined)



Welcome

As Director this is my annual opportunity to report on how well Flintshire County Council Social Services is performing.

Throughout 2012 I have again enjoyed many opportunities to meet the talented and hard working people who are employed by Flintshire Social Services. Spending time with my colleagues at Breakfast Briefings, 'Back to the Floor' sessions or at staff conferences has given me the opportunity to talk to them about the vision for the future and the challenges we face today.

I have, alongside my colleagues, valued the opportunity to hear first hand from people who rely on our services. I've been able to do this at the Children's Service Forum, a Dignity in Care event that was held at one of our care homes and at the fantastic 'Happiness in Ageing' day. Taking time to learn helps me to make the right decisions because I can better understand how performance impacts on people's lives.

Before I explain how well we are doing, I think it is useful if I remind you what we are all about.

Our vision: To work with people to achieve healthy independent, fulfilling lives, safeguarding vulnerable local people, and building strong communities.

Our Values

Flintshire County Council aims to be a modern public body which has the philosophy of operating as a social business which:

- Is lean, modern, efficient and effective
- Is designed, organised and operates to meet the needs of communities and the customer
- Works with its partners to achieve the highest possible standards of public service for the well-being of Flintshire as a County

Within that context our directorate will:

- Do the simple things better
- Be accessible, listen and respond
- Act openly and fairly
- Be a learning organisation and have models of service delivery grounded in research
- Develop our workforce to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to meet customer need
- Challenge and be innovative in finding solutions
- Make best use of all our resources

Context

We are providing services to 3,115 adults and 851 children, with an anticipated expenditure of £53 million for 2012 /2013. We support people of all ages, their carers and family members, often in times of illness and distress. We protect both adults and children from harm, abuse or neglect, and help them to cope. Our goal is to enable people to live independently and to lead full lives as part of their communities. Where possible we want to put people in control of the services they receive.

Resources

We are facing some huge challenges, and like other councils in Wales, we are dealing with reducing budgets compounded further by the reforms to Welfare benefits.

In the report last year we stated that Social Services would need to save £1 million in the coming year. We, as a corporate team, are really pleased to report that we actually made a saving of £1.2 million. This has happened as a result of the success of some of the measures we have taken, such as Reablement, reducing the costs of our out of county placements and changing the eligibility criteria for transport to services, to have a policy that is fair and equitable.

We are fortunate to be in a more favourable position than most local authorities in Wales and across the UK. However, we cannot be complacent. We are facing, like others, the pressure of increasing demands on our services as people are living longer with complex needs such as dementia and the improved survival rates for children with profound disabilities. Quite rightly people's expectations of what we should be doing have also increased.

Our commitment to invest in Flintshire Social Services where appropriate will continue in the year ahead, but beyond that point we cannot predict what will happen.

Transformation

The senior management team and myself agree with [CSSIW](#) (our inspectors) that we are making solid progress in driving forward our transformation of Social Services for both adults and children and this has continued in 2012/2013. In Adult Social Services we are providing more creative and flexible responses, based on our vision to promote independence through greater integration with housing, and health services. For Children's Social Services we are delivering our vision to develop services that are targeted at early intervention and prevention while focusing on support to the whole family. You will find the detail in this report.

Our ambitious Transformation of Adult Social Services has continued with force with the successful implementation of [Reablement](#), where focus is on enabling people to live as independently as possible, thus reducing the requirement for ongoing support. The Reablement model is now embedded across Social Services for Adults, as evidenced by the fact that 70% of all new referrals to Older People Services go through Reablement (September 2012).

Our Home Care Service has been remodelled and renamed as the Community Support Service, which better reflects what we are doing; keeping people at home for as long as possible in their community, with support that focuses on reablement and independence.

Feedback continues to be excellent and we are already seeing many people regain their independence with confidence. You will find out more about this significant project and others in our new plan '[Continuing the Strategy to Transform Adult Social Services in Flintshire 2012 – 2013](#)' where you can get the detail, including our rationale for transforming and how we are going about it.

In June 2012 CSSIW published their findings of their inspection of our Children's Social Services where the focus was on Assessment and Care Management. CSSIW has praised the quality of service provided in Flintshire, commenting positively on the leadership, communication, morale and standard of the practice delivered in the service.

As a Council we were delighted that our efforts to improve our out of county commissioning arrangements for Looked After Children received recognition in the report. In seeking better outcomes for children, young people and families, we seek continuous improvement and have produced an action plan in response to the inspection report, building further on the position of strength that CSSIW identified. We have recently found out that the annual inspection of our Flintshire Fostering Service was positive.

Council Governance

As a result of the election in May 2012 we now have a new cabinet with a new cabinet member overseeing Social Services, Councillor Christine Jones. The whole Council has continued their involvement in taking forward our challenging service change programmes. I have been fortunate to have had effective support from experienced councillors in full council and Overview [scrutiny committees](#) and the whole Corporate Management Team continues to be personally involved with the Transformation of Adult Social Services.

I believe that this collective approach across the wider council has firstly enabled me to lead on further improvements across our Services. Secondly it has created a sense of shared ownership over our successes which we celebrated at our annual Flintshire Excellence Awards. Some of the services and projects that received recognition during 2012 included our Reablement service, Involvement and participation for care leavers and Mental Health Service user involvement in training.

Awards and Success

A highlight which appeared in the July edition of our monthly workforce bulletin was Abbey Metal gaining a prestigious national award recognising their excellent practice in Health and Safety. Abbey Metal is a "small business" within our Learning Disabilities Day Opportunities service; which focuses on equipping people with employment skills in the metal fabrication industry. This is a tremendous achievement for the whole team who have succeeded against National UK entries to win the award.



Yet again we have held our uniquely successful Pride of Flintshire Awards. This glittering annual ceremony, our very own 'Oscars' hosted by young people, is a real inspiration to everyone who attends. The Children's Commissioner Keith Towler spoke at the event, quote:

"This is an incredible event which reflects part of the council's role as a corporate parent to looked after children and care leavers, is unique in Wales and something we should be proud of."

There have also been some key changes in personnel during 2012. Maureen Mullaney, our Head of Adult Services since 1999 retired at the end of August. Maureen left a strong legacy of achievement in the service. Alwyn Jones her replacement joined us on the 3rd September thus enabling a smooth transition, bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and expertise.

I am also pleased that I have been asked to lead a new exciting Council priority, - to support social enterprises and co-operatives in Flintshire. A Social Enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community. This way of working has great potential to help improve Social Care Services.

Having been involved nationally last year in developing an implementation plan in response to [the Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Bill](#) and the strategy 'Sustainable Social Services for Wales,' it will be an ambitious and exciting plan. The Bill will, for the first time, provide a clear framework for social services that ensures a strong voice and real control and will simplify the legislation that regulates social care in Wales, making access to services much easier and more understandable to those in need. It will be a great opportunity for change which will benefit the people who use our services.

This report

Over this coming year we will be benchmarking ourselves against all the key areas of the new Bill which include leadership, commissioning, improvement, voice for citizens, safeguarding and integrating services. Therefore we have taken the decision to organise this annual report based on those key areas.

If you receive a service from us we would like to invite you to tell us if you think this report is a fair description of your experiences. Your views matter to us and are crucial if we are to improve what we do and deliver on the future Implementation Plan.

This report will take a similar approach to last year and focus on how well we have done on those priorities identified for 2012/2013 and what we see as our key aims for 2013/2014.

There are links throughout if you want to delve into the detail and a glossary (**for words in green and underlined**) that may help explain unfamiliar words and terms. Please take up this offer and read more about our services and our plans to improve them.

You can write or email:

Neil Ayling

Director of Community Services
6th Floor, Phase 4
County Hall
MOLD
CH7 6NN

neil.j.ayling@flintshire.gov.uk

Social Services is fundamental to the work of Flintshire County Council. How we work and our choice of priorities are influenced to a great degree by the structures, policies and objectives of the wider authority.

Flintshire County Council's Code of Corporate Governance sets out the governance arrangements for the work of the authority including the Community Services Directorate, of which Social Services is part. The Code sets out how the Council seeks to achieve six important objectives:

- Being purposeful to achieve outcomes for the community and creating and achieving a vision for the local area
- Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
- Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour
- Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
- Developing the capacity and capability of Members and Officers to be effective
- Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust accountability

Working with members

Effective working with elected members is an important part of delivering on the Code of Corporate Governance. The Council saw a change in political leadership in the local elections in May 2012 resulting in a Labour-led Cabinet.

We recognise and value the role of elected members in shaping policy and setting the direction for the service through the [Overview and Scrutiny Committees](#).

Good examples of this joint working are the rigorous quarterly and end of year service performance reports which are presented for challenge and scrutiny to the Health and Social Care [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#); the Annual Budget Challenge and the Target Setting Workshops.

Flintshire County Council, at its meeting on Tuesday 16 October 2012 endorsed its revised and updated set of Council Priorities. In setting the Council Priorities the views of customers, communities, partners and elected members drawn from consultations and discussions over a period of time have been influential.

The priorities are influenced by:

- Previous commitments and needs
- The program of change of the new administration
- Elected Members engaging with their communities
- Customer feedback
- Local service consultations
- Priorities of local and regional partner organisations
- Statutory requirements
- Welsh Government Policy
- Good practice and peer influence

The ten priorities for 2012/ 2013 show how we use our resources across the Council to secure continuous improvement and improve services themselves:

Flintshire County Council priorities

1. To be the most modern, efficient and cost effective public organisation through our four resources strategies - the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the People Strategy, the Asset Management Strategy and the ICT Strategy - whilst ensuring our local taxes, fees and charges are fair and affordable
2. To achieve the greatest possible cost efficiencies through regional and sub-regional collaboration to reinvest in local public services
3. To be a modern, caring and flexible employer with fair and equal pay and terms and conditions of employment under a Single Status Agreement
4. To achieve the highest standards of customer service and care through our Customer Services Strategy
5. To make our communities safe and to safeguard the vulnerable with children and older people as priority groups
6. To protect and grow the local and regional economy, to be a prosperous County and to provide help and support for those vulnerable to poverty
7. To promote independent, healthy and fulfilled living in the community with the highest quality personalised and supportive social and health care services
8. To meet housing need in the County and to work with partners to ensure a sufficient supply of quality and affordable homes and housing services in the social, mixed tenure and private sector housing markets colleges and other partners
9. To secure a modern and high performing range of learning, cultural, play and leisure opportunities for all ages with our schools, colleges and other partners
10. To protect, plan and develop sustainable natural and built environments

Supporting these 10 Improvement Priorities are 66 secondary priorities, of which Social Services take a lead on nine. Three new secondary priorities introduced by the Council's new Leadership were agreed as part of the Improvement Plan these are:

- Extend and enhance the type of education, employment and training (EET) opportunities available for young people
- Develop an outline Master Plan for Social Enterprise and Cooperatives in Flintshire
- Facilitate support and provide a range of community events from high profile international events to locally organised community events.

Delivering on Council priorities

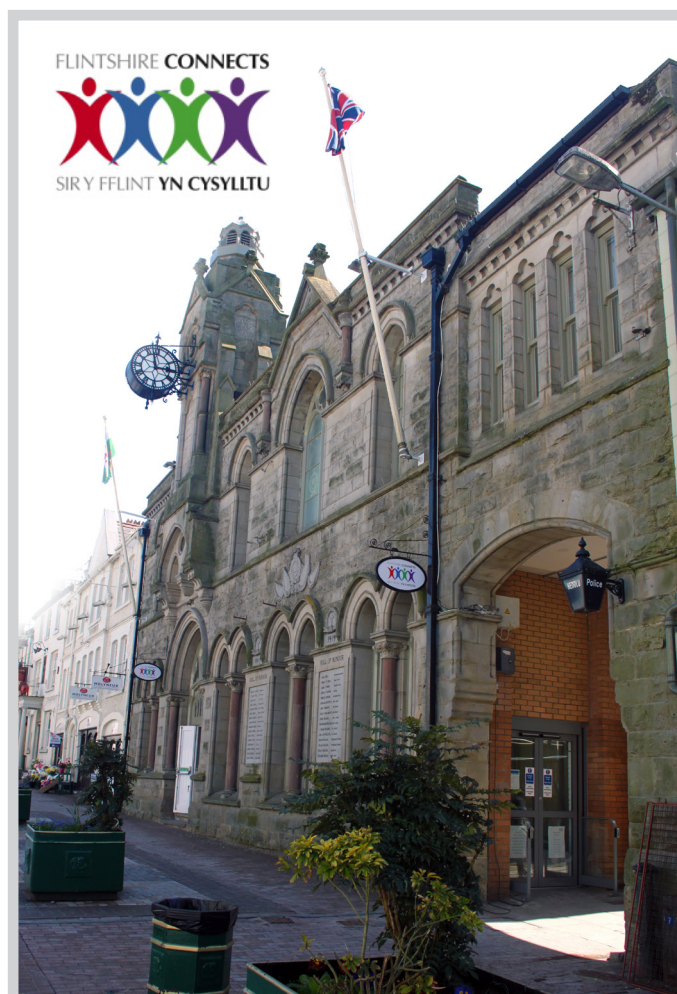
The Social Services has taken a key role in delivering on the councils corporate improvement priorities. This work is highlighted elsewhere in this report. However we wanted to give an overview of how our work is continuing to support the priorities of the council.

- Improving the information about our services on the Flintshire County Council Website and being more efficient in the production and distribution of service leaflets was a specific priority for us in 2012/2013. Our whole website has undergone a radical restructure and is due to go live in autumn 2013.
- We are reviewing the information we put online with the goal of reducing the number of pages and making answers to common searches more accessible. Increasing the numbers of people accessing information on-line can also save money. We have also expanded the distribution of Social Care leaflets to more partner agencies. To make our services more accessible we have changed our First Contact (Adult Social Services) telephone number to an easier number to remember, 01352 702000. The new number compliments the easy to remember Duty number for Children's Social Services which is 01352 701000.
- Social Services is working hard to make the best use of the council's buildings. This will help us save money, while ensuring we focus on the needs of people, services and the wider Council. We are challenging current ways of working by developing agile or mobile working to enable people to work from home or other council offices.

Many of our staff such as home carers already work from home, and we have developed facilities to enable some staff including the Director of Community Services to work from different locations across Flintshire.

Also as part of our future move to locality working which will see the co-location of three teams of Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and District Nurses new technology is being trialled to enable staff to work from any site.

- Our offices will be brought into local communities and we will use our Flintshire Connects facilities to deliver a wide range of services. Our first Flintshire Connects hub officially opened in Holywell on 30 November 2012. We have plans for future Flintshire Connects in Connah's Quay, Buckley and Flint.



Working with our Partners

Social Services works closely within the local authority and with external organisations in order to ensure that the health, social care and well being needs of people living in Flintshire are met.

We take a significant role on a number of multi agency groups including the Health, Social Care and Well being Partnership Board, Children and Young People's Partnership Board, [Locality Leadership Teams](#) and the [Local Service Board](#). This means we can ensure that the priorities set by these groups are geared towards ensuring that opportunities for vulnerable adults and children are improved, people stay well and independent for longer and receive the services that they need.

Resources

The Council has in recent years been setting annual budgets with a growing awareness of the medium and longer term financial challenges of our national context. The Council has succeeded in setting balanced budgets whilst investing in key priorities, meeting growth in service demands and absorbing the cost impacts of inflation.

The Council has achieved this through developing internal programmes of change and reform to make efficiencies, through collaboration and cost-sharing work with partners, and through service reviews and changes. The Council has followed the 'social business model' set within the current version of its [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) to give structure and impetus to this approach. As each year passes and efficiencies are found the challenge to the Council to find further efficiencies becomes greater.

Against this challenging backdrop, the impact of welfare reforms on Flintshire residents and people who access our services is a high priority for the whole council and the Local Service Board (local leaders of partner agencies).

The impact on people and the resulting financial pressures facing the Council have been discussed, and we know from our own review in preparation, that 450 people who currently access Social Services will be negatively affected.

People will be facing increased poverty and difficulties in paying household bills with an associated increased likelihood of homelessness. There is also the potential impact of increased numbers of children on the child protection register or in need of being looked after due to the additional stress facing parents. A number of council proposals have been agreed, so alongside other Directorates we will ensure that our:

- Customer facing staff attend a Welfare Reform Overview training course to ensure they have knowledge of the welfare reforms and possess the skills and confidence to provide the initial response to service users affected by the welfare reforms, commencing in January 2013.
- Managers will engage with the development, and implementation, of a corporate Homeless Prevention Strategy that promotes effective partnership working with internal and external services

Priorities for 2013/2014

- Implement Council proposals in response to welfare reforms.
- Deliver on the new outcome focussed Council priorities that will be relevant to Social Services.

A Stronger Voice and Real Control for Citizens

Reminder of our priorities for 2012/2013

For Adult Social Services and Children:

- Increase the number of carers and young carers we identify and support.
- Develop a model of support that will provide carers with flexible breaks and emergency respite in 2012
- Expand our [Direct Payment](#) and [Citizen Directed Support](#) so more people can benefit. Our target for 2012/2013 in relation to the number of people using direct payments is 170
- Implement our Involvement Action Plan to improve involvement for all people who use our services and their carers, delivering on the overall outcome of the provision of better services
- A revised Complaints management system and training programme, which will lead to a more robust 'lessons learnt' process and improved services

For Children's Social Services:

- Launch the Young Carers and Looked after Children 'Access to Action Card' in June 2012
- Increase the short break overnight provision for children and young people with disabilities by 54% more available bed nights

Carers

Carers are our key partners in the delivery of social care and our commitment to support them is stronger than ever.

In our last annual report we announced that despite the significant financial pressure we had protected the level of funding for the services that carers' value.

Our multi- agency Carers Commissioning Strategy for 2012- 2015 led to contracts with carer services being put in place during 2012, with the allocation of £435,000 to pay for services for carers. (Carers Commissioning Strategy 2012- 2015). A priority for 2012/2013 was to increase the number of carers being identified and supported and we can evidence this has happened by our effective multi-agency working:

- For the period from April 2011 to March 2012 the total number of carers supported via all commissioned carer services was 6,384. (Monitoring of carers grant April 2011 – March 2012). This is a staggering increase of 63.8% (2,487 carers) on the same period in 2010/2011. This could partly be attributed to more robust monitoring but we believe it is also down to the fact that year on year as commissioned services become more developed and better known by professionals, referral rates increase.
- The number of carers registered with **NEWCIS** (North East Wales Carers Information Services) now stands at 3,801 (Sept 2012), a 12.7% increase on the previous year.
- As of September 2012, 1547 carers in Flintshire are registered as a carer with their GP which is a 15.4% increase on the previous year.
- More carers are being assessed and receiving services. From October to December 2012 we have offered 89% of carers of adult service users an assessment or a review of their needs, and of those who have taken up the offer, 72% (371 carers) have been provided with a service. This represents an increase on last year when we only managed to offer a service to 60% (217 carers).

A case study how effective multi-agency working has a real impact

A recent referral came to NEWCIS when Mind signposted a lady in her late 70's to us. Her husband was also in his late 70's and has suffered from a severe chronic depression throughout his life. The couple have retired to this area and have no family. When her husband was admitted to hospital the lady was struggling to visit him each day. She was very isolated, worried about the household duties, maintenance and bills and could not stop crying when NEWCIS first contacted her.

NEWCIS commissioned by Social Services has since been able to offer and facilitate the following:

- Information about **community transport** that would assist her visiting her husband.
- Referred to **Care & Repair**, for house maintenance issues that were causing her concern and anxiety
- Referred to **Hafal** for information regarding her husband's condition
- **Carers Grant** to help her with the garden as she was unable to attend to the lawns due to her own mobility problems
- Carer owned a lap top but was not able to use it very well, she needed support in how to use it to manage her finances and shop on the internet for household products such as insurance, utilities and food shopping. (Now attending an IT course at NEWCIS)
- The Carer is now attending the NEWCIS drop in and has met carers who are providing similar support

- The carer has also started a painting course which is run by a volunteer carer and she is using this hobby as an aide to de-stress.
- Carer has also joined the NEWCIS carer walk group
- She has also made enquiries about the NEWCIS counselling service as she feels more able to talk about her concerns now that she is receiving some support

The outcome for the lady is that she now feels that when her husband is discharged she is in a better place to support him and to look after her own needs and is feeling much stronger to face the demanding caring role that is ahead of her.

In October 2012 we delivered on our improvement priority of increasing short break overnight provision for children and young people with disabilities by moving from Cornel Clyd to Arosfa. Arosfa is a larger adapted building which will increase the available provision from 240 care nights to 350 (54%).

During October, members of the local community, parents and professionals were invited to visit the new resource. The young people who will benefit from the service will have the opportunity to be involved in developing a new name for the resource.

2012 saw further strides being taken to implement the **Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010**. The Measure embodies the Welsh Government's vision that all carers will receive earlier and more planned support through local partnerships, in particular from Health. The intention of the Measure is to ensure that carers are identified, informed of their rights to an assessment and receive the right information and advice when making decisions about the provision of services to the person they care for.

In response to the Measure, our Council alongside other Councils in North Wales, Voluntary sector partners and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Boards (BCU Health Board) has been part of a North Wales group which is developing the new Carers Information Strategy.

Our strategy for implementation in North Wales was sent to the Welsh Government at the end of October for approval where it was accepted and will be taken forward over the next 12 months.

We stated last year that by the end of 2012 we would have a model of support that will provide carers with flexible breaks and alternative care. We have taken the first steps by bringing together interested carer support agencies. However, we took the decision to complete the commissioning process for other carer support services before moving forward. It is only now, with those new contracts in place from October 2012, that we all have a clear and shared picture on what we currently have on offer for carers in Flintshire.

This was necessary because we realised that a big part of what we wanted to deliver through this model will be via collaborative working and better linkages between agencies.

As a result with an investment of £50,000 we are developing a new approach to delivering flexible breaks and alternative care. It is a collaboration of carer service providers coordinated by NEWCIS which will come to fruition in 2013.

Young Carers

The Young Carers Strategy Group has been completely reinvigorated with increased and regular attendance from all key agencies. The group also now includes 3 Young Carers. We now have a clear measurable multi-agency plan for action, for details read our Young Carers Action Plan.

We have listened to the Young Carers Forum and have now agreed that the Barnardo's Young Carers Project can undertake young carers' assessments on our behalf. We believe that this will increase the number of young carers being assessed which was an identified improvement priority for 2012/2013.

We did this because there is a perception amongst young carers that if social services directly undertake the assessment they are more likely to be taken into care. As we highlighted last year our Young Carers professional pack, a tool intended to raise awareness of needs and available support failed to make an impact. This year we have modified it and introduced the pack along with the revised assessment protocol and flow chart to teams.

To find out if this will make a difference we have included in our contract with the Barnardo's Young Carers project a request for information that will enable us to see how well our staff are doing in signposting and referring young carers for an assessment and services.

We are pleased at this point to report that the number of young carers being identified has more than doubled compared to the same period last year and all have received a service.

Looking ahead to 2013/2014 we want to work with schools and colleges to help them find ways to identify and support young carers. One way is via our 'Access to Action Card' (better known by the young people as the A2A card) which is for young carers, looked after children and care leavers. The 'A2A card' concept was successfully launched in June 2012 with very positive press coverage.

We are the first county in Wales to launch such an initiative, which was requested by young people who find it difficult to explain their status in school to teachers and when they need instant access to Council services. The idea was developed by young people who are either part of Barnardo's Cymru Flintshire Young Carers or supported by Flintshire's Children's Services.

We were delighted in October to be invited to the [Senedd](#) to present the scheme to a group of Assembly Members. The young people who visited the Senedd in Cardiff were also joined by the Children's Commissioner, Keith Towler, who has been very supportive of the scheme, and who unveiled the card design at its launch.

Councillor Christine Jones, our Cabinet Member for Social Services said:

"I am so pleased that the young people, and our A2A Card, are receiving national recognition. The card is the first of its kind in Wales and is enabling Young Carers, Looked after Children and Care Leavers in Flintshire to receive both the recognition they deserve and prompt access to appropriate services they need. It is also a great example of collaborative working between Flintshire County Council and Barnardo's Cymru for the benefit of our young people."

Whilst at the Senedd a young person took it upon herself to personally invite the Children's Commissioner to visit her school in Holywell asking him to help her deliver a presentation to the School Council on A2A. The school was extremely receptive believing this to be a wonderful illustration of when a young person has been empowered to speak up in such an honest and open way about something that matters, in this case what it means to be a young carer.



2013/2014 will be a busy year as it is full steam ahead with promotion and developing the functionality of the card with young people. Following a presentation on the 'A2A' card at the Secondary Head Teachers' Federation in October, 4 secondary schools in Flintshire have signed up to be the initial sites for roll out. Alongside this the roll out across Social Services is being progressed.

Direct Payments and Citizen Directed Support is one of the key work streams in our Strategy to Transform Adult Social Services in Flintshire 2012 – 2013.

Both [Direct Payments](#) and [Citizen Directed Support](#) offer people the opportunity to work collaboratively with Social Services to enhance their wellbeing and enable independence.

They help enable people to take control of all aspects of their support and make life choices that help them achieve the goals and lifestyles that they choose for themselves. Both schemes help promote the development of sustainable and efficient care solutions.

We want to increase the numbers of people having the opportunities to take up these options. We set ourselves a target of 170 Direct Payments care packages for 2012/13 and in our last report we announced that we had exceeded this target which stood at 180 for 2011.

We are pleased to report that as of December 2012 the numbers have continued to increase with the new figure standing at 205 across Adult and Children's Social Services, as such we have delivered on our improvement priority.

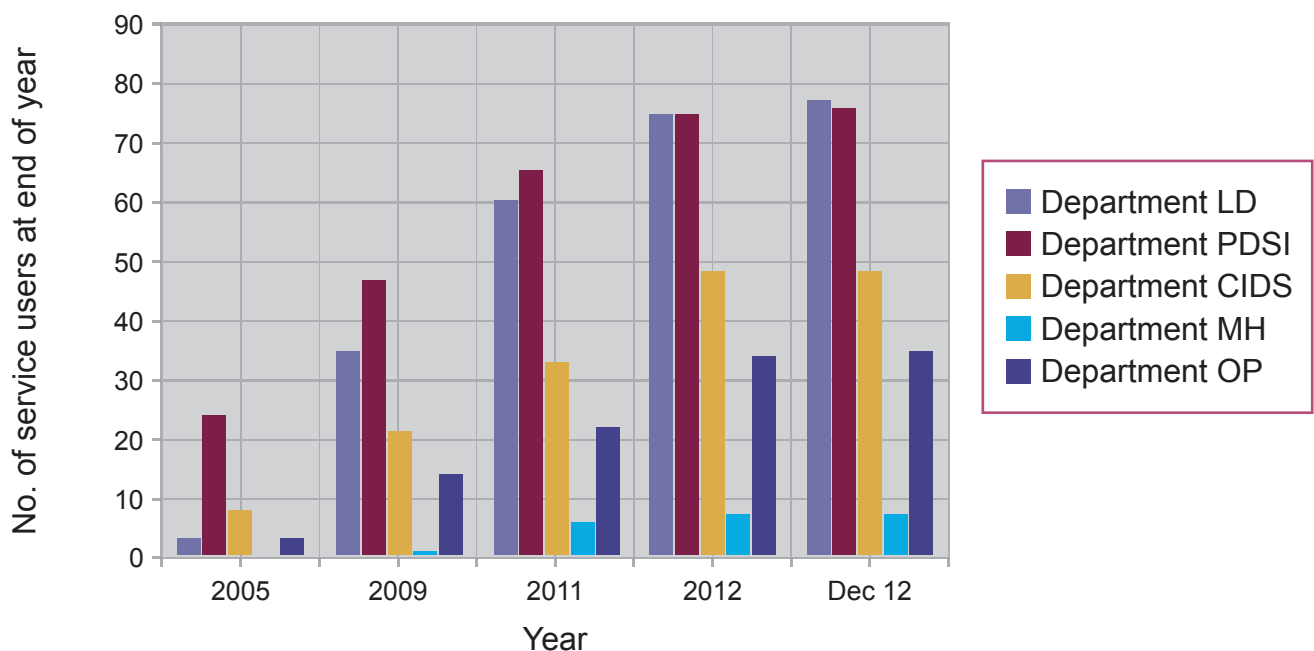
We believe that there are many more people who could benefit from these approaches, and increasing the take up of direct payments/CDS features strongly within the [Social Services & Wellbeing \(Wales\) Bill](#).

We know that we need to do more work with our social work teams if Direct Payments and Citizen Directed Support are to feature as the principle way for peoples social care needs to be met. We are currently working with our newly formed transition team, who have identified personalised approaches to care provision as a priority.

A Case Study - Empowered by Direct Payments

Direct payments have made a big difference to a young man's life. He has a debilitating condition that means that he needs 24 hour care and support to meet his needs. Traditionally, because of his level of need, he would have been cared for in a specialist residential care home. He did not want this, so chose to employ a team of personal assistants to support him in his own home. He enjoys his life and is cared for by people who he chooses to support him.

Direct Payment Growth 2005 - 2012



Involvement

We strongly believe that if we are to make the right decisions about service delivery and development we need to involve the people who use those services.

Different examples from 2012 :-

From Adult Social Services:

- People with Learning Disabilities via the Learning Disability Planning Group have been involved in the development of the Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy. At a half day event on the 8th March 2012 people were invited to tell us 'what makes a good home'. Some of the things people said which informed our strategy were; the importance of getting on with the people you live with, being independent, having the choice to move, being part of the community and regular contact with family and friends. We will feedback to the Learning Disability Planning Group the options and solutions we have come up with as part of the process (Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy 2012-2017)
- 5 people, representative of users of all adult services, were involved in the recruitment of our new Head of Adult Social Services. The 5 interviewers held a separate panel and devised their own questions to ask candidates, one question was '*How will you involve us in decision making?*' You will find Alwyn's answer in the box above. Interestingly the selection reached by the service user panel had strong parallels with the officer panel.

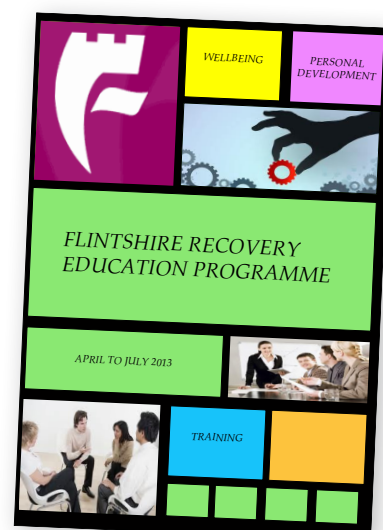
Panel Question:

How will you involve us in decision making?

Alwyn's Answer:

1. I would involve people in a timely way
 2. They would understand their role in each individual consultation.
 3. They would receive information in a timely and appropriate format.
 4. Involving also means giving feedback - in other words 'you said... and we did...'
- Our award winning Mental Health Training Programme has meant that all training delivered from our Workforce Development Team has 100% involvement of people who use Mental Health services and carers in delivery.

The **Involve project** (hosted with Unllais) will advertise training opportunities to all those registered on its database (as of March 2012 147 service users and 42 carers). The 6 month training programme brochure is designed and produced by service users in Double Click, one of our Mental Health Support Services Work Schemes. Involvement of people in this way enables them to gain knowledge, qualifications and confidence as their valuable local expertise is acknowledged. We are really proud of this initiative as it has led to some people gaining employment as a result.



From Children's Social Services:

- In relation to young people, we have already highlighted involvement in the 'A2A' card and there has been yet another successful Pride of Flintshire which is planned and hosted by young people. Our 6th annual Pride of Flintshire saw a total of 191 young people nominated for awards for meaningful everyday achievements as well as worthy academic and sporting triumphs. In total there were 38 very proud winners. The appreciative audiences comprised of young people, their friends and families, foster carers, volunteer mentors, Flintshire County Councillors, Social Services staff including our Chief Executive Colin Everett and also the Children's Commissioner for Wales Keith Towler who has showed his continuous support of the event by attending for the 3rd year running, and to quote Keith,

“Flintshire is the county where it all seems to be happening.”

- Our young people have been involved in interviewing candidates for vacancies within Children's Social Services. During 2012 the young people have been involved in 3 recruitment processes and their contributions have made a considerable impact on some of the decisions made.
- A Transition team event was held on the 6th February 2012, an event set up to involve young people in the shaping of the transition service. Their parents, carers and teachers were also invited to attend to have their say. The 48 young people who attended have shaped the role of the transition worker, influenced the content of the transition plan and their feedback on the day will result in a more accessible transition questionnaire. (Transition Team Event Report 6th Feb 2012)

- During 2012, 20 young people in care participated in a workshop commissioned by the Welsh Government to gather their views and opinions regarding the proposed changes to the Social Services (Wales) Bill. A voting process determined whether the young people were in favour of the implementation of 6 proposed changes to the bill. These changes covered safeguarding and protection, regulation and inspection and adoption and disabilities, and underpinning it all was the desire to achieve uniformity in standards across Wales. The information gathered was collated along with that from other counties to be used as part of the decision making process.

Our Involvement Action Plan, which will ensure a consistent approach to the way we involve people across our services, was launched in early 2012. Since then a priority for us and one identified by CSSIW has been to deliver on the outcomes of the plan. The standards that are featured in the Action Plan are now being embedded in practice in our Workforce Bulletin, key documents and at all 3 workforce conferences. Our mantra is quite simple 'engagement is an investment in getting our business right'.

To monitor the outcome of involvement activities a consistent system has been developed for use across Community Services. This entails recording on a database brief details of involvement activities including most importantly the outcome, in other words 'what we did as a result of what you said'. This ensures that all our involvement activities are meaningful and that the people who took the time to get involved receive timely feedback.

A standard questionnaire for Adult Social Services has been produced building on the one developed in older people services in 2011, which can be enhanced with service specific questions as desired. The questionnaire will be trialled in 2013 with the North East Locality Team. At an agreed review date we will evaluate the effectiveness of having a standard questionnaire with a set of key questions, with a view to rolling out across Adult Social Services.

A raft of satisfaction questionnaires is already in use in Children's Social Services and in 2012 we improved our systems to ensure effective and timely analysis. The findings are presented every six months to Senior and Team Managers to influence service development. A concerted effort by the service has increased the number of questionnaires returned.

We are pleased that for our **'User Satisfaction Survey for adults and young people aged over 16 survey'** 30 were returned for the period April 2012 to September 2012 compared to 14 for the previous period (Oct 2011 – March 2012), with 77% of respondents indicating an overall satisfaction with Children's Social Services.

There is an established process in place which enables the service to react whenever a response in a questionnaire indicates dissatisfaction such as a 'no' response to 'Would you recommend Children's Social Services to a friend?' If personal details are provided an interview between the respondent and an independent assessor will be set up to consider the issues. Our improved system has strengthened the whole process by promptly alerting managers to negative feedback, recording the outcomes as 'lessons learned' and reporting on the findings as part of complaints feedback, with improved service outcomes being our aim.

Learning from complaints and compliments received is important and we use the findings and outcomes to inform policy and practice in delivering services.

In preparation for the Social Services and Well being Bill which will require us to strengthen the complaints procedure, a priority for 2012/2013 was to revise the Complaints management system and training programme. We are pleased to report that we have delivered and now have two full time posts dedicated to complaints and customer feedback, who are supporting the resolution of complaints at the earliest possible stage, through the training of front line managers, as well as supporting complainants and staff through the process.

The training programme was rolled out at the end of 2012 and will continue into 2013. Findings of complaints are formally embedded in our performance management process which includes quarterly reporting to the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to Senior Management Children and Adults performance meetings. Ultimately all the steps we have taken will lead to a more robust 'lessons learnt' process and improved services.

In total for Social Services during 2011/2012, we received 143 complaints and 282 compliments, this compares to 118 complaints and 184 compliments for 2010/2011.

Two examples of actions we have taken as a result of complaints in 2012 have included:

What you said: There was a lack of supervision and responsibility regarding a service user's financial affairs.

What we did: The Deputyship Team published a Flintshire Fact Sheet for staff and families detailing the roles and responsibilities of the Corporate Appointee and Receivership Officer.

What you said: A young person's school classes were disrupted following a statutory social work visit.

What we did: Reviewed existing processes in relation to social work visits to schools, which has resulted in better liaison to ensure visits pose minimal interruption to the young person's school day.

The **Care Checker** pilot project was launched when the Care Council came to visit us in October to learn about our progressive approach to staff development. Care Checker is a new innovation and we are pleased that Flintshire is a pioneer, as the first pilot site in Wales and one of few in the UK.

Care Checker provides an independent service that focuses on listening to what people who receive services, and those that know them best have to say about their care and support. The vision of Care Checker is 'to help ensure that children and adults being supported within care services are valued unconditionally and have their well-being promoted and safeguarded'. The project involves two of our residential homes (Llys Gwenffrwd and Croes Atti) and two independent homes (Hollybank and Morfa Newydd). We look forward to telling you about the difference that Care Checker has made in our next year's Annual report.

For further information on Care Checker visit www.carechecker.co.uk

Social Enterprises

One workstream of our transformation of Adult Social Services is to set up a Social Enterprise. A Social Enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community. We had made a good start with Mental Health Support Services exploring social enterprises as part of an agenda to refocus work services.

During 2012 expertise has been sought from Social Firms Wales and staff and service users have been consulted. As a new Council priority the work we have undertaken to date will now be considered by a Council wide project board which will be led by our Director. The board was set up at the end of 2012 and number of key work streams have been agreed to take forward this work in 2013/2014, including 'support to existing Social Enterprises', 'New Social Enterprises' and the 'Legal and procurement issues'.

In November 2012 the Welsh Government published a framework called **'More than just words' Strategic Framework for Welsh Language services in Health, Social Services and Social Care** that will ensure a systematic approach to improve services for those who need or choose to receive their care in Welsh.

The supporting action plans sets out the practical steps we need to take to strengthen Welsh service provision. During 2013 we will be implementing those actions in the plan that need to be completed in Year 1. Implementation of the strategic framework will provide us with a good foundation to provide services in line with the Welsh language standards when they are introduced. We will be monitoring our ongoing progress via our Directorate Equalities Group.

Priorities for 2013/2014

- Implementation of the Regional Carers Information Action Plan to keep carers better informed.
- Implement a model of support that will provide carers with flexible breaks and alternative care in 2013
- Increase the number of young carers identified and supported in schools/ colleges
- Promote and develop the use of the A2A card with young carers and looked after children for prompting effective support in schools and in the council.
- Further improve the take-up of direct payments or Citizen Directed Support to promote greater choice and control
- Evidence the impact of the Involvement Action Plan
- Roll out the Complaints training for managers leading to a more responsive service from which we more effectively learn the lessons.
- Set up a Social Enterprise as a sustainable model with added social value.
- Deliver on Year 1 actions to strengthen Welsh service provision, as set out in the 'More than just words' Strategic Framework for Welsh Language services in Health, Social Services and Social Care.

Smarter Commissioning

Reminder of our priorities for 2012/2013

- Become smarter Commissioners and have commissioning plans for all services by April 2013
- Reduce our dependency on the independent sector for providing placements for looked after children and improve the financial management and effectiveness of the commissioning process
- Take up opportunities for collaboration where money will be saved

We have to become smarter business people if we are to save money and improve services. As such we have invested in our commissioning function; a commissioning manager has been appointed, planning officers and contract monitoring officers are being skilled up to carry out all the different functions involved in [Commissioning](#). The current restructure of our Development and Resources arm of the Directorate will result in the closer alignment of commissioning functions. We have brought all contracting officers together in one team and created a new post of Contracting Officer for Children's Services.

Our Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy 2012- 2017 has been drafted and will be going through the approval process in 2013. The aim of our strategy is that people with Learning Disabilities in Flintshire will have a choice of where they live and who supports them to live as independently and safely as possible. Completion took longer than anticipated (April 2012 was the date stated in our last annual report) as we felt it was important to undertake a thorough consultation with all stakeholders which included people who use our services and a random selection of accommodation and support providers (both in house and external).

In order to learn the lessons from our experience of undertaking the Learning Disability Commissioning plan, our timeframe for completing all commissioning plans by April 2013 has been reviewed. The next plans to be worked on will be Mental Health Services and Older People Services.

We have to be certain that those services we commission are of a high quality, delivering on need and keeping people safe. A key role of our commissioning team is to monitor our existing providers and where necessary work with them to improve performance through the development of an action plan or a corrective plan of action in accordance with Welsh Government guidance on escalating concerns.

For the period from April 2012 to January 2013, 10 action plans have been produced, 4 of which in response to [escalating concerns](#) and the remainder in response to annual monitoring. One of the recommendations from the serious case review following the high profile BBC Panorama exposure of abuse at Winterbourne View hospital in Bristol was the importance of outcome- based commissioning. We are moving towards a more outcome- focused approach in all our commissioning activities.

For example in commissioning for Learning Disability services we have taken a further step in introducing a 'payment by outcomes' approach as opposed to 'payment by an hourly rate'. This is when a percentage of the contract is paid up front and the remainder on the successful delivery of outcomes. The 'outcomes' developed with Flintshire stakeholders are in line with those produced by the British Institute of Learning disabilities and the National Development Team.

See box overleaf:

Payment by Outcomes

Outcome Area 1	To be able to make everyday choices about my life
Outcome Area 2	People feel respected
Outcome Area 3	People have relationships with family and friends
Outcome Area 4	People make a contribution as an active citizen
Outcome Area 5	People are involved with the local community
Outcome Area 6	People can make themselves heard
Outcome Area 7	People feel safe
Outcome Area 8	People feel well and know about how to stay healthy.

In the spirit of the Welsh Government's paper Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action, there is a strong directive for Local Authorities to work together to plan and deliver social care services. In response we have committed £30,000 to the [Regional Commissioning Hub](#). The Hub responds to growing financial pressures facing public sector organisations for increased collaboration in commissioning and procurement activity. We are utilising the Hub to find high quality and cost effective accommodation and support solutions for the relatively small number of people with high level needs. The value of the Hub is that it enables full transparency of all costs and has improved the ability of North Wales as a whole to control and manage the market in an effective and efficient way.

Alongside the Hub we will continue to work collaboratively with BCU Health Board in relation to high cost low volume placements. BCU Health Board has a plan to reduce their [Continuing Health Care](#) spend and bring people back who are out of the region. Working in partnership with the BCU Health Board when we are both dealing with depleting budgets can be challenging as we need to avoid the temptation to shunt costs. As we jointly fund some people we are fully committed to working together to ensure that we find the 'best way' to achieve the 'best outcomes' for these people.

We have reduced our dependency on the independent sector by having robust mechanisms for procuring and managing independent sector placements, which ensures looked after children are appropriately placed and best value is achieved. To achieve this, changes have been made to existing processes and guidance issued regarding the new Options Appraisal forms for all future submissions to the multi-agency Out of County Placement Panel.

A Flintshire framework of providers has been jointly established by Children's Social Services and Lifelong Learning and the panel is ensuring that lead practitioners are compliant. The attempt to achieve best value and cost volume reductions will continue on a case by case basis.

We are pleased to report that with the savings made we are funding a 2 year Contract and Commissioner Officer Post with a lead on Children's services. The officer's role will be to manage effectively the high cost low volume arrangements. The approach we have taken to out of county placements for looked after children is similar to the approach we are taking for those adults with specialist needs and challenging behaviour. The approach involves open- book accounting which allows for greater transparency between commissioner and provider and making use of the Hub.

Many of the things we reported on in our last report are still progressing such as a regional [domiciliary care contract](#) and a regional residential contract both to be underpinned by work to develop standardised monitoring tools. In [commissioning](#) services we have teamed up with the BCU Health Board on regional strategic priorities and our voluntary sector partners have been encouraged to [collaborate](#) with each other to submit tenders to deliver services. This results in efficiency for providers as they are dealing with only one contract and it means that services are standardised across North Wales.

The [CSSIW](#) Inspection Report on Children's Social Services (March 2012) identified 'positive outcomes from out of county commissioning work with fewer placements and improved expenditure' and North Wales colleagues through the Hub are learning from our experience having adopted our framework of providers.

An ongoing priority is to take up opportunities for collaboration where money will be saved.

Priorities for 2013/2014 (ongoing from 2012/2013)

- Become smarter Commissioners to ensure people receive the best services within the resources we have available.
- Develop commissioning plans for Mental Health and Older People Services and implement the Learning Disability Commissioning Plan.
- Take up opportunities for collaboration where money will be saved and the quality of services is maintained.
- Recruit a Contract and Commissioning Officer with a lead for Children Services (a 2 year post) to manage high cost/ low volume placements.

Evidencing Our Improvement

Reminder of our priorities for 2012/2013

For Adult Social Services and Children:

- Strengthen the performance team by the recruitment of a Team Manager and additional performance assistant
- Reduce times taken to deliver major adaptations (Disabled Facilities Grants), which are important for people's independence

For Children's Social Services:

- Ensure that statutory visits to looked after children are undertaken on time. Our target for 2012/2013 is 93%

We assess and evidence how our services are improving in a range of different ways. They include:

- **Inspection Reports:** For 2012 these have included short break provision for people with a learning disability in two settings, both resulting in positive reports. For Children's Services, our frontline Fieldwork services were inspected and we were encouraged by the positive response from the Inspectorate. In addition, the annual inspection of the North Wales Adoption Service was judged as operating effectively, efficiently and consistently.
- **CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) Annual Council Performance Evaluation:** This evaluation was prepared by CSSIW (our Inspectors) in response to the Director of Community Services' Annual Performance Report for Social Services (ACRF) 2011, drawing on various evidence including improvement plans, audit reports and inspection reports, and the regulatory work of CSSIW completed during the year. The evaluation sets out the areas of progress and areas for development for Flintshire Social Services, for the year 2011-12.



We were delighted with the final evaluation, which states that the Council has made solid progress over the past year and has a promising programme of modernisation in place in both Children's and Adults' services. It notes positive improvement against a range of national performance indicators. In particular, there was praise for Transforming Adult Social Services, supported by increasing investment in assistive technology, Citizen Directed Support and direct payments, resulting in more people being supported in their own homes and fewer needing long term residential care. The Evaluation also noted the positive shift in Children's Social Services towards prevention and early intervention with a whole family focus. Fewer children need care, and those requiring protection have benefited from an increased investment in resources. Across both services there is effective partnership working and a clear focus on delivering value for money, while retaining the flexibility to address future risks and demands.

Internal assessment

- **Performance Indicators** and especially those identified with elected members as improvement targets.
- **Monitoring of the Directorate and Head of Service Plans (HOS)** Senior managers monitor their progress against the Directorate and HOS plans, and report on this to Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and reflect how well we are performing in our priority areas. In areas where we are not performing as well as we would like, we implement an action plan which is regularly reviewed.
- **The Outcome Agreement** This includes the following themes that are a priority for our Directorate:
 - Improved quality and length of life, with fairer outcomes for all.
 - Good social care allows people a better quality of life.
 - Children and young people grow up as active citizens and achieve the highest possible standards of wellbeing.
- **Service User Feedback** In order to improve services, we need to know what users think. As already mentioned in this report feedback is collected via the Planning Groups, focused workshops, participation events and questionnaires. We use this feedback to inform the decisions we make about the way we deliver our services.
- **Compliments and Complaints** As already mentioned in this report 2012/2013 saw us strengthen process.

- **Strategic Equality Plan 2012 to 2016** In 2012 the Council launched its first Strategic Equality Plan, a partnership with all public bodies across Wales. In producing this plan we will meet our statutory public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010 to advance equality and eliminate discrimination. The plan details the objectives, actions and targets we must deliver on in the next 4 years. We are making good progress, for example one action is to undertake [equality impact assessments](#) on all new policies and services, during 2012 these were completed on our Locality Working Model, Extra Care Mold Scheme, Citizen Directed Support and Community Services Communication Strategy. We will be monitoring our ongoing progress via our Directorate Equalities Group.

2012 has seen us tightening up on our whole performance management process, which includes the priority of having a robust performance staffing structure in place, achieved through the recruitment of a team manager and additional performance assistant. We now consolidate all performance information from all the different sources listed above which is then regularly presented to our Senior Management Teams in both Adults and Children. Our IT Business System (PARIS) is now embedded and we now have robust data on the people who use our services, vital for commissioning and service development. There is still more to do such as building in a finance module into our IT system which will provide us with a more detailed picture on service costs, information that is vital for commissioning. We will be taking a staged approach to its introduction thereby making sure we get it right. The plan is to 'test run' in the payment of foster carers in 2013 running alongside our existing systems. We will learn from this and then look to roll out across Social Services.

Children's Social Services has been successful in a bid to become a pioneer authority for SSIA to pilot an 'Outcomes Framework' for child protection, linking to the ambitions set out in 'Sustainable Social Services framework for Action'. As a pilot site we will benefit from the expertise, support and coaching from external consultants. This exciting project runs from June 2012 to July 2013, the focus being on child protection planning and delivery that looks less at process and more on outcomes for the individual or young person. For instance in discussions with professionals, the young person and family,

“what does staying safe look like and how would we know or measure when this has been achieved, which key professionals need to help, what could work to make a difference and what do we propose to do.”

Our performance is strong overall and we have made improvements in 2012/2013 against the national set of performance indicators, as detailed in our Directorate Plan 2012-2016.

For Children's Social Services:

Legislation requires that children looked after by the Local Authority are visited regularly by a social worker, and one of our main priorities for last year was to ensure that these statutory visits are undertaken on time. Our target for 2012/2013 is 93%, and we have already exceeded this target. Regular contact with children and young people in care helps us to ensure that placements are appropriate and are meeting the needs of the young person. Sometimes placements do break down, and we have set an improvement target to reduce the percentage of children that have two or more changes of placement, from 11% currently to 7.5% in 2014.

We have also improved the frequency with which we review the care plans for looked after children; in December we were reporting 96% of care plans reviewed on time. We can report good outcomes for young people leaving the care system; four of our care leavers turned 19 in the last six months, and three of these are in education, training or employment, the other is actively seeking employment. With respect to the looked after children and young people, we have a number of high profile performance indicators for children in need of protection, and all of these are currently performing above target. All our targets for safeguarding are set above the All Wales average and Flintshire's performance is among the best in Wales against the national indicators for safeguarding children.

We have improved our identification and support to children with a caring role by working in partnership with Barnardos. By December 2012 we had identified 25 new young carers, and 24 of these young people have so far been assessed and provided with a service.

For Adult Social Services:

You have already read about some of our main areas for improvement in Adult Social Services and as you continue through this report you will read about more. Examples are the positive progress we are making in: increasing the number of people accessing direct payments (section 3), increasing the numbers of people who are able to continue to living in their own homes without support from Social Services via Reablement (section 8), strengthening our safeguarding practice (section 7) and increasing the numbers of carers being identified and supported (section 3).

Adaptations to properties are crucial to increasing independence. 135 adaptations funded by a Disabled Facilities Grant were completed by December 2012; this is slightly fewer than in the same period last year. But we have reduced the time that people have to wait. This whole area remains an ongoing priority for the Council and especially for our new Head of Adult Services as the changing demographics may result in increased demand.

Due to our continuing focus upon prevention and maintaining people at home our [Minor Adaptations](#) programme continues to place pressure upon social services budgets, we expect this pressure to continue as we refocus our services and realign our resources to match need and expectations. However, we have through changes in working practices reduced the average time taken to deliver Minor Adaptations for Adults from 41 days to 33 days and we will continue to seek new and efficient ways of delivering the service. We are constantly exploring changing markets, new technologies, new ideas and economies of scale to ensure that the programme is responsive to individual need, timely and effective.

To this end we have piloted a small project with a large independent provider who has suggested they can competitively supply and fit minor adaptations across the County. The pilot ran for two months with the evaluation focussing upon both customer satisfaction and value for money. The findings of our evaluation early in 2013 will be used to help shape how we assess and commission services going forward.

Having access to small pieces of Occupational Therapy equipment for example chair raisers, perching stools and grab rails is important to help people maintain their independence.

In autumn 2012 we set up a new project that will enable people to self assess for agreed equipment and minor adaptations, increasing their control of the assessment process and endorsing a person centred and outcome focussed approach. The project will be evaluated in the spring 2013 in the main by customer feedback.

Priorities for 2013/2014

- Implement the strategic equality action plan to advance equality across Social Services
- To get a more detailed picture of service costs 'test run' a finance module in PARIS in Children's Social Services.
- Learn from being a SSIA 'Outcomes Framework for child protection' pilot site.
- Ensure all children and young people receiving services have timely reviews.
- Improve the stability of placements for looked after children.
- Improve the identification of young carers
- Continue to evidence the effectiveness of the reablement service in supporting people to live independently in their own homes.
- Improve the data collection for Carers, to meet the outcomes for the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure
- Continue to reduce times taken to deliver [major adaptations](#) (Disabled Facilities Grants), which are important for people's independence
- Evaluate the impact of a pilot for Occupational Therapy self assessment in relation to small pieces of equipment and minor adaptations that serve to maintain independence.

A Strong and Professional Workforce

Reminder of our priorities for 2012/2013

For Adult Social Services and Children:

- Review workforce absence and set targets for reduction

Delivering top quality transformed services hinges on a having a strong and committed workforce. 2012 saw increased training opportunities, for example for the 6 month period from April:

- Active Listening Skills - 55 members of staff attended workshops designed to increase knowledge and skills when dealing with all Council customers. One attendee feedback:

“An excellent course and a brilliant facilitator who taught me how to listen without interruption and ask open ended questions to empower customers to make their own decisions.”

- Further Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) courses attended by 37 members of staff and service users. The course focuses on the key concepts and values of Recovery and Wellness Recovery Action Planning and how to develop your own Wellness Recovery Action Plan. The courses have been popular since it started in October 2008 we have run 23 workshops with 254 attendees. For the first 2 years there were costs incurred in running the courses but as a result of the ‘train the trainer’ approach since 2011 there is no longer a cost as staff, service users and carers now run the course.

- [Reablement](#) for Home Care Staff attended by the remaining 20 individuals and Reablement for Independent Sector staff attended by 45 individuals. Both courses are designed to ensure staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge and attributes for delivering a community-based service which focuses on enablement and increasing independence.
- Confidence Building and Assertiveness training, using a wide variety of material from the arena of stress management. In total 40 members of staff and service users attended the two workshops which were run. The feedback was again very positive “very interesting and positive course”.
- Supervised Contact a course based on a review of supervised contact of looked after children in Flintshire published in August 2011. It drew on messages from research, best practice and legislative requirements, and emphasised the need to engage with CAFCASS (Children and Families legal advocacy service) and courts to promote understanding of the developmental needs of children, to ensure that contact plans are always in the best interest of the child. It was attended by 21 staff members from Children’s Social Services. Feedback included “Thought provoking, looking at practice issues”. A tailored version of the course was delivered in December 2012 for foster carers and sessional workers involved in supervised contact.



The Care Council wrote to us in May 2012 asking us to indicate how we will deliver the Consolidation programme in our organisation. The Consolidation programme is the first part of continuing professional education and learning for Social Workers in Wales (CPEL). It will set the minimum arrangements for continuing professional education and learning for Social Care Workers after initial qualification.

We welcome the CPEL as its overall objective is to ensure that the standard of Social Work practice improves, assisting with recruitment, retention and development of practitioners. After a robust option appraisal we have chosen Porth Agored as our accredited provider. Porth Agored is a partnership of 8 existing Local Authorities across Wales working with the University of Wales. We liked the fact that we would be up and running by October, the costs were reasonable and that our students will benefit from accessing the University's resources and facilities.

Our 10th Annual Community Services Training Award Ceremony in September 2012 saw 178 members of staff receive recognition for the qualifications they had obtained during the past 12 months.

Our Workforce's motivation to embrace the significant service changes we are making has been fostered by close working and effective communication via initiatives such as 'back to floor', workforce conferences, directorate breakfast briefings and updates in our Community Services Bulletin.

You will find the detail on all activities in the [Community Services Communication Strategy](#). We are identifying the 'rising stars' within Children's Social Services and actively promoting their input in shaping policy and procedures.

During June 2012 the 'Rising Stars' Group led a whole service event day which focused on shared learning. CSSIW, following a site inspection of Children's Social Services, recognised our efforts.

The inspection report acknowledged the strong strategic and operational leadership shown by the Head of Service and found evidence that social work staff and their managers feel well supported by a number of initiatives such as active caseload weighting.



Inspectors interviewed a range of staff and managers in addition to examining case files and reported that “morale was good, support was readily available and professional supervision was, in the main, regularly provided” and there is *“a clear sense of purpose, together with the enthusiasm and commitment to deliver responsive services.”*

An improvement priority for last year was to review work absence across Social Services. We are making some progress with some of our ‘hot spot’ areas and remain confident that we have robust monitoring processes in place across Social Services and this has been evidenced by an audit of the system.

With Occupational Health and Human Resources our Quarterly Strategy Review Meeting in February 2013 focused on work absence starting with whether our current data recording process is the right one. We recognise that more needs to be done so work absence will continue to be a priority for our Heads of Service.

In relation to Children’s Social Services there have been some improvements in some teams. CSSIW reported following its inspection of our services that the measures being taking by managers to control caseloads and allocation of work has resulted with staff within our duty and assessment service feeling supported; a consequence is good staff morale, with increased stability of the workforce and improving sickness rates. Reducing staff absence results in greater efficiency and therefore greater resources available to provide services this is especially important now in times of austerity.

Priorities for 2013/2014

- Promote and deliver the Consolidation training programme for newly qualified Social Workers which on completion will provide them with credits towards a Graduate Certificate in Consolidation of Social Work Practice (the first element of continuing professional education and learning for Social Workers in Wales)
- Continue to review workforce absence and set targets for reduction

Stronger Safeguarding

Reminder of our priorities for 2012/2013

For Adult Social Services:

- Strengthen Adult protection with the introduction of a further specialist post

For Children's Social Services:

- Maximise the benefits of our enhanced Safeguarding Unit for Children by offering a support and advice role to our frontline workforce
- Further raise awareness and monitor safeguarding activity through the joint (with Wrexham) Local Safeguarding Children Board Protecting vulnerable people will rightly always be one of Social Services' main purposes.

For Adult Social Services

As reported in the last report the Council's commitment to safeguarding is evidenced by financial investment, with an agreed additional budget of £44,000 for 2012/2013 increasing to £90,000 for 2013/2014 for Adult Social Services. This enabled us to appoint a second Safeguarding Manager for the second half of 2012/2013.

During the later part of 2012 we focussed our efforts on improving our risk management recording systems which was identified by CSSIW as an area needing attention. A workshop for Social Workers and Team Managers was held in October to look at our processes and other quality issues. We are confident that our performance has improved in this area, and anticipate that this will be recognised by CSSIW in 2013.

For Children's Social Services

A priority for 2012/2013 was to bring together the Children's Safeguarding Managers

and Independent Reviewing Officers into a new enhanced Safeguarding Unit that would capitalise on the support and advice provided to our frontline staff.

We are making good progress, an Escalation Protocol is in place, consultation work regarding the future role of the unit is nearing completion, and executive summaries from national serious case reviews and research are routinely being shared. To further strengthen the support role of the unit during 2013 options will be explored with our frontline staff such as the introduction of a quarterly reporting framework and Safeguarding Managers supporting file audits when requested.

The Flintshire and Wrexham Local Safeguarding Children Board (FWLSCB) established in 2011 is responsible for ensuring everyone is working well together to keep children and young people safe from harm. The FWLSCB is always keen to hear what staff, volunteers, parents, carers and children and young people think about safeguarding children locally and last year set up a system so that people can contact them using an online postcard. Since April 2012, 7 online postcards have been received 4 potential child protection enquiries, 2 training enquiries from a junior football club and probation and a request for information on legislation. We will continue to widely promote the online postcard facility and monitor its uptake. Looking ahead in relation to Children there is a pilot for a regional safeguarding board in North Wales which would be aligned to the FWLSCB, and there are similar planned for Adults.

▪ Priorities For 2013/2014

Maximise the benefits of our enhanced Safeguarding Service for Children and Adults by offering a support and advice role to our frontline workforce

- Improve adult protection and risk management recording

Driving Forward More Integrated Services

Reminder of our priorities for 2012/2013

For Adult Social Services:

- Ongoing redesign of our services to promote the Reablement, Recovery and Independence agenda
- Our second [Extra Care Scheme](#), to support 48 older people and 15 people with moderate dementia will be operational in 2013
- Implement with the BCU Health Board the Mental Health Measure, creating more rights for people who use mental health services

For Children's Social Services:

- Implement a 'whole family' model (integrated Family Support Services Initiative and [Families First Initiative](#))
- Volunteering Mentoring project to become more efficient and a system to be created to measure the effectiveness of the intervention

For Adult Social Services and Children:

- Transition Team to become operational in April 2012, thus ensuring that a person's journey from children to adult services is even smoother and effective
- Deliver on the Locality Team Action Plans to join up service delivery at a local level and establish our first of three teams this year.

Driving forward our transformation of Social Services for both adults and children has continued in 2012/2013. The changes we are making are already saving us money while giving people what they want. Our plans 'Continuing the Strategy to Transform Adult Social Services in Flintshire 2012 – 2013' and Children's Social Services Head of Service Improvement Plan 2012 – 13 will provide you with the details.

The golden thread throughout the examples in this section are those things we are doing to maximise opportunities for collaboration to produce the best outcomes for the people who use our services. For adults this involves a new generation of services that will enable people to live as independently as possible and for children and young people services that focus on early intervention supporting the whole family.

For Adult Social Services:

Reablement - Reablement is an intense, short term intervention where individuals are supported to gain or regain the skills and confidence to live as independently as possible. The Reablement Approach featuring improved access to equipment including [telecare](#) is now embedded across Adult Social Services, for older people and people with a physical disability. We have moved from a position where some people are considered for Reablement to all people by establishing Reablement and First Contact (Duty) teams.

Our Home Care Service was remodelled to support the Reablement approach and has been re-branded as Community Support Services. This better reflects our goal to keep people at home for as long as possible in their 'community' and the word 'support' points to our focus on reablement and independence. We have delivered a Reablement training package to in house and independent sector providers to ensure that all partners are providing support to people who may need ongoing services, within the ethos of Reablement. We have worked closely with families and carers to help them understand Reablement and have produced an explanatory leaflet. (Reablement Leaflet)

We are pleased with the rapid growth of Reablement and the number of people being helped. In relation to referrals month on month we are seeing a steady increase in the number being accepted. The graph below shows the increase in new referrals going through reablement since October 2011 to September 2012 for all adult referrals.

Between October and December 2012 62% of people who went through Reablement did not require a further home care package, compared to 54% in the same period in 2011, and the number going through Reablement has increased during the year from 605 to 759. This means we are saving money, our developments in reablement have significantly contributed to the £1.2 million saving in 2011/2012, which protects front line services.

Most importantly to us we know our reablement approach is successful because the people who have used the service have continued to tell us and we are seeing many more people regain their independence with confidence.

Feedback comments include:

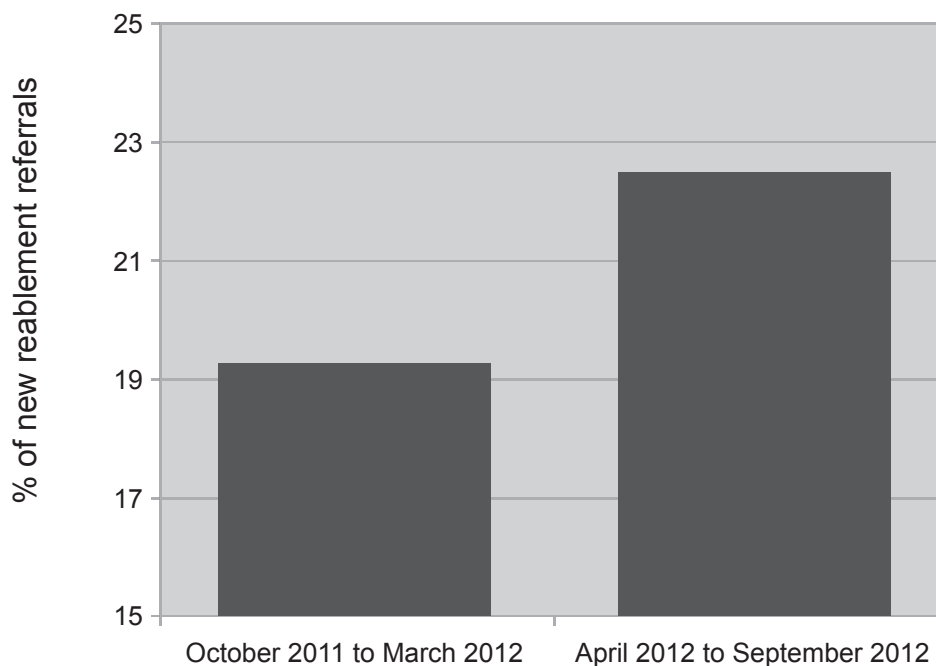
“The team taught me the best way to shower and get dressed.”

“The visits did help my father keep mobile, directly improving his health and mood.”

“Mum feels more in charge of the showering process and more comfortable with the less ‘hands on’ approach; she has regained lost autonomy.”

“You helped me to get around after my knee operation and took me for short walks to regain my confidence.”

Reablement ‘new’ referrals as a percentage of all ‘new’ referrals to Adult Social Care in from October 2011 to September 2012



Telecare

We believe that Telecare plays a key part in our reablement approach and can reduce intrusion into people's private lives of always having staff or family carers around. Telecare equipment is a range of sensors and detectors; from complex epilepsy monitoring devices, infra red movement detectors to less complex sensors such as a smoke detector, and a panic button, all of which support independence. Telecare also plays a vital part in supporting carers to continue with their caring role. We know that telecare is a making a big difference to people's lives and this is clearly captured in our chosen case study below.

The 'Buddi System'

A wife cares for her husband who has Alzheimers. The husband has enjoyed his solitary walks all his life but more recently due to his illness sometimes it is not safe for him to go out alone as he will forget his way home and will wander off, jumping on a bus etc. Naturally this is a cause of worry for his wife and as such steps have been taken to prevent her husband from going out. However, with the addition of a G.P.S device to his person (Buddi System) he is able to resume his walks. If the husband is not home by an agreed time, his wife will either phone the monitoring centre or her children who will then access a secure site to find out exactly where he is. Alternatively the system can be used to set up 'virtual fences' around an area for safe walking. If he walks out of safe area a trigger alert is sent to the monitoring centre. The device has enabled the husband to maintain his independence, as he puts it 'I don't feel like a prisoner in my own home' and it has enabled his wife to continue caring as 'I feel much calmer now'.

Telecare is already central to our Reablement Service as evidenced by 44% increase in the number of people using telecare for the period April to September 2012 (166) compared to the same period for 2011 (115) but we would like to see it as a consideration at the point of transition for young people especially at night time within our supported living situations for people with Learning disabilities. In December 2012 the North Wales Regional Telecare Programme Board was reconvened. Flintshire Social Services leads and chairs on the board which confirms our commitment to working collaboratively to find solutions that will ensure that we offer the best possible Telecare service. The board has identified a number of areas that could benefit from collaboration and these will be considered in detail during the forthcoming year. They include trialling new equipment, telehealth, installation and maintenance and policy development.

Extra care

We are now on schedule to open our second [Extra Care Scheme](#) in Mold in the Summer of 2013 the culmination of a project that started in May 2009, a collaboration with Wales and West Housing Association. An open day was held at the Daniel Owen Centre in Mold where over 80 people attended and expressed an interest in the scheme. The scheme is based on the concept of our award winning Shotton Extra Care Scheme. As reported last year we are particularly pleased as this new scheme for 48 older people will also include further specialist provision for 15 people with dementia which will be the first of its kind in Wales. Our aim is to have a further 2 Extra care schemes in Flintshire by 2016.



Recovery Approach

The recovery approach seeks to provide services that help people with mental health problems manage their own recovery rather than becoming dependent on long term social care. The approach recognises that people have the right to build meaningful lives as defined by themselves regardless of their mental health problems. The focus is on identifying and building on strengths and promoting well-being. Central to the recovery approach is the concept of hope; hope for change and a better life which needs to be fostered by services.

Our Mental Health Support Services has continued during 2012/2013 to embed recovery and we know this because:

- More people (since 2008 254 people) have taken part in the Wellness and Recovery Planning (WRAP) courses as already mentioned in this report.
- The number of people we have helped on their journey of recovery is increasing for example Next Steps, a service we provide that supports people to access education, training, voluntary work and employment has supported 12 people to get a job during 2012, which compares to 5 in 2011.

“My support worker has had a massive impact on my life, she has helped me rebuild my confidence in myself and my self esteem in just 5 months, I have gained my level 2 award in food safety in catering, applied for and successfully been awarded a bursary to start up my own business in the Pet services industry.”

In a matter of a few months leaving this service (Next Steps) many things have changed I have got much more confidence which has made me able to pass my driving test and hold my present job down and be in a stable relationship. The service I receive is very good. It helping to build my confidence within society. I value the support I receive.

(Ex-service user March 2012)

- People who have used our services have told us that our services focus on recovery. We know this because in 2012 we adapted our annual service user questionnaire in line with the principles of recovery. A number of key questions were included to establish whether the service we provide is recovery focussed. We were pleased to find that the service is operating in a recovery-orientated way, particularly given that 95% of the 78 respondents felt that they had been treated with dignity and respect.

However, there is recognition that we need to do more if we are to fully embed recovery, a particular area is providing people with information about what is going on in their local communities, as 18% of respondents to our annual service user questionnaire indicated this to be a need. This will be addressed by our Recovery Focussed Action Plan for 2012-2013; where you can find out about the other actions we are taking such as the ongoing use of WRAP (Wellness Recovery and Action Planning) for service users and staff, our first Social Enterprise pilot, developing the role of our Recovery Champions (nominated members of staff in teams) and ongoing promotion of direct payments.

Also as part of the Transformation programme Mental Health Support Services is undergoing a review under the Service Re-design work stream. The purpose of the review is to ensure that we have a workforce structure that will be 'fit for purpose' to deliver a recovery approach.

Mental Health Measure

2012/2013 saw us working closely with the BCU Health Board to implement the [Mental Health \(Wales\) Measure](#) (Welsh Government legislation), creating more rights for people who use mental health services. Our focus for 2013 will be to ensure that Assessment and Care Planning adopts a Recovery ethos and the further embedding of the recovery approach across all services.

For Children's Social Services

We are moving to a model of early intervention that supports the whole family.

2012/2013 has seen us progress towards having the new arrangements in place for our [Integrated Family Support Service](#) (IFSS) in April 2013. The desired outcome of this new service is to improve the quality of life chances of vulnerable families through an integrated multi-agency approach. We have taken on board learning from the three IFSS pilot sites in Wales, working particularly closely with Wrexham Local Authority.

Also, as reported last year further ahead is our implementation of the Families First Initiative which will reduce the impact of poverty on families in Flintshire. We are pleased to report that Families First funding has been allocated and new contracts for service delivery requiring a family focused approach were issued at the beginning of October.

Both initiatives will mean better outcomes for children and future savings as fewer children will need to go into care. We welcomed the acknowledgement from CSSIW that across our services there is progress in relation to the 'whole family approach', which is captured in the following quote:

“There is an increasing focus upon prevention and early intervention that supports the whole family, with better outcomes for children as fewer are needing care.”

Volunteer Mentor Project

The volunteer mentor project provides a range of supports for young people. A volunteer mentor will support a looked after child, a care leaver or a child in need to develop independent living skills and personal and social skills.

A volunteer can be a member of the public or our workforce, coming from a variety of backgrounds. We have a good record for retaining volunteers, with over 50% of our volunteers having been with the service for over 12 months. We continue to promote the opportunity to volunteer via our website and the current number stands at 25.

A priority for 2012/2013 was to make the project more efficient with a system in place to measure the effectiveness of the support provided. We have done this with our Mentoring Support and Review plans and these are now being used and integrated into our IT Business system. This is having a positive effect of linking the initial support plan to outcomes being worked towards. Also a database has been created in order to analyse User feedback and satisfaction on an annual basis to verify service quality and make improvements in response to feedback.

Flintshire Fostering Service

(previously known as the Family Placement Team) A follow up CSSIW inspection was undertaken with our Flintshire Fostering Service in February 2012. The service received a positive inspection report in April 2012 concerning its adherence to regulations and guidance, with no action requirements. To establish the extent to which the team is meeting those responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner in Autumn 2012 we embarked on a review of the team, looking at day to day operations including staff deployment, policy reviews etc. The review has resulted in six options for change. Each option will be considered in terms of quality and cost with a view to recommendations being presented to the Director in early 2013.



Last year we reported that our Stepping Stones Support Group for children whose families foster with Flintshire was embarking on a new project with 'Film Blast', a community film project that gives community groups the opportunity to work with a resident professional film maker and a specialist arts practitioner.

The Stepping Stones group alongside other groups produced a film which was screened at the Flintshire Filmfest in June 2012. The film featured the children's own artwork and the children themselves on the theme of "seasons". It showed a seed growing into a tree during spring, summer, autumn and winter. All ten children involved in making the film attended the "premiere" screening with their parents at Theatr Clwyd.

The children enjoyed the opportunity of making a film, which is one of the many activities organised during school holidays to say "thankyou" to the children for sharing their lives, toys and parents with children in foster care. The group have also produced their own magazine answering children's big questions about "what's fostering like".

During 2012 Foster Carers were honoured at an awards ceremony for dedicating many years to looking after children. 15 Fostering families who had reached a milestone in caring during the year were presented with their long service awards from Flintshire County Council. Foster carers attended the event with their families which included their own children and foster children.

One couple who had been caring for children of ranging ages for 30 years and duration received a long service award. The children had fitted into their family alongside their own daughter and had thrived in their care.

To find out more about fostering in Flintshire visit www.flintshire.gov.uk/foster

Over the past few years our pool of in-house foster carers has increased, with the figure now standing at 100 approved carers. We continue to develop new ways of supporting and connecting our foster carers.

An initiative at the end of 2012 was to set up a foster carers secure website which allows us to communicate more effectively and efficiently with our foster carers. As of January 2013, 50 foster carers have been issued with their secure log-ins.

The team has tested the site and we are now encouraging foster carers to book places on training and events electronically. The foster carers handbook and forms are available to view and download, and developments are in progress to add a chat forum.



Homes for our Care Leavers

We know that finding suitable temporary and independent living accommodation for our care leavers is a real challenge. We are glad to report that our two care leavers who turned 19 in the first half of this year are living in suitable accommodation. However this remains an important improvement priority for our Council, so in collaboration with Housing we have taken steps to address the issue.

For example we have executive agreement for the allocation of up to 10 units per annum of accommodation from the Flintshire Housing Stock for care leavers.

We have also commissioned the British Association for Adoption and Fostering to carry out a review of supported lodging schemes in Flintshire.

We eagerly await the findings of the review which will influence future placement options. Our goal is to see an expansion of the housing options on offer for all our Care leavers who will be equipped with skills to live independently. This hinges on the really positive collaboration between Children's Social Services and Housing.

For Adult and Children's Social Services Transition

The joint Transition Team (across Children and Adult services) was launched in July 2012. Staff members have been transferred / recruited and are now co-located and this was a significant milestone in the project plan. Young people with disabilities over the age of 16, previously supported by adult and children teams, have been transferred into the Transition Team. As a new team, a training programme is in place which will ensure that all team members can support young people across the age range of 16 to 25 years to consistently high standards. The ethos behind having one team is that a young person's journey from children to adult services will be well planned to meet their individual needs.

Locality Leadership Teams

We carried out significant work with BCU Health Board in 2012 to ensure that we link service planning and delivery of health and social care services at a local level.

We want to move to co-located teams between social workers, occupational therapists and district nurses, a strategic position that senior officers within the Local Authority and Health are committed to achieving via 3 locality teams that are co terminus with the health boundaries.

Staff have been appointed to roles in this new structure and are now in a position to work with their health partners across localities. This model of service delivery is being progressed in the context of the outcome of the significant service review within BCU Health Board called “Health Care in North Wales is Changing” (Consultation document August 2012).

During 2012 the impact of the proposals in this service review have been treated as a high priority by the Leader and all the Members of the Council, who sought in a range of different ways to get clarification on the detail in order to robustly respond to the consultation. The consultation has now been completed and the outcomes have been decided by BCU Health Board subject to ministerial review.

Priorities for 2013/2014

- Continue to embed the Reablement, Recovery and Independence Agenda
- Progress work towards having a regional Telecare/ Telehealth Service
- Open our second Extra Care Scheme in Mold and progress plans for a further two
- Implement with the BCU Health Board the Mental Health Measure. Creating more rights for people who use mental health services.
- Progress the Implementation of a ‘whole family’ model (integrated Family Support Services Initiative and Families First Initiative)
- Recommendations following the review of the Flintshire Fostering Service to be considered by Director with view to service redesign.
- Progress the locality model of working and implement [enhanced care](#) with the BCU Health Board

What We Will Do In The Coming Year To Make Things Even Better

Council Leadership

- Implement Council proposals in response to welfare reforms.
- Deliver on the new outcome focussed Council priorities that will be relevant to Social Services.

A Stronger Voice and Real Control for Citizens

- Implementation the Regional Carers Information Action Plan to keep carers better informed.
- Implement a model of support that will provide carers with flexible breaks and alternative care in 2013
- Increase the number of young carers identified and supported in schools/ colleges
- Promote and develop the use of the A2A card with young carers and looked after children for prompting effective support in schools and in the council.
- Further improve the take-up of direct payments or Citizen Directed Support to promote greater choice and control
- Evidence the impact of the Involvement Action Plan
- Roll out the Complaints training for managers leading to a more responsive service from which we more effectively learn the lessons.
- Set up a Social Enterprise as a sustainable model with added social value.
- Deliver on Year 1 actions to strengthen welsh service provision, as set out in the 'More than just words' Strategic Framework for Welsh Language services in Health, Social Services and Social Care.

Smarter Commissioning

- Become smarter Commissioners to ensure people receive the best services within the resources we have available.
- Develop commissioning plans for Mental Health and Older People Services and implement the Learning Disability Commissioning Plan.
- Take up opportunities for collaboration where money will be saved and the quality of services is maintained.
- Recruit a Contract and Commissioning Officer with a lead for Children Services (a 2 year post) to manage high cost/ low volume placements.

Evidencing our Improvement

- Implement the strategic equality action plan to advance equality across Social Services
- To get a more detailed picture of service costs 'test run' a finance module in PARIS in Children's Social Services.
- Learn from being a SSIA 'Outcomes Framework for child protection' pilot site.
- Ensure all children and young people receiving services have timely reviews.
- Improve the stability of placements for looked after children.
Improve the identification of young carers
- Continue to evidence the effectiveness of the reablement service in supporting people to live independently in their own homes.
- Improve the data collection for Carers, to meet the outcomes for the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure

- Continue to reduce times taken to deliver major adaptations (Disabled Facilities Grants), which are important for people's independence
- Evaluate the impact of a pilot for Occupational Therapy self assessment in relation to small pieces of equipment and minor adaptations that serve to maintain independence.

A Stronger and Professional Workforce

- Promote and deliver the Consolidation training programme for newly qualified Social Workers which on completion will provide them with credits towards a Graduate Certificate in Consolidation of Social Work Practice (the first element of continuing professional education and learning for Social Workers in Wales)
- Continue to review workforce absence and set targets for reduction

Stronger Safeguarding

- Maximise the benefits of our enhanced Safeguarding Unit for Children by offering a support and advice role to our frontline workforce
- Improve adult protection and risk management recording.

Driving forward more integrated Services

- Continue to embed the Reablement, Recovery and Independence Agenda
- Progress work towards having a regional Telecare/ Telehealth Service
- Open our second Extra Care Scheme in Mold and progress plans for a further two
- Implement with the BCU Health Board the Mental Health Measure. Creating more rights for people who use mental health services.

- Progress the Implementation of a 'whole family' model (integrated Family Support Services Initiative and Families First Initiative)
- Recommendations following the review of the Flintshire Fostering Service to be considered by Director with view to service redesign.
- Progress the locality model of working and implement enhanced care with the BCU Health Board

Citizen Directed Support - It is where people choose, organise and control their own support to meet assessed and agreed social care needs in a way that suits them with an identified budget. It is about using available resources to achieve what is important to them. The service package can be made up of statutory and other services.

Continuing Health Care - People receive the appropriate level and type of care related to their dependency and disease, within the relevant legal, policy, clinical and resource context (Aim of Continuing NHS Health Care: Framework for Implementation)

Commissioning - Involves making decisions about what services are required to respond to need. It involves making decisions about the capacity, location, cost and quality of services, together with who will deliver them.

Collaborate - Where agencies pool resources (time, expertise and money) to work together to deliver and develop services.

Corporate Parent - The Council has a duty to act as a good parent to children and young people in it's care and those young people in the process of leaving care. The Council wants these children to have the best possible outcomes. Clear strategic and political leadership is crucial in ensuring that Looked After Children and the Corporate Parenting agenda is given the appropriate profile and priority.

CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) - CSSIW encourages the improvement of social care, early years and social services by; regulating, inspecting and reviewing and providing professional advice to Welsh Ministers and policy makers.

Direct Payments - Cash payments given to people who are eligible as a means of controlling their own care, allowing more choice and flexibility. They are regular monthly payments from Social Services enabling people to purchase their own care, instead of receiving help arranged by social services.

Domiciliary care contract - A single regional contract for care in the home being developed in partnership with Local Authorities, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the Independent Sector. This means that all providers work to the same standard and service specification. To be launched in April 2012.

Enhanced Care - Forms part of the spectrum of intermediate community based services, but specifically provides care at the 'far end' of this spectrum for people who have medical and/or nursing needs who, without enhanced care, would otherwise be admitted to a hospital bed or would remain in hospital for a longer period of time. (This includes people admitted to an acute hospital bed and those who are admitted/transferred to a community hospital bed).

Equality Impact Assessment - An equality impact assessment is a systematic method to assess implications of an organisation's decisions on people from different backgrounds. Impact assessment should take place when considering a new policy or strategy or revising an existing policy or reviewing a function, service or procedure. Escalating concerns arise where there are accumulating issues relating to the operation of, or quality of care provided in, a registered care home providing services to adults.

Escalating concerns - arise where there are accumulating issues relating to the operation of, or quality of care provided in, a registered care home providing services to adults.

Families First Initiative - Improving the delivery of services to families across Wales, especially those living in poverty, as set out in the Welsh Assembly Government's Child Poverty Strategy 2010.

Extra Care Scheme - Llys Eleanor, Flintshire's first extra care scheme provides independent living for some older people in Flintshire. The scheme was developed by Flintshire County Council in partnership with the Pennaf Housing Group. It has won the Best Housing and Regeneration award in the annual Association for Public Service Excellence awards. Llys Eleanor has 50 one and two bedroom apartments with a restaurant, lounge, mini cinema, gym, games room, IT suite and hair dressing salon amongst the communal facilities on offer as well as a treatment / therapy room. A state of the art alarm system and 24 hour care is available on site. Apartments can be purchased by or rented to people aged 60+ who have care and accommodation

Integrated Family Support Service - An innovative service model that aims to reform services provided to vulnerable children and families. For families with complex problems there is an increased likelihood that the child's physical, social and emotional development will be impaired and for some children there will be repeated or long term episodes of being looked after by the local authority. The main aim of IFSS is to support families to stay together by empowering them to take positive steps to improve their lives.

Locality Leadership Teams – There are three teams in Flintshire - North East (Deeside), North West (Flint and Holywell) and South (Buckley, Mold etc). The overall aim of the Locality Leadership Teams is to enable multi-agency staff from the locality to work in partnership as an integrated team to plan, deliver and monitor the best possible locality services for residents by:

1. Maintaining independence and wellbeing at home and in the community as appropriate, and avoiding unnecessary admissions to hospital and long term care
2. Improving the multi-disciplinary care of people with chronic conditions and
3. Targeting resources more effectively in the community to include a range of health promotion and preventative interventions.

Local Service Board – A local Leadership Team of Flintshire's public service bodies (Council, Police, BCU Health Board, Further and Higher Education, Probation, Fire and Rescue, Environment Agency, Voluntary Sector). It has four principal roles as a set of local leaders: to take ownership of the community strategy; provide oversight and monitoring of relevant partnerships; identify common issues as public bodies/employers and promote effective joint working in the design and provision of public services.

Mental Health (Wales) Measure - The proposed Measure places duties on Local Health Boards and local authorities in Wales in relation to assessment of mental health and treatment of mental disorder. It also makes provision in relation to independent mental health advocacy for qualifying patients – those are persons subject to the compulsory powers of the Mental Health Act 1983, and persons receiving treatment in hospital (suffering with a mental disorder).

Medium Term Financial Plan - The plan forecasts available resources, financial pressures, opportunities for efficiencies/ savings for both revenue services and the capital programme. The Plan builds on 2011/2012 and forecasts forward 3 years to 2014/2015. The plan is an integral part of our Medium Term Financial Strategy which can be found on our Council website.

Minor and Major Adaptations - Minor Adaptation is an adaptation which costs under £1000 such as a grab rail or level access shower (not equipment). A major Adaptation is over £1000 and would be through the Disabled Facilities Grant or if a Housing Association tenant through Scheme 1A which is Welsh Government funded (e.g. bathroom, kitchen or bedroom extension, stairlift or lift)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Decisions are usually made by the cabinet for all issues including major policy matters. The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to hold the cabinet to account as a critical friends and to monitor/ assist in the improvement and development of the council's policies and services. Under local government Act 2000 the Local Authority must have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. There are six Overview and Scrutiny Committees in Flintshire of which the Social and HealthCare Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the one relevant to this report.

Reablement - Reablement is an approach which aims to maximise independence, choice and quality of life. This means that all people who wish to access Social Care Services undergo a period of assessment and support to enable them to live as independently as possible, thus minimising the requirement for ongoing support. Reablement is a short term assessment and intervention service which is person centred and outcome focused.

As such the duration of the reablement will vary for each person (from a few days to a maximum period of six weeks). During the reablement phase there will be regular reviews to assess progress against agreed outcomes.

Regional Commissioning Hub - A collaboration of the six North Wales' authorities for the commissioning and contracting of high cost low volume care home placements for adults and children.

Senedd - The main public building of the National Assembly.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill - The Bill will set out the core legal framework for social services and social care, reinforcing people's rights to information and services and supporting the delivery of our services in an integrated way to ensure that social services and social care are sustainable.

Telecare - Is a way in which support can be provided through telecommunication devices in the home. It uses simple technology to manage risk and give people the peace of mind they need to live in their own homes for longer. Telecare equipment is provided through Community Equipment Stores and fitted and monitored by Carelink. There are currently over 400 homes in Flintshire with Telecare as part of an assessed care package.