

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SOCIAL SERVICES
annual report 2022/2023
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This Social Services Annual Report is prepared under the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, both of which place a statutory requirement on the Council to report annually on its social services functions.

The focus of this legislation is on well-being, and our report summarises the key things that we are doing in Flintshire to support our most vulnerable residents. It describes our challenges, provides our stakeholders with a picture of how we have performed and improved over the last year, and sets out our priorities for the coming year.

Stakeholders include the people using our services, our staff, elected members, the general public, our partners, regulators and Welsh Government. Engagement with stakeholders is fundamental to what we do, and informs the development of our services and future plans.

In the report we evaluate our performance against last year's improvement priorities and outline our priorities for next year.

The work described in the report links to the National Quality Standards, which set out the Welsh Government's expectations at a national level of the quality of support that local authorities must be providing.

In preparing this report, we have followed the same approach as last year, reflecting the headings from the North Wales Population Needs Assessment, and under each heading we will demonstrate:

- ✧ **What we had planned to do last year and how we have succeeded**
- ✧ **What difference this made to the outcomes for well-being of people**
- ✧ **What our priority objectives are for next year**
- ✧ **Any lessons learnt from the work carried out during last year**

The standards are set out on the right:

People

NQS 1.1 All people are equal partners who have voice, choice and control over their lives and are able to achieve what matters to them.

NQS 1.2 Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision.

Prevention

NQS 2.1 The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is prevented, whilst ensuring that the best possible outcomes for people are achieved.

NQS 2.2 Resilience within our communities is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively encouraging and supporting people who need care and support, including carers, to learn, develop and participate in society.

Partnerships & Integration

NQS 3.1 Effective partnerships are in place to commission and deliver fully integrated, high quality, sustainable outcomes for people.

NQS 3.2 People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as equal partners.

Well-Being

NQS 4.1 People are protected and safeguarded from abuse and neglect, and any other types of harm.

NQS 4.2 People are supported to actively manage their well-being and make their own informed decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and live independently for as long as possible.

Director's Summary of Performance

WELCOME to this year's Annual Social Services Report.

We have over the past year continued to positively support our most vulnerable residents to have a voice and control over their own lives, reach their potential and live well in their communities.

Flintshire County Council's Corporate values (link):

- ✦ Compassion, Empathetic and Kind
- ✦ Dignified and Respectful

- ✦ Resilient and Resourceful
- ✦ Energetic and Enthusiastic

Flintshire County Council's Corporate values are reflected throughout the delivery of our services by our committed Social Care Workforce. In these challenging times, they remain dedicated to improving well-being through meaningful joint working with our residents, their families, our commissioned providers and partners to build our resilient and resourceful community.

We have highlighted below just some of our key successes from last year:

- ✦ Children's residential services have seen significant development, with its two small group homes and the completion of building work on two four bed properties, one of which has emergency accommodation.
- ✦ Our Early Years and Family Support web page has been developed as part of the Flintshire County Council website, as is to be launched April 23
- ✦ The Draft Early Years Strategy has been consulted on and is also due for launch April 2023
- ✦ A new team, DART, has been set up by Flintshire Social Services to support citizens in hospital and beyond DART is the social care link between hospital and the community, and we aim to make the move as smooth as possible for people.
- ✦ In September 2022 Empowering Parents Empowering Communities (EPEC) successfully delivered its third cohort of Parent Group Leader training.
- ✦ We have increased the number of approved general foster carers and approved connected persons.
- ✦ The number of Micro-carers has increased with an additional 11 people in setting up Micro-Enterprises in Flintshire this year, bringing the total number of Micro-Carers setup since the pilot launch to 34.
- ✦ A Project Board has been established, and identified key actions to implement the Dementia Strategy for Flintshire.
- ✦ Work has progressed with the development of a new 56 bedroom residential care home in Flint offering residential care of the highest quality with state of the art facilities across 4 floors.



Neil Ayling
Chief Officer
Social Services



**Councillor
Christine Jones**
Cabinet Member
for Social Services



Suzy Lunt



Janet Bellis

- ★ **Flintshire has continued to lead the North East Wales Community Equipment Service.** The provision of community equipment is essential for promoting the independence of people with disabilities of all ages.
- ★ **Properties at Larchway, Sandycroft, and Glany Morfa, Connah’s Quay have been refurbished to support people with physical disabilities.** Flintshire now has three units available to support people in urgent need of accommodation.

- ★ **We have continued to explore different ways of using direct payments with a focus on strength and resilience, to help families use their direct payments in creative and resourceful ways.**
- ★ **The Project SEARCH programme for adults over 25 was launched with 7 interns undertaking work placements.**
- ★ **Next Steps ran their advanced volunteering program**
- ★ **The Young Carers ID card has been launched successfully working in partnership with young carers.**

This year has seen the appointment of a new Senior Head of Adult services, Janet Bellis following the retirement

Susie was passionate about the importance of good care for the people we look after, and is admired and respected by our Councillors Colleagues, Welsh Government Ministers and Civil servants, regional and national colleagues and by all the staff team in Flintshire.

Flintshire has received a legacy of great work from Susie who spent most of her working life at Flintshire, and developed many first rate services through her determination to improve the lives of the people we support.

We wish Susie all the very best for the future and welcome Janet to her new role.

From both myself, and Councillor Christine Jones, my colleague Cabinet member for Social Services, we express our sincere gratitude to our staff for their tremendous effort and commitment in providing such excellent services in what continue to be very pressured times to the citizens of Flintshire.

We wish to thank our staff and all of our stakeholders for their dedication and professionalism shown towards our very positive working relationships, and their innovative approaches to developing our Services.

How are People Shaping our Services?

Central to our work in Social Services are the people of Flintshire.

If you come in to contact with Social Services, you can expect to be asked for some of this information. The care and support someone may need to reach their outcomes differs greatly from person to person, and it is important to understand that one size does not fit all. The support someone needs may increase or reduce over time.

Alongside opportunities for people to be part of the development of their own care and support, we also work to ensure that we have opportunities for people to influence wider service design and to build solutions to issues raised.

On the next pages are some of the areas where residents and partner agencies have supported us in the design and delivery of services.

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What Matters conversations are based on the following 5 points:

1. **The person's circumstances**
2. **Their personal outcomes**
3. **Barriers to achieving those outcomes**
4. **Risks to the person or to other persons if those outcomes are not achieved**
5. **The person's strengths and capabilities**



Young Voices Speak Out

are a group of young people that are looked after or leaving care.

The group designed a logo for their new name incorporating an infinity sign as this means forever as there will be no end to the group,

as even when the current members move on, there will be new members joining to carry on the work.

Some of the things the group has worked on in the last 12 months have included;

- ✦ **Interviewing candidates** for a Managers post in Children's Services. The group asked the candidates questions they had written, and provided feedback to Senior Managers.
- ✦ **Members of the group also continue to attend the Children's Services Forum meetings** which is made up of Elected Members, Senior Managers and representatives from Children's Services and Education. At these meetings they share their views on a range of topics that have recently included housing, education and sexual health advice for young people.
- ✦ **Members attend the regional 'Voices From Care' events**, which bring together care experienced young people from across Wales. At conferences, professionals and young people take part in workshops and activities. The group have attended workshops on Corporate Parenting and Education.
- ✦ **The group also attended the Young Wales Annual Participation Conference** in Wrexham. It gave them the opportunity to meet members of other Participation Groups and Youth Councils and find out about the work they are doing.
- ✦ **The group have also fed in to work to develop a number of different projects around mental health and wellbeing for young people.** The group were asked what support they felt there was for children and young people around mental health and wellbeing and if they felt there was anything that is missing that could be good for children and young people. Following this, members have met representative from Theatre Clwyd and are helping to plan community projects.

We have developed new webpages for those living with Dementia and their families and carers in Flintshire after a local resident living with Dementia, Jim, shared how difficult it had been to navigate and find the right information to support him following his diagnosis. It is hoped that these pages will bring together a range of information in to one place, acting as a directory of support services.

The webpages will continue to be updated as we learn more about local support. We are also in the process of mapping the Dementia Friendly Communities, locations, businesses and schools on our interactive map, which we will add to the page.

Jim continues to advise us as a member of the Council's Dementia Friendly Council Steering Group.

We are proud to have built positive working relationships with organisations who deliver care and support in care homes, domiciliary care services and supported living settings across Flintshire, and we regularly meet together to have open discussions and share information through quarterly Provider Meetings. Over the past year we have spoken with providers at length about, fees, training and social value amongst other things. We have also fed their views and comments back in to our consultation responses on the Regulation & Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act and the development of a Health & Social Care Workforce Strategy. We are committed to ensuring that local provider's voices are heard alongside our own.

We continue to communicate with the providers between meetings via email and each care home is assigned an officer to support them to deliver person centred services through Progress for Providers, and with any challenges they encounter.

In 2019/ 20 the Flintshire Carers Strategy Group, a group of health, social care, third sector organisations and carers, completed a review of its provision and support for local carers. This review included understanding what is working well within the existing provision, what changes we could make and most importantly we listened to the views of carers to make sure any future provision is providing what matters to them.

Another great example of carers being involved in shaping services was the recent procurement exercise of the Flintshire Young Carers Service, whereby four local young carers, aged between 10 and 15, were involved in interviewing the bidding organisations and assisted in selecting the winning delivery organisation.



I really cannot say thank you enough to Flintshire County Council for acting so quickly. All related information to support someone living with dementia in one place.

Jim Ibell, Ambassador for Alzheimer's Society Flintshire resident



I have been talking about trying to get this done for months at different meetings I have been to around North Wales and at last it has been acted on.

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