

Public Document Pack

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Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To: Cllr Carol Ellis (Chair)

CS/NG

Councillors: Marion Bateman, Peter Curtis,
Adele Davies-Cooke, Andy Dunbobbin,
Veronica Gay, Cindy Hinds, Hilary Isherwood,
Stella Jones, Brian Lloyd, Mike Lowe,
Hilary McGuill, Dave Mackie, Ian Smith and
David Wisinger

13 September 2013

Sharon Thomas 01352 702324
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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **THURSDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2013** at **3.00 PM** to consider the following items.

Please note that the meeting will start at 3pm

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

AGENDA

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 10)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2013.

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

- 4 **LEARNING DISABILITY COMMISSIONING PLAN** (Pages 11 - 64)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 5 **ADULTS SAFEGUARDING REGIONAL PROPOSAL** (Pages 65 - 82)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 6 **DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE FOR WALES**
(Pages 83 - 160)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 7 **PERFORMANCE REPORTING** (Pages 161 - 168)
Report of Chief Executive enclosed.
- 8 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 169 - 176)
Report of Social Care & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25 JULY 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Thursday, 25 July 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Marion Bateman, Veronica Gay, Cindy Hinds, Hilary Isherwood, Brian Lloyd, Hilary McGuill, Dave Mackie, Ian Smith and David Wisinger

CONTRIBUTORS: Cabinet Member for Social Services, Director of Community Services and Head of Social Services for Adults

Jo-Ann Dyson - Locality Manager, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (for minute number 13)

Adult Safeguarding Manager (for minute number 14)

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were received.

12. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Joint Lifelong Learning and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 11 June 2013 and the Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 20 June 2013 had been circulated with the agenda.

Matters Arising - 11 June 2013

Minute 4: Educational Attainment of Looked After Children - Councillor H.J. McGuill sought an update on the request for the Welsh Government to increase the Pupil Premium. The Facilitator would pursue a response from the Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator who had been dealing with actions from this meeting.

Minute 5: Corporate Parenting Activity Update - The Facilitator advised that the request for mandatory Corporate Parenting training had been considered at the recent meeting of the Democratic Services Committee. As there was no statutory duty for this training to become mandatory, the Committee had resolved that Group Leaders encourage Members' attendance at a seminar to be facilitated by an appropriate officer. Councillor McGuill felt that the requirement for Members of Planning Committee to have attended at least two-thirds of training should also apply to those on the Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Facilitator explained the Council's statutory requirement for those on the Planning and Audit Committees to undertake relevant training however there were no such powers for Corporate Parenting. Members were in

agreement with the suggestion made by Councillor V. Gay that this could be addressed by the creation of a mandatory training module on Corporate Parenting for school governors.

Accuracy - 20 June 2013

Minute 4: Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) - On an example given of a patient experiencing a lengthy waiting time in an ambulance outside a hospital, the Chair asked that her comments be included to reflect that this could have been as a result of the ambulance being unable to discharge the patient due to insufficient capacity in the hospital.

Matters Arising - 20 June 2013

Minute 4: BCUHB - Councillor Gay queried the statement made by Ms. Clare Jones that there were currently no contracts with English GP practices for patients living in Wales, as she was aware that the Lache practice in Cheshire had special dispensations to take in patients from across the border. The Facilitator agreed to clarify this with BCUHB and provide a response. She went on to confirm that responses to issues raised at the meeting had been circulated to the Committee.

The Chair said that she had been informed that work on the Primary Healthcare Centre in Buckley was due to start at the end of September 2013. She and Councillor McGuill reported on the forthcoming removal of community health services from Flint hospital prior to its closure on 2 September 2013.

Minute 6: Quarterly Performance Reporting - It was confirmed that the report on looked after children across Wales had been circulated to the Committee.

Minute 8: Forward Work Programme - In relation to an issue raised on the Emergency Duty Team, Councillor C. Hinds said that she had been advised that this was now resolved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, subject to one amendment to the minutes of 20 June 2013, both set of minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman;
- (b) That the Facilitator provide a response to the Committee on the request for the Welsh Government to increase the Pupil Premium;
- (c) That the Facilitator pursue the suggestion for mandatory training on Corporate Parenting for school governors; and
- (d) That the Facilitator liaise with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board representatives and provide a response to the Committee to clarify the issue on contracts with GP practices in England.

13. WELSH AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Chair welcomed Jo-Ann Dyson from the Welsh Ambulance Service and invited her to deliver the presentation, copies of which were circulated. Ms. Dyson explained that she was the Locality Manager for Flintshire and Wrexham and was based at the newly-established Area Ambulance Centre at Dobshill. In thanking the Committee for the chance to give a brief presentation, she welcomed the opportunity for a future return visit if further information was required.

Ms. Dyson explained details of the 'Make Ready' system which aimed to accelerate and improve the preparation process of ambulances to benefit response times as well as improving infection control and patient experience. In reporting vast improvements in ambulance waiting times at hospitals since April 2013 mainly due to regular liaison with three appointed hospital-based Operational Site Managers, Ms. Dyson assured the Committee that there had been a significant increase in patients being seen within 15 minutes and a decrease in numbers of those waiting over an hour.

Statistics indicated a steadily improving performance in Flintshire, resulting in 60.1% of emergency calls in June 2013 being responded to within 8 minutes. It was acknowledged that response times during March had been affected by the extreme weather conditions experienced throughout the county. Ms. Dyson referred to local press coverage on ambulance response times in Flintshire in comparison with those in Wrexham, and pointed out that crews from Flintshire were dispersed to Glan Clwyd, Wrexham Maelor and the Countess of Chester hospitals which impacted on turnaround times. She added that despite the high demand for services in Flintshire, it was hoped that performance figures would continue to improve, although this was dependant on a number of other factors.

The Chair asked whether patients, particularly those from the Mold area, could opt to be taken to the Countess of Chester hospital if they wished. Ms. Dyson confirmed this and stated that the hospital was generally chosen based on the postcode area of the patient, but was also dependent on patient choice.

In response to queries raised by Councillor H.J. McGuill, Ms. Dyson confirmed that equipment and stretchers etc in ambulance vehicles were thoroughly cleaned in-between patient use. Staff based at the Dobshill depot were employed by the Ambulance Service and undertook a rigorous three week training programme to gain an understanding of the equipment used, including driving of the vehicles and safety checks. Councillor McGuill referred to a range of systems and additional resources put in place for hospitals to cope with emergency situations and said it was difficult to understand why these measures could not be utilised on a daily basis to ensure that demand was met. Ms. Dyson agreed that this was a fair observation and commented that patients were triaged on arrival at hospitals however internal hospital organisations were responsible for moving patients out of the emergency department.

In response to further queries, it was explained that ambulances were unable to discharge patients to out-of-hours clinics as once the patient was on board the vehicle and documentation initiated, there was a responsibility to

discharge the patient to a hospital unless the patient chose to discharge themselves. Explanation was provided on the process of dealing with 999 calls from receiving the call at the control centre within a set time to the dispatching of an ambulance vehicle at the same time as seeking responses from the caller to set questions. Emergency 'red' calls were to be dealt with within 8 minutes whereas other calls were deemed 'green'. Councillor McGuill referred to a previous incident at County Hall where an ambulance had failed to respond to an emergency call with no notification given as to why. Ms. Dyson explained that a callback system was now in place to report any follow-up information.

Issues raised by Councillor H.T. Isherwood were in relation to the increasing pressure on the NHS due to the ageing population and ambulances being able to access individuals in rural areas. In addition, she felt that more education should be available on basic first aid/CPR procedures in schools and referred to drivers with hearing impairments who may not be able to hear ambulance sirens. Ms. Dyson said that rapid response vehicles could be used to access rural areas which, apart from stretchers, were fully equipped. Staff knowledge of areas was helpful in identifying any access issues and was also aided by advance notification, for example in a recent case of a home birth where a prior risk assessment had been carried out. The intensive training course undertaken by ambulance drivers included awareness raising and consideration of other road users such as those with hearing impairments. Whilst the suggestion for training at schools would be beneficial, there were insufficient resources to put this into practice, however representatives from the Ambulance Service made every effort to attend schools and associated events to raise awareness, when requested. In response to a request, she agreed to provide the Committee with a breakdown of the reasons for calling out ambulances.

Following a query raised by Councillor M. Bateman, Ms. Dyson said that a doctor calling an ambulance from a patient's home would request the type of vehicle required to transport the patient to hospital. Councillor Bateman would discuss this further outside the meeting. As requested, Ms. Dyson agreed to provide performance figures from previous years to compare with the current statistics included in the presentation.

In response to a query raised by Councillor V. Gay, it was confirmed that Operational Site Managers were located at BCUHB hospital sites including Ysbyty Gwynedd. A similar, less robust, arrangement was in place at the Countess of Chester hospital where issues could be raised with another contact.

Councillor D.E. Wisinger commented on the effectiveness of service arrangements and waiting times in previous years, despite the improvements currently being made, however acknowledged that some delays could be due to increased traffic on roads. He referred to the case at County Hall mentioned earlier and similar incidents across the UK in relation to ambulance waiting times. Ms. Dyson pointed out that demand on the Ambulance Service had significantly increased which was partly due to individuals not registered with a GP choosing to call for an ambulance and impacted by the closure of some community hospitals. She gave assurances that work was ongoing to look at ways of resolving this issue.

The Chair said it was recognised that the closure of community hospitals was an increased risk and would lead to further pressure on hospital beds and ambulance waiting times.

Councillor McGuill referred to the first responder on the scene of an incident and asked if there was potential for future training in the Ambulance Service and the Fire Service to be linked. Whilst Ms. Dyson was not aware of any intention to do this, she commented on the system in place at Airbus where co-responders were in place to deal with emergencies on site with the option to call in the Ambulance Service if required.

Following comments made by Councillor C. Hinds on demand for services in December and January, Ms. Dyson said that traditionally there was an increase in calls received during this period of the year and that the service aimed to deal with at least 58% of those calls within the target time of 8 minutes.

Councillor D.I. Mackie expressed his disappointment that information on the use of Operational Site Managers had not been mentioned by BCUHB representatives at a recent meeting and asked if the high demand for services in Flintshire was based on population size or volume of calls. Ms. Dyson said that this related to population size and also took into account the number of employees from other areas who worked at the number of large industries in the county. In relation to the example cited on prior knowledge of an incident gained through a risk assessment, she said that such information would not be retained in the log after the incident had been resolved. On access to rural areas, staff in the Control Centre had an awareness of locations and could opt for a rapid response vehicle to attend an incident in addition to an ambulance. Ms. Dyson went on to speak of her involvement in two working groups to address improved flow of working in partnership with BCUHB.

The Chair thanked Ms. Dyson for her detailed presentation and full responses to queries raised.

Following the item, Councillor Hinds said that Ms. Dyson had extended an invitation for the Committee to visit the Ambulance Service. The Facilitator agreed to arrange this.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted;
- (b) That the Locality Manager provide the Committee with a list of reasons given for dispatching ambulances;
- (c) That the Locality Manager provide performance statistics for previous years to compare with those included in the presentation; and
- (d) That the Facilitator arrange a site visit to the Ambulance Service depot.

14. ADULT SAFEGUARDING

The Director of Community Services introduced the annual report to update Members on Adult Safeguarding Performance and revised structures for the year April 2012 to March 2013. He reported on service charges to respond to forthcoming legislation and additional statutory duties placed on Local Authorities, which would put Adult Protection on an equal legal footing to that of Child Protection. It was thought that an increase in the number of Adult Protection referrals was partly due to a stronger awareness and knowledge of adult safeguarding as a result of publicity from national cases.

The Head of Social Services for Adults gave an overview of the breakdown of the 283 referrals received during 2012-13 which included outcomes from cases which had been referred in 2011/12. He also provided an update on the active training structure which was in place and reported good progress on the workforce structure.

Councillor D.E. Wisinger welcomed the additional funding for new appointments, particularly in view of the increasing number of referrals. The Head of Social Services for Adults said that Safeguarding Team Managers chaired all Safeguarding Strategy meetings which ensured a more consistent approach in taking cases forward.

Councillor H.T. Isherwood acknowledged the suggested reason for the increase in referrals but stressed the need for vigilance as this could also be an indication of increased levels of abuse. She questioned accountability for cases where allegations had been made against 'persons unknown' and raised concerns about ensuring the safety of vulnerable people whose complaints made against their carers had not been upheld. The Head of Social Services for Adults said that allegations made against 'persons unknown' would need to be looked at individually but may involve issues such as the alleged theft of items belonging to a vulnerable person. Following a request by Councillor Isherwood, he agreed to provide clarification in writing of such cases. On abuse allegations, the Director remarked on the care plan arrangements for all service users which would reflect any vulnerabilities of the individuals. This would ensure that whether or not the allegation of abuse was upheld, the individual would be supported and not be put in a position of risk. Councillor Isherwood reiterated her concerns that the person raising the allegation would not remain anonymous and that this would discourage others from making a complaint due to possible repercussions.

In response to a query raised by Councillor I. Smith on the main categories of vulnerability, the Director explained that 'organic mental health problems' related to organic conditions of the brain such as Dementia.

Councillor C. Hinds felt that there was a need for more frequent unannounced visits by Inspectors and proposed that an invitation be extended to receive further explanation on visits at a future meeting. The Head of Social Services for Adults advised that both Contract Monitoring Officers and Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) carried out more unannounced visits than previously, including private sector homes, and that he was provided with regular updates. Specified areas of concern were closely monitored where issues had been raised.

Councillor Hinds' proposal was seconded by Councillor Isherwood and following a suggestion by the Chair, it was agreed that Contract Monitoring Officers and CSSIW Inspectors be invited to attend a future meeting. It was suggested that Dave Mills of the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) could also be asked to attend.

The Director reported that Flintshire was one of the first Councils to pilot an initiative with two Local Authority homes and two from the independent sector where a range of individuals, including family members and workers within homes, could report issues.

The Chair was disappointed to note that only one prosecution had been made, despite the high number of referrals and work of those involved in putting together such cases. The Head of Social Services for Adults acknowledged this but pointed out that a less serious outcome would be expected from lower level complaints.

Councillor M. Bateman asked if unannounced checks were made on those in private properties in view of the statistics in the report. The Director said that there were currently no statutory powers to enter homes without permission although the proposed Bill would change this position.

Councillor H.J. McGuill commented that the Council should have a right to check provision of care that it was paying towards and asked about staff training in the private sector. The Adult Safeguarding Manager said that each care provider had a statutory obligation to provide required levels of staff training and that records were checked by Contract Monitoring Officers. When asked if this applied in all cases, the Head of Social Services for Adults recognised that this was a challenge but said that monitoring was carried out and concerns raised where inconsistencies were identified.

In relation to the pilot project discussed earlier, the Director said that Llys Gwenffrwd, Croes Atti, Hollybank were three of the four homes involved. Following further discussion on investment and the potential to link with rota visits, the Chair requested that further information be received in a report to a future meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Isherwood asked if only one prosecution had been made due to insufficient evidence on other cases. The Head of Social Services for Adults reiterated the differing nature of cases, but agreed to look at the detail and provide a response. The Adult Safeguarding Manager commented that the Police would be unable to take forward a successful prosecution unless a complainant came forward and that issues such as the mental health capacity of the complainant would need to be taken into consideration.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee are content that robust structures are in place for adult safeguarding in Flintshire;

- (b) That a report continues to be provided to the Committee on an annual basis;
- (c) That the Head of Social Services for Adults provide the Committee with written clarification on the cases marked 'persons unknown';
- (d) That an invitation be extended for Contract Monitoring Officers and CSSIW Inspectors to attend a future meeting of the Committee to report on unannounced visits to care homes;
- (e) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on the pilot project currently taking place with four care homes; and
- (f) That the Head of Social Services for Adults provide a response to the Committee on the nature and outcomes of cases which had not resulted in prosecutions.

15. ROTA VISITS ACTIVITY AND OUTCOMES

The Head of Social Services for Adults introduced the report on rota visit activity and outcomes during 2012/13, and sought comments from Members on the issues raised within it. An updated copy of rota visits undertaken between 10 August 2012 and 14 July 2013 was circulated, indicating that seven reports currently remained outstanding.

The Facilitator said that a number of questions on rota visits had been raised at the recent Forward Work Programme workshop. She asked if Members who had completed visits could return their forms immediately to the Co-ordinator and that those who were unable to carry out their visits could contact the Co-ordinator who would re-allocate to another Member. Members were able to raise any issues on the new electronic process with the Co-ordinator and views on the frequency of discussion of rota visits at the Committee could be shared with the Facilitator. As discussed in the training session, there would be future discussion on the option to link rota visits to the checker system once the pilot had been completed and evaluated.

Councillor H.J. McGuill asked if officers could provide Members with a breakdown of statistics from the accident books of establishments to help identify and understand any trends or issues prior to visiting. The Head of Social Services for Adults agreed to provide this information on incidents over the past 12 months.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report including information on sections 3.06-3.09 be noted; and
- (b) That the Head of Social Services for Adults provide Members with a breakdown of accident book statistics in rota visit establishments over the past 12 months.

16. **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.45 pm)

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Chairman

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **LEARNING DISABILITY COMMISSIONING PLAN**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The Learning Disabilities Commissioning Strategy and Summary documents appended to this report describe our plans for the provision of accommodation and support to persons with a learning disability in Flintshire over the next 5 years.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Adult Social Care's TSSA programme which started in 2011 reinforced the need for fundamental changes to deliver on people's expectations, respond to changing needs and improve efficiency in relation to accommodation and support for people with Learning Disabilities.

2.02 People told us that they wanted to be more independent with more choice and control over their lives and access to a range of housing options, which includes ordinary community living.

2.03 This Strategy aims to provide the basis upon which accommodation and services will be developed over the coming 5 years to deliver these aims.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The vision described in these documents is that people with a learning disability will have a range of different types of accommodation available to them, and that through individualised support planning, they will be enabled to be as independent as possible with 'just enough support' to promote their wellbeing and ensure they are safe.

3.02 We intend to retain a viable but reduced in-house service to ensure we retain experience within this service and continue to be well placed to provide support to Independent sector providers as necessary.

3.03 We will achieve this vision by:-

- Adopting an ethos of promoting independence.
- Review and refocus our in-house Supported Living Service and configure it as the 'first stop' on the 'move on' pathway for young people with disabilities coming through transition from children's services.
- Increase the use of Direct Payments and Citizen Directed Support Packages.
- Work with partners to ensure that housing options are available that respond to the needs of persons with a learning disability.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That scrutiny support the implementation of the Learning Disabilities Commissioning Strategy following final consultation and informing sessions planned.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The Learning Disabilities Strategy aims to ensure that future provision can be met within current budgets and over time delivers further efficiencies to support the councils overall Medium Term Financial Plan.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 Not Applicable

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 Not Applicable

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 An Equalities Impact Assessment of this Strategy and its development has been completed

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 Not Applicable

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 Standard 2 of Fulfilled Lives Supportive Communities Commissioning Framework states that *'Representatives of service providers need to be engaged at each stage of the analysis process as they can make valuable contributions towards identifying changes in need and with regard to the existing capacity to deliver services and options for future developments'*

Taking into consideration the proposed actions noted below and those

carried out to date we are of the view that we have fully met this requirement.

10.02 Future consultation and involvement includes

- Updates/ feed back to LD planning group – Easy read version of the final strategy being produced
- Involvement in monitoring of the effectiveness of the strategy (details needed from contract monitoring team)
- A market position statement that will follow this strategy will be shared with provider forums

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The views stakeholders have informed the ‘analysis of need’ stage of the development of this commissioning strategy.

11.02 This consultation involved the following events

- People with learning disabilities and their families were provided with the opportunity to tell commissioners ‘what makes a good home’ and ‘what makes a good break’ in a workshop on the 8th March 2012 facilitated by the Learning Disabilities Partnership and Planning Group.
- Findings from a Transition event, which was held for 48 young people with learning disabilities on 6th Feb 2012 were also considered and fed into the strategy.
- A SLOT (strengths, limitations, opportunities and threats) tool was used to structure 1:1 interviews with a random selection of existing providers and was also completed by other stakeholder teams, included Social Workers, Commissioners and Contract monitoring.
- The equality impact assessment and strategy was shared with the Quality Checks Group, a corporate led group with representatives from the protected groups.

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy
2013- 2018

Appendix 2 - Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy 2013- 2018
Summary

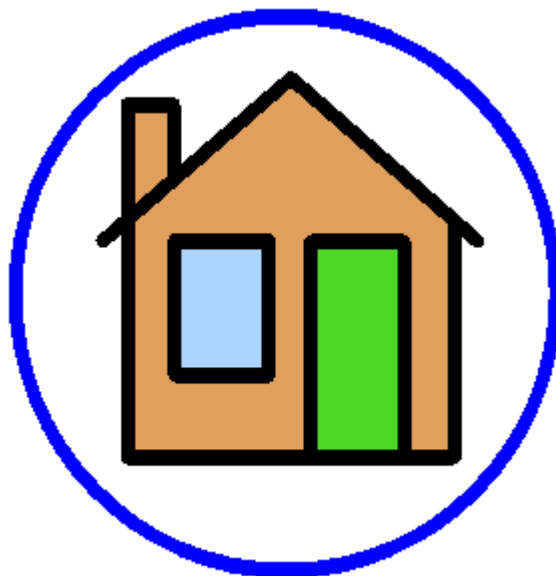
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy 2013- 2018



September 2013

This report is produced in two versions. The full report and an easy read version.

Project team and contributors in alphabetical order:

Alan Butterworth, Joan French, Lin Hawtin, John Henry, Alwyn Jones
Stephen Jones, Learning Disability Planning Partnership members, Tracy
McLintock,
Jane Moore, Jo Taylor,

In addition a random selection of learning disability service providers,
members of the Community Learning Disability Community Team,

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 - 6.4 – Promote a choice of break.
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Introduction

This document is about the services that we provide to people with a learning disability in Flintshire and sets out how we want to see them developed for the future.

Our Strategy to Transform Social Services for Adults in Flintshire which started in 2011 reinforces the need for fundamental changes if we are to deliver on people's expectations, respond to changing needs and improve efficiency in relation to accommodation and support for people with Learning Disabilities. People have told us that they want to be more independent, wanting more choice and control over their lives with access to a range of housing options, which includes ordinary community living.

Our vision is primarily based on the views of people with a learning disability, their families and service providers who currently support people in Flintshire.

Our vision is that people with a Learning Disability have a range of different types of accommodation available to them and that through individualised support planning, people are enabled to be as independent as possible with 'just enough support' to promote their wellbeing and ensure they are safe.

To achieve this vision we will:

- 1. Plan better with people and their families.**
- 2. Ensure accessible and appropriate information is available and is timely.**
- 3. Have a range of accommodation options that are outcome focused and promote 'move on' to independence.**
- 4. Promote a choice of short breaks**
- 5. Increase the range of support options available.**

This strategy provides our plan on how we intend to work with people, their families and other partners over the next 5 years to meet those aspirations, and changes with improved efficiency.

Section 1 – Purpose, legislation and National Guidance

1.1. There is a raft of statutory drivers, legislation and policy that has been taken into account during the development of this strategy and its future implementation, as listed in Appendix 1.

However, the key Welsh Government policy documents that have shaped this strategy include (for details see appendix 1):

- Welsh Mental Handicap Strategy (1983) revised 1994
- Statement on Policy and Practice for Adults with a Learning Disability (2007)
- Practice guidance on developing a commissioning strategy for people with a Learning Disability (2011).
- More general practice guidance Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities Commissioning Framework Guidance and Good Practice 2010
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders Strategic Action Plan for Wales (2008)

The key messages from these documents and reinforced by what people have told us locally is that this strategy should give people more independence, choice and control over their lives, with access to a range of personalised services.

Section 2. What do we know?

2.1 The type of places where people live now

Some Headlines as at the end of February 2012:

- People with Learning Disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria for services make up approximately 0.32% (483) of the population in Flintshire
- 48% (214) of people are aged 40 or over
- 45% (202) of people live with their relatives (a parent or sibling)
- 38% (123) of people are living with someone else (excludes hospital and relatives)
- There is a range of different provision from Adult placement, Single Occupancy, Shared supported housing etc, with the majority (40%) living in some form of shared provision.
- For 2012/2013 the total annual spend on in- house supported living for **54** people will be **£4,452,091** and we will spend **£2,847,679** on contracts with the independent sector for **52** people. Choosing to commission supported living services from our in- house provider is costing us more.

The diagram below shows you the different places people live in Flintshire

Where People live:

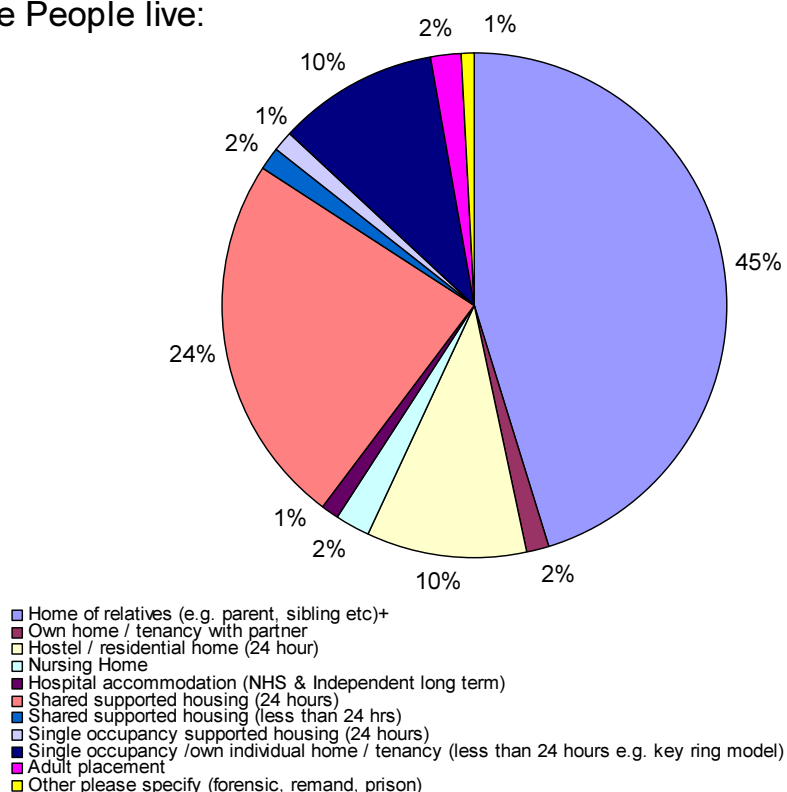


Table: Where People Live (Source: PARIS Records and Finance Team as of 30 January 2012 (does not include people undergoing contact overview assessment or where closed))

| Where People live | How many? | % of total |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Total | 447 | 100% |
| Home of relatives (e.g. parent, sibling etc) | 202 | 45.2% |
| Own home / tenancy with partner | 7 | 1.6% |
| Hostel / residential home (24 hour) | 46 | 10.3% |
| Nursing Home | 9 | 2% |
| Hospital accommodation (NHS & Independent long term) | 5 | 1.1% |
| Shared supported housing (24 hours) | 107 | 23.9% |
| Shared supported housing (less than 24 hrs) | 7 | 1.6% |
| Single occupancy supported housing (24 hours) | 6 | 1.3% |
| Single occupancy /own individual home / tenancy (less than 24 hours e.g. key ring model) | 45 | 10.1% |
| Adult placement | 9 | 2% |
| Other please specify (forensic, remand, prison) | 4 (based on remainder non allocated) | |

Table: The profile of our key providers of accommodation and support.
(Source: Independent and Supported Living Spreadsheet 7/08/2012)

| Provider | Number of Addresses | Number of people | Voids |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------|
| Health | 5 | 15 | |
| Independent | 19 | 52 | 3 |
| In-House (Supported Living) | 23 | 54 | 5 |
| Citizen Directed Support Model | 1 | 3 | |
| TOTAL | | 122 | 8 |

The provider profile table shows that there is roughly an equal split between In-house and the independent sector in the provision of supported living.

Table: The number of people in Residential/ nursing care (Source: PARIS)

| | Number receiving residential care during the year | Number receiving nursing care during the year | Total number of people receiving nursing/ residential care services during the year |
|---------|---|---|---|
| 2009/10 | 42 | 4 | 45 |
| 2010/11 | 43 | 3 | 44 |
| 2011/12 | 41 | 2 | 43 |

Table: Care home placements in relation to other North Wales Local Authorities (Source: All Wales 2011/2012 and Data submitted to Hub August 2012)

| Local Authority | Number | Approx number of people known to services | % of LD living in a care home |
|-----------------|--------|---|-------------------------------|
| Anglesey | 90 | 275 | 33% |
| Gwynedd | 36 | 520 | 7% |
| Conwy | 90 | 442 | 20% |
| Denbighshire | 60 | 359 | 17% |
| Flintshire | 43 | 483 | 9% |
| Wrexham | 49 | 520 | 9% |

We compare favourably with the rest of North Wales Local Authorities on numbers of people with Learning Disabilities in Care Homes, sharing the lowest percentage with Wrexham. There are a number of people with specialist needs who currently reside outside of Flintshire due to the complexity of their needs. It is anticipated that as a result of the Regional approach to commissioning specialist services some of these individuals may be supported to “ move on “ in the future and step down into less complex care settings closer to home

2.2 How much do we spend?

2.2.1 According to records from our Financial Assessment and Charging Team as of February 2013, there were **47** people with a Learning Disability living in a residential or nursing home, at a total cost per week of £64,085, which is approximately **£3,332,441** per annum. Only 13 people are living in Flintshire residential homes.

2.2.2 For 2012/2013 the total annual spend on in- house supported living for **54** people will be **£4,452,091** and we will spend **£2,847,679** on contracts with the independent sector for **52** people.

2.2.3 Choosing to commission supported living services from our in – house provider is costing us more and this is apparent from further interrogation of costs for all types of services (for methodology see Appendix 2).

The table below shows the equivalent cost of all services at the current highest external rate (note this does not factor in level of need).

It is challenging to support a unit cost for in-house supported living services supporting people with varying levels of need (low to High) which exceeds the regional norm unit cost for those people with complex/ challenging needs, which we define as high cost low volume.

Additionally it is important to reflect current voids within in-house services and associated cost implications for the service which reached £60,331.92 for the year 2011 – 2012 This is a significant increase on the position for the previous 2 years (for details see section 6.3) and in the context of the current economic climate that Local Authorities face.

| Type of Provider/ Support | Rate per hour |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Independent (Supported Living) | £13.50 |
| In- house (Supported Living) | £21.31/£22.38 |
| CDS Scheme | £11.50 |
| Direct Payment | £10.22 |
| Adult Placement | If £60 max a day/ 12 = £5 |
| Key Ring | If £12.26 a day / 12 hours = £1.02 |
| Regional Norm Residential / Nursing agreed for High Cost Low Volume | £18 |

In the light of this information it is our view which is reflected in our vision that we retain a viable but gradually reducing in house service in the future. We aim to shift the balance of provision by 30% in the next 5 years

The future role and model for in-house services is described in section 8.

2.3 What do we know about the choice and quality of where people live now?

The majority of people live in or around the 5 main population centres, Buckley, Holywell, Mold, Flint and Deeside.

2.3.1 Hostel, Residential and Nursing Homes

43 people with Learning Disabilities live in a Residential or Nursing home. Currently, we contract with 3 small residential homes located in Flintshire. Both Flintshire Social Services for Adults Contract Monitoring team and CSSIW have indicated that those providers who exist in Flintshire are of a good standard, demonstrating creativity in the way that they meet the needs of the people who live there.

2.3.2 Supported Living

We commission supported living, which provides comprehensive support services based on the person's assessed needs. This ranges from "24 hour support" where support workers are based in the person's own home, to 'floating support' (less than 24 hours) in which support workers provide peripatetic support as agreed in the individual's service delivery plan. People supported are almost without exception tenants of their own home/ or bedroom in a multi- tenanted property.

Our own Supported Living service can support 59 people across 23 properties owned by a number of housing providers. Annually as part of Quality Check the Supported Living Service finds out what people think about the service they get. See Appendix 3 for the Easy Read findings Report. We also contract with 7 independent sector providers who are able to support 68 people across 25 properties provided by a number of housing providers.

2.3.3 Adult Placement

Adult Placement Schemes provide a family placement for people who wish to live in a family environment. Adult Placement Carers receive an allowance from us to help them care for the person who lives with them in their family home. Our Adult Placements / Shared Lives Schemes currently stand at **9**, with 4 placements being managed by PSS (with a management cost of £100 per person per week) and a further 5 being independent.

2.3.4 Short Breaks

Our Short Term Care Service provides respite care to over **75** adults with learning disabilities who live with their family carers in Flintshire. There are three small registered homes (each can accommodate 3 people over night) that people can book pre-planned visits to. These are Hafod, Orchard Way and Woodlee. Most people stay overnight with visits lengths varying from one to 14 nights. A small number of people visit during the day during their residential college holidays.

Additionally we have access to an adapted static caravan on the North Wales coast that people can book to stay in with their friends or families.

A Quality Network Review was undertaken on our short break services in 2008 where people gave their views. The main requests reflections were the need for :

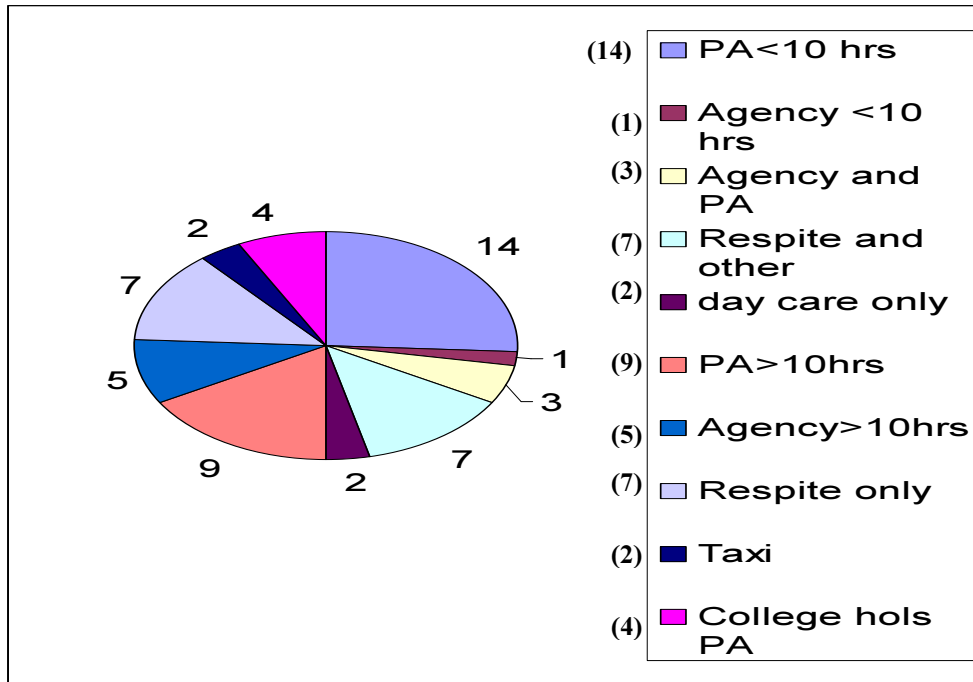
- Short term care in an emergency.
- More choices and options for planned short term care.
- Everyone who uses short term care to have an accessible person - centred plan that is outcome focused.

2.3.5 Personalisation

2.3.5.1 Direct Payments

Direct payments enable people to have access to cash to procure their own services instead of the local authority providing or commissioning services to meet their assessed needs. This can be as part of or instead of their overall package of support. Direct payments provide people with the flexibility to find 'off the peg' solutions and to have greater control over their lives. A financial benefit to the service is the visibility of resources with people only spending what they need and any remainder returning to the service

As of August 2012 there were **55** people with a learning disability accessing a direct payment. For the majority of service users however a direct payment featured as only part of their whole package of support. Only 14 people were buying in excess of 10 hours support a week either by directly employing a Personal Assistant or from an agency. The pie chart below shows how direct payments are currently used (in a week). Where PA means Personal Assistant, > means more than and < means less than.



Our target for the next 5 years will be a 50% increase in the number of people accessing a direct payment /CDS as a substantial part of their care package (10 hours or more)

2.3.5.2 Citizen Directed Support (CDS)

Frequently in Flintshire our approach to new developments is to use pilot projects, and CDS was one such project. Our definition of Citizen Directed Support is “social care support which service users choose, organise and control to meet their assessed and agreed needs in a way that suits them, using resources available to them to achieve what is important to them”. In essence it is an approach to support provision that begins with the person and not the service, providing people with the opportunity to exercise more choice and control over their lives. The aim of the pilot which ran from July 2008 to the end of March 2011 was to identify key learning points which would support our future development of CDS at a local level¹. On a national level there is to be consultation on the Citizen Directed Support and Control Paper (CDSC) with primary legislation and subsequent regulation being in place. It is envisaged that for 2015 /2016 there will be the introduction of a new CDSC arrangement. Currently **16** people with Learning Disabilities use CDS and 3 are in progress. See Box 1

Increasing take up of direct payments / CDS features in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill. We want to see Direct Payments/ CDS as the default position and featuring as the main part of a person’s care packages. We will be targeting our Transition Team, which has identified the

¹ FCC Citizen Directed Support Pilot Evaluation Report Summary Jan 2012

personalization agenda as a priority. Our plan is to ensure that CDS is considered as an option for all young people who are assessed as needing day time support. From the accommodation list there are 4 young people in 2013 requiring this level of support. If all 4 received CDS in conjunction with telecare as opposed to accessing in-house Supported Living the projected savings over 3 years could be around £734,025.24. Looking ahead the total savings for the 10 young people coming through transition over the next 3 years assessed as needing 'shared accommodation with some daytime support' could be £1,284,546 if the solution was CDS as opposed to In-house Supported Living. See appendix 4 for workings.

Box 1- Supported Living – CDS Model

Three gentlemen choose to share a property owned by First Choice Housing Association.

With support each undertook a Self Assessment of their care needs. The results of these assessments have been used to determine their indicative budgets and to develop their own Support Plans detailing how the budget will be used to meet their assessed care needs as part of Flintshire's Citizen Directed Support Scheme (CDS).

This is a collaborative approach to the provision of social care support involving the person at the centre of the process and the involvement of other key people.

Each person is the budget holder and commissioner of their own care package. This enables them to manage their decisions and their services in a far more creative way and shifts the balance of power away from the professionals or providers into the hands of the individual.

The individuals have been helped by their parents and grandparents in the Support Planning and support provider commissioning process.

We provided guidance and mentoring in the selection of a suitable service provider. It was the responsibility of the Clients and Agents to select a suitable service provider to provide the "Core" support for the bungalow.

The Housing Association stipulated that a service level agreement between themselves and the selected service provider be put in place to cover the housing management function. The model is new to Flintshire and it is expected that the selected Service Provider be a flexible partner alongside the Clients, Agents and Flintshire County Council in the development, implementation and monitoring of the CDS scheme.

We have a statutory responsibility to monitor the arranged package of care. The involved Social Worker chaired an initial service review after 6 weeks for each client. This moves to an annual review dependant on the stability of the service provided. The Client, Agents or Service Provider is able to request a review meeting at any time if problems arise.

Individual CDS budgets including Individual Service Fund, time sheets and non person support will be monitored by the families, in conjunction with Social Services, and will be reviewed at the service review meeting. The individual, Agents and a Social Worker will be present at the meeting.

The monitoring of the Service Provider will be measured by whether or not the individuals have achieved the outcomes they have been working towards as identified in their support plans.

2.3.6 Independent Living Fund

The Independent Living Fund (ILF) is a discretionary scheme, financed by the Government, to help fund care packages for people with severe disabilities living in the community, rather than residential care. ILF funding has always been a top up to Local Authority funding and is now closed to new applicants. People already getting ILF funding will continue to get it until 2015. The Government has not committed to funding the ILF in its current form after that date. The Government plans to consult on how people who currently get ILF funding should be supported in future. Any subsequent changes to ILF will have a significant impact on future Council budgets.

Currently there are **61** people with a Learning Disability receiving ILF funding amounting to £1,369,000 per year (includes client contributions). Funding is used primarily to promote peoples independence within their local communities and is used to purchase support for personal care, daily living activities, social support, respite care, and support to attend daytime activities etc.

2.3.7 Key Ring Model

Key Ring is a network of people with their own tenancies over a defined geographical area, usually supported via Supporting People funding. A support worker lives in the centre of the network in their own tenancy which is rent free and based on the individual's assessed needs provides a level of support to each tenant either on a one to one or on a group basis to promote community links and inclusion. Currently **36** people with Learning Disabilities known to our services are supported in this way.

2.3.8 Transition Team

During 2012 our new transition team became operational. The Transition team is a joint team between Children and Adult Services, situated in one place with common line management. This means that a person's journey from children's to adult services will be smoother with the introduction of a young persons' single transition plan which includes 'where they live' as a key focus. A priority for the team is to progress the personalisation agenda promoting both Direct Payments and Citizen Directed Support.

2.3.9 Telecare

Telecare equipment is a range of sensors and detectors which supports independence. In 2011/2012 there were **44** people with Learning Disabilities using telecare as part of their package of support. Most people have at least

three pieces of telecare equipment installed. In the main the type of equipment installed is care sensors on doors (internal and external) and epilepsy bed sensors. Telecare can promote independence and can help to reduce the worry for individuals, carers and families. See Box 4. As a support option that promotes independence it is in our view currently under utilised. A robust approach is needed to introduce telecare across supported living and support realising the impressive savings that can be made which have been evidenced in other councils. In Lincolnshire switching waking nights to sleep-ins across 15 houses (accommodating 59 people) delivered £243,000 savings over a 19 month period.

All new supported living placements will have a comprehensive telecare assessment and it is our aim to increase the use of telecare equipment generally within Learning Disability services by 10% year on year

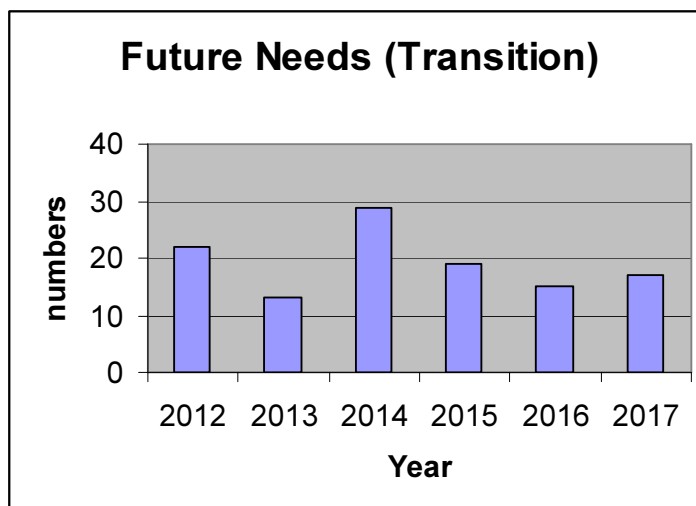
Section 3: What we know now about the current and future population

3.1 People living with relatives

Of the **202** who live with their families, over **60** peoples carers are older people (aged 55 and more). We are also aware that some carers are caring for more than one person. Supporting these families to plan for the future will be essential to ensure the best outcomes for people with learning disabilities and their families.

3.2 Young Adults with Learning Disabilities

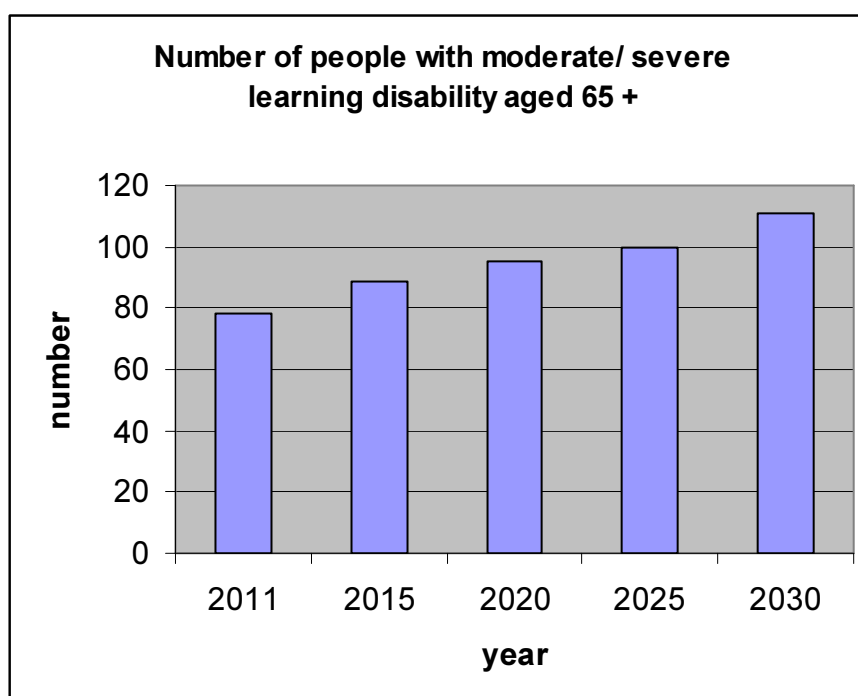
More young people with profound multiple needs are surviving into adulthood; this is shown in the increasing numbers coming through transition from children to adult services. There are approximately **150** young people with learning disabilities coming through transition over the next 5 years. We know that as of April 2012 there were **115** young people who met Fair Access to Care criteria for our services amongst this group. The remaining young people have a range of needs that may or may not require our services in the future. Within this cohort there are substantial numbers of young people with complex health needs, which will have an impact on the type of care they will need such as PEG feeding (percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy).



3.3 Older People with Learning Disabilities

Advances in medical and social care have increased life expectancy for people with learning disabilities and as a result we are expecting that the future number who will develop age related frailties and illnesses such as dementia will increase.

The number of people in Flintshire with a moderate to severe learning disability aged 65 and over is predicted to increase by 14 % from 2011 to 2015 and by 42% from 2011 to 2030.² We know that currently there are 12 people with a diagnosis of dementia and a further 12 people being assessed for dementia. There are 24 people aged 50 or over still at home with their family. We also know that there are 70 people known to our service with Downs Syndrome and with this diagnosis comes a higher incidence of early onset dementia.



² Daffodil Cymru website projecting future social care needs.

3.4 People living outside Flintshire

There are currently 16 people in high cost out of county placements as we cannot meet their needs within our current community living model. Our aim is to give these people the opportunity to move closer to Flintshire so that they can be closer to family and friends should that be their wish. This will require thorough planning with people, their families and services to create a range of accommodation and support that would meet their needs locally.

3.5 Autistic Spectrum Disorders

We know that there are over 70 people on the autistic spectrum. Recent research has found that there is no quality of care, or lifestyle outcome advantages of group living for this client group apart from within smaller settings³.

Over the next three years we have 4 young people coming through transition assessed as needing a specialist ASD accommodation solution.

3.6 Black and Minority Ethnic Communities (BME)

From the number of people with Learning disabilities known to our services and recorded on our PARIS business system we know that almost all are from a mainly white background which is in line with the Flintshire Profile.

3.7 Welsh Language

We know from the Census 2011 that 13% of the Flintshire population speak welsh. We also know that currently no one known to our services with a Learning disability receive a service in welsh. The More Than Just Words Strategic Framework which outlines the Welsh Governments intention to prioritise welsh language services for people who are vulnerable is clear that services should be 'actively offered' in Welsh.

Section 4: The views of stakeholders

The views of the following stakeholders have shaped our strategy (see appendix 3 for their views)

- Learning Disability Planning Group
- Young People in transition
- Accommodation and Support providers
- Social Workers
- Commissioners and the Contract Monitoring Team

Section 5: The Issues

We know from what people have told us that if we are to achieve our vision of having a range of different types of accommodation available and that through

³ Diagnostic grouping among adults with intellectual disabilities and autistic spectrum disorders in staffed housing – Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities Nov 2011.

individualised support planning, people are enabled to be as independent as possible with 'just enough support', we need to:

- 1. Plan better with people and their families.**
- 2. Ensure accessible and appropriate information is available and is timely.**
- 3. Have a range of accommodation options that are outcome focused and promote 'move on' to independence.**
- 4. Promote a choice of short breaks**
- 5. Increase the range of support options available.**

The issues and challenges that we need to deal with in relation to each of the 5 things we need to do are discussed in sections 5.1 to 5.5.

5.1 Plan better with people and their families.

- Person centred planning has to be robust so that we can with confidence aggregate data from plans. This will help us develop a picture of outcomes people want and the type of accommodation, breaks and support that would help them to achieve these. We recognise that this is dependent on having good advocacy in place and have recently identified a new Advocacy provider to support this goal.
- Focussing on 'move on' pathways is important to people and we need to get better at this. It requires careful and robust pre-planning which is particularly vital for people with dementia. Move on pathways will need to be in place before the point at which a persons illness means that they will struggle to settle in new accommodation.
- There are **60** people who are living with older carers aged over 55. We need to work with families to forward plan and identify accommodation options and support needs for their future. We need to capitalise on new Flintshire developments such as Extra Care schemes which can be a real option for people and their families.

5.2 Ensure accessible and appropriate information is available and is timely.

- Our range of accessible information about available services has to be offered regularly so that people are fully aware of all the choices they have. This should also include people having access to their individual care plan which is in a format that is most accessible to them.

5.3 Have a range of accommodation options that are outcome focused and promote 'move on' to independence.

- We need to roll out to all providers our new outcome – focused approach to contracting and monitoring. This work should 'dovetail' with

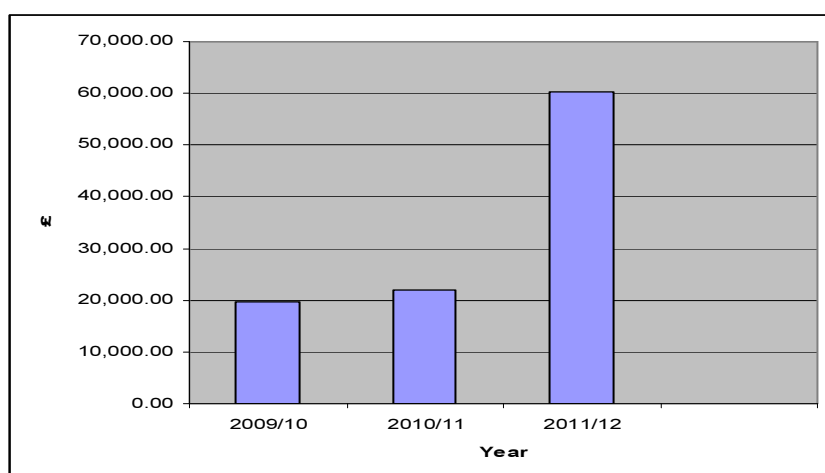
regional work while and ensure that the positive progress we are making in Flintshire is maintained.

- A Service Setting Review was undertaken on a sample of Shared Supported Living Homes (low, medium and high level need). The key message coming from the review is that we need to 'right size' all Shared Living Homes, a term that means we need to ensure that every individual is getting the right level of support that promotes independence and 'move on'. It seems from our initial review that some people are getting too much support; this is not only a barrier to independence but a needless cost. If the right sizing exercise is undertaken on all our in-house supported living schemes there could be a projected saving of between £110k and £156k per year on direct care costs.

Our Target for the next 5 years is for 10 % of people currently in supported living settings to "move on" to greater independence and have less dependency on formal care providers

- Person centred planning for a person with challenging behaviour is difficult. There are **47** people known to our services with a challenging behaviour profile with 16 living outside of Flintshire because we can't meet their needs. There are active plans in place to bring these people back to Flintshire.
- We have 12 vacant tenant places across the 127 tenant rooms available (9.5%), spread between in house and independent sector provider properties. Some of these vacancies have existed for over a year owing to difficulties in matching new tenants to the existing tenants, and during the last year the vacancies reached 16 at one point. The cost implications to our service reached £60,331.92 for the year 2011 – 2012, which is a large increase on the previous 2 years (see graph below). This model of service is clearly not meeting people's accommodation and support needs in all cases, and we need to ensure that future provision better meets needs and overcomes these problems.

Graph to show cost of Voids to the Service 2009/2010 – 2011/12



Source: Accountancy August 2012

- Whilst many people experience good outcomes, there are some fundamental inequalities for some people with Learning Disabilities. Most people with learning disabilities who live in residential care or supported accommodation do not have choice over where and with whom they live and this is most likely to be the case for people with more complex needs and challenging behaviour. A number of people have also expressed a wish to move, for a snapshot of some of the reasons given see Box 1 below (taken from a fortnightly spreadsheet (August 2012) presented to the Accommodation panel)

Box 2 – ‘Reasons for Moving’

Note the table below excludes the 8 people in transition. The total number on the list in need of accommodation was 24 (excludes the 8). The age range was 20 to 61 years with an average age of 42.

| Number | Reason |
|--------|---|
| 2 | Wanting to live alone |
| 1 | Incompatibility with co-tenants |
| 4 | Carers/ Families expressed a wish for person to ‘move on’ |
| 1 | A house move with family |
| 6 | In need of suitable property e.g. adaptations, from warden to supported living, extra care |
| 1 | Homeless when off section |
| 3 | Carer Breakdown (in one case individual has also expressed wish to move) |
| 1 | repatriation |
| 4 | Want to move e.g. to live with named individuals, lonely on own and live with people of own age |
| 1 | Reason not given |

- Although we compare favourably with the rest of North Wales Local Authorities on numbers of people with Learning Disabilities in Care Homes 43 people do live in a residential/ nursing home setting. We need to work with these individuals to make community living a real option.
- Young people in transition have told us that they want to live as independently as possible. We recognise that we need to focus on 'move on' pathways and therefore need to develop options, which seek to maximise independence with 'just enough' support and are value for money such as Adult Placement Schemes and local area coordination.
- We need to develop services that can respond to our changing population namely the young people coming through transition with complex needs, older people with dementia and people with ASD.
- The development of Adult placement schemes in Flintshire has been static. It is a cost effective model that can support people of varying needs and has been successful in many parts of England. If we were able to increase the scheme provision to accommodate just 3 more people our projected saving could be as much as £545,000 over 3 years compared to our own in-house service. Regional delivery and fee levels are currently being considered. We aim to double our current Adult Placement provision over the next 5 years as a means of extending the range of options for individuals to develop independent living skills, and as a move on to being supported in their own homes
- There are extra care developments in Flintshire but currently they are not accessed by people with Learning Disabilities. We need to ensure that future schemes are open to people with Learning Disabilities and their carers.

5.4 Promote a choice of short breaks

- The issues are still the same as identified as part of a Quality Network Review of our Short Break service in 2008. People are still identifying the need for more choice and flexibility. We know that in our Short Break Service there is no waiting list and there are voids. We need to understand why as we may need to remodel our break provision service. Like other Local Authorities such as Bradford we want to be in position to offer service users a menu of short breaks from Adult placement to community placement and social and leisure breaks with emergency provision within and outside the home.

5.5 Increase the range of support options available.

- We need a better support process so that people with Learning Disabilities can benefit from the option of direct payments and CDS and to achieve more packages of support where a direct payment is a main component of care. Currently there are only 14 people buying in over 10 hours of support a week .
- The evaluation of our CDS pilot flagged our current social work/ care management processes as a barrier to its spread. The teams have identified capacity as a concern because CDS as a support option requires a longer period of input. The transition team made reference to the fact that there is no longer a CDS officer to support their work. Work continues in developing and testing the Resource Allocation System through ongoing data collection and evaluation.
- We know that people who choose to use Direct Payments to purchase their care through a domiciliary care agency are generally being charged more than the agreed direct payment rate. We need to consider how this is overcome in future so that there is greater consistency across rates.
- We need to manage the end of the Independent Living Fund in 2015 as 61 people with Learning Disabilities access the fund which equates to a significant £1,369,000 per year (including their contributions). Our plan will hinge on how the Welsh Government intends to proceed and to date there is no indication although there is the promise of a formal consultation process.

Section 6: What we will do differently / or more of

6.1 Plan better with people and their families.

- Care Management team will undertake more robust person- centred planning that creatively explores solutions, drawing up options for appraisal for accommodation, breaks and support. More shared responsibility and understanding between people, their families and the service. An approach that reaches beyond the boundaries of what Learning Disability services can offer, looking to other service areas and out to voluntary sector and wider community provision. Our mission is that people get 'just enough' support, where they neither have too much or too little (both of which can be equally bad).
- Better contingency planning between in house provider and Social Work teams so as a service we are more responsive to provide breaks in times of emergencies. Linking with development work underway to have a generic model of break provision in Flintshire that can be responsive in an emergency

- Work with people and their families to develop a shared understanding of independence. At reviews we will look for ways to ensure ‘just enough support’ and also ask the question ‘is there another way of doing this’. We will promote and capitalise on our commissioned Advocacy service.

6.2 Ensure accessible and appropriate information is available and is timely.

- Social Workers will ensure that all Information about all available services will be timely provided. People will have access to their individual care plan which is in a format which is most accessible to them, for example easy read etc.
- We will ensure that people understand the information offered and will provide/ or facilitate via advocacy or family members assistance to help them to make informed decisions and choices.

6.3 Have a range of accommodation options that are outcome focused and promote ‘move on’ to independence.

- A paper on developing alternatives to just paid support “All together Now”⁴ made the bold statement that over-support is a barrier to community participation and can be harmful to the quality of people’s lives. We want more accommodation and support options that help people reach their goal of living independence. Options that are robustly planned, with clear pathways and coordinated with all involved e.g. people, their families, care managers and providers. Options that focus on ‘moving people on’ to independence where support can be ‘stepped up and stepped down’ when the need arises, this flexibility in support means that ‘moving on’ becomes a viable option for those people with high level needs such as our 47 people with a challenging behaviour profile. ‘Moving on’ could mean living in the same place with reducing support or moving somewhere else with reducing support as was the case for M in Box 2.

To explain what we mean by ‘move on’ with ‘just enough’ support and what we want to see happening for more people in Flintshire see Box 2.

Box 3 – ‘Moving on to independence’

- M a 52 yr old man with Learning Disabilities has lived at home with his elderly parents all his life.
- M, his parents and Care Manager agreed that the best outcome for M would be to move out, in recognition that his parents will not always be

⁴ Cooper O and Warren S (2011) All Together Now. Birkenhead: Paradigm.

in a position to support him.

- A project was identified that offered the needed 24hr supported living.
- M moves into the project in **September 2008**.
- A discussion was held with M, his Social Worker and his parents. A full assessment of M's skills and abilities was carried out over a few weeks
- As a result of the assessment 1to1 hours of support were allocated to help M develop skills of independent living.
- The Skills development plans put into place had clear guidelines and profiles on how M was to be helped to achieve his goals.
- The work began in **October 2008**. The approach taken, once M carried out the identified task independently such as using the microwave or cooker, he would then move on and focus on the next. The allocated 1:1 support hours to help him are then transferred to this next skill and so on.

M was also supported to join local community based groups to build up social skills and a network of friends.

- M's achievement in mastering tasks independently means that he is ready to move on to a semi- independent living.
- In **April 2009** M moves onto semi independence, he longer needs 24 hour support and people to stay with him throughout the night.
- M continued to have support around skills development and maintaining skills learnt.
- M was supported to register with a housing association and received support with how to budget for which an appointee was identified.
- In **July 2011** M achieved his goal and moved into his own flat with support workers popping in to maintain support around his health and well being.

It took M with the support of his parents, Social Worker and Support Workers 2 years and 10 months to move on from being completely dependent on his parents to living on his own with minimal support.

- The local area coordination model aims to create a community based support option for people living residential or supported living placements'. Sometimes this will be along side individual additional support packages.

It aims to enables people to remain in their own homes for longer and avoid inappropriate residential placements'.

The local area coordination model uses some of the following strategies to achieve the desired outcome in the following way:

- By identifying and planning for current 1:1 support to be reduced over time through reablement strategies.
- By developing peoples skills and confidence, reducing the need for paid support

- By facilitating communication and the understanding of risks and planning strategies.
- Review people currently living in accommodation with high support packages to see if they are getting 'just enough' support. This is called 'right sizing' this activity will have resource implications but we know from our Sample Service Review Setting exercise that this will be worthwhile and will save money. This could potentially mean a move to more independent living at a lower cost if care packages comprised of floating support services and utilised a range of assistive technology (telecare). We need to develop and expand the range of choice ensuring that people receive 'just enough' support at an economic cost.
- We will regularly check what over-night support does and achieves – asking whether the money could be better spent when people are awake.
- We want to explore the model of Extra Care as a more independent option for people with Learning Disabilities. A model that combines housing, care and support services in a modern purpose built environment and offers a solution to retirement and for people with dementia. We know we have a number of older carers currently caring for a family member with a Learning Disability. Extra Care could be a joint housing and support solution for carer and the person with a Learning Disability.
- Establish whether existing accommodation is failing to meet the needs of tenants, as could be concluded from the number of voids. Explore what capacity there is to raise finance for re-investment so that we can get the most for our money.
- We want to continue to work with our Housing partners to ensure that people's accommodation needs are met.
- Develop the option of Adult Placement / Shared Lives schemes, a service that gives people greater choice and control and fits with our direction of travel in relation to providing more outcome focused community based services (as was shared in the Learning Disability Partnership meeting early this year). A versatile model of service that is useful for 'move on pathway', offering a break and responsive in times of emergency.

6.4 Promote a choice of short breaks

- To be in a position to offer people more choice and options to short breaks. To revisit and learn from the pilot project (now ceased) which gave people the option to vary the places they took a break. To explore

further what Adult Placement schemes could offer to increase choice and responsiveness.

6.5 Increase the range of support options available.

- To address the issue of agencies charging more than the agreed direct payment rate the Council is seeking an agreement with agencies on what would be a fair and reasonable rate. We anticipate that this will be lower than our standard agreed rate as direct payments are more planned, regular and generally for longer visits. Agencies will be invited to quote a rate for direct payments and the Council will set a ceiling at the mid-point of received rates.
- We want to increase the number of people benefiting from Telecare. We believe that Telecare can play a key part in our mission to provide 'just enough support' and can reduce intrusion into people's private lives of always having staff around. This is captured in our chosen case study where a small pendent played a key role in maintaining a personal relationship. See Box 4. Our aim would be to make the consideration of Telecare a default position at the point of transition.

Box 4: 'A little pendent that helped a couple stay independent'

A husband with diabetes cares for his wife who has a moderate learning disability. The couple lead an ordinary life thanks to a pendent. If the husband becomes unwell owing to his diabetes he can press the panic button for help. If he is unable to manage the button his wife can press it. This offers peace of mind to him as his wife is unable to operate the telephone. The pendent has enabled the husband to look after his wife, which is very important to him as this means there is minimal intrusion from paid carers in their home and relationship.

Section 7: How we will work differently.

To achieve what we want to do differently we need to work differently.

We intend to work more collaboratively with our providers to meet the needs of our changing population, the young people with complex needs, people with dementia, people with ASD, and people currently out of county and our current service users who have told us that they want to move. We know that there is a willingness amongst providers to work with us as they have told us.

We will commission services differently based around agreed outcomes and payment by results.

The 'outcomes' which we developed with Flintshire stakeholders are in line with those produced by the British Institute of Learning disabilities and the National Development Team. The BILD outcomes are increasingly becoming embedded in everything we do in Learning Disability Services. See Box 1 below.

Box 5 – '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.

We will be smarter business people and look to capitalise on the recession we find ourselves in. We know there is a glut of property to rent which can only mean that developers and private landlords are more open to suggestions.

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 a Regional Commissioning Hub. The Hub responds to growing financial pressures facing public sector organisations for increased collaboration in commissioning and procurement activity. We will be utilising the Hub to find high quality and cost effective accommodation and support solutions for the small number of people with high level needs. The projected savings that will be made by regional commissioning is £112k per year (this excludes cost avoidance in relation to new placements).

Alongside the Hub we will continue to work collaboratively with the Health Board in relation to high cost low volume placements. The Health Board has a plan to reduce their Continuing Health Care spend and bring people back who are out of region. As we jointly fund some of these people we will be working closely with Health to ensure that together we find the 'best way' to achieve the 'best outcomes' for these people.

Section 8 - Putting the Strategy into practice.

This Strategy sets out how we want to see services develop over the next 5 years.

Our vision is that people with a learning disability have a range of different types of accommodation available to them and that through individualised support planning, people are enabled to be as independent as possible with

'just enough support' to promote their wellbeing and ensure they are safe. To deliver on this vision we have identified the actions we need to take if we are to deliver on **'what we will do differently/ or more of'** (section 7). We believe our actions are innovative and sustainable.

Actions:

- We will ensure that social workers and other professionals adopt the ethos of promoting independence and positive risk taking. We will develop a 'move on' culture with all new service users, based on an initial assessment of the persons current abilities and strengths and working towards maximising their potential to be as independent as possible and live a fulfilled life.
- We will review and refocus our in-house Supported Living Service and configure it as the 'first stop' on the 'move on' pathway for young people with disabilities coming through transition from children's services. This 'first stop' assessment provided by the in-house Supported Living Team will establish an accurate baseline of need and skills which in turn will lead to a 'right size' package to enable the individual to move on to a more individualised type of accommodation and support .This approach is consistent with the rehabilitation and recovery model in other services provided by the Authority ie Older People and Mental Health services
- Direct payments/CDS will be the default method used to enable individuals to have control and choice about how their support services are organised.
- For those existing tenants already supported within in-house Supported Living Services the 'active support' approach will be introduced in order to maximise skills for independent living and offered opportunities for 'move on' to alternative accommodation as appropriate.
- We will work in partnership with independent providers to shape and develop the external market to provide supported living options, therefore over time our reliance on in-house provision will become less. *(See Ty Ni outcomes section to box 3 in LD Strategy).*
- We will seek to promote and nurture existing social enterprises as a future viable consideration for commissioning as in accordance with Council priority.
- As part of this refocus we will review the use of Telecare and seek to use it effectively to support people to be independent and safe overnight.
- Extra care is a joint housing and support solution for carer and the person with a disability; we will ensure that the two planned schemes

include tenancies for people with disabilities. We will capitalise on the skills in the dementia part of the service.

- We want to work with housing partners to ensure tenancy agreements are flexible enough to respond to the changing needs of people with learning disabilities.
- We believe very strongly that local area co-ordination must be part of our 'move on' approach. We want people with a learning disability to be active citizens within their local community and not solely reliant upon paid workers for social contacts. Therefore we intend to commission a community development and integration service and extend this across Flintshire.
- We will also review current short break provision and explore opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring authorities on developing different models such as adult placement.

What Next?

We will be producing a Market Position Statement based on this strategy which will clearly state that our direction of travel is and will be our 'calling card' to providers which includes established social enterprises to work with us.

We will develop a Contractual Agreement with our in-house Supported Living Service to ensure that they deliver the outcomes we expect and drive forward our new 'move on' service model. This strategy will go through a robust accountability gateway which includes equality and Welsh language.

Section 9 - Conclusion

This Strategy has provided a strong rationale based on the best information we have that we need to act and do things differently if we are to:

- Give people what they want, which is more independence, choice and control over their lives with access to a range of housing options.
- Respond to our changing needs and trends
- Deal with the challenging costs of in-house Supported Living Services.
- Embrace the personalisation agenda.
- Have a Supported Living Service that is placed on a 'level playing field' with other providers (via a Service Level Agreement)

Our Council like others is facing unprecedented financial challenges and raising expectations as such we have to do 'better with less'. Our ultimate goal is therefore to provide the best possible services in terms of accommodation and support options with the money we have available.

Appendix 1 **Statutory Drivers**

Care Standards Act 2000
Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010
Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
Children Act 1989
Children's Act 1980
Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996
Community Care (Residential Accommodation) Act 1998
Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
Health Act 1999
Health and Social Care Act 2001
Health and Social Services and Social Security Adjudications Act 1983
Health Services and Public Health Act 1968
Homelessness Act 2002
Housing Act 1996
Housing Grants, Constructions and Regeneration Act 1996
Human Rights Act 1998
Local Authority and Social Services Act 1970
Mental Health (patients in the Community) Act 1995
Mental Health Act 1983
Mental Health Bill 2004
Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010
National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990
National Health Services Act 1977
Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
Welsh Language Act 1993
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

Summary of Duties required

• National Assistance Act 1948

- Power to make arrangements for the provision of accommodation for persons who are aged 18 or over and who require care and attention otherwise unavailable to them.
- Power to charge for such provision
- Duty to arrange welfare services for disabled people who have been assessed as needing them.
- These will include practical assistance in the home, meals, provision or assistance in obtaining certain equipment, holidays, and transport to and from services, recreational activities.
- Power to take steps to remove to suitable premises, people who are in need of care and attention.
- Duty to protect the property of people who are in hospital or residential care.

Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1958

- Power to make arrangements for the provision of facilities for enabling disabled persons to be employed or work under special conditions

Mental Health Act 1959

- Power to prosecute for offence under that Act with the consent of the DPP (Section still in force).

Health Services & Public Health Act 1968

- Power to arrange services to promote the welfare of older people, with the approval of the National Assembly for Wales
- Power to make grants and/or loans and/or assist voluntary organisations in respect of relevant services

Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970

- Duty to gather information on how many disabled people live in the local authority area and plan to meet their needs.
- Duty to publish information about its services
- Duty to assess people for provision of services and to ensure that those needs are met
- Duty to make provision for the needs of disabled persons when providing public sanitary conveniences
- Duty to consider co option of chronically sick or disabled persons to local authority committees concerned with matters in which such persons have special needs
- Duty to provide information to the National Assembly for Wales as to accommodation of younger with older persons

National Health Service Act 1977

- Powers to make arrangements for the care of nursing and expectant mothers and the prevention, care and after care of people who have been ill.
- Duty to co operate with NHS bodies

Health & Social Services & Social Security Adjudications Act 1983

- Power to charge for certain services and to take steps to recover such sums

Mental Health Act 1983

- A local social services authority shall appoint sufficient approved mental health professionals (AMHP) for the purposes of discharging mental health functions.
- The functions of AMHP's include assessment for compulsory admission to hospital for assessment, or assessment and treatment, or assessment and removal to a place of safety.
- Local social services authorities may make a guardianship application in respect of a patient of over 16 years suffering from a mental disorder where it is in the interests of the patient's welfare or for the protection of others that the patient is received into guardianship. The authority granted a guardianship order can require the patient to reside at a specified place, require the patient to attend medical treatment, education, occupation or training and require access to the patient to be given to a medical practitioner or approved social worker.
- When a young person in the authority's care or a person subject to the guardianship of the authority is admitted to a hospital or nursing home the authority shall arrange for visits to be made to the patient.
- It is the duty of the Local Authority and Health to provide, in co-operation with voluntary organisations, after-care for certain categories of discharged mentally disordered patients.

Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010

Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986

- Duty to assess people for the provision of certain welfare services. Right of representative to act on behalf of a disabled person in dealings with local authority.
- Duty to assess a disabled young person about to leave full time education

NHS & Community Care Act 1990

- Each authority shall prepare plans for community care services having consulted with relevant bodies
- Duty to carry out assessments of need for community care services and duty to consider whether services should be provided, with special action in the case of disabled persons and where there are health or housing needs

Carers (Recognition & Services) Act 1995

- Whilst carrying out an assessment of a person, there is a duty to assess the needs of carers if so requested.

Carers & Disabled Children Act 2000

- Rights of carers to assessment of their needs and powers to provide support direct to carers in their caring role.

Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010

- Local Health Boards and Local Authorities must work together to prepare and publish an Information and Consultation Strategy.
- It will set out how they will work together to provide information to carers and include carers in the arrangements made for those they care for.

Community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996

- Functions in connection with the making of payments to persons in respect of their securing the provision of community care services themselves

Housing Act 1996

- Duty of Social Services authority to co operate in relation to homeless people and persons threatened with homelessness

Care Standards Act 2000

- This has the effect of bringing local authority settings within the regulatory scheme. Local authorities have to meet the same standards as independent sector providers.
- The Act also imposes a duty to refer people to the Secretary of State who are considered unsuitable to work with adults. The list should be checked before an offer of employment is made.

Children's Act 1989

- To fulfil the duties to give information about and services to Children in Need (or of need of protection) as defined in the Children Act 1989 and their families as set out in "Working Together" and "Framework for Assessment of Children and Families.

Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984

- Specific codes of practice must be adhered to when dealing with vulnerable people.
- The Local Authority has a duty to provide an appropriate adult.

Mental Health Bill (2004)

- New Mental Health legislation and a final bill produced in September 2004 will bring a range of new statutory requirements and place new duties on statutory health and social care authorities. It will increase the duties/powers of treatment and care in the community.

Section 7 Service Principles and Service Responses Guidance 2004

Statement on Policy and Practice for Adults with a Learning Disability. 2007

Welsh Language Act 1993

Equalities Act

Human Rights Act 1998

The Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategies (Wales) Regulations 2003

Codes of Practice/Nationally Agreed Standards; or Specific Codes of practice and Nationally Agreed Standards include:

Social Care Institute of Excellence guidelines

National Institute Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines (Health)

Care Management and Assessment HMSO fifth impression 1994

Fairer Charging policies for Home Care and Other Non-Residential Social Services 2001

Continuing Care: NHS and Local Council Responsibilities, Department of Health 2001

Guidance on Free Nursing Care in nursing Homes, 2001

Fair Access to Care Services – Guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care

National Minimum Standards for Adult Placement

National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Younger Adults

Domiciliary Care Agencies (Wales) Regulation

National Minimum Standards – Domiciliary Care Standards

National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older People

Dual Diagnosis Good Practice Guide 2002

All Wales Strategy for the Development of Services for Mentally Handicapped People 1983

Fulfilling the Promises 1999

Learning Disability Strategy Service Principles and service Responses, Section 7 (August 2004)

Practice Guidance on developing a commissioning strategy for people with a learning disability. 2011.

ASD Strategic Action Plan for Wales 2008 and associated Guides to Housing Management 2010 & 2011

However, the key Welsh Government policy documents that have shaped this strategy include:

- Welsh Mental Handicap Strategy (1983) of which the 1994 revised guidance set a clear objective to see the *'provision of a range of accommodation so that people with learning disabilities have as much*

freedom as anyone else to choose where they live and with whom they live and a level of support which enables them to continue to live in the community’.

- Statement on Policy and Practice for Adults with a Learning Disability (2007) which included the following statement *‘All people with a Learning Disability are full citizens, equal in status and value to other citizens of the same age’*
- Practice guidance on developing a commissioning strategy for people with a Learning Disability (2011). Guidance that communicates clear messages to us as commissioners which includes taking into account the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010, the need for us to model future support provision around personalisation e.g. increasing use of direct payments, to work with all providers and always keep the focus of everything we do on outcomes for people.
- More general practice guidance Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities Commissioning Framework Guidance and Good Practice 2010 sets out our approach to develop future services e.g. the role of social enterprises, co-production, an outcomes based approach to commissioning and commissioning on a regional level.
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders Strategic Action Plan for Wales (2008), our Flintshire Local Action Plan and associated/salient guides⁵ that will influence how we will work with providers to develop more responsive services.
- ‘All Together NOW’ Cooper and Warren (2011) which has re-affirmed our thinking set out in the concept the authors have coined ‘Just enough’ support. The concept of ‘just enough’ support aims to provide the optimum level of support which will increase the chances of people making connections with other people in their communities, and ultimately their independence.

⁵ ASD – Information for practitioners who have an interest in Developing Property or Services for Housing and/ or Day Opportunities.
ASD – A Guide to Housing Management for Practitioners and People in Rented Housing.

Appendix 2 – Costings

However, we needed to investigate further to work out the unit cost for our In-house service. Owing to the complexity of the investigation we worked closely with an Accountant to devise a method that would provide us with the best idea we could get. It was agreed a triangulation approach was needed, whereby three different methods would be used to calculate estimates of the unit cost and compare results to identify if and why there are significant differences.

Approach 1)

Rota Sheets for 3 months of 2011 / 2012, review and extract more accurate estimates of Direct Care inclusive of agency input for cover.

Extract total direct costs per scheme from ledger 2011/2012

The overall average gross unit cost is **£21.31**

Approach 2)

Identify actual inputs to schemes for one month in 2012 from direct in-house scheme workers.

Identify cover agency input through review of invoices for same month for all schemes.

Annualise and cost total input by reference to 2011/12 full year data

Allocate management, admin and other direct cost relating to schemes and apportion to schemes based on activity

The overall average gross unit cost is **£22.38**

Approach 3) A benchmark with work undertaken within Older People Domiciliary Care.

Our approximate costings are as follows:

Source: Independent and Supported Living Spreadsheet 7/08/2012

| Provider | Number of Addresses | Number of people | Voids | Cost of service 2012/2013 | Approx per person per year |
|------------------------|------------------------|---|------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Betsi | 5 | 15 | | | |
| Independent | 19 | 52 | 5 | £2,847,679 | £54,763 |
| In House (SL) | 23 | 54 | 5/6 | £4,452,091 | £82,446 |
| CDS Model | 1 | 16 | | | Average £13,032.23 |
| Key Ring | 4 networks | 36 | | £161,137 for 2012 | £4,476 |
| Direct Payments | | 55⁶ in the main a part package (only 14 buying in over 10 hours a week) | | 2011/ 12 £420,392.40 | £7,643.49 |
| Adult placement | | 9 | | Calculations based on Max cost £420 per week (if £60 per day) plus additional £70 per week Total spend: £126,274 | £21,840 |
| Short Breaks | | | | Devolved annual budget | |
| | Woodlee | 3 beds | yes | £164,142 | |
| | Orchard Way | 3 beds | | £205,508 | |
| | Hafod | 3 beds | | £168,980 | |

⁶ For 54 people on Direct Payments
 Costing Number of people
 Under £200 37
 £200- £500 14
 £500- £1,000 1
 £1,000- £5,000 2
 £5,000 0

| | Cost 2011/2012 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Residential Long Term | £3,121,778 |
| Residential Short Term | £129,357 |
| Nursing | £119,803 |

2.3.2 North Wales Commissioning Hub for High Cost Low Volume placements:

Cost - £30k

The projected savings made by regional commissioning are £112k per year (this excludes cost avoidance in relation to new placements)

Appendix 3 – The Views of Stakeholders

People with Learning Disabilities and their Families

People have repeatedly told us what they think makes a good home and a good break and this was reconfirmed with the 4 members of the Learning Disability Planning Group at a meeting on the 8th March 2012. As follows:

What makes a good home?

- Getting on with the people you live with
- Being part of a community
- Contact with family and friends
- Being independent
- Space and time alone
- Choice of where to live, what you do and when you do it, who supports you, the décor,
- Being given the chance to move
- Proper planning and time to find the right home

What makes a good break?

- Having planned and unplanned breaks
- Choice / online booking facility
- Breaks that are reliable and good value
- breaks with friends and getting on with people
- Breaks that serve as a stepping stone to independence
- Creative short breaks e.g. camping, use of individual budgets, B&B, breaks around events such as the clothes show or Rugby
- Different types of breaks – Adult Placement, staying at home, across North Wales etc.

Young People in transition

Young people have told us that they want to live independently once they are an adult which is a view echoed by their families.

At the Transition team event on 6th February 2012, an event set up to involve young people in the shaping of the transition service. In total 48 young people attended. Young people said it was important to include in their transition plan about where they will live in the future

- Young people said they need to think about
 - ✓ Who I will live with e.g. family, friends, on my own.
 - ✓ Where I will live e.g. close to family and friends.
 - ✓ Being safe at home
- The plan should say if young people need adaptations, help and support to live independently and to pay the bills.

- They thought it was important that the people who support them get on well with them.

Accommodation and support providers.

The key themes for our strategy from a random selection of Flintshire providers:

- Choice and range of accommodation and support solutions, sitting along a 'move on' pathway with a 'step up/step down' support facility.
- Providers collaborating.
- Meet the needs of people with dementia and those with challenging behaviour
- Work with private landlords and housing associations.
- Proper planning with people and families with better transitions and shared risk taking between all stakeholders.
- Ensure quality provision e.g. roll out the 'real tenancy test' and involve people with learning disabilities in checking out if people with learning disabilities are happy with where they currently live.
- Enhanced Key ring scheme for people with higher level needs.
- Increase short break provision, explore volunteer families.

Care Managers (the purchasers)

The key themes for our strategy from the purchasers:

- Effective 'step up/ step down' facilities
- Retirement provision
- Meet the needs of people with complex needs and people with autism.
- Enhanced keyring model of support.
- Extra Care Facilities and warden type accommodation
- Flexibilities in tenancy duration.
- Home ownership
- A new lease option scheme with Housing Association.
- Direct payments and Citizen Directed Support.
- Address issues of compatibility

Commissioners and Contract Monitoring Team.

The key themes for our strategy from the Commissioning team:

- Alternative Day service provision
- Outcome-focussed Day Support with flexible opening such as model in South Manchester⁷
- Explore Social enterprise model and the co production of services

⁷ hub approach with services users engaged in community based person centred activities outside of the hub but having the facility to fall back on, multi user group service, activities based on preference rather than disability.

- Work in partnership with organisations who want to develop alternative planned break models giving a broader range of choice⁸
- Adult placement services as seen in Gwynedd
- Better partnership working on a regional level, with the Market and across the Council e.g. Housing

⁸ registered for LD planned breaks in a grade 2 former guest house in the centre of LLanberis, the idea was to focus on peoples abilities and use a combination of group participation and learning, a week would try to focus on achievements ie, from learning to cook to walking up Snowdon and anything in-between depending on preference, a strong person centred focus with the management qualification in both support and outdoor pursuits, I think the idea was for people to have a planed break and achieve something measurable.

Appendix 4

Supported Living Quality Check – Easy Read July 2011

Every year the Supported Living Service has to find out what people think about the service they get at home.

There were 2 meetings. Pictures and symbols were used to help people say what they thought.

Steve Williams the Registered Manager was at the meetings so that he could answer any questions from service users.

Joan French and Mike Farrelly were at the meetings to ask what people thought about their service. Joan and Mike work for Flintshire County Council. They do not work for the Supported Living Service.

People were asked

- What is important to you about the support you get at home?
- What is good about the support you get at home?
- What could be better about the support you get at home?

What is most important to you about the support you get at home?

People said

- Doing things for myself – support to be independent
- Having my own space – my room and privacy and respect for my space and my home
- Being able to get about – to do things that are important to me like swimming, theatre, bingo and my own shopping
- Contact with other people – having visitors to my home, keeping in contact with friends and family
- Keeping healthy – support to help me do this

What is good about the support you get at home?

People said these things were good

- Support to meet people and keep in contact with people, having visitors
- Support to do things for myself – food shopping, household jobs, being as independent as possible in washing and dressing, keys to my home
- Choice about important things in life like home cooked food, what's on TV, doing my hobbies, my garden
- Most of my staff

What could be better about the support you get at home?

People said these things could be better

- Being able to change things on my plan
- To do more cooking for myself, go on a cookery course
- Living somewhere on my own, somewhere bigger
- People in my house being too loud

What the Supported Living Service will do to make things better.

- Tell everyone who works for Supported Living about the important things people said
- Check the things that are in everyone's Service Delivery Plan and Active Support Plan are what they want and need to do to be as independent as they can
- Use symbols and pictures to help communicate with people
- Remind people about the Pink Forms and how to use them to say what they think about their service
- Think about how Supported Living can support people to keep speaking out

Appendix 5 – Transition 2013- 2015 - Projected Savings - CDS v In house Supported Living solution

Note CDS average cost per annum is approx £13,032.23

In house Supported Living (based on no voids) per annum is approx £74,201

| Accommodation Need | number | Projected savings per annum if CDS solution instead of In house SL For those requiring some day time support |
|---|---------------|---|
| Year 2013 | | £244,675 |
| Fully adapted shared property / 24 hr | 2 | |
| General housing/ 24hr | 1 | |
| Shared/ some day time support | 3 | |
| Shared/ 24 hr | 1 | |
| Fully adapted / some daytime | 1 | |
| | | |
| Year 2014 | | |
| Fully adapted shared property / 24 hr/ complex health needs | 1 | £183,507 |
| Shared/ some day time support | 3 | |
| Shared/ 24 hr | 10 | |
| Shared/ 24hr/ specialist ASD | 2 | |
| | | |
| Year 2015 | | |
| Shared/ some day time support | 3 | £183,507 |
| Shared/ 24 hr | 4 | |
| Fully adapted shared property / 24 hr | 1 | |
| Shared/ 24hr/ specialist ASD | 2 | |
| | | |
| | | Total savings over 3 years = £1,284,546 if those 10 young people coming through transition (2013, 2014, 2015) assessed as needing Shared/ some daytime solution was CDS instead of inhouse SL. |

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Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy 2013- 2018

Accommodation and Support

SUMMARY

1. Why do we need a Commissioning Strategy?

This document is about the services that we provide to people with a learning disability in Flintshire and sets out how we want to see them developed for the next 5 years.

Our vision is based primarily on what people with a learning disability told us they wanted and the views of their families as well as the providers who currently support people in Flintshire.

2. Who currently uses our services and how much do we spend on them?

- People with learning disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria for services make up approximately 0.32% (483) of the population in Flintshire.
- 48% (214) of people are aged 40 or over.
- 45% (202) of people live with their relatives (a parent or sibling).
- 38% (123) of people are living with someone else (excludes hospital and relatives).
- There is a range of different provision from Adult placement, single occupancy, shared supported housing etc. with the majority (40%) living in some form of shared provision.
- For 2012-2013 the annual spend on in-house supported living for **54** people will be **£4,452,091.00** and we will spend **£2,847,679.00** on contracts with the independent sector for **52** people. Choosing to commission supported living services from our in-house provider is clearly costing us a lot more.

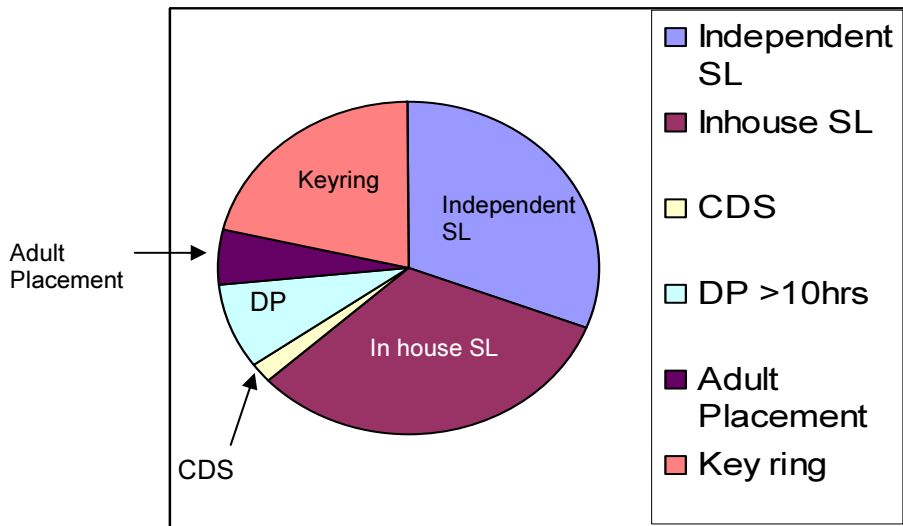
3. Our vision for the future

- Our vision is that people with a learning disability have a range of different types of accommodation available to them and that through individualised support planning, people are enabled to be as independent as possible with 'just enough support' to promote their wellbeing and ensure they are safe.
- Our vision is that we retain a viable but reduced in-house service to ensure we retain experience within this service and continue to be well placed to provide support to Independent sector providers as necessary .

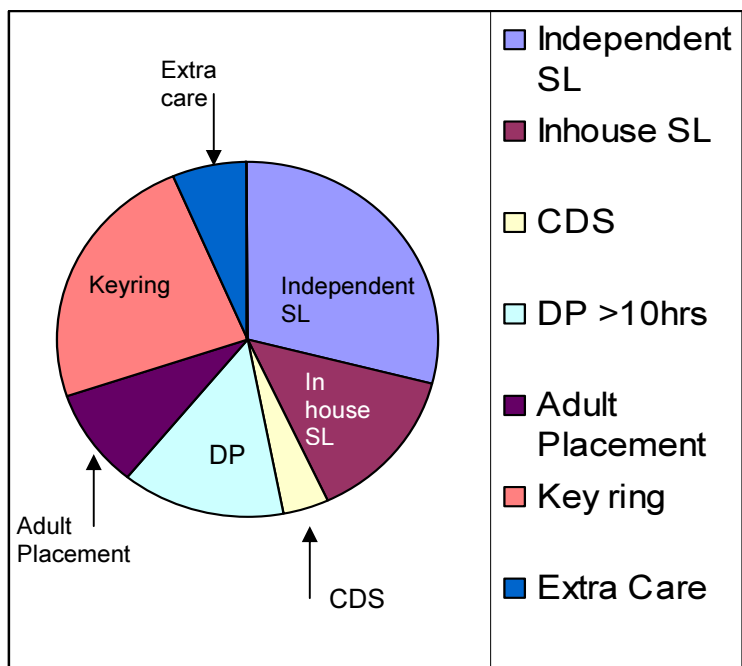
4 Where are we now and where do we want to be in 5 years time

Broad graphic illustrations of how we see services in 5 years time in terms of volume and model.

Now



In 5 Years Time



5 How we will achieve this vision

5.1 We will ensure that social workers and other professionals adopt the ethos of promoting independence and positive risk taking. We will develop a 'move on' culture with all new service users, based on an initial assessment of the persons current abilities and strengths and working towards maximising their potential to be as independent as possible and live a fulfilled life.

5.2 We will review and refocus our in-house Supported Living Service and configure it as the 'first stop' on the 'move on' pathway for young people with disabilities coming through transition from children's services. This 'first stop' assessment provided by the in-house Supported Living Team will establish an accurate baseline of need and skills which in turn will lead to a 'right size' package to enable the individual to move on to a more individualised type of accommodation and support arrangement. It is logical that we refocus our in-house Supported Living Service in this way as it is consistent with our directorate's ethos around providing services that focus on reablement and recovery.

5.3 For those existing tenants already supported within in-house Supported Living Services the 'active support' approach will be introduced in order to maximise skills for independent living and offer opportunities for a 'move on' to alternative accommodation as appropriate. **Our target for the next 5 years is for 10% of people currently in our Supported Living Service to move on.** We will also start on a gradual path to reduce our in house Supported Living Service in recognition of it's high comparable costs and move towards increasing the range of independent living options available in the independent sector. **Our target for the next 5 years will be that 30% of in-house Supported Living Service will be redesigned.** The decision as to which of our 23 properties will be externalised will be based on an agreed criteria which will include existence of voids, cost of running the property, stability of staff team, and proximity of properties to other properties to capitalise on economies of staffing. We will seek to decommission some properties where there are voids and only 1 tenant as these are not economically sustainable.

5.4 Direct payments/ Citizen Directed Support will be the default method used to enable individuals to have control and choice about how their support services are organised. **Our target for the next 5 years will be a 50% increase in the number of people accessing a direct payment/ CDS as a substantial part of the care package** ('Substantial' for this purpose is defined as 'over 10 hours of personal assistant support per week')

5.5 We will work in partnership with independent providers to shape and develop the external market to provide supported living options, therefore over time our reliance on in-house provision will become less. (*See Ty Neath outcomes section to box 3 in LD Strategy*).

5.6 We will seek to promote and nurture existing social enterprises as a future viable consideration for commissioning as in accordance with Council priority.

5.7 As part of this refocus we will review the use of Telecare and seek to use it effectively to support people to be independent and safe overnight. **All new Supported Living arrangements will have a telecare assessment and we aim are aiming for a 10% increase year on year in the use of telecare equipment.**

5.8 Extra care is a joint housing and support solution for carer and the person with a disability; we will ensure that the two planned schemes include tenancies for people with disabilities. We will capitalise on the skills in the dementia part of the service.

5.9 We want to work with housing partners to ensure tenancy agreements are flexible enough to respond to the changing needs of people with learning disabilities.

5.10 We believe very strongly that local area co-ordination must be part of our 'move on' approach. We want people with a learning disability to be active citizens within their local community and not solely reliant upon paid workers for social contacts. Therefore we intend to commission a community development and integration service and extend this across Flintshire. **The first network will be in 2014/2015 based in the South Locality, with a roll out on a locality basis within 5 years.**

5.11 We will also review current short break provision and explore opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring authorities on developing different models such as adult placement. **We will double our adult placement provision within the next 5 years.**

6. What Next?

6.1 We will be producing a Market Position Statement based on this strategy which will clearly state that our direction of travel is and will be our 'calling card' to providers which includes established social enterprises to work with us.

6.2 We will develop a Contractual Agreement with our in-house Supported Living Service to ensure that they deliver the outcomes we expect and drive forward our new 'move on' service model. This strategy will go through a robust accountability gateway which includes equality and Welsh language.

7. Conclusion

This strategy has provided a strong rationale based on the best information we have that we need to act and do things differently if we are to:-

- Give people what they want, which is more independence, choice and control over their lives, with access to a range of housing options.
- Respond to our changing needs and trends.
- Deal with the challenging costs of in-house Supported Living Services.
- Embrace the personalisation agenda.
- Have a Supported living service placed on a 'level playing field' with other providers (via a Service Level Agreement.)

Our Council, like others, is facing unprecedented financial challenges and rising expectations, as such we have to do 'better with less'. Our ultimate goal is therefore to provide the best possible services in terms of accommodation and support options with the money we have available.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **ADULTS SAFEGUARDING REGIONAL PROPOSAL**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide scrutiny with information regarding future proposed Regional Safeguarding structures

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill and Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action collectively bring a different context to adult safeguarding.

2.01 The current arrangements in place across North Wales are network arrangements for sharing information and peer support. The emerging view is that there is a need to move the adult safeguarding agenda into a robust regional framework

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill and Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action places a requirement upon partners to develop the current adult protection arrangements into an adult safeguarding agenda both locally, regionally and nationally.

3.02 Part 7 of the Bill relating to safeguarding clearly states the requirements for Safeguarding Adult Boards to be developed.

3.03 Part 7 of the Bill clearly sets out the objective of the Safeguarding Adults Board as to protect adults within its area who:

- Have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs), and
- Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- To prevent those adults within its area from becoming at risk of abuse and neglect.

3.04 Statutory regulation on Adult Safeguarding Boards will set out the areas in Wales for safeguarding boards (to be referred to as safeguarding board areas). Discussions during consultation has led

to the understanding that North Wales will remain one region.

3.05 Preferred Future Option

Four options have been considered for North Wales. Following initial consideration partners preferred option is Option 4 a Two tier – North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board. (See Appendix 1)

The other options considered were

- 1 Maintain the status quo – 4 North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board and 1 Sub-regional Adult Safeguarding Board (Gwynedd and Anglesey)
- 2 Three North Wales Adult Safeguarding Boards
- 3 Single North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board
- 4 Two-tier North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board

3.06 Description of Preferred Option

Within this model there will be a North Wales Regional Adult Safeguarding Board which will consider functions that can be carried out on a regional basis including training, performance and audit, policy and serious case reviews.

In addition this option recommends 3 sub regional partnerships of neighbouring Local Authorities working together to develop Adult Safeguarding Boards. This builds on the learning from the current Gwynedd and Ynys Mon model. These sub regional boards will focus on local issues and practice and will be based on already well established local links.

3.07 This structure provides a balance between regional working and being able to work effectively across boundaries, whilst continuing to maintain local links within sub-regional boards.

3.08 This two-tiered option is favoured as:

- This model allows for structures to be developed in ways which strike an acceptable and well-managed balance between local and regional agendas
- Maintains the ability to be responsive to local issues and practice
- Positive Regional adult safeguarding working can contribute to a higher profile and increased regional and national influence.
- This model would be more manageable for the pan-North Wales organisations
- Its strengthens the collaborative agenda in North Wales
- Having the same model for adults and children safeguarding boards will bring about equity for both adult and children

safeguarding

- Over time, this model will allow for the opportunity to merge some common areas of safeguarding practice across children and adult services
- This model can also bring an opportunity for integrated business support to underpin children and adult safeguarding across North Wales.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That scrutiny supports this proposed regional model to change the current arrangements for adult safeguarding across North Wales implementing the preferred option a Two-tiered North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 This model will initially be developed using existing regional capacity.

5.02 A bid has been made to the Regional Collaboration Fund which includes a project management post to support this development. If successful, this funding will be available for 3 years. However, the preferred model does provide the opportunity to merge some common areas of safeguarding practice across children and adult which has the potential to lead to an integrated business support function to underpin adult and children safeguarding across North Wales and may potentially lead to efficiencies.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Not Applicable

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 Not Applicable

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 An Equalities Impact Assessment of this proposal has been completed by Denbighshire County Council on behalf of partners

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None at present

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 This proposal has been presented to appropriate scrutiny committees across all North Wales authorities as part of the consultation and

approval process

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Senior Social Care officers have been fully involved in agreeing the preferred option

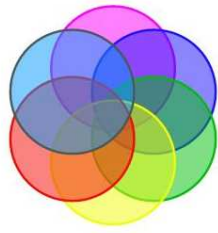
12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - North Wales Adult Safeguarding Integration and/or Collaboration: The way forward

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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Email: alwyn.jones@flintshire.gov.uk



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Social
Services
Improvement
Collaborative

Cydweithredfa
Gwella
Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol
Gogledd
Cymru

North Wales Adult Safeguarding Integration and/or Collaboration: The way forward

Context

The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill and Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action brings a different context to adult safeguarding. The current arrangements is a network arrangement for sharing information and peer support. The emerging view is that there is a need to move the adult safeguarding agenda into a robust regional framework.

Purpose of the report

This report

- 1) Presents the options
- 2) Is a vehicle for decision making
- 3) Explores the appetite for seeking closer synergy across adult and children safeguarding

These were initial discussions in December which paved the way to a regional North Wales Workshop which was held on 25th January 2013 with a range of stakeholders from statutory organisations. The discussions at that workshop have influenced the formulation of the options within this report.

Background

The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill and Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action places a requirement upon partners to develop the current adult protection arrangements into an adult safeguarding agenda both locally, regionally and nationally. A statement letter from Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services

dated 19th October 2012 communicated some clear messages around Welsh Government's direction of travel in light of its recent consultation on the Bill. Furthermore, part 7 of the Bill relating to safeguarding clearly states the requirements for Safeguarding Adults Boards and clearly sets out the objectives of the Safeguarding Adults Board as:

(a) To protect adults within its area who:

- Have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs, and
- Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- To prevent those adults within its area from becoming at risk of abuse and neglect

The Bill also prescribes that Safeguarding Boards must produce an 'annual plan' at the beginning of each financial year setting out its proposals for achieving its objectives within that year and a report must be published by 31st July of each year on how it has exercised its functions in the preceding financial year, and the extent to which it implemented the proposals in its annual plan for the preceding financial year.

The WG agenda therefore, is firmly set around the requirement to develop Adult Safeguarding Boards as a means of strengthening adult safeguarding across Wales.

Statutory regulation on Adult Safeguarding Boards will set out the areas in Wales for safeguarding boards (to be referred to as safeguarding board areas). In reflecting upon discussions during consultation it is anticipated that the North Wales footprint will remain one region.

Joint working with Children Safeguarding Board

Notwithstanding the fact that it is fully acknowledged that the complexities and possible risks and practice concerns associated with integrating safeguarding frameworks across both children and adult services need to be carefully considered, this is however, something that should be pursued. This would place North Wales as a region in a position of strength as the national direction of travel evolves and is clarified.

Engagement of Elected Members in Adult Safeguarding

Consideration needs to be given to the active engagement of elected members within adult safeguarding. There is acknowledgement that this has been in need of some strengthening and is inconsistent. This will provide a framework of ensuring political accountability for safeguarding.

Current Landscape – Adult Safeguarding

Currently the Local Authorities of Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy undertake adult safeguarding activities on an individual basis. Gwynedd and Anglesey Council's however are working collaboratively to develop a joint Safeguarding Adults Board. Although this development is currently in its infancy a shadow joint board has now been established and has met once.

The 3 sub-regional Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) in North Wales has already taken steps ahead of recent communications from Welsh Government to develop a shadow LSCB.

Summary of Options to be considered

- 1 Maintain the status quo – 4 North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board and 1 Sub-regional Adult Safeguarding Board (Gwynedd and Anglesey)
- 2 Three North Wales Adult Safeguarding Boards
- 3 Single North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board
- 4 Two-tier North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board

The feedback from the workshop held on 25th January 2013 can be found in Appendix 1.

Options

1 Maintain the status quo – 4 North Wales Safeguarding Boards and 1 Sub-regional Adult Safeguarding Board (Gwynedd and Anglesey)

Given the clear direction provided within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, the option of maintaining the status quo in 4 of the North Wales Local Authority areas is unlikely to be commended by the Welsh Government. A North Wales Adult Protection forum exists

in North Wales however, this is a network arrangement for information sharing and peer support.

This option is least favourable as:

- It is not in line with the requirements of the Deputy Minister
- It is resource intensive
- It does not bring about efficiency
- The current arrangement is a network and not a decision making forum

2 Three Sub-regional North Wales Adult Safeguarding Boards (Wrexham and Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy, Gwynedd and Ynys Mon).

There are a number of strengths and weaknesses to this option; the most significant weakness is the requirement for appropriate resources and duplication of work in particular for the regionally structured organisations such as North Wales Police and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. This model is already being progressed by Gwynedd and Anglesey and therefore, there will be shared-learning available to develop this model. Local Authority members and officers may find a three board structure may initially be more palatable and more acceptable from a governance point of view.

This model would also mirror the established LSCB structure and again learning from this development would be shared.

This option is not favourable as:

- It is not within the spirit of the Welsh Government's footprint underpinning collaboration across boundaries.
- It does not bring about efficiency and sufficiently reduce duplication
- It continues to be resource intensive
- It is not conducive to innovative collaboration and forward thinking around governance and accountability frameworks across agency boundaries
- May be deemed as being overly cautious.

3 Single North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board

Given that 4 Local Authorities currently have individual safeguarding arrangements and Gwynedd and Anglesey sub-regional arrangements, it would be challenging to comfortably move from the current structure to a single board. Governance and accountability

arrangements would need to be considered carefully and there would be potential dilution of links with local services and remoteness from practice. This model would also run the risk of becoming detached from frontline staff and the public. Given that safeguarding currently lies within individual or sub-regional arrangements Local Authority members and officers would need to be assured that this model would provide transparent and robust governance and accountability for adult safeguarding as the statutory duty for safeguarding lies with the Director of Social Services as clearly stated in the Roles and Responsibilities of that post.

The strengths of this option include the potential for greater efficiency, reduced duplication and effective shared learning. A single safeguarding board also brings the potential to bring a broader range of skills, knowledge and experience to the safeguarding agenda. This option would no doubt, be preferred by Welsh Government and organisations that work across North Wales.

This option is less favourable as:

- Whilst the aspiration of the Deputy Minister is to have regional adult safeguarding board, to move from a local arrangement straight to a regional arrangement would require great confidence in the new model and the North Wales footprint covers a very large geographical area
- It would be too remote from practice
- It would prove hard to hold a large number of representative agencies to account
- The agenda could become unmanageable which would impact on the effectiveness of the Board
- Governance issues and accountability would become remote and impact on statutory duty of the Director of Social Services.

4 Two tier- North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board

This option would enable 3 x 2 Local Authorities to work together to develop a Safeguarding Board and to develop using the learning from the current Gwynedd and Anglesey model. However, there are elements of adult safeguarding that could conceivably be carried out on a regional basis for example, training, performance and audit, policy, and serious case reviews.

This structure would provide a balance between regional working and being able to work effectively across boundaries whilst continuing to maintain local links.

With regard to weaknesses this option would present the most potential for confusion around accountability, securing representation at the right level for both sub-regional and regional elements and would require strong leadership at each level. This could impact on the capacity of senior managers of all agencies; some members would find that they have more meetings to attend than previously, for example however, this would have less capacity implications on pan North Wales organisations.

The most notable strengths for this options include the fact that this model is now being piloted in children safeguarding via the LSCB's and early indications would suggest its potential as a future model that could be fully integrated. Duplication would be lessened, and it allows for innovation, evolution and offers the potential to reduce demand on resources, both people and financial. The general broad direction of travel as outlined in the Bill is a National Board for Children and Adults. There is lots to learn from children safeguarding boards and this structure would allow us to achieve equity.

This is the favoured option as:

- This model is currently being piloted in children's safeguarding through the LSCB model and early indications are encouraging and positive
- Gwynedd and Anglesey have started on the journey of establishing a joint board and the learning from this is available
- It allows for the structures to be developed in ways which strike an acceptable and well-managed balance between local and regional agendas
- It maintains the ability to be responsive to local issues and practice
- The regional adult safeguarding elements could create a higher profile and increase the North Wales Board's influence regionally and nationally
- This model would be more manageable for the pan-North Wales organisations
- It strengthens the collaborative agenda in North Wales
- Having the same model for adults and children safeguarding boards will bring about equity for both adult and children safeguarding in readiness for any direction from Welsh Government

- Over time, this model will bring about the opportunity to merge some common areas of safeguarding practice across children and adults e.g. training, policies and procedures, performance and audit, serious case reviews.
- This model will also bring a real opportunity for integrated business support to underpin children and adult safeguarding across North Wales.

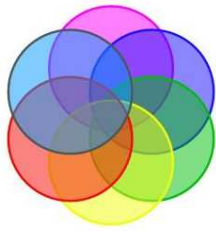
5 The favoured option – a two tier Adult Safeguarding Board

The potential structure for this option consists of:

- One Regional Adult Safeguarding Board
- Three Sub-regional Adult Safeguarding Boards (Gwynedd/Anglesey; Conwy/Denbighshire; Flintshire/Wrexham)
- To underpin the above, four regional sub-groups:
 - Training
 - Policies and procedures (linking to National work)
 - Performance and Audit
 - Serious case reviews

Next Steps:

- 1) The collaborative of NWSSIC, NWASH and safeguarding leads for the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Police and North Wales Ambulance Service are invited to form a view around the preferred option.
- 2) Provide a clear steer to the current adult protection forum in relation to their existence and any forward work programme
- 3) Consider the resources needed to take forward



North
Wales
Social
Services
Improvement
collaborative

Cydweithredfa
Gwella
Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol
Gogledd
Cymru

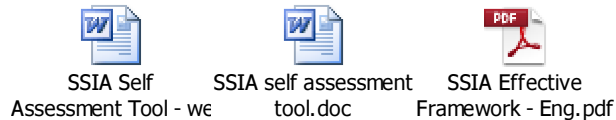
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APPENDIX 1

Regional Adult Safeguarding Workshop Friday 25th January 2013 Optic, St Asaph Business Park

A North Wales Adult Safeguarding Workshop was arranged via NWSSIC, led by Jenny Williams, Director of Social Services, CCBC who is the North Wales lead Director for Safeguarding. The event was attended by an excellent mix of colleagues from Local Authorities, BCUHB, North Wales Police and the North Wales Ambulance Service.

The following attached documents were available to attendees either through prior circulation or on the day:



The workshop was opened by Jenny Williams and introductions were made. The opening presentation is attached:

[attach Jenny's presentation]

A presentation was then given by Anwen Davies, Head of Adult Services, Anglesey Council and Ann Lloyd Jones, Senior Manager, Adult Services, Gwynedd as they have already started on a journey to transform their individual POVA forums into a joint Safeguarding Board.



During both these presentations there was recognition that in Gwent a number of Authorities are working together to develop a joint Safeguarding Board and attached is a presentation “Improving Adults Safeguarding: Establishing the Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board” prepared by Stephen Gillingham of Blaenau Gwent Council. This will provide some insight into the work undertaken thus far in Gwent.



GWASB ADSS
Presentation November

Workshop Session 1

Attendees were asked to think about Adult Safeguarding in the context of local, sub-regional and regional. The feedback from this session included:

General

Robust accountability is key

Moving from local straight into regional is a huge step

Need to have clear direction whichever model is agreed

Statutory responsibility for safeguarding sits at different levels within partner organisations e.g.

Director of Social Services in some

Opportunity to develop an equal structure to that of Children's.

Local

Local Authority members may prefer and feel more confident in a local approach

Vast variation in the resources available per Local Authority area

Sub-regional

Sub-regional is more suitable for pan North Wales organisations

Already established joint working i.e. 3 x 2 LA's

May be more acceptable to members

Would mirror the current LSCB arrangements

Current capacity in children's sub-groups could be utilised

Prudent to move to a sub-regional model initially to replicate the Gwynedd/Anglesey work

Sub-regional children's model seems 'manageable' at present

Regional

Challenging without a sub-regional framework

Pan North Wales organisations would benefit more than Local Authorities

Provides opportunity to pool resources and use more efficiently

Geography and demographics challenging

Difficult to 'sell' to members

Some elements need to become regional as quickly as possible e.g. data collection

Corporate agenda

Systems approach could be used from the start

Variation in the resources per Local Authority area

Initially introduce a shadow regional board

The afternoon workshop sessions provided the opportunity to consider 5 specific areas in more depth based on the areas within the SSIA toolkit:

- 1) Establishing the Board's Strategic direction and Improving Outcomes
- 2) Establishing effective governance
- 3) Building capacity
- 4) Operational Delivery
- 5) Commissioning, QA Performance and resource management

Feedback from this session included:

Establishing the Board's Strategic Direction and Improvement Outcomes

The Board needs to have a clear vision of the outcomes it wants to achieve:

- Board to agree the outcomes
- Appropriate people to be around the table
- Links and cascading of information to bridge the knowledge gaps
- Clearly defined strategic objectives
- Consider already established 10 priorities
- Identify most appropriate Chair (?Independent)
- Co-chair – ?service user or Carer
- Communication strategy
- Baseline measures – performance framework
- Map progress
- Common vision – what is it?
- Strategic priorities

- Advise on plan
- Service user involvement
- Feedback from family early on
- Adult Proactive review?
- Best Practice guidance
- Mechanism for feedback
- Safeguarding issues – solution might not be a POVA investigation – priority is to put measures in place to protect
- Prevention needs to be considered – balance between prevention and protection
- Sub-groups – need to include DOLS, and MH legislation
- Support carers and support abusers in addressing their behaviours.

Establish Effective Governance

- Determine membership at the appropriate level to regional/sub-regional
- Independent Chair for regional level
- Mechanism to determine multi-agency representation and service users
- Robust Terms of Reference for both groups
- Probably membership at different levels to each Board
- Effective links between Boards
- Element of shared governance and accountability between regional and national level
- Clearly agreed agendas to avoid duplication i.e. terms of reference for each group crucial
- Locally based organisations need governance structures to enhance assurance
- Regional Board may ask a sub-regional Board to lead on a particular issue or work stream
- Regional Board should provide strategic direction and develop work plan (strategic) taking sub-regional issues
- Taking the political (local) dimensions into account how to take 6 LA's and get appropriate reps
- WAF
- Minute taking and dissemination responsibilities
- Reporting mechanism
- How to involve service users – consider this carefully
- Identify key priorities
- Develop website to share information
- Links between adult protection and other e.g. CP, DV

- Community safety partnerships – how does communication happen?
- Development of training strategy
- What is the role of the regulator?
- Financial implications

Building Capacity

- Adult processes should reflect existing children’s processes and aligned where appropriate to eliminate and reduce duplication and increase capacity
- MAPPA – where does this sit?
- DA for a – how are they linked?
- Collective regional intelligence should release operational capacity
- Creates opportunity for early intervention work
- Creating standardised reporting frameworks, practice and referral thresholds at the outset should ensure common practice and less ‘purposeless’ work
- Clear Terms of Reference and reporting responsibilities for all groups again to avoid duplication
- Opportunity to review ‘what works’ in children’s LSCB/Safeguarding on local, regional and national level
- Identify whether there is duplication or gaps e.g. policy groups
- Avoid bureaucracy and being SMART about key members, agenda and being outcome focussed.

Operational Delivery

- Serious care reviews – need national guidance that talks to all – none feed into each other. No read across departments which causes confusion and delay.
- Effective delivery – must begin strategically to feed down and guide practice – accountability at board level and independent member
- Reporting framework for each organisation - also for each independent/individual forum, must feed up/down and be accountable to the Board
- Information sharing
- Where will adult protection sit in hierarchy
- Remit and purpose – pre-requisite to delivery
- Standardisation of data collection/reporting
- Standardisation of POVA Co-ordinator role and the strategy meeting

- Training for DLM should be clarified/standardised
- Issues in relation to data protection, MC, DOLS
- Guidance regarding when to become involved when service user does not consent
- Different thresholds – police very different
- 2 referrals at present to children and adults – duplication for staff – need one point of contact also – same referral also for MARAC
- For people who work across Authorities – referral practice different in each area = not best quality referrals as a result
- Escalating concerns dealt with differently across local authorities – absence from joined up governance lead
- Clarity regarding what is POVA and what is practice
- Regional training group with steer/direction that feeds into each agency – needs clarity of role and responsibility
- Need to link into LSCB agenda for training.

Commissioning, QA Performance and resource Management

- Information should be available for self- funders to inform them where they can go for support – regional approach to this information/material
- Quality assurance and service standards to be explicit within contracts and specifications
- Contract monitoring needs to be robust in the areas of safeguarding and dignity
- Reviews should be centred on the individual but look at a whole range of aspects
- Standardised application of the POVA/Escalating concerns guidance
- Collate an overview of what is happening in terms of individual providers
- Contract monitoring co-ordination and intelligence can be regional but local delivery is required
- Standard contract monitoring practices/procedures/framework across partner organisations not just LA's

Next Steps/Way Forward

Drawing on the views captured, an options paper to be developed following this workshop. First draft will be shared with the current POVA forum and following any amendments will be circulated to colleagues within partner organisations. These options will need to be considered so that the next stage can be agreed.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE FOR WALES**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To seek Member's views of the plan to establish a National Adoption Service for Wales, supported by Regional Adoption Collaboratives.
- 1.02 To seek Member's views regarding the proposal that Wrexham will continue to act as the lead authority for the North Wales Adoption Service.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Adoption must be seen in the broader context of planning placements and permanence for children and as part of an integrated system of services for meeting their needs and promoting their well-being. Adoption Services as a whole are complex, provided to a wide range of service users from very young children who are being placed for adoption to older adults who are seeking to be reunited with their birth families.
- 2.02 There is a clear requirement that children in care must have plans for permanence in place which consider the full range of permanence options and which are put into effect with appropriate urgency.
- 2.03 Members will be aware that the creation of a National Adoption Service is one of the key policy strands of the Welsh Government and that if enacted, the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill will allow Ministers to prescribe arrangements by local authorities.
- 2.04 Working closely with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), ADSS Cymru produced a functional model for delivery of Adoption Services across Wales. A copy of this report is attached at Appendix A. The model was endorsed by the Expert Advisory Group on Adoption established by Welsh Government. The outline proposal developed by ADSS Cymru was agreed in principle by Leaders at WLGA Council in April.

2.05 Subsequently, in a Written Statement on 25th April 2013, the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services endorsed the proposals for achieving a National Adoption Service and the development of a Functional Model for the delivery of services across Wales, as presented by ADSS Cymru and the WLGA. A copy of the Written Statement is attached at Appendix B.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The proposals outlined in detail in Appendix A, provide an ambitious but realistic pathway for creating an effective and responsive National Adoption Service. This will help to ensure:

- A new direction for the delivery of Adoption Services that is particularly suited to the Welsh context.
- Timely implementation of the improvements required.
- An increase in the pace of collaboration and the capacity to build sustainable services for the future.
- A reduction in bureaucracy and a streamlining of service delivery.
- An improvement in service accessibility for all key stakeholders.
- Maintenance of the essential integrity and coherence between all elements of Adoption Services, to prevent a mismatch between the needs of children requiring adoption placements and the adopters being recruited.
- Long term and lasting improvements to address the weakness identified in some elements of current service provision.
- A central place for the significant contribution made by the Voluntary Sector as valued co-producers and delivery partners.
- Collective opportunities for local authorities to respond effectively to rising pressures within the care system.

3.02 The proposal will be underpinned by a National Standardised Performance Framework that will allow the National Adoption Service to identify, review and highlight key performance measures. The framework will set performance thresholds and make clear the Welsh Government's minimum expectations for timeliness in the adoption system, for both the child and prospective adopter.

3.03 The National Adoption Service will be responsible for:

- Establishment of a National Board.
- Monitoring the delivery of services in accordance with the national performance framework.
- Producing an Annual Report and action plan.
- Developing a national marketing and awareness raising strategy.

- Providing a single point of contact for anyone seeking information about adoption.
 - Providing a database of information.
 - Developing and maintaining a National Adoption Register.
 - Co-ordination of Adoption Panels, Panel Members, Preapproval Training, Post Adoption Support Services and
 - provision of the Independent Review Determination Service.
 - Acting as a Centre of Excellence for Adoption in Wales.
- 3.04 The functional model proposes five Regional Adoption Collaboratives are established, to deliver the functions of a National Service including:
- Ensuring compliance with legislation, regulation and the performance measuring framework.
 - Recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters.
 - Ensuring appropriate matching of children.
 - Provision of the whole range of support services including birth parent counselling, step parent adoptions, intermediary services and letterbox contact.
 - Ensure effective links are maintained with local authorities Children's Social Services.
- 3.05 The proposed five regional collaboratives are:
- North Wales – Wrexham, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire and Ynys Mon;
 - South East Wales – Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Newport and Caerphilly;
 - West & Mid Wales – Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys;
 - Western Bay – Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea; and
 - Mid & South Wales – Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda-Cynon-Taff.
- 3.06 These collaboratives are currently at different stages of development but it is planned that all five Regional Collaboratives will be established by April 2014.
- 3.07 The North Wales regional collaborative has been in place since 01.04.10. [The North Wales Adoption Service] The Service is currently hosted by Wrexham and overseen by the 6 North Wales Heads of Children's Service who meet quarterly as the NAWAS Board. The current collaborative recently held a workshop to evaluate its operations and three workstreams have been established to take forward the actions arising from the workshop and ensure that we are prepared for the new arrangements. A copy of the NAWAS Annual

Report 2012-13 is attached as Appendix (c).

3.08 Within the future model each local authority will retain responsibility for the following:

- Assessment and care planning and reviewing of Looked After Children and young people.
- Ensuring the Agency Decision Maker functions are fulfilled.
- Assessment of the Adoption Support needs of children for whom the plan is adoption.
- Involvement in the matching and linking of children and adopters.
- Providing birth parent counselling, although in North Wales this is also provided as a collaborative via NWAS.
- Making applications to the Courts for appropriate orders.
- Attending Adoption Panels where proposed matches are being considered.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Members

- a) Note the contents on this report and;
- b) Comment on the proposals for achieving a National Adoption Service in Wales as detailed in the report of the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru
- c) Consider the proposal that Wrexham will continue to act as the lead authority for the North Wales Adoption Service.

By so doing Flintshire County Council can ensure that the Council's statutory functions in relation to providing an Adoption Service are fully met, in accordance with legislation and guidance.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 A Task and Finish Group will be established with representatives from Welsh Government, ADSS Cymru, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW), British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), Voluntary Adoption Agencies and each of the five Regional Collaboratives. The purpose will be to produce a robust change programme for implementing the functional model.

5.02 It is recognised that Programme Management capacity is required to drive through these changes in a timely fashion and the Deputy Minister has awarded £50k to ADSS Cymru to support implementation.

5.03 The following key milestones have been agreed:

- Membership and brief of the Task and Finish Group – June.

- Identification of the five Lead Authorities – June.
- Development of a common Implementation Plan format – July.
- Support Lead Authorities in their role – July.
- Outline business components for the infrastructure of the National Service – July.
- Regional Implementation Plans in place – August.

5.04 As the North Wales Adoption Service is already in existence the funding formula was agreed in 2009/10 and is as follows:

Wrexham 19.4%
 Flintshire 22.4%
 Denbighshire 14.0%
 Conwy 16.5%
 Gwynedd 17.6%
 Ynys Mon 10.1%

[based on child population / adoption activity in 2009/10]

Flintshire's current cash contribution is £96,640 per annum, plus 2x FTE posts at £86,257 (with on costs) making the total Flintshire contribution £182,897. The overall operating costs for the consortium are £758,493. Flintshire's contribution is already met within existing base budget, so the impact is cost neutral.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None arising directly from this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None arising directly from this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None arising directly from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 As the NWAS is already in existence the structure of the service is in place but currently subject to review following the evaluation workshop.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 See background.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 See background.

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Appendix A - Proposals for Achieving a National Adoption Service in Wales and development of the Functional Model – ADSS Cymru, April 2013.
- 12.02 Appendix B - Written Statement by the Deputy Minister – 25th April 2013.
- 12.03 Appendix C - North Wales Adoption Service Annual Report 2012/13

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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**PROPOSALS FOR ACHIEVING
A NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE IN WALES
AND
DEVELOPMENT OF THE FUNCTIONAL MODEL**

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Proposals for achieving a National Adoption Service in Wales and Development of the Functional Model

- This paper sets out ADSS Cymru's proposals for achieving, as quickly as possible, radical reforms to Adoption Services in Wales and the creation of a National Adoption Service. It is grounded in a strong and shared commitment to building only on the best of current practice and to ensuring that the changes enable us to keep the child's best interests throughout their life at the core of adoption work.
- Adoption should be seen in the broader context of planning placements and permanence for children and as part of an integrated system of services for meeting their needs and promoting their well-being. There is a clear requirement that children in care must have plans for permanence in place that consider the full range of permanence options and that are put into effect with appropriate urgency. These plans should be agreed as soon as possible after admission and reviewed regularly thereafter.
- As a leadership organisation, ADSS Cymru acknowledges that reform on the scale set out in this document is delivered most effectively if there is a strong consensus across the key stakeholders and a coherent and professional approach to managing change. With others, local government has a key role to play in helping to generate these preconditions and so the plans have been produced in collaboration with the WLGA. A clear political mandate across local government has been achieved in respect of those issues which touch most directly on its role in bringing about change.
- The proposals acknowledge the significant contribution that the Voluntary Sector plays in the delivery of Adoption Services in Wales and its unique expertise. It is only by the statutory and voluntary sectors working together inclusively and collectively, drawing on best practice, that the vision of a National Adoption Service can be realised. Key voluntary adoption organisations have been involved in considering the plan put forward by ADSSC, in part through the national Expert Reference Group which has endorsed the proposals.
- The proposals provide an ambitious but realistic pathway for creating an effective and responsive National Adoption Service, a goal to which local

government is committed. The Local Government Implementation Plan for Sustainable Social Services includes responsibility for developing the operational model. These proposals build on two previous papers submitted to the Expert Reference Group and they are underpinned by the ten principles for adoption services devised by BAAF (December 2011).

- The proposals will help to ensure:
 - A new direction for the delivery of Adoption Services that is particularly suited to the Welsh context.
 - Timely implementation of the improvements required.
 - An increase in the pace of collaboration and the capacity to build sustainable services for the future.
 - A reduction in bureaucracy and a streamlining of service delivery.
 - An improvement in service accessibility for all the key stakeholders in every aspect of Adoption Services.
 - Maintenance of the essential integrity and coherence between all the elements of Adoption Services, to prevent a mismatch between the needs of children requiring adoptive placements and the adopters being recruited.
 - Long-term and lasting improvements to address the weaknesses identified in the some elements of current service provision.
 - A central place for the significant contribution made by the Voluntary Sector as valued co-producers and delivery partners.
 - Collective opportunities for local authorities to respond effectively to rising pressures within the care system.
- Adoption Services are governed by a number of detailed Regulations. These proposals recognise that changes in Regulations may be required in due course but progress in implementing key aspects can be made, pending those changes.

Context

1. In February 2011, *Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action* made clear that some services could be delivered more effectively at a national level. The Deputy Minister was keen to pioneer this approach in exploring, with stakeholders, the remit and functions of a National Adoption Service.
2. The Deputy Minister is clear that the new powers being sought under the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill will allow Welsh Ministers to direct local authorities (adoption agencies) to come together to form such a service. The law is to be underpinned by a National Standardised Performance Framework that will allow the National Adoption Service management team to identify, review and highlight key performance measures - such as how swiftly local authorities place children in need of adoption and how swiftly they deal with prospective adopters. The framework will set performance thresholds and make clear the Welsh Government's minimum expectations for timeliness in the adoption system, for both the child and the prospective adopter. It will allow local authority adoption agencies and others to monitor their own performance and compare it with that of others.
3. The case for change is widely accepted: BAAF estimate that 1 in 4 children available for adoption will not be placed primarily because an adoptive parent resource is not available. There are clearly issues about variability, both in performance between different local authorities and in the experience of prospective adopters. Services are insufficiently coordinated and they have not tackled well enough issues about supply and demand, to overcome barriers to recruitment and matching.
4. In November 2012, following an in-depth inquiry into adoption in Wales, the Children and Young People Committee published recommendations calling for radical action. It proposed a major shift in the way adoption services are organised and delivered, re-invigorating the momentum and the aims of the 2002 Adoption Act and strategies for placement choice and stability.

5. The Deputy Minister then repeated her commitment to establishing a National Adoption Service, which will have the power to deliver services across Wales. She has established her expectations about what the new system must offer:
 - eradicating 'drift' for children in care
 - eliminating waiting lists for training and assessment
 - improving the matching process
 - allaying adoption breakdown by providing comprehensive adoption support services
 - streamlining the process and ensuring better linking and understanding between social workers
 - providing the widest choice of placements through the increased use of voluntary adoption agencies; and
 - most importantly, ensuring consistent delivery across Wales.

6. The Children and Young People Committee recognised too that some services are best delivered regionally. The Deputy Minister supports this approach "as the key to change is not the location of the service, but rather the delivery of a national framework for the recruitment, training and approval of prospective adopters. The focus of the National Adoption Service will be on promoting excellence and driving continued improvements, ensuring that opportunities for collaboration are maximised whilst maintaining the necessary local links and knowledge, which are crucial aspects of adoption services."

7. Adoption Services are complex, provided to a wide range of service users from very young children who are being placed for adoption to older adults who are seeking to be re-united with their birth families and governed by a large number of detailed Regulations. These proposals are formulated as an appropriate response to that complexity.

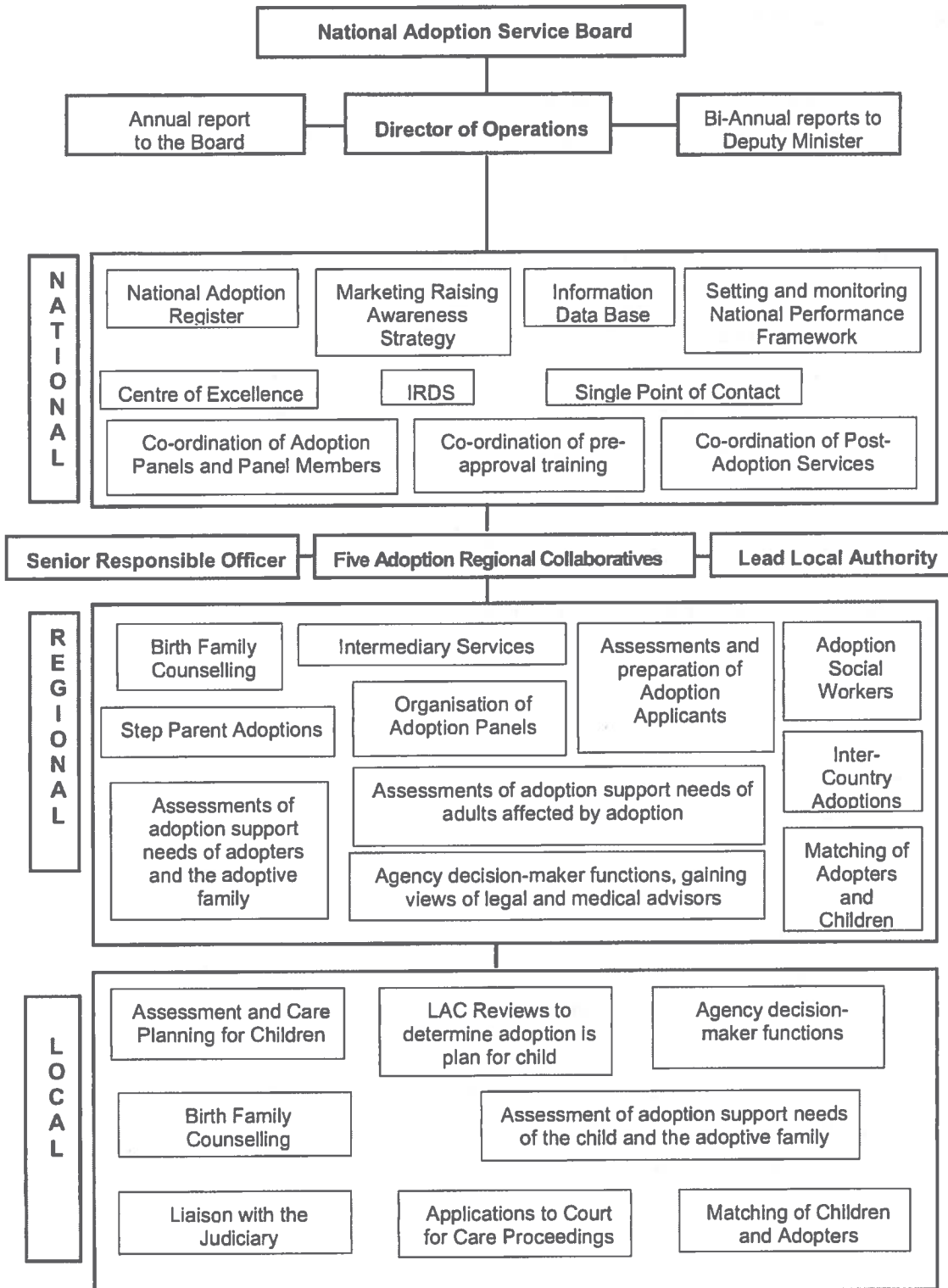
8. One of the crucial tasks has been to ensure that the proposals provide a means of addressing urgently the concerns outlined earlier, without sacrificing the acknowledged strengths within the existing system – what the Deputy Minister describes as "achieving change without detriment." For this reason, ADSS Cymru has worked with the WLGA to ensure that there is support for the proposals from

local authorities across Wales as well as from the professional leadership organisation for social services. We believe the National Adoption Service would reap great benefits from harnessing this support for change.

9. The report of the *National Inspection of Adoption and Permanency Services delivered by Local Authorities*, undertaken by CSSIW in 2009/10 has also been revisited. These proposals incorporate the strengths the Inspectorate identified in the provision of Adoption Services across Wales and address the areas that were identified as requiring attention.

10. A functional model for the National Adoption Service is set out in the chart overleaf. To ensure a seamless service, co-ordinated activity between the national, regional and local elements is critical. It is only in this way that children, adopters and those affected by adoption will receive the best possible service regardless of where they live in Wales.

National Adoption Service – Functional Model



A The National Adoption Service

11. Welsh Government would establish a national performance management framework. All Agencies will be required to operate within the framework set for by the National Service.

12. The National Service would undertake the following roles and functions.
 - i **Monitoring delivery in accordance with the national performance management framework.** The Regional Adoption Collaboratives described later would be accountable to a National Board for their performance and the National Board would have the powers to intervene if they are not delivering the service to the required standards. The Regional Adoption Collaboratives will have day-to-day line-management of the staff delivering the service at a regional level.

 - ii **Establishing a National Board** with the following membership:
 - o Representatives from Voluntary Adoption Agencies
 - o Adoptive Parents
 - o Adopted Adults/Young People
 - o The senior responsible officer of the lead Local Authorities for the Regional Adoption Collaboratives
 - o NHS representative
 - o Education representative
 - o Academic representation
 - o Director of Operations of the National Adoption Service (in attendance).

 - iii **Producing an Annual Report and action plan on the delivery of Adoption Services in Wales.** The Annual Report should be presented to the Board and to the Deputy Minister. In addition, the Director of Operations will produce bi-annual reports for the Deputy Minister.

- iv **Developing and delivering a national marketing and raising awareness strategy.** This would involve developing a national brand, a set of images to be used uniformly, to ensure brand recognition across Wales. Potential adopters would get a more accessible and consistent message. It will also help dispel some of the commonly held myths about the children who are seeking adoptive parents and which adults who can adopt children. The national marketing strategy will need to pay particular attention to attracting adopters for children whose circumstances make placement more difficult to achieve.

- v **Providing a single point of contact for anyone who is seeking information about adoption.** A National Adoption website and helpline will provide consistent information to children, young people and adults who may be interested in any aspect of adoption. It will also provide information on inter-country adoption. There is an increasing use of the Internet and social media sites by service users to gain information. It is essential that the National Service keeps abreast of these developments and maximises the opportunities they create.

- vi **Providing a database of information** to monitor where the greatest demand for services is being received by the Regional Collaboratives. This will allow resources to be deployed to areas of greatest demand or need.

- vii **Developing and maintaining a National Adoption Register.** This will enable linking and matching of children requiring adoptive placements with adopters across Wales, a service currently delivered by BAAF. It will maximise the opportunities for Welsh children being placed in Wales. A number of existing collaborative arrangements currently operate regional registers and a National Register could build on those experiences. Close links would be needed to the systems operating in the other three Administrations in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

- viii **Providing the Independent Review Determination Service.** This service is currently commissioned by Welsh Government and delivered by BAAF. The

service is being delivered to a high standard and it would be appropriate for this service to continue to be delivered at a national level only.

- ix **Co-ordination of Adoption Panels and Panel Members** to ensure that all the Adoption Panels are performing to the same required standards and Panels in all the Regional Collaboratives are being held frequently enough to avoid any delay for prospective adopters. It would also administer a list of suitably qualified panel members who could be called upon if any of the Regions were experiencing difficulties in ensuring quoracy on their Panels.
- x **Co-ordination of Pre-approval Training Courses** to ensure they are being held at regular intervals across the Regions, to avoid any delay for prospective adopters and to ensure consistency in the course content.
- xi **Co-ordination of Post Adoption Support Services** to ensure there is a robust range of adoption support services in place, particularly to support children with complex needs and their adopters
- xii **Acting as a Centre of Excellence for Adoption in Wales.**
The National Service will ensure that a set of policies and good practice guidelines are developed and maintained which reflect the very best practice in the delivery of all adoption services. It will arrange specialised training for staff in the Regional Collaboratives so that they are properly equipped for their role. There should be links to academic institutions and opportunities for promoting research.

Governance Arrangements at the national level

13. The National Adoption Service will have a Director of Operations who will be accountable professionally to the National Board for Adoption Services. The Director will prepare and present bi-annual information reports to the Deputy Minister and an annual report to the National Board.

B Regional Adoption Collaboratives

14. Five regional adoption collaboratives would be created in Wales, building on existing and emerging networks. This change will:
- Assist in implementing as soon as possible the National Adoption Service.
 - Cause least disruption for children, approved adopters and adoptive applicants.
 - Ensure the speedy and appropriate matching of children requiring adoptive placements, making best use of knowledge about these children held locally.
 - Concentrate practitioner and managerial expertise, experience and skill into the regional hubs.
 - Achieve far greater consistency in the delivery of services.
 - Embed a culture of statutory and voluntary sectors working in partnership to deliver the objectives of the National Adoption Service.
 - Achieve efficiencies in number of adoption Managers required to deliver the service, staff accommodation required and support services needed.
 - Achieve appropriate economies of scale
 - Ensure sustainable services
 - Ensure regional contribution to marketing strategies, to recruit the numbers and types of adopters required.
 - Reduce the number of Adoption Panels required.
 - Allow the Director of Operations to ensure resources are deployed to areas that have a particular need at any one time.
15. The Regional Collaboratives would deliver the following functions of the National Service.
- i Ensure compliance with legislation, regulations and the performance management framework set by the National Board.
 - ii Report on a regular basis to the Director of Operations and in turn to the National Board on performance.

- iii Recruit and assess adoptive applicants and provide pre-approval training. This will include the initial counselling service to ensure a speedy, knowledgeable response to possible applicants.
- iv Ensure that the children requiring adoptive placements are appropriately matched with adopters who can meet their needs for their entire childhood.
- v Manage and host Adoption Panels to ensure compliance with Regulations.
- vi Ensure that the statutory and voluntary sectors, working in partnership, provide the range of integrated post adoption support services as prescribed by the current Regulations and subsequently in accordance with the standards set by the National Service. These can include a number of services provided by colleagues in health, education, CAMHS, as well as letter-box contact with birth parents and relatives.
- vii Deliver birth parent counselling for birth parents and relatives who have had their children removed from their care and placed for adoption. Close working relationships with Children's Social Workers and other key stakeholders are essential in the delivery of this service.
- viii Undertake stepparent adoption assessments, as directed by the courts
- ix Provide intermediary services for those adopted adults who are seeking to be reunited with their birth families
- x Provide inter-country adoption services for those adults who are seeking to adopt a child from abroad.
- xi Engage with key stakeholders- the judiciary, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- xii Employ and manage staff delivering functions of the National Service at a regional level.

- xiii Link to each Local Authority Children's Services Department within the region to assist with the training and support of social work staff and to ensure a seamless service for children, adopters and prospective adopters.
16. It is planned that the five Regional collaboratives will be:
- North Wales - Wrexham, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire and Ynys Mon;
 - South East Wales - Blaenau Gwent, Monmouth, Torfaen, Newport and Caerphilly;
 - West & Mid Wales - Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys;
 - Western Bay – Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, and Bridgend;
 - Mid & South Wales - Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr and Rhondda-Cynon-Taff.
17. These Regional Collaboratives are currently at different stages of development. North Wales led the way with their service becoming operational in April 2010 and the South East Wales Service followed in April 2012. This will facilitate shared learning across Wales, to ensure speedy implementation of these plans. It is planned that all the Collaboratives will be fully operational by April 2014.

Governance arrangements at the regional level

18. Each Regional Adoption Collaborative will have the same set of responsibilities and functions and operate within a performance management framework developed at a national level. Each Collaborative will be accountable to the Director of Operations for its performance and then to the National Board. The Director of Operations, in consultation with the National Board, will have the powers to intervene if the performance of a Regional Collaborative is not meeting required standards.
19. It is likely that one local authority within each Regional Collaborative will agree to act as the lead authority for the delivery of all the regional roles and functions. The Senior Responsible Officer from the lead Authority will be a member of the

National Board. This will ensure accountability of the Regional Collaboratives to the National Board.

20. Directors of Social Services will continue to exercise their statutory accountabilities through a Regional Collaborative Board and maintain the link to the executive and scrutiny functions of their own local authorities.

C The Local Authority Adoption Service

21. Each local authority will retain the following roles and responsibilities.
- i Assessment and care-planning for children in need and those looked after conducting timely Looked After Children Reviews where the recommendation is for adoption to be the plan for that child.
 - ii Ensuring the Agency Decision Maker functions are fulfilled in compliance with Regulations.
 - iii Undertaking the assessment of adoption support needs of children for whom the plan is adoption.
 - iv Being involved in the matching and linking of children with prospective adopters.
 - v Providing Birth Parent counselling for parents who have had their children removed from their care and placed for adoption.
 - vi Making applications to the Courts for care orders where the plan is for adoption.
 - vii Attending Adoption Panels where a proposed match between a child and prospective adopter is being considered.
 - viii Ensuring that staff maintain their knowledge and understanding of best practice in adoption.

Next Steps:

22. A task and finish group will be established with representatives from Welsh Government, ADSS Cymru, CSSIW, BAAF, VAA and each of the Regional

Collaboratives. The purpose will be to produce a robust change programme for implementing the functional model as set out in this paper.

23. Programme management capacity would need to be available on a temporary basis to drive through these changes in a timely fashion. It might be possible to consider allocating responsibility for any posts to ADSS Cymru and/or one of the social services regional improvement collaboratives. A time-framed project plan would be produced for the task and finish group. The creation of the National Service will require fundamental change at many different levels. Robust financial analysis and planning will be required to cost the delivery of a National Adoption Service. New IT systems will be required and there are significant Human Resource implications.
24. It is anticipated that this initiative will be taken forward using the wider leadership framework established for the ten-year strategy set out in *Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action*. The National Social Services Partnership Forum, Strategic Leadership Group and the Local Government Implementation Board will exercise oversight of the change programme. The Boards of Directors for the Regional Social Services Improvement Collaboratives will have a key role in steering through these changes to the required timescales at the regional and local level.
25. It is recognised that each of the agreed Regional Collaboratives are at different stages. Each Region will be required to develop its own detailed project plan, using a common format and approach. The project plans for each Region will need to reflect the performance management framework agreed by the National Service Board. It is planned that all five Regional Adoption Collaboratives will be established by April 2014.
26. ADSS Cymru awaits Welsh Government direction on the development of the National Service as outlined in these plans. We very much welcome the opportunity to work with the Welsh Government and colleagues in the Voluntary Sector to ensure we deliver a sustainable National Adoption Service of which Wales can be proud.

PE/170413

15



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT
BY
THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE The Establishment of a National Adoption Service – ‘case for change’

DATE 25 April 2013

BY Gwenda Thomas AM, Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services

You will recall that in February 2011, *Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action* was published, this document provided the platform that identified the need for a major shift in adoption services and my vision of a national adoption service. Evidence had been collated from various sources, and although able to demonstrate excellence within some areas, there remained a great disparity in service delivery across Wales which reaffirmed the need for radical reform.

The proposal of a national adoption service was one of the key strands identified within the consultation on the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, which ran between March and June 2012; officials visited the established adoption services and consortiums throughout Wales and explored the key issues, challenges, best practises and lessons learned of working within a collaborative. The information gleaned from these visits consolidated the need for an Expert Advisory Group on Adoption to be established.

The Group brought together key stakeholders from within the adoption system in Wales and provided a community of understanding and common purpose to oversee coordinate and deliver improvement of services and outcomes for children and young people in Wales for whom adoption is in their best interest. Delivering on these improvements included the introduction of a national adoption service and consideration of a national service model proposed by ADSS and WLGA. The remit identified was simple, I wanted to see greater collaboration and partnership working, a model which operated under a two tier system, dispelled duplication and delay, addressed current concerns and provided the mechanism for driving performance improvements across Wales ensuring a service that encouraged and welcomed a broad range of adopters to meet the diverse needs of our looked after children.

In conjunction with the task of reform undertaken by the Expert Advisory Group the Children and Young People Committee also identified a need to review the delivery of adoption services in Wales and calls for evidence from the Committee were made in December 2011. After an in-depth scrutiny of the evidence presented both verbally and written the Committee presented its report in November 2012 which compounded our earlier findings and remit of a national service. I was encouraged and heartened that we had the same shared values and aspirations on such an important agenda.

I am pleased to inform Members that good progress has been made; discussions have concluded in the group and a consensus has been reached. I have now received a functional model for a national adoption service proposed by the Association of Directors of Social Services in conjunction with the Welsh Local Government Association, and endorsed by the Expert Advisory Group - it is a model that I believe will achieve the step-change and radical reform we have all sought.

The proposal acknowledges the significant contribution and the unique expertise the Voluntary Sector plays in the delivery of adoption services in Wales. Embedded in the proposal is the message that 'only by statutory and voluntary sectors working together inclusively and collectively, drawing on best practice, the vision of a National Adoption Service can be realised'. It embraces a tiered model, the different elements making up an effective and efficient service which is appropriately aligned at a local, regional and national level, the functions of each determined where they best fit in the restructured service model.

* It foresees the National Adoption Service having a Director of Operations who will be accountable professionally to the National Board for Adoption Services. He /she will prepare and present bi-annual information reports to me and an annual report to the National Board.

It proposes that five regional adoption collaboratives are created, configuration building on existing and emerging networks, it is planned that these will be:

- North Wales - Wrexham, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire and Ynys Mon;
- South East Wales - Blaenau Gwent, Monmouth, Torfaen, Newport and Caerphilly;
- West & Mid Wales - Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys;
- Western Bay – Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, and Bridgend;
- Mid & South Wales - Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr and Rhondda-Cynon-Taff.

Each collaborative will have the same set of responsibilities and functions and operate within a performance management framework developed at a national level. Each collaborative will be accountable to the Director of Operations for its performance and then to the National Board. The Director of Operations, in consultation with the National Board, will have the powers to intervene if the performance of a Regional Collaborative is not meeting required standards. One local authority within each collaborative will act as the lead authority for the delivery of all the regional roles and functions. The Senior Responsible Officer from the lead authority will be a member of the National Board. This will ensure accountability of the regional collaboratives to the National Board.

Directors of Social Services will continue to exercise their statutory accountabilities through a Regional Collaborative Board and maintain the link to the executive and scrutiny functions of their own local authorities.

Each local authority will retain the role and responsibilities pertinent to the child and aligned to the wider social care legislation.

Next Steps

A task and finish group will be established, and a time-framed project plan will be produced. Representatives on the group will be from Welsh Government, ADSS Cymru, CSSIW, BAAF, VAA and each of the Regional Collaboratives. The purpose of this group will be to produce a robust change programme for implementing the functional model. To facilitate this change programme I am pleased to confirm that I have secured £50K which will assist ADSSC in the commissioning of resource to undertake a number of key tasks looking at both the business model and the processes and procedures for the proposed National Adoption Service. The key milestones undertaken by Autumn this year will be:

- Membership and brief for the Task & Finish Group for the National Service to be established;
- Identification of the five Lead Authorities;
- Development of the common format for the Implementation Plans to be agreed by each Region;
- Begin work on supporting the Lead Authorities in their role;
- Outline business components required for the infrastructure of the National Service; and
- Each Region to have in place an implementation plan.

It is acknowledged that creation of the National Service will require fundamental change at many different levels. It is anticipated that this initiative will be taken forward using the wider leadership framework established for the ten-year strategy set out in *Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action*. The National Social Services Partnership Forum, Strategic Leadership Group and the Local Government Implementation Board will exercise oversight of the change programme. The Boards of Directors for the Regional Social Services Improvement Collaboratives will have a key role in steering through these changes to the required timescales at the regional and local level.

It is recognised that each of the agreed regional collaboratives are at different stages. Each region will be required to develop its own detailed project plan, using a common format and approach. The project plans for each region will need to reflect the performance management framework agreed by the National Service Board. It is planned that all five regional adoption collaboratives will be established by April 2014.

We must remember that adoption must be seen in the broader context of planning for permanence and as part of an integrated system of services for children in care. Children in care need permanence plans that consider the full range of permanence options and it is imperative that these plans are implemented with appropriate urgency, that is why I am carefully considering the potential of introducing further provision within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, the purpose of which would be to place a child with their prospective adopter at the earliest possible juncture „once a decision has been made that adoption is in the child's best interest and that every effort has been made to rehabilitate the child with birth parents or family and friends. . Hopefully this would negate

disruption to the child and provide earlier permanence for them. The detail of such a provision is currently being explored.

We are about to embark on yet another unique way of working in Wales, championing transformational change in service delivery and I am proud to be apart of that and to witness all sectors working together. We are pressing ahead with this agenda so the Welsh Government can consider any necessary changes required in legislation to accommodate this pioneering way forward.

I would like to conclude by thanking all those involved in embracing partnership and delivering a model which provides us with the first major stepping stone towards a flagship adoption service for Wales.

ANNUAL REPORT AND QUALITY OF CARE REVIEW

APRIL 2012 – MARCH 2013

North Wales Adoption Service

Host Authority - Wrexham County Borough Council

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North Wales Adoption Service
Adoption Agency Annual Report and Quality of Care Review
April 2012 – March 2013

1. Introduction

The Adoption Service (Wales) Regulations 2007, Regulation 22, require all adoption agencies to complete a review of the quality of the service and for this to be completed on an annual basis.

This is set out below.

Review of Quality of Service

- (1) The local authority must make suitable arrangements to establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and improving the quality of adoption services provided by the local authority.
- (2) The system established under paragraph (1) must make provision by the local authority for —
 - (a) the quality of service to be reviewed at least annually; and
 - (b) the local authority to obtain the views of—
 - (i) adoptive and natural parents and children being adopted;
 - (ii) any person receiving services from the local authority or their representatives in relation to adoption;
 - (iii) staff employed by the local authority; and
 - (iv) any local authority,on the quality of care provided, as part of any review undertaken.
- (3) Following a review of the quality of care, the local authority must within 28 working days prepare a report of that review and make a copy of the available report in an appropriate format when requested by —
 - (a) the National Assembly;
 - (b) service users;
 - (c) representatives of service users;
 - (d) staff employed by the local authority.

The North Wales Adoption Service has now concluded its final year of the original three year Partnership Agreement. All six local authorities, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Wrexham and Ynys Môn have agreed to extend the current arrangements for a further 12 months. Meanwhile a review of the service is being undertaken by a consultant from the Institute of Public Care, Oxford Brookes University; with the intention of developing a 3 to 5 year plan for the service. The general feedback from the initial review is positive, reflecting the success of the partnership to date. In addition, areas for development have been identified and will be dealt with in the proposed plan. Issues include, the development of adoption support services for adoptive families and their children; improving timescales for assessments and placing of children; office accommodation and Human Resources issues regarding staff secondments.

The manager of the service has been a member of the Welsh Governments Expert Advisory Group on Adoption attending all meetings in Cardiff during 2012/13. The group was set up to oversee, coordinate and deliver improvement of services and outcomes in adoption services across Wales. It included the consideration of the model for a National Adoption Service proposed by ADSS and WLGA. This model was endorsed by the group and was to be presented to the Deputy Minister in April 2013.

In light of the Welsh Governments intention to establish a task and finish group to produce a time-framed project plan for the National Adoption Service in Wales, it is acknowledged that this may have an impact on the current activities. As a common format for implementation plans have yet to be devised and agreed; it is deemed essential that the NWAS continues to develop the 3-5 year plan as proposed in the recent review. NWAS is keen to identify and implement any areas of improvement which will benefit all those involved in adoption until decisions are made on the structure, governance, business model and processes and procedures of a National Adoption Service.

The service continuous to be hosted by Wrexham County Borough Council and the main office was relocated from Crown Buildings Wrexham to Lambpit Street, Wrexham in February 2013.

2. Background

The North Wales Adoption Service was established in April 2010 following the introduction of the new legislation relating to adoption in 2005 and subsequent governments initiatives requiring local authorities to work in partnerships to provide more efficient, cost effective and equitable services. The change in legislation and the demands on local authorities to provide additional support services without additional finance and resources, prompted the North Wales local authorities to take the lead in developing a regional service. Having an

already established regional service, NWAS is in an advantageous position to move forward in line with the new government plans for a National Adoption Service, which will involve national, regional and local elements of delivery.

Since the inception of the service the numbers of children being referred for adoptive families has risen in general and more significantly in the last financial year. This has been more significant following the changes in legislation to remove the 'should be adopted' decisions from adoption panels since September 2012. These figures can be viewed in Section 8 Children.

3. Current Position

The North Wales Adoption Service in partnership with the six local authorities is responsible for providing the following services:

- Recruitment, Training, Assessment and Supporting prospective and approved adopters
- Matching children to adopters
- S98 Access to records, Search and Intermediary Services for adopted adults and their relatives
- Birth Parent counselling
- Adoption Support
- Development and management of joint adoption panels
- Partner of Parent Adoptions
- Adoptions with A Foreign Element

CURRENT SITUATION (figures at end of March 2013)

ADOPTERS

| | Conwy | Denbigh | Flint | Gwynedd | Wrexham | Ynys Mon | Other | Total |
|--|-------|---------|-------|---------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Adopters Recommended for Approved at panel this financial year | 4 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 12 | 3 | 2 | 42 |
| Adopters Currently Under Assessment | 3 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 30 |
| On hold for potential matches | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 17 |
| Available | 1 | 3 | - | 3 | 1 | - | - | 8 |
| Adopters – checks in progress and waiting allocation | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | 9 |
| Partner of Parent Under Assessment | | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | | | 8 |

CHILDREN

| | Conwy | Denbigh | Flint | Gwynedd | Wrexham | Ynys Mon | Other | Total |
|--|-------|---------|------------------------|---------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Children Matched at Panel during this financial Year | 9 | 2 | 6(+ 1 not recommended) | 6 | 12 | 3 | - | 38 |
| Children Placed for Adoption as above | 7 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 30 |
| Children On Hold for potential matches | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | - | 20 |
| Children on Waiting list with no identified match at present | 5 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 11 | 6 | - | 36 |

CHILDREN WAITING:

| Ref | AGENCY | DOB | SHOBPA | NOTIFIED | PLACEMENT ORDER | COMMENTS |
|------------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 206 207 | Gwyn | 07/10/2009 10/09/2010 | 17/03/2011 17/03/2011 | 14/07/2011 14/07/2011 | 04/05/2011 04/05/2011 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – pursuing long term fostering, awaiting official notification |
| 221 222 | Wrex | 02/01/2008 28/11/2008 | 04/08/2011 04/08/2011 | 11/08/2011 11/08/2011 | 16/01/2012 16/01/2012 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – potential match identified for 1 f willing to separate. Update 11/04/2013 – Professionals meeting held 19/03/2013 re future plans. Future request to Register 11/03/2013. Outcome to continue to search together and separately. Addendum report from CAMHS requested. LAC review 16/04/2013. Profile sent to Barnardos |
| 314 | Ynys | 08/09/2009 | 06/01/2012 | 26/03/2012 | 02/03/2012 | Update 22/01/2013 – Foster Carers would consider adoption if no family identified in next 12-months. Linking visit due 08/04/2113 to 544 |
| 315 316 | Ynys | 25/04/2007 14/12/2009 | 13/06/2012 13/06/2012 | 27/06/2012 27/06/2012 | 08/08/2012 08/08/2012 | |
| 317 | Conwy | 18/11/2009 | 23/03/2012 | 12/04/2012 | 28/05/2012 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – withdrawn due to long term fostering, awaiting official notification |
| 318 | Conwy | 20/04/2007 | 23/03/2012 | 12/04/2012 | 28/05/2012 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – planning for permanency, need to evidence rationale Update 18/12/2012 – FC considering SGO. Update 22/01/2013 – viability assessment being undertaken |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--|
| 328 | Conwy | 24/02/2006 | 23/03/2012 | 03/05/2012 | 28/05/2012 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – potential match identified, with possibility of taking sibling in the longer term if direct contact is successful. Consider professionals meeting. |
| 329 | Conwy | 04/08/2007 | 23/03/2012 | 03/05/2012 | 28/05/2012 | |
| 442 | Gwyn | 25/04/2011 | 05/07/2012 | 24/08/2012 | 10/07/2012 | Link not recommended by panel- another potential link identified |
| 452 | Wrex | 26/02/2008 | 02/11/2012 | 21/09/2012 | 25/01/2013 | Update 11/04/2013 – Profile sent to all LA's. Meeting re placement planned for 07/05/2013. No success to date with the register. Profile sent to Barnardos |
| 591 | Wrex | 20/06/2008 | 08/10/2012 | 11/10/2012 | 10/10/2012 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – professionals meeting to be held, it is not believed children are ready for adoption, may need to be withdrawn for additional work to be undertaken with children due to behaviour |
| 592 | | 02/09/2009 | 08/10/2012 | 11/10/2012 | 10/10/2012 | |
| 606 | Conwy | 08/08/2012 | 12/10/2012 | 15/10/2012 | 01/03/2013 | Viability Assessment being undertaken |
| 621 | Wrex | 09/09/2008 | 02/11/2012 | 02/11/2012 | 13/12/12 | Update 11/04/2013 – LAC review 05/04/2013 to continue to search for a separate placement. Potential link explore not appropriate. Profile sent to Barnardos |
| 622 | Wrex | 27/08/2007 | 02/11/2012 | 02/11/2012 | 13/12/12 | Update 11/04/2013 – LAC review 05/04/2013 to continue to search for a separate placement. No response from the Register. Profile sent to Barnardos |
| 647 | Gwyn | 16/10/2010 | 06/11/2012 | 22/11/2012 | 12/11/2012 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – possible link in the near future |
| 648 | | 13/06/2009 | 06/11/2012 | 22/11/2012 | 12/11/2012 | |
| 657 | Denb | 05/10/2012 | 25/10/2012 | 27/11/2012 | 28/02/2013 | Update 11/04/2013 – Birth father no longer contesting, Placement |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---|
| 658 | | 20/01/2012 | 25/10/2012 | 27/11/2012 | 28/02/2013 | Order granted |
| 682 | Ynys | 17/01/2005 | 05/11/2012 | 17/12/2012 | | |
| 683 | Ynys | 26/03/2007 | 05/11/2012 | 17/12/2012 | | |
| 684 | Ynys | 15/04/2011 | 05/11/2012 | 17/12/2012 | | |
| 685 | Wrex | 19/06/2012 | | 21/12/2012 | | |
| 692 | Gwyn | 03/05/2012 | 17/12/2012 | 03/01/2013 | 02/01/2013 | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 - Potential link identified |
| 693 | | 09/06/2011 | 17/12/2012 | 03/01/2013 | 02/01/2013 | |
| 715 | Wrex | 13/12/2007 | 04/01/2013 | 25/01/2013 | | |
| 716 | | 15/09/2009 | 04/01/2013 | 25/01/2013 | | |
| 740 | Wrex | 30/12/2011 | 01/02/2013 | 04/02/2013 | | Update via OMG 18/04/2013 – need to establish where siblings are placed |
| 744 | Denb | 26/03/2011 | 08/02/2013 | 27/02/2013 | | |
| 751 | Flint | 26/05/2012 | 04/01/2013 | 07/03/2013 | 25/02/2013 | Awaiting links |
| 753 | Denb | 30/08/2008 | 07/01/2013 | 06/03/2013 | 28/02/2013 | |
| 758 | Denb | 02/08/2012 | 11/01/2013 | 18/03/2013 | 04/02/2013 | |
| 763 | Gwyn | 02/07/2012 | 21/02/2013 | 25/03/2013 | | |

4. Staffing

Registered Manager

The registered Manager of the Adoption Service is Mandy Humphries who was appointed in June 2009 and has been manager of the service since April 2010.

In 2012-13, in line with the requirements contained in the Local Authority Adoption Service and Miscellaneous Amendments (Wales) Regulations 2003, the manager, has undertaken regular training and has achieved the Post Graduate Certificate with merit in Managing Practice Quality in Social Care. One Deputy Manager is currently studying for this Certificate and a second Deputy Manager is undertaking the ILM Managers' course.

The service consists of staff members directly employed by the host authority and staff seconded to the service from the remaining five local authorities. Additional sessional

workers are employed via Wrexham County Council and based across North Wales. The staffing situation is as follows:

Main Office: Lambpit Street, Wrexham:

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Manager: | Mandy Humphries | 37 hours |
| Admin: | Larry Groom | 37 hours |
| | Sarah Picken | 28 hours |
| Social Worker: | Lesley Davies | 37 hours |
| | Helen Kinney | 37 hours |
| Training Officer: | Denise Roberts | 32 hours |
| Recruitment Officer: | Wendy Thomas | 37 hours |
| Contact Coordinator: | Santosh Prihar | 25–37 hours weekly (Agency Worker) |
| Contact – Admin: | Clare Pearce | 37 hours |
| CHARMS IT Admin: | Martin Evans | 18.5 hours |

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Sessional Social Workers: | Pat Fairclough | |
| | Nicholas Gore | |
| | Christine Williams 06/10/11 -November 2012 – now on long term sick | |
| | Gina Orbetelli December 2012 now on maternity leave) | |
| | Jackie Lloyd – seconded in Flintshire on a part time basis | |

Office Location: County Hall, Mold

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|------------|
| Social Workers: | Bob Proctor | 18.5 hours |
| | Nicola Kernighan | 37 hours |
| | Jackie Lloyd | 18.5 hours |

Office Location: Bedford Street, Rhyl.

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------|--|
| Social Workers: | Tracy Roberts | 37 hours |
| | Polly Edwards | 37 hours (vacant as from the 31 st March) |

Office Location: Glan-y-Don, Conwy

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Deputy Manager East: | Trish Welsh | 37 hours |
| Social Workers: | Beverley Herrington | 37 hours |
| | Barbara Jones | 18.5 hours |
| | Marilyn Owen | 15 hours |

Office Location: County Offices, Llangefni, Ynys Môn

Social Workers: Lydia Murphy 37 hours
Carolyn Jones 37 hours

Office Location: Caernarfon

Deputy Manager West: Heather Pearson 37 hours
Admin: June Owen 18.5 hours
Social Worker: Sue Adams 37 hours
Sessional Workers: Nia O'Marah
Jenny McGugan
Sian Peacock start date post March 2013

Staff Sickness:

4 staff had 1 day of sick

5 staff had 2 days off sick

3 staff had 3 days off sick

1 member of staff had a total of 3 months off sick – this had a significant effect on the availability of staff in Denbighshire for assessment and family finding and other staff caseloads. This member of staff will also be leaving the service for another post at the end of April and the LA is actively seeking to fill this post initially via internal secondments and more recently external recruitment.

Staff development and training – see training section 8.

Student placements – A 20 day student placement was supported by Tracy Roberts in Denbighshire.

Questionnaires were sent to all staff members in March and the responses were as follows:

- 96% were able to access the Statement of Purpose and Policies and Procedures (these have now been made available to all staff on the CHARMS online system.
- 75% had access to the National Minimum Standards for Adoption (some responses were from the administrators who may not require access to these on a regular basis)
- 86% felt supported by the management team
- 96% were clear about the lines of accountability and reporting mechanisms
- 78% felt there was effective communication between management and staff
- 67% received regular supervision (12 social workers) other staff includes admin. Supervision responsibilities have now been revised as many social workers were not

receiving copies of supervision as these were being held on the IT system. This has now been amended and supervision sessions are recorded on case files.

- 78% receive appraisals regularly
- 75% agreed they had access to training
- 54% have received training in Child Protection in the last 3 years – all other relevant staff have been requested to ensure they attend this training which is available through their own LA's
- 80% felt the standard of care offered to children and families was good. Adoption Support highlighted as a need in some areas this may be resolved in part via the Safe Base programme to start in 2013.

Some staff continue to feel isolated and many comments have been made regarding a review of the location of team members. This will be considered in the review and in the 3-5 year plan being undertaken at present.

5. Adoption Panel Membership / Advisors and Training

The previous six adoption panels have now been amalgamated into three joint panels covering the following areas:

Flintshire/Wrexham – established since September 2012

Conwy/Denbighshire – established in January 2012

Gwynedd/Ynys Môn – established November 2013

All panels are held on a monthly basis and emergency panels have been organised where the capacity has exceeded individual panels and cases need to be presented. This is particularly important in the matching of children with adopters in order to prevent delay in introductions and placements. All adoption panels are appropriately resourced with independent members from a good cross section of the community including, adopted adults, adopters, birth parent, foster carers, CAMHS professionals, voluntary agency representatives as well as the statutory required members i.e. medical advisers, elected members, social workers and legal advisers with each local authority being represented appropriately. (see below for detailed information on all 3 panel membership).

Changes to membership, number, recruitment issues.

The Flintshire/Wrexham panel has had two changes in membership over the past year. One elected member from Flintshire resigned and a new elected member from Flintshire was appointed in November 2012. The NWS social worker resigned from the adoption panel due to moving to part-time employment and was replaced with a social worker with significant adoption experience from the Flintshire Family Placement Team. Opportunities

to observe the panel, an induction session with the panel adviser and reading materials were provided on both occasions.

There have been no changes in membership of the Conwy/Denbighshire panel or the newly established Gwynedd/Ynys Môn panel. A joint induction session was provided by Gwynedd and Ynys Môn for the members of the new panel which was also attended by the Chairs as representatives from the other joint panels who shared their experience to date.

Panel members training:

The following training has been offered to panel members over the past twelve months:

- The Pathway to Adoption (Flintshire & Wrexham Panel members)
- Education and Attachment
- Facing up to Facebook
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

A total of 8 panel members have taken the opportunity to attend these courses over the past 12 months.

A two day training courses 'An overview of Themes and Processes relating to Adoption' has been organised and will be presented to all panel members in April 2013.

Verbal feedback from members who have attended the courses has been positive and they have taken the opportunity to encourage other panel members to attend when given the opportunity.

Panel Member appraisals (numbers undertaken/issues arising/ actions taken or to be taken)

Flintshire/Wrexham – Panel members appraisal have been undertaken, 2 are outstanding due to cancellations due to sickness and annual leave but have been re-arranged to be undertaken by the end of April 2013. In order to ensure continuous improvement and quality, panel members are requested to provide written comments on all cases presented to panel each month, comments from annual appraisals and an annual survey is undertaken with panel members, social work professionals and adopters who have attended panel. These comments have been collated and any issues requiring attention have been acted on as follows:

During previous appraisals several panel members from the Flintshire and Wrexham joint panel identified the need for some basic information on the legal process for children leading up to the point of the 'should be adopted decision', in order to understand the

issues that arise in the process and lead to delay for some children. Two child care team managers were invited to a panel meeting to provide information on their role from the point of referral to the 'should be adopted' stage. This was later followed up with a training session from the NWS training officer, namely "*The Pathway to Adoption*" which was well received by panel members and noted in subsequent reviews.

Issues regarding the lack of attendance and difficulties in undertaking a review by a panel member was also raised and resolved by the Head of Service. No other issues were identified during the appraisal process, the majority of members stating that the minor difficulties arising at the inception of new joint panels were now resolved and panels were working well.

Quality Assurance issues

Panel members have yet to experience the matching of children whose 'should be adopted' decision 'has been removed from panel since the change in legislation in September 2013. Concerns have been raised that the information provided to panel previously will now not be available in such depth at matching consideration. Panel members feel that the panels have lost an element of their ability to quality assure the documentation and information provided in CARA's at this initial stage. To date there is not enough evidence to support that this will have any detrimental effect on matching and further consultation will be undertaken on this issue in the coming months.

An issue that has been raised in recent CSSIW inspections is the quality of the adoption support plans. Discussion has taken place in OMG and in the review of the service being undertaken at present. It is envisaged that further training for child care social workers will be identified as a requirement in the action plan. Proposals for a working group to look at these issues with managers from NWS and the child care teams will be discussed at the next OMG meeting attended by Child Care managers.

Panel members

Flintshire/Wrexham Joint Adoption Panel Membership and advisors

| | Name | Panel Role | Term of Office | End Date First Term | Date of Appraisal |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---|
| Members | | | | | |
| 1 | David Beard | Panel Chair | 27/09/2010 | 26/09/15 | 04/13 |
| 2 | Dr Ewoud Bos | Medical Advisor – Flintshire | 27/09/2010 | N/A | 12/02/2013 |
| 3 | Dr Anil Ninan | Medical Advisor – Wrexham | 27/09/2010 | N/A | 06/12/2012 |
| 4 | Paula Spencer | Independent Member Adopter | 27/09/2010 | 26/09/15 | 05/12/2012 |
| 5 | Denise Nicholls | Independent Member Adoptee | 27/09/2010 | 26/09/15 | Cancelled on 2 occasions health reasons to be re-arranged |
| 6 | Denise Preece | Independent Member | 27/09/2010 | 26/09/15 | 13/12/2012 |
| 7 | Linda Vickery | Independent Member | 27/09/2010 | 26/09/15 | Re-arranged 22/04/13 |
| 8 | Councillor Cindy Hinds | Elected Member – Flintshire | 12/11/2012 | 12/10/2017 | n/a |
| 9 | Councillor Lloyd Kenyon | Elected Member – Wrexham | 27/09/2010 | 26/09/15 | 05/12/12 |
| 10 | Hazel Reid | Social Worker - Flintshire | 23/07/2012 | 23/06/2017 | 13/12/2012 |
| 11 | Julie Canovan | Social Worker - Wrexham | 27/09/2010 | Mid 2013 | 06/12/2012 |
| Advisors – Formal | | | | | |
| | Glenda Jones (Wrex) Beth Evans (Flint) Sally Shenton (Flint) Jenny (Flint) | Legal Advisors | n/a | | |
| | Mandy Humphries | Panel Advisor and co-ordinator | n/a | | |
| Administrator | | | | | |
| | Sarah Picken | Panel Administrator | n/a | | |

Conwy/ Denbighshire Joint Adoption Membership and advisors

| | Name | Panel Role | Term of Office | End Date | Date of Appraisal |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------|------------|---------------------------|
| Members | | | | | |
| 1 | Sue Roberts | Panel Chair | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 11/2012 |
| 2 | Dr Sue Roberts | Medical Advisor - Denbighshire | 27/01/2012 | N/A | 11/2012 |
| 3 | Dr Lindsay Groves | Medical Advisor - Conwy | 27/01/2012 | N/A | 11/2012 |
| 4 | Kate Dyke | Independent Member Adopter | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 11/2012 |
| 5 | Gaynor Lanyon | Independent Member Birth mother | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 11/2012 |
| 6 | Rod Bowden | Independent Member | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 11/2012 |
| 7 | Jaqui Doll | Independent Member - Education | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 02/2013 |
| 8 | Cllr Chamberlain Jones | Elected Member - Denbighshire | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 11/2012 |
| 9 | Cllr Carlisle | Elected Member - Conwy | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | arranged for - 24/05/2013 |
| 10 | Sarah Halley | Social Worker - Denbighshire | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 11/2012 |
| 11 | Ian Turner | Social Worker - Conwy | 27/01/2012 | 26/01/2017 | 11/2012 |
| Advisors – Formal | | | | | |
| | Wayne Cooper / Ceri Williams / Heidi Roberts | Legal Advisor | n/a | | |
| | Trish Welsh | Panel Advisor and co-ordinator | n/a | | |
| Administrator | | | | | |
| | Wendy Roberts | Panel Administrator | n/a | | |

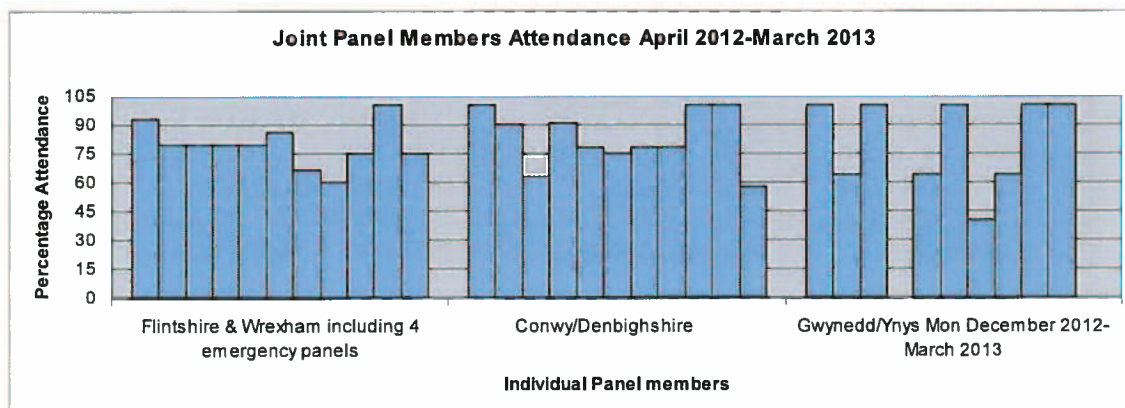
Gwynedd/Ynys Môn Joint Adoption Membership and advisors

| | Name | Panel Role | Term of Office | End Date | Date of Appraisal |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| Members | | | | | |
| 1 | Non Davies | Panel Chair Independent BAAF | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | Due Dec 2013 |
| 2 | Dr Teyrnon Powell | Medical Advisor | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 3 | John Peach | Independent Member | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 4 | Vernon Rowlands | Independent Member Education Advisor | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 5 | Melanie Jones | Independent Member Social Worker – Barnardos | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 6 | Trish Girling | Independent Member CAMHS | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 7 | Dylan Jones | Elected Member Ynys Môn | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 8 | Mandy Williams-Davies | Elected Member Gwynedd | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 9 | Sharon Williams-Carter | Social Worker – Gwynedd | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 10 | Carolyn Jones | Social Worker – Ynys Môn | 21/12/12 | 20/12/17 | " |
| 11 | Vacant Position | | | | |
| Advisors – Formal | | | | | |
| | Sarah Lloyd Evans | Legal Advisor Gwynedd | | | |
| | Rhys Hughes | Legal Advisor Ynys Môn | | | |
| | Heather Pearson | Panel Advisor and co-ordinator | | | |
| Administrator | | | | | |
| | Glesni Williams | Panel Minute Taker | N/A | | |
| | June Owen | Panel Administrator | | | |
| Panel Advisors – Specific | | | | | |
| | Dr Janet Horne | Medical Advisor - Ynys Môn | N/A | | |

Attendance rates of Panel members 2012-2013

Panel Members are familiar with the requirement to attend a minimum of 75% of panel meetings. The chart demonstrates that in most cases this has been achieved, or exceeded in 2012/13.

Panel Members Attendance rates 2012-2013



Panel Members Attendance rates 2012-2013

Flintshire & Wrexham Joint Panel:

In addition to the 11 regular panel meetings for the Flintshire and Wrexham Joint Panel an additional 4 emergency panels were organised due to the number of cases to be heard and in order to prevent any delay for approval of adopters and matching. One panel in December was cancelled as there were no cases to be heard. Two new members have joined this panel during the past year following the resignation of an elected member and social worker. Both attended a panel for observation and attended an induction with the panel adviser.

Conwy & Denbighshire Joint Panel:

No additional panels were required during this period and none were cancelled. The date of one panel meeting was re-arranged to accommodate annual leave.

Gwynedd and Ynys Môn:

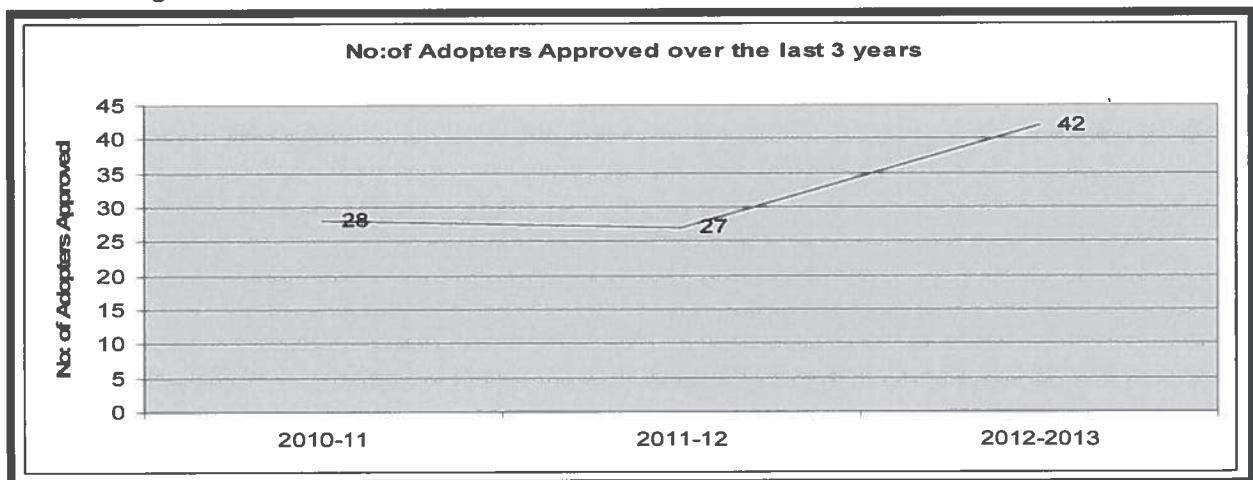
Five panels meetings have been held since the inception of the new joint panel. The first panel did not consider any cases as the only case to be presented was withdrawn requiring additional work to be completed by the child care social worker. One panel date was re-arranged to accommodate work commitments of the presenting social worker. Further recruitment of independent panel members will be required this year in order to fulfil the full complement of panel members.

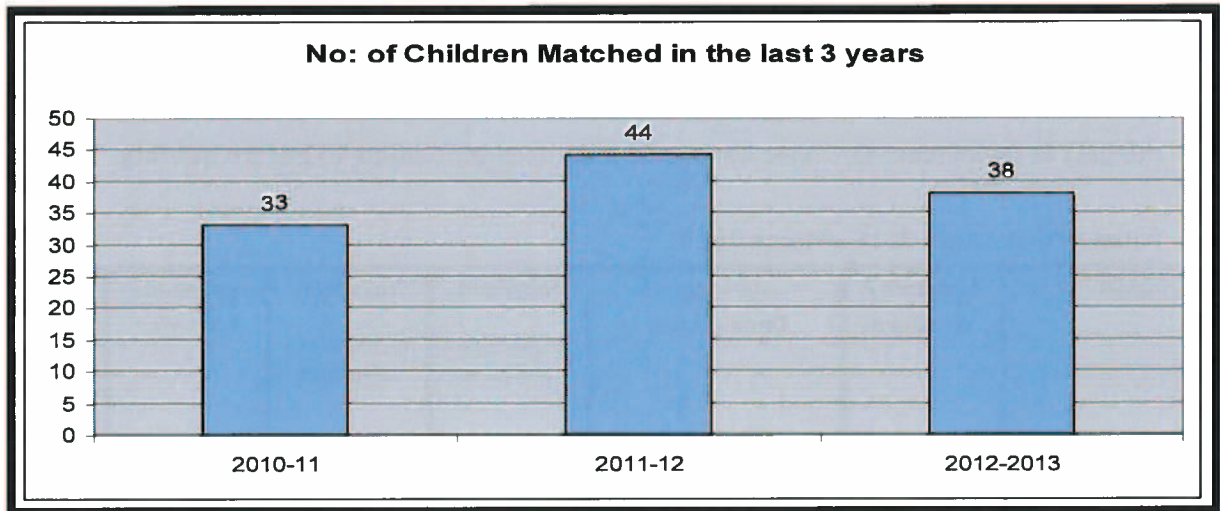
Each Joint Panel plans to conduct a monthly panel and all dates are planned in advance. Where additional panels have been required panels over the past twelve months members have been contacted to ascertain their availability. This has not proven to be an issue over the past as panel members have been extremely accommodating to ensure quoracy.

Panel Activity April 2012 –March 2013

| Panels | Flintshire / Wrexham | Conwy / Denbighshire | Gwynedd (01/04/2012 – 18/10/2012) | Ynys Môn (01/04/2012 – 18/10/2012) | Gwynedd / Ynys Môn | Total |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Adoption Assessments | 17 | 10 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 42 |
| Should Be Adopted | 8 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 18 |
| Matching | 18 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 38 |
| Total | 43 | 37 | 15 | 3 | 10 | 108 |

The following graph shows a 64% increase in the number of adopters approved at panel over the past year. This has been achieved by the availability of a full complement of staff and additional sessional workers being employed to undertake assessments. A number of sessional workers are unavailable for further assessments due to health issues and maternity leave. Additional recruitment of sessional workers or full time staff will be required if this level is to be sustained or improved. Added to this is the increasing number of children being referred for family finding and the lack of placements available via the National Register.





There has been a slight decrease in the number of children matched at panel this year. However, the figures for 2011 -12 include 9 sibling groups as opposed to 4 /5 sibling groups in 2010-11 and 2012-13 accounting for the increase in number placed. The actual numbers of placements were 29, 35 and 32 over the past 3 years.

Number of Panels held by year.

| Joint Panels | Flintshire / Wrexham (as from Sept 2010) | | | Conwy / Denbighshire (as from January 2012) | | | Gwynedd / Ynys Môn (as from December 2012) | | |
|---|---|-----------|-----------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|-----------|
| | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| Year | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of Panels held | | | 15 | - | | 12 | - | - | 5 |
| Number of Panels cancelled due to lack of quoracy | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | 0 |
| Number of Panels cancelled for other reasons | | | 1 (No cases to be heard) | - | | 0 | - | - | 0 |

All panel dates for 2013/2014 have been confirmed and all panel members are aware of the panel dates for the coming year well in advance. Despite the increase in number of children referred for matching it is not anticipated that additional panels will be required at this present time, additional panel space for cases has been made available due to the removal of the should be adopted decisions from the joint panel.

NWAS was able to achieve the amalgamation of the six LA panels into three joint panels by November 2012. As NWAS is now responsible for the co-ordination and management of all three joint panels NWAS proposes to set up a working group to consider the organisational and procedural aspects of these panels in order to ensure equity across the region. This will be undertaken, following a settling in period for the Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Joint Panel. It is anticipated that this will also be highlighted and timetabled in the proposed 3 – 5 year plan currently being drawn up.

In light of the current proposals by the Welsh Government for speeding up the assessment process and the development of the new PAR the Joint Panel Working Group will be considering and agreeing standard paperwork that will be presented to panels in future. NWAS has been involved in piloting the new PAR which will be introduced in April 2013. Joint Panel training for panel members on the new PAR will be required by mid 2013.

Joint training for all 3 adoption panels has been organised for the 29th and 30th April 2013 which will be providing panel members with an overview of all aspects of the pre approval training provided to prospective adopters via the NWAS training officer. This will also be the

first opportunity for all panel members to meet together to begin to build up relationships and share experiences and issues arising in panel business across the region.

Responses to Quality Assurance Questionnaires and panel members comment sheets regarding Panel Activity:

44% of panel members felt they received documentation in a timely manner and 56% most of the time. The Conwy and Denbighshire panel paperwork is compiled and sent out from different venues. This can cause difficulties for the advisor and paperwork is sometimes sent out at different intervals. The consistency in organisation and administration of all panels is an issue that will need to be addressed in the proposed plan and in the Joint Panel Working Group.

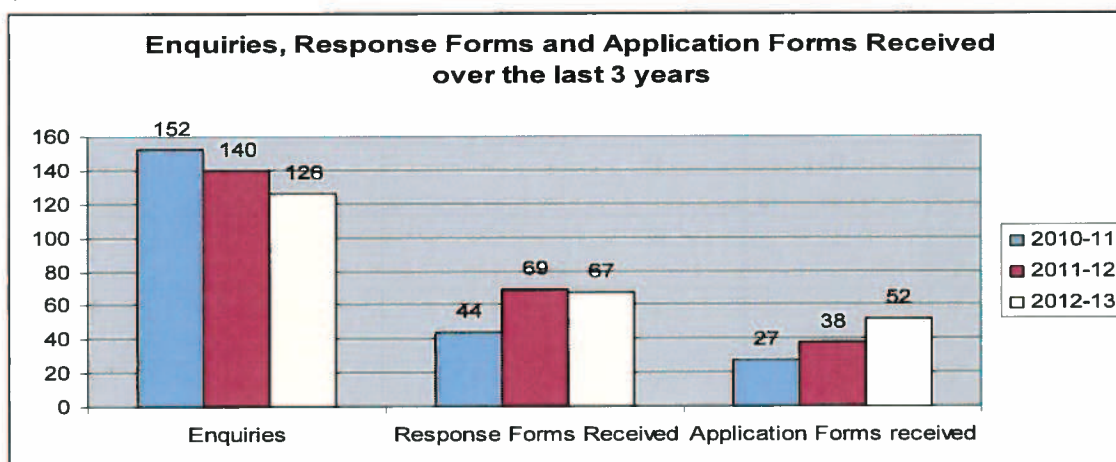
The quality of reports presented to panel are deemed to be good (63%) or excellent (25%) with significant improvement in the last year, particularly in analysis and some deemed to be useful as examples of good practice. The new PAR and an agreed format for the CARA's are now beginning to come through to the individual panels and should provide further consistency in paperwork. In the last year NWAS social workers have been provided with additional training on the PAR, including an emphasis on analysis and they have been provided with a Tool Kit for use in assessments. The quality of some reports continues to be dependent on the reporting skills of individual adoption and child care social workers. Additional training and support for adoption social workers is currently being sought and addressed. 94% felt that the knowledge and experience of the adoption staff was excellent or good. 87% felt able to express their views on improvements/developments of the panel to the adoption team, one suggestion was joint training with other panels. This is already being addressed in the training plan for 2013-14 and awaits approval from Heads of Service and all panel members have been requested to attend the joint panel training in April.

Responses from prospective adopters attending panel indicate that most felt that their experience of attending panel was positive rating the experience 8 /9 out of 10. Some were provided with written information regarding the process of panel and information on panel members. All panel administrators will need to ensure that these information leaflets are sent to all prospective adopters due to attend panel. The information for the Gwynedd and Ynys Môn joint panel is currently being translated. All attendees felt supported by their social workers and comments were made that panel chairs from all three panels made them feel comfortable and put them at ease. One couple suggested it may be helpful if they were informed of the question prior to going into panel and given time to consider due to them being so nervous. The only issue to arise was that one couple were kept waiting a long time and found this stressful. This issue is sometimes inevitable if a difficult case has been

presented prior to their appointment, however, panels need to be aware of the anxiety this is likely to cause prospective adopters. Should this become an issue timescales between cases may need to be considered. Issue to be raised at the proposed Joint Working Group.

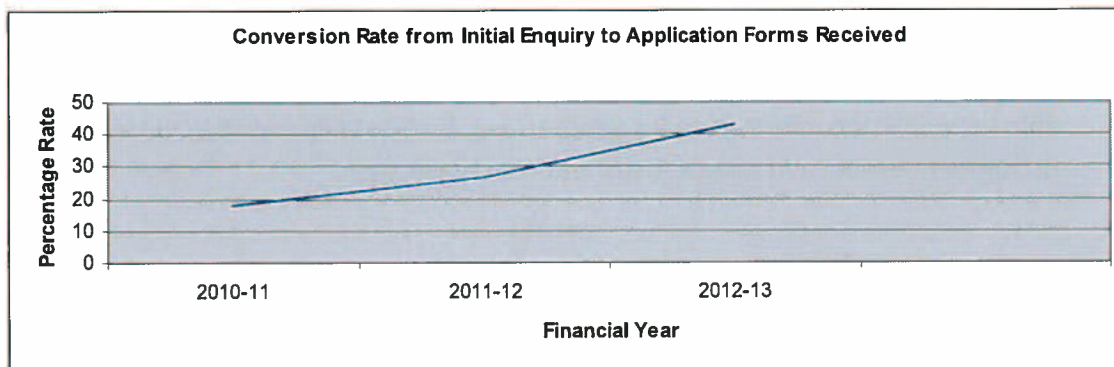
7. Advertising and Marketing

NWAS employs a Recruitment Officer to undertake specific recruitment activities for prospective adopters. The following graph highlights the conversation rates between specific events in the recruitment process.



The graph identifies a decrease in the number of general enquiries over the last 3 years, however, the conversion rate to response forms improved significantly in the second year of the service and remained fairly static in the third year. The conversion rate from response to application forms being received following training has risen from 61% in Year 1 to 78% in Year 3.

Conversion rates from initial enquiries to application forms being received have also shown a steady increase over the last 3 years as follows:



Marketing Source for all enquiries between April 2013 – March 2013

| Marketing Source | April-June | July-Sept | Oct-Dec | Jan- March | Total Enquiries |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------------|
| NWAS Website | 12 | 16 | 9 | 26 | 63 |
| LA Direct | 6 | 8 | 9 | 17 | 40 |
| LA Website | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| Other | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 9 |
| Foster Carers | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Word of Mouth | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Freephone | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Newspaper | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Nation Adoption Week | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Radio | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Total for each quarter | 32 | 33 | 30 | 56 | 151 |

A significant increase in enquiries in the last quarter of 2012-13 is recorded. Although not identified as coming in via National Adoption week in November it is likely that the publicity during this week did prompt further enquiries for the following months. Adopters often take note of publicity and follow this up on websites via the internet. The most often used source of enquiry is the NWAS website which has been updated in the past year. The Recruitment officer has spent considerable time liaising with the IT department and investigating the potential of Google and Facebook. As a key source for enquirers it would be judicious to invest further and continue to improve the NWAS website in future. Issues around access need to be resolved in order to ensure NWAS is able to update the information for adopters e.g. forthcoming training courses, recruitment events and adopters stories on a regular basis.

Activity undertaken by Recruitment Officer within each Local Authority April 2012– March 2013 (Figures updated end of April 2013)

| LA | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd | Wrexham | Ynys Môn | Other | Total |
|----------------------------|-------|--------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Enquires | 23 | 27 | 32 | 15 | 33 | 11 | 5 | 146 |
| Response Forms | 11 | 8 | 17 | 9 | 14 | 6 | 6 | 71 |
| Initial Visits Undertaken | 9 | 9 | 17 | 10 | 13 | 4 | 4 | 66 |
| Application Forms received | 6 | 9 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 52 |

The majority of initial visits are undertaken by the recruitment officer and local authority checks are undertaken prior to the visit in the interest of health and safety and in order to be aware of any issues that may be relevant. Due to the delay in receiving confirmation from LA's the process has now been revised and more recently initial checks are being requested via e-mail. It is envisaged that the timescales between the receipt of response forms and the initial visit will improve in 2013.

Recruitment Activities April – June 2012

- Radio interview on Radio Cymru to discuss the current situation on adoption in North Wales. – No Cost
- LGBT meeting; recruiting prospective adopters – No cost
- NWAS Website live on all Authorities Website – No cost
- Discussion with Jason Kendrick regarding advertisement in empty shop properties in the Conwy area. – No cost to date
- Awareness Campaign at Broughton Retail Park, Flintshire – No cost
- Awareness Campaign at Bangor Cathedral during a family fun day – No cost
- Community Routes Meeting; sharing information with other organisations and asking for their support in distributing posters & leaflets to the communities. – No cost
- Eisteddfod yr Urdd in Gwynedd
- Securing advertising slots for National Adoption Week on Real Radio.
- On going preparation work for the children under 5, story book .

-
- On going work with NWAS website; liaising with adopters who wish to share their adoption journey and displaying it on the website for others to read.
 - Advertising in the Daily Post and NWAS website for a child with significant health needs – unfortunately this was unsuccessful in identifying adopters – care plan amended to long term foster care
 - Assist in arranging NWAS profile evening for approved adopters in North Wales
 - Advertising campaign on Real Radio from the 01/09/2012 – 31/11/2012
 - Attend the National Register exchange day in Cardiff to profile harder to place children in North Wales; open to adopters all over the UK
 - Arrange venues & advertisement material for National Adoption Week 2012
 - Liaise with 'Google Add Words' to arrange easier access to prospective adopters to access information of our website through Google search.
 - Liaise with IT to discuss advertising using 'Facebook' & Twitter in a safe environment
 - Arrange and invite adopters & team members to join National Adoption Week walk.
 - Liaised with 'After Adoption' regarding activities during National Adoption Week.
 - Liaise with Wrexham Fostering team to share advertising space at the ten-pin bowling venue in Wrexham
 - Attended a seminar on the new CRB procedures
 - On going preparation work for the children under 5, story book.
 - On going work with NWAS website; liaising with adopters who wish to share their adoption journey and displaying it on the website for others to read.
 - National Adoption Week walk – no cost
 - 'After Adoption' attended a National Adoption Week information session
 - Advertising at the ten-pin bowling venue in Wrexham
 - On going poster & leaflet drop to various organisation/businesses
 - Advertising in Christmas pantomime programmes, Rhyl & Venue Cymru
 - National Adoption Week information sessions:
 - 5th of November – Penmaenuchaf Hall, Dolgellau, Gwynedd.
 - 6th of November – Victoria Hotel, Llangefni, Ynys Mon
 - 7th of November – Interchange, Old Colwyn, Conwy
 - 8th of November – Ruthin Conservative Club, Denbighshire.
 - 9th of November – Wynnstay Hotel, Wrexham
 - 10th of November – Broughton Retail Park, Flintshire
 - 14th of November – Lion Quays, Oswestry
 - Meeting with CBS Outdoor regarding advertising on various train stations across North Wales
 - Liaising with Royal Mail for mail a drop across North Wales
 - Contacted Tesco advertising to arrange information stalls in various Tesco's across North Wales.
 - Liaised with Real radio for costing around advertising
 - Adoption information taken to various doctors surgeries, libraries & Family Information Centre in Llandudno, Conwy, Nefyn, Botwnnog, Abersoch, Pwllheli, Caernarfon





-
- Information stall at the St David's day market in Wrexham
 - Advertising for LGBT Adoption & Fostering week
 - Arranged/attended an information session to support LGBT Adoption & Fostering week in Wrexham.
 - Attended an information session in Manchester to support LGBT Adoption & Fostering week
 - Information stall arranged for the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol
 - Liaised with Anglesey County Council, Gethin Jones, press officer/public relations to arrange information stall at the Anglesey show.
 - Liaised with Wrexham IT to update NWAS website.
 - Liaised with Wrexham IT regarding Google Add words.





This year NWAS has targeted its recruitment for older children and sibling groups. Recent research indicates that same sex couples offer a valuable resource and make successful parents for adopted children. Specific attempts have been made to liaise and make contact with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) groups in the area as a potential resource for prospective adopters. In direct response to this there has been an increase in the number of same sex couples coming forward to adopt, many of whom are willing to consider sibling groups and older children. A specific leaflet is currently being designed to highlight that NWAS welcomes applications from this particular group to encourage more same sex couples to come forward.



NWAS organised a profile evenings for the more difficult to place children in North Wales and was successful in identifying links for three children. In addition NWAS attended the National Adoption Register Profile day in Cardiff, no additional links were identified at this event.




8. Training



NWAS Training Activity Report April 2012 – March 2013



| Month | Date | Course | Invited | Attended | Total Attendees | Venue Costs | Cost Per Delegate | Total Cost | Evaluation |
|-------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------|---|-----------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|--|
| April | 19 th , 20 th , 26 th & 27 th | Preparing to Adopt | 30 | 22 prospective adopters | 22 | £1456.00 | £16.54 per day | £1456.00 |  evaluation report |
| May | 15 th | PAR Assessment & Analysis | 20 | 19 NWAS Social Workers | 19 | £70.00 | £3.68 | £70.00 |  evaluation report |
| May | 30 th | Safe Caring/Let's Get Started | 22 | 17 prospective adopters | 17 | £75.00 | £4.41 | £75.00 | |
| June | 14th, 5th, 21st, 2nd | Preparing to Adopt | 30 | 22 prospective adopters | 22 | £814.48 | £9.25 | £814.48 |  evaluation form |
| June | 28th and 29th | Moving children on - Good Practice | Not known | 4 child care social workers 2 family placement SW | 12 | Venue costs absorbed by CCBC | | £00.00 |  evaluation form |



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|--|--|-----|--|----|--|--------|----------|--------|----------|--|---|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| July | 2 nd | Pilot for Conwy foster carers and family placement social workers | 4 | 4 (2 nd time) adopters | 4 | £85.00 | £21.25 | £85.00 | £21.25 | £85.00 | |  evaluation form | |
| July | 6 th | PAR Assessments 'One Step Beyond' | 19 | 19 NAWAS SW's & Recruitment Officer | 19 | £154.50 – £400.00 – trainer costs | £29.18 | £554.50 | £29.18 | £554.50 | |  evaluation form | |
| July | 16 th | Education and attachment | 80+ | 38 adopters 2 panel members | 40 | £115.00 – venue costs £350.00 – trainer costs | £11.62 | £465.00 | £11.62 | £465.00 | |  evaluation form | |
| July | 18 th | Safe Caring/Let's Get Started | 20 | 16 prospective adopters | 16 | £102.00 – venue costs | £6.37 | £102.00 | £6.37 | £102.00 | | | |
| Sept | 6 th , 7 th & 13 th , 14 th | Preparing to Adopt | 21 | 19 prospective adopters | 19 | £1070.88 – venue costs | £14.09 | £1070.88 | £14.09 | £1070.88 | |  evaluation form | |



| | | | | | | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------|---|-----|--|----|--|--------|---|
| Sept | 20 th & 21 st | Moving children on - Good Practice | 12 | 3 Fostering SWs 2 CCSW 5 Foster carers | 10 | Venue costs absorbed by CCBC | £0.00 |  evaluation form |
| Oct | 5 th | Attachment and Trauma For prospective adopters | 30+ | 19 prospective adopters | 19 | £154.50 – venue costs £400.00 – trainer costs | £29.18 |  evaluation form |
| Oct | 15 th | Safe Caring/Let's Get Started | 14 | 14 prospective adopter | 14 | £90.00 – venue costs £00.00 – trainer costs | £6.42 | |
| | | | | | | | £90.00 | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|----|--|--------|-----------------|---|
| Oct | 25 th | Facing up to Facebook – social networking and contact | 80+ 18 confirmed participants | 9 adopters 1 CCSW 3 Adoption social workers 2 panel members 1 recruitment officer | 16 | £446 – venue and accommodation for trainers costs £683.45 – trainer costs | £70.59 | £1129.45 ex vat |  evaluation form |
| Oct | 26 th | Facing up to Facebook – social networking and contact | 80+ 20 confirmed participants | 9 adopters 6 adoption social workers 1 CCSW | 16 | £154.50 – venue costs £683.45 – trainer costs | £52.37 | £837.95 |  evaluation form |
| Nov | 12 th | FASD | 80+ 49 confirmed participants | 14 CCSW 16 Adopters 2 Panel Members 6 Support Workers 1 Reviewing Officer | 39 | £90.00 Venue costs £433.50 - Trainer costs | £13.42 | £523.50 |  evaluation form |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|---|---|----|--|--------|---------|--|
| Nov | 28 th | Attachment and Trauma for adopters with children placed. | 90+ 12 confirmed attendees 11 attended 1 apology | 8 Adopters 3 Prospective Adopters | 11 | £154.50 – venue costs £400.00 – trainer costs | £50.40 | £554.50 |  evaluation |
| Dec | 10 th | Education and attachment | 80+ 31 confirmed 4 apologies 9 no shows 18 attended | 9 Adopters 7 prospective Adopters 2 Panel Members | 18 | £75.00 – venue costs £350.00 – Trainer Costs | £23.61 | £425.00 |  Evaluation |
| Dec | 6 th , 7 th & 13 th , 14 th | Preparing to Adopt | | CANCELLED DUE TO LACK OF NUMBERS | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|---|----|---|--------|---------|--|
| Jan | 17 th , 21 st and 22 nd | Preparing to Adopt | 22 20 attended | 20 Prospective Adopters | 20 | £975.00 – venue costs | £16.25 | £975.00 |  evaluation |
| Feb | 18 th | Safe Caring/Let's Get Started | 12 attended | | | Venue Costs: £75.00 | £6.25 | £75.00 | |
| Feb | 20 th & 21 st | Developmental Re-parenting for Professionals | 40+ 31 confirmed 2 apologies 29 attended | 17 LA social workers (3 Conwy, 4 Wrexham, 2 Denbighshire, 1 Gwynedd, 3 Ynys Mon, 4 Flintshire) 12 NWAS Adoption social workers | 29 | Venue Costs: £ 325.00 Trainer costs: Wrexham CBC absorbed these | £5.60 | £325.00 |  evaluation |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|--|--|----|---|-------|---------|--|
| Feb | 22 nd | Developmental Re-parenting for Adopters | 100+ 29 confirmed 7 apologies 1 no show | 21 Adopters | 21 | Venue Costs: £ 162.50 Trainer costs: Wrexham CBC absorbed these | £7.73 | £162.50 |  evaluation |
| Feb | 25 th and 26 th | Facilitating Contact for professionals | 40+ 27 confirmed 5 apologies 4 no show | 11 LA social workers (6 Flintshire, 1 Gwynedd, 3 Wrexham, 1 Conwy,) 7 NWAS Adoption Social Workers. | 18 | Venue Costs: £ 325.00 Trainer costs: Wrexham CBC absorbed these | £9.02 | £325.00 |  evaluation |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---|--|---|--|----|--------------------------|--------|----------|---|
| March | 1 st | 2 nd time adopters training | 8 invited 6 confirmed 4 attended 2 apologies | 4 adopters | 4 | Venue Costs: £136.32 | £34.08 | £136.32 |  evaluation |
| March | 13 th , 14 th 21 st and 22 nd | Preparing to Adopt | 24 invited 2 apologies | 12 adopters full 4 days 2 adopters – 3 days 8 adopters– 2 days | 22 | Venue Costs: £ 926.00 | £10.52 | £ 926.00 |  evaluation |

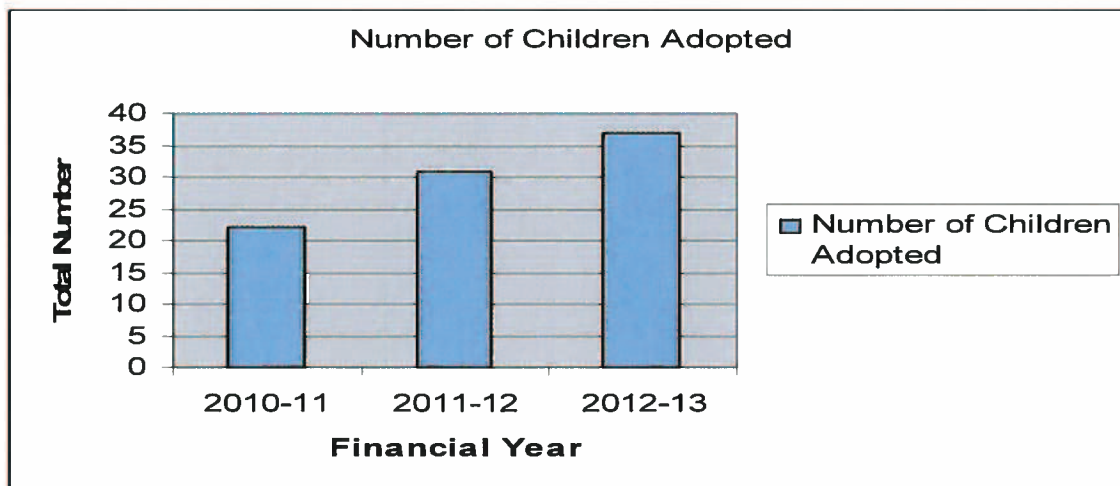
9. Children

Number of Children Referred for Adoption April 2012- March 2013

| | Conwy | Denbs | Flint | Gwynedd | Wrexham | Ynys Môn | Other | Total |
|--|-------|-------|----------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Number of children referred for adoption | 17 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 17 | 11 | - | 75 |
| Number of children matched at panel | 9 | 2 | 6 (+ 1 match not recommended) | 6 | 12 | 3 | - | 38 |
| Number of children placed for adoption | 7 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 30 |
| Number of children adopted | 8 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 36 |

Number of Children Referred, Matched, Placed and Adopted April 2012- March 2013

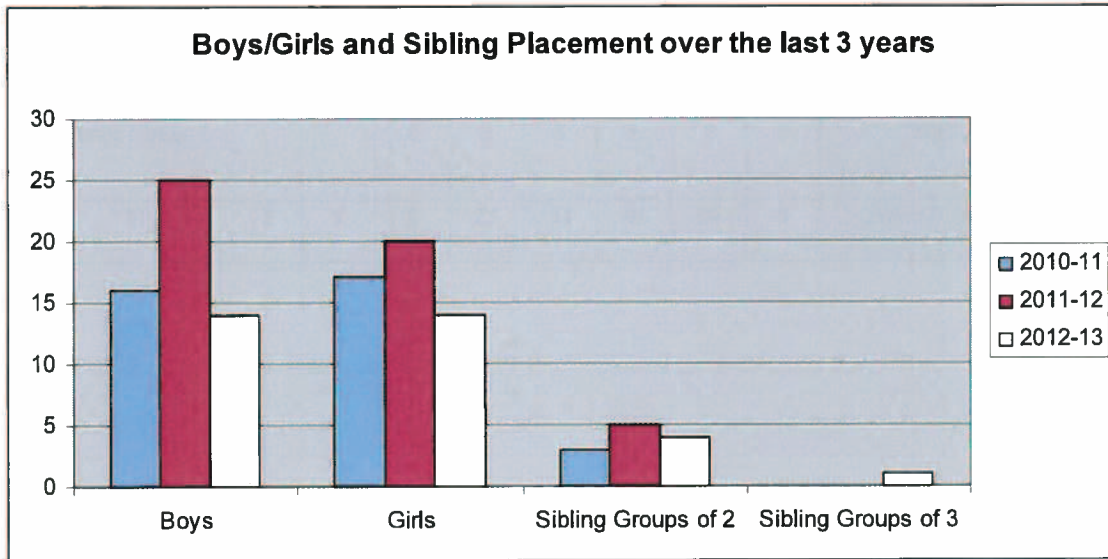
Number of children adopted over the past 3 years



There has been a steady increase in the number of Adoption Orders granted over the past 3 years compatible with the increase in number of children being placed for adoption.

Gender Comparison of Children Placed for Adoption

2010-11 placed 16 boys 17 girls 29 (11 placements outside NWAS)
 2011-12 placed 25 boys 20 girls 45 (4 placements outside NWAS)
 2012-13 placed 15 boys 15 girls 30 (all placements within NWAS)

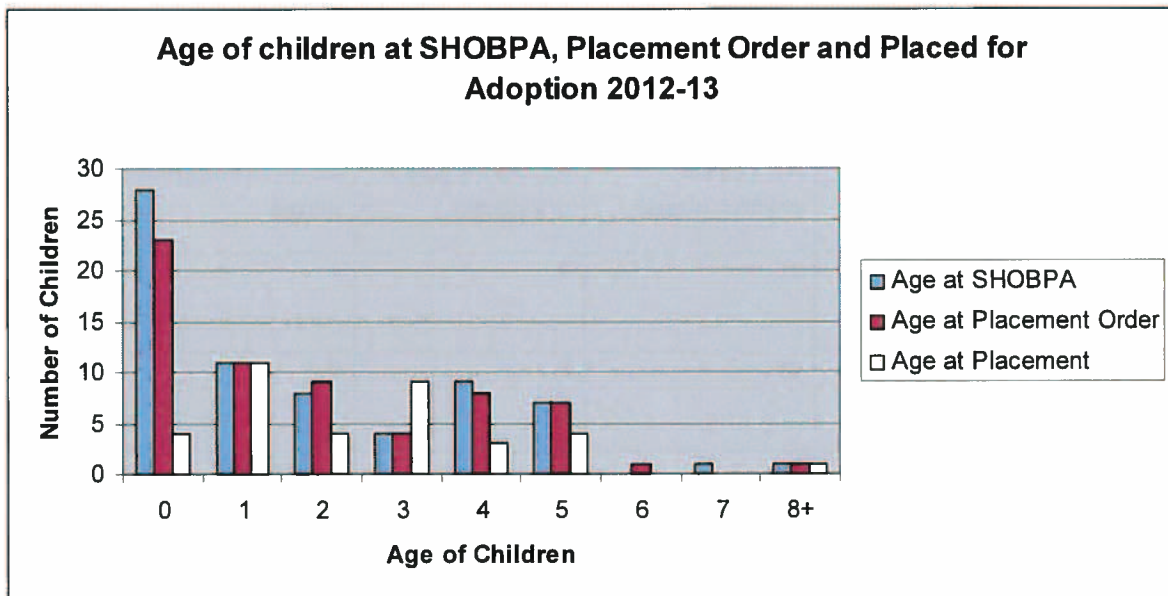


| | No: Male children Placed | No: Female children placed | No: Sibling groups of 2 placed | No: of sibling groups of 3 placed |
|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2010-2011 | 16 | 17 | 3 | 1 |
| 2011-2012 | 25 | 20 | 5 | 0 |
| 2012-2013 | 14 | 14 | 4 | 1 disrupted |

Ages of children placed for adoption by year

| Year Placed | Age of Children at Placement | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------|
| | 0-1 | 1-2 | 2-3 | 3-4 | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8+ |
| 2010-2011 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | - | - | - |
| Non NWAS Placements | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 aged 9 & 10 years |
| 2011-2012 | 2 | 23 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 2 | - | 1 | - |
| Non NWAS Placements | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 2012-2013 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 3 | - | - | 1 aged 15 years |
| Total Over 3 years | 8 | 41 | 10 | 16 | 15 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 2 |

Age of Children at Should Be Adopted', Placement Order and Placed for Adoption 12-13



The graph identifies a significant increase in the number of children under the age of 1 years old being subject to a 'Should be Adopted' decision this year. The number of placement

Order being made at this age is considerably lower and this impacts on the age of actual age on placement. It is likely that the next financial year will show an increase in the number of children under the age of 2 years being placed which can only be viewed as a positive aspect in light of attachment and limiting their time in the LAC system.

Number of children adopted by former foster carers or Outside of NWAS Region

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number of children adopted | 21 | 28 | 36 |
| Number of which were adopted by former foster carers including concurrent planning. | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Total No: Children placed Out of NWAS region | 11 | 4 | 0 |
| Total No: Children Placed with NWAS Adopters from other Agencies | 4 | 4 | 0 |

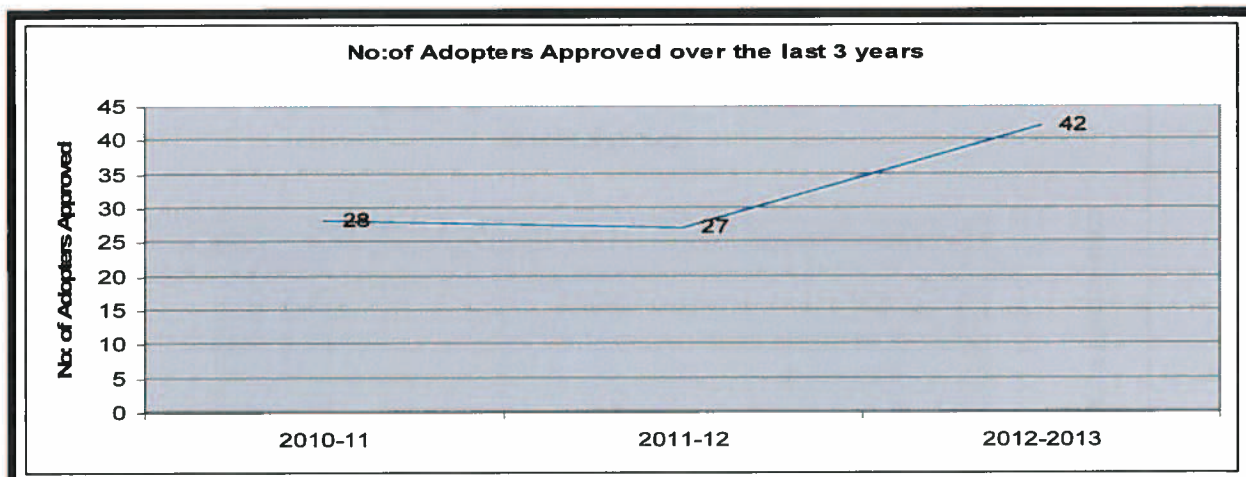
The number of children adopted by former foster carers and out of NWAS region

It has been noted in the latter part of 2012-13 that there is an increase in the number of foster carers coming forward to adopt specific children. These figures are likely to be more evident in the coming financial year once these have been approved and children placed for adoption.

10. Adopters

| LA | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd | Wrexham | Ynys Môn | Other | Total |
|---|-------|--------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|-------|-------|
| Enquires | 23 | 27 | 32 | 15 | 33 | 11 | 5 | 146 |
| Response Forms | 11 | 8 | 17 | 9 | 14 | 6 | 6 | 71 |
| Initial Visits Undertaken | 9 | 9 | 17 | 10 | 13 | 4 | 4 | 66 |
| Application Forms received | 6 | 9 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 52 |
| Adoption Assessments Completed | 4 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 12 | 3 | 2 | 42 |
| Adoption with a Foreign Element Enquiries | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 3 |

NWAS has an agreement with Adoption Matters to undertake the initial visits and provide the information regarding Adoption with a Foreign Element. The enquiries are referred directly to Adoption Matters and are provided with all the necessary information. To date no adopters requiring this service have returned to NWAS for Assessment.

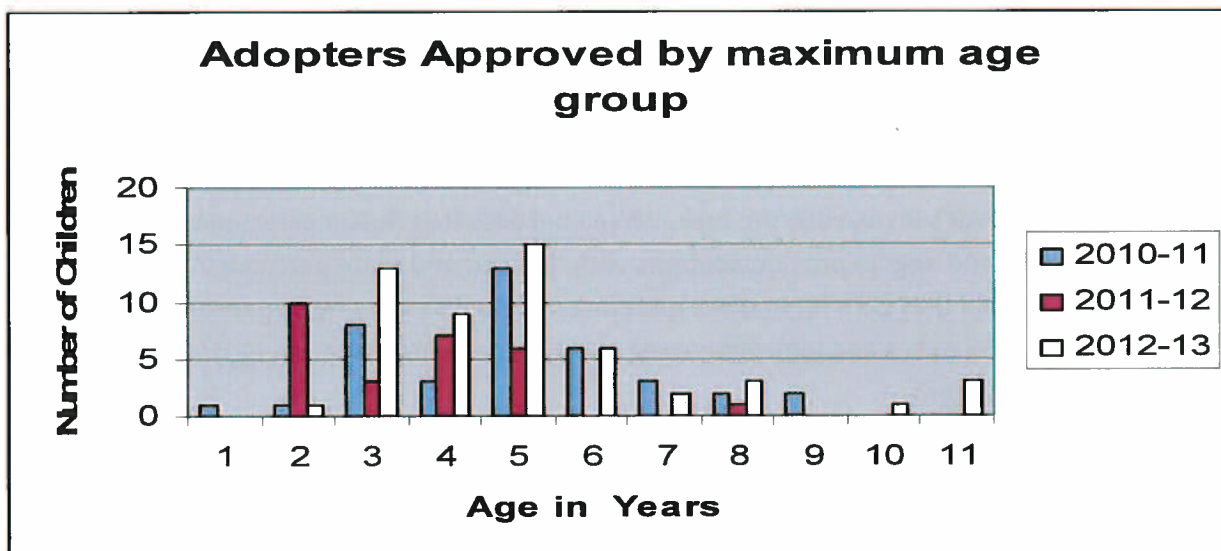


Several children who NWAS are having difficulty in placing have been referred to the adoption register and two children, one with a significant disability were profiled in Be My Parent. Neither of these were successful in identifying adopters for these specific children and several have gone on to be placed within NWAS and others to long term fostering.

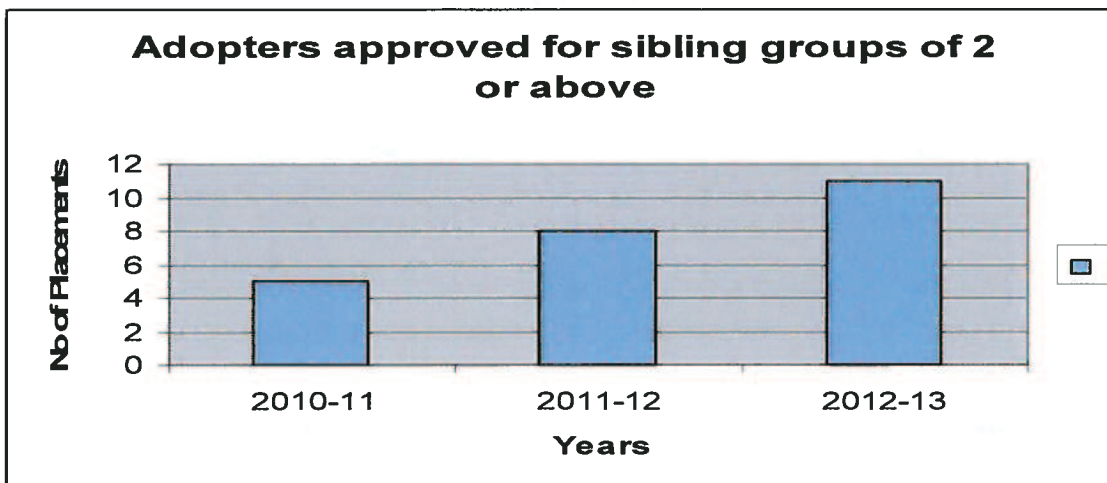
Current referrals for two other children of mixed ethnicity are being pursued via the National Register.

No children from other local authorities were placed with NWAS adopters in 2012-13.

Number of Placements offered by approved adopters by maximum age of children:



The graph shows that an increased number of adopters have been approved for older children over the past year.



This graph show the increase of adopters approved who are offering sibling group placements in the last two years.

11. Matches

NWAS social workers are responsible for Family Finding and work closely with the child care social workers during this process. All searches are initially undertaken via the CHARMS matching database and families are then considered in more detail in light of the specific needs of each child by the social workers before visits to potential adopters take place. Adopters are given detailed information about the child and have the opportunity to meet with the medical adviser and the foster carers of the child/ren in question. Matching meetings are attended by the child's social worker, NWAS social worker, a social worker who has had no involvement with the case, acting as an independent member and chaired by a NWAS manager. Matching reports are then presented to the adoption panels with CARA's and PAR's involved in the case. NWAS believes that foster carers play a key role in this process and able to provide adopters with detailed and more personal information about the child they care for and are therefore included as an integral part of the process. All potential matches and information regarding placements made are recorded on the CHARMS IT system.

12. Disruptions

Number of disruptions compared to the number of placements (NWAS placements)

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|---|----------------|--|---|
| Number of disruptions | 0 | 2 placements (1 single 1 sibling group of 2) | 1 placement (sibling group of 3 children) |
| Number of children placed in same period | 22 | 45 | 30 |

There has been one disruption of a sibling group of 3 children during this financial year. A disruption meeting was held and undertaken by an independent social worker. Recommendations and learning points from the report were as follows:

- Increase time for adopters and foster carers to get to know each other
- Support for the adopters and foster carers through this emotional period
- Issues of concern to be reported to supervising social workers
- Foster carer's diaries to be shared during transition
- Ensure professionals share information appropriately
- Communication is essential when a large group of professionals are involved
- Research proves that children who suffer neglect can lead to excessive fear and anxiety
- Use of plain language when discussing child's behaviour
- Attachment based training to be made available to adopters
- Robust support package based on any expert reports accepted by the LA
- Identifying the key worker and decision maker during transition period
- Ensuring that the introduction process is monitored and timescales for moving placement are appropriate.

Some of these issues are being addressed via training on attachment issues. The NWAS manager has requested a meeting with Fostering Team Managers across North Wales to discuss issues for foster carers during this period. Moving on Training has been developed by the NWAS Training Officer for all foster carers and family placement social workers and offered to each authority.

A working group needs to be established to discuss adoption support plans and will be discussed with managers in 2013..

13. Notifications

No notifications during 2012-13

14. Non Agency Adoption Activity

Partner of Parent Activity April 2012-March 2013

| | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd | Wrexham | Ynys Môn | Total |
|--|-------|--------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|-------|
| Partner of Parent Enquiries | 6 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 33 |
| Partner of Parent Initial Visits | | | | | | | 23 |
| Partner of Parent Checks in Progress | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 3 |
| Partner of Parent Waiting Allocation | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| Partner of Parent Currently Under Assessment | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | - | 8 |
| Partner of Parent Adoption Orders Granted | | | | | | | 13 |

15. Management information and development work

Management Information is collated on the CHARMS system which is updated on a regular basis. Updated information is provided on a monthly basis to panel members and operational service managers. The information includes lists of all children currently waiting for placements, potential matches and those approved or placed for adoption in the current year. In addition information on the current situation of adopters is also made available including those under assessment, available, potential links and placements.

Development Issues are discussed at the OMG meeting on a monthly basis, which have included, Safe Base Partnership, Policy amendments and of photographs in Family Finding.

16. Legal issues /Placement Orders/Placements

None identified for NWAS this year

17. Adoption Support

9.1 Individual Adoption Support

Referrals for Adoption Support for adopted children are referred via the relevant local authority Duty and Assessment Teams for initial assessment and referred or signposted to appropriate services. NWAS has a limited amount of resources available to provide adoption support and is very much aware that these services need to be developed in order to provide equity across the region. Some local authorities have their own therapeutic teams and therefore able to provide significant therapeutic assessment and support in a timely manner. In light of the need to develop this service NWAS has now entered into a new partnership agreement with After Adoption to provide the Safe Base parenting programme for NWAS adopters. The Partnership was launched in April 2013 and the first programme will be offered in September 2013 and a second in February 2014. New support groups will be developed once the initial programme has been provided.

Three Adoption Support Groups are available across the region. The groups in Flintshire/Wrexham and Conwy Support Group are run by adopters. The Ti a Fi Group for pre school adopted children is organised by NWAS staff in Ynys Mon. Further development of these groups will need to be considered in the proposed 3-5 year plan as this issue was raised in the latest inspection carried out by CSSIW.

Individual Support provided by NWAS social Workers:

Adoption Support referrals (one off service / advice as well as on-going work)

A total of 16 referrals for individual support were received by NWAS and these families are being supported by NWAS social workers in a variety of ways. The support varies from signposting to appropriate services, referrals to Duty and Assessment teams in relevant LA and individual support via Theraplay, attending meetings and issues regarding contact.

9.2 Letterbox Contact and Direct Contact – Support to adopted children, birth and adopted families.

Current Contact Arrangements in place

| | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd | Wrexham | Ynys Môn | Total |
|--|-------|--------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|-------|
| No: of children with contact arrangements in place supported by NWAS | 71 | 78 | 35 | 33 | 53 | 24 | 294 |

All letterbox arrangements are now being co-ordinated through NWAS. NWAS has employed a Contact Co-ordinator who is supported by an administrator. All historical contact arrangements for contact from Conwy, Denbighshire and Ynys Mon have been transferred to NWAS and all new contact arrangements are referred directly to NWAS. Gwynedd are currently in the process of transferring historical cases across and the Flintshire and Wrexham historical cases are still being managed by NWAS social workers – it is anticipated that these will be transferred by July 2013.

All contact arrangements and activities are recorded on the Letterbox CHARMS system and this has proven to be particularly successful. However, work is still being undertaken on developing appropriate reports within the system in order to identify the level and complexity of work required. At present NWAS is able to identify the number of children, adopters and birth families on the system but unable to provide an accurate figure of the contact arrangements for individual children.

The number of contact arrangements increases by between 27 and 42 plus each year depending on placements made with very few being closed due to reaching adulthood.

9.3 Birth Record Referrals – Access to files, Counselling and Intermediary Service.

NWAS has had a contract with After Adoption to undertake this work and the numbers referred have been fairly consistent over the past 3 years. All local authorities involved in the Partnership have agreed to extend this contract for a further 12 months and review as the new Partnership Agreement is being produced in light of the proposed 3-5 year plan and decisions of the Welsh Government on the National Adoption Service.

Birth record referrals (access to files) Referrals received and transferred to After Adoption 2012-13

| | 2012/2013 | | | 2011/2012 | | | 2010/2011 | | |
|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| | Birth Parent | Section 98 | Section 98 | Birth Parent | Section 98 | Section 98 | Birth Parent | Section 98 | Section 98 |
| | Counselling | Pre 75 | Post 75 | Counselling | Pre 75 | Post 75 | Counselling | Pre 75 | Post 75 |
| Ynys Mon | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Gwynedd | 3 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| Conwy | 3 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 12 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| Denbighshire | 3 | 10 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 6 |
| Flintshire | 2 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 4 |
| Wrexham | 6 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 14 | 10 |
| TOTAL | 19 | 56 | 19 | 14 | 53 | 22 | 21 | 46 | 31 |

Response to Quality of Care Questionnaire to cases closed by After Adoption once work has been completed:

Of the 19 responses received

- 95% of those that answered the question felt that they were greeted appropriately and informed about the transfer to After Adoption when contacting NWAS for the service; additional comments included, staff were very professional and helpful and exceptionally friendly.
- 73% stated they would rate the service as excellent, having had contact within two weeks of referral, face to face meeting with After Adoption staff and information on their files shared in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- One response felt this was a good service – although every other aspect was positive After Adoption was unable to facilitate contact with relatives.

-
- 3 service users considered the service to be average, these were birth parents who appeared to be expecting a different type of support and unhappy as birth children declined contact. Not a true reflection on the After Adoption service.

18. Development of Adoption Service

NWAS is currently undergoing a review of the service undertaken by a consultant from the Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University and a 3-5 year plan is being proposed. The impact of the proposed National Adoption Service will also have an impact on future plans; however, until these are clarified NWAS will continue under its present partnership agreement which also being revised.

The Partnership with After Adoption to provide the Safe Base Parenting Programme and additional support groups has now been agreed and launched in April 2013.

19. Policies and Procedures

The policy regarding financial support to adopters during the introductions period has been reviewed and revised and agreed across all six authorities providing equity for all adopters across the region. This includes clear guidelines for adopters on their entitlement to financial support during the introductions period, based on the Welsh National Fostering Rates. The policy also includes an agreed list of essential items and rates for mileage claims.

20. CSSIW

NWAS has been inspected twice during this financial year.

Flintshire Inspection May 2012

Recommendations include:

- Panel Minutes to include the reasons for panel panel's recommendation. This has been discussed with panel members and the administrator and these are now included.
- Adopter's applications for the relevant authorities to be taken to the relevant joint panels and legal advice to be sought. NWAS is complying with this at present. However, this issue has been raised during the adoption inquiry and at the Expert Advisory Group meeting in order to highlight the need for legislation changes in line with the Welsh Governments requirement to work on a regional basis.

Good Practice Issues included:

- Statement of Purpose to be made available to stakeholders on the NWAS website - completed
- Failure of panel member to comply with attendance expectation and reviews - new panel members appointed
- Continue communication with LAC social workers and managers on up to date activity – service managers provided with monthly updates and share with relevant team managers.
- Improve structure of Adoption Support Plans – Working Group to be identified 2013.

Conwy Inspection February 2013

No significant or urgent issues for non-compliance to report – Final report due in May 2013.

Potential areas of improvement:

- Further training on analysis for some NWAS assessors – with the introduction of the new PAR training will be required for all staff and panel members. Discussion taking place at present.
- More comprehensive support plans required
- Supervision/management issues – OMG have discussed and NWAS managers have agreed to revise supervision responsibilities. These changes will be put in place as from May 2013.
- Increase provision of support groups - with the introduction of Safe Base new support groups will be available to adopters – locations to be agreed.

21. Consultations

Consultation exercises, via questionnaire are undertaken with the following stakeholders:

- Staff members
- LA social workers
- Panel Members
- Adopters attending Panel
- Adopters who have had a child placed within the stated period
- Attendees for all training events provided by NWAS (See Training Section)

-
- Adoptees, birth parents and relatives of adoptees accessing the After Adoption services contracted by NWAS.

Responses are recorded within this report.

22. Compliments, comments, complaints and representations

NWAS has received 5 complaints during this period. Three complaints derived from NWAS informing the applicants that we were unable to continue with their assessments due to various reasons. These were dealt with at Stage one and a further complaint was received from the same person which was escalated to Stage 2. These decisions were discussed and agreed by Head of Service.

One complaint was received regarding comments within the training report which were interpreted inappropriately this was dealt with at Stage 1.

One complaint was received regarding panel's decision not to recommend a match at panel and is currently being dealt with by the appropriate authority.

23. Reporting Mechanisms to Senior Management, Scrutiny & Members

Monthly meetings are held with the operational managers on a monthly basis to discuss day to day operation of the service, OMG members are provided with an update of activity across all six authorities on a monthly basis and quarterly reports are presented to the Heads of Children's Services across the region.

In order to improve communication and liaison with the six child care teams the Child Care Managers are invited to the OMG meeting 3 times per annum. The provision of training to all stakeholders across the region has also aided communication and has begun to cement the regional relationships.

24. Agenda for Change/Future Challenges

This will be dependent on the outcome of the Adoption, Inquiry, The Social Services Bill and the development of the National Adoption Services in Wales, however, NWAS is currently looking at developing its 3-5 year plan. The plan will be based on the final

recommendations of the review currently being carried out by a consultant from the Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University.

25. Conclusion

NWAS continues to develop as a service. As highlighted in this report, the number of adopters recommended for approval at panels over the past 12 months has increased by 64% and the number of children placed with adopters in North Wales has also increased. In the current climate of a national shortage of adopters NWAS continues to have a steady flow of adopters coming forward to adopt. NWAS has seen a slight increase in enquiries from adopters in neighbouring authorities and for single and same sex carers.

With the introduction of the Safe Base Parenting Programme we look forward to being able to offer equity in access to support for all families in North Wales and encourage families to consider children with more complex needs, sibling groups and older children, in the knowledge that this support will be available.

Adoption specific training for all stakeholders is proving to be successful in developing skills across the board and enabling more liaison with colleagues across North Wales. Evaluation of the training programmes provided have generally been very positive and numerous requests are being made by individual authorities to provide further training to child care social workers on the adoption process, including matching, moving children on, contact and life story work.

NWAS is in a good position to further develop its regional service within the proposed model of a National Adoption Service.

This report will fulfil the requirements of Reg 22 but could also be used for distribution to senior managers, cabinet, scrutiny etc. Circulation of this report will be determined by each local authority area.

Date completed: 2nd May 2013.

Author: Mandy Humphries

Title: Manager North Wales Adoption Service

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide an update on the streamlined and corporate approach to performance reporting.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council adopted the Improvement Plan for 2013/14 on 25 June 2013. The Improvement Priorities of the previous Council have been thoroughly reviewed and challenged to streamline and reset them and to be clearer over the impacts and how performance will be measured.

2.02 The Improvement Plan focuses on the priorities which are going to have the most impact during 2013/14. This helps the organisation to concentrate on the things where sustained corporate attention is needed during 2013/14, with the remaining priorities being managed as more routine performance management.

2.03 The introduction of the new style Improvement Plan has presented the opportunity to review and streamline our current reporting arrangements so that they in turn focus and concentrate on the achievement of our priorities and the impacts which they seek to deliver.

2.04 The alignment of the new three year Outcome Agreement (starting in 2013/14) with the Improvement Plan allows for further streamlined reporting as part of the Improvement Plan monitoring.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Future reporting arrangements will include:

1. Monitoring of Improvement Plan activity and progress reported each quarter: This will include progress against the achievement measures, risks and the Outcome Agreement. This will start in October with a single report to Cabinet, followed by quarterly updates. The Improvement Priorities are to be monitored by appropriate Overview

and Scrutiny Committees according to the priority area of interest. Most of these are straight forward e.g. the Housing priorities will be reported to Housing Overview and Scrutiny; others are more complex e.g. Social Enterprise is led by the Director of Community Services, but will be reported to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the content is mainly regeneration and business related. Appendix 1 is a mapping document showing accountability and reporting lines.

2. Twice annually (at quarters 2 and 4) performance highlight reports will be presented from the Heads of Service: These will be similar to those previously produced for quarterly reporting with a focus on performance exceptions, both good and poor. This ensures that the 'business as usual' is still being monitored and reported against.
- 3.02 The contents of these half yearly Head of Service reports will include:
- Improvement Priorities that do not have an in-year priority
 - Service Plan progress
 - Corporate measures e.g. absence management
 - Reporting against findings from external regulatory bodies e.g. Wales Audit Office, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales or Estyn
 - Improvement Targets
 - National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) – as part of the new Outcome Agreement.
- 3.03 This approach is more streamlined and will remove some of the duplication experienced with the previous approach, e.g. separate Improvement Plan and risk register reporting.
- 3.04 The first full Improvement Plan progress report will be presented to Cabinet's October meeting.
- 3.05 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive this report and will be briefed on the changing arrangements.
- 4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**
- 4.01 Members support and help develop the new approach to performance reporting.
- 5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**
- 5.01 There are no specific financial implications for this report, however the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan is aligned to resource the priorities of the Improvement Plan.

5.02 In addition, the alignment of the Outcome Agreement to the Improvement Plan may have financial implications. These will be detailed in a future report once the Outcome Agreement is more fully developed.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 There are no specific anti poverty implications for this report, however poverty is a priority within the Improvement Plan 2013/14.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no specific environmental implications for this report, however the environment is a priority within the Improvement Plan 2013/14.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no equalities implications for this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no personnel implications for this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will receive this report as part of their September forward work programme which explains the new approach to performance reporting.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Corporate Management Team and the Performance Leads from across the Authority have contributed to help shape the new approach to reporting. Cabinet members have been consulted. Wales Audit Office has been advised.

11.02 Informal Cabinet received a copy of this report 3 September 2013.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Improvement Priorities Mapping Document

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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Council Priorities - Accountability Mapping

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|---------------------|------------------------|
| Housing | Director of Community Services | Cabinet Member for Housing | Extra Care Housing | Helping more people to live independently and well at home | Head of Housing | Housing |
| | | | Modern, Efficient and Adapted Homes | Improving the choice and quality of local housing | | |
| | | | Achieve the Wales Housing Quality Standard | Improving quality of life for our tenants through improved housing | | |

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|--|------------------------|
| Living Well | Director of Community Services | Cabinet Member for Social Services | Independent Living | Improving people's quality of life | Head of Adult Social Services / Head of Children's Social Services | Social & Health |
| | | | Integrated Community Social and Health Services | Helping more people to live independently and well at home | Head of Adult Services | |

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| Economy and Enterprise | Director of Environment | Council Leader | Business Sector Growth in Deeside | Creating jobs and growing the local economy | Head of Regeneration | Environment |
| | | | Town and Rural Regeneration | Making local communities viable | | |
| | Director of Community Services | | Social Enterprise | Supporting and creating new forms of local business | Head of Regeneration | Environment |

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Skills and Learning | Director of Lifelong Learning | Cabinet Member for Education | Modernised and High Performing Education | Improving standards in schools to get the best learner outcomes | Primary, Secondary and Inclusion Lead Officers | Lifelong Learning |
| | | | Places of Modernised Learning | Improving places of learning to get the best learner outcomes | Head of Development & Resources (LLL) | Lifelong Learning |
| | | Council Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance | Apprenticeships and Training | Meeting the skills and employment needs of local employers | Director of Lifelong Learning / Head of Regeneration | Lifelong Learning / Environment |

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Safe Communities | Chief Executive / Director of Environment | Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Waste & Recycling | Community Safety | Keeping people and communities safe | Head of Public Protection | Community Profile and Partnerships |
| | | Cabinet Member for Environment | Traffic and Road Management | Improving road safety | Head of Assets and Transportation | Environment |

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Poverty | Director of Community Services | Cabinet Members for Social Services / Housing / Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance | Welfare Reform | Protecting people from poverty | Head of Finance / Head of Housing | Housing / Corporate Resources |
| | | | Fuel Poverty | | Head of Housing | Housing |

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Environment | Director of Environment | Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Environment / Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Waste & Recycling | Transport Infrastructure and Services | People being able to access employment, local services and facilities | Head of Assets and Transportation | Environment |
| | | | Carbon Control and Reduction | Reducing our carbon impact on the natural environment | | |

| Council Priority | Lead Accountability | Portfolio Holder | Sub-Priority | Impact | Lead Accountability | O&S Scrutiny Committee |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|------------------------|
| Modern and Efficient Council | Chief Executive | Cabinet Member for Corporate | Organisational Change | Managing services well to achieve our priorities | Chief Executive / Head of ICT & Customer Services / Head of Housing | Corporate Resources |
| | | Cabinet Member of Finance | Matching Resources to Priorities | Protecting local front-line public services through the best use of our resources | Chief Executive / Head of Finance | |
| | | | Achieving Efficiency Targets | | | |
| | | Cabinet Member for Corporate | Procurement Strategy | Making our money go further through smart procurement | Head of ICT & Customer Services | |
| | | | Asset Strategy | Having the right buildings in the right places for the right uses | Head of Assets and Transportation | |
| | | | Access to Council Services | Improving Customer Services | Head of ICT & Customer Services | |
| | | | Single Status | Achieving a fair and affordable pay and grading structure | Head of HR and OD | |

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **19TH SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **SOCIAL CARE & ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR**

SUBJECT: **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council, or Directors. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful or a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are members. By reviewing and prioritising the forward work programme Members are able to ensure it is member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the draft Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the Forward Work Programme Planning Session held in July.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

N/A

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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DRAFT

| Date | Item | Purpose of Report/Session | Scrutiny Focus | Responsible/ Contact Officer | Submission Deadline |
|--|---|--|---|--|------------------------|
| 2 October 10.00 am Shotton | Double Click as a Social Enterprise - workshop | To further consider the proposal to transfer Double Click to a Social Enterprise | Pre-decision Scrutiny | Director of Community Services | |
| 24 October 10.00 a.m. | Voluntary Sector Services – FLVC, Carers etc (NEWCIS/Young Carers/Age Concern Access to Services Quarter 1 reporting | To enable Members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring | | Facilitator | |
| 8 November 2pm | Welfare Reform Workshop | | | Facilitator | |
| 25 November 1.00 p.m – please note change of date and time | Mental Health Commissioning Plan Dementia Commissioning Plan | To consider the draft commissioning plan To consider the draft commissioning plan | Service/Performance monitoring Pre decision Scrutiny | Director of Community Services Director of Community Services | |
| December – date to be confirmed | Budget meeting | | | | |

| Date | Item | Purpose of Report/Session | Scrutiny Focus | Responsible/ Contact Officer | Submission Deadline |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 9 January 2014 10.00 am | Collaborative Projects update | To receive a progress report on projects and services running collaboratively across North Wales. | Partnership Working/Performance Monitoring | Director of Community Services | |
| | Integrated Family Support Service | To receive a progress report post implementation of the Integrated Family Support Service across Flintshire and Wrexham. | Joint Working/Performance Monitoring | Director of Community Services | |
| | Q2 Performance | To enable members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring | Performance Monitoring | Facilitator | |
| 13 February 2.00 p.m. | CSSIW Inspection Report – Commissioning Dementia | To inform members of the outcome of the Dementia Inspection | Service Delivery/Performance | Director of Community Services | |
| | Annual Fostering Inspection | To inform members of the outcome of the Annual Fostering Inspection | Service Delivery/ Performance | Director of Community Services | |

| Date | Item | Purpose of Report/Session | Scrutiny Focus | Responsible/ Contact Officer | Submission Deadline |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|---|------------------------|
| 20 March 2.00 p.m. | ACRF Q3 Performance Directorate Plan (provisional) | To consider the final draft of the Flintshire County Council Social Services Annual Performance Report 2013-14. To enable members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring | Service Delivery Performance monitoring | Director of Community Services Facilitator Director of Community Services | |
| 1 May 10.00 p.m. | Comments, Compliments & Complaints | To receive a report on the compliments, representations and complaints received by Adult and Children Social Services for the year April 2013 – March 2014. | | | |
| 12 June 2.00 p.m. | Q4/Year End Performance | To enable members to fulfil their scrutiny role in relation to performance monitoring | Performance monitoring | | |
| 3 July 2.00 p.m. | Adult Safeguarding | To inform Members of the annual adult protection monitoring report submitted to the Welsh Government and to monitor progress of CSSIW Inspection Action Plan | Performance monitoring | Director of Community Services | |

ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED

Joint meeting with Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee at Llys Jasmine – date to be confirmed

- Disabled Facilities Grants – and the use of removable 1 bedroom/bathroom pods
- Supporting People
- Telecare
- Extra Care

Joint meeting with Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee – March 2014

- Corporate Parenting
- Children and Young People Plan
- Educational Attainment of Looked After Children
- Safeguarding
- Services for the blind/0partially sighted in Flintshire

Family Placement Team Review

Half-yearly meeting with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board representatives to include update on Home Enhanced Care Service

Site Visits

- Ambulance Depot – Alltami
- Llys Jasmine/ Arosfa

Suggested mini scrutiny topics

- Carers
- Dementia
- Public Health

Awareness raising – Safeguarding – Regional Local Safeguarding Children’s Board

Regular Items

| Month | Item | Purpose of Report | Responsible / Contact Officer |
|--------------------|---|--|--|
| Quarterly | Performance Information | To consider quarterly performance outturns against directorate indicators | Director of Community Services |
| January | Safeguarding & Child Protection | To provide Members with statistical information in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding | Director of Community Services |
| March | Educational Attainment of Looked After Children | Education officers offered to share the annual educational attainment report which goes to Lifelong Learning OSC with this Committee | Director of Lifelong Learning |
| March | Corporate Parenting | Report to Social & Health and Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny | Director of Community Services |
| June | Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Strategy | Update report | Director of Community Services |
| Half-yearly | Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Update | To maintain 6 monthly meetings – partnership working | Chief Executive/ Sheila Wentworth/ Facilitator |
| June/July | Foster Care | To receive an update on the recruitment and retention of Flintshire's Foster Carers. | Director of Community Services |
| May | Comments, Compliments and Complaints | To consider the Annual Report. | Director of Community Services |
| July | Protecting Vulnerable Adults & Inspection Action Plan Update | To inform Members of the annual adult protection monitoring report submitted to the Welsh Government and to monitor progress of CSSIW Inspection Action Plan | Director of Community Services |

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