

Flintshire County Council

**Annual Social Services Performance Report
2014-2015**

Contents

Introduction	3
A well governed and high performing council	5
Overview of Flintshire Social Services	9
More voice and more control	12
Smarter commissioning	17
A strong and professional workforce	22
Strong safeguarding	
'Better together' - in promoting 'well-being' and developing preventative services	

Glossary

This document provides a summary of our annual self assessment. If you receive a service from us please let us know if you think this report is a fair description of your experiences. Your views matter to us and are crucial if we are to continue to improve what we do and deliver on our future priorities.

If you are reading this on the web then there are links (in bold) throughout the document if you want to read more about individual projects. For words underlined there is a glossary at the end of the document that may help explain unfamiliar words and terms.

We welcome your comments on the format of this report, particularly whether it includes information that is helpful and of interest to you in a suitable format.

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Introduction

This is our fourth Annual Report on the performance of Social Services in Flintshire. The report reflects performance in the County in 2014-2015 which has been a really momentous year of change for the service. There is much to celebrate and staff have worked hard throughout the year to support vulnerable adults, children, families and carers.

In March 2015 we received our Annual Improvement Report from the Wales Audit Office. The report states 'There has been good progress in Adult social services but the performance of children's services has been less consistent in the face of increasing demand'. We consider this to be a fair impression of where our services currently are in terms of performance. There has indeed been an increase in the pressure on Children's services this year, demonstrated for example by a 70% increase in contacts/referrals to Children's Services, creating additional demand on services. Nevertheless positive performance has been provided in almost all areas of adult services and many areas in Children's Services but we recognise the need to do more to ensure all our services reach the standards of best practice.

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) passed into statute last year and will be fully implemented by April 2016. This is a significant milestone for social care in Wales as the delivery of high quality social care that promotes well-being will be a critical challenge, not just for Social Services but for the whole council, the wider public sector and the wider community. We have been planning in line with the 6 main themes of the Act for some time but the Act still marks a 'water shed' as we will need to achieve some radical change in a very challenging financial context.

Social Services is a strong council run service in its own right but of course needs to be firmly embedded in the corporate body and the overall key priorities for the Council. This has been further strengthened this year with the Council approving a new Operating model at Senior Management Level, with the introduction of a one tier Chief Officer Team, reporting directly to the Chief Executive. The role of Chief Officer, Social Services, is co-located with Chief Officer Colleagues working across the Council, which has enabled a cohesive, can do approach for the corporate team. In addition, there has been considerable change at Senior Manager level in Social Services with a brand new team of Senior Managers, working in a different way concentrating on the needs of families, with all Managers having a role both in Children's and Adult Services.

Flintshire Social Services continues to take forward the adoption of modern and effective working practices which support our staff better and improve our service offer for the people that rely on our services. We continue to develop agile working, for example in our much improved successful new modern office environment for Children's Services in Flint, with much more supportive conference facilities for children and families. We are also currently finalising arrangements for our new multidisciplinary Single Point of Access Service based at Preswylfa, Mold.

In 2014 Flintshire committed itself to older people by signing the Dublin Declaration, part of a national agreement to create an age friendly community. Flintshire has a very strong network of active 50 forums and groups and their steadfast support in developing age friendly communities is really remarkable.

We know the challenges for our services are very real and we operate in a context of increasing service demand, greater complexity of need and a very challenging budgetary position. We have worked hard to develop a business plan which sets out a range of approaches to deliver £2 million financial efficiencies in 2015/16. Some of these proposals involve difficult choices about how services are targeted and delivered. The proposals for 2015/2016 include:

- Targeting day care, respite and short term breaks to those with greatest need
- Consulting on the potential to refocus the role of In House Supported Living
- Reducing management posts
- Delivering efficiencies, and taking a more targeted approach to funding

Some of the approaches will require detailed and sensitive consultation with people, and partner organisations, to ensure their voice informs and shapes how we move forward.

As part of our overall approach we are exploring opportunities to operate through alternative delivery models e.g. mutuals, social enterprises and co-operatives. In particular we think there are real opportunities for looking at alternative delivery models for our work opportunity services for people with learning disability. Exploring, and where appropriate, moving to alternative delivery models plays an integral role in protecting, and in some cases improving services and making them sustainable. Our overriding principle is to protect services, and outcomes for vulnerable people, whilst changing the delivery mechanism.

Critically we have a strong and committed leadership team to help us manage these changes, with attentive and supportive senior politicians, and a creative, committed and a tireless workforce who go the extra mile for people every day in Flintshire. This is evident from the many complimentary letters we receive and some of the accolades and positive inspections you will read about in this report. However, we are in no way complacent and know how much harder we need to work to introduce further successful change, in a difficult financial climate, and ensure our services continue to support people well in Flintshire.

Neil Ayling
Chief Officer Social Services

(add image)

and

Councillor Christine Jones
Cabinet Member for Social Services

(add image)

A well governed and high performing council

Flintshire is a well governed and high performing Council. We have a strong Corporate identity with a Chief Operating Team providing cohesive and professional leadership. We have a robust governance framework which includes a clear set of organisational priorities, a coherent approach to financial planning/management and an effective operating model for risk management. Our arrangements for accountability and support include regular consideration of social services/social care issues at the Chief Officer Team meetings, a Modernising Social Services Programme Board that involves Senior Officers across portfolios, informal and formal Cabinet, Social and Health Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, The Children's Services Forum and our Joint Lifelong Learning and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Council Priorities

We have a clear sense of purpose and direction and have set four shared priorities with our partners at a County level, and eight priorities for the Council itself. Last year we highlighted that Social Services would contribute mainly contribute to three of the Corporate Priorities and here is a summary of the things we have done to fulfil our priorities (further detail is contained within the report):

Corporate Priority	What we have done...
Improving quality of life through the promotion of independent living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported more people through <u>reablement</u> – responding to a 28% increase in referrals in 2014/15 Reduced the waiting time for OT assessments Completed 608 minor adaptations Completed 92 major adaptations to people's homes through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process Increased the number of people supported through a Direct Payment from 302 to 388
Helping more people to live independently and well at home through integrated community Social and Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established an integrated Step Up/Step Down service to prevent hospital admission or facilitate early discharge 90 people were supported through Step Up/Step Down service which included reablement and physio support 15 people with dementia were supported by a project to use an EMI residential bed to assess their needs instead of assessing in a hospital ward setting Ran a Palliative Care project to increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of staff in Nursing Homes in Flintshire to support residents who are able to remain in their chosen home at the end of their life and receive palliative care in a dignified manner.
Improving the opportunities for the growing numbers of <u>Looked After Children</u> , with a focus on learning opportunities and educational attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <u>Corporate Parenting</u> Strategy document revision was completed and ratified by Children's Services Forum. The strategy and the LA action plan for Looked After Children have been shared with school representatives. Meetings have been held to investigate data links between ONE and PARIS systems (Education and Children's Services databases.) to improve the way that information is shared and a series of options for regional working have been identified.

The 2015/16 Council's priorities and sub-priorities for action are set out in our Annual Improvement Plan, which have recently been updated, are summarised below:

Priority	Sub-Priority	Impact
Housing	Appropriate and Affordable Homes	Improving the choice and quality of local housing
	Modern, Efficient and Adapted Homes	
Living Well	Independent Living	Enabling more people to live independently and well at home
	Integrated Community Social and Health Services	
	Safeguarding	Ensuring adults, young people and children are safeguarded
Economy & Enterprise	Business Sector Growth	Creating jobs and growing the local economy
	Town and Rural Regeneration	
Skills and Learning	Apprenticeships and Training	Improving learning provision and opportunities to achieve better learner outcomes
	Modernised and High Performing Education	
Safe Communities	Community Safety	Keeping people and communities safe
Poverty	Maximising Income	Protecting people from poverty
	Fuel Poverty	
Environment	Transport Infrastructure and Services	Helping people to safely access employment, local services and facilities
	Sustainable Development and Environmental Management	Developing and protecting the environment
Modern and Efficient Council	Developing Communities	Supporting communities to be resilient
	Improving Resource Management	Supporting front line services to perform well whilst being efficient

As a Council we work collectively across service areas to deliver on the Improvement Plan. As such Social Services has a key role in delivering the Council's improvement priorities. For example we are working hard to contribute to the delivery the Asset Strategy to make the best use of the council's buildings by making sure our offices are brought into local communities and using our Flintshire Connects facilities to deliver a wide range of services. Conversely, services across the Council work to support vulnerable people and deliver priorities relating to the social care agenda e.g. through the provision of quality Housing, anti poverty work in response to Welfare Reform and making local communities viable and vibrant so vulnerable people are safe and can access local support networks.

For 2015/16 the main ways in which Social Services will contribute to the corporate priorities will be through the 3 sub-priorities under the 'Living Well' Priority that social services will directly lead the delivery of:

- 1. Improving quality of life through the promotion of independent living.**
- 2. Helping more people to live independently and well at home through integrated community Social and Health Services.**
- 3. Ensuring adults, young people and children are safeguarded**

The safeguarding sub-priority (number 3) within the Council's Improvement Plan is new for 2015-16. Safeguarding has a high Corporate profile and the new sub-priority reflects a commitment to further develop the awareness and profile of Safeguarding across the Council, including the wider issues of prevention of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Working Together

We continue to be proud of our longstanding track record of partnership working. The communities we serve rightly expect the statutory and third sector partners to work together, to work to shared priorities and, through collective effort, to get things done.

As a Local Service Board (LSB) we have jointly developed "**Flintshire's Wellbeing Plan: A Single Integrated Plan for Flintshire 2013-2017**". The Plan focuses on four priorities that are reviewed on a regular basis:

- **Priority 1** - Lead by example as employers and community leaders
- **Priority 2** - People are safe
- **Priority 3** - People enjoy good health, well-being and independence
- **Priority 4** - Organisational environmental practices

Working together to make an impact in these priorities is the collective aim of the LSB, realising that no single organisation can achieve them on their own; the partner organisations represented on the LSB can collectively make a positive difference for the people who live, visit and work in Flintshire.

We have previously acknowledged that in recent years, there have been challenges in ensuring effective and consistent partnership working with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB). We are encouraged by more recent working relationships, refreshed strategic direction being led by BCUHB's new Executive Board and the new operating structure currently being introduced which will have more of a locality focus. We also welcome the strengthened focus that is anticipated in relation to increasing capacity within community based services. As this new structure develops and we continue to strengthen our working relationship, we will continue to review the success and pace of partnership working with BCUHB as part of our approach to risk management.

Working with members

Elected members have a valuable role in shaping policy, setting the direction for the service and scrutinising progress. Good examples of joint working include the rigorous quarterly monitoring of the Improvement Plan, half yearly Performance Reports presented for challenge and scrutiny to the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Annual Budget Challenge and consultation on the setting of priorities and targets. Here in Flintshire we are lucky to have a committed and experienced Scrutiny Committee. Elected

members also provide an invaluable link to our communities and to the issues that are important to them.

Children's Services Structural Changes

2014/15 has been a year of transition for Children's Services with a move to the new Social Services management team structure. We now have all 3 of our Senior Managers in place and have embarked on a review of Children's Services to ensure that we are organised to support the delivery of good outcomes for children, young people and their families, with a robust focus on practice and quality. The review will inform a restructure of Children's Services that will have the following key features: stronger integration of early intervention and preventative services; stronger focus on the child's voice in the planning and delivery of services; implementation of a new single assessment that will enable Social Workers to allow appropriate time for reflection and direct work with the children/ young people and their families.

Resources

The Council has made significant progress in a number of difficult areas during the last year, including: setting balanced budgets whilst investing in key priorities, meeting growth in service demands and absorbing the cost impacts of inflation. The Council has achieved this through developing internal programmes of change and reform to make efficiencies, whilst acknowledging it still needs to strengthen aspects of its operations. The scale and pace of efficiencies required over the coming years is unprecedented; and 2015/2016 will not be any different, we will be updating, and further developing, a comprehensive Medium Term Financial Plan to ensure that we continue to respond to the medium and longer term financial challenges ahead. Within this context we were pleased to recently receive our best ever annual improvement report from the Wales Audit Office (WAO) which reflects our commitment to remain a high performing organisation which gives us good foundations to continue to delivery our priorities in the face of further financial challenges.

Overview of Flintshire Social Services

Social Services provide social care services to vulnerable adults, children and families. We provide services directly and in collaboration with partner agencies including Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), independent sector care providers, voluntary and charitable organisations. Last year we provided services to 4,323 adults and 843 children.

A significant focus of our work is safeguarding both vulnerable adults and children. Key functions include child protection work with the 75 children currently on the child protection register. We also have increasing numbers of vulnerable adults being referred to Adult Safeguarding with 416 vulnerable adults referred since 1 April 2014. Recent changes in case law have also led to a significant increase in the number of DOLS (Deprivation of Liberty) cases with 263 applications since 1 April 2014.

A large proportion of the Departments resources directly funds directly care packages for older people, people with disabilities and children. The cost of our services is currently £59 million. We spend 71% (£41.6m per annum) of our budget on direct care for vulnerable people children and adults). This is made up of £30m on direct care packages from the independent sector and £11.5m of our own In-House provision. Even though we have a high proportion of care provided by the independent sector the overall amount is lower when compared to other authorities in Wales.

There are 70 registered providers of social care operating in Flintshire. 90 percent of older people's services and physical disability services is provided by the Independent Sector; in learning disability services the balance is 60 percent. The trend will be to rebalance provision from In House services through alternative delivery models or through increased commissioning of services. In house provision will increasingly focus on specialist functions, particularly relating to dementia care.

In Children's Services there is no in house residential provision and we will increasingly be looking at how we support more children and young people to remain in a family setting as opposed to out of county residential placements. Positively, In House Fostering Services are strong, with 112 approved foster carers and another 31 going through the process. Our target to increase to 150 foster carers will help reduce our reliance on expensive foster placements with independent agencies and provide a choice of in-house fostering placements for looked-after children.

Future Horizons and Service Demand

We have well developed commissioning strategies for key services, mental health, learning disability, ageing. These give us statistical predictions for these populations.

Improvements in health services and living standards has delivered a significant improvement and life expectancy. We expect significant increases in age profile, the incidence and complexity of disability, and in long term medical conditions, which statistically mean more demand on services. Carers are more dispersed and we have very high numbers of vulnerable people living alone with weak support networks. Increasing numbers of women are in work and / or are supporting both children and elderly parents (double dependency). We are dependent on the resilience of primary health care and therefore we need to continue to integrate our planning with Health.

We are already experiencing significantly increasing demand for services from an ageing population with complex care needs. Between Quarter 1 in 2011/2012 and Quarter 1 in 2014/2015 there was a 38% increase in demand for older people services.

For children there are more child protection cases being referred to the service than 2 years ago and more looked after children. This is believed to be due to the increasing profile of abuse. There are also vastly more adults abuse cases referred due to high profile cases and increasing awareness.

We recognise that if we are to ensure that the people are supported to live good quality lives we need to continue to change the way services are designed and provided. The Social Services and Well-being Act provides a clear framework for this modernisation agenda.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act

2016 will mark a new era for social care when the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act comes into force. The Act require Local Authorities and Local Authority partners to:

- ✓ strengthen the information and advice so people know what support is out there
- ✓ improve the quality of services
- ✓ provide service users and carers with a stronger voice and real control over the services they receive
- ✓ promote equality
- ✓ bring a renewed focus on prevention and early intervention.

We are working hard to bring about the transformational change that the Act will require when it becomes legislation in April 2016. We have made sound progress in transforming and modernising our services. This report provides a flavor of the work that has been carried out so far and the changes that we have planned over the coming year. We know that the scale and pace of the change needed should not be underestimated, particularly in the context of growing demand for care and support, increasing complexity of need, and significant budgetary pressures. One of the biggest challenges that we face is how we successfully continue to meet the needs of vulnerable people whilst at the same we need to remodel more traditional models of care, and empower people and communities to take responsibility for their own wellbeing. This agenda will bring about significant change for service users, carers, families, staff, communities and our partners. Some of this change will not always be popular and tough decisions will need to be made. The reality is that this change agenda cannot be delivered in isolation. The council, the NHS, independent, voluntary providers of care and support and local communities will need to work together to turn the Act's ambitious plans and principles into an everyday reality.

To deliver this agenda we are working to:

- Ensure that we have a unified approach across the Council so there is a consistent understanding and approach to enhancing the wellbeing of vulnerable people
- Further develop and strengthen partnership arrangements with Health and other statutory agencies, including integrated and shared services where appropriate.
- Develop a greater understanding of local need and establish new approaches to commissioning to ensure high quality, sustainable services that deliver good outcomes.

- Ensure both children and adult's services are focussed on early intervention and prevention.
- Ensure robust programme and project management to deliver sustainable change.
- Target finite resources in ways that best meet need whilst investing in the design and development of new approaches and service models.

More Say and More Control

We believe that people should have a stronger voice and real control over their lives. This requires a focus on enabling people to:

- take responsibility of their own well-being
- focus on what matters for people through personal outcomes
- be in control of the care and support they receive

This chapter sets out what we have been doing to ensure that people are placed at the centre of their care. The starting point has to be that people can find out about the support that is available. This is about people getting the right information, at the right time, without having to phone around different agencies and services.

Single Point of Access: First Contact right response

Last year we reported that we are developing a Single Point of Access (SPoA). The SPoA will be the 'front door' for information, advice and community services for adults in Flintshire regarding their health, care and well-being.

Plans to set up a SPoA in Flintshire are progressing well. We have:

- ✓ developed a 'postcard from the future' which describes our vision for the SPoA. If you are reading this report on line click here to read the postcard from 'Maureen to Beryl' ([link to postcard](#));
- ✓ introduced a member of staff from the voluntary sector to work as part of the SPoA to ensure that people receive information and advice about the range of community and voluntary support that is available in their area
- ✓ secured a location for the SPoA where staff from social services, health and the voluntary sector will work together as an integrated Team

It is important to us that we develop a SPoA that is right for Flintshire and will serve the needs of our residents, therefore we are taking an incremental approach to its implementation.

In 2015 we will be changing our operational structure in Children's Services. This new structure will introduce a new working arrangement at the front door of Children's Services which will strengthen links with early intervention services. It is our longer term intention to move towards a Single Point of Access for all citizens within Flintshire.

Listening and involving people

It is important to us that we receive good quality feedback from the people we support and to be able to incorporate the positive and negative experiences into our lessons learnt process.

The voice of children and families is actively encouraged within the service through a range of approaches including: effective statutory review processes; conference buddy scheme; dedicated participation forum and the Children's Services Forum amongst other methods.

Last year we recognised that feedback from young people had dropped so we wanted to increase the range of opportunities and technologies for service users to give us feedback, so we have introduced an electronic evaluation form and a questionnaire on SurveyMonkey as a starting point. However, we recognise that there is further work to be done to ensure that the voice of the child (and family) is encouraged and listened to as a continuous process and not solely at key stages in the process (i.e. meetings and reviews). Equally, there is a need to address the quality of recording in capturing the voice of the child and evidencing how this is used to influence decisions and actions taken.

Over the past twelve months work has been undertaken to strengthen the focus on quality assurance with a move away from being solely focussed on performance measurement to recognise the broader qualitative element of our work in areas such as: voice of the child being at the heart of what we do; the focus on outcomes being the at the heart of our planning and delivery; the arrangements to focus on the breadth, depth and quality of assessment, care planning and review activity; the lessons that are learnt from complaints and compliments and observations made from independent perspectives such as external inspections.

As part of this refocus we have made personnel changes within the strategic support functions, including the appointment of a Participation Officer to strengthen our commitment to our children and their voice, and strengthened the role of independent functions such as Safeguarding Managers and Independent Reviewing Officers. Running concurrently has been closer working with operational managers and staff to ensure that the quality assurance processes that are designed and implemented are fit for purpose not only to enable a strategic overview of the quality of services but to also ensure they are effective in supporting improvements to individual practice.

We have also reviewed our Action Plan with the 'Flintshire Getting Engaged' group and will be looking at how we refresh our approach to engagement as part of the wider quality initiative. To move forward we will re-launch the group and update the action plan in a way that embeds engagement into our quality assurance framework.

In response to the 2013/14 annual report we have made improvements to our processes for the timeliness of resolving complaints and we have raised awareness amongst staff about the importance of learning from compliments and complaints as it allows us to use the findings and outcomes to inform our policy and practice in delivering services. I am happy to report that 91% of adult complaints and 86% of children's complaints are being responded to within timescales, compared to 92% and 75% respectively last year.

The following section provides examples of some of the things people told us through our complaints procedure and what we did in response:

What you said: The process for reviewing foster placements that had ended abruptly took too long to arrange and were held too long after the placement had ended.

What we did: We streamlined the Disruption Meeting process so the issues involved in the breakdown are fresh in people's minds, and implemented a single point of referral, reducing delay.

What you said: Our contact facilities for families were too formal and didn't make people feel relaxed.

What we did: We reached an agreement with Action for Children to use their facilities for contact sessions as they are more child friendly and family focussed.

What you said: Some of our action plans following P.O.V.A. (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) investigations need more detail and need to be more robust.

What we did: We revised the P.O.V.A. audit tool to include prompts such as agreeing the scope of the investigation, that clear timescales are set out and that the family are formally informed of the investigation's outcome and decisions reached.

What you said: Service users and families indicated they were unaware of their right to comment upon or amend their Unified Assessment and Care Plan.

What we did: We revised our information booklet "*Getting Help From Social Services*" to make this particular right more explicit.

Direct Payments

Last year we said that we would continue to expand the take-up of Direct Payments and Citizen Directed Support to promote greater choice and control. So, how did we do? We are really pleased that as of December 2014, 388 people are now using direct payments across Adults and Children's Social Services, that's an increase of 31% since 2013 and 89% since 2012 and we have achieved this by:

- Developing a true partnership between the Council and the people who use Direct Payments to effectively responding to the experiences of users
- Creating a scheme that it is responsive, provides opportunities for personal creativity and gives autonomy.
- Introducing innovative solutions, such as administered direct payments, pooling resources, direct payment cooperatives, a wide range of financial management options
- Facilitated an annual direct payments open day in supporting the development of the Personal Assistant workforce locally ([photo from March open day](#))

We are now also embarking on a new direct payments card scheme, in partnership with APS card solutions, which will administer the funding differently. The initial project went live at the end of February 2015 and will support approximately 30 service users. The project will be reviewed before hopefully being offered to anyone who would benefit from this approach. ([brand/ image of card](#))

"Direct payments give me peace of mind and flexibility." – Quote

"The direct payments scheme enables me to employ support for my Son. The benefit is that I know exactly who is supporting him" - Quote

Young carers

We recognise and value the critical role that carers and young carers play in supporting people to live independently lives. We know that caring can be a rewarding and fulfilling role, but that for some people it can, at times be tiring and isolating. We work very closely with the 3rd sector who provide experience and expertise in supporting carers and young carers.

In our report for 2014/15 we identified that we needed to improve the way we capture information about the support we provide to young carers as data under represented the real picture of the number of young carers supported and the type of help they receive. Over the last 12 months we have:

- Updated our recoding system to ensure data was efficiently captured and developed additional specifications enabling staff to record more information on young carers.
- Barnardos worked with us to update referral forms to ensure we capture more information with regard to signposting and referrals made on behalf of social workers.
- Barnardos Assessment Processes have been updated. The process streamlined in order to improve the overall timescales between referral and assessment.

- In order to raise awareness about young carers and the referral processes Barnardos have arranged a training workshop for all social service staff and have also arranged to visit a number of teams.

It is now evident that these changes are working, when compared to 2013 data, more carers this year have been assessed for their needs and more carers are going on to receive support services.

The Young Carers Strategy is at present developing a new clear measurable multi- agency plan for action for 2015/2016 to ensure the needs of our young carers are being met and offer the support that is wanted by the young people.

Welsh Language

Flintshire continues to develop the Welsh Government framework 'More Than Just Words'. This is a Strategic Framework for Welsh Language services in Health, Social Services and Social Care which aims to improve services for those who need or choose to receive their care in Welsh.

In 2013 we made good progress with the framework and we have continued to do so throughout 2014. Developing a series of new training initiatives to ensure staff are able to access the right training at the level we need (outlined further in the workforce section); developing proposals for a new forum for Welsh Language Champions, which will enable more opportunities to share good practice and will ensure Welsh Language is a Local Authority wide priority; including an active offer specification into our PARIS system for adults and children's with assisted guidance, which means we can now record when staff are actively offering welsh language services and monitor this to ensure it becomes embedded into practice.

I am also proud to report that Flintshire Adult Social Services has received a Special Recognition Award at The Welsh Language in Health, Social Services and Social Care Conference and Awards 2014. This Award acknowledges the significant improvements to Welsh Language Services for older people at Llys Jasmine Extra Care Scheme in Mold and as a result of the £500 awarded we have developed a dementia reminiscence initiative, specifically for welsh speaking people. (photo David J.)

Looking forward: Our priorities for 2015/16

Our priorities for enabling people to have more say and more control in 2015/16 are:

➤ To increase in Direct Payments

We want to see a continued increase in people choosing Direct Payments.

➤ Refocus day care

People's expectations about the type of support they want when they are old is changing. In line with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act we will look at how we can support people to access universal and community based day activity whilst ensuring that vulnerable people are supported.

➤ Develop a 'progression model' of support for people with learning disabilities

The progression model builds and supports people strengths and enables them to live as independently as possible.

Smarter Commissioning

Responding to what people need by ensuring that we have the right services in place is a big part of what we do in Social Services. The Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 identifies new ways for us to do this and in readiness over the last year we have embarked on some exciting new approaches:

Co-production

Co-production is a new approach we are seeking to embed in our commissioning activity. Under the Act like other Local Authorities we are required to produce a population needs assessment so in readiness we are getting to know our providers better. During 2014 we have started meeting with providers of disabilities services to understand what they see as the priorities and outcomes for people with disabilities and how this needs to be reflected in future service development. Providers also took part in self- assessing where their own service is at in delivering on the 5 ways to wellbeing, with some thinking of how they could deliver going forward. A priority for 2015/ 2016 will be to widen the involvement to include local communities and most importantly the people who currently use our services.

In Flintshire, we have always been keen to grow our shared lives scheme and in 2014 we have been looking at best practice in other areas, in particular how one expert provider in the field is leading the way in taking a co- production approach to develop innovative ways of working with people and their carers to ensure person shaped support where focus is on choice and independence. We will be taking this forward in 2015.

Outcome based Commissioning

We are continuing to work with a number of domiciliary Providers in Flintshire to roll out the "Living Well " approach to supporting individuals living with Dementia moving away from a task and time approach towards a personalised outcome based service. We have been fortunate to involve Helen Sanderson associates in driving forward this pilot project as a first step to changing the way we commission care services for some of our most vulnerable users in 2015

In 2014/15 we worked with all North Wales Local Authorities and BCUHB to develop a North Wales Advocacy Service. This development is not only a good example of regional commissioning but it's also a strong move towards outcome based commissioning that is heavily focused on children and young people.

Alternative Delivery Models

Flintshire is determined to provide the best outcomes for local residents in what is a financially challenging environment. A key element of this approach is to try and sustain important services for communities and individuals that would otherwise may be lost. Our approach is to learn lessons from elsewhere but alternative models will be designs specifically to meet the needs of our communities and within the context we are working. This will be a priority over the next few years but here are a couple of the developments we have been working on to date:

In January 2014 approval was received for Double Click Design, one of our Mental Health Support Services, to be developed as a Social Enterprise. This service has continued to flourish supporting people to gain new skills and confidence. We would expect the service to become a fully independent community interest company by May 2015 once a formal

transfer has been fully completed and this will enable the service to continue to provide valuable support and expands its business ambitions.

The Flintshire Crèche is another in-house service that has the potential to enhance and sustain the existing sessional crèche provision through the development of a social enterprise business model. The service aims to provide quality sessional childcare to vulnerable families to enable parents to attend training courses that will in turn increase their knowledge and skills in preparation for further training or employment opportunities and good parenting.

There has been a lot of good work undertaken over the last year to make the service a more viable and sustainable business model and to meet the increased demand, we have:

- ✓ Increased the staff team
- ✓ Expanded the provision of childcare on a needs basis
- ✓ Registered 2 further sites to provide childcare, now operational across 4 sites
- ✓ Implemented quality standards, a training programme and good practice
- ✓ Developed a business plan

We will continue to develop the service model throughout 2015/16, financed through grants and committed services, with a view to considering whether to move forward as a social enterprise.

The Learning Disability Day and Work Services project is probably one of the most complex initiatives to be taken forward in Flintshire. Our direction of travel for this initiative is to firstly ensure that any new models deliver quality and citizen directed services whilst carefully considering the business viability of these services. We recognise the importance of this work to make sure we get it right so we will take the time to fully explore and scope suitable alternative delivery models over the next year.

Move to Person Centred Practice

We have commissioned an expert in the field of person centred practice to work with us to ensure that person centred practice exists in all care homes across Flintshire. This robust programme which will be co-developed with all partners i.e. Care Homes, Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) and BCU and will deliver the needed change in a new exciting way; by building the capacity of care home managers to deliver person centred change, introducing the key person-centred practices of one-page profiles, person-centred reviews and individual time. There will be 3 levels of change for Care homes linking to a Gold, Silver and Bronze scheme. We look forward to reporting on the progress our Care homes make against the scheme in our next year Annual Report.

Fig – What do we mean by a One- page profile.

The One – page profile describes what is important to the person and how to support them, also showing areas of a person's life they want to make decisions. Care home staff also produce their own one- page profile for the purpose of matching people with the team.

In addition to the plans to work with providers to improve person centred practice work has continued in 2014 to apply a 'judgement framework' and assess it's value in our evaluation and monitoring practice, as a way to measure the outcomes achieved for care home residents. Providers have welcomed this approach as it leads to a shared understanding on quality and best practice.

"I really like the new monitoring tool, it makes it very clear where you are now in each outcome area and what you have to do to improve. I find the reports from the regulators to be very negative" (Quote from EMI Residential Home Manager)

We are in fact the only local authority currently that is consistently applying such as tool across all residential and domiciliary providers. Our next steps will be to ensure that our framework is aligned to a similar framework that CSSIW is producing.

Our Programme of Commissioning Strategies

Last year we were pleased to report three commissioning strategies were approved, namely Learning Disability, Mental Health and Dementia Care long term placements – common to all is the aim to support people to maintain their independence, secure good quality outcomes and achieve value for money. A priority for this year was to further develop our programme of commissioning taking opportunities for collaboration with Health and other partners where money can be saved and quality maintained. We have regionally collaborated on domiciliary care provision and on a number of voluntary sector contracts such as the provision of advocacy for children and young people. We have delayed going to the market as part of the implementation of our Learning Disability Strategy as focus has started with the transformation of our own provision. This includes the adoption of the progression model our blueprint for services which is about supporting people to live as independent as possible, by maximising use of telecare and direct payments, with 'just enough' support and ensuring progression is a key feature of transitional arrangements for young people.

Through the North Wales Commissioning Hub a range of activity has been undertaken to develop the Children's Services market through the development of market position statements for Fostering and Residential Care. The market position statements provide information to help social care providers make proactive business and investment decisions that in turn help to develop and increase the range of services available.

Action for Children

Last year we reported that we had introduced a part-time Therapist, with a specific remit for looked after children to focus on short term intervention programmes to assist with issues such as: separation / loss issues for sibling groups, children in transition between placements, behavioural management advice and supporting Kinship placements as and when issues arise.

During the past 12 months there has been 101 direct work sessions held with children and their carers, ongoing work with 21 children and 22 consultations with social workers all of which have contributed to the stability of placements and support to carers. This service, under new commissioned arrangements for 2015/2016, this service will be continued due to its success.

Night Support Service

A priority for this year was to launch our first ever Night Time Response Service and in February 2015 we launched the Pilot. A partnership with Compass Community Care and Wales & West Housing Association, this pilot funded by the Intermediate Care Fund promotes the independence of service users at night time. A trained team of responders are at hand to offer support and reassurance over the phone or by visiting. The service is available from 10.30pm to 7.30am seven days a week in the Mold locality initially for a period of 6 to 8 weeks. It is anticipated that older people discharged from hospital or adults in recovery with mental

health needs may benefit from this additional support at night during their transition home. The service is free of charge for the duration of the pilot and we will be looking to formally evaluate in September 2015. It is very early days, having only been live for one month but after extensive consultation 14 people with learning disabilities they have said how welcomed the scheme is by signing up to be part of the pilot and with new referrals being considered.

Re-modelling dementia services

The Flintshire integrated Health and Social Care dementia action plan aims to take forward 7 key themes and here is a flavour of the work that has been taking place over the last year:

Integrated Dementia Action Plan Headline Achievements:

Living well with dementia in the community

- Roll out of 'Dementia RED' THE Regional Collaboration project aimed at developing a presence within the GP surgeries for co coordinating support /information about statutory Services ,Voluntary Services particularly Alzheimer's society to benefit people with dementia and their Carers
- Access to reminiscence resources via Flintshire's Library services such as Rem Pods and Reminiscence Packs (**photos of the pods**) which embrace our welsh culture and heritage.

Early diagnosis and integrated health and social care support

- Increasing early diagnosis and integrated health and social care support through reducing waiting times for diagnosis and access to services needed before diagnosis Waiting times for Memory Clinics have reduced from an average of 18 weeks to 6.5 weeks

Educating families and carers

- Counselling services to ensure carers are supported through both BCUHB and NEWCIS
- Carers Training courses specific to those carers supporting individuals living with dementia
- A range of activities for carer and cared for to enjoy such as gym membership and exercise programme, gardening, music therapy sessions and access to reminiscence load equipment and training in creative story telling via 'Never Ending Story'

High quality residential and nursing provision within Flintshire

- Roll out of Person Centred Care Planning / one page profile to support a person centred approach for people living with dementia in all Independent Sector Homes in Flintshire.
- Training Courses in Reablement, Dance Circle, Art and craft and Dementia Friendly Gardening

Workforce development in health and social care

- Developed a tiered dementia training programme for staff in Care Homes from basic level 1 awareness raising to degree qualifications

Safeguarding vulnerable people

- Working with Age Connects to create a new service called " listening friends " who will visit and comment on the "lived experience " of people with dementia living in Care Homes in Flintshire

Dementia Friendly Communities

- Working with partners in Buckley, Flint and Mold we are removing the segregation between enhanced care settings and the community environment, for example improved access to the community (**photo of Flint event**)
- Actively increasing the number of " dementia friends" in Flintshire in conjunction

with Alzhiemers

The outcomes of the action plan will make a difference to people living with dementia and there carers by removing the loneliness and stigma often attached to the diagnosis. We are encouragingly seeing people with dementia, being seen as a person with a past life, experiences and personality.

The Quality Circle Approach

In 2003 Flintshire County Council's Contract and Commissioning Team, in partnership with CSSIW, BCUHB and Flintshire Advocacy Services, decided to pilot a 'Quality Circle' approach to ensure on-going quality monitoring of adult services across all care settings in Flintshire. The aim of this pilot was to develop a central point where positive and negative information about commissioned care services could be shared informally amongst organisations and agencies with a view to securing improvement before issues needed more formal action

The Quality Circle meets on a quarterly basis. To date the voice of service users has been represented by Flintshire Advocacy Services, however in March 2015 a plan was formed that the Quality Circle would establish a means by which it would listen directly to service user views, and that these views could be fed back to the meetings on an anonymous basis. This plan was made in response to a recommendation made by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales that 'Commissioners and CSSIW should develop informal and systematic ways in which to ensure they better understand the quality of life of older people, through listening to them directly'.

A 'Listening Friends' pilot project will be introduced within eight residential and nursing homes for older people in Flintshire, representing Flintshire County Council's three locality areas. The project will be delivered by Age Connects North East Wales, largely using an existing volunteer pool, who will receive appropriate advice and mentoring in advance of the project. The 'Listening Friends' project will further contribute to the effectiveness of the Quality Circle in Flintshire, ensuring the continued sharing of intelligence and information, strengthening relationships between service users, organisations and agencies, and preventing the escalation of concerns that pose potential risks to service users.

Looking forward: Our priorities for 2015/16

Our priorities for Smarter Commissioning in 2015/16 are:

➤ Remodelling dementia services

We have developed an action plan for strengthening dementia services. We will work locally and with BCUHB across North Wales to deliver this plan which will include a strong focus on how we can develop dementia friendly communities.

➤ Review supported living arrangements

We will consult with people about alternative arrangements to providing supported living support In House. This discussion will also explore how we can support people in a more flexible, person centred way

➤ Review and realign funding to the voluntary sector

We will work closely with the sector to target funding where it will be most effective

A strong and professional workforce

Our workforce continues to be our most valuable asset to support people to achieve their best outcomes and lead independent lives. Modernising to deliver quality services and meet the challenges ahead must go hand in hand with modernising our workforce. Even within a financially challenging environment training and developing our workforce is crucial, albeit we must prioritise our resources.

As a Council we continue to invest in staff through management development ILM training, recruitment of apprentices, trainees and graduate opportunities as well as ongoing training and development for the entire workforce.

Training our Workforce

Priorities in the 2013/14 annual report identified the delivery of key training and in response we have delivered the following in 2014/15:

Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014)

Basic awareness training has been rolled out during January - February 2015 to 266 staff, excluding direct care who have been issued with information. The training was a half day session delivered jointly by Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council. Working together with the Care Council, from March 2015 onwards, further training will be delivered to staff increasing in detail as we move closer to full implementation.

More than Just Words

In partnership with corporate training a suite of community based Welsh language courses, with qualifications attached, have been delivered; which include: a summer and winter school being delivered at Northop College, weekly conversation groups delivered in County Hall, Mold, annual events involving staff and the community, which are all aimed to raise awareness and encourage the use of the Welsh language.

Corporate Parenting

We have been working with the Welsh Local Government Association to identify the most up to date training material to pull together a short training session for Members as their role as corporate parents – this will be delivered in May / June (post elections).

Public Law Outline

A national programme of training delivered in the North, South and mid-Wales. As Public Law Outline is developing staff are attending 'train the trainer' courses, 26 members of staff attended from Flintshire.

Critical thinking analysis training is also being delivered for staff to complement the Public Law Outline.

In addition we have also delivered in key areas such as:

- All Wales Safeguarding (Adults and Children)
- Autism Awareness
- Dementia
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Domestic Abuse
- Mental Health First Aid and Parental Mental Health: Safeguarding Children
- Understanding Self Harm for Children and Young People

As part of the national programme to develop the next generation of social work practitioners, the Workforce Development Team have been involved in the Continuing Professional Education and Learning Programme (CPEL). The consolidation programme for newly qualified social workers has been a great success and our experienced practitioners and senior social workers are now embarking on the 'Experience Practitioner Programme Award' and 'Senior Practitioner Programme Award' both of which involve one years university study to achieve a 60 credit qualification at level 7, here in Flintshire 3 of our staff who started studying for the Senior Practitioner Programme in September 2014 will complete the course by July 2015.

Supporting staff

Staff have regular supervision to support them in their role and to ensure continued high quality practice. Discussions with staff show that they value the regular supervision they receive. In Childrens services staff have advised that supervision supports reflective practice and learning. However, we recognise that we need to improve the recording of supervision to ensure that our records reflect the professional and effective management support and oversight that is provided.

Within the Council we have updated our performance appraisal system which has a clear focus on recognising and nurturing talent and good performance. The Employee Appraisal process forms part of our overall Performance Management System, which provides a framework to ensure appropriate and effective training and development for all staff to meet both their personal needs and the needs of the Council. Again, our assessment is that we need provide a focus on ensuring better recording of performance appraisals to provide an accurate reflection of activity.

Valuing excellence

Every year Flintshire holds an Excellence Award recognising and celebrating the achievements of staff across the Council. The work of Social Services was reflected in the awards with specific achievements by:

- Our Locality Teams in supporting older people
- The integrated equipment service
- Health and Safety staff in offer advice and support to Care Homes

We also hold an Annual Workforce Development Award Ceremony which recognises the qualifications achieved by social care staff. At our ceremony in September 2014 we celebrated the qualifications achieved by 148 staff. ([Ceremony picture](#))

The Change Exchange

The Change Exchange provides an opportunity for Managers of Services across the organisation to regularly come together to meet with the Chief Executive and Chief Officers to consider corporate, regional, national updates on big issue topics. During the year there have been special innovation sessions on organisational change, business planning and challenging topics which have invigorated involvement, invited ideas and contributions and facilitated networking, communication and fostered relationships.

Benchmarking Review

Last year we reported that the Workforce Development Team would be part of a benchmarking review across North Wales. As a result of work commissioned through the North Wales Social Services Improvement Collaborative, a detailed options appraisal has been undertaken for the efficient and effective delivery of strategic and operational workforce development services. The outcome of this review is yet to be finalised.

New Electronic Absence System

Flintshire Social Services was the pilot for the new 'Absence Recording System' which was the implementation of an electronic data collection system for staff absences. The system has now been roll out across the whole Council and is aimed to be more environmental friendly, reduce duplication and ensure more accurate recording.

The New Social Services Structure

As mentioned in the introduction, we now have a new senior management team for Social Services that has been fully operational since February 2015. This new structure offers more cross service responsibility and one great advantage of this model is how Children's and Adults services are now working much more hand in glove with a stronger family focus running throughout. We are still in the early days and will evaluate the new structure in 2015-16.

New Working Arrangements

Social Services is adopting the corporate agile and mobile working practices which enables staff to work from various locations on a more flexible basis to better support their daily work commitments. Not only does this contribute to the Council's Asset Strategy but offers more efficient working, increased productivity and boosts staff morale achieved from a better work life balance.

In November 2014 all operational staff within Children's Services successfully co-located as a whole service to new modern County Offices in Flint. As well as supporting a more efficient approach to working the move has also helped to strengthen the communication and co-working between all elements of the service.

In 2015/16 the organisation will implement a new flexible working policy. The policy aims to:

- Improve access and quality of provision to the citizen of Flintshire
- Enable a flexible approach to work by giving staff more control over their work time

We look forward to working with staff to look the policy can help us improve services whilst improving flexibility for staff.

Looking forward: Our priorities for 2015/16

Our priorities for developing a strong and professional workforce are:

- **Delivering a comprehensive training and support programme for staff to ensure they are ready for the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014)**
- **Supporting staff to adapt to new ways of working (agile working) and in new models (social enterprises, mutuals etc)**
- **Continued focus on whole sector training and development to drive up quality and person centred approaches**
- **Review and realign services to ensure that they are as responsive, co-ordinated and cost effective as possible.**

Stronger Safeguarding

Safeguarding has seen a stronger focus both corporately as a whole Council through the development of a new Safeguarding priority within the Improvement Plan and at a Service level with the appointment of a Senior Manager with specific responsibility for Safeguarding. These developments are significant steps forward in ensuring safeguarding is a strong corporate priority within Flintshire, something that has been highlighted by the recent Wales Audit Office report.

The level of activity in relation to safeguarding has been steadily increasing across both adults and children's services. From 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 we received 416 Adult Safeguarding referrals, compared to 305 received in the previous year however not all safeguarding referrals meet the threshold for investigation. 149 appropriate referrals have been investigated and completed so far this year and in 99.3% of cases we were able to reduce or remove the risk to the service user. The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding arrangements have proved to be a big demand on capacity and resources within the service and this has been recognised by the Council with additional resources having been secured to enable us to complete timely assessments of adults whose liberty may be affected by their needs for care and support.

All of our key performance indicators for Children's Safeguarding remain well above the All Wales average and this is in a challenging climate where the number of Child Protection referrals has continued to increase at a rapid pace. All children on the Child Protection Register have an allocated social worker, and 91% of initial child protection conferences were conducted within statutory timescales. In addition 99% of initial core group meetings were held within timescales, and 98% of children on the Child Protection Register had their child protection plans reviewed within statutory timescales. Occasionally it is necessary to delay the core group meetings and review conferences in the best interests of the children concerned.

The percentage of open cases of child in need that were reviewed within statutory timescales increased from 53% to 74% in the last year; this was an improvement priority for Social Services, and performance is now just below the All Wales average.

Regional Arrangements

On a regional basis there have been a number of key developments within the past year including the establishment of both a North Wales Adults Safeguarding Board and Children's Safeguarding Board. These partnerships bring together a range of partner agencies at a strategic level and are charged with ensuring appropriate and effective safeguarding arrangements and processes are in place to protect adults and children/ young people.

Sitting under the regional boards are local safeguarding delivery groups for both adults and children's safeguarding issues. The joint Flintshire and Wrexham delivery groups are key multi-agency forums that ensure local safeguarding practice is appropriate and fit for purpose.

The remit of the regional safeguarding arrangements are far reaching and include a number of key sub-groups that cover areas such as performance and quality; training and workforce development; policies and procedures and communication.

There are also regional groups that co-ordinate the completion of practice reviews that explore in detail the lessons that can be learnt from tragic incidents in which children/ young people and adults have died as a result of abuse and neglect. The development of the new child practice review process has been significant within Flintshire as we currently have two reviews underway. We will continue to work regionally where this provides a benefit to us. This includes involvement, and in some instances taking a lead role, in Regional Safeguarding Board, Delivery Group, Procedures/ Polices Group and Child Practice Group

Looking forward: Our priorities for 2015/16

In response to the report and recommendations from the Welsh Audit Office on the study of safeguarding, published in December 2014, we have identified a number of priority actions within the 2015/16 Improvement Plan – Safeguarding priority, these are:

1. Create a single Safeguarding Unit to manage safeguarding and protection processes for adults, young people and children.
2. Prepare for the new and additional safeguarding requirements of the SSWB Act.
3. Establish wider ownership and governance of safeguarding across the authority.

These achievements will be measured through:

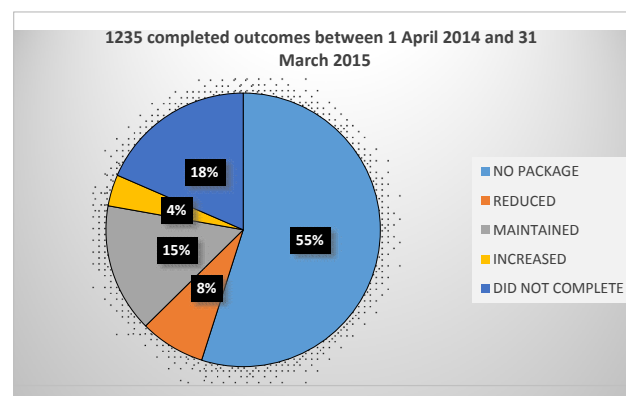
- Managing the risks identified through adult protection referrals
- Establishing a Flintshire Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF) panel to manage the risks of sexual exploitation of children in the County and encourage wider ownership of safeguarding across the authority
- Meeting child protection conference timescales
- Completing child protection reviews on time

‘Better together’ - in promoting ‘Well-being’ and developing preventative services

Our partnership working with BCUHB, as well as other voluntary and community organisation, is essential to deliver successful preventative and community services. Last year CSSIW identified that strategic partnership working with Health was a risk for all 6 Local Authorities in North Wales. Whilst relationships and joint working has been positive in Flintshire the pace and extent of integrated working with Health has been challenging at times. However, we are optimistic about the future. We have recently seen changes in BCUHB such as the refreshed strategic direction, being led by the new Executive Board, and now a new operating structure which is being introduced so that there is a greater locality focus from the new Area Director and Lead Nurse covering Flintshire and Wrexham. We welcome these changes and hope to see increasing capacity within community based services, enhanced working relationships and stronger strategic planning in the future.

Reablement, Telecare and Telehealth

We have continued to make good progress with our successful reablement and recovery approaches as evidenced by the continued increase in the number of adult service users who benefit from the service. The Social Services Improvement Agency has also supported us to capture some very powerful video case studies, which are included within this report, to highlight good practice.



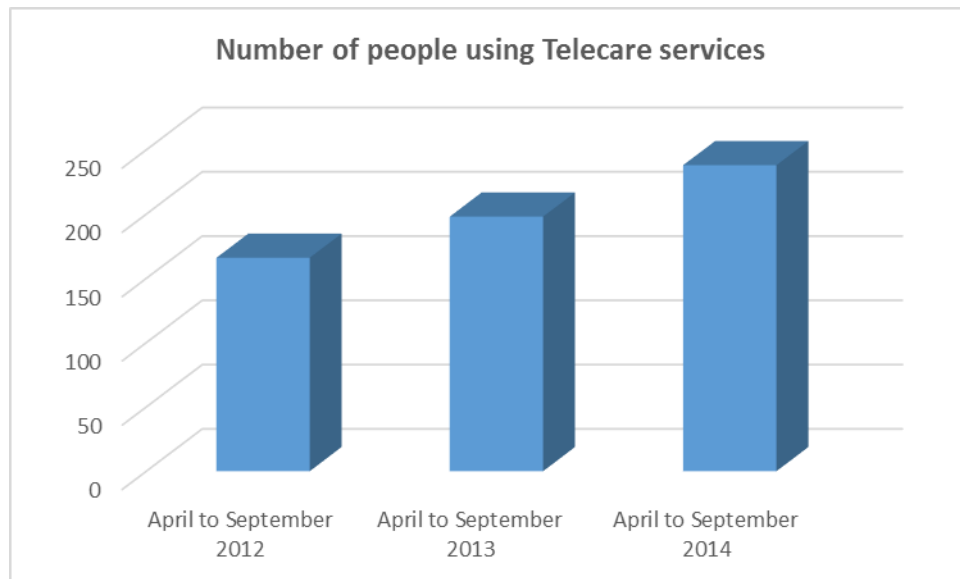
Between April 2014 and March 2015, there were 3044 referrals to Reablement; an increase of 58% on the 2013 rate.

Between April 2014 and March 2015, a period of Reablement was completed for 1235 referrals. Data collected on the outcomes of these

referrals shows that 78% of all adult service users completing a period of Reablement required a package of care which was the same or less than they had previously, or no package of care, as shown in the chart below:

Please take a look at our success stories for Barbara, Kevin and Mrs Stapleton (password: ssia) : <https://vimeo.com/123605688>

We have seen a steady growth in the number of people using Telecare to 238 for the period April to September 2013 as compared to 198 for the same period in 2013 and 166 in 2012, an increase over 2 years of 43%.



Please take a look at our video case study on how assistive technology has changed Dr Cheryl Jones and her carer's life (password: ssia) : <https://vimeo.com/123602575>

Intermediate Care Fund

During 2014 our ambitious programme to modernise social care in readiness for the Act has picked up pace as we have fully embraced the Welsh Government Intermediate Care Funding (ICF) opportunity. We have delivered a wide range of initiatives to develop more joined up intermediate care services.

Working with colleagues in health, housing and the voluntary sector we are pleased to report the funding has supported many people to avoid going into hospital or to be as independent as possible after discharge from hospital. It has also supported people from moving into residential or nursing homes until they really need to. Working within extremely ambitious timescales to get services up and running we have increased provision and tested new services finding that in many cases demand had exceeded anticipated referrals with many positive personal stories throughout.

We have identified a number of projects that we wish to continue with moving forward and as a result have submitted these to the Welsh Government for continued funding. You can find out more about the positive impact our ICF projects have made, including the Six Steps to Success Programme for Palliative Care, the Falls Programme and Dementia care by following this [link to the ICF newsletter](#).

Below is a 'whistle stop' tour of some of the things that have been achieved in such a short time:

- Over 135 people had been supported by the five voluntary sector projects coordinated by Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (British Red Cross, Care & Repair, Alzheimer's Society, Neuro-therapy Centre).
- 70 people had used one of the step up /step down beds in residential care homes. Enabling people to further recuperate and increase their independence before returning home

- Others avoided being admitted to hospital using “step up” with early support from the Enhanced Care Team and Crisis Intervention to maximise their functional ability before returning home. The step up/ step down project is brought to life by Dot’s experience (see below).
- 15 people were admitted to a step up / down assessment bed in an EMI home so that detailed assessments could be made to enable targeted support to be given.
- The Flintshire MRA Falls Service had seen 75 vulnerable people referred and assessed in the community by March 2015. Read about Mike’s story below.
- Over 170 referrals have been received for additional community equipment and adaptations with 212 pieces of individual equipment being provided to enable people to remain independently in their own homes.
- More people have benefitted from Telecare equipment, including GPS “safe walking systems”, buddy systems and ‘Just Checking’ equipment to increase the range of equipment available
- 35 profiling beds have been purchased and are available on loan through the Red Cross to people living in the community, including those in need of palliative care, to provide them with appropriate equipment and it also supports carers to continue caring for the person at home.
- Our dementia projects have seen over 600 people (either living with dementia, their carers or staff) benefit from an extensive range of projects, further details of the services offered are included in the commissioning section.

We are really pleased to say that all our projects have made a real difference to people’s lives and it was near impossible to select just a couple to show case in this report, as such selection has purely been on giving the reader a flavour of the diverse nature of the projects funded.

DOT: “stepping up from the community”

Dot is 70 years old and waiting for a hip operation. Dot lives alone with paid carers calling 3 times a day to support her with meals and personal care. With her failing mobility her G.P decided that as she was not ill enough to go into a local Community hospital he referred her to a “step up” bed at Llys Gwenffrwd Residential Home.

Dot received a number of assessments to see how well she copes with washing and dressing, mobility and transfers. Reablement goals and interventions were agreed with Dot and put in place to increase her mobility by using small aids, enabling her to transfer independently to and from bed, to mobilise frequently through the day to reduce swelling and to wash and dress independently.

Discharge Planning took place to enable Dot to return safely home. This included an environmental visit to her home where it was apparent she was only able to access the kitchen and bedroom. Further equipment was supplied and a referral made to Reablement Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy for her to practise stepping, so she could regain access to her recently converted shower room and better access the kitchen.

In total Dot received three weeks of Step Up bed support and Reablement which enabled her to return home with no increase to her care package. Her medical condition has improved greatly, with all compression stockings removed and District Nurse intervention reduced. Dot is regaining her confidence and strength when mobilising and continues to work towards accessing all of the ground floor of her home.

Mike: 'Stop falling'

Mike was referred by his GP practice. With Mike's consent he was initially contacted by phone within one day of the referral and his assessment was completed within 4 days.

Mike suffers with diabetes and heart failure and is under the nephrology team. He had recently been an inpatient due to poor blood sugar control and was also being seen by podiatry as he has had ulcers on his right foot in the past. Mike chooses not to wear slippers or socks at home.

He has had a number of falls owing to numbness in his feet and poor gait. He has been given crutches previously by the GP but only uses one crutch if he uses them at all. Mike does not want to use a frame as he feels he is too young and does not want care.

Mike has a trolley, a wet room with shower chair, a raised toilet seat and a grab rail to the right side of the toilet. He also has a perching stool in the kitchen, a profiling bed and has been given the phone number for Care Link for a care call button, as he is unable to get up independently when he falls.

Outcomes

- Referral made to Care and Repair for grab rails and to re-situate the light switch. Care and Repair advised an approach to the British Legion as Mike was previously in the Army and is on pension credits as possible option to cover costs.
- A Physiotherapy referral to the local Community Hospital for an outpatient appointment to follow up a possible left leg foot drop and also pain to left ankle following a fall.
- Mike was referred for a Multifactorial Risk Assessment for his regular falling. Mike's GP was informed of the outcome of the MRA.

Extra Care

Following the successful Extra Care Schemes of Llys Eleanor and Llys Jasmine we are extremely excited to announce that two further developments are being taken forward with our partners.

A site has been chosen in Flint town centre for the next Extra Care development which will be built by Clwyd Alyn Housing Association; it will also form part of the wider housing and regeneration programme in the area and will be a real flagship for Flint. Following recent Planning approval, this scheme will provide 72 self contained apartments, including apartments that are specially designed for people with dementia. The build will commence late summer 2015 and the scheme is due to open in early 2017. (insert visual designs of the scheme)

A further site has been identified for Holywell in partnership with West and West Housing. Initial work has been undertaken on the project but it has not yet secured planning approval.

Further work needs to be undertaken on the feasibility of the project and to develop proposals that would attract support.

We are also pleased to report that the Llys Jasmine Extra Care scheme in Mold has won an Local Authority Building Control Cymru Award in the Best Social/ Affordable Housing Development category.

Locality Working

One of our priorities last year was to implement our local plan for the Statement of Intent on Integrated Care for Older People with Complex Needs. Much progress has been made in a number of key areas identified within the Statement of Intent at a local level with key developments including the use of the Intermediate Care Fund, as detailed above.

The co-located Health and Social Care Team North West Flintshire provides opportunities for improved communication and closer working relationships. We have previously created locality teams in preparation for the creation of co-located teams across the whole County. The agreement to develop similar arrangements for the North East and South localities remains working progress due to the inability to find suitable and available accommodation.

The North West Flintshire is the only locality to be served by an Enhanced Care Service. The local authority awaits a decision to be made by BCUHB to roll out this service across the whole of Flintshire.

Whilst Children's Services do not currently operate to a locality model their cross county working does inevitably lead to practitioners working closely with partner agencies in identified clusters such as schools, police protection units, midwives and health visitors.

Early Intervention and Support

Last year we tasked ourselves with considering the expansion of the family focused services provided at the Gronant Centre. Sadly, our bid to the Big Lottery was unsuccessful which would have supported us to move forward. However, the Centre continues to be self funded but new funding sources continue to be explored including smaller pots of funding to enable the Centre to run a series of projects alongside the standard Centre childcare provision.

That said, it hasn't stopped us from expanding the service and raising the profile of the service, to summarise we are:

- ✓ Securing funding for Sports Shack projects and have submitted further bids for funding, including the archery club.
- ✓ Offering craft and art sessions in-house delivered by our staff
- ✓ Working with a group of volunteers at the Centre who are developing a community café, which will run weekly from the Centre from May
- ✓ Offering yoga classes after a member of staff obtained the British Wheel of Yoga qualification

Flying Start Award

One of our very own health visitor's has been nationally recognised as a 'hero' after providing life changing support to a Higher Shotton family and awarded a prestigious accolade by the Welsh Government.

When Stephanie and Richard Morris lost their first child three years ago, the prospect of having another was somewhat daunting, but health visitor Jo Parry made herself available 24/7 to support them before and after their second baby Elena was born as part of the Welsh Government's Flying Start scheme. Jo also set up a 'New Mum's Café' network which helped Stephanie meet other first time mums and build a local support network which helped her overcome the isolation that she had been experiencing.

Now Jo has been named the regional winner for North Wales in the inaugural 'Star's In Their Lives' award, which aims to highlight the amazing contribution made to youngsters in their crucial early years by Flying Start professionals across Wales, I am sure you will join me in congratulating Jo and this is another example of the outstanding work our staff provide to the residents of Flintshire.

Integrated Family Support Service

The Integrated Family Support Service has continued to deliver a whole family approach to support families that have complex needs to prevent them from needing to go into the care of the local authority. The service is a good example of multi-agency working between Flintshire and Wrexham Local Authorities, BCUHB and 3rd sector organisations. It has been noticeable that, in 2014/15 we have successfully reduced the number of children to progress through legal proceedings within the court arena as they have been supported to remain with their family.

Vulnerable Children

The profile of child sex exploitation has increased over the past year with the high profile cases in England. In Flintshire we recognise the potential for child sexual exploitation and are taking a very proactive and preventative approach to ensuring children and young people are protected from this. A comprehensive multi-agency training programme to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation is being planned across Flintshire and Wrexham; the issue is a key priority for the North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board; and the planned North Wales summit in May this year is testament to the profile and importance that is being placed on this issue. In 2015/16 we will also see the introduction of a multi-agency child exploitation panel (MAACSE). The Panel will be the mechanism employed by the Flintshire County Council's Children's Services and its partner agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people in cases of known or suspected child sexual exploitation.

The MAACSE Panel has three primary roles:

- To ensure that cases of suspected or actual child sexual exploitation are well-managed and co-ordinated and that all possible action has been taken to protect the victims.
- To ensure that all cases are considered by a single group who are then able to identify any links between individual cases.
- To ensure that intelligence relating to patterns of child sexual exploitation in the area can be identified and action taken where necessary. This will include the sharing of intelligence relation to suspect groups of victims, perpetrators, vulnerable locations etc.

Homes for our Care leavers

The provision of accommodation for care leavers is provided via the Local Authority Housing department, Supporting People, social housing and the commercial sector. Looking at the future housing needs for children leaving care is an integral part of the Pathway Plan, and the Local Authority Housing Department are a key part of this planning phase. There is a dedicated Housing Options Officer who works with young people aged between 16 and 24. Together with the young person they will explore all of their housing options and work closely with Social Services professionals and the young person to provide suitable, affordable accommodation.

Children's services also joint commission the Night Stop service with Housing and Supporting People. The purpose of Night Stop is to ensure that young people are do not have to access emergency accommodation such as Bed & Breakfast, should they become homeless. Instead, they will be placed with a householder within the community, whilst further work is undertaken to address their housing need.

Looking Forward: Our Priorities for 2015/2016

Our priorities for driving forward more integrated and preventative services are:

- Implement a Single Point of Access
- Develop Extra Care in Flint and Holywell
- Continue to work with BCUHB and seek to enhance the way we work together at a strategic and operational level

Evidencing our Improvement

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

External inspection:

The following external inspections took place across our service during 2014/15 and here is a summary of the key findings:

External Quality Assurer for City and Guilds, March 2014

- A well organised and managed centre with a robust Internal Quality Assurance and assessment strategy which is monitored and updated as necessary.
- Planning and feedback by assessors is particularly noteworthy, both are detailed and clear, thus helpful and supportive to candidates.
- Internal Quality Assurer's have continued with the excellent monitoring of quality, supporting the assessors and demonstrated good team work and leadership skills.
- The observation of assessor/candidate feedback session was very good, the candidate was obviously relaxed in her assessors company and enjoyed receiving the feedback. The candidate stated later during interview that she is well supported by her assessor.

CSSIW National Inspection Safeguarding and Care Planning of looked after children and care leavers, March 2014

- Elected members were knowledgeable about the issues facing vulnerable and looked after children and young people and were committed to improving services,
- Corporate parenting arrangements are strong and evidence how outcomes have been influenced,
- There were regular opportunities for children to give their views to elected members and senior officers,
- Safeguarding was a priority for all staff and child protection processes were being used effectively.
- Agencies in Flintshire were working well together, especially in relation to missing young people and child sexual exploitation.
- Social Workers were making strong efforts to ensure that young people understood their lives and were empowered to represent their views in care planning.
- A number of areas for improvement were identified and these have been actioned.

CSSIW National Review of Commissioning for Dementia, May 2014

- The Commissioning Strategy puts the local authority in the position of making sound long term decisions and managing the market rather than working in a reactive way,
- A number of areas of 'best practice' were identified.
- Three recommendations were made to improve services for people living with dementia around the co-location of operational teams in health and social care, the optimisation of access and availability to the Dementia Support Worker Service, and the development of a joint approach to commissioning locally based high quality nursing home capacity.

CSSIW Fostering Inspection, (February 2015)

- A well managed service that has effective partnerships in place with the foster carers

- Excellent scrutiny arrangements from the fostering panel.

This builds upon successive inspections dating back to 2003 and reflects the value of planning and delivering good and effective outcomes.

Internal assessment/ quality assurance

Senior managers monitor their progress against the Council and Business plans, and report on this to Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis, and reflect how well we are performing in our priority areas. Our Modernising Social Services Board oversees key activities that is driving forward service change that in turn contributes to the Councils priorities, in particular the Living Well priorities that the department leads on.

Managing our Performance

Performance information from across both Adults and Children's services is regularly presented to the Senior Management Teams and the Quarterly Performance Forums to highlight best practice and identify areas for improvement. Our performance is strong overall and we have made improvements in 2013/2014 against the national set of performance indicators, as detailed in our Directorate Plan 2012-2016.

This year we have introduced management self-service reports within our IT Business System (PARIS) which provide managers with timely and accurate information on the detail which underpins our performance data.

We are working alongside a multi stakeholder group for Welsh Government, to assist in the development of the recording and reporting of personal outcomes within a new national outcomes framework for performance measurement. One of the ambitions of the Social Services and Wellbeing Wales Act is to see a much more co-productive approach (between agencies and individuals) to addressing and finding solutions to support needs. This project seeks to reduce the need for expensive, time-consuming and bureaucratic assessments, using instead an approach which determines "what matters" to the citizen, through a professional targeted conversation, and supports people to help themselves as much as possible. A group of our professional staff will be undertaking extensive training on this approach in the spring of 2015, and we will be collecting data on the outcomes to support the national project.

Last year we set the following improvement priorities and below is a summary of how we have got in:

Improvement Priority: Develop a coherent quality assurance framework which draws together information about the quality of our services into a single quality report

Considerable work has been undertaken in 2014/15 to strengthen our quality assurance arrangements. The new Quality Assurance Framework that will be implemented in 2015/16 will encompass all areas of activity, both quantitative and qualitative, and will provide us with robust evidence about our strengths and areas for development in achieving positive outcomes for the people we support.

In addition the Framework will allow us to evidence that we are achieving the aims identified through the vision for 2015-18:

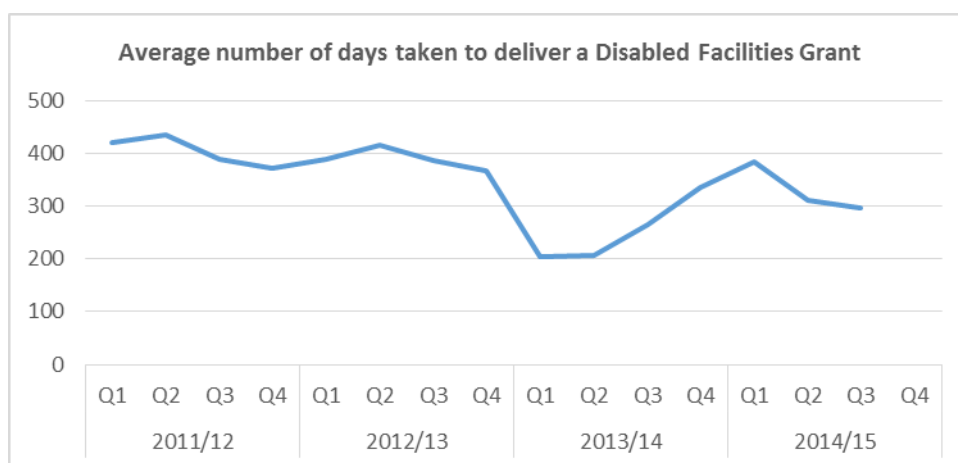
- Keep people as our focus
- Safeguard and support

- Do “what matters” well
- Promote independence and strengthen families

Intelligence contributing to the Quality Assurance Framework includes performance and management information, the outcomes of service user engagement activity, gathering feedback from service users, lessons learned from complaints and complements, contract monitoring, recording and monitoring of personal outcomes, and information determined from audits. We will use all this information to inform the decisions we make about the way we deliver our services.

Improvement Priority: Improve the timeliness of major adaptations and evaluate the impact of the extended minor adaptations and self-assessment projects to inform further service improvements and options to increase people’s independence

We continue to work to reduce the time taken to provide adaptations in owner occupied properties. Between April 2014 and March 2015 92 major adaptations were provided through the Disabled Facilities Grant route, and these were completed in an average of 329 days.



The arrangements for the transfer of patients from hospital to a more appropriate care setting, either between NHS hospitals or on discharge from NHS hospitals, will vary according to the needs of each patient, but can be complex and sometimes lead to delays. We monitor the delays that occur for social care reasons, and between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015 there were 25 reported delays, resulting in a delay rate per 1,000 population of 2.05 (against an All Wales rate of 2 per 1,000).

Improvement Priority: Further improve the data collection for carers and young carers to meet the outcomes of the Carers Strategy (Wales) Measure

You have read earlier in this report about our arrangements for commissioning services for carers and increasing the numbers of carers being identified and supported. We work in partnership with Barnardos to identify children and young people who have a caring role, and by March 2015, 39 young people had been assessed and provided with a service.

Improvement Priority: Consider the findings of research underway on parent’s perceptions of the Child Protection process and take appropriate action

'Understanding the experiences and involvement of children, young people and families in the Child Protection process in Flintshire and Wrexham was a piece of research carried out by Strategic Consult & C Ltd on behalf of the Flintshire and Wrexham Local Safeguarding Children's Board and published in July 2014. The aim of the research was to seek the views of children, young people and their family's views on the child protection process, and listen and understand their experiences in order for us to better understanding their perspective and improve how we work with families in the future.

The key findings from the report are being considered by the Senior Managers and Safeguarding Unit and actions will be taken forward to make relevant service improvements as an outcome of this research.

Improvement Areas, as highlighted by CSSIW: Timeliness of initial child protection conferences, timeliness of statutory visits for Looked After Children, health assessments for Looked After Children, Timeliness of Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children and improving outcomes for young adults who were formerly looked after

Our "front door" response for children remains good, with 99.6% of referrals having a decision made within one working day and 88% of initial assessments completed within seven working days. This means that children, young people and their families receive the support they need and others are signposted appropriately as soon as possible. 88% of in depth core assessments were completed within 35 working days. Performance against these indicators continues to be considerably better than the average for All Wales.

We have improved the stability of placements for children looked after by the Local Authority with only 7.2% of children experiencing two or more changes of placement. Sometimes placements do break down and a change of placement can be a positive move for the individual, for instance where they move to a longer term arrangement such as adoption or long term foster care. 96% of our Looked After children had a Permanency Plan at their second review.

With respect to children and young people who are looked after by the Local Authority, we have a number of high profile performance indicators and these are performing at around or better than the All Wales average, for statutory visits, statutory reviews, first placements with a care plan in place, and the provision of a personal education plan. 70% of health assessments for looked after children were requested within timescales.

We continue to perform among the best in Wales against the national indicators for safeguarding children. We have achieved this in a challenging climate where the number of child protection referrals has continued to increase.

We continue to do our best to ensure that young people leaving care have the best opportunities to secure their future accommodation, training and employment prospects and our national performance indicators reflect this.

So to conclude, in a climate of increased demand and budget pressures we are making good progress in many areas, particularly in Children's which has greatly improved over the last year. That said, we are by no means perfect and will have to continue to work hard, with our partners, to continue to deliver high quality modern services that meet the needs of our residents in Flintshire.

Looking forward: Our priorities for 2015/2016

Our priority for evidencing our improvement in 2015/16 is to develop and enhance our approach to quality assurance. This includes addressing:

- The way we measure quality
- How we measure outcomes
- How we capture and use people's experience of services

And how we use this information to provide a strategic overview of the quality of services and inform our improvement agenda as well as supporting improvements to individual practice.

Glossary

Cabinet - The Council's Cabinet comprises 8 Elected Members. Each Elected Member, supported by a Lead Director and accountable Heads of Service / Managers, is assigned a portfolio of Council services / functions. The roles and responsibilities of Cabinet Members in respect of their portfolio is to: lead, with their respective Directors, their assigned set of portfolio services/functions, lead key corporate priorities according to the Improvement Priorities and Assessment of Strategic Risks and Challenges (SARC), participate in and lead county and regional partnerships and actively participate in the national agenda e.g. WLGA, Ministerial meetings, conferences etc.

Care Council - The Care Council for Wales is the social care workforce regulator in Wales responsible for promoting and securing high standards across the social services and social care workforce.

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) – established in 2007, the powers and functions of CSSIW are enabled through legislation. CSSIW has the powers to review Local Authority social services at a local and national level, to inform the public whether services are up to standard, to promote improvement of services and to help safeguard the interests of vulnerable people who use services and their carers. They provide professional advice to Welsh Ministers and policy makers.

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

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

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

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

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

Domiciliary Care – Also known as home care, is whereby supportive care is provided to individuals within their own home.

Enhanced Care - forms part of the spectrum of intermediate community based services, but specifically provides care at the 'far end' of this spectrum for people who have medical and/or nursing needs who, without enhanced care, would otherwise be admitted to a

hospital bed or would remain in hospital for a longer period of time . (This includes people admitted to an acute hospital bed and those who are admitted / transferred to a community hospital bed).

Extra Care Scheme – extra care schemes provide independent living and greater housing choices for some older people in Flintshire; apartments can be purchased by or rented to people aged 60+ who have care and accommodation needs.

Llys Eleanor, our first extra care scheme, was developed by Flintshire County Council in partnership with the Pennaf Housing Group and provides 50 one and two bedroom apartments and a range of communal facilities. Llys Jasmine, our second innovative extra care scheme opened to accommodate its first tenants in October 2013. Developed in partnership with Wales & West Housing the scheme provides a total of 63 apartments and bungalows of which 15 are specifically designed for people with dementia. Both schemes feature state of the art alarm systems and 24 hour care is available on site.

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

Just enough support - The right sizing assessment process aims to ensure an outcome focussed personalised approach is taken so that people receive the right amount of support to be as independent as possible – the right amount of support, at the right time and in the right place.

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

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

Looked After Child (LAC) - Looked after children are children and young people who are in public care and looked after by the state. This includes those who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care. The term is also used to describe 'accommodated' children and young people who are looked after on a voluntary basis at the request of, or by agreement with, their parents.

Market Position Statements – Informs the Care Provider market of the local authorities commissioning and service priorities based on the evaluation of data and evidence for current demand and possible future trends in services. The data presented should help providers to develop effective business plans.

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

More Than Just Words – A strategic framework for Welsh language services in health and social care in Wales, developed by the Welsh Government. The framework outlines the current position and provides a systematic approach to improve services for those who need or choose to receive their care in Welsh

Outcomes - The benefits, changes or other effects that result in an improvement in quality of life for a person from services provided. E.g. an improvement in physical functioning or maintaining a life skill leading to continued independence.

Prevention – The prevention approach enhances the persons well being by preventing or minimising major problems of living. Providing information for people to self manage alongside early intervention before problems escalate, monitoring and proportionate risk assessment means that problems are reduced and the need for ongoing longer term support is minimised.

Reablement - Reablement is an approach which aims to maximise independence, choice and quality of life. This means that all people who wish to access Social Care Services undergo a period of assessment and support to enable them to live as independently as possible, thus minimising the requirement for ongoing support. Reablement is a short term assessment and intervention service which is person centred and outcome focused. As such the duration of the Reablement will vary for each person (from a few days to a maximum period of six weeks). During the Reablement phase there will be regular reviews to assess progress against agreed outcomes.

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

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

Supporting People Team – The team ensure the Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) from the Welsh Government funds the most appropriate housing related support services in the county to maximise outcomes for people. This includes support to vulnerable people to enable them to maintain their independence in the community and to prevent homelessness.

Telecare - is a way in which support can be provided through telecommunication devices in the home. It uses simple technology to manage risk and give people the peace of mind they

need to live in their own homes for longer. Telecare equipment is provided through Community Equipment Stores and fitted and monitored by Carelink. There are currently over 400 homes in Flintshire with Telecare as part of an assessed care package