

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 22 nd September 2020
Report Subject	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Annual Performance Review Letter 2019/20
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is brought to inform Cabinet of the content of the recent Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Annual Performance Letter issued on the 2nd July 2020.

Following the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, CIW have developed a new framework which works to ensure local authorities are inspected using the well-being outcomes of the Act. This places an emphasis on hearing the views and voices of people and their carers who have care and support needs.

An annual letter is sent to each local authority in Wales and published on the CIW website. The information contained within the letter is normally based on a meeting held with the Chief Officer for Social Services and Senior Officers, unfortunately due to the COVID-19 restrictions this year it has not been possible for the annual performance review meeting to take place. However, the letter is also based on evidence and performance data submitted throughout the year together with the outcomes from any inspections, focused activities, self-evaluation returns. These have taken place, prior to the COVID restrictions and the outcome of these inspection activities alongside the information published in the Social Services Annual Report are reflected in the letter.

Each letter summarises CIW's evaluation of performance in relation to adults and children's services during the financial year and reports against the four core principles of the Social Services and Well-being Act, those being:

Well-being, People, Prevention and Partnership.

The letters also sets out CIW's individual work programme to review performance over the coming year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Cabinet notes and is assured by the content of the Annual Performance letter and CIW's assessment of the authority's performance during the year 2019/20.
2	That Cabinet notes the CIW's Performance Review Plan for 2020-21 has been paused, and they will notify us once the programme of inspection re commences.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CARE INSPECTORATE WALES (CIW) ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW LETTER
1.01	Members will be aware that CIW write and publish an annual letter for local authorities which provides feedback on inspections undertaken during the year and CIW performance evaluation activity complete.
1.02	The letter reports on the progress of the local authority and how it has implemented any recommendations from inspections, focused activities, Child Practice Reviews and Adult Practice Reviews.
1.03	The letter is also an opportunity for CIW to outline its forward work programme in Flintshire.
1.04	The content of the letter relates to the authority's performance in carrying out its statutory social services functions and is separate to an inspections of the Council's Provider Services.
1.05	As stated in the Executive Summary above, the letter is informed by performance evaluation and meetings with the Chief Officer Social Services and Senior Managers within the service. Whilst this formal meeting could not take place in April 2020 due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the CIW Lead Inspector for Flintshire, Glenda Lloyd-Evans, has met with Senior Managers in June and December 2019.
1.06	The letter also takes into account CIW activity during the year and in particular the focused activity in Children's Services in October 2019 and the focused activity in Adult Services in February 2020.
1.07	CIW also undertook engagement activity with older adults and held a review meeting in November 2019 around the Prevention and Promotion of Independence for older adults.
1.08	In February 2020, CIW undertook a risk assessment and assurance review of Flintshire.
1.09	In addition to these activities, Flintshire Social Services provides CIW with quarterly performance data which is reviewed and analysed and CIW use feedback and intelligence received on the performance of the service to

	shape the content of the Annual Performance Letter.
1.10	The strengths of the authority and any areas for improvement are categorised into the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and these are summarised below.
1.11	Well-being
1.12	CIW commented that the local authority benefits from an experienced senior management team. Effective leadership is evident at all levels with a highly skilled, well qualified and supported workforce working towards a shared vision. CIW also specifically commented on the strong corporate and political support for both adult and children's service and a thorough and well developed understanding of strengths and current challenges.
1.13	As with many local authorities CIW notes that Flintshire experienced challenges in securing appropriate placements able to meet the needs of some young people and it is of concern that children were placed in unregistered arrangements. However, CIW also noted that Flintshire demonstrated a focus on meeting the needs of the children and kept CIW informed of development throughout.
1.14	The innovative work of the Council was also noted under well-being through the development of a range of new projects and the use of grant funding to create new models of care and support to improve outcomes for people. An example sighted by CIW in Children Service is the work with regional partners to secure transformation funds to create a multi-disciplinary assessment and support Hub to facilitate placement reunification and long term placement planning. CIW also noted the work the local authority is doing to actively develop the local care sector and more latterly develop micro-care enterprise.
1.15	People
1.16	CIW specifically review the Welsh Language provision for those who receive support from Social Services, they notes that language is recognised as a key factor in building positive relationships and Welsh language use amongst local authority staff is a corporate commitment.
1.17	CIW made reference to how people in Flintshire are involved in service development, they heard how the Mockingbird and Development Project asked young people what they thought of the idea and what was important to them to feature in the development. CIW noted feedback from a young person in their letter. "I like that there are other foster carers that can support and listen". In respect of service development and embedded learning, CIW commented that the same project, used an analysis of disruption themes to help it shape the way in which support will be provided to children and carers.
1.18	In adults service particular reference was made to the local authority and its partners continue to engage with local business and charities. Through such engagement, opportunities for people with a learning disability to be supported into paid work have been identified as well as new volunteer placements.

1.19	The letter identified that more people are managing their own care through the provision of direct payments allowing the person more control and flexibility with the care they receive. The letter recognises that Flintshire continues to look at creative and innovative ways of using direct payments and during CIW's focused activity they heard of groups being awarded direct payment to enhance people's independence and/or involvement in community activities.
1.20	CIW made specific reference to the committed and dedicated professional staff whom they constantly met in their dealings with the Council throughout the year. Discussions with staff, observations made, and case records evidenced staff's understanding of the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and staff vigilance in ensuring that these principles are implemented in practice. Practitioners and managers told CIW they are happy and content working in Flintshire County Council.
1.21	CIW continues to monitor the implementation of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) which has identified the local authority, in common with many others in Wales, is unable to assure itself that people's human rights are not being breached by being deprived of their liberty unlawfully.
1.22	Prevention
1.23	In Children's Service CIW identified a strong focus on early help and support to build resilience and help prevent a families problems escalating. They visited the Early Help Hub and saw an emphasis on helping parents to develop their own abilities, their coping mechanisms and strengths to identify and manage problems. They also saw community based solutions supporting families and a focus on keeping families together in a safe, supportive and stable environment.
1.24	In Adults Services CIW's focus was on building and promoting people's own strengths and resilience in line with the principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. During the focused activity in February 2020, they commented on examples of how the Council has been enabling people to maintain and develop skills, achieving greater independence and responsibility. CIW commented that individuals are given the opportunity to take risks safely and assistive technology is used effectively to support increased freedom and independence.
1.25	CIW saw a focus on enabling individuals to develop and maintain social relationships and be involved in their community. They met with members of the Dungeons and Dragon group, established to help people's recovery from mental health. They also heard how the group helped with recovery and provided an opportunity to develop friendship, interest and a reason to interact.
1.26	CIW also noted that in Flintshire County Council Children's Services there are procedures in place to respond effectively to placement breakdowns and to placements where there are escalating challenges and indications that a disruption is likely. They commented that the voice of the child remains central throughout the process. CIW also recorded that recommendations are formulated within the pre-disruption meetings and

	distributed to the service area with responsibility for the child to ensure this informs future practice.
1.27	Partnerships
1.28	The regulator noted that the local authority continue to be actively engaged in local and regional partnership working. Flintshire currently host the North Wales Learning Disability Strategy and jointly host the North Wales Integrated Autism Service with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB).
1.29	In the letter CIW commented on the Council's awareness of the fragility of the domiciliary care sector and how we are exploring different options to address market capacity. CIW noted that the Council recognises the importance of working in partnership with providers and made reference to the extension of our successful Progress for Providers Programmes for Care Home to the domiciliary care sector. The Council recognises the difficulties in the recruitment and retention of care workers and the significant challenge facing all home care providers (please note, the comments made by CIW were before the COVID-19 pandemic).
1.30	CIW paid particular attention to the efforts the Council have taken to reduce the turnover of care workers and how we have learnt from others and adopted an innovative approach to recruitment, aiming to maximise retention by more careful approaches to recruiting the right people with the right values. Care providers told CIW of their positive working relationship with the practitioners and managers. CIW commented that "The focus on working in partnership and supporting providers by investing in training and development of care staff can only lead to better outcomes for people."
1.31	Finally, Project Search was highlighted as an example of Flintshire's successfully working in partnership with Hft, Pennaf Housing Group, Coleg Cambria and others to establish an employment support programme for young people with a learning disability. During the focused activity CIW met with some of the young people and parents and heard how Hft has further developing partnership with public, private and voluntary sector organisation to create new work, education and leisure opportunities for people with a learning disability.
1.32	CIW Performance Review Plan for 2020-21
1.33	CIW's scheduled thematic inspection programme for 2020-2021 focused on prevention and promoting independence for older people and for current children services thematic inspection the focus is on prevention, partnerships and experiences of disabled children. Due to the current emergency situation relating to COVID-19 CIW have paused the publication of their older people's report and paused all activity relating to the disabled children's review. They will advise you in due course when we envisage recommencing our inspections.
1.34	Due to the unforeseen circumstances, CIW are currently reviewing and considering their work plan for the remainder of 2020-2021.
1.35	Following the focused activity in Children's Services during October 2019, CIW identified the following areas for Improvement:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers need to ensure themselves of the effectiveness of the implementation of the new supervision policy. Whilst the service continues to have ongoing discussions with Adult Mental Health, managers must ensure practitioners communicate on individual cases. Managers need to ensure the evidence of the analysis which informs decision making is recorded at the Early Help Hub multi-disciplinary meeting.
1.36	<p>CIW identified the following area for improvement in the focused activity in Adult Services in February 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there is a record of the risk assessments and decisions on local authority's case records.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no direct resource implications as a result of this letter.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT	
3.01	The letter is a very positive review of the statutory Social Services provider by the local authority. The work of risk management associated with statutory services continues within the portfolio, there are no additional requirements as a result of the letter.	
3.02	Response from the Service to the Required Actions from the Children's Services focused activities	
3.03	Managers need to ensure themselves of the effectiveness of the implementation of the new supervision policy.	The new supervision policy has been launched across all services and the effectiveness of the policy and recording of information in the appropriate locations has been monitored and evaluated through case file audits. This action has been replicated in other service areas to ensure consistency in recording linked to supervision.
	Whilst the service continues to have ongoing discussions with Adult Mental Health, managers must ensure practitioners communicate on individual cases.	Professional Supervision between case holders and their managers ensures a focus on discussing the detail of adult mental health cases
	Managers need to ensure the evidence of the analysis which informs decision making is recorded at the Early Help Hub multi-disciplinary meeting.	A revised recording mechanism has been put in place to address this. Case file audits have paid particular attention to this area and recoded evidence of improved analysis recording as part of the decision making process.

3.04	Response from the Service to the Required Actions from the Adult Services focused activities	
3.05	Ensure there is a record of the risk assessments and decisions on local authority's case records.	An amendment has been made to the records management process and case file audits have paid particular attention to risk assessment and the recording of associated decisions.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT	
4.01	There are no consultation requirements as a result of this letter.	

5.00	APPENDICES	
5.01	Local Authority Annual Performance Letter 2019/20 – Flintshire County Council.	
5.02	CIW Letter to Flintshire Following Children's Focused Activity.	
5.03	CIW Letter to Flintshire Following Adult's Focused Activity.	

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS	
6.01	None.	

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS	
7.01	Contact Officers: Jane Davies Telephone: 01352 702503 E-mail: jane.m.davies@flintshire.gov.uk	

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS	
8.01	Social Services and (Well-being) Wales Act 2014: The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6 April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.	