

Social services: what we do and the difference it makes

Director of Social Services Annual Report
Wrexham
2016-17

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Summary of performance.....	4
3. What people tell us about our services	7
4. Improving well-being (the six standards).....	10
Standard 1: Helping people achieve the well-being outcomes they want.....	10
Standard 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.....	15
Standard 3: Safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm.....	18
Standard 4: Helping people to learn, develop and participate in society.	22
Standard 5: Helping people maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.	25
Standard 6: Helping people achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.	29
5. How we deliver for our citizens	32
A. Developing our workforce	32
B. Finances and planning for the future.....	33
C. Political leadership, governance and accountability	34
6. Further information.....	36
7. Performance measurement framework	39

1. Introduction

The way we deliver social services has a huge impact on people's lives.

This report looks at how effective our services in Wrexham have been over the past year, and how we've worked with partners and local people.

It also explains our plans for the coming year, and how these are based on what the people of Wrexham tell us they need.

We've worked hard to ensure we meet our responsibilities under the new *Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act*, and the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*.

Both involve the work of the council as a whole, and staff from across our departments understand their responsibilities.

The challenges we face are greater than ever. We have fewer resources, but demand continues to grow.

So it's important we think differently about how we provide services, and we'll continue to work closely with partners, families and individuals to promote the wellbeing of people in Wrexham.

We have a strong, resilient team who are making a real difference to the lives of the people we support.

I'm very proud to work with them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare Field". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Clare Field
Strategic Director – People/Statutory Director of Social Services

2. Summary of performance

Background

At the end of each financial year, every council in Wales must publish a report about its social services. This is our report.

The aim is to evaluate how well our services have been delivered, and highlight any improvements needed.

It's also a chance to explain how we're going to help people over the coming year – both people who need care and support, and carers who need our help.

As you read through these pages, you'll notice we talk about six 'quality standards.' These are part of the *Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act* (we'll just call it 'the Act' from now on).

The format of this report reflects the requirements of the Act, and the need to measure the performance¹ of social services around these six standards.

It also feeds into the *Well-being of Future Generations Act*, which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales – helping to create a place where we all want to live. Both now, and in the future.

Overall performance in 2016-17

1. We provided a good first point-of-contact through our Initial Response Team. This helps a lot of people deal with their problems without becoming dependent on our services long-term.
2. Over 70% of clients supported by our Reablement Service went on to live independently in their own home, requiring less care or none at all.
3. We helped older people get involved in social activity through our Shared Lives and Community Agents services.
4. We continued to provide Disability Facilities Grants, as well as our generous minor adaptations scheme – helping people adapt their homes.

¹ You'll find this performance framework at the end of the report, and references to particular performance indicators and measures throughout.

5. We opened a new Elderly Mentally Impaired (EMI) residential care home in partnership with Clwyd Alyn Housing Association.
6. We set up a dedicated team following changes to the way councils deal with Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)².
7. We worked with Welsh Government and the NHS Health Board to help more people remain in their homes – saving 8,111 hospital bed days.
8. We trained over 1,000 employees across the social care sector to make sure Wrexham complies with the Act.
9. Clients with our Day and Work Opportunities team received the John Muir Award for their work at Chirk Hospital – transforming outdoor areas to improve the environment for patients.³
10. The Lifespan Disability Service was launched – providing a seamless service for children and adults with disabilities.
11. We expanded our Children’s Single Point of Access Team (SPoA), helping us respond quickly to anyone making a referral – including partner agencies and members of the public.
12. Our children’s services expanded the information on Dewis Cymru – a website that helps people access information about things that matter to them (you’ll find the link in section 6).
13. We introduced a new ‘child-centred’ approach to assessments, while maintaining quality and ensuring children were seen.
14. We implemented child-friendly invitations and review-minutes, and continued looking at new ways to improve engagement with young people.
15. We regionalised some elements of the Fostering Service – which includes training, advertising and recruitment – to provide a consistent approach across neighbouring councils.

² These were introduced in 2009 (as part of the Mental Capacity Act) to provide legal protection for vulnerable people in care homes or hospitals who are – or might be – deprived of their liberty. For example, it might be necessary to restrict their freedom for their own safety, stopping them from leaving a place where they’re being treated or cared for.

[http://www.mentalhealthlaw.co.uk/Cheshire West and Chester Council v P \(2014\) UKSC 19, \(2014\) MH LO 16](http://www.mentalhealthlaw.co.uk/Cheshire West and Chester Council v P (2014) UKSC 19, (2014) MH LO 16)

³ <https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award>

16. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy was developed. It promotes greater understanding among staff, councillors and people working on our behalf about the policies and guidelines for safeguarding children and adults.
17. Children's services published a Public Law Outline guide to help families understand the process and help available.
18. We created the Waking Hours Team to support children and their families. It's proved effective and we're committed to its development.

The big things we want to do in 2017-18

1. Continue to implement the requirements of the Act.
2. Continue to meet savings targets. Our main challenge is to protect frontline services – both children's and adults'. We have smaller budgets, but demand is growing.
3. Work with the Health Board to create a single point of access for all adult community health and social care services.
4. Keep improving occupational therapy so we can reduce waiting times.
5. Improve how we make information available to the public, and support the development of the Dewis Cymru website.
6. Review adult safeguarding processes as new guidance becomes available from Welsh Government, and create a separate safeguarding team to help meet demand.
7. Strengthen our partnership with domiciliary care and care-home providers – so they continue to deliver quality services.
8. Continue developing support for people with disabilities, focusing on reablement and independence.
9. Work with partners to develop quality services for people with complex needs.
10. Implement the new national electronic case management system, and maximise mobile technology to improve our services.
11. Implement adult social care at HMP Berwyn – Britain's newest and biggest prison.

12. Review the services available to adult carers.
13. Review our recovery services for mental health.
14. Review day and work opportunities for people with learning and physical disabilities, as well as mental health needs.
15. Continue to roll out Community Agents, working in partnership with GPs across Wrexham County Borough.
16. Work with partners to develop a regional strategy for learning disability services.
17. Continue our work with young people, getting more involved in the way their care and support is provided.
18. Create 'outcome-focussed' care and support plans that let us monitor personal outcomes (i.e. the end result for the people we help).
19. Review regional advocacy services, making sure we comply with the Act by offering them to all children coming into our care (advocacy is where an independent person outside the council helps a young person get their views and opinions across).
20. Expand the Wrexham Repatriation and Prevention project - which helps young people with complex needs – into a regional model.
21. Work with the national project team to develop an all-Wales fostering service.
22. Continue developing information, advice and assistance services in line with the Act.

3. What people tell us about our services

Our Domiciliary Care service – which supports older people in their own home – was inspected as part of a national study this year.

The findings indicated we have a clear vision in Wrexham and a strong approach to buying-in services from care providers.

They also recognised the challenges facing the sector – particularly recruitment and retention of staff, and the work involved in creating a more customer-focused service.

The report was useful, and one of many valuable sources of feedback.

For example, Adult Social Care carries out two big annual surveys. The Quality of Life (QOL) survey goes out to a random sample of over 1,000 people, and the carers survey was sent to over 600 registered adult carers this year.

The results have been published on the *Your Voice Wrexham* website (see section 6 for the link) and will help us shape what we do.

We also sent out a new Welsh Government survey this year, and a lot of people responded. We've sent the data to Welsh Government and will act on any insights it provides.

When we receive complaints, service managers are copied-in to help them identify issues.

And every year, an annual review of complements and complaints is considered by councillors on our Scrutiny Committee.

So complements and complaints provide useful feedback.

We also reviewed our charging policy after a lengthy consultation exercise (you'll find more details in section 6).

And our supported living service has set-up a tenant forum and surveys. We've used the feedback to develop a more customer-centred approach, and hold events on particular themes for people with learning disabilities.

We also gather service-specific feedback.

For example, recent surveys with people receiving Intermediate Care indicate:

- 93% feel they're involved as much as they want in decisions about their care and support.
- 88% feel involved as much as they want in decisions about their treatment.
- 90% feel that when staff organise care or treatment for them, it happens.
- 90% feel the team works well together.

- 100% feel the support they receive helps them live the life they want, as far as possible.
- 90% feel the service they receive makes them feel safe.

And responses from people in contact with Community Agents indicate:

- 92% feel their quality of life has improved as a result of the contact they've had with a Community Agent.
- 83% say that since receiving support, they feel part of their local community more.
- 92% say the support they've received has made them feel safe and secure.

Here's an example of how we act on what people tell us.

Feedback received from families through home-visits and at family centres made it clear there was demand for out-of-hours support services.

So we created the Waking Hours team, who work with families seven days-a-week from 7am until 10pm.

And here's another example.

After feedback from families, we redesigned some facilities at Tapley Respite Centre to make it more accessible for wheelchair users.

We also redesigned a house used to help young people develop their independence – making it more accessible for people with disabilities.

Under the council's *Difficult Decisions* consultation about budget savings, we suggested moving more information online.

But people told us they didn't want that – and that we should save money on management costs instead. So that's what we did.

Also, a lot of children we look after said they didn't like their reviews – they felt they were too focussed on adults. So we introduced a more child-focussed approach –

which was described as innovative by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate in Wales (CSSIW).

And the CSSIW recently inspected the whole of our children's social services without any major issues being identified.

Finally, this report – the one you're reading right now – is an important part of how we gather feedback.

Before we finalise the document, we always carry out a lengthy consultation – and use the results to help improve it.

4. Improving well-being (the six standards)

These are the six standards we mentioned earlier.

There's a lot of information here, so we've split them into two sections – adult social care and children's social care.

Standard 1: Helping people achieve the well-being outcomes they want.

This sounds complicated, but it's simple really. We're talking about helping people improve their situation in a way that takes account of how they feel, and what they want.

Adult Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Increase the integration of community health and social care services.
- Meet the requirements of the Welsh Government Welsh Language Standards.
- Review how we buy-in services.
- Increase the use of direct payments by customers.

- Revise our charging policy for care.
- Develop an Initial Response Team to act as a first point of contact.

This is what we did

Wrexham is a very active partnership player - both regionally and nationally.

Our work with the Intermediate Care Fund is helping us integrate community health and social care, reducing the number of people going into hospital.

This year we supported 250 people. As a result, 51% avoided going to hospital and 49% were quickly and safely discharged home. And over half were able to live independently afterwards.

Satisfaction levels remain high and this continues to be a priority service for both Adult Social Care and the Health Board.

Community Agents are also making a difference.

Nearly 200 people have been supported by eight agents this year, working in nine communities. A range of community groups and activities have been developed as a result.

We've also delivered training to social care professionals across Wrexham – so they understand the requirements of the Act.

Overall, adult clients feel we make a difference to their lives. Look at this chart.



This year, our carers' survey showed that 73% felt we met their needs.

And we continue to learn from compliments and complaints. This year the Adult Social Care department received 19 complaints. They were all resolved at 'stage 1.'

In children's services, we also had some feedback about poor communication. It was the main trend identified from the 14 complaints we had.

One of these complaints – relating to child protection – helped us improve the way we communicate with families.

This year we reviewed our charging policy in line with the Act (see section 6) and focused our resources on the *first point of contact* in the shape of our Initial Response Team.

We haven't achieved our ambition of a single point of access for all adult community health and social care services yet, but we'll focus on this over the coming year.

As mentioned earlier, we like to work with regional partners. We've had some successes and a few challenges.

- We've continued to provide an integrated mental health service with the Health Board.
- We've continued to provide an integrated equipment service ⁴ with Flintshire County Council and the Health Board.
- We've continued to provide and manage a North East Wales Emergency Duty Team with Flintshire and Denbighshire.
- We've continued to work with North Wales partners to develop public information on Dewis Cymru.
- We're helping the North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board develop new policies in line with the Act.
- We've contributed to the regional population needs-assessment, market position statement and domiciliary care commissioning strategy.

We've also developed an *ageing well* plan for Wrexham following consultation with local people and other organisations.

⁴ North East Wales Community Equipment Service

It'll focus on five priority areas – i) age-friendly communities ii) preventing falls iii) dementia supportive communities iv) opportunities for learning and employment and v) tackling loneliness and isolation.

We also remain committed to achieving the Welsh Language Standards, although recruiting Welsh-speaking staff is a challenge. So we're doing more to attract Welsh-speakers, and investing in Welsh language training courses.

Staff are also working with colleagues across Wales and Welsh Government on the new Families First Programme, which aims to help low-income families gain employment and achieve their potential.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Work with clients to co-produce outcome-focussed support plans – creating a more sustainable and client focussed service.
- Continue to develop our Welsh language services to meet Welsh Language Standards.

Children's Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Expand the information, advice and help we provide.
- Improve our assessments – meeting new guidelines and being more timely.

This is what we did

We expanded the Children's Single Point of Access (SPoA) team.

It's the first point of contact for anyone making a new referral to children's services – including partner agencies and members of the public.

It also identifies families that might be in need of early help, and signposts young people, parents and carers to services that can support them.

The team now includes a police community support officer (PCSO), with a youth justice social worker and health visitor set to join in 2017.

This means we can provide a wider range of information and advice.

We've also made more info available on the Dewis Cymru website.

So what about assessments? Well, we think children should be at the heart of it.

So we've changed our approach, and do more to understand their circumstances and what they want. As well as the strengths and capabilities of their family.

We recognise that families – with a bit of help - can often meet their own needs, and don't always need social services. But if we believe a child is at risk, we continue to act without delay to safeguard their welfare.

Welsh Government recently set a timescale of 42 working days for assessments.

We won't know until later this year (2017) how we're doing compared to other councils. And although timescales are important, so is quality.

When it comes to making sure children are seen as part of their assessment, Wrexham has outperformed every other council in Wales. So we're going to keep monitoring this.

And again, it shows how we build everything around the child.

Understanding how a young person feels is crucial in meeting their needs, and the needs of their family. That's why seeing and talking with a child is at the heart of our assessment process.

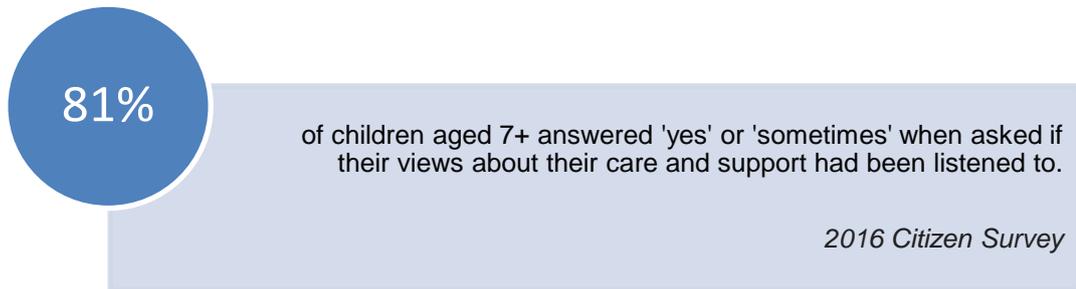
We've made sure our assessment paperwork focusses on 'outcomes' – in other words, the end result. But we need to do more with our care and support plan documentation.

In 2017, we'll be moving to a new national health and social care IT system to help us do this.

We've also improved the way we engage with young people after they've been assessed and referred to our Child Protection and Looked-After Children processes.

Before every review meeting, we'll send them a child-friendly form they can use to tell us their wishes and feelings. And in 2017, we'll introduce feedback forms to get a better feel for how children find the meetings, and to shape how we do things in future.

All of these improvements have been supported with training for key members of staff.



This is what we want to do in 2017-18

1. Continue developing our services in line with the Act and elements of national best practice.
2. Introduce the new national Electronic Case Management System (WCCIS) to help us manage care and support plans for children.
3. Make our care and support plans more outcome-focussed, and monitor whether the personal outcomes agreed are being achieved.
4. Develop feedback forms for Child Protection and Looked-After Children reviews to help shape what we do.

Standard 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

This means helping people look after their physical, mental and emotional health.

Adult Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Find savings to help us manage reduced funding, while developing services to meet the requirements of the Act.

- Change the way the department is structured.
- Reduce the waiting time for Disabled Facilities Grants.
- Respond to the big increase in demand for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS).
- Determine how we'll support the needs of HMP Berwyn – ready for when the prison opens in February 2017.
- Use reablement to ensure people achieve the level of independence they want.
- Implement a range of Welsh Government and Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) funded initiatives for older people, people with learning disabilities and children with complex needs.

This is what we did

Both the adult and children's social care departments have successfully delivered a savings plan to produce a balanced budget.

We've also done a lot of work with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and Health Board to make sure the right care is available for men coming to the prison from February.

We've invested a lot in our Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards team and worked hard to reduce the backlog of DOLS assessments. We've grown our expertise in managing cases and will be training staff so we can improve further.

It's estimated we'll handle around 550 DOLS cases this year. And since March 2015 we've had over 750 referrals. We expect to catch-up fully by April 2017.

We've continued to focus our resources on helping people maximise their independence and remain living at home.

Our in-house reablement service is very successful, with over 70% of people who complete the support package being able to live with reduced care, or no care at all.

There are now fewer people in residential placements supported by the council. It went down from 767 last year to 706 this year.

And we continue to invest heavily in disabled facilities grants, with the average waiting time reduced to 209 days.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Further develop social care services for the new prison to ensure the needs of the men are met.
- Embed the national outcomes framework into our work, and the work of our external providers. This will give us a new way to measure the impact of what we do – and understand the difference we're making to people's lives.

Children's Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

We didn't have any objectives under this standard for Children's Social Care...

This is what we did

...but we still did a huge amount of work.

We have an NHS nurse based in our Social Services team. They work with health visitors and school nurses to help look after the children we're supporting.

We also support 11-18 year-olds who've been to hospital for self-harming and other risk-taking behaviour. This is part of a project we've been running with the NHS since 2006.

Here's another thing. We've employed a social worker to work alongside health professionals in *Flying Start* areas (parts of Wrexham supported by a national initiative to help children aged below four).

They visit the homes of families that might need help – identifying their needs early, before things escalate.

And we're strengthening how we work with the NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Social workers supporting families with complex mental health issues now meet with NHS professionals once a month.

It's a chance to discuss the needs of the family – with foster carers and other professionals also able to attend.

Working closely with the NHS is a really important part of how we protect the physical, mental and emotional health of our young people in Wrexham.

Our teams play an important role in making sure children's health needs are being met, and all young people in care placements have a health-record and regular medicals.

Finally, we sometimes have children with complex needs who – rather than staying in residential placements – might benefit from therapeutic foster care.

So we've developed an approach for this – called the Wrexham Repatriation and Prevention Project.

It's helping to reduce the number of young people in residential care, and the number being placed outside the county – giving them more stability.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

1. Expand the Wrexham Repatriation and Prevention Project into a regional model.
2. Recruit more in-house generic and specialist foster carers to meet predicted demand, and reduce the number of young people placed with independent fostering providers.

Standard 3: Safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm.

This means helping protect people who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or other forms of harm or exploitation.

Adult Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Improve adult safeguarding and completion of DOLS requests by ensuring timely and safe responses to concerns.
- Implement an adult protection action plan.
- Improve how we share information with partners.
- Increase our use of ICT to reduce reliance on paper.
- Take action based on *A Place Called Home* – a report by the Older Peoples Commissioner in Wales.

This is what we did

Adult safeguarding referrals continue to rise, putting pressure on the department. So we've created a dedicated safeguarding and DOLS team to address this.

We're also an active member of the North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board, contributing to regional policies and procedures and sharing best practice.

We're reviewing our procedures to help us meet the requirements of the Act and achieve best practice. And we've worked hard to raise awareness of safeguarding among professionals, care providers and the public.

We invested heavily in training for both council staff and external agencies over the year, and held promotional events during National Safeguarding Week. We also provide advice on the council's website.

Our annual Quality of Life survey revealed that over 79% of adult clients felt as safe as they wanted to be, with over 86% feeling safe from risk of injury or neglect, and 92% feeling safe from any form of abuse.

And our investment in the DOLS team means we're making excellent progress delivering timely responses to assessments for people in care home settings.

Wrexham held its first National Adult Safeguarding Week in November. The aim was to raise public awareness of how everyone can play a part in supporting vulnerable people.

It included a drop-in day, where anyone concerned about a friend, relative or neighbour could speak in confidence to a professional, and get some advice.

“We all have a role to play in raising awareness of - and reporting concerns about - the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.”

Councillor Joan Lowe, Lead Member for Health and Adult Social Care

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Finish delivering our adult protection action plan to maintain the safety of vulnerable adults in Wrexham.
- Progress all areas listed for development in both the corporate and Safeguarding People Team action plans.
- Set up a safeguarding team in Adult Social Care.
- Implement new procedures to deliver the safeguarding requirements of the Act – pending guidance from Welsh Government.

Children’s Social Care

This is what we said we’d do

- Improve how we share information with other agencies.
- Improve how we listen and talk to young people we’re supporting – including how we engage children in the Child Protection and Looked-After Children processes.
- Develop our use of ICT – moving our records from paper to electronic.

This is what we did

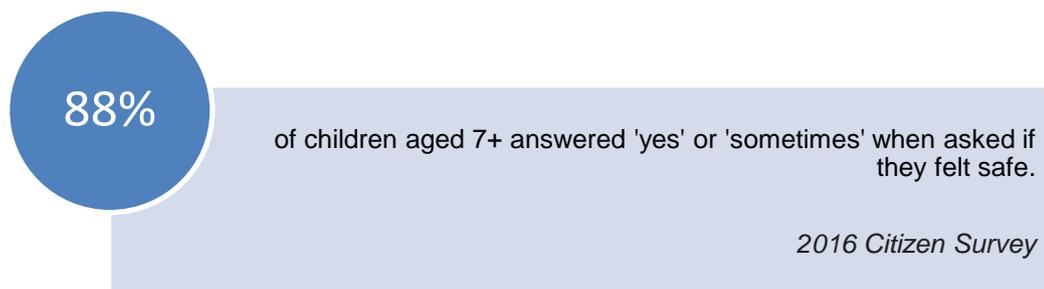
We share information and expertise – both internally and with partner agencies – in lots of ways.

The Safeguarding People Team provides advice to staff who work with young people at risk of harm. The expertise in the team helps provide a consistent approach to safeguarding across social services in Wrexham.

We also have a specialist who delivers training on the impact of sexual abuse and domestic violence on children and their families. This training is available to our entire social care workforce.

The Wrexham White Ribbon Campaign also helped raise public awareness about these issues, and asked people to pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.

Wrexham also ran a Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week.



You can never learn too much, and we're committed to developing a learning-culture here in Wrexham.

For example, recommendations from Child Practice Reviews (which look at serious incidents of abuse or neglect in Wales) are shared with our social services teams. We use them to develop our procedures and shape what we do.

Here's another way we share information. If a child is at risk of sexual exploitation, we work with our colleagues at Barnardo's to assess things.

Cases scored as 'significant' or 'moderate' can be progressed to a panel that includes Social Services and other relevant agencies. The panel shares information and identifies actions to safeguard the child.

We also contribute expertise and resources to the North Wales Safeguarding Children's Board – which helps co-ordinate work in the region.

So we shared a lot of information and expertise in 2016-17. But did we develop our use of ICT to manage our records – like we said we would?

We back-scanned all of our paper case files, reducing our reliance on paper records.

There are lots of benefits. For example, it lets staff in different teams or locations view the same records quickly – without having to send paper files to each other.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Progress all areas for development listed in both the corporate and Safeguarding People Team action plans.
- Improve the participation and engagement of both young people and fathers in the child protection process.

Standard 4: Helping people to learn, develop and participate in society.

This standard is about encouraging people to take part in society – helping them learn, interact with other people and be part of their communities.

Adult Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Increase the role of Community Agents across the borough.
- Expand the Shared Lives service.

This is what we did

Helping people access social activities and community contact is something we need to work on. We know this from our Quality of Life survey.

We need to become more creative in helping clients achieve a quality of life that includes social interaction in the communities of their choice.

Shared Lives and Community Agents are having a positive impact, so we need to grow these services over the coming year.

The council does support social care clients with transport – helping them get out and about. And a Wrexham charity called Chariots also provides adapted or supported taxis.

We know that loneliness and isolation are big concerns for many people, and that public transport can be a lifeline. So the council also subsidises bus services where it can – services that might not be profitable for bus companies, but are essential to isolated or rural communities.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Continue to increase the role of Community Agents across the borough.
- Continue to expand the Shared Lives service.
- Review the day and work opportunities service

Children's Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Increase in the number of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) completed. These help young people remain in school and continue their education during times of change.

This is what we did

Our education co-ordinator continues to support the young people we look after through school and college.

It's a really important job, and helps prevent or reduce disruption to their education (for example if they need to move to a new location or school).

Although the timeliness of initial PEPs remains a challenge, we'll look at how we incorporate them into the wider Care and Support Plans we put together for our children.

We also support young carers – children who look after someone at home (a parent, brother or sister for example) and often carry big responsibilities on small shoulders.

Advice and information, one-to-one support, outings and activities - as well as opportunities to meet other young carers – help these children experience things that might otherwise be impossible.

Case study

A young carer was referred for support following concerns around her caring role at home, the emotional impact of her sister's learning difficulties, and her own health needs (Cerebral Palsy).

Her mother had passed away and the father had little extended family nearby to help with their upbringing. Despite support from the NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and a behaviour unit, the challenging and sometimes volatile behaviour of her sister increased, and was controlling the family dynamics.

The home situation was sensitive and it took several home visits to gain the family's trust. One-to-one sessions with the young carer showed her mood was extremely low and she felt she "didn't have any way out."

The initial discussions focussed on her father, her relationship with her sister and school – as the young carer was starting secondary school soon and wanted a safe place to complete her homework.

Through the course of these sessions – and with trips out bowling with other young carers – we saw a change in her mood and she became more positive.

She seemed able to look at her situation more objectively and was a lot more hopeful for the future.

There were still some areas to be improved, but she could see the positives in her life. She also felt she'd been tough on her dad in the past and should appreciate him more.

She now feels she has more opportunities to meet other young people her own age. She also has more confidence - which is bound to have a positive effect on the rest of the family.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Incorporate the timely completion and monitoring of PEPs with the Care and Support Plan reviewing process.

Standard 5: Helping people maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

This standard is about helping people achieve healthy relationships at home and with the people they're close to.

Adult Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Implement the *What Matters* assessment across Adult Social Care.
- Enhance social work skills to focus on outcomes, and the strengths and assets of people, their families and networks.
- Continue to invest in Community Agents.

This is what we did

We've implemented the *What Matters* assessment, which focuses on finding out what's important to each individual. It's helping us offer a more person-centred approach.

Training has been provided to help staff focus on developing outcomes with people that recognise the support and opportunities available to them.

Our investment in Community Agents is having a positive impact too. And will grow over the coming year.

For example, we've started a *social prescribing service* with one GP practice to help people at risk of isolation. Instead of prescribing medication, the doctor writes a prescription for Community Agent support.

Helping people stay active, involved and socially connected in their communities is good for their health and wellbeing.

So it's really important stuff, and we'll be rolling out social prescribing across the borough as the Community Agent service expands.

This year's Quality of Life survey showed that 89% of adult clients felt our services helped their family support them.

But only 48% said they had as much social contact as they'd like. So that's something we need to look at – so we can help people have better social interaction and relationships.

Our annual carers' survey revealed that 70% of adult carers felt their views were listened to when discussing the needs of the person they care for.

And 63% felt their views were listened to when discussing their caring role and how it affected them.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Expand community agents to cover the whole of the borough, together with the social prescribing service with GPs.
- Further develop our outcome-focused approach to assessment and care management.
- Extend outcomes training to external providers, like our domiciliary care and supported living providers – helping them work in a more customer-focused way.

Children's Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Safely reduce the number of Looked-After Children by using preventative services – which help families deal with problems before they escalate.
- Review and enhance our preventative services so we continue to meet demand.
- Work towards a regional fostering service.

This is what we did

In 2016 Wrexham took part in a national review to look at the effectiveness of social services.

During three days of onsite fieldwork, inspectors held meetings with children and their families, interviewed staff, and reviewed case files and other documents.

The feedback was positive, with comments about the good standard of communication and evidence of families being supported through our processes.

A small number of actions were identified (such as updating policy documents) and completed soon after. Follow this link for the full report:

<http://cssiw.org.uk/our-reports/national-thematic-report/2016/161221-care-planning-report/?lang=en>

We also published a Public Law Outline guide for parents – to help them understand the social services process and the help available.

“Everybody involved with my children has been really helpful and supportive.”

2016 Citizen Survey – response from a parent of children receiving our support

Wrexham continues to host the regional North Wales Adoption Service (NWAS), which helps place children who can't return to live with their parents.

Sometimes, other family members could be suitable carers for the children. And when this is the case, the adoption service will offer advice to help them stay with their birth family.

Wrexham County Borough Council has two family centres that provide a range of services.

For example, the Parenting Team offers early intervention for families who need parenting support – including one-to-one help and group sessions.

A fortnightly drop-in service was also introduced in 2016.

Both Family Centres support the Flying Start initiative and offer sessions 42 weeks of the year.

There's also intensive support for families affected by substance misuse and domestic violence.

This includes the Freedom Programme for mothers who are victims of domestic violence.

“I’ve never felt so confident and calm. Freedom (Programme) has done this.”

Feedback from a client who benefitted from the project

The Waking Hours Team was fully up-and-running by June 2016.

The aim was to deliver services between 7am and 10pm, 7 days-a-week – allowing workers to support parents with routines, behaviour management and developing positive relationships within families.

The team also assists with foster care and adoption placements that are at risk of breaking down, as well as providing support for adolescents aged 16+ struggling within the family home or in supported lodgings.

The team has a child-friendly venue where staff undertake direct work and supervised contact with clients.

The approach is proving effective and we’re committed to its development.

The Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) is a multi-agency team that works directly with families experiencing parenting difficulties due to substance misuse or other complexities – such as mental health or domestic violence.

IFSS intervention consists of an intensive 4 -6 week programme, followed by a less intensive phase of up to 12 months.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Further develop referral mechanisms into the Prevention and Support Service – monitoring the outcomes in more detail.

Standard 6: Helping people achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

This means helping people improve their income. As well as helping them benefit from a social life and a suitable place to live.

Adult Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Meet the requirements of the Welsh Government Welsh Language Standards (mentioned in section 4.1).

This is what we did

Our Income Maximisation Unit does what it says on the tin. It helps clients maximise their income and access the benefits they're entitled to.

This year we've supported 3,000 people in this way, and estimated income gain from increased benefit take-up is £9 million.

The service is about to expand its MacMillan-funded welfare rights service to cover the whole of North East Wales. It provides benefits advice to cancer patients in partnership with MacMillan and the NHS.

Our work opportunities service for people with disabilities has also made a difference – giving clients greater independence by helping them access education and employment placements.

We also support 162 people in supported-living accommodation, working closely with housing and support providers to ensure that a wide range of accommodation is available.

The Housing Grants and Occupational Therapy teams help meet the needs of disabled adults and children by adapting their homes or helping them source more suitable housing.

We've continued to work closely with Penaf Housing Association, and will expand our stock of extra-care housing apartments from 54 to 114 by May 2018.

And we'll be supporting the development of the 2018-23 housing strategy, helping to make sure Wrexham has appropriate quality housing for people with different needs.

The council's Housing and Economic Development department has commissioned a review of sheltered housing – which includes bedsit accommodation, small one-bedroom flats and bungalows. Times have changed, and the layout, size and condition of some of our buildings no longer meet people's needs.

We're also trying to reduce homelessness among young people. We'll assess any 16 or 17 year old that asks for help. And if they want to live independently (rather than be looked after by the council), we'll help them find supported accommodation.

The new Lifespan Disability Service has also made it easier for adults and children's departments to work together to secure accommodation for people aged 16 and over with complex needs.

This will also help reduce the number of young people moved to out-of-county placements.

We also use our annual Quality of Life survey to understand if clients have suitable accommodation.

This is what we want to do in 2017-18

- Consider redesigning sheltered housing to better meet the needs of current and future generations.

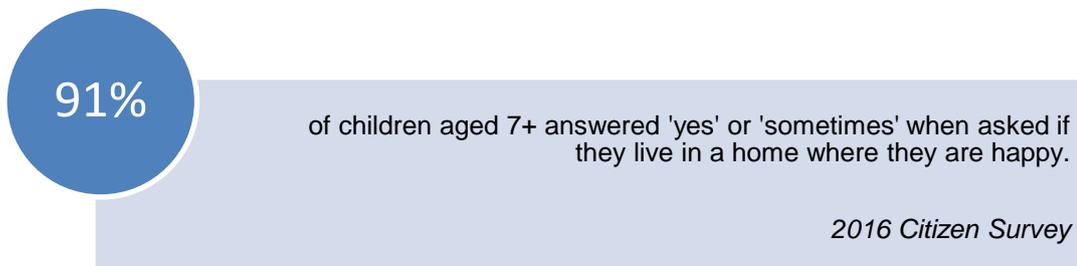
Children's Social Care

This is what we said we'd do

- Support the implementation of *When I am Ready* duties from April 2016, as set out in the Act.

This is what we did

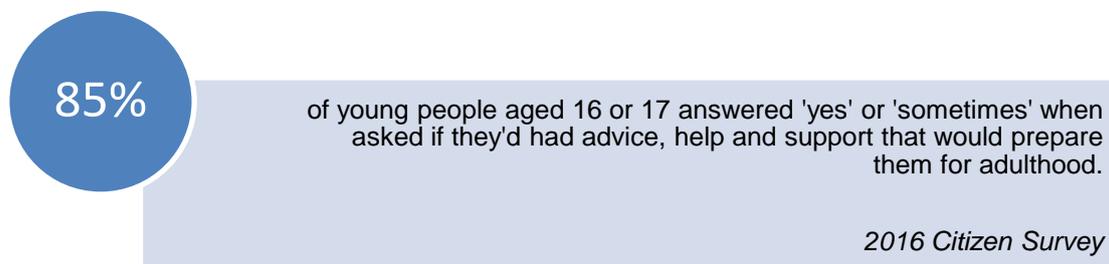
The Children's Single Point of Access (SPoA) Team includes a housing officer who helps us make the right decisions in Social Services and the Housing Department.



Families evicted from council accommodation will often find it difficult to get new accommodation, and can fall into a cycle of homelessness.

Aside from the negative effect on families, it can also add to the pressure on resources for tackling homelessness.

The housing officer plays a key role in preventing homelessness by sharing knowledge and information that helps parents struggling to keep up with their rent.



Working with Children's Social Services, the housing officer will also assist 16 or 17 year olds who tell us they're homeless.

Last year we created an additional post in our Leaving Care Team, helping young people on the edge of care build bridges that allow them to remain at home if it's safe.

Locating the housing officer in the Children's SPoA has strengthened relationships between housing and children's social services, which is a positive thing for children and their families.

We continue to run the Family Aide Scheme – part of Welsh Government’s *Supporting People* programme.

This aims to break the cycle of homelessness and ensure families can remain in their community by giving appropriate housing support. The service is highly regarded by the families that use it, and it was audited this year with a positive outcome.

There’s a duty on councils to allow fostered young people in stable placements the opportunity to remain until they’re 21 – or 25 if they’re in higher education.

The scheme is called *When I am Ready* and although there’s no additional funding for it, all North Wales councils have worked together to develop the scheme.

Take-up of these placements has been consistent with predicted demand for 2016-17.

5. How we deliver for our citizens

A. Developing our workforce

We receive a training grant from Welsh Government to help us meet the requirements of the Act.

We were given £309,187 in 2016-17, and we topped this up with £132,509 of our own money.

We also invested £270,809 from our normal budgets – giving us a total of £712,505 for workforce development.

Each council publishes a workforce development plan. Follow this link to read ours: http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/social_services/workforce_strategy/communication_plan.pdf

So what did we do?

We delivered over 80 days of training on the Act to the social care sector in Wrexham.

We also delivered dementia-awareness training in Wrexham care homes, and trialled a new approach to workforce development with Stirling University.

The trial was successful, so we’ll be rolling it out in 2017-18.

You can find out more about our workforce strategy in section 6.

We've also helped our social workers access training and qualifications under the Care Council for Wales (CCW) Continuing Professional Education and Learning Framework.

We have a strong career-progression framework for social workers, based on CCW Continued Education Awards. And a similar framework is being developed for occupational therapists.

We've also adopted the *First 3 Years in Practice* framework – published by CCW and the Social Services Improvement Agency. And produced guidance for managers to supplement existing training.

B. Finances and planning for the future

We're getting less money from Welsh Government, so reshaping social services to meet this challenge has been a priority.

Adults Social Care delivered £6,654,216 of savings – which represents a 14.9% budget reduction.

And Children's Social Care delivered £1,232,000 of savings – a 9% budget reduction.

We've updated our medium-term financial and service-efficiency plans, and continue to factor future pressures into our budget-planning.

The council has a rigorous budget process that asks managers to identify potential savings over a three-year period.

Departments like Social Services – who have a *duty of care* – are supported as much as possible.

Software changes will soon give managers more online, day-to-day control of their budgets.

And we've implemented a *procure-to-pay* (P2P) system – integrated with our financial system – to help managers control expenditure.

The Supporting People grant from Welsh Government helps us provide housing-related support to vulnerable people – so they can live as independently as possible.

We're expecting this grant to remain at £4,980,685 over the coming year, although it's been reduced by 15% since 2013-14.

We've also benefited from a government 'top-up' in the past, but this has dropped from £700,000 in 2013-14 to zero in 2016-17.

So we've had to meet challenges – reshaping and re-tendering services in order to reduce costs. But we've made every effort to reduce the impact on vulnerable people.

C. Political leadership, governance and accountability

On a political level, the council is supported by an executive group of councillors – called *portfolio holders* or *lead members* – who make key decisions.

They're supported by scrutiny committees. Social Services comes under the *Safeguarding, Communities and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee*.

On a management level, the council also has a chief executive supported by two strategic directors.

Social Services comes under the remit of the director responsible for 'people.' This person also has the statutory *Directors of Social Services* role.

Councillors and senior managers with these lead-responsibilities understand the importance of social services, and council policy states that we'll prioritise services that support vulnerable people when setting budgets, making savings and changing how we do things.

Social Services is managed by the Head of Adult Social Care and Head of Children's Social Care. Each department is supported by a portfolio-holder who meets regularly with managers.

They're involved in service-planning, and work with the Leader of the Council to help us produce this report.

Of course, social services is part of a much bigger picture in Wrexham.

The council focuses its work on three strategic themes – *economy, people* and *place* – and promotes well-being across its departments by bringing together officers responsible for things covered by both the *Social Services* and *Future Generations* Acts.

The future generations work is being overseen by the Wrexham Public Service Board (PSB). You can find out more about the PSB in section 6.

Partnership working

The PSB was established as a result of the Future Generations Act.

It aims to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wrexham County Borough – in a sustainable way that won't harm future generations.

To help do this, the PSB has different partnership boards working on different things. Social Services is supported by a board that includes Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Public Health Wales and the third sector.

Its priorities for 2016-17 are:

- Delivering integrated health and social care.
- Child and adolescent mental health services.
- Working towards a smoking-free Wrexham.
- Promoting healthy eating and being more active (preventing obesity).

Safeguarding arrangements

Our new *Corporate Safeguarding Policy* promotes greater understanding among staff, councillors and people working on our behalf about guidelines in place for safeguarding children and adults.

The associated *Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan* was developed to help us meet recommendations in the Wales Audit Office review *Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils* (published in June 2015).

We have action plans for the Safeguarding People Team, Adult Protection and Corporate Safeguarding, and these are given high priority.

The council also remains compliant with the 'prevent' duty under the *Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015*.

This requires councils to play a part in responding to the ideological challenge – including giving advice and support to help prevent people being drawn into terrorism.

So if we think a person is at risk of radicalisation, we'll work with other organisations to assess the situation, and develop a support-plan for the individual concerned.

6. Further information

This final section lists where you can find more information about some of the things mentioned in this report.

Council structure

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/about_council.htm

Wrexham Public Service Board

<http://www.wrexhampsb.org>

North Wales Safeguarding Board

Helps ensure children and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and neglect.

<http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/fwlscb/>

Council Plan

Overarching plan that defines where the council focuses its energies.

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/documents/council_plan.htm

Your Voice Wrexham

Public Service Board consultation website – used by the council for online surveys.

<http://www.yourvoicewrexham.net/KMS/news.aspx?LoggingIn=tempVar&strTab=Home>

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Inspects local authority social services, and reports on their effectiveness.

Wrexham Council report:

<http://cssiw.org.uk/our-reports/local-authority-report/2015/wrexham2014-2015/?lang=en>

Report on regulated care services in Wrexham:

<http://cssiw.org.uk/find-a-care-service/service-directory/?lang=en#/find-a-care-service/service-directory/?keywords=wrexham&view=Search+results&lang=en>

Council complaints and complements

<http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/complaints>

Dewis Cymru

<https://www.dewis.wales/>

Council reports and documents

New charging policy

<http://moderngov.wrexham.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=6721>

Contract Monitoring Report

<http://moderngov.wrexham.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=4429&LLL=undefined>

Safeguarding Report

<http://moderngov.wrexham.gov.uk/documents/s500003197/Item%207.pdf?LLL=0>

Corporate Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection)

<http://moderngov.wrexham.gov.uk/documents/g3006/Public%20reports%20pack%2012th-Jul-2016%2010.00%20Executive%20Board.pdf?T=10&LLL=undefined>

Review of Day Services

<http://moderngov.wrexham.gov.uk/documents/g3627/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Dec-2016%2010.00%20Executive%20Board.pdf?T=10&LLL=undefined>

Wrexham Council Workforce Strategy

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/social_services/workforce_strategy/communication_plan.pdf

Workforce Development training plan, brochure and mid-year report

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/social_services/workforce_strategy/index.htm

Welsh Language Standards

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/documents/welsh_language_scheme.htm

Wrexham's *Ageing Well* plan

https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/social_services/key_documents/aging_well_wrexham.pdf

Transport web-pages

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/links/links_transport.htm#bus

Wrexham travel plan – *Wrexham Connected*

https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/travel/wrexham_connected.pdf

Housing Strategy

http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/documents/local_housing_strategy.htm

Supporting People funding programme

https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/housing/supporting_people/supporting_people_directory.pdf

https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/housing/supporting_people/local_commissioning_plan.pdf

7. Performance measurement framework⁵

Quality Standards	Performance Measure/Indicator ⁶	2016/17 Out-turn	Comments
1. Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.	1. People reporting they have received the right information or advice when they needed it	1. 88.85%	1. A 2. A 3. A 4. A 5. A 6. A 7. A
	2. People reporting they were treated with dignity and respect	2. 97.71%	
	3. People reporting that they felt involved in any decisions made about their care and support	3. 91.09%	
	4. People with a care and support plan reporting that they have been given written information of their named worker in social services	4. 86.36%	
	5. People who are satisfied with care and support that they received	5. 96.86%	
	6. The percentage of adults who have received support from the information, advice and assistance service and have not contacted the service again during the year	6. TBC	

⁵ The performance reported and commented upon here is based on latest figures as at 31st December 2016. It will be updated as at 31st March 2017 for the year to date when the whole year performance is calculated. This will be updated prior to publication.

⁶ If these are not part of the new Performance Indicator data set, the responses are based on the best match question within the new annual Welsh Government surveys carried out by the Council during the autumn of 2016.

	7. The percentage of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales	7. ?	
2. Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.	<p>1. The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over</p> <p>2. The percentage of adults who completed a period of reablement A. And have a reduced package of care and support 6 months later B. And have no package of care and support 6 months later</p> <p>3. The average length of time older people (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes</p> <p>4. Average age of adults entering residential care homes</p> <p>5. The percentage of children seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after</p> <p>6. The percentage of looked after children registered with a GP</p>	<p>1. 1.72</p> <p>2. TBC, report not ready yet.</p> <p>3. TBC</p> <p>4. TBC</p> <p>5. ?</p> <p>6. ?</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2. The current performance report measures success immediately after reablement. At Q3 we had A. 39% fully reabled and B. 33.1% partially reabled.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p>

<p>3. Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People reporting that they feel safe 2. The percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescales 3. The percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR) 4. The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 89.05% 2. TBC 3. ? 4. ? 	
<p>4. Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People reporting they can do what matters to them 2. People reporting they feel satisfied with their social networks 3. The percentage of children achieving the core subject indicator at key stage 2 and 4 4. The percentage of looked after children who have experienced (1) or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the year to 31 March 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 89.23% 2. 93.51% 3. ? 4. ? 	

<p>5. Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People reporting that they feel a part of their community 2. The percentage of looked after children on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year 3. Carers reporting they feel supported to continue in their caring role 4. Carers reporting they felt involved in designing the care and support plan for the person that they care for 5. Parents reporting that they felt involved in any decisions made about their child's care and support 6. The percentage of children supported to remain living within their family 7. The percentage of looked after children returned home from care during the year 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 71.16% 2. ? 3. 86.55% 4. 90.48% 5. ? 6. ? 7. ? 	
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<p>6. Working with supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People reporting they have received care and support through their language of choice 2. People reporting that they live in the right home for them 3. People reporting they chose to live in a residential care home 4. Children and young people reporting that they are happy with who they live with 5. Young adults reporting they received advice, help and support to prepare them for adulthood 6. The percentage of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at 12 months and 24 months after leaving care 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 98.83% of adults and 96.82% of Carers were able to communicate in their preferred language 2. 96.2% of adults and 90.32% of Carers felt they lived in a home that best supports my well-being 3. 61.11% of adults said it was their choice to live in a residential home. 4. ? 5. ? 6. ? 	
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	7. The percentage of care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year	7. ?	
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Appendix A – National Performance Measures (Children’s)

National Performance Data	2016/17 Performance *Currently Q3
PMC024: The percentage of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales	79.7%
PMC025: The percentage of children supported to remain living within their family	72.0%
PMC026: The percentage of looked after children returned home from care during the year	7.3%
PMC027: The percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority Child protection Registers (CPR)	0%
PMC028: The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year	337.9 days
PMC029a: Percentage of children achieving the core subject indicator at key stage 2 PMC029b: Percentage of children achieving the core subject indicator at key stage 4	n/a – data taken from ‘Children receiving care and support’ census
PMC030: The percentage of children seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after	71.4%
PMC031: The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who were	100%

registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement	
PMC032: The percentage of looked after children who have experienced 1 or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the year to 31 March	2.6%
PMC033: The percentage of looked after children on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year	4.2%
PMC034: The percentage of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at: a.) 12 months after leaving care b.) 24 months after leaving care	27.2% 64.3%
PMC035: The percentage of care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year	18.3%

Appendix B – Children’s and Parents Citizen Survey Responses

Children’s questionnaires were sent to all children/young people receiving care and support aged 7 – 17 on 1st September 2016:

Question	Response Percentage			
	‘Yes’	‘Sometimes’	‘No’	‘Don’t know’
1. I live in a home where I am happy	80%	12%	3%	5%
2. I am happy with the people that I live with	80%	6%	6%	8%
3. I can do the things I like to do	62%	24%	8%	6%
4. I feel I belong in the area where I live	74%	10%	6%	10%

5. I am happy with my family, friends and neighbours	78%	11%	2%	9%
6. I feel safe	82%	6%	4%	8%
7. I know who to speak to about my care and support	82%	6%	4%	8%
8. I have had the right information or advice when I needed it	66%	15%	5%	14%
9. My views about my care and support have been listened to	67%	14%	8%	11%
10. I have been able to use my everyday language	89%	0%	1%	10%
11. I was treated with respect	77%	7%	5%	11%
12. I am happy with the care and support I have had	74%	10%	7%	9%
13. I have had advice, help and support that will prepare me for adulthood (aged 16 or 17 only)	74%	11%	15%	0%

Questionnaires were sent to the **parents** of all children/young people receiving care and support aged 7 – 17 on 1st September 2016:

Question	Response Percentage			
	'Yes'	'Sometimes'	'No'	'Don't know'
1. I have been actively involved in all decisions about how my child's/children's care and support was provided	60%	28%	7%	5%