



Report of the Director of Social Services

Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel – 31 October 2023

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 – DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Purpose	This report is the Director of Social Services' account of the Council's improvement journey to 2022/23, and how well the Council is meeting statutory requirements under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The report looks back at last year's areas for improvement, the challenges we face and sets new priorities for 2023/24. It highlights changes that have taken place within social services to achieve progress towards national well-being outcomes.
Content	The Annual Report of the Director of Social Services is a requirement under Part 8 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, and the report is required to give the Director's own account of how well Swansea Council are responding to the main challenges. In particular, in meeting the new Act's statutory requirements and progress towards achieving outcomes set by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
Councillors are being asked to	Receive and approve the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2022/23
Lead Councillor(s)	Councillor Louise Gibbard
Lead Officer(s)	Dave Howes, Director of Social Services
Report Author	Dave Howes / Simon Jones
Legal Officer	Carolyn Isaac
Finance Officer	Chris Davies
Access to Services Officer	Catherine Window

1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services is to evaluate the local authority's improvement journey to 2022/23, improving services to people in Swansea, those who access

information, advice and assistance, and to those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. This report also sets out to demonstrate how well Swansea's Social Services has implemented new requirements under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act) and how well we have promoted and accounted for the delivery of well-being standards to the citizens of Swansea.

- 1.2. This Annual Report is a statutory requirement under the Part 8 Code of Practice on the Role of Director of Social Services (Social Services functions) under the SSWB Act, which prescribes a format and template for the report to follow. Part 8 of the SSWB Act also states that the annual report should be published "as soon as reasonably practicable" after the year to which it relates. The report is required to be presented to Council by the Director, then copied to the Welsh Minister, as well as Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), and finally published on the Council's public website.

[Part-8-code-of-practice-on-the-role-of-the-director-of-social-services-social-services-functions.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

- 1.3. The main background paper to this report is the Director of Social Service's Annual report 2022/23.

2. Annual Report

- 2.1 The main report, as appended, has been written with a close eye on Reg. 3 of the *Local Authority Social Services Annual Reports (Prescribed Form) (Wales) Regulations 2017*, which came into force in September 2017.

- 2.2 This statutory regulation sets out in detail the information which is required to be included in the Director of Social Services' annual report, although this is likely to change in the next year or two alongside the introduction of a new national performance framework. As things stand, the Director of Social Services' Annual report is still set out using the following headings:

Part One:

- Introduction
- Director's summary of performance
- How are people shaping our services?

Part Two:

- Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help,

Part Three:

- How we do what we do
- Accessing further information and key documents

2.3 The information in Section 4, National Quality Standards has to be set out in six parts, highlighting progress in meeting the national Local Authority quality standards under the following headings. The six national quality standards are:

NQS 1: Working with people to define & co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.

NQS 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

NQS 3: Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm.

NQS 4: Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society.

NQS 5: Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

NQS 6: Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life It covers the outcomes expected, what we are doing how well we are doing and the priorities for the year ahead.

2.4 Director of Social Services' Annual Report 2022/23 is an opportunity to show how Swansea is meeting the new statutory requirements under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and how we are applying the five ways of working within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2.5 Current guidance suggests that the annual report is produced and presented to Council, and that this report together with last year's is made available to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Welsh Government by October 2023.

2.6 The Welsh Government has commissioned Practice Solutions Wales to lead on proposals to amend the Annual Reporting template and guidance. The new reporting is likely to align more closely to the needs of each target audience, with closer attention to services delivered regionally and in partnership. An important consideration as always is how well available performance and activity data is used within self-assessment, and how this analysis integrates with service plans and improvement programmes.

2.7 In the meantime, the annual report must conform to the performance framework and outcomes as laid out in the Code of Practice for measuring social services performance, including a new set of quality standards, and the national Performance and Improvement framework for Social Services, has recently been published:

[Code-Of-Practice MeasuringPerformance \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/code-of-practice-measuring-performance)

2.8 Data in this report reflects the Welsh Government reporting requirements (our statutory data returns) under the National Social Services Performance and Improvement framework, and corporate performance reporting (KPIs).

3. Other Issues

3.1 Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) facilitates an annual performance review meeting with each local authority social services. Senior management, and cabinet members are generally invited to the meeting to share in feedback from recent inspection activity and to discuss progress against the statutory requirements, improvement priorities and against performance measures. Minutes summarising this year's meeting, held on 31/01/2023, are sent to the Director of Social Services.

3.2 The meeting covered four areas: People, Wellbeing. Prevention and Partnerships. Generally positive examples shared in all areas, and some observations for follow up:

- **Key challenges** are captured in service improvement plans and on-going work is being done to align this with the new corporate plan. Swansea Social Services challenges are captured in service improvement plans and on-going work is being done to align this with the new corporate plan.
- **People** - workforce – Swansea has a targeted recruitment strategy for addressing gaps and looking longer term.
- **Wellbeing**- amount of legal resource required has been a particular area of challenge (DoLS).
- **Prevention and early help** the Director noted that services are significantly dependent on grant funding and if they were removed it would pose a significant risk to the provision of preventative work.
- **Partnership & Integration** – how the regional agenda is focused on 'big system change', which can make the work harder to measure progress. Directors report this year will reflect more on general issues and not so much on impact of the pandemic.

3.3 In May this year the Deputy Minister for Social Services, on behalf of the Welsh Government, launched a public consultation on the Rebalancing Care and Support Programme. Part of the proposed changes are to the Part 8 Code of Practice on the role of the local authority Director of Social Services and the related Local Authority Social Services Annual Report Regulation. [Rebalancing care and support programme | GOV.WALES](#)

3.4 Current proposal is to keep the statutory requirement to report annually.

Main drivers are to ensure that the guidance reflects more closely corporate self-assessment, citizen engagement and improvement requirements set out within the Local Government & Elections (Wales)

Act 2021, as well as the National Social Services Performance and Improvement framework. As a result, there are likely to be some changes to the timetable and structure of the Director's report next year.

4. Integrated Impact Assessments

4.1 Integrated Assessment Implications

The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage

Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language

Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

4.2 An Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed, with the agreed outcomes as follows:

- **Summary of Impacts (Q2)** Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.

- **Summary of involvement (Q3) Social Services work closely with other** Swansea Council services, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards and works co-productively on services development and commissioning plans. This development work and the involvement of others has been involved in his report.

- **WFG considerations (Q4)** Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall plan and as part of the transformation and improvement programmes within social services, which are working towards a sustainable model of social care. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified social care workforce is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for Swansea citizens. The report shows how we are looking to the future by ensuring that we are well placed to recruit, retain and better support social care workers in their professional development, and how we can help them be the best that they can be in their work with vulnerable people, and their carers.

- **Any risks identified (Q5)** The improvements and transformation programmes set out within this plan are risk managed closely. Any risks identified, and agreed, are mitigated as routine within social services at service, directorate and corporate levels through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meeting and escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.

- **Cumulative impact (Q7)** There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens through the continuous improvement of social services, and the benefits this brings to the social care economy and wider social care workforce.

The screening exercise concluded it is not necessary to complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment on this report.

4.3 The Director of Social Services' annual report also sets out progress towards the Council's objective on Well-being and corporate priority of Safeguarding people from harm, as described in the Corporate Plan 2023-28, and as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and associated statutory guidance.

4.4 The Director's Annual Report takes into account the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by outlining (p36) how Swansea Council is committed to taking forward these rights through the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Board, and action plan.

- 4.5 The Annual Report also summarises Swansea Council's progress on mainstreaming Welsh language standards, and "Mwy Na Geriau / More than Just Words" framework for Health and Social Care. In particular, whether there has been progress on delivering the 'active offer' in social services whereby staff initiate a response to the public by offering to provide services in Welsh language. Also, progress is expected by the Council on implementing the Welsh Language standards in other business as usual areas; by mainstreaming the Welsh language into service delivery, commissioning and workforce planning.
- 4.6 The Director's Annual Report must comply with Welsh Language Standards. The full report will be translated in a Welsh Language version, then published on the Council's public website, following its presentation at the Full Council meeting in October 2023.

5. **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. **Legal Implications**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report other than those set out in the body of the report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

- Appendix A Director of Social Services Annual Report 2022/23
Appendix B Integrated Impact Assessment