



CHIEF OFFICER STATEMENT

Jason O'Brien
 Chief Officer
 Social Care and Housing



During 2021-22 we have found innovative solutions to ensure we support, safeguard and enable vulnerable people to achieve the positive outcomes and wellbeing they need. We have kept to our principles and values of promoting independence, measured risk taking and reducing isolation by having “What Matters” conversations that are centred on giving people a voice and control in decision making. I am very proud of my colleagues in Social Care and Housing who have continued to respond quickly and efficiently during the pandemic. Despite the additional demands and complexity created by the pandemic, core services have been delivered while the service continues to make improvements. Recruitment across the whole of social care remains a major challenge for the year ahead and there are areas where further development is necessary, and these will be addressed through the Chief Officer and individual team plans and monitored robustly over 2022-23.

What went well...

- ✓ Enhanced partnership working through an expanded Multi Agency Support & Safeguarding Hub (MASSH) ensures children and families receive the right support at the right time.
- ✓ Developing our on-line referral pathway which aligns to a threshold of need and enables professional referrers to make effective decisions when considering referring to children and family services.
- ✓ A whole service review of the Family Placement Team which will increase placement stability for our Children Looked After, improve the usage of in-house foster placements and ensure our Foster Carers receive suitable support.
- ✓ Through a range of practice changes and initiatives we have ensured a net reduction of Children Looked After and we have reduced usage and spend on residential placements.
- ✓ We have embedded a renewed approach to performance management resulting in more meaningful insight and accountability.
- ✓ We opened ‘Ty Glas Y Dorlan’ Adult Services Community Hub. This offers high standard accommodation with a recover to re able focus, enabling people to achieve what matters to them and providing carer respite opportunities within Torfaen.
- ✓ Housing colleagues responded enthusiastically to new challenges during the pandemic and helped create a very successful community hub linking volunteers with individuals for assistance with daily tasks.
- ✓ Working with partners, the temporary accommodation team ensured that every rough sleeper was offered safe accommodation.
- ✓ We supported social care providers with the delivery of over 22 million items of PPE since the start of the pandemic.



Challenges moving forward

These are the key strategic challenges emerging from the self-evaluations.

Further multi-year challenges carried forward from the 2021-22 Chief Officer Plan and other emerging projects from change activities will be undertaken with a renewed focus on data, performance and risk management.

Challenges		Solutions/Actions
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting people, staff, providers, and the communities of Torfaen to recover from the physical and emotional impacts of the pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having the resources and capacity to support commissioned services through Covid outbreaks. Engage in national, regional, and local work to develop dynamic recovery plans.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of increasingly complex referrals requiring high levels of support from staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve partnership working and multi-agency approaches to improving outcomes for individuals. Monitoring effectiveness of high cost placements. Understand, recognise and plan for the impact of Covid.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragility in the Social Care provider market and our ability to commission the right level of care that people need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on the positive relationships with our partners to build a sustainable provider market focused on enablement, promoting independence and positive risk taking which enables people to live the way they chose to live. Engage in National, Regional and Local workstreams to drive forward improvements.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning services given uncertainties around short Term Grant Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Welsh Government and other funding bodies so that services can be planned effectively and identify priority areas of investment.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting and retaining staff across the service area and within commissioned services to deliver our services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement internally and regionally on strategies to recruit and retain care staff. Work with HR colleagues to review the LAs "offer". Review secondment / sponsorship opportunities for unqualified.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The anticipated impacts of the cost-of-living crisis on providers financial stability and the numbers of adults, children and families experiencing increased poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with corporate colleagues to understand the impact and ensure we can work across directorates to support individuals and families to maximise opportunities for stability