

MEETING	The Full Council
DATE	1st October 2020
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Dafydd Meurig & Councillor Dilwyn Morgan
TITLE	Statutory Director for Social Services Annual Report 2019/20
PURPOSE	To present the report to the Council Member's attention
AUTHOR	Morwena Edwards, Statutory Director for Social Services and Corporate Director

1. Introduction

- 1.1. At the end of every financial year, every Statutory Director of Social Services is required to provide and publish a report regarding the duties of social services within the local authority over the previous year.
- 1.2. The report must be published as soon as practically possible after the end of the financial year.
- 1.3. The report should explain the Council's performance in terms of fulfilling its social services roles, and it must explain the manner in which the Council's other roles have contributed towards fulfilling outcomes in terms of people's well-being, and the manner that this will continue.
- 1.4. As Statutory Director, I am requested to consider the range of information and experiences that can affect the ability of Social Services to provide high quality, reliable and sustainable services.

2. The Report

- 2.1. The purpose of the report is to outline our journey towards improvement in providing services to the people of Gwynedd who need advice, support or care from us.
- 2.2. In line with the requirements of the new Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (the Act) the report considers how Gwynedd Council have promoted well-being and its achievement against the quality standards set out in the Act. This year, I have outlined the definitions of those standards, as set out in the Act, in appendix 2 to the report.
- 2.3. The report also draws attention to any lessons learnt, and outlines the priorities for the year ahead. It also explains the manner in which we assessed people's needs and included them in the centre whilst shaping our services and care provisions.

- 2.4. As you know, the Covid-19 pandemic struck at the end of the 2019/20 financial year. Of course, the priority was to ensure our ability to continue to provide essential services and care for our vulnerable people. This has meant a delay in preparing this report for your attention, and I apologise for that.
- 2.5. I'm very pleased to note that the performance of social services over the past year has once again been positive. As you know, we have been on a journey for several years to transform our services, by causing a culture change and ensuring that we provide our social services in a way that keeps the individual at the centre at all times. Some issues need particular attention from us and I will ensure that these issues are given due attention by the relevant departments. On the whole, I am pleased with the progress that has been made, but it is vital that we and our partners continue to invest time and resources to realise the vision of acting as one. This is not always easy but I think that recent times have shown us all how important it is for us to act as one and in a way that achieves what is important to people.
- 2.6. The performance of relevant services is challenged in accordance with Council procedures and reports on this performance are presented by the relevant Cabinet members at regular intervals. By now, representatives of the Services Scrutiny Committee are present at the performance challenge meetings. An overview of the performance of services for the whole year is also provided in Gwynedd Council's Annual Performance Report for 2019/20, which is on the programme for this meeting today.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1. The Council is requested to accept the report for publishing.

4. Views of the Statutory Officers

The Monitoring Officer:

It is a requirement, in accordance with statutory guidance made under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 that the Director of Social Services prepare an annual report. As part of those arrangements it is expected that the report is shared with members in order to ensure effective accountability. This report meets those requirements.

Head of Finance:

I note that the last part of the Director of Social Services' annual report sets out Social Services' main priorities for the year 2020/21. It is expected that the relevant departments (Adult and Children's services) aim to deliver these priorities within their existing resources, by working together on activities with different departments and external bodies, and by securing additional funding from the Welsh Government. Approval of this annual report will not involve any additional financial commitment from the Council – this will be addressed further in the normal course of the 2021/22 budgeting round.