

# **Local Authority Social Services Annual Report** **– Additional Guidance**

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## Additional Guidance Introduction

This is a document to help the drafting of the Local Authority Social Services Annual Report. The structure of the report is set out in the Part 8 Code of Practice. Page 12-15 of [Director of social services annual report: guidance \(gov.wales\)](#) provides the necessary information for completing each section of the report.

Therefore, the **headings and structure must be followed**. However, the narrative and content are for the individual local authority to decide. The below guidance is to support drafting officers in knowing what to include in each section.

The purpose of the report is to give an overview of the performance of the social services department. It provides a narrative self-assessment which adds context to the performance and activity data which is provided to Welsh Government.

The whole document is to be published on the council's website. Therefore, when drafting the report, consider language choices. This should include using everyday language and avoid jargon where possible. Use accessible, plain language throughout the report. Even those sections not written for the public. It should be readable by people of different backgrounds, and can be read with screen readers etc. Guidance for writing for work can be found in the FAQ (Annex B).

The document should also be used internally throughout the year as part of ongoing business planning and prioritisation. It creates accountability, as the priorities and focus for each year will be reflected on in next year's reports.

This report must be the main, important points to be made, rather than a full description of all the local authorities' activities. Additional information can always be provided to interested readers, but this report must be a summary.

To avoid duplication, links to other reports which contain more information are encouraged. However, it needs to be made clear what the linked document is, and some short summary of the key points from the linked document. For example, if linking to the complaint's reports, giving some headline figures and learning.

The final report **must be approved by the Director of Social Services**. It needs to be accurate and informative to a range of stakeholders and audiences. It also needs to highlight how the social services department makes a difference to people's lives but also fits within the local authorities' overall governance and structure.

Case studies can effectively highlight the impact of services on individuals. They can add depth to the report but must be succinct and effective. However, an overuse can result in information being skipped and the report becoming overly long. Therefore, please include case studies in the report, but try to consider where they meaningfully add value to the report and show impact of a difference made. Guidance for using and drafting case studies can be found here: [Guide to case studies - NHS Evaluation Toolkit](#)

Include a glossary of specialist terms and acronyms (Annex A). This should set out the range of services and functions provided by the local authority. It should be at a level where people with no prior knowledge or experience of social services could read it and understand what each service provides.

Quotes can also be included sparingly, as they can demonstrate the voice of the people using the service. While pictures, diagrams and animations can be included, photographs of

people should be avoided. If quotes are used, permission and correct use of these quotes must be obtained in advance.

A general point is that the report should be focused on local outcomes and impacts, not focused on processes and activities. It should try to describe what difference the local authority's actions are making in people's lives.

## 1. Directors Summary

An overview of performance in a form which could be used in a separate version of the report produced for the public.

- An introduction by the Director(s)
- Highlights key achievements, challenges, priorities and overarching objectives for the coming year
- Describes the key themes and issues that are of most importance to the local authority area
- Give a view from the Director(s) about the local authorities' ability to meet statutory responsibilities
- Set out the risks and challenges being faced and coming up in the future
- Potentially horizon scanning for future opportunities and possibilities.

This section should be succinct and not duplicating content in the later sections.

## 2. Context section

The information need only be **brief summaries**.

It is acceptable to refer to separate published documents if a reference or electronic link is provided.

There is relevant data to the level of activity here: [Social Services Performance and Improvement Framework \(gov.wales\)](#). The data can be presented in a variety of formats, but the recommended items for inclusion are:

- AD/001 – [Number of adult contacts](#)
- AD/002 – [Adult provision of advice or assistance](#)
- AD/004 – [Adult assessments completed](#)
- AD/005 – [Adult eligible needs](#)
- AD/012 – [Adult care and support plans](#)
- CH/001 – [Number of children's contacts](#)
- CH/002 – [Children's provision of advice or assistance](#)
- CH/006 – [Children's assessments completed](#)
- CH/007 – [Children's eligible needs](#)
- CH/015 – [Children's care and support plans](#)

This data helps to present the overall level of activity and provision by the local authority through the year.

It may also help to relate the provision of services to the financial arrangements and budget pressures experienced by the local authority.

It would also help to describe what prevention and early intervention work is being funded and what level of universal provision is being made to people needing support. There may also be change programmes (nationally, regionally or locally) or models of care which are not captured within national data, which would be beneficial to describe here.

## Leadership

### Aim for up to one page

Needs to include a short narrative summary of the local authority's:

- political and senior leadership (this needs to be brief)
- social services management structure
  - Possibly an organigram
- governance, scrutiny, and challenge arrangements
  - Possibly with a visual setting out the performance cycle of how the Local Authority Social Services Annual Report links with directorate planning and performance reporting

## Workforce

### Aim for up to one page

- Short summary of the workforce within the local authority.
  - numbers of staff
  - vacancy rates
  - main changes in staffing over the year
- Describe the make-up of the directly provided and commissioned services
- Updates on staff turnover and changes
- Key challenges, including vacancies, sickness and recruitment/retention
- Support for staff – wellbeing, mental and physical
- Professional development
- It may help to refer to the data collected about the workforce by Social Care Wales
  - [Have Your Say survey 2024 | Social Care Wales](#)
  - [Data and information on the social care workforce... | Social Care Wales](#)

## Financial resources

### Aim for up to one page

This section should include:

- A table showing the main income and expenditure of the social services department. It may help to refer the financial data published on StatsWales: [Social services](#)
- This should be broken down by service area:
  - Children
  - Working age adults
  - Older adults
- A summary of changes in financial situation since last year
  - Include key figures, such as overspend and pressures

### **3. Performance assessment section**

This section asks you to provide a self-assessment of your performance under the four headings of People, Prevention, Partnership and Integration, and Well-being. As such, this performance assessment section is the local authority's self-assessment of their social services.

**Each section has two quality standards, and the responses to the self-assessment questions should try to address both the standards at the same time.** It does not ask for an assessment of each individual quality standard.

This self-assessment should focus on the local authority's social services department specifically, i.e. the delivery of social services in each local authority. It is intended that these social services focused reports integrates with the corporate self-assessment report required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The self-assessment questions used below are the same as those used in the corporate self-assessment.

The **self-assessment should be evaluative, drawing on qualitative and quantitative evidence.** The emphasis should be on self-assessment and not just a description of what is provided. Evidence from a range of sources can be used e.g. operational performance data, research, surveys, engagement events, consultations and citizens' panels. Case studies can add additional insight here.

Where any of the data set out in the [Measuring Activity and Performance](#) is cited, sufficient context should be provided e.g. is it an improving/declining trend? Why? What is being done to cause/in response to it?

Some material might well relate to more than one of the four quality standard headings below. Where this applies, local authorities should include the material under the heading considered most appropriate. Where necessary, cross-referencing should be used to avoid repetition in different sections.

**Aim for a succinct and clear response to each question.** Flexibility is essential to make sure the content is informative and tells a story. Ideally this whole section would be around 20 pages, covering all of adults and children's services and the eight quality standards. The goal is to provide an accessible report, and so the length should be a balance between being concise while still providing sufficient detail.

**The sections can be split into children's and adult's services or combined into a single assessment.** If the services are addressed separately, those areas which cross over services, such as transitions, can be included as a separate section, or sit at the end of the children's services self-assessment, before the adults' self-assessment. It can then describe how it is relevant to the adult's section. The adult's section can then provide a link back to that information, when relevant.

Please refer to the [statutory guidance](#) for the specifics of what each section needs to cover.

You do not need to structure the sections according to the questions set out, as long as it is used to directly answer the individual questions.

All sections must address what was set as actions and priorities described in the previous year's report. This may describe how these were achieved and the impact of those actions. However, they may not have been possible, and that also needs to be described and addressed with reasons and next steps.

This is about what the evidence is telling you about how outcomes are being achieved, and how the services being delivered meet people's needs. It is not just about presenting data, but the 'So What'. Describe what difference services are making to people's lives.

Every local authority must include the narrative text below at the start of the Performance Assessment section, to show how these are the standards by which each local authority is assessing themselves. Additional text can be added here, but the below is expected to be stated at the start.

*This section asks local authorities to address the [eight quality standards](#) under four sections. This assessment is completed for both children's and adult's services and describes how the local authority has aimed to achieve these standards throughout the year.*

*The self-assessment approach asks local authorities to address the following four questions:*

- *What do we know about the quality and impact of what we are doing?*
- *How do we know? e.g. what evidence from research, engagement and the metrics are we using to inform this assessment?*
- *What are we doing well and how can we do better? What are our priorities for improvement particularly over the coming year*
- *What progress did we make on the areas for improvement identified in last year's report? What difference did we make?*

## People

Try to start the section with the specific quality standards:

- *"All people are equal partners who have **choice, voice and control** over their lives and are able to achieve **what matters** to them"*
  - *Effective **leadership** is evident at all levels with a highly skilled well qualified and supported **workforce** working towards a shared vision".*
- 
- A good section for case studies and demonstrations of how children have been able to have choice over services
  - This section can look at training and supervision of staff.
  - There may have been organisational changes in leadership. You can describe how these have been handled and leadership has been maintained throughout the changes.
  - Think about how different communities and people from different backgrounds are supported. E.g. Welsh language, ethnic minorities
    - This should specifically mention Mwy Na Geiriau and relevant equalities action plans, such as the Anti Racist Wales Action Plan
  - The following data items from the [measuring social services activity and performance dataset](#) may be useful to explore as part of the response to this section. Try to consider the reasons for change, the impact of it and what 'good' looks like
    - CH/016: [The total number of children with a care and support plan where needs are met through a Direct Payment](#)

- CH/056: [The total number of “Active Offers” of advocacy for children during the year](#)
- CH/057: [The total number “Active Offers” of advocacy for children during the year where an Independent Professional Advocate was provided](#)
- AD/013: [The total number of adults with a care and support plan where needs are met through a Direct Payment](#)
- AD/032: [The total number of adults during the year where the need for an independent professional advocate was identified](#)
- AD/033: [The total number of adults during the year where the need for an independent professional advocate was identified and an independent professional advocate was provided](#)

Clearly state the key objectives and related actions for the coming year, which will be reflected and reported on in next year’s report. This can be done in a table, as bullet points or in narrative, as long as it is clear to the reader what the plans are for the coming year. Try to keep this to the strategic objectives, as opposed to operational objectives.

## Prevention

Try to start the section with the specific quality standards:

- *“The need for care and support is minimised and the escalation of need is **prevented** whilst ensuring that the best **outcomes** for people are achieved”*
  - *“**Resilience within communities** is promoted and people are supported to fulfil their potential by actively supporting people who need care and/or support including **carers** to learn develop and participate in society”*
- Try to consider how unpaid carers are considered
  - What is the role of social enterprises, co-operatives, user-led services and the third sector?
  - Preventative activity can include wide-scale measures aimed at the wider population as well as targeted interventions for individuals
  - The following data items from the [measuring social services activity and performance dataset](#) may be useful to explore as part of the response to this section. Try to consider the reasons for change, the impact of it and what ‘good’ looks like
    - CH/002: [The number of contacts for children received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided](#)
    - CH/007: [Total number of new assessments - CH/007b: Needs were able to be met by any other means](#)
    - AD/002: [The number of new contacts for adults received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided](#)
    - AD/005: [Total number of new assessments - AD/005b: Needs were able to be met by any other means](#)
    - AD/010: [The total number of packages of reablement completed during the year](#)
    - AD/011: [Total number of packages of reablement by outcome](#)



Clearly state the key objectives and related actions for the coming year, which will be reflected and reported on in next year's report. This can be done in a table, as bullet points or in narrative, as long as it is clear to the reader what the plans are for the coming year. Try to keep this to the strategic objectives, as opposed to operational objectives.

## Partnership and Integration

Try to start the section with the specific quality standards:

- *“Effective **partnerships** are in place to commission and fully deliver fully **integrated**, high quality sustainable outcomes for people”*
- *“People are encouraged to be involved in the design and delivery of their care and support as **equal partners**”*

- It might help to describe how you work with the Regional Partnership Board and other local/regional partners.
- How are the Market Stability reports, Population Needs Assessments and area plans used to deliver services, commissioning, shaping plans etc?
- Think about the ways in which services can be integrated, such as co-location, engagement with providers/third sector, co-production for delivery and design and new ways of working with partners.
- This section should refer to any actions related to climate change, such as decarbonisation, adaptation or supporting biodiversity.
- This section should also address how the local authority is working towards meeting the principles of the [National framework for commissioning care and support](#).

Clearly state the key objectives and related actions for the coming year, which will be reflected and reported on in next year's report. This can be done in a table, as bullet points or in narrative, as long as it is clear to the reader what the plans are for the coming year. Try to keep this to the strategic objectives, as opposed to operational objectives.

## Well-being

Try to start the section with the specific quality standards:

- *“People are protected and **safeguarded** from abuse and neglect and any other types of harm”*
- *“People are supported to actively **manage their well-being** and make their own decisions so that they are able to achieve their full potential and **live independently** for as long as possible”*

- What impact is the local authority making on people's wellbeing?
- What is the impact and response to increasing demand for care?
- Discuss how the service being delivered is shaped by people's personal circumstances, capabilities, networks and local communities
- Describe creative solutions through case studies

- Local authorities can refer and provide a link to the reports of regional safeguarding boards and other agencies for more detail where appropriate. Any cross-cutting work alongside regional safeguarding boards? (perhaps implemented at a local level).
- The following data items from the [measuring social services activity and performance dataset](#) may be useful to explore as part of the response to this section. Try to consider the reasons for change, the impact of it and what 'good' looks like
  - o CH/020: [The number of Initial Strategy Meetings for children concluded during the collection year.](#)
  - o CH/021: [The number of Strategy Meetings held during the year that progressed to Section 47 enquiries.](#)
  - o CH/022: [The total number of Section 47 enquiries completed during the year that progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference.](#)
  - o CH/024: [The number of children who were added to the child protection register during the collection year: all children](#)
  - o AD/020: [The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the year.](#)
  - o AD/023: [The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk where it is necessary for enquires to be made.](#)
  - o AD/026: [The total number of enquiries where it was determined that additional action should be taken.](#)

Clearly state the key objectives and related actions for the coming year, which will be reflected and reported on in next year's report. This can be done in a table, as bullet points or in narrative, as long as it is clear to the reader what the plans are for the coming year. Try to keep this to the strategic objectives, as opposed to operational objectives.

## **4. Other information section**

### **Inspections and reviews**

**Aim for up to two pages – may not be necessary if no reports have been published**

If, within the reporting year, Care Inspectorate Wales has reported on the Council's social services functions or services, include:

- Links to the full inspection report
- Links to any written responses to the inspections, e.g. what went to scrutiny committees
- Response to any key priority actions which required urgent improvements
  - o Keep this to a high-level summary which is relevant to a wider audience. Care Inspectorate Wales will have the routine monitoring of the improvements relating to inspections, so this report should summarise these for the audience.
  - o This should be additional to the information provided in the Performance Assessment Section. It can reference the content elsewhere in the report. It should be what is specifically focused on the inspection findings.

This section should also reference how it proposes to act on any relevant findings and recommendations from:

- CIW's periodic thematic reviews
- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales inspections or joint inspections

- Estyn (where relevant)
- any relevant reports by:
  - Audit Wales
  - the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
  - Older People's and Children's Commissioners.

For these wider reports, it is acceptable to make a brief reference here and direct the reader to another document for more detail.

## Complaints and representations

### Aim for up to two pages

Refer to and provide a link to the Council's corporate annual complaints report. This section should add to that with:

- describe any discernible trends, for both the workforce and people receiving care and support, including details of:
  - if a complaint was linked to a protected characteristic
  - sources of complaint
  - main topics of complaint
- main learning from complaints
- what changes and improvements the authority has made, or proposes to make, in response to complaints and investigations.
- Include any complaints and representations received from the Citizen Voice Body

When drafting this section, consider the findings and recommendations from: [Challenging adult social care decisions in England and Wales \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://equalityhumanrights.com)

## Other sources of information

### Aim for up to one page

Opportunity for local authority to include anything not covered by the previous sections.

Can signpost to other reports such as:

- service level,
- corporate plans
- supporting business plans
- Climate action plans
- Welsh language report (Mwy Na Geiriau)
- Strategic Equality reports

Good practice is to include a reference and an electronic link where any other document in the public domain can be found.

## Appendices

### Annex A – Glossary of terms

It would be helpful to provide a glossary of terms to provide a description of services, terms or acronyms which may not be familiar to people who are not experienced of social care.

These descriptions should be suitable for a lay person, who may have no prior understanding of social care.

Term/Acronym	Description
Reablement / Rehabilitation / Interim care	This short-term care is sometimes called intermediate care, or aftercare. Reablement is a type of care that helps people relearn how to do daily activities, like cooking meals and washing. It is provided by local authorities with the aim of mitigating the need for long term care and support.
Domiciliary Care / Domiciliary Support Service / Home Care	Domiciliary care, also known as "care at home", refers to a broad range of care services provided in a person's own home. It can include assistance with day-to-day living and certain health care issues for the elderly.
Residential Care Home / Nursing Home	A residential care home provides accommodation and 24-hour personal care and support to the older people and others who may find it difficult to manage daily life at home. Both a residential care home and nursing home provide care and support 24 hours a day, however the main difference is that a nursing home is able to provide a higher level of care. Nursing homes have qualified nurses on-site around the clock to provide medical care as needed whereas residential homes help people with personal care and support them to engage in physical activity
Care Experienced Children	Care experienced is an umbrella term which can mean children / young people who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looked after at home through a Care Order</li> <li>• Looked after away from home in a residential children's house, in a foster placement or in a kinship placement (Looked After or Non-Looked After)</li> <li>• Previously looked after, where at some point in their lives they have had any of the above experiences. The child / young person may never have been formally looked after.</li> </ul>
Care Leaver	In Wales, care leavers are individuals who have been in the care of the local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and have left care on or after their 16th birthday. The support provided to care leavers is intended to be equivalent to what a child who has not been looked after might reasonably expect from their parents.
Children looked after (CLA)	<a href="#">Children and young people who are 'looked after' don't live with their parents, either</a>

	<a href="#">temporarily or permanently, because for many reasons they can't safely take care of them.</a>
Safeguarding	Safeguarding is about protecting children and adults from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.
Wales Safeguarding Procedures	They detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure that they safeguard children and adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Provides a useful glossary of safeguarding terms: <a href="#">Safeguarding Wales</a>
<a href="#">Performance and Improvement Framework: Measuring activity and performance data</a>	This sets out a framework of metrics covering adults, children, and carers, which must be collected and submitted to Welsh Government together with anonymised person-level data and aggregated data on specific aspects of social care. It states local authorities should also gather their own data to understand better how the local delivery of social care is working according to local priorities.
Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)	CIW is the social care provider regulator. They will register, inspect and take action to improve the quality and safety of services for the well-being of the people of Wales.
Social Care Wales (SCW)	SCW is the workforce regulator. As part of this they register and set standards for the care and support workforce and develop the workforce. SCW also has an improvement remit, by which they will share good practice, set priorities for research and provide information for the public and other organisations.
Resident / Citizen	A person whose usual residence is within the local authority boundary
Service User	A person who is accessing social services.
Shared Lives / Adult Placement Scheme	Shared Lives Schemes – also known as adult placements – are a family-based way of supporting a vulnerable person's housing needs. This type of supportive accommodation can be the ideal stepping stone on the way to independent living. This sharing arrangement is often referred to as 'shared lives'.
Direct Payments	Direct payments are issued to individuals to allow them to pay for their own care. They are a way that local authorities can help to meet individual's eligible need for care and support, or a carer's need for support. They are a way for people to arrange their own care and support.

Supported Living / Accommodation	Supported living accommodation is a type of housing that provides personal care, support or supervision to help people live independently. The care and support are separate from the housing contract. The accommodation can be shared or single, depending on the needs and preferences of the occupants.
Unpaid Carer	An unpaid carer is someone who provides care and support to family members, friends, or neighbours who are affected by disability, physical or mental ill-health, frailty, or substance misuse. The carer does not need to be living with the person they care for.
Young Carer	A young carer is an unpaid carer who is up to the age of 18. They may be providing care and support to parents, siblings or other family members.
Care and Support Plan	A care and support plan is a document that sets out what has been discussed during a social care needs assessment and what is going to happen as a result. It is a plan which a local authority is required to prepare and maintain under section 54 (1) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
Carer's Support Plan	If unpaid carers have needs that are eligible for support, the local authority has a statutory duty to plan for and meet those needs by providing a 'Carer's Support Plan.' Where eligible needs for support are identified for the unpaid carer, local authorities must ensure these needs are met.
Advocacy	Advocates in social care are independent from the local authority (local council) and the NHS. They are trained to help people understand their rights, express their views and wishes, and help make sure their voice is heard.
Prevention and Early Intervention	Prevention and early intervention are forms of support aimed at improving outcomes for people or preventing escalating need or risk. They are also sometimes referred to as early help or preventative services.
The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014	The Regulations which introduced a new two stage process to deal with complaints and representations about local authority social services. It brings the process for social services in line with the Model Concerns and Complaints Policy and Guidance and the NHS Complaints Procedure Putting Things Right.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)	The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) is a legal procedure in the UK designed to protect vulnerable people in care settings. It applies to adults who lack the mental capacity to give consent to their care arrangements and need to be deprived of their liberty. DoLS ensures that those who cannot consent to their care are protected when their arrangements deprive them of their liberty. It will be replaced by Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) in the future.
Mwy Na Geiriau / More than words	More than just words is a strategy and delivery plan to aim to improve the quality of care for individuals living in a bilingual country.
Extra care	The provision of a domiciliary care package to an individual living in supported living/accommodation.
Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP)	The Welsh government plan to tackle racism and make 'meaningful and measurable changes' to the lives of BAME people in Wales. The plan aims to make Wales an anti-racist country by 2030.
Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA)	Refer to contacts and referrals – consent and level of information recorded – link to proportionate assessment
Not in education, employment or training (NEET)	NEET stands for "Not in Education, Employment, or Training". It refers to young people who are neither engaged in education or vocational training nor in paid employment. NEET individuals may experience social and economic disadvantage.
Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014	The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 is a law that aims to improve the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and to transform social services in Wales.

## Annex B – Frequently Asked Questions

***Is there guidance on the fonts, size of text, spacing and generally writing for work.***

*Most local authorities will have their own house style, which you should use. For an example, the guidance below is for Welsh Government, and provides general useful advice on writing for publications.*



Writing - Guide to  
writing for work.doc

### **Can I deviate from the proposed format?**

*The additional guidance offers flexibility in how each local authority produces their report, according to their own house style and needs. However, there are some elements which much be included.*

*The headings used in this additional guidance, and in the [Director of social services annual report: guidance \(gov.wales\)](#) are a strict requirement, and so must be used.*

### **What is the purpose of including case studies?**

*Case studies can be an effective means of demonstrating impact or bringing the work described to life. Within the Performance Assessment sections, they can be used to show how ongoing programmes have benefited people, or how people's real-life experiences are being used to shape ongoing priorities.*

### **How many case studies can be included?**

*There is no strict limit to the number of case studies that can be included. The use of them is encouraged, but in moderation. Ideally, they would make up the minority of the total length of the report, and used sparingly to add impact to the narrative.*

### **Can I use quotes / feedback instead of case studies?**

*The use of quotes can also be a useful means of adding personal experiences to the detailed narrative, especially in the Performance Assessment section. They do not need to be instead of case studies and can be used alongside them. However, when drafting the report, the combined length of case studies and quotes should be the minority and used to elaborate a point.*

### **What if I go over the suggested page count?**

*The page count is a suggestion with the aim making the reports accessible to a wide audience. However, the use of images and designs is not discouraged, which can add to the page count. Therefore, use best judgement when drafting the report, and only go beyond the recommended page count if justified and adds to the quality of the report.*

### **Is there a suggest word count?**

*While word counts have not been provided, it is suggested that for a general audience, around 500 words are used per page. This will vary depending on formatting, content and the use of images, but it is not recommended that pages contain large blocks of text. Instead, a more focused and illustrative report is provided.*

### **What do Welsh Government do with the report when received?**

*Ideally, the reports will be published and sent to Care Inspectorate Wales as soon as possible in the financial year. Once received, Care Inspectorate Wales summarise the reports for use in their regulatory work.*

*These summaries will then be analysed and used to produce a summary of the work going on across the different local authorities.*

### **What are the timescales for publication?**



*The statutory guidance states: The 2014 Act says that the report should be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year. If information for the report is collected over the course of whole year, then depending on the local authority's own processes for signing off the report, it should be possible to publish the report **by the end of September**. In normal circumstances, it should not be produced any later.*

*Some data or information may not be available at this time, and some data may not be validated or published before the report. Indicative figures can be used, where appropriate.*

**What if I am unable to meet the timescales for publication?**

*Local authorities should make every effort to publish their reports by the end of September. However, this may not always be possible, especially with the needs for Council scrutiny and translation.*

*If they are not able to publish by the end of September, then Care Inspectorate Wales should be notified with an expected publication date. As stated above, Welsh Government will use the summaries of the annual reports to produce an analysis of the work being undertaken by local authorities. For this to be useful, the summary analysis will need to be published before the next reports are starting to be produced by local authorities. Therefore, a delay in receiving the reports from local authorities will impact the timeliness of this analysis.*

**What is the timeline for drafting and publishing the report?**

*It may be helpful to start the drafting process in Q3 (October-December) of the year being reported of. This may be simply producing a skeleton report with some requests for information. Q4 (January-March) can then be used to more fully populate the report to have a draft ready for review by the Director of Social Services in Q1 (April-June) of the following year. It may be necessary to use quarterly data to aid the production of the report, but some information or data may not be available until the end of the financial year. Preparing for this data and knowing what needs to be done can speed the use and analysis of the data. This preparation may allow for the report to be finalised and presented to the Council before the summer recess and publication in September.*

*Once the report has been finalised by the Director of Social Services, and is ready to be presented to Council, it can be shared with CIW and Welsh Government. The final report will still need to be shared and published according to normal processes.*

**Does the report have to go through any local authority governance once finalised by the Director of Social Services?**

*The report should be considered a report from the Director of Social Services. As such, they will have final sign-off of the report. The report should be considered final and will not be changed once signed off by the Director of Social Services. It is the Director who will present the report to the Council.*

*Any other scrutiny may depend on the local authority governance structure. Ideally, the governance and scrutiny would not delay the publication of the report.*

**What if we have not achieved what we said we would do?**

*The annual report should be an honest reflection of the progress and performance of the local authority. Therefore, if aims have not been achieved, this should be stated with rationale and next steps.*

**Some of my report may cut across more than one section heading, where do I put it?**

*It is acceptable for content to be relevant to more than one section. Where this occurs, provide it in the most appropriate location and signpost to the content within the other relevant sections.*

***Do the complaints, inspections and reviews section cover both Children's and Adults' services?***

*Yes, but where there are different themes between Children's and Adults services, this should be described.*

***Is there a limit on the number of images, graphs that are used?***

*Similar to case studies, there is no limit on the number of images or graphs that are used, so long as they usefully and meaningfully add to the report and the message it is trying to make. They should not make up most of the report, and so used sparingly to highlight data or add to the narrative.*

*No images or photographs containing individuals should be included, as obtaining permission for their image to be used can be a lengthy delay to the publication process. If consent has already been obtained for this purpose of this report, then photos can be used at the local authorities' discretion.*

***Can infographics be included?***

*Yes, where relevant. However, where data is used to develop infographics, the source data should be made available via a link and/or narrative description.*

***Can video clips be included?***

*Yes, where relevant. These can be a useful way to add to the narrative of the report. However, consideration will need to be made to the accessibility of the video, and if it can be provided in English and Welsh and with subtitles.*

***Are there any examples of good practice?***

*The new style guidance has come into force for the 2024-25 reports. As such, there are no examples of good practice which can be drawn on currently. However, there are examples of case studies below (Annex C) and as reports become published, examples of good practice can be found.*

*As part of the analysis and summarising of the 22 local authority reports, CIW and Welsh Government will aim to find examples of good practice which can be shared with local authorities.*

## Annex C – Example Case Studies

### Case Study – Early Help / Reviewing Hub

*B is a young child who had recently been on the Child Protection Register. Her mother is a teenage mum who was struggling to care for B, and not managing her own serious health issues or addressing a history of mental health concerns. Professional agencies had significant worries that B had very few or consistent boundaries, was not being supervised or cared for properly, and B was responding to this with extremely challenging behaviour. As part of the child protection processes, the child and her mother moved in with B's grandparents. At an early Child Protection Review it was agreed that B could be stepped down to a Care and Support Plan (CASP), with participants welcoming the fact the plan would be reviewed closely by an experienced Reviewing Officer.*

*Care and Support Planning Meetings were convened shortly after the conference, which robustly reviewed and made recommendations in relation to the plan. B's mother had been able to evidence that she was complying with her medication, accessing support via The Mental Health Service and working with the Flying Start Outreach-service. The Health Visitor had also been able to support the family in accessing a varied package of support with groups and parent nurture programme.*

*Within the review meetings, B's mother was able to ask about and be supported to move onto independent living. To safely achieve this a Family Plan was drawn up, with her parents providing extensive outreach support. B's mother has been able to share in the reviews that she welcomed the support that had been made available in helping her to understand how she needed to prioritise B.*

*B's mother wishes to continue receiving support from Flying Start and other Early Help outreach services. It was agreed in a recent review that B can be stepped down to Early Help support services and no longer required support from Children's Services. Early Help will continue to provide support with follow up mental health support and safety planning.*

### Case Study – Lab7

*Two young people who the Youth Justice Service were working with have been successful in securing early revocations of their 12-month Referral Orders due to their hard work, engagement and the progression that they made. Staff from the Youth Justice Service worked so well with both of them that both parents commended the Youth Justice Service for their work and commitment. The parents shared that they were able to see changes in their children after the Youth Justice Service sessions and that they were considering and reflecting on their actions. The mum of one of the young people noted that Lab7 has been a fantastic opportunity for her son and that he has continued to engage with the service following Youth Justice Service involvement ending. The mum of the other young person has shared that she would like to become a volunteer with the service and to support the parents due to her own lived experiences. (Lab7 provide creative workshops and tailored support for young people with poor mental health or at risk of criminal and anti-social behaviour.)*

### **Case Study – Adult Services**

*T has Learning Disabilities and was referred the Adult Learning Disability Team as he had been home throughout COVID-19 and was unsure what he wanted to do. After a several meetings and the building of rapport with T it was established that he wanted to do some sort of volunteering.*

*Further discussion took place with T about the kind of work he would like to do in the future, and he mentioned work in a warehouse environment. The service contacted the British Heart Foundation as they were advertising for Volunteer Warehouse Assistants.*

*The service assisted T with an application form as he struggles with reading and writing. A taster day for T was arranged and the bus routes to enable him to get to the location were worked out.*

*In order for T to volunteer at the warehouse he was required to complete an inhouse health and safety and manual handling course online. With some support, T successfully passed both courses.*

*Initially T was attending The British Heart Foundation one day week in the warehouse. T was really enjoying his time at the warehouse and there was a vast different in his confidence and communication, he had developed a good relationship with the staff. T now volunteers 3 days a week and is really happy there.*