



***SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE***

2.00 PM THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2023

MICROSOFT TEAMS / HYBRID COUNCIL CHAMBER

All mobile telephones to be switched to silent for the duration of the meeting

This meeting will be recorded for broadcast via the Council's Internet Site. By participating you are consenting to being filmed and the possible use of those images and sound recordings for training purposes.

1. Chair's Announcements
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 18*)
 - 15th December 2022
 - 26th January 2023
4. Adults and Children's Single Point of Contact (*Pages 19 - 36*)
5. Early Intervention and Prevention Support within Children Services (*Pages 37 - 56*)
6. Pre-Decision Scrutiny
To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board agenda for Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports included for Scrutiny Members)
7. Forward Work Programme 2022/23 (*Pages 57 - 58*)

8. Urgent Items
Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.
9. Access to meetings
Access to Meetings to resolve to exclude the public for the following item(s) pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the relevant exempt paragraphs of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

PART 2

10. Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Private Item/s
To select appropriate private items from the Cabinet Board agenda for Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members)

K.Jones
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Friday, 3 March 2023

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: **Councillor C.Galsworthy**

Vice
Chairperson: **Councillor H.C.Clarke**

Councillors: O.S.Davies, J.Jones, A.R.Lockyer, A.Lodwig,
K.Morris, P.D.Richards, M.Spooner, D.Thomas,
S.Rahaman and A.R.Aubrey

Notes:

- (1) If Committee Members or non-Committee Members wish to have relevant items put on the agenda for future meetings, then please notify the Chief Executive/Chair eight days before the meeting.*
- (2) If non-Committee Members wish to attend for an item of interest, then prior notification needs to be given (by 12.00 noon on the day before the meeting). Non-Committee Members may speak but not vote, or move or second any motion.*
- (3) For pre scrutiny arrangements, the Chair will normally recommend forthcoming executive items for discussion/challenge. It is also open to Committee Members to request items to be raised - though Members are asked to be selective here in regard to important issues.*
- (4) The relevant Cabinet Board Members will also be invited to be present at the meeting for Scrutiny/ Consultation purposes.*
- (5) Would the Scrutiny Committee Members please bring the Cabinet Board papers with them to the meeting.*

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Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

(Microsoft Teams / Hybrid Council Chamber)

Members Present:

15 December 2022

Chairperson: Councillor C.Galsworthy

Vice Chairperson: Councillor H.C.Clarke

Councillors: J.Jones, A.R.Lockyer, A.Lodwig, P.D.Richards, M.Spooner, S.Rahaman and A.R.Aubrey

Officers In Attendance A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, K.Warren, R Davies, J.Hodges, S.Waite, C.Jones, C.Millis, C.Morris, R.Turner, D.Harding, G.Liley, C.Frey-Davies, M.Potts, N.Jones and A.Thomas

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors S.Harris, A.Lockyer and J.Hale

1. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2022 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. **Environmental Health - What is a Statutory Nuisance**

Officers updated members in relation to 'What is Statutory Nuisance'

Members asked in regards to an abatement notice, what the procedure would be if someone was to break the notice

Officers explained it depends on what the nuisance is, the notice would come down to legal action or prosecution. It would come down to what the specific case is, noise is the most common one, music noise from a domestic premise, find it more effective to arrange the seizure of the that noise making equipment as opposed to carrying out a prosecution procedure.

When Officers do the seizure of noise making equipment we would keep it for a period of time and the person it has been seized from would have to pay a reasonable cost in order to get the equipment returned.

Members asked if someone has a vacant property, does the councillor come to the officer directly. Officers explained Environmental Health had set up an online system for a number of years and they do encourage that everything is put through that online report purely because the public will receive an instant notification back with a reference number and will go straight to the Officer.

Members mentioned they had dealt with a number of complaints in privately rented properties regarding noise, what sort of legal or statutory powers do local authority have under the environmental health act to get the landlord involved.

Officers explained that the action they can take in terms of services of abatement notice is on the person responsible for causing the statutory nuisance. Officers do get landlords involved in the process and if there is a structural issue or a property related problem, then the law says those structural issues are the responsibility of the owner.

5. **Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

Members agreed to scrutinise items 7, 8,9,11 and 12 from the Cabinet Board agenda.

Children & Young People and Adult Services - 2nd Quarter Performance Report (April 2022- September 2022)

Members were presented with a report relating to the background and summary of the content of the Children & Young People and Adult Services - 2nd Quarter Performance Report (April 2022- September 2022)

Members asked, in relation to the reregistration of children, the indicator was red, was there any more information. Officers explained when children were reregistered, there was a multi-agency decision. Our partners would take a view as to whether a child needs to be placed on the register, when a child is placed on the register that would result in a manager's review and officers were notified of the reregistration.

Members asked in relation to children going into care could they explain the emergency situation. Officers explained there was an action plan where we were working to in to link in children's right across Children's Services and had been successful in getting what officers think would be best described as a kite mark in children's rights. When children do enter care in an emergency that they do or are furnished with as much information as possible in respect of placement on where they were going, where they'll be sleeping, who the foster carers are etc. Officers explained it was red because it was being worked upon and the quality practice leader was linking in with engagement, looked after children and fostering to ensure that all the foster carers had pen portraits etc. Officers suggested that a report would be brought back to committee in relation to reregistration.

Members asked in relation to the wellbeing objectives, it states the significant increase of new assessments completed compared to the same period last year, was there a reason for the numbers increase. Officers explained they had seen a huge increase of referrals and there was a huge demand during the cost of living crisis. Officers explained there were additional members of staff to meet the demand and was something that was looked at on a daily basis. Members asked for more information on Single Point of Contact, officers were happy to provide a report on this topic.

Members asked in relation to the number of overdue reviews, why had the numbers increased by 150 since the end of April. Officers explained these were receiving statutory services, they were either in residential care or domiciliary care.

Following scrutiny members were supportive of the recommendations to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

Quarterly Performance Management Data 2022-2023 - Quarter 2 Performance (1st April 2022- 30th September 2022)

Members were presented with a report relating to the background and summary of the content of the Quarterly Performance Management Data 2022- 2023 – Quarter 2 Performance (1st April 2022 – 30th September 2022)

Members asked in relation to the figures, it stated there were four new referrals during quarter one, where were the referrals from.

Officers explained there were a number of sources from education, police and social work were the reporting people for the four cases. They go into police, they come to local authority social care and then between us and counter terrorism Wales, then officers decide on the next steps or safeguarding will always trump any kind of criminal response. However, it would be done in conjunction with police so wouldn't be interfering with any police investigation.

Members asked why the figures were red.

Officers mentioned the system operates on a 5%, so if goes over 5% the system automatically shows as red. With the IT system, the way it was set up, if it went over a 5% margin it would automatically tip into the ref category. It is the system itself that makes it red.

Members noted the report.

Directors Annual Report

Members were presented with a report in relation to the Directors Annual Report.

Members commented that the report was excellent.

Members asked in relation to Neurodiversity and LGBTQ, was there any support for the children and families especially in schools. Officers explained they had been fortunate this year and the end of last year to have a piece of work done by the junior safeguarding board whereby they engaged with the LGBTQ plus community and developed a program LGBTQ. Officers stated they could have a more of an understanding in respect of what the young people's kind of lived experiences and following on from that, there had recently been a guidance document shared with the safeguarding board to ensure that across schools the response to LGBTQ was better understood.

Officers explained they were happy to share the reports and the guidance document with members.

Members asked about the action plan and were happy that it was developed. Members asked was the report focusing on Neurodiversity, Autism or both. Officers explained they will find out more information on this and get back to the committee.

Members asked in relation to the safe and well service, why their roles are in education and not in wellbeing. Officers explained in terms of safe and well, it sits in adult services, officers were linking closely in terms of the food poverty with other teams and partnerships.

Officers explained it doesn't need to sit in one directorate, and tackling the disadvantage of poverty was everyone's business. If officers were going to tackle poverty and food poverty, the best way of doing that was to ensure that people had enough finance coming into the house and to do that, they need a job. Officers explained they could see why under Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning, they had somebody that led Education, Poverty and Skills.

Members stated the following proposals were approved and successfully established with three schemes approved for ongoing funding, would it be possible to have the three organisations to come in and speak to us about the projects that they were running. Officers explained they were happy for that to happen.

Members noted the report.

Leasing Scheme Wales

Members were presented with a report in relation to the Leasing Scheme Wales.

Members asked if Officers could give examples when they had looked at empty houses and brought them back.

Officers explained there had been a couple of different schemes. There had been the empty property lawn scheme and which was about to start again where the Welsh Government provided funding for works to bring these properties up to standard, they can be let out again and officers need to know who the landlords were. Some of the ones that members had mentioned there maybe absent landlords which environmental health had got various ways of trying to find

who the landlords were. With this particular scheme, the landlord had to bring the property to us and then officers mentioned they can offer for grant funding to bring it up to standard as well.

Members mentioned it stated that local authorities would not be able to supplement the rent to owners as an incentive, does that mean that officers wouldn't be able to use DHCP payments. Officers explained, in this scheme, the level of the rent is the local housing allowance where the issue we get in with this scheme potentially is that some of the landlord they can get a higher rent in the private market and whereas this scheme it is only local housing allowance.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

Grant Arrangements For The Provision Of Warm Spaces Funding

Members were presented with a report in relation to the Grant Arrangements for the Provision of Warm Spaces Funding.

Members asked were the grants going forward to building that were already open or was it supporting those who would be opening to create warm spaces. Officers explained that they would be their priority, the ones that were open in extended hour and potentially to establish a warm hub, we would obviously consider the applicants within that. However, they were looking at what they were offering and whether or not they were part of business as usual and what additions they're asking for in terms of that, so they would be part of the consideration also.

Members asked would this be a joint approach. Officers explained from the development of the warm spaces, the coordinators and members had been involved in the development of them, so officers were aware of some of them were more engaged with many of them. There were plans to monitor and keep a weekly update as part of what they do on the number of people that were coming to the venues and that was part of the grant requirements from Welsh Government aswell.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

6. **Forward Work Programme 2022/23**

Officers asked if the items that were discussed today could be put on the Forward Work Programme.

7. **Urgent Items**

There were none.

CHAIRPERSON

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Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee
(Microsoft Teams / Hybrid Council Chamber)

Members Present:

26 January 2023

Chairperson: Councillor C.Galsworthy

Vice Chairperson: Councillor H.C.Clarke

Councillors: O.S.Davies, J.Jones, A.R.Lockyer,
P.D.Richards, M.Spooner, S.Rahaman and
A.R.Aubrey

Officers In Attendance A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, K.Warren,
C.Howard,L. Jones, E.Wellington, S.Waite,
C.Jones, C.Morris, H.Jones, N.Blackmore,
C.Owens, S Bradshaw, E. O'Brien, I.Finnemore,
M.Hayes, K.Richards, M.Weaver, A.Thomas
and N.Jones

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors S.Harris, A.Llewellyn and J.Hale

1. **Chair's Announcements**

In relation to the Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection of Trem Y Mor Respite Unit report, Members wanted to congratulate Officers for an excellent report.

Also, the Social Services Complaints and Representations Annual Report 2021-22, Members wanted to congratulate officers for a brilliant report and said how it was nice to see that there more compliments than complaints.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following Member made a declaration of interest at the start of the meeting:

Councillor Charlotte Galsworthy Re: Items 7 – Audit Wales Report
on Direct Payments for Adult

	Social Care as she is a Personal Assistant (PA) for her mother.
Cllr Sian Harris	Re: Items 13 – The Procurement of a Social Care Case Management Platform – Her son is a PCSO.
Cllr Jeff Jones	Re: Cllr Jones' wife works for the Wellbeing Team
Cllr A.Lockyer	Re: Items 7 – Audit Wales Report on Direct Payments for Adult Social Care – His daughter is a PA.

3. **Consultation on 2023/24 Budget Proposals**

Officers updated members in relation to the Budget.

Members asked how much percentage of the reserve fund was expected to be allocated to Social Services.

Officers explained that none of the funds were specifically for the Social Services directorate, it would be used to underwrite the whole council budget for next year.

4. **Asylum and Refugees Resettlement Jan 2023**

Officers updated members in relation to Asylum and Refugees Resettlement.

Members asked who was funding the British Red Cross. Officers explained the British Red Cross were commissioned to provide very specific orientation support to Afghan families and that was funded by a tariff from the Home Office.

Members referred to the company Clear Springs and it referred to three properties for family accommodation, members asked officers if the property was in addition to the three properties already in place. Officers explained that the three Afghan families had arrived and were a refugee resettlements program, which was entirely different to the asylum dispersal route. Asylum seekers and refugees had a different legal definition. Clear Springs had been contracted by the Home Office to source initial accommodation for Asylum Seekers.

Officers had no details on what the nationalities could be and wouldn't know until the property was procured.

Members asked in relation to the host family visa scheme, what would happen if the relationship between the Ukrainian family and the host family doesn't go very well after a few weeks or a couple of months, would the local authority intervene. Officers explained under the Ukrainian settlements program, the people arrive in with their visas either through the homes for Ukraine or the family visa scheme had all the rights to housing, education and benefits so, if the relationship broke down they could present to the housing options service who would have to provide advice or temporary accommodation.

Officers mentioned the report briefly explains about the unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and issues they had with the dispersal mechanism from the Home Office. While Officers had worked well with Welsh Government, the relationship wasn't as strong with the Home Office where officers had to write to the Home Office that there were safeguarding issues and the way they were discharging their responsibilities. Officers suggested that the committee may want a further report in relation to the Home Office. Members were happy with this suggestion.

Members asked in relation to Clear Springs, what input they had with regards to monitoring the quality of accommodation that the company were allocating. Officers explained under the Asylum Dispersal Route, Clear Springs had a process whereby they consult the local authority on a prospective property that they hope to procure, they would send the details to officers and then they consult with colleagues across the local authority, which would include Education, Safeguarding, Housing and Environmental Health. Officers also consult with South Wales Police, the Health Board, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service to find out their views also. The form would be required to be returned within five days and within that form, officers could say whether they were supportive or not supportive of the property being used.

The Home Office and Clear Springs could challenge that and had already pushed back against one property that was raised concerns about on behalf of South Wales Police.

Members asked for an update in relation to what the position was around the housing enforcement and maybe write to the Minister for more clarity. Officers explained they give assurances that the properties would be in good condition because the company has had

criticism in the past for the quality of their accommodation, officers agreed to bring an update back to the Committee.

5. **Anti-Social Behaviour and Homelessness**

Officers delivered a presentation to the committee in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour and Homelessness.

Members thanked Officers for an excellent presentation and thanked them for all their hard work.

Members asked would Welsh Government be offering more resources to help the area. Officers explained they have had a number of grants, in relation to the housing support grant there hadn't been an uplift in that grant but was at a standstill position of approximately 6.5 million to provide the support to people that needed additional support to prevent homelessness or to support them back into accommodation. Officers explained they had been given various grants for next year also but the amount of grants doesn't cover the cost of supporting people.

6. **Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

Members agreed to scrutinise items 7, 12 and 13 from the Cabinet Board agenda.

Audit Wales Report On Direct Payments For Adult Social Care

Members were presented with a report relating to the summary of the content of the Audit Wales on Direct Payments for Adults Social Care.

Members asked in relation recommendation three, it stated the advocacy services representatives to be invited to direct payment recipient form and meetings, members asked does it mean paid for advocacy or third sector advocates. Officers explained they had legal surgeries for direct payments where social workers were being updated and trained as they went along. Officers mentioned they want advocates more at the front door, they want the initial part of the assessment so that they were satisfied that people were being offered direct payments. The report was referring to a non-paid advocate for people to have somebody as part of their network that sits with social work in terms of them making sure the right people were with the individual during that assessment process. Officers mentioned that advocacy can include third sector or it can include the

paid advocate or can include anyone that wishes to advocate on behalf of that person who could be the direct recipient. Members queried the difference in payments between Neath Port Talbot and Swansea as Swansea is paid more. Officers explained they can't recruit domiciliary care workers or home care workers in the Council for the money they were paying which is more than the £10.50 an hour. Officers added that they had a rate of pay for Personal Assistants but then other areas would set their rates for agency or respite, NPT wouldn't do that but they made sure that people were able to put to Commission the service that they needed. Members asked for a further report to publicise all the positive work officers were undertaking.

Members noted the report.

7. **Forward Work Programme 2022/23**

Members asked for Items to be put on the Forward Work Programme for the next couple of months:

- Joint Working with Home Office
- Report on Personal Assistants
- Update on accommodation (Asylum and Refugees)

8. **Urgent Items**

There were none.

9. **Access to Meetings**

10. **Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Private Item/s**

Manager's Report On Hillside Secure Children's Home

Members were presented with a report in relation to the Managers Report on Hillside Secure Children's Home

Members noted the report.

The Procurement Of a Social Care Case Management Platform

Members were presented with a report in relation to the Procurement of a Social Care Case Management Platform.

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the recommendations to be considered by the Cabinet Board

CHAIRPERSON



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL NEATH PORT TALBOT SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY BOARD

09th March 2023

**Report of the Head of Children and Young People Services –
Keri Warren**

Matter for Information

Wards Affected All Wards

Social Services Adults and Children's Single Point of Contact

Purpose of the Report

To introduce and accompany a presentation by officers on Social Services Single Point of Contact

Executive Summary

Following a request from Scrutiny Committee, officers of Neath Port Talbot Council (NPTC) will give a presentation focused on the Adults Social Services Single Point of Contact (SPOC) which provides an over-view and reassurances of the current performance, pressures and outcomes of the team. This report will offer a narrative which will assist Scrutiny, and will also compliment the presentation. The presentation will provide data, bring the team to life and include service user feedback

Background:

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council benefits from an integrated Social Services 'front door' known as the Adults and Children's Single Point of Contact or, more commonly known as, SPOC. The integration of SPOC across the directorate offers a holistic approach to the citizens of NPT which promotes positive outcomes through collaborative working. Although our internal pathways branch off into two strands of SPOC, which specialize in Adults and Children and Young People's Services (CYPS), the team as a whole offer a joined up approach for complex cases with multiple identified needs for the adults and the children involved in any given family. Most commonly these types of cases involve young people transitioning into adulthood who are presenting with vulnerabilities, and mothers before they give birth to their children where there are assessed vulnerabilities and needs requiring support.

Across Social Services we have felt the pressures of the pandemic and are currently battling with an 'over heated' system. Families are presenting with more complex needs as we come out of the pandemic and have to contend with the unintended impact of the last few years on their emotional, social and mental wellbeing.

In March of 2022, in recognition of demand and in line with the remodelling of Adults Social Care, we began to formally undertake Proportionate Assessments (PA) in SPOC which would support, where ever possible, outcomes being met quickly through IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance). Although we were already undertaking PAs up until this point, we were doing them less frequently and our IT system did not allow us to capture them appropriately and in a way that would assist the wider service. We came together as a service to agree pathways for new referrals, with a general rule that all new referrals would undergo a proportionate assessment except for specifically agreed circumstances which would result in the referral being screened straight to a long term team for assessment and intervention.

Once our pathways were agreed, we ensured the team was appropriately resourced to meet the demand we were anticipating. We resourced the team with Occupational Therapists (OTs), in recognition that a large number of our referrals into the service were in relation to OT support of varying complexity. The OTs and Social Workers in SPOC are able to support an individual to meet his/her outcome as quickly and efficiently as possible. This approach has meant that only those individuals with the most complex needs would transition to our long term teams for more in-depth assessment and care packages. This approach has also allowed us to 'slow down' the process and take pressure off of our wider Adults Social Care Teams. Cases are transferred from an assessed position and in most situations service users have already received a level of intervention to support them and manage their identified needs whilst they wait for a more in-depth intervention/care package. This way of working is in line with our outcomes focused model of practice, whereby we support service users to identify what matters to them early in their journey with us and work to achieving those outcomes as quickly and efficiently as possible without creating a dependency on services.

In the summer/autumn of 2022, concerns were raised by cabinet members that there was a delay in the call answering times by Contact Officers in SPOC. At the point when concerns were raised our average calls answered rate was 51%. A review was undertaken by the Safeguarding Principal Officer in October 2022 where it was recognized that due to pressures in the service and sickness/vacancies in the Contact Officers resource we were not sufficiently staffed to manage the demand of the phone calls we were receiving. As a result, additional resources were brought into the service. We have seen a steady improvement since the addition of resources and as of February 2023, we are answering 83.5% of all calls coming through to SPOC. Typically, callers are waiting around 5 minutes for a call to be answered, with average call wait times in February being 2 minutes and 18 seconds. Our data shows us that most callers will wait up to 8 minutes before they abandon a call.

Although we have seen a healthy improvement in this area, we are keeping this resource closely under review. We continue to work closely with our colleagues in Human Resources to ensure any vacancies are filled quickly and sickness is supported appropriately. We are also working closely with our IT colleagues to improve our answer phone facilities with the hope that we can provide citizens with an average wait time before calls are answered. We hope that by providing a general timeframe to manage expectations of callers we will be less likely to have abandoned calls. Furthermore, with the roll out of the new IT system for Social Services, we will have the opportunity to develop other platforms citizens can use to contact us, which will be more user friendly and in line with the digital transformation opportunities across NPT.

Financial Impacts

No implications.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes.

Valleys Communities Impacts

No implications.

Workforce Impacts

No implications.

Legal Impacts

The report outlines the respective legal duties and impacts.

Risk Management Impacts

No implications.

Crime and Disorder Impacts

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the Council in the exercise of its functions to have “due regard to the likely

effect of the exercise of those functions on and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent:

- a) Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
- b) The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- c) Re-offending the area”

SPOC has a positive impact in respect of this duty.

Consultation

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Appendices

None.

List of Background Papers

Presentation.

Officer Contact

Keri Warren

Head of Children and Young People’s Services

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Chris Frey Davies

Principal Officer

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Adult Single Point of Contact

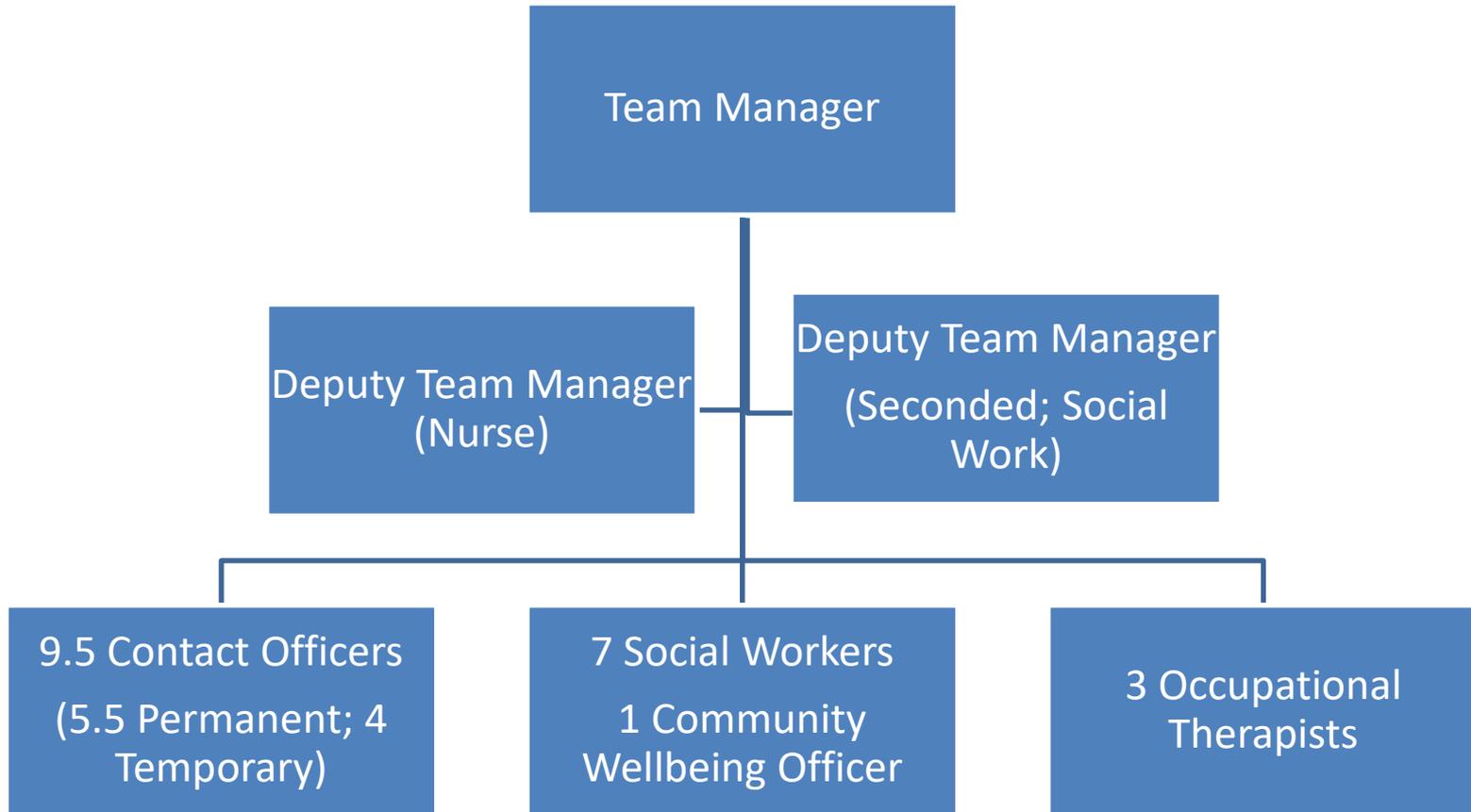
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What is the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)?

- Integrated 'Front Door'
- Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)
- Information Advice Assistance (IAA)
- Safeguarding

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Team Structure

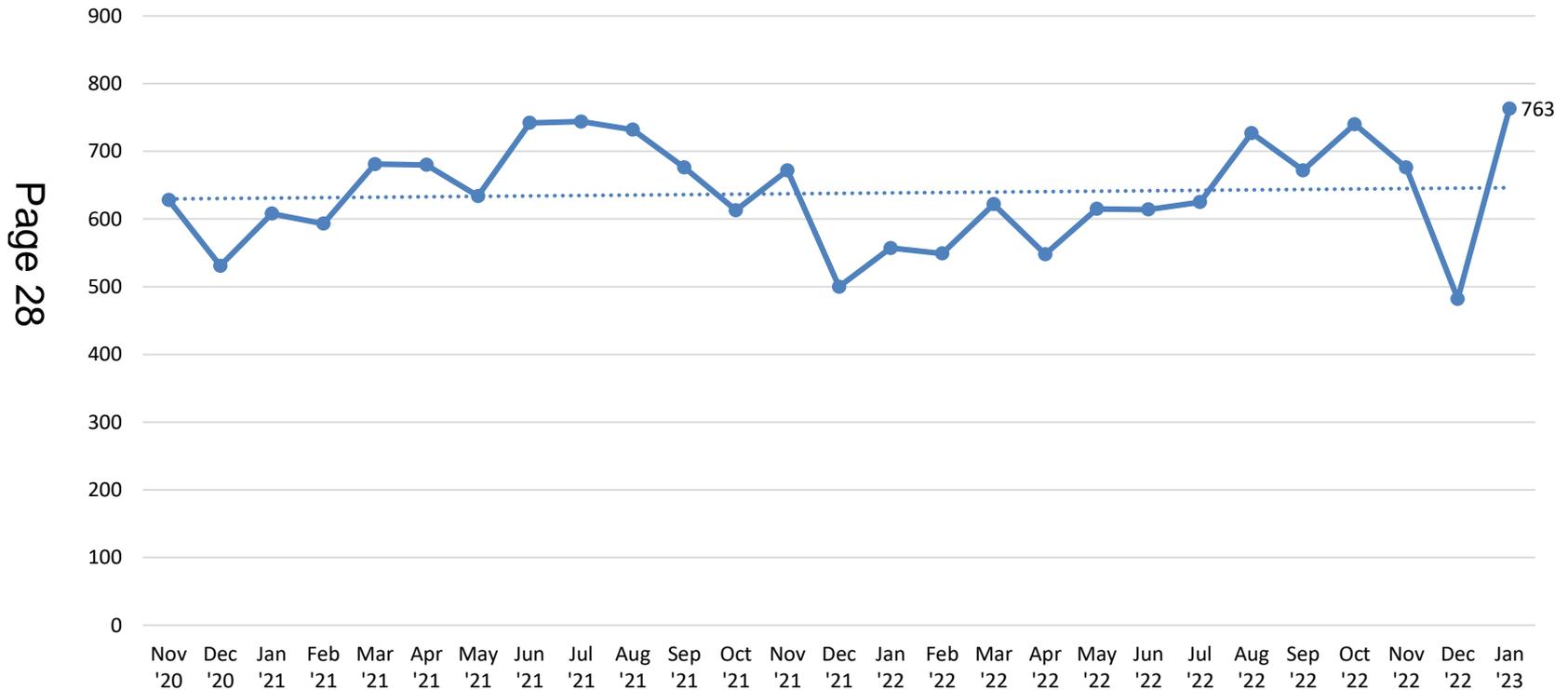


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Referral Trends for New Cases

This graph excludes secondary referrals on open cases processed by SPOC on behalf of the wider service. The graph clearly shows the steady increase in referral rates into the service with 763 referrals received in January 2023



Outcomes of New Referrals – 6 months

	Aug '22	Sep '22	Oct '22	Nov '22	Dec '22	Jan '23
New Contacts:	727	672	740	676	482	763

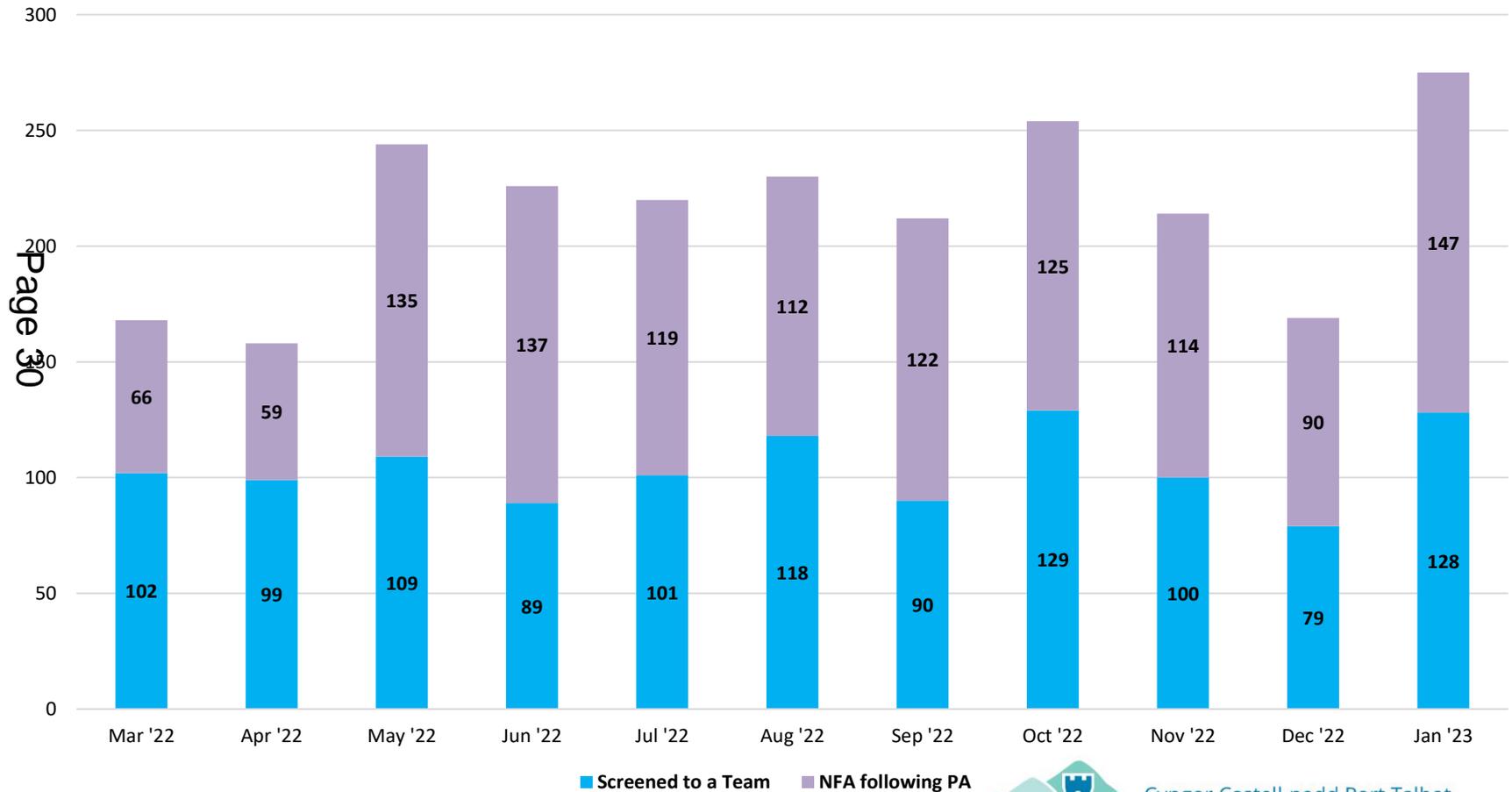
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	Aug '22	Sep '22	Oct '22	Nov '22	Dec '22	Jan '23
Contact Actions:						
Information Only	387	365	349	345	233	360
Assessment	340	305	390	328	249	403

This is a closer look at the referral rates and outcomes in the last 6 months. Of the 763 referrals received in January 2023, in 360 cases we offered Information to service users and subsequently closed the referral down. In 403 cases we made the decision to undertake a Proportionate Assessment in order to provide Advice and Assistance from an assessed position



In March 2022, we changed our IT systems to support the completion and recording of Proportionate Assessments (PA). This graph shows the outcomes of PAs since that time. For example, in the month of January 2023, we undertook 275 PAs, of which 147 were closed to the service following advice/assistance and 128 were passed onto the wider service for ongoing pieces of work



Impact of Proportionate Assessments (PAs) on Wider Service

Cases Screened by Team (at point of referral):	Dec '21	Jan '22	Feb '22	Mar '22	Apr '22	May '22	Jun '22	Jul '22	Aug '22	Sep '22	Oct '22	Nov '22	Dec '22	Jan '23
Afan Network	15	30	10	5	4	0	4	3	3	7	2	5	2	1
Neath Network	10	15	9	3	2	4	6	5	5	3	4	5	1	6
Upper Valleys	5	9	7	4	3	1	1	3	1	5	5	3	3	4
Community OT	70	86	84	29	5	2	9	9	9	4	17	10	7	20
Reablement	84	100	91	54	35	32	25	13	14	10	15	6	13	17
Adult SPOC	3	13	20	171	146	224	225	213	226	202	261	201	157	243

This table shows the journey of referrals at the point they are received by SPOC. There are still some cases in which it is best practice for the referral to go straight to a long term team, rather than undergoing a PA in the front door first. You can see from the table that prior to PAs being undertaken in SPOC, for example in Jan 2022, the Community OT service had 86 unassessed cases transferred to the team. However in January 2023, they only had 20 cases that went straight to the team



Cases Screened to Wider Service following completion of Proportionate Assessment

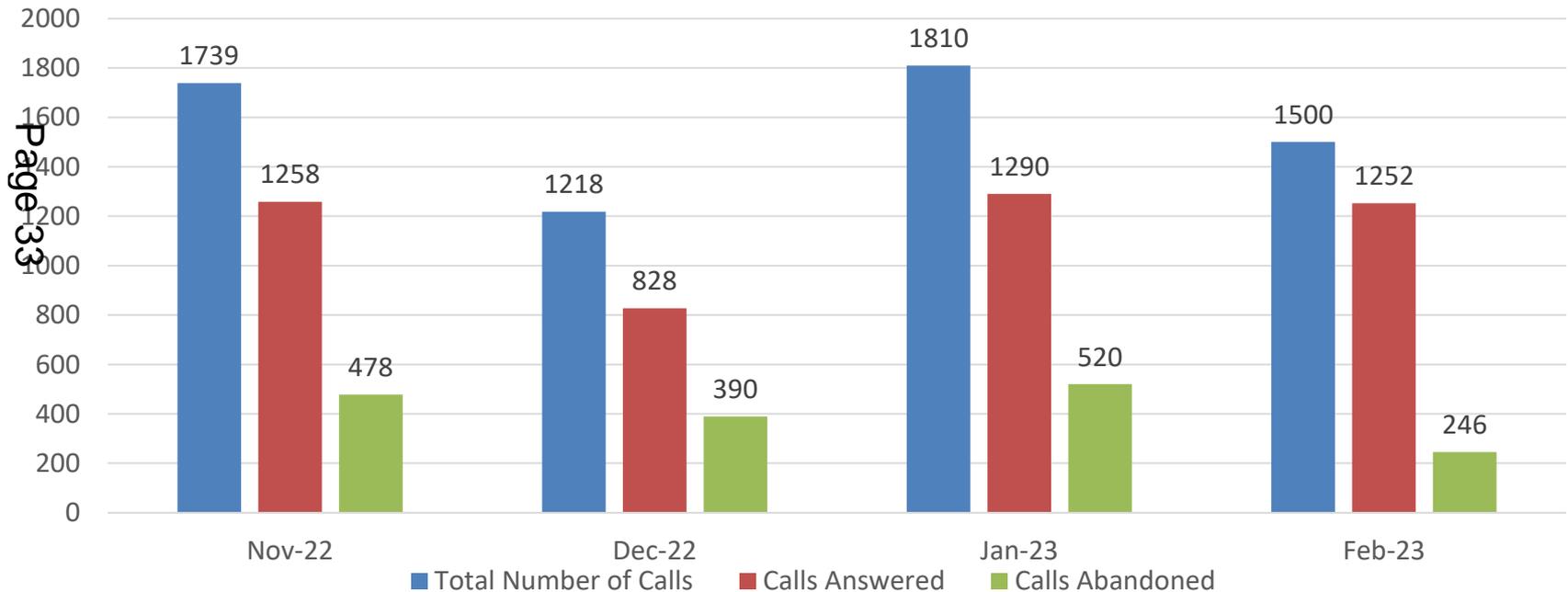
Adult SPOC Transferred to Team Following a Proportionate Assessment	Mar '22	Apr '22	May '22	Jun '22	Jul '22	Aug '22	Sep '22	Oct '22	Nov '22	Dec '22	Jan '23
Afan Network	10	4	6	9	15	21	12	18	21	16	17
Neath Network	5	5	6	10	8	14	14	18	20	12	19
Upper Valleys	4	4	4	1	6	12	5	15	13	10	18
Community OT	30	44	56	33	49	58	52	62	45	31	60
Reablement	54	42	37	37	27	12	5	6	4	7	11

This table shows the trends for where cases transfer to once a PA is completed and has identified ongoing needs for the service user. Although some circumstances and needs will always require cases to transfer to the wider service, these cases transfer with a completed assessment identifying what is needed and in most cases with some basic support having already been provided to the service user assisting them whilst they wait for a more comprehensive support package



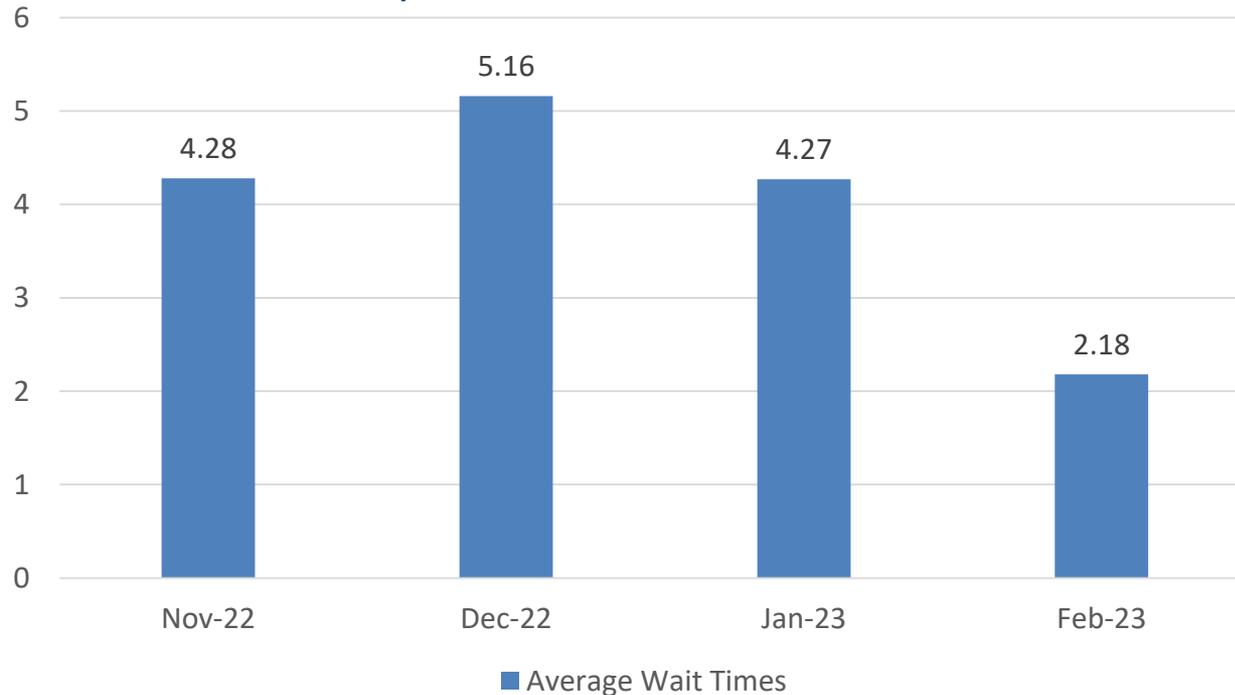
Contact Officers Response Rates

In the Summer of 2022 concerns were rightly raised in relation to our call response rates; we undertook a review of this service and implemented changes in October/November of 2022 by bringing in additional resources. We continue to see an improved response rate, with 83.5% of calls answered in February. This is an area of the service we are continuing to closely monitor. Our Human Resources Team are supporting us with staff wellbeing and we are working with IT to improve our answer phone facilities so users know how long they can expect to wait before a call is answered.



Average Call Wait Times

This graph shows the average length of time callers have to wait before a call is answered – generally calls are answered within 5 minutes. Our data shows that most callers will wait between 6-8 minutes before they abandon a call



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Examples of Service User Feedback Following Engagement with SPOC

"We are completely overwhelmed by the service and the efficiency of the system, it was only Monday I rang and we are so grateful for the speed of the service"

"I rang them they were ever so nice they asked my lots of questions about my health, what I think I need, was I prepared to have text messages, put me on what they say a waiting list"

"They listened, they were going to act on it, great. I felt good I felt delighted – it had lifted my spirits after everything that I have gone through - I had someone to talk to"

"Reassuring to know that the problems are getting sorted. Not had to deal with SS in my life just last couple of years, its reassurance we are looking for"

Thank you





Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL NEATH PORT TALBOT SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY BOARD

March 9th 2023

Report of the Head of Children and Young People Services – Keri Warren

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title

Early Intervention and Prevention Support within Children Services.

Purpose of the Report:

To inform the group about the Early Intervention and Preventative Support available to children, young people and families across Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

Executive Summary:

The report will give information about the Early Intervention and Preventative Services within Neath Port Talbot; it will focus on the support offered by services both during the Covid 19 pandemic and moving forward into the Cost of Living Crisis and the ongoing challenges faced by families today.

The focus on Early Intervention and Prevention is underpinned by the following National and Local strategic documents:

- Social Services Wales Wellbeing Act 2014
- Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015
- LAC reduction strategy
- Family Support Strategy
- Participation and Engagement Strategy

Background:

Families, in whatever form they take, are the foundation of Neath Port Talbot's communities. They are the single most important factor in making sure that our children and young people are happy, healthy and safe.

Desmond Tutu once said '*there comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they are falling in*'.

The case for Early Intervention and Preventative Support is very clear it can secure better outcomes for families whilst reducing the likelihood of them requiring statutory intervention or becoming looked after. When it works effectively, it prevents families going into crisis and allows professionals to concentrate the intensive support for children and young people most in need.

There is a tiered approach to service provision within Neath Port Talbot, which consists of four agreed tiers of need:

Tier 1: Universal services

- Services available to meet a range of services that most children and young people require. E.g. schools, early year's

settings, leisure facilities, youth work. These services are universally available to all children.

Tier 2: Targeted services

- Services that provide extra help for those with emerging needs, which usually supplements continued access to universal services. E.g., voluntary and community services, parenting support, Team Around the Family.

Tier 3: significant needs (referred services)

- Services that require an assessed programme of support provided by providers with particular skills in meeting higher levels of additional needs. E.g., social work, Disabled children with complex health needs, YOT, multiagency programmes.

Tier 4 Complex needs (specialist services)

- Services that require an assessed programme of specialist support services for children and young people with complex needs. Safeguarding services, corporate parenting

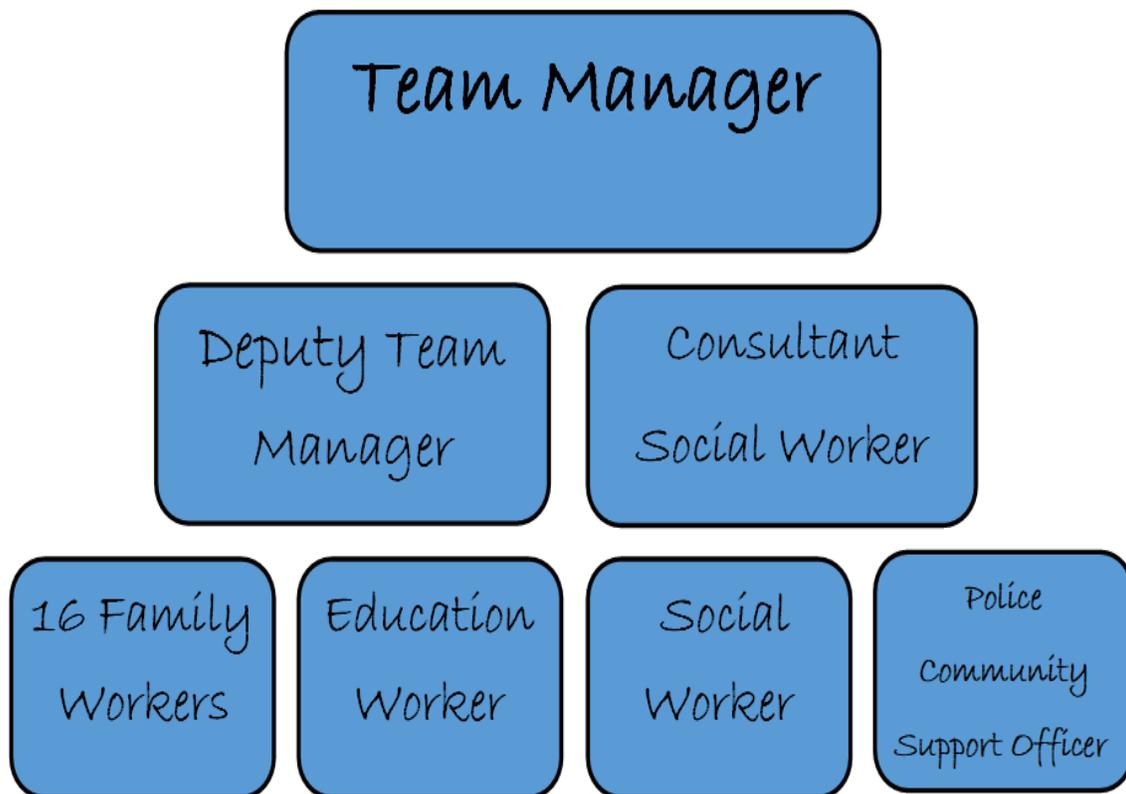


Team Around the Family is an Early Intervention and Prevention Service that is jointly funded by Families First and Children Services. The team was developed in 2012 and in 2016 came under the

governance of Children's Services. Team Around the Family is an outward facing service and aims to work collaboratively with partner agencies such as education, health and adult services.

Total funding for 2022/2023 is £761,950. Families First contribution £622,588 and Children Services £139,360. Whilst there has been continued financial support and investment from Children's Services – the contribution from Families First has remained static. The Principal Officer for Family Services has responsibility for the team and has experience in this area having previously managed Team Around the Family.

Team Structure



Referral Pathway

Team Around the Family receive referrals via a weekly Early Intervention Panel, which is a multi-agency forum where families are discussed and the most appropriate form of support identified.

Referrals also come into the team via the step down process from community teams where it has been identified that there are no longer any safeguarding concerns but ongoing support needs have been identified. There is an established robust step down process in place, which ensures families are at the centre of plans and involves communication between team managers and staff to ensure timeliness for families.

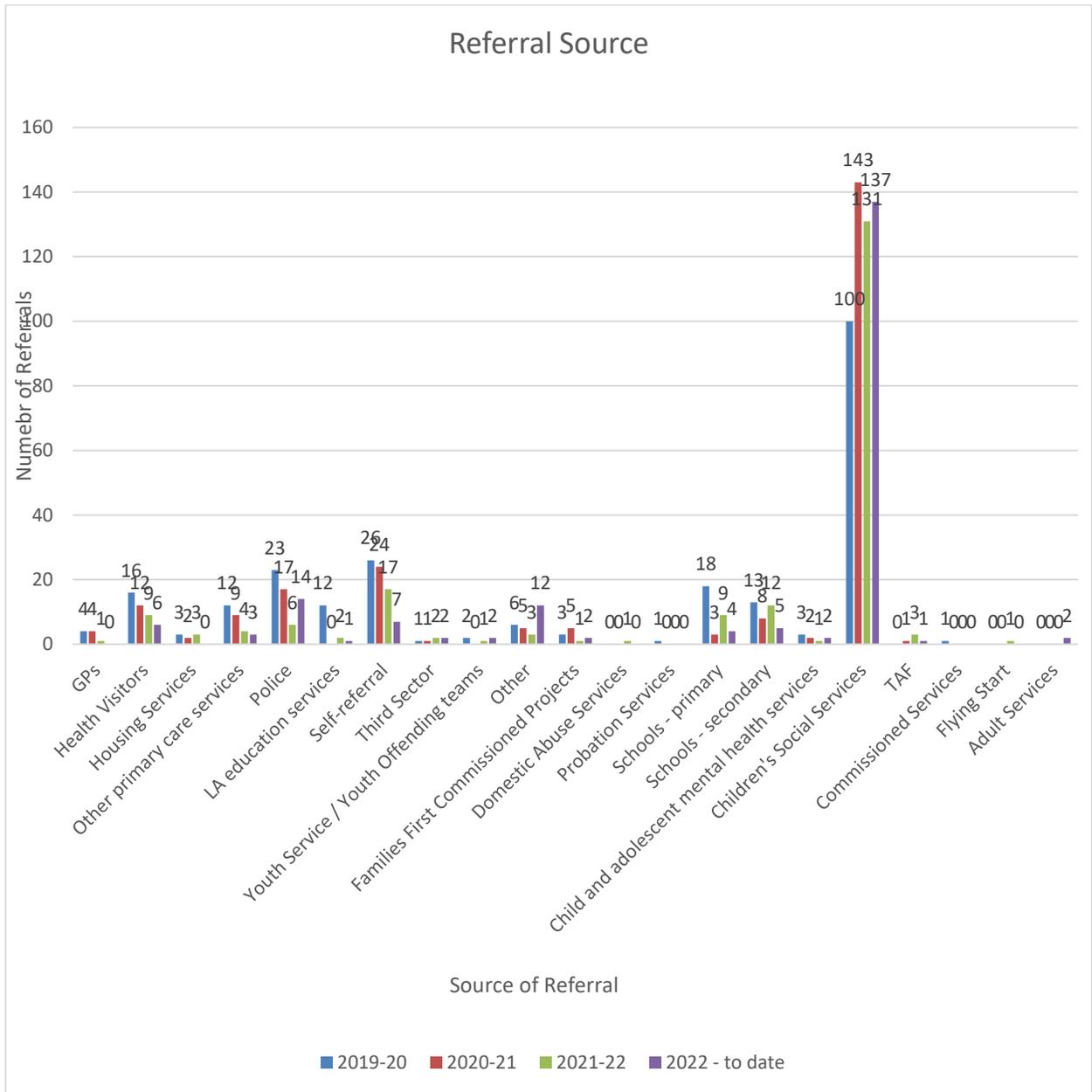
In the event of new safeguarding concerns, there is a step up process in place to ensure children's safety. This is adhered to in a timely manner, involves discussions with team managers, and involves the Single Point of Contact (SPOC).

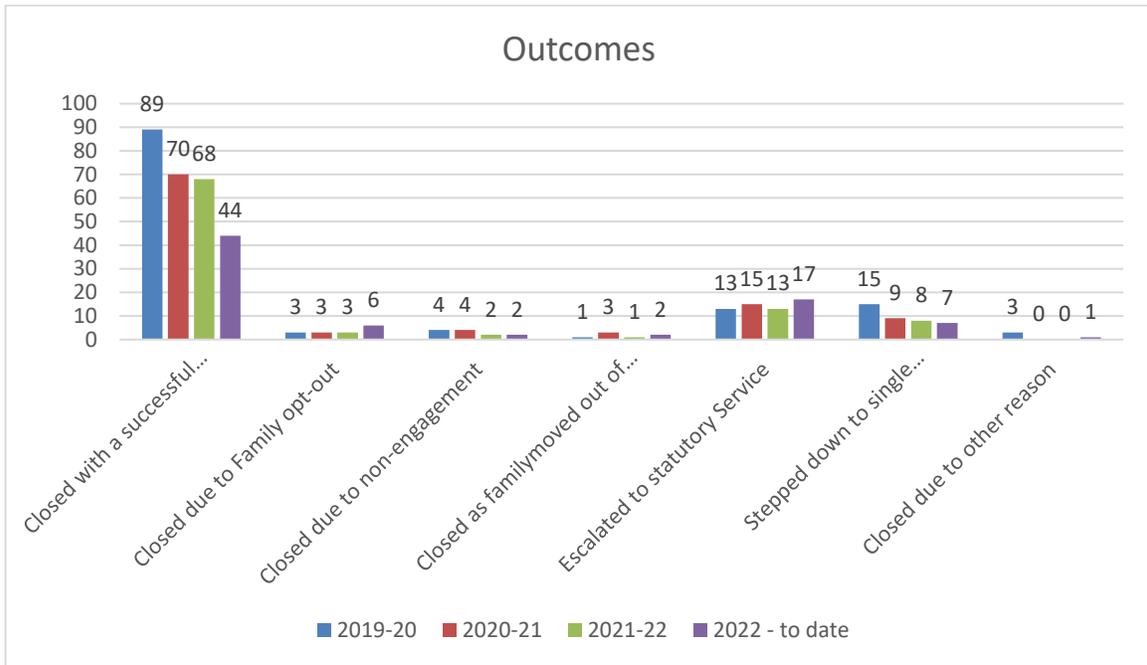
Transfer meeting is held every week, which is attended by Team Manager's from all of the social work teams, and has a representative from the Senior Management Team in attendance. Cases are discussed in this forum to ensure consistency of thresholds within the service.

The Social Worker that supports both the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and Team Around the Family will screen all referrals for an early offer of help. The social worker will have a 'what matters' conversation with the young person or family to ensure that their voice is heard and their views considered.

Team Around the Family work in an outcome focussed way and co-production is an essential part of our practice.

Referral Data





Support through the Covid 19 Pandemic

In March 2020, Team Around the Family had to change the way in which they were able to support families. Team Around the Family were able to adapt to the challenges and were able to offer support including parenting groups virtually, telephone support, doorstep visits to ensure families had face-to-face support and facilitated walk and talk sessions to ensure that children had the opportunity to spend one to one time with their allocated worker.

Family workers ensured that children and families were supported through a very difficult time and would deliver food bank parcels, essential items and schoolwork for those families in isolation.

Additionally staff provided emotional wellbeing support to children and families during an extremely anxious time and in turn as a team, we supported each other with the challenges.

Moving forward there has been an increase in the complexity of cases and certain aspects of virtual working continues to meet the needs, namely through the delivery of parenting groups. We now offer a hybrid model where those parents who wish to attend in person but for those parents who may face difficulties in attending can attend online – therefore making this service accessible for all.

Support Provided

The primary focus of Team Around the Family is assessment, planning and reviewing of support. Upon allocation, a comprehensive family assessment is completed in order to identify the strengths and needs within the family. All family members are involved in the assessment process.

The assessment then informs the creation of the Family Support Plan which focuses on the family outcomes. Again all family members are involved in the production of the plan.

Following a period of intervention the Family Support Plan is reviewed in collaboration with the family and partner agencies to ensure that the identified needs are being addressed.

In addition to the above the team provide support such a Nurture parenting groups, Non Violent Resistance parenting groups, direct work with young people to support with self-harm, confidence building, reducing isolation, encouragement into education and training, positive activities, financial support and practical support to manage home conditions.

Already this year the team have developed two programmes to facilitate direct work with young people. The FRESH programme is

aimed to support young children aged 4 to 9 and have been exposed to parental domestic abuse (see leaflet in appendices)

Secondly the Aspire programme which supports young people between the ages of 11-18 to improve their understanding of healthy relationships, understand the signs of exploitation and raise awareness of internet safety to name a few of the topics.

We run a successful school uniform bank and are in the process of further developing this to include clothing and baby equipment – this will assist families during this difficult period. These are available to all families across Children's Services.

To support girls and women we are able to provide 'period packs' to ensure that women are not forced to make a decision between purchasing essential items for their family or sanitary items. Again, this is available to all families across Children's Services.

Every year the team are responsible for co-ordinating the Mr X appeal within Neath Port Talbot. The appeal ensures that all children wake up on Christmas day to a gift and consists of a number of staff collecting, sorting and delivering gifts. The appeal last year supported approximately 700 children across the borough.

In addition to gifts, the team also ensures families have adequate food for the festive period; we have a good relationship with local food banks who ensure that families have the basics. In addition to this family worker Sarah Wells Jones established links with the 'Everyone Deserves a Christmas' campaign and was able to fundraise to provide 200 festive hampers to families across the borough that ensured they had a fresh turkey, fresh vegetables and many other food items for Christmas. A network of volunteers including staff, Swansea City Footballers, Osprey's staff and staff from the Welsh Rugby Union delivered these to family home. We are currently planning the roll out for Easter.

Collaborative working with these agencies are continuing with plans being developed to run 'summer camps' in conjunction with the Welsh Rugby Union to ensure that children have access to attend a fun play scheme with a hot meal during school holiday times. Attendance at such events can mostly be unobtainable for our children due to financial barriers.

Feedback

Feedback from the Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements held in 2021 states:

- There is early prioritisation of need and offers of help
- Good evidence of coproduction with Team Around the Family and partners
- Team Around the Family staff are confident and well supported
- There is a good relationship with Team Around the Family Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)
- Recognition that families need support beyond the Team Around the Family timescales
- Evidence of quality assessments in Team Around the Family
- Good step up/step down processes in place
- Early intervention and prevention services have innovative measures in place and are outcome focussed

The cabinet member for Children's Services recently visited the Neath Annexe where family support services are based and was given a visual overview of the support being offered to children and families across the borough and was able to talk to staff members about the work they do.

The Deputy Minister for Wales during a recent visit was also given the opportunity to discuss with staff the support provided to children and families in the area, positive feedback be given following the visit.

The below is feedback from a family supported by Team Around the Family who attended an NVR group:

“Sorry I couldn't stay today, I just wanted to thank the both of you, and show appreciation, the time and effort you put into families to help them is amazing and you both deserve credit for it”

Moving Forward

Team Around the Family have recently secured funding until March 31st 2025. There has been a recent recruitment of a Team Manager with Jenny McGrath being appointed, Jenny has a safeguarding background and will be an asset to the team.

The team will continue to offer support to children and families whilst being committed to developing our links with community initiatives such as ‘community hubs’ and ‘warm spaces’.

Team Around the Family will form part of the Neath Port Talbot Family Support Strategy that is due to be published in July 2023.

Financial Impacts:

No implications

Integrated Impact Assessment:

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications

Workforce Impacts:

Team Around the Family is partly funded by Families First with current funding agreed up to March 31st 2025. However should there

be a change in funding then a number of staff would be at risk of not having their contracts extended, this would have a detrimental impact on service provision.

Legal Impacts:

No implications

Risk Management Impacts:

No implications

Crime and Disorder Impacts:

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on the Council in the exercise of its functions to have “due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent:

- a) Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
- b) The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and
- c) Re-offending the area”

The joint working within Team Around the Family and Family Support Services has a positive impact in respect of this duty.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Appendices:

Case Examples
FRESH Leaflet

Officer Contact:

Keri Warren – Head of Children’s Services

k.warren@npt.gov.uk

Ruth Griffiths – Principal Officer – Family Support Services

r.griffiths3@npt.gov.uk

Jenny McGrath – Team Manager – Team Around the Family

j.mcgrath@npt.gov.uk

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Case Study

A 16 yr old mother who had previously been open to the team was referred when she became pregnant with her second child. The referral came from the midwife with whom the previously allocated family worker had a good relationship.

The referral highlighted worries around mother's relationship with the father of the unborn and requested support with budgeting, accessing financial support, parenting advice relating to managing two young children and support to reduce mother's social isolation.

The referral was discussed at the Early Intervention Panel and it was agreed that the case return to Team Around the Family. To ensure consistency for mother it was decided that the case would be allocated to the previous family worker. This would allow mother to have a trusted worker and build on an already established relationship.

Mother was able to identify a number of outcomes that she wanted to achieve including addressing her emotional and mental health difficulties, reducing her feeling of isolation, parenting support and to improve the relationship with her partner. There had been previous incidents of arguments between the couple that they wanted to prevent from escalating.

Support Provided

The family worker supported mother to apply for a number of financial grants including a DAF grant for household items, a Save the Children Grant that mother used to purchase items for the unborn, a food poverty grant that aims to reduce the fuel costs for families by funding the purchase of an air fryer or slow cooker in addition to tesco food vouchers to promote the purchase of fresh food. The family worker accompanied mother shopping which supported mother's ability to budget, plan meals and shop appropriately. The family worker then supported mother to prepare basic family meals. Mother was also supported at christmas with Mr X gifts, an 'everyone deserves a christmas' hamper and vouchers provided by the Salvation Army.

The family worker was able to liaise with partner agencies such as health to ensure mother had the correct support for her emotional and mental health. The family worker linked with the Community Mental Health Nurse and referred mother to the Peri Natal Mental Health Health Visitor for ongoing support. The family worker would ensure that mother was engaging with the support and taking on the advice given – the family worker would support mother with attendance at appointments if required.

In order to address mother's social isolation the family worker was able to utilise her knowledge and relationship with the Local Area Coordinator to support mother to attend a local parent and child playgroup, mother requested the family worker attended with her until mother's confidence increased to a point where she felt able to attend alone. The family worker also ensured that mother fully utilised the services offered by the Flying Start programme as mother lived in a Flying Start area.

Unfortunately during the intervention father received a custodial sentence and is currently serving this in Parc Prison. The family worker has been the point of contact for both the prison and the Probation Service during this time. The family worker has also been a valuable source of support to mother during this worrying time. Relationship work will commence following his release from custody.

Parenting support was provided on a one to one basis with mother and this continues following the birth of her second child. Mother's engagement continues to be very good, she is responding well to support, has a very good relationship with the family worker, is successfully managing her mental health and continues to attend community groups independantly and is building up a support network of friends and professionals who can continue to support her once Team Around the Family involvement concludes.

Case Study

A young person aged 10 years and his family were referred into the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) by his paternal grandparents who were raising concerns about his lack of education and social isolation. Following the completion of a Proportionate Assessment by a social worker in the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) the case was stepped down to Team Around the Family at the Early Intervention Panel.

It was established that due to ongoing health issues the child was having to isolate during the Covid 19 pandemic, he was in the high risk category and in order to ensure his safety his mother and his younger siblings isolated as per the Government's guidance.

However grandparents felt that mother was denying him his education, socialisation and by stopping contact was impacting on the relationship with them and his father. The child was being home schooled as a result of his isolation.

The family worker completed a comprehensive assessment with all family members including father and paternal grandparents. Assessment sessions with mother and the child were conducted virtually.

A Family Support Plan was co produced with family members

Support Provided

Due to ongoing issues with mother's emotional wellbeing home education was proving to be a challenge, support was given to mother in planning sessions for the child. The family worker was able to develop a link with the educated at home co ordinator who was able to support mother with resources to promote learning. As the child was due to transition from primary school to secondary school but was unable to attend the planned days with his peers the family worker liaised with both schools to ensure that this support was offered virtually.

The family worker ensured that there was regular communication with school to ensure that the child's voice was being heard and that his needs were addressed in his new school.

The family worker was an advocate for the child and ensured that his voice was heard by others such as school, grandparents and father. The family worker took a mediation role to ensure that once possible contact between the child and his paternal family members resumed.

When restrictions were reduced and the child had received his Covid 19 immunisations the family worker supported him to attend sessions at his new comprehensive school to promote his transition into secondary education.

The family worker supported mother to secure a Save the Children Grant to purchase equipment for home schooling, a food poverty grant to enable mother to reduce her energy costs. During the period of isolation the family worker also ensured that the family had access to food bank parcels.

The family worker supported the child and his siblings to engage in a number of social activities including the Team Around the Family 'Summer Squad' that ran over the summer holiday period and was delivered in conjunction with the Welsh Rugby Union, a trip to Folly Farm that was organised by staff from Team Around the Family and funded from the Child Development Fund, swimming and a Glamorgan cricket match held at the Gnoll.

Engagement with Team Around the Family was very good and the family successfully achieved their outcomes and the case was closed in Novemebr 2022. The family received Mr X gifts and an 'everyone deserves a christmas' food hamper.

What is F.R.E.S.H?

F.R.E.S.H has been designed to help support young children aged 5-11 years who have witnessed domestic abuse. The program's aim is to empower and educate children and young people about healthy friendships, relationships, emotions, safety and happiness to make positive changes to their lives to enable them to reach their full potential.

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Neath Port Talbot council
Team Around the Family
(01639) 763450

F.R.E.S.H



**Friendship, Relationships,
Emotions, Safety and
Happiness.**





F.R.E.S.H sessions The program has been designed for children aged 5-11 years who have experienced domestic abuse at home. has been designed for children aged 5- 11 years who may have experiences at home. The sessions will take place over 6 weeks that will be carried out weekly. Each session is given a more child friendly name.

Session 1:

Healthy relationships (My circle)

Session 2:

Domestic Abuse (Feeling safe)

Session 3:

Online Safety (safe connections)

Session 4:

Body image (All about me)

Session 5:

Feelings and worries (how I feel)

Session 6: Self-esteem and wellbeing (the power of positivity)

"The force of a shouting adult can feel like a terrible tidal wave to a child"
"The force of a shouting adult can feel like a terrible tidal wave to a child"

The young children who take part in the sessions are being supported by:

- Providing early intervention to make a positive change in their lives.
- Listening to their concerns.
- Promoting healthy relationships.
- Identifying unhealthy relationships.
- Supporting children's emotional development.
- Support children's self-esteem and confidence.

Children do not need to see domestic abuse happening for it to impact them. Children indirectly witness domestic abuse between adults in the home. This can be by hearing it from another room or by witnessing the outcome in the form of injuries and broken objects.

Your child has been referred to the program as they have witnessed some form of domestic abuse. The program does not talk about any incident they may have seen in the past but focuses on what a healthy relationship is and enables them to have their own healthy relationships in the future. We will work directly on their feelings, emotions and self-esteem in order for them to reach their full potential and not to worry about what they have experienced at home.

Contact Us

Team Around the Family

(01639) 763450

Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

(All starting 2pm unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Contact Officer
2022		
27 th June		
28 th July	Training Meeting	
11 th Oct (re-scheduled from 22 nd Sept)		
10 th Nov		
15 th Dec	'What is a statutory nuisance' in Environmental Health	Celvin Davies
2023		
26 th Jan	Asylum Seekers and Refugees Policy	Chele Howard
	Anti-Social Behaviour and Homelessness	Chele Howard
	Budget Scrutiny	
9 th March	Single Point of Contact – Front Door (Adults and Children's) (SPOC)	Keri Warren / Nune Aleksanyan
	Team Around the Family / Early Intervention	Ruth Griffiths / Keri Warren
20 th April	Joint Working with Home Office (UASC)	Andrew Jarrett

	Report on Personal Assistants	Angela Thomas/Maggie Hayes
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- **To be programmed into the next cycle**
Update on accommodation (Asylum and Refugees) – Claire Jones