



GŴYS Y CYNGOR

At holl aelodau'r cyngor

Rydych dan wŷs trwy hyn i ddod i

GYFARFOD Y CYNGOR

i'w gynnal am 2.00 pm

DYDD MAWRTH, 30 IONAWR 2024 Dydd Mawrth, 30 Ionawr 2024

yn

HYBRID CHAMBER OR VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

**RHAID GOSOD POB FFÔN SYMUDOL AR Y MODD DISTAW AR
GYFER PARHAD Y CYFARFOD**

--- A G E N D A ---

RHAN A

1. *Cyhoeddiadau'r Maer*
2. *Cyhoeddiadau'r Arweinydd*
3. *Datganiadau o fuddiannau*
4. *Holi'r Cyhoedd*

RHAN B

5. *2024/25 Cynllun Gostyngiadau'r Dreth Gyngor (Tudalennau 3 - 16)*
6. *Cynllun Cyfiawnder Ieuenctid 2023/24 (Tudalennau 17 - 76)*

7. *Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg (Tudalennau 77 - 200)*
8. *Adroddiad Blynyddol Cyfarwyddwr y Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol (Tudalennau 201 - 266)*
9. *Adroddiad Blynyddol Cynllun Corfforaethol 2022-23 (Tudalennau 267 - 326)*

RHAN C

10. *Hysbysiad o Gynnig o dan Adran 10 o Ran 4 (Rheolau Gweithdrefn) Cyfansoddiad y Cyngor*
11. *Cwestiynau gan Aelodau, gyda Rhybudd, o dan Reol 9.2 o Reolau Gweithdrefn y Cyngor*
12. *Eitemau brys*

Karen Jones

Prif Weithredwr

***CANOLFAN DDINESIG,
PORT TALBOT***

Dydd Mercher, 24 Ionawr 2024

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

30th JANUARY 2024

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED – ALL

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2024/25

Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/25 which needs to be adopted by Council by 31st January 2024. It also makes proposals relating to discretionary areas within the proposed scheme.

Background

2. Council Tax Benefit was replaced in April 2013 by a Council Tax Reduction Scheme more commonly known as Council Tax Support.
3. As Members are aware the UK Government funding for the scheme was reduced by approximately 10% as compared to their funding level for the previous Council Tax Benefit Scheme. However, since 2013/14 the Welsh Government has continued to provide an additional £22m on top of its base funding of £222m to enable financial support up to 100% of the council tax bill to be made available for eligible claimants.
4. The Welsh Government made regulations for a national scheme for Council Tax support. However, the obligation remains upon the Council to “adopt a scheme”.

Current Position

5. The current Council Tax Reduction Scheme ends on 31st March 2024 and a new scheme must be adopted for 1st April 2024.
6. As Members are aware the Council provides Council Tax support to approximately 15,500 households within the County Borough, of which approximately 10,850 receive full support and pay no Council Tax. The remaining 4,650 households receive partial support to pay for their Council Tax.
7. Although the Local Government Finance Act gives Welsh Ministers discretion to allow Welsh local authorities to determine the contents of schemes themselves, the Welsh Government have approved an extension to the existing national framework for the provision of Council Tax Support in Wales. This is to avoid what has been termed a "postcode lottery" whereby eligibility for a Council Tax reduction and the size of the Council Tax reduction for particular groups could be different in different council areas. This extension provides up to a "100% support scheme" for 2024/25.
8. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme in Wales is set by Regulations made under Schedule 1B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012). On 26th November 2013 the Wales Government approved the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2013.
9. The scheme is subject to the annual up-rating of certain figures used by authorities to assess individual customers' entitlement and is also subject to periodic technical adjustments. These amendments are contained in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
10. These regulations have been laid in Welsh Government on the 5th December 2023 and are due to be debated/approved by Welsh Government in January 2024. It is proposed that the Council also

adopts the proposed changes that will be made by the Welsh Government, which include:

Upating figures for 2024-25

Personal allowances in relation to working age, pensioner age, carer and disabled premiums will be updated as will non-dependent deductions.

Additional Amendments

In addition to upating the financial figures, there are also a number of other amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations, which make provision for the treatment of the following, which ensure the 2013 Regulations remain up-to-date and fit for purpose.

Widowed Parents Allowance and Bereavement Support back payments

The proposed amendment to the 2013 CTRS Regulations will ensure no applicant living in Wales is negatively impacted because they have received a Widowed Parents Allowance (WPA) back payment or a retrospective Bereavement Support Payment (BSP).

The amendment makes provision to disregard any payment received from the calculation of an applicant's capital under the scheme.

The amendment proposes that any backdated BSP award would be aligned with the existing provision for BSP awards and disregarded for a period of 12 months. Any WPA back payments will continue to be disregarded from a person's capital.

Post Office Compensation payments

The UK Government has announced funding to enable the Post Office to deliver compensation schemes and arrangements for various cohorts of postmasters. These include the Horizon Shortfall Scheme, compensation arrangements for postmasters whose

convictions were overturned and a compensation scheme for postmasters who did not receive remuneration during a suspension period.

An amendment will ensure no applicant living in Wales is negatively impacted because they receive any compensation or support payment made in connection with the failings of the Post Office Horizon system.

The amendment makes provision to disregard any compensation or support payment received from the calculation of an applicant's capital and a non-dependant's deduction under the scheme.

The Vaccine Damage Payment scheme

The Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme (VDPS) incorporated COVID-19 from December 2020, and the scheme is now processing these claims. The majority of VDPS awards are already disregarded relating to compensation for personal injury. However, this does not currently apply to the partners of vaccinated individuals who receive a payment derived from a VDPS award.

The proposed amendment to the 2013 CTRS Regulations will ensure that no applicant living in Wales is negatively impacted because they receive a payment under the Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979 in respect of a partner.

The amendment makes provision to disregard a payment received from the calculation of an applicant's capital under the scheme.

The Infected Blood Inquiry

The Infected Blood Inquiry published its first interim report in July 2022: this made a number of recommendations for a framework for compensation and redress for the victims of infected blood. The report recommended that interim compensation payments of £100,000 be made to infected persons and bereaved partners who registered with a UK infected blood support scheme.

Where an infected person or their bereaved partner died before the interim payment could be made, the Government agreed that the interim payment of £100,000 would be made to that person's estate.

An amendment to the 2013 CTRS Regulations will ensure that no applicant living in Wales is negatively impacted because they receive an interim infected blood compensation payment from their deceased parent's estate.

The amendment makes provision to disregard a payment received from the calculation of an applicant's capital under the scheme.

Minor technical and consequential amendments

Some further minor technical amendments are proposed to the 2013 CTRS Regulations to align provisions in Wales with England and housing benefit provisions. These ensure an applicant who is a pensioner and responsible for a young person who is in receipt of an Armed Forces Independence Payment is taken into account when calculating eligibility. The amendment also ensures that the list of matters which must be disregarded in relation to non-dependant deductions in relation to working-age people also applies to pensioners.

A consequential amendment will also reflect changes to the legislative landscape as a result of The Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 which becomes operational from April 2024.

Integrated Impact Assessment

11. The Welsh Government has previously compiled an Equalities Impact Assessment following its consultation. A local Equalities Impact Assessment has previously been carried out by this Council in 2012 and 2013. Those consultations assisted the Council in satisfying the public sector equality duty as set out in the Equality Act. A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the

Equality Act, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage assessment, attached at Appendix 1, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

12. The approved national scheme, within the Prescribed Requirements Regulations, provides some limited discretion for the Council to apply additional elements that are more generous than the national scheme.
13. As the Welsh Government has introduced a standard scheme other than for 3 discretionary items as set out below they have determined there is no need for each Council to carry out a separate consultation process in relation to individual schemes. This is provided that there is no proposed change in relation to the discretionary elements. It is confirmed that there are no proposed changes to the discretionary elements for the 2024/25 Council Scheme as set out below.
 - (a) The ability to backdate the application of council tax reduction with regard to late claims prior to the standard period of three months before the claim;
that there is no increase in the backdated period for pensioners and working age claimants from the standard 3 months contained within the prescribed scheme.
 - (b) The ability to increase the standard extended reduction period of 4 weeks given to persons after they return to work where they have previously been receiving a council tax reduction that is to end as a result of their return to work;
that there is no change to the standard 4 week extended reduction period contained within the Prescribed Scheme.
 - (c) Discretion to increase the amount of War Disablement Pensions, War Widows Pensions and War Widower's Pensions which is to be disregarded when calculating income of the claimant;

The National Scheme provides for the first £10 per week of this income to be disregarded.

to continue to disregard the above-mentioned pensions income in full.

Financial Implications

14. This Council's total budget for Council Tax Support in 2023/24 is £19.413 million. The budget for 2024/25 will be determined by Cabinet in February 2024.

Legal Implications

15. The Council is obliged to make a Council Tax Reduction Scheme under the Prescribed Requirements Regulations. Although the legislation provides for a default scheme to apply in the absence of the Council making a scheme, the Council is nevertheless under a statutory duty to adopt its own scheme, even if it chooses not to apply any of the discretionary elements.

Risk Implications

16. The Council needs to manage the cost of Council Tax Support within its budget. The amount of Welsh Government support is provided on a fixed basis rather than the demand-led basis of support to council tax benefit. Any variation in Council Tax support costs will have to be met by this Council.

Recommendations

17. Having given due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment. It is recommended that Council approve the following in relation to establishing its Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the 2024/25 financial year:

- (a) Adopts the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 as further amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and any subsequent amendments that may be required by legislation in relation to The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- (b) Approves the retention of the existing discretionary elements in relation to the Prescribed Scheme:
 - (i) That no increase in the backdated period for all claimants be applied from the standard 3 months contained in the Prescribed Scheme.
 - (ii) That no increase in the extended reduction period for all claimants be applied from the standard 4 weeks currently contained within the Prescribed Scheme.
 - (iii) Apply a 100% disregard for War Disablement Pensions, War Widows Pensions and War Widower's Pensions for all claimants.

Reason for Proposed Decision

- 18. To establish a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/25 in line with legislation and regulations.

Implementation of Decision

- 19. The decision is for immediate implementation.

Background Documents

- 20. Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 as amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme)

(Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2016, amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 (“Uprating Regulations”), amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (“Uprating Regulations”) and further amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2019. Further amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. Further amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021. Further amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2022. Further amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023. Further amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Impact Assessment – First Stage

Officer Contact

For further information on this report item, please contact:

Mr Huw Jones – Chief Finance Officer

E-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk

Mr Stuart Mason – Principal Benefits Officer

E-mail: s.c.mason@npt.gov.uk

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25.

The Welsh Government has previously consulted and put in place a universal scheme across Wales for the provision of financial support to the most financially disadvantaged citizens to help them pay their Council Tax. Since 2013/14 the Welsh Government has provided £244m to the 22 Local Authorities in Wales to adopt a standard scheme of financial support. This is to avoid what has been termed a "postcode lottery" whereby eligibility for a Council Tax reduction and the size of the Council Tax reduction for particular groups could be different in different council areas. The continued extension of this scheme into 2024/25 provides up to a "100% support scheme" for eligible taxpayers. As in all years since 2013/14 Neath Port Talbot Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme (or support scheme) will be in line with the standard Welsh Government Scheme and does not propose any change to the 3 Discretionary elements of the scheme as are set out in paragraph 13 of the report.

Service Area: Council Tax/Benefits

Directorate: Strategy & Corporate Services

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users (council taxpayers)	X	
Staff	X	
Wider community	X	
Internal administrative process only		X

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age				X		<p>Council Tax is payable by people occupying non domestic properties. These include owner occupiers, tenants and owners of properties (if they are vacant). There are a number of exemptions and discounts available for council tax payers and these along with the Council Tax Support Reduction scheme are applied to each property/taxpayer in line with Government legislation and regulations.</p> <p>The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) set out in this report was consulted on by Welsh Government prior to its adoption in 2013/14. CTRS is provided to all eligible taxpayers to help them pay their Council Tax. This report shows that the cost to the Council exceeds the share of the £244m funding made available. The cost of the scheme has to be found from within the Council's total resources available. The Council Tax database does not identify the specific characteristics of taxpayers. All eligible taxpayers receive the appropriate financial support in line with the scheme's criteria and do not treat any people with protected characteristics any differently.</p>
Disability				X		
Gender Reassignment				X		
Marriage/Civil Partnership				X		
Pregnancy/Maternity				X		
Race				X		
Religion/Belief				X		
Sex				X		
Sexual orientation				X		

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language	X				H	Applications for support can be made in Welsh
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English	X				H	Applications for support can be made in Welsh

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		X				
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		X				

6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	X		The scheme provides assistance to people on benefits and low income to help them pay their Council Tax. This is a continuation of a standard uniform scheme introduced by Welsh Government in 2013/14. In line with Regulations the council must determine annually before the end of January the Council Tax Reduction scheme that it will have in place for the next financial year i.e. 2024/25.
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	X		It assists to provide a sense of community and helps people live locally without having to be concerned about paying all or part of their Council Tax.
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative		X	The scheme has been in existence since 2013/14 and is proposed to continue unchanged in 2024/25. If the Welsh Government proposes any changes to the scheme they will be subject to full consultation.
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions		X	The Council is applying the standard scheme of financial support as provided by the Welsh Government
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	X		It prevents people having tax arrears and having to pay their Council Tax when they are on the appropriate benefits and/or low incomes

7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	X
Reasons for this conclusion	
This is a continuation of the Council Tax Reduction scheme that has been in existence since 2013/14. In line with regulations the Council's is required to approve its scheme for the forthcoming financial year by 31 January of each year.	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

	Name	Position	Date
Signed off by	Huw Jones	Chief Finance Officer	19.12.23

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

30th January 2024

Report of the Director of Social Services, Health & Housing – Andrew Jarrett

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected All

NEATH PORT TALBOT YOUTH JUSTICE AND EARLY INTERVENTION DRAFT YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2023-2024

Purpose of the Report

The report presents the background and summary of the content of the Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Early Intervention and Prevention Service draft Annual Youth Justice Plan 2023-24 (Appendix 1).

The report is seeking Member approval for the Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice and Early Intervention draft annual Youth Justice Plan 2023-2024 to be commended to Council. The Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service (Early Intervention and Prevention) Management Board has already submitted the final draft to the Youth Justice Board (YJB)

The report was considered by the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 16th November and as a result it has been amended in line with their recommendations.

Executive Summary

Background

Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an Annual Youth Justice (YJ) Plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth Justice Partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan, setting out:

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Financial Impact

There is no financial impact on the local authority resulting from this year’s plan.

Integrated Impact Assessment

A first stage impact assessment (Appendix 2) has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

Valleys Communities Impacts

No impact.

Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

There are no legal impacts associated with this report. The production of a youth justice plan is a statutory duty of the local authority under Part 3, Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Risk Management

There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

Other Impacts

Crime and Disorder Impacts:

The recommendation should have a positive effect on the below Crime and Disorder Impacts:

- 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 in the area.

This is due to the services supporting achievement of the WG outcome measure of 'promoting personal and community safety'. In particular the WCADA (Adferiad) Women's Outreach Engagement Service, will support women with complex and co-occurring needs, including mental health and substance misuse.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

The recommendation should have a positive effect on the below Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

Section 2(1) of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a general duty where a person exercising relevant functions must have regard (along with all other relevant matters) to the need to remove or minimise any factors which —

- (a) Increase the risk of violence against women and girls, or
- (b) Exacerbate the impact of such violence on victims.

This is because the Thrive WA-SWAN Project relates to the provision of domestic abuse support.

Consultation

There is no requirement for public consultation on the Youth Justice Plan; however, the plan has been circulated to partners through the management board and the community safety partnerships for comment. It has also submitted to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and I am expecting feedback in October 2023.

Recommendations

Having given due regard to the IIA, Members are asked to approve the Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice and Early Intervention Draft Youth Justice Plan 2023 – 24.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To enable the Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service (Early Intervention and Prevention) on behalf of Neath Port Talbot Council to undertake its duties to deliver youth justice services in line with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Implementation of Decision

It is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Youth Justice Plan 2023-24.

Appendix 2 - First Stage Impact Assessment.

Youth Justice Report appendices are contained at the end of the Youth Justice Plan

List of Background Papers

None.

Officer Contact

Andrew Jarrett, Director of Social Services Health and Housing

Email: a.jarrett@npt.gov.uk

Keri Warren, Head of Children's Services, email: k.warren@npt.gov.uk

Dr Alison Davies, PO Children's Services, email: a.davies8@npt.gov.uk

Table of Abbreviations used in the Report and in the world of Youth Justice.

CSE = Child sexual exploitation

SERAF = Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework

LA = Local authority

SBUHB = Swansea Bay University Health Board

SWP = South Wales Police

SCB = Children Safeguarding Board

GDPR = General Data Protection Regulation

CAMHS = Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

PPU = Public protection unit

LAC = Looked after children

HSB = Harmful sexual behaviour

NPT= Neath Port Talbot

YOS = The Youth Offending Service

YJS = The Youth Justice Service

YJB = The Youth Justice Board.

HMIP Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.

JICPA- Joint Inspection of Child protection arrangements.

TRM=Trauma Recovery Model

Appendix 1

NPT Youth Justice Service (Early Intervention and Prevention) Annual plan 2023-2024

Service	NPT Youth Justice Service Early Intervention and Prevention
Service Manager/ Lead	Ali Davies
Chair of YJS Board	Andrew Jarrett

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Foreword by Andrew Jarrett

I write as chair NPT YJS management board. I am pleased to ratify the 2023/24 Youth Justice plan and present it to the YJB as the road map for the service since the global pandemic drew to its end, therefore this plan captures the service recovery going forward over the next year.

The multi-agency management board is now well established, and the members have contributed effectively to the Governance of the YJS and to this plan. The children and young people's resource centre is well and truly established and the YJS are very proud to have a community resource for young people called BASE 15. The YJS continues to demonstrate resilience, consistent and continued improvement, high quality interventions, excellent organisational delivery, good quality out of court disposal work and outstanding governance and leadership. This of course means improved outcomes for children and young people, the communities of NPT and the victims of crime.

As a result of the dedicated work of our young people, the management board, senior managers, the team and our multi-agency partners, two inspectorates: HMIP and the JICPA have recognised that significant progress has been made to move Neath Port Talbot YJS from the lowest rating in its previous inspection to the good rating where it sits now. We are now contributors to YJSIP (Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership) Peer Reviews across the UK, with the Principal Officer becoming an accredited Peer reviewer.

The YJS have taken the findings from the last inspection seriously and have prioritised setting up a child focused Youth Justice Service (Early Intervention and Prevention). Thus, securing the relevant resources required for children and young people known to the service. NPT have developed robust performance management and quality assurance systems. This has been achieved with the engagement of staff and young people and is testament to the effective governance and leadership arrangements that are in place for the YJS,

The YJS has worked closely with Education and Children Services, professionals from South Wales Police, Probation and Health, to ensure that children and their families continue to be supported beyond the Covid 19 pandemic. As chair of the management board, and director of social services, I am very proud of the improvements made and sustained, and look forward to building on the identified strengths, which will further enhance our NPT YJS.

The principal Officer is now the vice chair of HWB Doeth (The academic arm of the YJB) and we are keen to develop research and evidence-based practice including the Enhanced Case Management (ECM) approach based on the Trauma Recovery Model. The Youth Justice plan for 2022/2023 received an overall good grading last year and we will continue to build on that grade going forward, collaborating and co-producing with our young people, multi-agency partners, and stakeholders.



**Andrew Jarrett Chair
NPT YJS Management board**

22nd June 2023

To place this plan into a local context, there needs to be a clear vision, which links to the wider local authority. NPT have done extensive work, which this plan evidences how we have understood the needs of the cohort of young people, and local trends and patterns. The YJS gathers both qualitative and quantitative data which supports the strategic plan, which in turn will achieve best outcomes for children and young people. There is more information regarding the local context of NPT Youth Justice Plan in section 4 (page 10)

Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice (YJ) plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth offending partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual youth justice plan. A Youth Justice Strategic Plan is required under the provisions of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. Standard requirements are outlined annually, and the Plan should be approved locally by the Youth Justice Management Board prior to submission to the Youth Justice Board. The new Youth Justice Strategic Plan will run from 2021-2024 and will be refreshed annually. It links with and contributes to the principles and priorities of the strategic Service plans of key partner agencies.

The principle aim of the Youth Justice Service is to prevent offending and re-offending by Children and young people who are under 18 years of age. Section 39 (1) and Section 38 (1,2) of the Crime and Disorder Act requires that statutory partners which includes the Local Authority, Police, National Probation Service and Health co-operate to provide multi-agency Youth offending services to prevent offending by children and young people.

1 (a) The expectations of the YJB

This Youth Justice Plan will equally address the functions assigned to the NPT Youth Justice Service, including how services will prevent offending behaviour and reduce reoffending. It will reflect on how our service takes a strength based approach towards delivering a Child First justice system.

It is positive to note that the Youth Justice Board (YJB) recognises the remarkable response of the sector to the effects of the pandemic on delivery and the support that has been provided to children and young people. The YJB advocates that the

importance of partners working together to put plans in place to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, and now post- pandemic are more crucial than ever.

These annual youth justice plans provide an opportunity to review performance and developments over a single year period and plan for the next year. This allows services to be able to respond to any changes that have taken place in the previous year, including new legislation, demographic changes, delivery of key performance indicators, and developments in service delivery. The planning and production of a youth justice plan is beneficial to partnership working and service delivery to ensure the best outcomes for children.

The YJB are now taking a more critical role in terms of oversight of the Youth Justice plan. They are also more visible at management board meetings and for the first-time last year analysed and graded the Youth Justice plan. Our overall grade was Good. The YJB have provided a new template both for the plan and the analysis of its effectiveness. There is more scrutiny from the YJB and higher expectations of accountability from the management board.

2 Our Vision

Our aim at NPT YJS (EIP) Youth Justice Service is to support young people and their families who are involved in, or on the fringe of, offending or anti-social behaviour. Integral to this is their safety and well-being, ensuring they remain protected from harm and exploitation, whilst balancing their risks with the impact on victims of crime and their communities. It is our objective to improve outcomes for our young people in all areas of their lives in order to achieve their potential and to make a successful transition to adulthood.

3 Strategy

The strategies used to make our vision a reality include:

- A commitment to providing a multi-agency and fully integrated services. This plan includes a full section on how we are promoting and developing a Child First Trauma Informed Service.
- This includes seeking the views of children in all stages of their interaction with the service, and a focusing on building positive relationships and empowering children to fulfil their potential and facilitating and enabling outcome focused practice.

- To complete holistic and timely assessments which are child focused and view the young person as child first and a child or young person involved in offending behaviour second.
- This means that children and young people are central to everything we do and ensure that their voice is heard. The child first approach will also consider the rights under the UN convention, and their agency in decision making processes and meetings about them.

4 Exploitation and extra-familial harm

- The Youth Justice Service (EIP) are well placed to identify and work with young people who are exploited or at risk of exploitation including our multi-agency staff; YJS (Youth Justice Service) police officer, substance misuse worker, probation, and we now have a full-time education worker. The principal officer is the chair of the Better Futures multi-agency partnership and the service have access to units for therapeutic intervention for young people at risk of exploitation or involved in exploitative situations. The principal officer has recently had work published around the voice of the child in exploitation cases and has presented at the YJB annual conference and Barnardo's conference, therefore there is sound empirical research knowledge and experience in the service to support both staff and young people at risk.
- The fully embedded safeguarding work stream in the NPT YJS acknowledges that our young people often engage in behaviours that involve taking risk, and that they are sometimes best placed to manage those risks alongside us. Therefore, we promote a culture of risk awareness, risk assessment management, balancing risk versus danger, and using language with and about young people that is non- blaming or judgemental.
- Criminal exploitation, contextualised risk, triangulation meetings with children services have been and will continue to be developed further to manage risk of extra familial harm in the community, focusing on the behaviours and risks presented by perpetrators and not the socially constructed behaviours of children and young people. These work streams and interventions are being developed further including maintaining the consultation clinics with Better Futures, further training and Community risk profiling and mapping. We

have very close links with the safeguarding lead for NPT and are fully integrated in all safeguarding work streams across the council.

- The Operational Manager leads on mapping and has produced some excellent work regarding maps, contextual risk and profiling linking in with other areas of children services to ensure young people are on the correct multi-agency agendas and are safeguarded.
- We have extra support via a regional CAMHS nurse, stronger links with the third sector, and housing re youth homelessness. The Principal Officer leads on Youth Homelessness and crisis bed move on therefore our young people can have access to crisis beds if assessed as necessary. There are also more intervention workers and sessional support staff. This ensures close working relationships with their respective agencies, professional and constructive challenge and creates a healthy learning environment.
- We have secured joint regional funding for a temporary regional worker alongside probation as an IOM (integrated Offender management) Practice Support Worker for the young people who are part of the Criminal Justice system. This is a pilot and if successful could mean future posts and funding being secured.
- Thematic internal audits on topics, which we feel need scrutiny in the service are, and will continue to be embedded into our service. To date we have completed a CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) and girls and boy's audits. Completion of assets within timescales are audited weekly as are our visits to young people.
- We form part of and are included in the audit cycle across children services, subsequently we sighted on any audits that we need to be involved in or contribute to.
- We are embracing and developing the learning culture of child and adult practice reviews and internal learning reviews following scrutiny of cases. There are three trained practice reviewers within the Youth Justice Service and some of the youth Justice cases have been presented to the Safeguarding board for scrutiny and constructive review. This process celebrates positive practice and highlights areas that need development.

- We are now the proud tenants of a fully functional young people’s resource centre in NPT. This has been integral to moving out of the pandemic, developing safe spaces for young people and creating and applying interventions which support our service delivery to ensure the best outcomes for children and to prevent offending and re-offending by Children and young people who are under 18 years of age (Section 39 (1) and Section 38 (1, 2) of the Crime and Disorder Act).
- As the cost-of-living crisis hit in the winter of 2022/2023, the centre was a warm space and provision was put in place for food parcels and elongated hrs for any young people who needed extra support. As a service and as a directorate, we will respond to any socio-economic crisis as the need dictates and in conjunction with the rest of the local authority.
- We are a person-centred service and therefore the views and participation of our young people are integral to everything we do. Participation is encouraged and young people and their families’ voice choice and control is included as a primary consideration. There is a participation officer who works very closely with the Youth Justice Service and a named participation lead in the YJS. This will be discussed later in the report, there are young women and girls groups and initiatives and diversity needs are also a major consideration when discussing disproportionality and the needs of black and ethnic minority young people. The Welsh language is also a national KPI and the authority have Welsh language and translation policies in situ too reflect the needs of staff young people and families who are Welsh speakers or who identify as Welsh being their first language.
- Young people contribute effectively to the management board, there is more about participation and their contributions later in this plan. If there are any consultations taking place young people from the Youth Justice Service are involved.

5 Local Context and Resource

In Neath Port Talbot, the Youth Justice Service (Early Intervention and Prevention) are incorporated within the Children’s Services directorate of the council.

Our Youth Justice Service is a statutory multidisciplinary partnership, equipped to deal with the needs of the whole child. Youth Justice Work is governed and shaped

by a range of legislation and guidance specific to the youth justice sector (such as the National Standards for Youth Justice) or else applicable across the criminal justice sector (for example, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements guidance-MAPPA). The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) provides some funding to YOTs. It also monitors our performance and issues guidance regarding how things are to be done.

Funding for our service is set up as follows:

Total budget for the Partnership

£1,037,270.00

Partners name	Contribution Amount £
Neath Port Talbot	£580,140.00
Welsh Government	£193,490.00
Police and Crime Commissioner	£35,800.00
YJB	£218,560.00
Probation	£5,000.00
Health	£4,280.00
Total	£1,037,270.00

Neath Port Talbot is geographically situated in South Wales and includes two towns: Port Talbot, which is on the coast and industrialised, and Neath, which is inland and a Welsh valleys community. According to the latest 2021 census, the population consists of approximately 141,931 people. The population is predominantly white (97%), with non-white minorities representing the remaining 3% of the population. English is spoken as the main language by 98.6% of people and the proportion of people who can speak Welsh is 22 per cent, according to the 2021 annual population survey. The most recent published figure shows that the number of first-time entrants in Neath Port Talbot reduced between October 21- September 22. The service has calculated for the 12-month period covering 2022/23, the number of first-time entrants remains consistent with previous years. The latest

published figure puts Neath Port Talbot below the average rate per 100,000 for Wales.

Although the percentage of the YJS cohort who reoffend has reduced it continues to be one of the highest in Wales and the highest of the YOT family. During 2022/23, Neath Port Talbot had one custodial sentence. The performance reports presented to the management board have led to specific requests for themed audits. These have included child sexual exploitation, gender data regarding boys and girls, violence against the person, accommodation and homelessness.

Our established early intervention and prevention model deployed within both Children Services and YJS means that support can now be delivered at the earliest prevention stages, or equally, sustained beyond the young person's Court Order, with the overarching aim to support young people to achieve their potential and to prepare them to make a successful transition to adult and working life. The analysis of the prevention data is provided to the Youth Justice Management Board and Welsh government using qualitative narratives to support the quantitative data for funding evidence. There is a full analysis of the prevention data later in this plan on page 37.

Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service is further required to meet the statutory requirements for Youth Justice including National Standards and National inspection regimes, overseen by the Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice. It must continually seek to balance the risks and vulnerabilities of young people with the risk that this poses to the public and wider communities, while managing the overall ambition of improving outcomes for young offenders, their families, victims of crime and communities. National standards are commented on in a separate section later in the report. The plan outlines priorities of the service and needs of the cohort and also links to innovative practice and the new intervention centre.

6 Child First

The Youth Justice Board's (YJB) vision is of a Child First youth justice system, is to prioritise the best interests of children, recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. The YJB is actively working with other organisations across the sector to develop a shared understanding of the benefits of the Child First approach. However, there is much that can be done within the existing system within our local NPT arrangements and this plan reflects our activity in working to achieve this.

Therefore:

- NPT YJS will ensure that all work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.
- NPT YJS will promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims.
- NPT YJS will ensure that all work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.
- We encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion via collaboration with parents' carers and multiagency partners.
- We are part of NPT Children services prioritising outcome focused interventions giving children and their families agency in the key decision made with them.
- This outcome focused approach involves a process of 'doing with, not doing to' young people, hearing their voices, and giving them voice, choice, and control of areas of their lives alongside structure and support within the realms of the Youth Justice Service.
- This service will always view the child as a child/ young person first and a young person involved in offending behaviour second.

7 Trauma informed Practice

- Attempting to address children's offending behaviour without understanding the context of trauma can result in unsuccessful and sometimes detrimental interventions. We know that adversity affects children's brain development and that experiencing trauma in a child's early years or in utero is linked to antisocial behaviour and offending. Additionally, the impairment of neuro-cognitive development may make it difficult for these children to understand and comply with criminal justice interventions and to comprehend the consequences of breach for example. Failure to take account of experiences of trauma and its impact upon child development and emotional well-being will limit the potential benefits of the Youth Justice Service's intervention (Beyond Youth Custody, 2016).

- All practitioners in NPT YJS are Trauma informed trained and aware of the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences on young people (as described below.)
- All new entrants into the service will also be offered trauma informed training and training in the trauma recovery model, (Mathews and Scouse 2017)
- NPT YJS is committed to the development of a Trauma Informed Approach across the service and investment in training is key to supporting this. Over the last few years, the service has taken forward Relationship Based Practice that is underpinned by the Trauma Recovery Model, which assists practitioners to guide young people through change.
- The whole workforce has undertaken the three-day Trauma Recovery Model training and embedded the principles of this model within our everyday practice, ensuring that assessments put young people's behaviour in context identifying and recognising the impact of trauma and ACEs as well as stress reactions. Successful intervention planning hinges on understanding the underlying reasons why the young person offended in order to consider how best to support the development of a range of skills, bolster or establish protective factors and address their needs and risks; such planning considers how to increase safety and how to avoid reinforcing trauma.
- The way we work is sequenced and structured and this is central to trauma-informed approaches as is the young person's active participation and acceptance of support; ensuring the support offered is not beyond their skills and developmental capacity and that the right person(s) is involved in supporting the young person. Ensuring the workforce have access to support systems and management oversight to minimise the risks and effects of vicarious trauma is also central in our work to support young people.
- All three workers funded by the PCC Grant are all trained in the trauma informed approaches and will form part of the collective response over the next year to embed trauma informed practice and enhanced case management in practice. Additional to this, they are all heavily involved in the contextual safeguarding approaches embedded across the local authority in response to Harm outside of the Family Home and in particular, exploitation (CSE, CCE, HSB).

- The ECM (Enhanced Casework Management) model is available in the service, to support trauma-informed practice, which is a psychology led, multi-agency approach for young people with complex needs and risks, enabling effective tailoring and sequencing of interventions, recognising the trauma and adverse events children have experienced. In order to support this, NPT YJS have identified a number of trauma champions in the team that will support the facilitation of the case management formulations and they have attended YJB workshops that support them in ensuring that moving forward over the next year, that as a service we continue to respond and develop by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practice.

8 The child's voice

In Youth Justice and indeed in social work generally, the challenge of establishing the 'voice of the child or young person' is often present when considering multi-agency working because of competing organisational agendas and priorities. Thematic evidence regarding young people's voices (Smeaton, 2013, Gilligan, 2016, and Hallett, 2017) advocated that when hearing the voice of young people and acknowledging their agentic position, communication with young people should be pivotal to multi-agency or multi-disciplinary practitioners. In NPT, young people's voices are integral to everything we do and set out to achieve.

This is achieved and will be further developed by:

- Our local authority participation officer has regular access to the resource centre (Base 15) and works alongside the YJS lead for participation.
- Children/young people attend or make representation at every management board meeting, and they were involved in a consultation exercise with the engagement and participation officer to rename the resource centre.
- YJS children are involved in the majority of participation programmes and a participation presentation has been given to the management board.
- As part of the HMIP last inspection process, children were invited to participate in a text survey, and offered the opportunity to speak to a HMIP inspector to give their feedback.

- Four children returned the text survey, with three rating the YJS as eight or more out of 10 (with 10 being 'fantastic').
- Inspectors spoke to seven children and one parent.
- They all felt that their workers had the right skills to do the work and had been able to access the right services and support to help them stay out of trouble.
- When asked what was one thing that they liked best about the YJS, one young person said:

"Their kindness and they try to get you involved in things."

Another young person said:

"It's helped having someone to talk to and they have helped me stay out of trouble. I have listened to the advice they have given me."

Participation for NPT YJS means involving and engaging our young person as a partner in the youth justice and safeguarding process, thereby reducing the risk of further offending behaviours, promoting young people being removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system. It is fair to say that, young people often feel that professionals cannot always balance their need for protection and guidance with their right to a voice and make agentic choices about their live, and there will be variance and potential tension between hearing young people and previous risk-based approaches. Talking to our young people, the following themes have emerged over the last 12 months via case work, our participation officer's work, meetings, the inspection survey and simply walking and talking with them through the pandemic.

- Our young people do not want to be talked at or about; they want to be seen, heard, believed, and respected.
- When blamed, held responsible, criminalised, or judged negatively by their behaviours, their relationships with multi-agency professionals are jeopardised evoking mistrust, and creating barriers to being heard.

- Conversely, when young people feel that that they have some agency in decision-making and participated in decisions about their lives, they considered this as essential to a successful safeguarding or risk management plan as multi-agency collaboration (Davies 2022)

8a Participation

- Engaging young people in decision making and accepting responsibilities for their actions and future is critical to developing skills as constructive members of their community; Article 12 of the UNCRC (**United Nations Convention for the rights of the Child**) establishes the right of young people to participate where decisions are being made that affect their future. Young people attend or make representation at every management board. The LA participation officer has very strong links with the YJS and brings most of his groups from the LA to access the facilities at the resource centre. The participation officer includes the YJS cohort in the invitations for activities and participation events, independent living skills and our young people are involved in the majority of participation programmes. Eventually we will want our young people (with the help of the participation officer and YJS participation lead) to represent the whole area of service delivery i.e. Pre-court, post court and exit planning.
- These are some of the quotes from young people involved in our services led by the participation officer and involving YJ staff and young people highlighting the work and interventions that are on-going.
- **Independent Life skills quotes**
- "I've really enjoyed learning to cook, budget meals and feel confident cooking these by myself".
- **LOVE – Let Our Voices Explode** is a young person's action group in Hillside Children's Secure Home. The group attend management meetings and are regularly consulted on regarding decisions made at Hillside. They have played a vital role in decorating the homes and developing the new menu. We have young people placed at Hillside who have contributed to this group
- **Hope – Girls' Rights Group** have been campaigning for safer spaces for girls and women. Girls receiving support from the YJS have played a pivotal role in

organising activities and awareness events to highlight sexual harassment. This has included developing a workshop to raise awareness of the consequences of sexual harassment and delivered to 120 boys in NPT along with self-defence classes for girls and outdoor activity events to build confidence. The project worked in collaboration with SWP, Children's Rights Unit and Plan UK. Their work made national news on BBC Wales.

- **Hope member quote:**

"Hope means everything to me. We are like one big family where I get a voice and people listen."

- **Language:** We Use consultation

YJS young people have been engaging in this consultation to ensure all jargon and corporate language is removed from documents to make them child and young person friendly.

- **Care experienced & Youth justice experienced** YP quote:

"I hate seeing 'in care' it makes me feel like I'm in an old people's home".

- The participation officer carries out exit interviews with all young people leaving the service. I have included an example here.



9 Governance, Leadership, and Partnership arrangements

- The YJS (EIP) is an integral part of children services and as such is accountable to the Head of Children Services, Keri Warren and the Director of Social Services and Housing, Andrew Jarrett. It is also accountable to the YJB and the NPT YJS Management Board also chaired by Andrew Jarrett.
- NPT YJS has an effective local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high quality, personalised and responsive service for all children as set out earlier in the plan.

- Our NPT Youth Justice Service has effectively moved through two of the HMIP inspectorate’s ratings boundaries within a short space of time and in a pandemic, this has been recognised and commended.
- Over the last year, the YJB has introduced a new process and made the decision to grade all submitted Youth Justice Plans, which form the basis of the allocation of grant received into service from the YJB.
- The YJB presented us with a new template in which to complete the plan (this template has been used to set out the current 2023/2024).
- NPT Committee ratified our Youth Justice (EIP) plan last September (2022).
- The overall grade for last year’s plan was **Good**, which supports the findings of the previous inspection.
- This evidenced that the chair of the management board, the wider directorate and our multiagency partners have taken the findings from the last inspection seriously and prioritised setting up a new Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service, securing the relevant resources including a children’s resource centre, required for children known to the service or any new entrants and early prevention cases, and have also developed effective and sustainable performance management systems.
- This has been achieved with the engagement of staff and is testament to the effective governance and leadership arrangements that are now in place for the YJS. Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service
- The management board is chaired by the Neath Port Talbot Director of Social Services, Health and Housing, Andrew Jarrett who has been the chair since its inception in April 2019.
- Representatives with the right level of seniority attend the board and board members are fully immersed in the work of the YJS.
- The management board includes all statutory partners, as well as some non-statutory partners, such as the cabinet member for children’s services and a representative from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

- A representative from court is a board member but due to court commitments, it is difficult for them to attend board meetings. Therefore, the YJS principal officer and the operational manager meet with court representatives on a regular basis and a service level agreement is in place.
- New board members receive an induction into their role from the principal officer along with an induction pack, which includes an outline of the function of the board and an explanation of the data sets used.
- The YJB National Practice Guidance for England and Wales, (published December 2021) contains the government pathway written by the operational manager for NPT. This notes that the service's management board governance pathway and its induction pack are good practice guides, which are accessed by all Youth Justice Services across the UK.
- There has been a focus on developing the board so that all members understand their role and responsibilities. This has included several board development days, which have helped to establish working links with the staff team and supported the board
- This has increased the board members knowledge of the work of the YJS. As the board has developed, the development days now focus on scrutinising specific areas of practice.
- The principal officer provides and will continue to provide a management board briefing paper at each board meeting. This includes updates on service and action plans and service area updates, for example, staffing, courts, and actions arising from the last board.
- A safeguarding report is produced for the board on a quarterly basis and includes information on a range of safeguarding data, including referrals to social services, information regarding contextual risk and triangulation meetings, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences, Prevent (Channel), and complaints and compliments.
- Performance reports are presented at board meetings at different points throughout the year, including six-monthly reports, a yearly profile of the YJS cohort and year-on-year comparisons.
- The number of looked after children on an out-of-court disposal or a court order is in line with the number of looked after children generally in the

Neath Port Talbot area. Work is ongoing nationally to reduce the criminalisation of young people in the looked after system.

- As you are no doubt aware, in March 2022, WG published an All Wales Protocol on reducing the criminalisation of care experienced children and young adults. The Protocol sets out best practice for avoiding criminalisation of this over-represented group whenever possible and is intended to provide a common framework for all professionals working with and supporting care experienced children and young adults (up to the age of 25 years).
- In order to support the implementation of the Protocol, the Welsh Government's Steering Group for Reducing the Criminalisation of Care Experienced Children and Young Adults has commissioned a team to develop a practical multi-agency Toolkit and Training Pack for practitioners.
- There are several residential homes locally and the service regularly manages children from other local authorities who have been placed in the area. This has an impact on local resources and is and will continue to be continuously monitored.
- The looked after children protocol has recently been reviewed and the YJS is promoting it to ensure that the arrangements with children's homes and the police do not result in children being unnecessarily criminalised.
- The management board continues to promote constructive professional challenge and in the last 12 month achieved positive improvements and resulted in an improved offer of provision for CAMHS and Probations services for the YJS.
- Our education worker is now in post and we have made intervention workers permanent.
- We have also recently gone to advert for a pilot IOM (integrated offender manager) practice support worker with funding from probation until March.
- The Chair has also escalated to members of the judiciary the board's concerns about the delays in court procedures for children, highlighting the impact delays can have on the child's emotional and mental health and wellbeing.

- There are robust processes in place for the board to hear the views of children. This has been achieved via multi-modal means including through the children attending board meetings or through video recordings, and WhatsApp messages, which are shared at board meetings.
- There has been a children's rep at the board meetings previously, but he has now moved through our service, we are now considering who can take that role going forward and we are liaising with the participation officer as there may be other young people across children's service who could undertake this role.
- Wider issues that impact on offending behaviour and young people on the periphery of offending are prominent on the wider agendas of other key strategic groups within Neath Port Talbot. The Youth Justice profile has been raised across the directorate, and throughout the strategic partnership boards.
- These include the Children and Adult regional Safeguarding Boards, The Corporate Safeguarding board, The Community safety partnership, Channel Panel, Better Futures Partnership, and the Integrated Offender Management group.
- The YJS Principal Officer has held various senior management roles within Neath Port Talbot, and Welsh Government and over 22 years of senior management and leadership experience and led the disaggregation of the YJS in April 2019. Currently the principal officer is the chair of the Better Futures Partnership, Vice chair of the HWB Doeth partnership (the academic arm of the YJB), Chair of the Youth Homelessness panel, Chair of the crisis bed move on panel, and Chair of Community Mapping and Risk Profiling meeting.
- The Operational Manager has worked for the YJS since 2008 as a social worker and then as a senior practitioner before becoming the Operational Manager. The operational manager represents NPT YJS on all the above meetings/partnerships and is a key player in Out of court disposal meetings, and the meetings with the magistrates and court users. Both officers are accredited child practice reviewers.

- There is a leadership team within the YJS comprising the Principal Officer, Operational Manager, Senior Practitioners, Consultant Social Worker, Information Manager and Business Manager. The leadership team are all knowledgeable about youth justice and work well together to support the team.
- The Principal Officer and the operational manager attend the management board, and other staff members attend to present on specific pieces of work. There is a two-way constructive and supportive relationship between the board and the YJS staff.
- Communication from the board is shared at management and team meetings and board members attend team meetings.
- The operational manager also writes a very successful and acclaimed newsletter for the board so that members are kept updated on YJS issues. There is also a junior newsletter aimed at, and contributed to by young people who use the service. I have included examples of the newsletters [here](#).



YJEIS MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER Octobe

- It important that the staff are updated about the strategic intent of the board and that the board is updated about the operational matters in Youth Justice. Work is ongoing to facilitate this.
- Leadership and Governance was rated as outstanding in the recent HMIP inspection and we will strive to maintain and build on this excellent standard.
- In the analysis and grading of last year's plan the YJB commented that: *'There has been lots of work done on improving governance arrangements and engagement of board resulting in an Outstanding rating in HMIP inspection'*.

10 Resources and Services

The Covid-19 pandemic and related service recovery plans has meant that the YJS has now entered the phase of hybrid working between home and office working. There is now extensive face-to-face working at the centre and in the community, with flexibility to work at home or at evenings and weekends as and when the needs of the service dictate. Assessments, interventions, and visits to children have been

completed creatively and all vulnerable children continue to be monitored in collaboration with our partner agencies. We are mindful of the neuro divergent cohort of young people and those who have communication difficulties. All young people entering the YJS have access to a speech and language assessment. (Neurodiversity and communication are commented on later in the plan p34)

The resource centre, repurposed and refurbished in 2021 is an excellent facility. It has now been renamed following consultation with our young people and participation officer as Base 15. It is purposely designed for our young people and has facilities that we have never had in NPT before including, outside gym equipment, a hairdressing salon, (with vocational course being run) and a new bike maintenance container. There is enough room to develop an allotment, flower and vegetable beds and a working shed. There is a kitchen, laundry, and shower room facilities. Alongside these facilities, there is a well-equipped IT suite, a well-being room, conference facilities, training and sessional and intervention room, administration facilities.

Young people in the participation groups have undertaken graffiti projects, and a music studio for recording and mixing is being developed following funding from SWP to purchase the instruments and equipment. This is very much a centre for young people involving young people. It is also used by young people and officers in the wider directorate and as such has become a collective resource for NPT.

We have purchased other resources to support interventions including I- pads for remote working with young people, and we have restarted female focused programmes to continue supporting young females involved in or on the cusp of offending or antisocial behaviours.

The K9 project which focusses on exploitation continues to go from strength to strength and is accredited and includes sessions on knife crime, county lines and basic first aid (see below page 27).

The YJS police officer has recently delivered Knife crime and violent crime assemblies to all secondary schools in NPT these have been very positively received and have resulted in excellent feedback. Delivery of these workshops was supported by wider Police and YJS colleagues and a victim of knife crime.

'I would like to thank you for the five assemblies which you presented to all year groups on Tuesday 14th March. The delivery was excellent, age

appropriate and the message about knife crime and the long-term impact of a poor decision was extremely powerful. All our pupils were fully engaged, and a large number of pupils has spoken to me at length about the message of the assembly. Thank you and I hope we can work together in the future'.

Stephen Crowson, Assistant Headteacher Dwr Y Felin Comprehensive School

10b Distribution of Resources/Posts

In 2023/24, part of the funding provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner's department would be utilised to partial fund the YJS Youth Justice Worker post to support the ongoing provision of the above support. Moving forward post pandemic as services open up, the YJS Youth Justice Worker will work closely in partnership with other agencies to improve access to services and outcomes for young people; some of these partnerships including working with Swansea Targeted Kicks, St Giles Trust, and Team Around the Family.

The remaining funding would be used to sustain the part funding of the two Ad-feriad substance misuse workers that sit within the YJS. Both these workers, work across the full remit of the service, working with young people in contact with service via prevention (including anti-social behaviour), out-of-court disposals and Court Orders. All young people in NPT YJS assessed as requiring input regarding their substance misuse, receive prompt access to further assessment and targeted intervention via the substance misuse workers. At the height of the pandemic and beyond, this support was still accessible to all young people, although practice adapted to include virtual engagement where necessary; however, as things have opened back up, face-to-face engagement has resumed. All young people have and will continue to receive one-to-one support, which would include elements of harm reduction advice as well as information sessions which would be tailored to the individual's identified substance used. All young people will receive relapse prevention work to some degree, either throughout the intervention or towards the end. Parent/ carer support and advice has also been offered to all families.

10 c. Interventions

On setting up the new Youth Justice Service, the partnership completed a gap analysis to review the resources. As a result, partners developed a better understanding of local youth justice issues and the specific needs of the children known to the service. This included developing exploitation clinics with Better Futures, who provide consultation to practitioners for cases involving exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour.

The YJS has a strong partnership with children's services, and there are three trained child practice reviewers within the service. A YJS multi-agency risk review meeting is convened if a child is assessed as high risk for safety and wellbeing and/or risk of harm to others. The meeting is chaired by a senior practitioner and all staff involved with the case will attend, including any partner agencies working with the child.

There is also a strategic contextual risk panel and an operational multi-agency mapping and community risk profiling meeting. These focus on mapping children in communities and looking at potential areas where exploitation may be happening, the type of exploitation and how it can be disrupted. In addition, the YJS has set up monthly exploitation clinics with Better Futures (a project run by Barnardo's), which provides individual consultation slots for practitioners with any of their cases involving child exploitation, child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour and child sexual abuse.

NPT YJS has access to a wide range of group work and one-to-one programmes to meet the diverse needs of young people accessing our service. Over the last two years, (like everyone) we have had to modify our approach and responses because of COVID 19 but as restrictions have lifted it is wonderful to see staff and young people accessing and utilising the centre and our interventions on a daily basis.

Over the next year, the continuing analysis of the needs of young people accessing NPT YJS alongside the recording of unmet need within the Pathways and Planning section of Asset Plus, will support the service in ensuring we have access to the right interventions to support young people to make better choices and behavioural changes. We are now running or developing the following interventions.

[The K9 project \(in collaboration with South Wales Police\)](#)

This is a 3-day group programme delivered alongside Police that aims to engage, discuss and educate young people on the dangers and risks associated

with knife crime, county lines, and substance misuse. The two substance misuse workers are heavily involved in the delivery of sessions on this project given the focus on awareness raising around the risks associated with substance misuse, county lines and dealing. Outside of the formal delivery of work, a key element of this project is about building trust and respect between professionals and the young people, creating an opportunity to understand the issues and concerns as seen by the young people enabling us to respond to them in the most appropriate way. This project is run at several points throughout the year and mainly during school holidays; both substance misuse workers are involved in the delivery of all the programmes scheduled.

Perfectly Imperfect Girls Programme

The YJS in conjunction with multi-agency partners have developed a targeted girl's group programme that is delivered over a day; the content of the group work is adaptable and can be delivered to both a younger (10-14) and older (14-17) audience. The development of this group by YJS who reached out to partners for support was in response to the growing cohort of young females coming into contact with the YJS and there were concerns in relation to their exploitation both criminally and sexually within the local community as well as concerns in relation to low level anti-social behaviour. Over the course of the programme, the young females are supported to explore a range of topics including antisocial behaviour, community safety and how the police can support young people; substance misuse awareness; exploration of support in school and post 16 education; mental health advice and signposting; sexual health support and exploitation. At the end of the programme, there is an organised pampering session that involves the girls having their hair and nails done as well as a lesson on how to apply false eyelashes; this was arranged in consultation with the girls who were also supported to name the project for future delivery. Distance travelled tools have been utilised to measure outcomes across the project as well as gain general feedback from all three groups that have run to date; the results of which were really positive and encouraging. The feedback was scoring their knowledge and understanding of the topics covered before and after the event and there were improvements in all areas with the biggest increases reported around mental health and exploitation. Also 100% of the girls said they would recommend this for other young people and when asked

what were the best parts of the day some of the comments received were "everything" and the "police"; the latter comment is excellent as one of the aims of the project was to break down barriers between young people and professionals, in particular the police. Additional feedback from a young person is provided as follows "I was nervous at first because I didn't know anyone. I gave it a go and it was a good day in the end. I liked being part of a group that had similar experiences to me and they knew what it was like to be arrested. I was able to talk about what happened to me and not feel judged because they got it".

Taking this forward into future delivery, distance travelled tools will be extended to include the measure of softer outcomes as well as outcomes related to knowledge and insight more broadly.

Music Project

Weekly music sessions have been commissioned by the Youth Justice Service since the end of September 2022 and take place at Base 15. At the end of the last financial year, the YJS was successful in applying for a financial bid via South Wales Police to support the purchasing of a range of musical equipment, with the agreement that the YJS would fund the provision of a tutor. A music tutor is now in place and is able to offer young people bilingual one-to-one music lessons, singing and song-writing lessons to support them in expressing themselves emotionally. There is also the option of organising song-writing and performance workshops in the future. We have had 8 young people referred into the project since it started and currently have 4 young people engaged. It is positive to note that one young person who has finished their involvement with YJS, has been supported to continue to access the music tutor privately, with an arrangement in place that the music tutor attends his home every Friday for an hour on the back of his sessions in the YJS office; this offers this young person who has neurological difficulties a continuation in work and allows him to continue to learn and develop his skills on the acoustic guitar. The current 4 accessing the music project include 2 males and 1 female. The female young person has been supported to access the project as she wanted to learn the guitar and it was a way of supporting her to express herself emotionally; it is positive to note, that she has also been gifted a guitar by the music tutor who has donations of instruments for gifting to allow her to practice outside of the

lessons. One of the young males attending the music project, has been attending as part of his resettlement and reintegration back into the community from custody; the young person is a talented musician and is being supported by the tutor to write and produce his own lyrics. The young people attending the music project are going to be involved in supporting the redesign of the music room and the design and creation of a music mural on one of the walls in the room. In general, young people accessing the music project are able to access 1 to 1.5 hours per lesson over a period of 10 weeks, at which point the intervention will be reviewed. Since the inception of the project, in a total of 87 hours of music lessons have been delivered. This provision will be available ongoing to young people accessing YJS support.

Hairdressing and Barbering (vocational qualification)

NPT YJS has continued to commission hairdressing courses from NPT Skills & Training department over the last 12 months. Five units have been delivered over the last 12 months with 5 young girls consistently attending all units with additional young people attending specific units. Whilst the young people have gained qualifications, they have also improved their softer skills in terms of teamwork, building and maintaining relationships with peers etc. This provision will be available ongoing to young people accessing YJS support.

Bike maintenance

Two members of the team, a social worker and a substance misuse worker have undertaken training that supports them both to teach basic bike maintenance to others. To this end, bike maintenance skills sessions will be offered within the YJS moving forward. NPT YJS have linked up with the NPT Road Safety Department as part of this project and we will be offering Road Safety Levels 1, 2 & 3 to all young people who engage to promote their safety whilst using a bike on the roads.

1. Independent living skills
2. Cookery
3. ASDAN
4. English and Maths tuition and a full education strategy is being developed for young people who are NEET (Not in Education Employment, or training) or

young people excluded from their current provision. We have a full time education worker in situ and maintain our strong links with Neath College and the Education Wellbeing Team.

5. The YJS Principal Officer is also leading on Youth homelessness and going forward we are linking in with housing and adult services and our homelessness provision in NPT to find sustainable solutions to homelessness for some of our most vulnerable YJS young people. Youth Justice Experienced Young people in crisis are referred for crisis beds and can also be considered for supported lodgings with our commissioned providers.
6. To support sustainable solutions going forward, we have applied and had monies agreed for a life skills pod to be situated in the grounds of the resource centre to begin specific programmes regarding independent living, budgeting and transitioning into adulthood. This will be a project aimed at Care leavers and YJS young people to also focus on the national agenda of reducing the criminalisation of care leavers.

Alongside this, we can access St Giles Trust for County Lines intervention and Fearless (run group work around county-lines, knife crime, consequences etc.) St Giles Trust has its own staff trained to deliver the Non-Violent Resistance programme.

7. The NPT YJS have also commissioned and trained our own equine assisted trainer for equine assisted learning. This is a specific area of interest for our senior practitioner who has developed this service within the YJS. This has been one of the most successful interventions to date.
8. This is a first for any YJS in Wales and we are tremendously excited about this resource. This programme has seen fantastic results and was highlighted alongside K9 as excellent examples of innovative practice by the HMIP inspectorate.
9. This provision began in July 2021, and consists of 3x8 week programmes where young people will work with horses and trainers to address issues like trust, emotional response and emotional intelligence.

Equine Assisted Learning

(EAL) is a form of experiential learning that includes horses and a facilitator working together with a person to create positive change. EAL often includes a number of beneficial equine activities such as observing, handling, grooming,

groundwork, and structured challenging exercises focused on the young person's needs and goals. EFL provides unique non-verbal opportunities for young people to enhance self-awareness recognize maladaptive behaviours and identify negative feelings. Equine-assisted therapy/learning allows young people, and people of all ages, to work on issues such as assertiveness; confidence; developing and maintaining respectful relationships; emotional awareness; empathy; impulse control; problem-solving skills; social skills; trust in others and trust in self.

Published Research including Stock (2016) and Wilson (2020) highlight that this approach has had positive results for people with social difficulties and mental health needs that can result in significant changes in cognition, mood, judgment, insight, perception, social skills, communication, behaviour, and learning.

There is growing evidence to show that the use of natural interventions for individuals involved in or at-risk of involvement in crime can foster behaviour change by addressing many of the issues directly related to their criminal activity and helping them to avoid and overcome these problems (Hine et al. 2008; Peacock et al. 2008; Pretty et al. 2009). For individuals who have been victims of crime, interactions and experiences with nature can help them to deal with the trauma that they have experienced and re-integrate them into society (Hine et al. 2009b).

Feedback from the young people who have attended the programme include:

- Young people often report to feeling happier and calmer after leaving sessions, this has had a positive impact on their ability to relax and induced better sleep.
- Parents/carers and schools have noticed an improvement in mood and concentration levels in young people following sessions.
- During one session a young person was able to identify a trigger to flashbacks of physical abuse which were occurring at school, this was shared with school and the young person said the flashbacks had reduced as a result.
- Young people have said that their confidence and self-esteem have improved since working with the horses, this has helped them in developing friendships and improve relationships with parents/carers.

- Others have reported that their communication skills have improved and that they find it easier to express their feelings and ask for support since attending the programme.
- One young person attended just after attempting suicide, he made an incredible connection with one of the horses, and he said “the horse just knew that I needed a friend”. His mental health considerably improved during the course of the programme.
- An increasing number of children recently have said that CAMHS have suggested EAL to them either following their care and treatment or if they don’t meet the criteria for their service. A number of children who have accessed both services report that our non-talking therapy approach works better for them.
- We have also supported parents and children whose relationship was at risk of breaking down. Spending time together with the horses, have given them a safe space to talk, share a common interest and work at strengthening their relationship in a non-confrontational way.

11 Education, Employment and Training: 2023/24

In the last Youth Justice plan we recognised that there was work to be done to drive our education agenda forward, reduce exclusions and to build on the existing links that we have with schools’ colleges and further education. We have now employed a very proactive full time education training and employment worker who is driving this agenda forward alongside the Operational manager.

In NPT we have one Youth Justice ETE post which is aimed to provide ongoing support for these young people in the above cohorts. Our ETE (**Education Training and Employment**) practitioner will engage with the Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator, the NEETS Multi Agency Group and the Engagement Provider Support group, ASD (**Autistic Spectrum Disorder see also below section on additional learning needs p34**) Steering Group. The operational manager attends the Youth Engagement Strategy Group and has had to pick up all of the ETE work in the absence of a practitioner for the past two years alongside her primary roles of the operational manager. Hopefully we have now remedied this and this addressed previous concerns raised by the inspectorate. The Operational manager

meets with Pupil Parent support and the Senior Wellbeing Manager every two months to discuss individual cases.

We recognise that there is (catch- up) work to be done to drive our education work forward, reduce exclusions and to build on the existing links that we have with schools' colleges and further education.

The YJS has strong links with Hillside Secure Children's Home Neath College, we aim to try and develop an education resource facility as part of the planned resource centre. This will mean programmes of education with accreditation can be offered as an alternative to exclusion for specific periods of time, alongside educational staff for our young people. We are trying to develop the sports hall provision at Hillside as our education worker is a qualified fitness instructor. This will incorporate a gym and a climbing wall and will enable Hillside young people and our YJS young people to work collaboratively on sports projects.

12 [Additional learning needs /Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Neurodiversity.](#)

As a Youth Justice Service, we are very aware that young people with Additional Learning Needs, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Neurodiversity or speech and language/ communication difficulties are at higher risk of being drawn into the criminal Justice system. There are many reasons for this, and they are covered in the plan, but this is what is on offer in the YJS to ensure inclusion and support, whilst managing the holistic needs of the young people wherever possible.

- Hairdressing – City & Guilds
- CSCS card
- Equine Assisted Learning
- Bike Maintenance Project
- Independent Living Skills
- Music Project
- Martial Arts taster sessions
- Motorbike Maintenance Project – outsourced.
- ASDAN
 - Vocational tasters
 - Personal and social skills
 - Informal support and advice.
 - Core subjects

Actions taken by YJS staff include:

- Ensure that YP with additional learning needs is supported at every stage of the process.
 - At the Police station – Appropriate Adult role and responsibility would include sharing concerns /background information if YP is known including SLCN report.
 - At Court – prehearing visits & on the day support
 - Bail support
- The YJS Diverts away from the formal systems where we can.
- Working with schools to identify YP at an early stage to offer support and avoid exclusions as well as the potential to come into contact with the criminal justice system.
- Assessments consider the impact of the ALN and then plan interventions to support the YP taking this into account.
- Feed into Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- Support YP's
 - Social engagement
 - Academic support
 - Support to express themselves.
- Referral to specialist services for young people with ASD – assessment and intervention for YP and family
- Purchased ELSA resources.
- Full time education worker in post
 - Provides support around access to pre-16 education.
 - Provides support around access to pre-16 provisions.
 - Provides direct intervention in relation to ETE.

Speech and Language therapist's role supports:

- Full speech and language assessment looking into understanding, expressive language and social language.
- Attendance at meetings
- Liaison with school and YJS education worker
- Report writing following assessment (standard report and an easy read visual version for YP)

- Talking Mats strengths and needs assessment (to ensure YP's voice is a part of order/intervention)
- Intervention with YP following assessment – based on assessment results and what they are 'bothered' about
- Adapting resources – making more visual to aid understanding and retention
- Putting programmes together for schools and YJS staff to complete with YP
- Developing resources as requested by case managers/prevention workers
- Onward referrals
 - ASD – discussion with school for ASD ND Pathway referral – will occasionally do this in conjunction with the school if any barriers are identified.
 - Integrated Autism Service (IAS) if YP is 17:06 years or over.
 - Referral to speech and language youth club via Early Intervention & Prevention (EIP) panel where appropriate
- Since having money from the Turn Around Initiative we have also been able to commission Outside with positive results, embedded here are the spectrum outcome measuring tools.

This is the feedback from the young person Received from the Outside co-ordinator.

'J. also wanted me to pass on his thanks to Chris (social worker) He said that Chris and the YJS have been 'absolutely amazing' and the support he had went 'over and above'. He said both he and his parents have said that they don't know where they would be if it wasn't for the YjS support and linking them in with Outside'



Spectrum Star
Outcome Measuring 1



Spectrum Star
Outcome Measuring 1

12 Restorative justice

Restorative justice approaches and opportunities for victims of youth crime will continue to be a focus in 2023/24 Our victim worker was placed within an educational team for two days per week developing and delivering the Restorative Justice programme and training, this was a relatively new and innovative development and enhanced our links with the well-being and education teams. This was agreed

with both the director and assistant director of education with whom we have very good links, it worked well and we will be providing refresher training as and when needed.

All victims of youth crime are invited to participate in the criminal justice process in accordance with the Victim Code. This includes:

- 1) A letter of apology or explanation from the young person
- 2) Attending a Referral Order Panel Meeting where the victim can meet the young person and explain the impact their offending has had on them
- 3) A Restorative Justice Conference where the victim can meet the young person and explain the impact their offending has had on them
- 4) The victim of the offence having a say in what type of reparation they would like the young person to complete and can be indirect to benefit the local community and/or direct to the victim of the offence

There are enhanced entitlements as sent out in the Victims Code of Practice for victims in the following categories because they are more likely to require enhanced support and services through the criminal justice process. In the Neath Port Talbot YJS, the victim liaison officer will continue to liaise with the Youth Justice Service Police Officer to ascertain whether a victim should be considered under one of the following categories and has established links locally to fulfil these duties.

- 1) Victims of the most serious crime
- 2) Persistently targeted victims
- 3) Vulnerable or intimidated victims

NPT has a portfolio of reparation projects that are developed locally with partner agencies including housing providers, parks, schools, the environmental department, charities and local churches.

NPT has one Youth Justice Victim Liaison officer who facilitates restorative meetings and conferences and ensures the impact on victims is considered in young people's offending behaviour programmes. All victims of crime are consulted in relation to restorative options; however, engagement is voluntary and not all victims chose to engage in this process following initial consultation. The service has good

links with Victim Support including signposting and liaising with provision for supporting young victims.

Restorative principles are applied in Referral Order Panels. Referral Order Panel volunteers are recruited from local communities and receive restorative justice training as part of the programme.

NPT offers all young people engaging in restorative justice the opportunity to complete an Agored Cymru unit called Restorative Justice (EC61CY002) Level 1 (credit value 1).

13 Progress against the last Youth Justice plan

The HMIPP inspection report was published on 12 May 2022, it followed the JICPA inspection report September 2022 and the Governance Pathway for good practice in the YJB national guidance December 2021.

These three publications are testament to the progress NPT YJS has made in relation to their Youth Justice plan and within the disaggregated service generally.

We have worked to a post inspection action plan since the last 2018 inspection, and this has now been replaced with the post inspection action plan 2022.

The YJB have introduced an analysis and grading system for all Youth Justice plans and the analysis and grade was Good. I have addressed the areas of any omissions or more information needed in the relevant parts of this year's plan

I have included the grading analysis for reference on page 43 of this plan and highlighted where in this plan those issues are covered.

All actions and objectives were completed in the previous action plan and any rolling actions will be carried over into the new action plan for 2023.

The updated post service recovery plan and the inspection action plan (PIAP) are included on page 46.

The Chief Inspector of Probation Justin Russell commented on the progress of NPT YJS at the conclusion of the inspection.

'NPT Youth Justice Service have obtained an overall rating of good. It takes considerable effort to make such significant progress over the past few years. Especially through the pandemic, but Neath Port Talbot YJS has

***achieved it. In real terms this means reducing the likelihood of a child re-
turning to crime, and better the lives of children under their supervision
are working. '***

The inspectorate concluded that:

***'We have inspected and rated Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service
(YJS) across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational deliv-
ery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the
courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. Overall, Neath Port
Talbot YJS was rated as 'Good'. (May 2022)***

The inspection found an effective service, with strengths apparent across assess-
ment and service delivery for court orders. Assessing and planning for desistance
and safety and wellbeing in out-of-court disposals were also strong areas of prac-
tice. The YJS's arrangements for governance and leadership are rated 'Outstanding'
and its staffing, partnerships, and information and facilities are 'Good'.

Following this the Principal officer has attended accredited Peer review training and
is now an accredited peer reviewer, as part of the national peer review team she
will be undertaking her first Peer review in Flintshire in October. The chair of the
management board has suggested to board that NPT may wish to be considered for
a peer review to ensure that any areas that need further development and scrutiny
in the service can be looked at.

The areas that needed further development in the last plan were

- a) Education, and the appointment of a full-time employment education and
training officer. (Section 11.)
- b) Profiling of the cohorts of children presented in the performance manage-
ment data.
- c) Development of a more robust OoC scrutiny panel and OoC process.
- d) Improved links with HWB Doeth

All the above have been achieved and are commented upon within the rele-
vant sections of this plan.

14 NPT performance management 2022/2023

22/23

Young People Offending

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
31	29	23	17

During the last financial year the number of young people receiving a substantive outcome for offending reduced and continued the trend over the last few years. The figures have been calculated from the year as a whole and not those that received an outcome in the 4 individual quarters combined as some individuals receive more than 1 outcome per year.

Offences

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
76	88	82	51

In previous years, whilst the number of young people offending reduced the number of offences remained relatively stable. However in 2022/23 the number of offences reduced considerably.

First Time Entrants

Oct 18– Sept 19	Oct 19– Sept 20	Oct 20– Sept 21	Oct 21 – Sept 22
18	13	18	12

The most recent published figure shows Neath Port Talbot FTE figure decreased following an increase in the previous 12 month period. A local calculation has been done for the 12 month period covering 22/23 and shows the number of FTE as being 13. This confirms the fairly consistent figure of FTE's that has been reported for Neath Port Talbot as the number for several 12 month rolling time periods all report less than 20.

The latest published figure puts Neath Port Talbot below the average rate per 100,000 for Wales.

Custody

	2019	2020	2021	2022

Number	1	4	0	1
Rate per 1000 NPT	0.08	0.32	0	0.08
Rate per 1000 Wales	0.18	0.08	0.07	0.08

During 2022, 1 young person from Neath Port Talbot received a custodial sentence.

Referral Orders

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
22	14	9	12

Following a reduction in the number of Referral Orders in recent years 2022/23 saw a 33% increase when compared with the previous year.

Youth Rehabilitation Orders

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
1	5	4	1

There was a continuing reduction in Youth Rehabilitation Orders from 2020/21 following a sharp increase in 2020.

Reoffending

As with First Time Entrants, Neath Port Talbot now has our own figures published on the YDS.

April 17-March 18					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Of fender	%Reoffending
29	15	82	5.47	2.83	51.7%

April 18-March 19					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Of fender	%Reoffending
45	23	107	4.65	2.38	51.1%

April 19-March 20					
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Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Of offender	%Reoffending
48	26	94	3.62	1.96	54.2%

April 20-March 21					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Of offender	%Reoffending
34	16	44	2.75	1.29	47.1%

Both the number in the cohort and the percentage of the cohort reoffending has decreased in the latest reported 12-month period, following an increase during the previous years.

The percentage of reoffending at around 47% continues to be one of the highest in Wales and the highest of the YOT family, however it has decreased from 54% which was last year's figure.

13 a. Out of court Disposal data.

Following the inspection last year, we reviewed the OoC disposal, Bureau, membership, and scrutiny of our out of court processes . We are now part of the regional scrutiny panel of all out of court disposals. The embedded report provides a Qualitative narrative combined with Quantitative analysis which is used to inform analysis over the next 12 months. We have revised and amended our bureau model and are moving away from the police led model which was the norm in all YJS. This extra layer of independent scrutiny is proving very valuable when profiling the young people coming to bureau.



Scrutiny Data Report
NPT (003).docx

13b. Disproportionality and Diversity.

- There will be a focus on continuing to tackle disproportionality and promoting diversity in all of the work we do in 23/24 and beyond, and on a wider directorate and multi-agency basis.

- Ongoing discussions about anti-racist practice and the impact of structural racism on young people and families is a standing agenda item at the Youth Crime Prevention Executive Board and Subgroup meetings. Board members regularly discuss disproportionality, possible factors which might be causing or affecting disproportionality and what could be done differently across the partnership to address this.
- To ensure that all performance reports provide a breakdown and analysis of diversity issues and the findings are used to drive forward improvements in practice. A report on disproportionality has already been provided to the board and these findings are used to consider practice and open up a dialogue with the team around diversity and disproportionality in respect of ethnicity and gender. This will be facilitated on an on going basis and will be factored into future reports.
- The OOCSD Scrutiny Panel provides oversight and scrutiny about decisions made at panel in relation to the outcomes given to young people; within this there is a clear focus on disproportionality and partner agencies are supported to flag up cases for scrutiny if necessary.
- The YJS are compiling data that allows us to analyse whether young people with the same offending profile have received disproportionate outcomes based on their age gender ethnicity etc. Similarly, this data is also analysed in respect of court outcomes to allow us to feed back to court and to challenge the decisions made.
- We use the analysis relating to diversity and disproportionality to enable conversations to take place that recognise the impact of the criminal justice system on girls, black and Asian and minority ethnic children and target provision accordingly.
- We will review all existing policies and practice documents and ensure that the service's approach to diversity and tackling disproportionality is embedded within each document.
- We will ensure that staff receive training to support their work with over represented groups and children with diversity needs. Cultural competence training has been commissioned via Vibe Youth and there are ongoing conversations

around exploring training that is available that will support staff to work with diversity and in particular to meet the needs of girls, black Asian and Minority and ethnic children who come into contact with the Youth Justice System.

- In conjunction with social services we are working establishing a data set to capture outcomes in relation to the socio economic status of the families that we are working with alongside capturing data in relation to where they reside in respect of local wards and where this ward sits on the Index of Multi- Deprivation: This will support the YJS and wider services to consider the needs of the young people and their families in service planning and delivery . This is particularly important in the current economic and energy crisis.

13 c Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice & Early Intervention Service

Prevention 22/23.



Prevention 2223 -
05.06.docx

14 National Standards

Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System – self assessment of baseline year

In 2021, we submitted our self-assessment of Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System. Because of the Covid situation it was recognised by the YJB that this was a complex task at that time.

The self-assessments provided to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) support them in monitoring our adherence to national standards in line with our statutory responsibilities. The Standards, are set by the Secretary of State for Justice, and aim to:

- Provide a framework for youth justice practice and ensure that quality is maintained.
- Encourage and support innovation and good practice to improve outcomes for children who commit crime.

- Ensure that every child lives a safe and crime-free life, and makes a positive contribution to society.
- Align with the YJB's child first principle.
- Assist the YJB and inspectorates when they assess whether youth justice services are meeting their statutory requirements.
- The YJB concluded the moderation of all the self-assessment submissions received from the sector.
- This exercise was undertaken using a team of internal and external senior managers.
- Our NPT moderation results concluded that our self-assessment of our national standards offers an evidenced reflection of the judgements against service standards. Therefore, the YJB did not carry out a validation visit to NPT.

As the year progresses, we will monitor our progress against our standards, and will be reflected in our QA work when auditing against the standards going forward.

14) Service improvement plan



Service Recovery
plan 2022-25.docx

This is a three-year plan; the new updates are in the process of being agreed across the directorate and will be ratified prior to the submission of the YJ Plan to the YJB

The post inspection action plan is included here and as you can see all actions have now been achieved.

Andrea Brazier Head of Youth Inspection HMIP writes of the action plan:

'The Post Inspection Plan is a thorough and detailed response to the recommendations, and I am sure that with the excellent leadership and the commitment of all YJS staff and partners it will be achievable. I have no doubt that progress is already being made.'



NPT YJS Action Plan
October 2022.docx

I have also embedded the previous grading report here.



grading report.odt

14 a Resettlement

- Strengthening the presence of the YJS at Neath Port Talbot Accommodation Panel and 16+ panel – this includes housing, accommodation providers, IRO's, homelessness prevention services

Consideration is being given Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Services (YJS) procedures and processes surrounding resettlement have been revised to reflect the underpinning principles of Constructive Resettlement as an evidence based approach to intervention as opposed to a planning/process led by series of meetings. This document has been written to ensure that protocols around the resettlement of detained children and young people are being managed effectively by Neath Port Talbot YJS and those services supporting the resettlement plan.

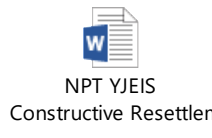
The information contained within this document should ensure that the evidence base surrounding resettlement is understood by all those working with detained children and young people, both on remand and serving sentences, and ensure the delivery of consistent and effective practice within the Youth Justice Sector.

This document should be read in conjunction with Neath Port Talbot YJS Resettlement procedures as well as the following documents:

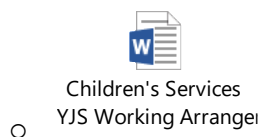
- **National Standards 2019**
 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957697/Standards_for_children_in_youth_justice_services_2019.doc.pdf

- **YJB Custody and Resettlement Case Management Guidance**

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/custody-and-resettlement/custody-and-resettlement-section-7-case-management-guidance>



- **YJS- Child & Family Service working protocol**



15 Challenges, risks, and issues

- Continued increase in work demands not accompanied by increased revenue, leading to non-delivery of performance, reduced staff morale, lack of confidence by stakeholders.
- Lack of continued funding to renew temporary intervention worker posts within the team past the end of the financial year.
- Lack of career progression opportunities within the team and potential for staff turnover.
- Increased austerity could place greater demand on the need for a Youth Justice response.
- The economic and social fall out following Covid-19, the cost of living crisis, other world or environmental events that impact on offending rates and requires a youth justice response.
- A requirement to provide a number of Intensive Supervision and Surveillance packages at any one time as this will divert resources from elsewhere in the service and potentially impact on service delivery.
- Greater demand and duties not being accompanied by additional funding placing further strain on existing staff and services they provide.

- Inconsistencies with bespoke IT system to support effective practice; YJS uses a standalone database that does not link up with the systems used by children's services.
- Workloads and demands are increasing but resources are diminishing.
- Education provision for young people could be improved to prevent exclusions and support reintegration back into mainstream provisions - School is a protective factor for young people in terms of preventing offending/re-offending and permanent exclusion has been identified as a critical event that can lead to young people becoming vulnerable to criminal exploitation. We have made progress on this since the last plan and we understand that there is more to do, there is increased engagement with Neath college and all of the schools in the area. We are developing an education strategy with our partners.
- Victim engagement feedback could be improved to ensure that it effectively informs and drives improvement in service delivery, we are working on a system/ process to improve this.
- YJS is not able to consistently reduce re-offending rates amongst a small cohort of young people.
- Continued increase in work demands not accompanied by increased revenue, leading to non-delivery of performance, reduced staff morale, lack of confidence by stakeholders.
- The service could offer more to volunteers to support the youth justice service and help them integrate into the team. Thus, further training should be considered so that they remain up to date with youth justice developments and practice.

16 Evidence based practice.

- NPT YJS has a clear understanding of implementing evidence-based programmes, embedding best practice, and successfully introducing multi-agency programmes within our public services.
- The principal is now the vice chair of HWB DOETH, which is the academic arm of the YJB bringing research and practice together.

- The principal officer Dr Ali Davies is also writing a paper for YJSIP with Dr Ellanora Clarke head of Lambeth Youth Justice Service in relation to the benefit of peer review in Youth Justice. They are hoping it will be published later this year and both are part of the national peer review team.
- Ali Davies has also presented at the YJB conference, and is presenting her research at the Barnardo's conference and the next YJB conference, this research is about the voice of the Young person versus the voice of the professional in cases of CSE (child sexual exploitation)
- We recognise in NPT that Empirically tested evidence-based interventions and evidence base practice are central to positive outcomes for young people.
- NPT is an outcomes- focused children's service which means that empirical evidence is core to all social work practice with children and young people.
- Evidence based interventions are being used consistently within our services and will be built on going forward.
- These were recognised and commented on in the JICPA and HMIP Inspections
- The Operational manager, Amanda Turner, has written and contributed to the national YJB good practice guidance re governance pathways published dec 2021.
- NPT YJS are aware of the merits of testing and verifying empirical evidence via academia and practitioners, within this, we employ a consultant social worker whose focus is to develop research-based initiatives in the team and as part of the wider service directorate.
- It is important to remember that every team member has an area of expertise and positive ability, whatever their rank or role. The YJS is a multi-disciplinary service, subsequently the role of the Principal Officer and operational manager is to elicit those strengths. Those on the ground will often be far more valuable to our children and families than the high-level strategic players, so we adopt a 'what works approach' (Anastas, 2014). Evidence base interventions in the YJS include speech and Language provision, and the support services provide by our substance misuse workers, and the

work undertaken by our CAMHS nurse, who utilise evidence base programmed. Within this we have developed some exceptional and creative interventions which we are gathering evaluation evidence as to their success and what outcomes have been achieved.

- These Include :

- 1) The K9 project, which has been described and evidenced on pages 27, 29, and 31 of this plan.
- 2) Following on from this K9 project the YJS Police Officer and the operational manager have been undertaking knife crime awareness assemblies in schools across the authority, these have been extremely well received and feedback has been included.

17 Looking forward.

We have had another good year in the NPT Youth Justice Service, navigating through the end of the pandemic, ensuring service recovery plans are fit for purpose, developing our Base 15 children and young people's resource centre, and receiving a good grading for last year's YJS plan which means we can build on that grade for this year.

These results speak for themselves and is testament to the commitment of all the staff involved but more specifically to the resilience and commitment of our young people who want better outcomes and who are often the ones best placed to tell us as professionals what will help them the most. Within this, is also hearing the voice of the victims of crime and the voices of our multi- agency partners.

We are developing the voice of youth justice experience young people further (indeed they have contributed to this plan on pages 46 and 47) and we are hoping to develop an easy version of the plan in leaflet form for young people to contribute to and develop the service they want going forward. Therefore, giving young people agency and a voice in this plan, and in all of our work going forward remains integral to our practice. Further information on participation as a priority is contained on page 46 of this plan.

We know that we have achieved a great deal, but we recognise that it is not the time to rest on our laurels, but to build on the recommendations made by the inspectorates and capitalise on the identified strengths. We will simultaneously ensure that we improve the areas identified as needing development.

We are approaching YJSIP to be considered for a peer review on areas to be determined by the YJS management board and our multiagency partners whose comments about the service are incorporated in this plan.

18 Priorities going forward.

18a Vulnerability management safeguarding and wellbeing.

As with risk management, safeguarding relies on robust and accurate assessment and listening to what the child or young person is saying. This is a priority area that alongside risk management is a primary focus of the service. The service needs to address the gap in evidencing wellbeing outcomes. This work has been enhanced this year by the appointment of our regional CAMHS nurse who is taking up post imminently, we also have more intervention staff, and the new employment training and education worker.

18b Strategic safeguarding

The Chair of the NPT YJS Management Board Service is a key player of the **West Glamorgan Safeguarding Children Board (WGSCB)** giving a robust strategic link to the safeguarding needs of children and young people known to the service. Safety and wellbeing cannot be seen in isolation of the services we provide to victims and their need to feel safe. We are very much part of NPT children services and regularly attend all identified safeguarding meetings professional strategy meetings and so on. As a previous safeguarding lead for three Welsh authorities, the PO is chair and vice chair of many of the safeguarding board and LA subgroups including Barnardo's, Better Futures and Channel panel, community risk profile meetings, crisis bed move on panel and the Youth homelessness strategic panel. We have also contributed to the West Glamorgan Safeguarding board annual plan with a specific report regarding safeguarding in NPT Youth Justice and early intervention service and an update regarding service developments in the YJS, which strategically links the plans of the safeguarding board and the Youth Justice board. The principal officer has also completed two child practice reviews and adult practice reviews as review last year, and she is currently a panel member for a domestic homicide review. The operational manager has also been a panel member on a

child practice review involving a child from Youth justice, which means that our cohort of children are given full consideration within this strategic arena.

18 c Workforce development

In addition to areas of training and management oversight already covered the drive this year is to ensure everyone has a clear role, good supervision and quality appraisals. The JICPA recently identified good quality supervision and training in their inspection. We consistently achieve 95 % or more supervision rates. Everyone has supervision in line with the NPT supervision policy and appraisals will form a part of that process going forward. We also are committed to the health and well-being of our staff, and this is covered in our development days and will form part of everyone's appraisal. Staff well-being will be kept a priority. The building of staff morale has been essential to maintain staff commitment reduce sickness and maintain staff continuity.

18d Victim Feedback

As with previous years year victim feedback gathered by volunteers over the phone evidenced an overall satisfaction with the service and a growing positive view of restorative approaches however the numbers giving feedback in the new NPT team have not been measured as yet, We will be collating these going forward as the service and our communities re- open. We would like to be able to develop feedback by use of a phone app which we are looking into.

Parenting groups have been re- established in NPT. There was hugely positive feedback about the NVR parenting course when we were a regional service so we will be revisiting this going forward. There is also a lot of work being done with the parent advocacy network, and this is something which we would like to see developed in the Youth Justice cohort of parents. The previous key messages were around the need for consistency of messages given by the parenting worker, case manager, childcare social workers and schools. One of the aims of the parenting group for NPT YJS is to reduce the mixed messages that the parents can receive from professionals and improve consistency per se. There are four workers at NPT YJS trained in providing the NVR course.

Staff retention in NPT YJS is not problematic, we are a long standing and established service with experienced and committed practitioners. Therefore, the levels of distribution of youth justice expertise across the service and the close collaboration with Children services are a firm base on which to develop the NPT YJS service. Long standing temporary appointments have been made permanent and we have now got

a consultant social worker in the team commensurate with the rest of Children services. The staffing structure meets the needs of the service with additional business support and administration providing crucial support for the service. Sickness has been problematic over the last year but this too is now being resolved.

Probation, Education South Wales Police and our intervention workers, including Speech and Language therapist, substance misuse workers Bail support, volunteer coordinator victim support and reparation and transition officers are all key players in the multi-agency team approach and we will keep developing these services to meet the complex needs of our young people. A CAMHS regional nurse is joining shortly and we will focus on emotional health and wellbeing of our young people going forward.

Training, monitoring and support are provided by the senior management team and in local authority training department to ensure required standards are met. A training plan has been developed for the service.

18 e Staff recruitment and retention in NPT YJS

Retention of qualified social work staff in NPT YJEIS and the impact of this for maintaining effective Youth Justice Practice do not appear to be a risk to delivery at this juncture, although it is important to recognise that resources must be allocated to meet the additional training and necessary management support needs of new and/or inexperienced staff within NPT YJS.

The NPT HR and the senior management team are fully engaged with supporting the teams including delivering induction and training and development days, guidance, gatekeeping, alongside quality assurance and management reports to track progress. The strategic lead is full engaged with the LSCB, CSP and sub-groups to ensure that the YJS are fully represented in all external and partnership arenas.

19 Operational Priorities

19a Devising a strategy to reducing exclusions alongside education.

As a common thread running through this plan, we have discussed the role of the education training and employment worker. A key issue for the service and one which can affect better outcomes for our young people are school exclusions. We are therefore looking at this in detail and analysing the number of young people who are excluded or have been excluded from school or who are on reduced timetables. I am now attending the PSP meetings with education that considers children

and young people on reduced timetables/facing exclusion, which can impact on their placement, entering the care system of becoming at risk of being involved in offending or anti-social behaviours. I am collecting data from the teams to analyse these incidents and examine the emerging trend themes and patterns in order to inform a strategy to address exclusion or reduced timetables.

19b Training plan:

The corporate training plan for children services is attached, within this there will be additional training provided for the Youth Justice Service identified as need arises or as themes and trends arise from other workstreams.



SCWWDP CYPS 23-24
Rolling Action Plan - F

20 In conclusion

This plan has been developed alongside board members and partners young people and staff who attended a development day and produced the gap analysis in 2021. The board management board met in June 22 to look at the plan and discuss, amend, and agree.

I have embedded all partner feedback following a small survey I sent them to look at how they felt they contribute to the service and where and how the board holds us accountable and vice versa.

20 a Partner Feedback and Evidence.



Barnardo's Cymru,
Better Futures Service



Careers Wales.docx



Cllr Sian Harris.docx



Hillside Children's
Secure home.docx



Hillside
Education.docx



NPT Education.docx



PCC Office.docx



Probation.docx



SBUHB.docx

This plan will also be shared with children's services CSMG and Social Service Scrutiny Committee (Health and Housing) Once ratified it will then be placed before the YJB as per statutory requirement, and to receive YJB funding for the service. It will be refreshed and resubmitted annually. The principal officer intends to


produce a young person easy read version collaboration with the Participation lead in social services, and this will also be placed before the YJB.

The plan is a fluid document and will be used to monitor the objectives and progress of the service as we move through the next 12 months.

Dr *Alison Davies*

Principal Officer NPT Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service.

Sign off, submission and approval

Signature	
Chair of Board : Andrew Jarrett	
Date	22 nd June 2023

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

30th January 2024

**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,
LEISURE AND LIFELONG LEARNING
ANDREW THOMAS**

MATTER FOR INFORMATION

WARDS AFFECTED: All

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2032

Purpose of report

1. To report on progress of Neath Port Talbot's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

Executive summary

2. Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 requires Local Authorities to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).
3. Neath Port Talbot's WESP details the plan to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools and in the wider communities and planning for future growth. The plan details how further development will be secured over the next 10 years, January 2022 - January 2032.
4. This report details the progress made in the first year of implementing the plan (Appendix A- Annual Review) and targets for the forthcoming year (Appendix B- Annual Plan) and the next 5 years (Appendix C- Five Year Plan).

Background

5. Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 requires Local Authorities to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The WESP must contain proposals and targets to improve the:
 - Planning and standards of Welsh medium education and teaching; and
 - Report on progress made to meet the targets of the previous WESP.
6. Neath Port Talbot's WESP 2022-32, will be the cornerstone for the Council's vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot, to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life. It both complements and assists in facilitating the National vision for the Welsh language, to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050:

The year 2050: The Welsh language is thriving, the number of speakers has reached a million, and it is used in every aspect of life. Among those who do not speak Welsh there is goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society, and economy of Wales. Our vision is to secure favourable circumstances throughout the country that support language acquisition and use of Welsh language skills. We want to see an increase in language transmission in the family, early introduction of Welsh to every child, an education system that provides Welsh language skills for all

Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers (Welsh Government, 2017)

7. Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot and all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and understand their lives through the medium of Welsh. This principle is underpinned by ensuring universal access to this provision across the county borough. Neath Port Talbot Council recognises that language and culture are critical parts of an individual's identity and is committed to promoting and celebrating Welsh language learning across all phases and sectors.

8. It is acknowledged that the statutory education system has a vital role to play in increasing the number of Welsh speakers. We must increase the number of school learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh-language skills in school and the opportunity to use it in their everyday lives, significantly, to achieve our goals.
9. Neath Port Talbot's WESP details how we plan to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools and in the wider communities and how we plan for future growth. The plan details how we will secure further development over the next 10 years, January 2022 - January 2032.
10. The plan has been developed through close working with partners including Neath Port Talbot schools, Menter Iaith, RhAG, Mudiad Meithrin, Neath Port Talbot College, Academi Hywel Dda Swansea University, the Urdd and with Welsh Government.
11. It aligns itself to the national policy and guidance '*The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) Regulations 2019*', '*Cymraeg 2050*' and to the '*Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan 2017-21*'. The plan will reflect how the school system in Neath Port Talbot, including sixth forms, will move forward in the period until 2032 to ensure that the new curriculum is implemented effectively in our schools securing the opportunity and 'desire for learners to become increasingly bilingual with a strong grasp of other languages' (*Curriculum for Wales 2022*).
12. The overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.
13. PLASC 2021 reception and second year nursery pupil numbers were 283 (18.7%) and 290 (21%) respectively, so over the short term, year 1 numbers and percentages are likely to increase.
14. Neath Port Talbot's WESP also contains information on mitigating any possible negative impacts on linguistically sensitive areas. This information is included as an appendix to the main WESP (Appendix D).

WESP Outcomes

15. The following outcomes are outlined in the WESP and address the broader aims outlined in Cymraeg 2050 and its implementation plan.

- More nursery children/3 year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- More reception class children/ 5 year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another
- More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh
- More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
- An increase in Welsh-medium education provision for learners with additional learning needs (in accordance with duties determined by the ALN Act
- Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.

Summary of progress

16. Key achievements over the last year include the following.

- *Welsh-medium/ bilingual Childcare*- New Welsh-medium childcare facilities have opened or been expanded in YGG Treges, YGG Tyle'r Ynn, YGG Pontardawe and YGG Cwmllynfell. A further two setting will open imminently in YGG Trebannws and Neath Central. Work on a new-build Welsh-medium/ bilingual childcare facility in Blaendulais and Cwmafan are currently in progress and will be completed in Summer 2024, along with the opening of a new Childcare provision in Neath Central (new Leisure Centre) significantly increasing the current childcare places within these areas. As a result of the expansion and refurbishment of the childcare settings, an additional 94 places will have been created within the Local Authority.
- *New Welsh-medium school* - Ysgol Gymraeg Treges, a new Welsh-medium 3-11 primary school opened in January 2023 in the Neath Abbey area. Currently the school is open to Nursery and Reception pupils. Phase 2 of remodelling works is currently underway (kitchen refurbishment and 2 Foundation Phase classrooms).
- *Sustainable Schools Challenge*- The LA were successful in the Sustainable Schools Challenge and as a result a new Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan will be built in the next 3 years. The project will demonstrate an exemplar commitment towards environmental sustainability and stakeholder engagement throughout all stages of the design, build and operation of a new build Welsh-medium school.

- *Immersion Provision*- 'Y Cwm' immersion unit, located in YGG Pontardawe, has been successfully established. It has provided Welsh language immersion and Welsh language 'catch-up' intervention for 3 cohorts of pupils (total of 49 pupils, 12 late-comers and 37 language intervention/ catch-up pupils) throughout the year. It currently employs one full-time teacher and a teaching assistant.
- *Welsh-medium Additional Learning Needs Provision/ DACC*- NPT have created a steering group for the development of inclusive Welsh medium education (Grŵp Lliwio Datblygiad Addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg Cynhwysfawr /DACC). The purpose of the group is to identify the provision and resources required within the Welsh Medium sector that will ensure an equitable offer for Welsh medium pupils and continuity in their journey in Welsh education, particularly during transition points. DACC are currently developing resources that will facilitate a consistent approach in identifying and supporting literacy difficulties in the medium of Welsh. School staff have been seconded for this work and will launch the resource with schools in Autumn term 2023.

Financial Impact

17. There are no financial implications linked to this report. However if implemented financial impacts could occur, for example an increase in the number of Welsh-medium schools is likely to lead to increased capital and revenue costs.
18. A Welsh-medium capital grant of £460,000 was awarded for the development of a Childcare provision and refurbishment of the ALN provision in YGG Trebannws. Phase 1 of the project (Childcare and Early Years classrooms) was completed in September 2022. Phase 2 of the project (ALN provision) was completed in September 2023.
19. A Welsh-medium capital grant of £550,000 was awarded for the development of Foundation Phase classrooms in YGG Tregales. Phase 1 of the project was completed in December 2022 (remodelling and refurbishment) and phase 2 of remodelling works is currently underway (kitchen and a further 2 classrooms).
20. A Welsh Government Immersion Grant of £300,000 was awarded to facilitate the running of the immersion centre from September 2022-March 2025. Additional costs of running the immersion centre may be identified in March 2025 and reports will be presented to members at the appropriate time for approval.

21. Applications for grant funding have been submitted to assist with additional capital and revenue costs for identified projects through the 21st century schools programme and these will be the subject of further reports.
22. Additional financial impacts may be identified through the course of the 10 year plan and reports will be presented to members at the appropriate time for approval.

Integrated Impact Assessment

23. An integrated impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
24. The assessment has indicated positive impacts in relation to age, disability, race and sex; neutral impacts on the other protected characteristics and a positive impact on the development of the Welsh language. The WESP is a 10 year plan and will continue to be monitored during that period by the WESP forum members and annually by Welsh Government for any mitigating actions where necessary.
25. The Integrated Impact Assessment is attached to this report as Appendix E.

Valley Communities Impacts

26. There are likely to be positive impacts on valley communities as result of this report. During implementation it is likely that the WESP will create and provide opportunities and experiences for all learners and the wider community to use Welsh and be part of Welsh life in order to increase confidence in the Welsh language and to feel a sense of belonging. The WESP aims to promote community cohesion by creating opportunities to work together towards a common aim, developing the Welsh language. Specific actions within the WESP

promote community cohesion, for example, Menter Iaith's family activity sessions/ days e.g. fun days, singing sessions; The Urdd's Community Department providing arts opportunities and arranging activities to encourage and enable children and young people to socialise through the medium of Welsh outside the classroom; further development of Ty'r Gwrhyd's community groups, including Merched y Wawr, Cylch Darllen Cwm Tawe and papur bro *Llais*, and activities including regular book launches, small art exhibitions, cultural and literary events and creative activities for children and young people. These activities aim to forge good relationships between Welsh-medium and English-medium communities.

Workforce impacts

27. It is likely that there will be positive workforce impacts as a result of this report. WESP outcome 7 aims to increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and to teach through the medium of Welsh, which is likely to positively impact on the workforce. The opening of 3 new Welsh-medium schools within the 10 year period will also increase the number of staff teaching through the medium of Welsh within the Local Authority.

Legal impacts

28. The following legislation / regulations are aligned to this report:

- Section 84 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
- The WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019
- The WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020

Risk Management Impacts

29. Failure to implement the WESP targets will mean that the Council will not be able to fulfil its legal obligations.

Consultation

30. Consultation on the WESP has already taken place, there is no requirement for further external consultation.

Recommendation

42. It is recommended that members note the content of the report on the progress of the WESP.

Appendices

Appendix A: Annual Review

Appendix B: Annual Plan

Appendix C: 5 Year Plan

Appendix D: Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Appendix E: WESP IIA

Officer Contact:

Andrew Thomas

Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong learning

Email: a.d.thomas@npt.gov.uk

Rhiannon Crowhurst

Head of Support Services and Transformation

Email: r.crowhurst@npt.gov.uk

Kate Windsor- Brown

WESP Co-ordinator

Email: k.windsor-brown@npt.gov.uk

ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2023

Name of Local Authority

Neath Port Talbot

Author:	Kate Windsor-Brown
Approver:	Rhiannon Crowhurst
Date	19.06.23

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS / HIGHLIGHTS

- Welsh-medium/ bilingual Childcare
New Welsh-medium childcare facilities have opened or been expanded in YGG Tregeles, YGG Tyle'r Ynn, YGG Pontardawe and YGG Cwmllynfell. A further two setting will open imminently in YGG Trebannws and Neath Central. In YGG Trebannws classrooms have been remodelled to incorporate a childcare facility (currently out to tender). Work on a new-build Welsh-medium/ bilingual childcare facility in Blaendulais and Cwmafan are currently in progress and will be completed in March 2024, along with the opening of a new Childcare provision in Neath Central (new Leisure Centre) significantly increasing the current childcare places within these areas. As a result of the expansion and refurbishment of the childcare settings, an additional 94 places will have been created within the Local Authority.
- New Welsh-medium school
Ysgol Gymraeg Tregeles, a new Welsh-medium 3-11 primary school opened in January 2023 in the Neath Abbey area. Currently the school is open to Nursery pupils with the first cohort of full time Reception age pupils starting in September 2023. Phase 2 of remodelling works is currently underway (kitchen refurbishment and 2 Foundation Phase classrooms).
- Sustainable Schools Challenge
The LA were successful in the Sustainable Schools Challenge and as a result a new Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan will be built in the next 3 years. The project will demonstrate an exemplar commitment towards environmental sustainability and stakeholder engagement throughout all stages of the design, build and operation of a new build Welsh-medium school. Initial meetings and discussions with Welsh Government representatives have taken place.
- Immersion provision
'Y Cwm' immersion unit, located in YGG Pontardawe, has been successfully established. It has provided Welsh language immersion and Welsh language 'catch-up' intervention for 3 cohorts of pupils (total of 49 pupils, 12 late-comers and 37 language intervention/ catch-up pupils) throughout the year. It currently employs one full-time teacher, one part-time teacher and a teaching assistant. A comprehensive new Welsh language acquisition scheme of work has been created and good practice has been shared across other Local Authorities.
- Welsh-medium Additional Learning Needs Provision/ DACC
One of the core aims of the ALN Act is to create a bilingual system of support for ALN. A series of strategic duties are aimed at driving progress towards a bilingual ALN system. In response, NPT have created a steering group for the development of inclusive Welsh medium education (Grŵp Lliwio Datblygiad Addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg Cynhwysfawr /DACC). The purpose of the group is to identify the provision and resources required within the Welsh Medium sector that will ensure an equitable offer for Welsh medium pupils and continuity in their journey in Welsh education, particularly during transition points. DACC are currently developing resources that will facilitate a consistent approach in identifying and supporting literacy difficulties in the medium of Welsh. School staff have been seconded for this work and will

launch the resource with schools in Autumn term 2023. Termly DACC meetings will continue as the review of provision available in the medium of Welsh is ongoing as resources develop and approaches in ALN evolve. Membership of DACC includes ALNCoS from both primary and secondary, Education Support Officers, Specialist Teachers, Educational Psychologists and the head of the strategic school improvement team. DACC are therefore able to link their review of ALP with wider strategic duties including those under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, which requires Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs).

OVERALL PLAN SUMMARY

Current target or achievement this year and a self - assessment of
red, orange or green

(Detailed descriptions of progress can be seen in the outcome summaries below)

outcome	Target Description	Assessment
Overall	<i>Welsh Government have set a target for Neath Port Talbot to increase the number of learners accessing Welsh-medium education of between 17% and 27% over a 10 year period. This target is based on increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032. Our ambitious plan is to exceed the upper range of the target set by Welsh Government.</i>	
1	<i>Increasing the % of 3-year olds (N2) receiving their education through the medium of Welsh to 21.4%</i>	
2	<i>Increasing the % of 5-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh to 19.7%</i>	
3	<i>By the end of the 10 year plan we will see a significant increase in the number of learners transferring from WM primary to YGYBD as well as an increase in the number of learners remaining in WM education from KS3 to KS4 (see Outcome 4). It is intended to see an increase in the number latecomers changing to WM education as a result of successful immersion, as parents become more informed and confident with WM education.</i>	<i>Immersion/ KS2 to KS3 transition</i>
		<i>KS3 to KS4 transition</i>
4	<i>By the end of the 10 year plan, we aim to see a significant increase in the percentage of qualifications studied through the medium of Welsh as learners and parents become more confident in choosing Welsh medium education. There will also be a wider variety of vocational qualifications taught through the medium of Welsh available within the Local Authority in order to allow full access of the Welsh language to all learners.</i>	
5	<i>All schools within the Local Authority will be fully engaged with Curriculum for Wales in conjunction with the Siarter Iaith. The Welsh</i>	

	<i>language, contemporary culture and history will be integral to curriculum design. We will see an increase in learner and staff confidence and pride towards being Welsh and the Welsh language. The Welsh language and the associated extra-curricular activities will be inclusive and will radiate into the wider community, allowing all to have access and to develop their Welsh-language skills.</i>	
6	<i>All pupils with ALN within the local authority will have access to provision at all levels through the medium of Welsh. Collaboration with regional partners will provide a comprehensive range of resources, training opportunities and networking to ensure that Welsh medium provision will be of a high standard and complies with the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018. Early Years and pre-school WM ALN support, assessments and provision will provide increased confidence in parents when choosing Welsh medium education for their children.</i>	
7	<u>Outcome 7 ten year target:</u> <i>An increased number of the NPT education staff will be able to teach through the medium of Welsh and Welsh as a subject. There will be an increase in Welsh medium staff able to teach specific subjects at secondary level. There will be an increase in the number, ability and confidence of staff in English-medium schools able to converse and teach Welsh, therefore increasing the amount of learners with access to Welsh-medium education at all levels throughout the Local Authority. NPT will attract and recruit excellent, bilingual leaders for our schools. All NPT schools will form communities that promote the Welsh language as a medium for education and community life.</i>	

FOREWARD LOOK MILESTONES

Please see attached annual plan for 2023-2024 (appendix 1).

Outcome 1

More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Outcome 1 ten year target (table 1)

Numbers and % of 3-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh				
2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027
21.4%	22.8%	24.2%	25.5%	26.8%
2027 - 2028	2028 - 2029	2029 - 2030	2030 - 2031	2031 - 2032
28.1%	29.5%	30.8	32.0%	33.4%

Actual percentage of learners in nursery who are taught through the medium of Welsh using PLASC data 2021-2023 (table 2)

	Nursery 2 (2021-2022- pre WESP plan)	Nursery 1 (2022-2023- current cohort)
PLASC 2022	20.0%	20.1%
PLASC 2023	20.0%	22.1%

The number of Cylchoedd Meithrin within the local authority area and also the number and percentage of children transferring from Cylchoedd Meithrin to Welsh-medium primary education

Number of Cylchoedd Meithrin (table 3)

Service Name	Service Address Town/City	Service Type	Service Sub Type	Maximum Capacity	Date Of Registration
Cylch Meithrin Mwy Blaendulais	Neath	Childrens Day Care	Sessional Day Care	12	31/03/2002
Tiddlywinks Childcare Centre	Swansea	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	43	31/03/2002
Lots of Tots (Canolfan Maerdy)	Ammanford	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	52	22/04/2009
Meithrinfa Ddydd Ser Bach / Little Stars Day Nursery	Neath	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	13/04/2009
Cylch Chwarae Castell-Nedd	Neath	Childrens Day Care	Sessional Day Care	28	13/03/2013
Meithrinfa Ddydd y Waun	Ammanford	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	15/04/2013
Georgie Porgie`s Cylch Tir Morfa	Port Talbot	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	24	05/01/2015
Cylch Chwarae Pontardawe	Swansea	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	37	19/07/2016

Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd	Neath	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	20	12/08/2018
Cylch Meithrin Cwmllynfell	Swansea	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	08/09/2022
Cylch Meithrin Teulu'r Tyle	Castell-nedd	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	11/11/2022
Gofal Plant Tregeles	Neath	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	18	24/05/2023
				Total Places	
				310	

% of children transferring to WM education (table 4)

Service Name	Service Address Town/City	% Transition Rate		Date starting, if new to FS	Notes
		Welsh Medium Nursery	English Medium Nursery		
Tiddlywinks Childcare Centre	Swansea	100		Legacy Setting	
Lots of Tots (Canolfan Maerdy)	Ammanford	100		Legacy Setting	
Meithrinfa Ddydd Ser Bach / Little Stars Day Nursery	Neath	-	-	New for September 2023	
Cylch Chwarae Castell-Nedd	Neath	100		Closing July 2023	New provision to open in new Leisure Centre
Meithrinfa Ddydd y Waun	Ammanford	100		Legacy Setting	On school site
Georgie Porgie`s Cylch Tir Morfa	Port Talbot	100		Legacy Setting	On school site
Cylch Brynhyfryd	Neath	90	10	Legacy Setting	
Cylch Chwarae Pontardawe	Swansea	100		Legacy Setting	On school site
Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd	Neath	100		Legacy Setting	On school Site
Cylch Meithrin Cwmllynfell	Swansea	-	-	New for September 2023	On school Site
Cylch Meithrin Teulu'r Tyle	Castell-nedd	-	-	New from May 2023	On School Site
Gofal Plant Tregeles	Neath	-	-	New from July 2023	On school Site

Flying Start (table 5)

The number of children accessing Welsh language in Flying Start, accumulative, is as follows:

Year	Number of children
2017/18	104
2018/19	135
2019/20	130
2020-21(during Covid)	77
2021-22	142
2022-2023	141

OUTCOME SUMMARY

- Based on 2022/23 data, there were on average 505 Flying Start childcare places per annum across our settings of which 114 were category 3 (Welsh language) and category 2 (English/Welsh language) childcare settings equating to a total of 22.6%. This is a substantial increase from 2020/ 2021 when there were 452 Flying Start childcare places per annum across our settings of which 65 were category 3 (Welsh language) and category 2 (English/Welsh language) childcare settings equating to a total of 14.4%.
- The current overall transition rate from WM FS Childcare to MW Nursery Education is 98%. Individual setting transition rates can be seen in *table 4*. Since 2021/2022, a significant increase can be seen in the Brynhyfryd, Cwmnedd and Castell-nedd area.
- 55 children (26 of which accessed English Medium FS Childcare) transitioned into WM Nursery during 2022/2023. This is an increase on the 2020/ 2021 data where 44 children (11 of which accessed English Medium FS Childcare) transitioned into WM Nursery.
- Based on data from June 2020, there were 9 wards within the Local Authority with no registered childcare provision (Welsh and English). Of these 9 wards, 3 were in the catchment area of existing Welsh-medium schools- Trebanos, Godre'r Graig and Coedffranc Central. In 2022/2023, a new Welsh-medium childcare provision has opened in YGG Tregales (Coedffranc Central catchment), a new provision will be opening in YGG Trebannws in September 2023 (Trebanos catchment) and a 'babi a fi' provision has opened in Ysgol Ystalyfera Bro Dur north with the aim of expanding this in the near future to provide a wraparound/ childcare provision on site (Godre'r Graig catchment).
- Following WG EY&CC Capital investment within 22/23, 3 additional Welsh/Bilingual settings have now open in YGG Tyle'r Ynn, YGG Cwmllynfell and YGG Tregales, with a total of 56 new Welsh/Bilingual childcare places available.
- Following capital investment, Cylch Pontardawe within YGG Pontardawe were able to offer an additional 14 spaces, increasing from 23 to 37 Welsh childcare spaces.
- The additional 70 Welsh/Bilingual childcare spaces on offer in NPT will ensure that the amount of children accessing Welsh Language childcare and transitioning into Welsh Medium education will continue to increase.

- All the relevant settings are now engaging with FS ready for phase 2 FS expansion. They've had training and support for ALN and some contact with our EY&CC teams. As a result, following completion of training, we will have all the Welsh settings on board in NPT.
- We have lost a few settings that have not kept up with bilingual offers (Aberafan ICC, and Brynhyfryd), however with the Welsh Award well underway, we will have an increasing level of Welsh Language use within all settings, including EM settings.
- Further Welsh-medium/Bilingual Childcare developments underway include:
 - YGG Trebannws will open in September 2023, with 12 - 16 spaces available.
 - Gofal Plant Gardd Victoria (Neath Central) with an additional 24 bilingual childcare spaces from December 2023.
 - Cylch Meithrin Mwy Blaendulais will have 20 additional childcare spaces within the new capital build, when complete in Summer 2024 (allowing for CIW variation).
 - Cwmafon Childcare will create 24 additional bilingual spaces in Summer 2024 (allowing for CIW registration).
- A Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Welsh-medium sub group has been formed and includes partners from the LA (transformation co-ordinator, educational support officers, corporate policy officer), Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith and Swansea University to address targets arising from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Targets and actions from meetings align with WESP Targets (with an emphasis on Outcome 1 and 7) in order to ensure cohesion and reduce any duplication.
- An 'Early Years and Flying Start' bilingual Facebook page is now active and provides support for families within NPT. The content includes correct and up to date information on support, activities and new initiatives and has an emphasis on the benefits of bilingualism as well as easily accessible bilingual resources for parents and carers.
- The Outcome 1 sub-group consists of many of the partners noted above as well as additional LA officers and RhAG representatives and meet on a termly basis to evaluate progress and set targets and actions arising from the annual plan, the 5 year plan and the 10 year WESP.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Local Authority officers and the *WESP Outcomes* sub-groups are responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress against actions within the 10 year plan, the 5 year plan and the annual plan. A range of quantitative and qualitative data is collected and analysed throughout the year in order to obtain an informed evaluation of progress and to set further targets. Information is shared through termly sub-group meetings and reported back to the full WESP forum annually.

OUTCOME LEVEL RISKS

- No grant funding or late offer of grant funding leading to projects not being delivered within the grant period.
- External pressures and influences impacting on project progress.

- Capacity of small teams/ Welsh-medium staff to continue to deliver growing number of projects.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- LA looking into funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision or accessing the Flying Start and Childcare Capital Programme.
- Regular communication with WG and negotiation over realistic timescales.
- Effective planning to meet statutory timelines, collaborating with other services to share responsibilities, good practice.
- Succession planning in order to identify where biggest pressures exist and what can be done to alleviate them. Feed these targets/ pressures into Outcome 7 targets.

Outcome 2

More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Outcome 2 ten year target (table 6)

Numbers and % of 5-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh				
2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027
19.7%	21%	22.3%	23.6%	24.9%
2027 - 2028	2028- 2029	2029 - 2030	2030 - 2031	2031 - 2032
26.2%	27.5	28.8	30.%	31.4%

Actual percentage of learners in nursery who are taught through the medium of Welsh using PLASC data 2022-2023 (table 7)

PLASC 2023	Percentage %	Number of pupils
Reception	19.7	279

Surplus places in Welsh-medium schools data (table 8)

	Number of schools	% of schools
Full capacity	1	10
0-10% unfilled places	0	0
11-25% unfilled places	3	30
26-50% unfilled places	5	50
Over 50% unfilled places	1	10

The number and percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic background learners who are taught through the medium of Welsh using PLASC Data (table 9)

Black, Asian and minority ethnic background learners			
	Welsh-medium schools	All NPT schools	% in Welsh-medium
PLASC 2022	84	1369	6.1%
PLASC 2023	89	1515	5.9%

Y Cwm Immersion Centre data (table 10)

Term	Number of pupils
Autumn 2022	11
Spring 2023	22
Summer 2023	16
Total	49 (12 latecomers, 37 language intervention)

OUTCOME SUMMARY

- Update on projects funded through the Welsh-medium capital grant -YGG Tregeles

YGG Tregeles, a new Welsh-medium starter school has opened in Neath Abbey to the first cohort of Nursery children in January 2023. Currently there are 8 Nursery pupils attending the school with a further 13 pupils commencing in September 2023. Phase 2 of works are in progress to remodel and refurbish the Year 1 and 2 classrooms along with the kitchen (kitchen works funded through FSM grant). A new childcare facility, 'Gofal Plant Tregeles', has opened on site providing childcare and wraparound for children age two upwards. A permanent Headteacher, teacher, 2 TA's and part time admin assistant have been employed. Since opening the school also holds a weekly 'Caffi Cymraeg' for the community and open evenings to promote the benefits of bilingualism for parents.

-YGG Trebannws

Phase 1 of works in YGG Trebannws were completed January 2023. The work included remodelling and refurbishment of 4 Foundation classrooms to create 2 larger classrooms and remodelling and refurbishment of toilets (in line with CIW regulations). A new childcare facility has been created to provide wraparound provision for pupils and afternoon childcare for children age 2 upwards. The childcare tender applications are in the process of being evaluated and scored and a provider will be appointed imminently.

Phase 2 of works in YGG Trebannws have commenced and will be completed by September 2023. The scope of work includes remodelling and refurbishing the ALN/LSC provision within the school. One large room will be created with enhanced access to outdoor provision, a changing/ toilet facility within the area and specialist sensory areas/ bespoke ALN resources will be installed during the Summer holiday. Currently there are 2 English speaking pupils (Key Stage 2) and 6 Welsh speaking pupils within the provision. It is proposed that the LSC will formally change to a Welsh-medium LSC in 2026 (subject to member approval).
- Update on how you are Assessing the strategic outline programme (9-year investment) as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme to ensure it is consistent with the aims and objectives of the WESP

The strategic outline programme for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme has been approved by members. The SOP Strategic Outline Programme is in the process of being completed and will be submitted to

Welsh Government in the Autumn term. In line with WESP targets, there are 2 new-build Welsh-medium schools within the programme. A new build YGG Rhosafan will be completed within 3 years (currently being funded through Sustainable Schools Challenge funding). A further new Welsh-medium school will be established and built in the East of the authority. Currently, work is underway with planners (in line with new LDP) to identify land for the new build.

- Assessing the impact of wider school organisation proposals to ensure they are consistent with the aims and objectives of your WESP.

A catchment data analysis has been carried out to support the evaluation of future Welsh Medium Education in Neath Port Talbot County Borough. The purpose of this report is to present information relevant to the decision making process on the siting of Welsh Medium Education Schools within Neath Port Talbot and will also assist in identifying sizes of future new Welsh-medium schools, including the 3rd Welsh-medium school identified within the WESP.

- Increasing Welsh-medium provision in schools that are not Welsh-medium

-A mapping out exercise of Welsh-medium provision has been completed (by *Fforwm Iaith Abertawe a CNPT*). The map includes information from all parties outlining the activities, providers, age groups, locations, cost and times of events/ activities. It outlines activities suitable for children and young people as well as community activities and online resources. This resource will be shared and used for future planning in schools and communities (outcome 5). Currently, there are 186 activities and resources available.

- pilot schools have been identified with the aim of mapping out a continuum of staff training to be able to eventually create a category 2 stream/ Welsh language community within an English-medium school. Work to map out pathways to enable effective staff training are being discussed currently with LA officers and external supporting bodies. The LA will also be working with Meinir Ebbsworth, National Centre for Learning Welsh, on a study that she is currently undertaking around flexible models that would meet the needs of schools in going forward.

- Provision for latecomers

-Two members of staff (experienced teachers) were appointed in January 2022 to investigate existing methodologies and good practice within latecomer centres across Wales and establish effective networks. Following the period of observing good practice, the staff created a detailed scheme of work bespoke to the area and incorporating 'cynefin' into the scheme. An area within YGG Pontardawe was identified and developed/ refurbished during the Summer term 2022 (WG immersion grant funding). A teaching assistant was also appointed and the immersion centre 'Y Cwm' officially opened in September 2022. The first block of immersion had 10 pupils attending and has been very successful. Currently, 49 pupils have attended the 'Y Cwm' this academic year (see table 10).

-There is an aim to open the second immersion hub in the south of the local authority in YGG Rhosafan, thus reducing transport costs and increasing the

number of places available for pupils. There will be a slight delay with this target due to YGG Rhosafan being successful in the Sustainable Schools Challenge. As a result a new YGG Rhosafan will be built within the next 3 year and will incorporate a new immersion unit.

- Sustainable Schools Challenge

The Local Authority were successful with the YGG Rhosafan Sustainable Schools Challenge bid. As a result, a new build YGG Rhosafan community school will be completed within 3 years. Work on design has begun. The project involves the demolition of existing (and adjoined) Welsh Medium school and community buildings and the development, on the same site, of a fully integrated Welsh Medium community school, including a Welsh Immersion unit and Welsh-medium ALN provision. The new facility will deliver a range of bilingual educational and community services that will be provided by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, partner organisations and by local voluntary organisations, to the benefit of the Sandfields community and communities within the wider Port Talbot area. The new community school will provide an additional 28 primary places, 12 nursery places, 18 childcare offer places, 12 ALN places and 16 immersion centre places (all Welsh-medium).

- The Outcome 2 sub-group consists of many partners and meet on a termly basis to evaluate progress and set targets and actions arising from the annual plan, the 5 year plan and the 10 year WESP.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Local Authority officers and the *WESP Outcomes* sub-groups are responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress against actions within the 10 year plan, the 5 year plan and the annual plan. A range of quantitative and qualitative data is collected and analysed throughout the year in order to obtain an informed evaluation of progress and to set further targets. Information is shared through termly sub-group meetings and reported back to the full WESP forum annually.

OUTCOME LEVEL RISKS

- No grant funding or late offer of grant funding leading to projects not being delivered within the grant period.
- External pressures and influences impacting on project progress.
- Capacity of small teams/ Welsh-medium staff to continue to deliver growing number of projects.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- LA to look into funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision.
- Regular communication with WG and negotiation over realistic timescales.

- Effective planning to meet statutory timelines, collaborating with other services to share responsibilities, good practice.
- Succession planning in order to identify where biggest pressures exist and what can be done to alleviate them. Feed these targets/ pressures into Outcome 7 targets.

Outcome 3

More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Outcome 3 ten year target:

By the end of the 10 year plan we will see a significant increase in the number of learners transferring from WM primary to YGYBD as well as an increase in the number of learners remaining in WM education from KS3 to KS4 (see Outcome 4). It is intended to see an increase in the number latecomers changing to WM education as a result of successful immersion, as parents become more informed and confident with WM education.

PLASC data

Transition from one key stage to the next PLASC 2022 (*table 11*):

School Year	Actual numbers/ percentage
N2 (2021) to Rec (2022)	290 to 286 (98.6%)
Year 2 (2021) to Year 3 (2022)	238 to 231 (97.1%)
Year 6 (2021) to Year 7 (2022)	222 to 233 (105.0%)
Year 11 (2021) to Year 12 (2022)	201 to 111 (55.2%)

Transition from one key stage to the next PLASC 2023 (*table 12*):

School Year	Actual numbers/ percentage
N2 (2022) to Rec (2023)	272 to 279 (102.6%)
Year 2 (2022) to Year 3 (2023)	252 to 249 (98.8%)
Year 6 (2022) to Year 7 (2023)	247 to 256 (103.6%)
Year 11 (2022) to Year 12 (2023)	208 to 105 (50.5%)

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Information on transition data for 3 year olds and 5 year olds are noted in the Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 progress summary. Information regarding Key stage 4 transition data will be noted in the Outcome 4 progress summary.

- The methods used to monitor linguistic progression
 - Data has been analysed (Welsh-medium schools) to identify individual schools and areas that are showing an increase and decrease in transition.
 - Year 6 to Year 7 transition has been analysed on an individual school level to identify increase/ decrease in transition levels as well as patterns in transition from Welsh-medium to English-medium schools and the locations of the English-medium schools.

-Transition data is now discussed in every Cluster meeting with the aim of identifying patterns/ concerns at an early stage and creating an action plan for addressing these issues.

-A linguistic skill progression map is being developed by the Ystalyfera cluster (in line with the new curriculum) to ensure cohesion from school to school when assessing pupils along the language continuum. This will be complete by 2024 and will ensure consistency when assessing pupils and providing support/ intervention if needed. This will also assist when identifying pupils in need of Welsh language intervention in the immersion provisions.

- Transition arrangements from primary to secondary schools/ Collaboration with schools to understand the reasons behind transitions to schools
 - Targets from cluster meetings in relation to transition will be included in the 2023-2024 cluster development plan
 - A menu of various transition activities (Year 6 to Year 7) are available to all schools. These include:
 - Ystalyfera'n cyfri- teachers from YGYBD attend cluster schools for 1 hour weekly to deliver a specific series of lessons.
 - Hwl i Holi-pupils and staff from YGYBD attend cluster schools and primary pupils have an opportunity to ask questions or voice any transition concerns/ anxieties.
 - Transition website for pupils transferring to YGYBD.
 - Additional transition days for pupils with ALN or anxiety.
 - Open days for pupils and open evenings for families.
 - Gwyl Haf- 3 day summer camp for Year 5 pupils based on a specific theme and followed by a presentation to parents.
 - Proms- vocal and instrumental. Y5 and Y6 pupils from cluster schools attend YGYBD and are taught by staff and pupils for the day. It is followed by an orchestral performance in the evening (instrumental) or a performance by the YGYBD Cluster Choir.
 - Gig Tanio'r Ddraig- Y5, 6, 7 pupils attend a music festival in YGYBD playing fields annually with the best of current Welsh bands and talent performing.
 - Cluster sports day for KS2 pupils from feeder primaries on YGYBD playing fields.
 - Additional support days/ transition activities for schools with lower transition rates to YGGBD in order to understand local reasons for lack of transition and increase parental confidence in Welsh-medium education.
- The Outcome 3 sub-group consists of many partners and meet on a termly basis to evaluate progress and set targets and actions arising from the annual plan, the 5 year plan and the 10 year WESP. They support and strengthen the work of the cluster and parents' confidence in the Welsh language. They encourage early support and preparation within the Primary sector to communicate expected pathways to pupils and parents through their promotional strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Local Authority officers and the *WESP Outcomes* sub-groups are responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress against actions within the 10 year plan, the 5 year plan and the annual plan. A range of quantitative and qualitative data is collected and analysed throughout the year in order to obtain an informed evaluation of progress and to set further targets. Information is shared through termly sub-group meetings and reported back to the full WESP forum annually.

OUTCOME LEVEL RISKS

- Population growth not following the patterns as expected in the data analysis leading to a reduced number of pupils in the education system, reduced number of pupils in specific areas
- Strategic plans/ potential new Welsh-medium schools in neighbouring authorities could significantly reduce transition numbers to Ysgol Ystalyfera Bro Dur north campus (significant intake from Carmarthenshire and Powys)
- External pressures and influences impacting on progress e.g. new childcare/ wrap around facilities in neighbouring authorities/ English-medium childcare establishments offering longer hours.
- No funding leading to projects not being delivered e.g. Menter Iaith funding for Gig Tanio'r Ddraig.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Update catchment data analyses for Welsh-medium education on a biannual basis
- Keep up to date with developments in neighbouring authorities and increase pupil numbers from within the local authority to offset any loss
- Keep up to date with childcare/ wrap around developments in neighbouring authorities and the English-medium sector (regular meetings with Early Years colleagues) and long term strategic planning of future Welsh-medium provisions in line with the Childcare Sufficiency Report
- LA to look into funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision

Outcome 4

More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Outcome 4 ten year target:

By the end of the 10 year plan, we aim to see a significant increase in the percentage of qualifications studied through the medium of Welsh as learners and parents become more confident in choosing Welsh medium education.

There will also be a wider variety of vocational qualifications taught through the medium of Welsh available within the Local Authority in order to allow full access of the Welsh language to all learners.

The number and percentage of learners registered for GCSE Welsh First Language, GCSE Welsh Second Language or not registered for either (table 13)

Year	11 Cohort	1st Language GCSE	2nd Language GCSE	Total	Total % of cohort	% cohort 1st Language GCSE	% cohort 2nd Language GCSE
2018	1486	190	917	1147	77%	13%	62%
2019	1456	166	1038	1204	83%	11%	71%
2020	1513	171	984	1155	76%	11%	65%
2021	1619	196	1061	1257	78%	12%	66%
2022	1593	208	989	1197	75%	13.1%	62.1%
2023	No figures available yet on those registered						

The number and percentage of enrolled learners who are assessed for A Level and Welsh First Language and Welsh Second Language A levels (table 14)

	A Level 2nd Language	A Level 1st Language
2019	3	5
2020	2	5
2021	1	4
2022	1	1
2023	No figures available yet on those registered	

OUTCOME SUMMARY

- Data Collection**
As noted in the annual plan, the Outcome 4 sub-group will undertake a data collection exercise in the Autumn term to analyse the data in order to understand which subjects/ areas of study are showing an increase and decrease in uptake. They will also look at the projected data for the next 3 years with a focus on year 10 and 11 pupils to identify where children are going to study/ trends and the reasons for the choice. This will then feed into the mapping exercise outlined below and the long term strategic plan for vocational and alternative curriculum provision throughout the local authority.
- Mapping exercise**
A mapping exercise is currently underway involving many officers from different departments within the Education Directorate in order to map out the provisions/ pathways available for pupils from 14-18 (leading into the employment sector). The aim is to look at future employment needs within the local authority (e.g. Celtic Freeport project, Wildfox Resort, Energy Park as well as traditional alternative curriculum skills provisions) along with the proposed Full 14-16 qualifications Offer in order to provide clear pathways to employment for pupils that do not follow the *traditional* academic route of GCSEs and A levels. A short term and long term strategic plan is being developed to provide skills centres and provisions across the authority in order to ensure that provision is easily accessible to all pupils. Welsh language and bilingual provisions will be a central part of this offer.
- Welsh Science GCSEs and A Levels**
Ystalyfera Bro Dur have started initial discussions in order to increase numbers who choose Science GCSE and Science A level through medium of Welsh in YGYBD (currently English by default and pupils have to opt in for

Welsh). By 2025, the default language for Science GCSE will be Welsh and by 2027, the default language for Science A level will be Welsh.

- Partnership work

Currently there is effective partnership work between Ysgol Ystalyfera Bro Dur and the Urdd (apprenticeship), Swansea University (Welsh-medium ITT students) and Mudiad Meithrin (Cam wrth Gam Childcare courses). Data on uptake is now being monitored and will be collect on an annual basis in order to feed back into future WESP evaluations.

- Discussions with local partnerships to monitor the number of courses offered and uptake through the medium of Welsh and external partnerships

As noted above, a mapping exercise, involving a range of local partners is underway in order to develop provisions and meaningful pathways to employment (which will include bilingual and Welsh-medium provisions). The Local Authority will also be working closely with Meinir Ebbsworth, National Centre for Learning Welsh, on a study that she is currently undertaking around flexible models that would meet the needs of schools in going forward. Although directly linked to Outcome 7, the information will be essential in developing Welsh-medium provision and pathways within both Welsh-medium and English-medium schools.

- The Outcome 4 sub-group consists of many partners and meet on a termly basis to evaluate progress and set targets and actions arising from the annual plan, the 5 year plan and the 10 year WESP. They support and strengthen the work of the cluster and parents' confidence in the Welsh language. The Outcome 4 sub-group will also undertake a data collection exercise in the autumn term to analyse the data in order to understand which subjects/ areas of study are showing an increase and decrease in uptake.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Local Authority officers and the *WESP Outcomes* sub-groups are responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress against actions within the 10 year plan, the 5 year plan and the annual plan. A range of quantitative and qualitative data is collected and analysed throughout the year in order to obtain an informed evaluation of progress and to set further targets. Information is shared through termly sub-group meetings and reported back to the full WESP forum annually.

OUTCOME LEVEL RISKS

- External partners not delivering Welsh-medium provisions/ courses
- No funding leading to courses (grant funded external providers) not being delivered
- Capacity of small teams/ Welsh-medium staff to continue to deliver growing number of specialist courses.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Keep up to date/ regular meetings with external partners to discuss/ foresee any future delivery issues.
- LA to look into funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision
- Develop internal skills provisions/ delivery within the local authority
- Succession planning in order to identify where biggest staffing pressures exist and what can be done to alleviate them. Feed these targets/ pressures into Outcome 7 targets.

Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Outcome 5 ten year target:

All schools within the Local Authority will be fully engaged with Curriculum for Wales in conjunction with the Siarter Iaith. The Welsh language, contemporary culture and history will be integral to curriculum design. We will see an increase in learner and staff confidence and pride towards being Welsh and the Welsh language. The Welsh language and the associated extra-curricular activities will be inclusive and will radiate into the wider community, allowing all to have access and to develop their Welsh-language skills.

Number of primary schools that have received the Siarter Iaith Cymraeg - Gold, Silver and Bronze award (table 15)

	Number of Schools
Gold	1
Silver	0
Bronze	9

Number of primary schools that have received Cymraeg Campus - Gold, Silver and Bronze award (table 16)

	Number of Schools
Gold	0
Silver	0
Bronze	17

It has been decided (since 2020) not to validate schools in order to give them enough time to resume their *Cymraeg Campus* journey. Validation will begin again during the next academic year.

The number/ percentage of English and Welsh primary schools that are part of Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus (table 17)

	Number of schools	% of schools
Siarter Iaith (WM Primary schools)	10	100
Cymraeg Campus (EM Primary Schools)	45	100

(Table 17 does not include YGG Tregelles due to the school only opening to Nursery in January 2023. Future data will include YGG Tregelles)

Number of Welsh / English secondary schools operate the Siarter Iaith

Currently our secondary schools do not officially operate the Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus. An officer from the NPT Education department is a representative on the national *Arweinwyr y Gymraeg* group who are currently revising the Siarter Iaith structure and will be launching a new reviewed structure in the Spring term 2024. 2 education officers are also representatives on the national Siarter Iaith coordinators group.

OUTCOME SUMMARY

- Mapping of activities / opportunities for school-aged children to use their Welsh language skills outside of class and outside of school

A mapping out exercise of Welsh-medium provision has been completed (by *Fforwm Iaith Abertawe a CNPT*). The map includes information from all parties outlining the activities, providers, age groups, locations, cost and times of events/ activities. It outlines activities suitable for children and young people as well as community activities and online resources. This resource will be shared and used for future planning in schools and communities. Currently, there are 186 activities and resources available. Partners include *Menter Iaith, Mudiad Meithrin, Tŷ'r Gwrhyd, Urdd, Cymraeg i Blant, Technocamps, Dysgu Cymraeg Ardal Bae Abertawe* and *Amgueddfa Cymru*.

- Evaluation of the impact of Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus

It has been decided (since 2020) not to validate schools in order to give them enough time to resume their *Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus* journey. Validation will begin again during the next academic year and an evaluation of progress will be noted in next year's WESP evaluation. This will fit in with the revised *Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus* structure that will be launched nationally in Spring 2024.

- Other activities to support learners to make continued progress in learning Welsh – regardless of the school's language category

-*Menter Iaith* have held various activities throughout the year in both Welsh-medium and an increasing number of English-medium schools including after school clubs, silent discos, Gig Tanio'r Ddraig, supporting the Urdd Eisteddfod work, Clwb Cinio Cymraeg, music/instrument/ singing sessions, Cwis Dim Clem (1st and 2nd language Welsh pupils), Caffi Cymraeg (for parents and wider community), benefits of bilingualism promotional packs and videos on social media, attended many open evenings in schools to promote Welsh language activities.

-*Urdd* have held various activities including lunch hour and after school clubs, Eisteddfod promotional visits, sporting competitions and activities, apprenticeship training within secondary schools and for current staff within primary schools, residential visits for both English-medium and Welsh-medium schools as well as community and youth work.

-*Tŷ'r Gwrhyd* in Pontardawe continue to offer Welsh language courses to the wider community, story sessions and *Clwb Darllen*, a Welsh book shop and

hosts various Welsh-medium community groups including *Merched y Wawr* and *Cylch Ti a Fi Pontardawe*.

-Further detailed activities can be seen in the activities map. The next step will be to add internal/ LA Welsh-medium and bilingual activities and groups to the map in order to identify and address gaps in provision.

- Welsh language provision for latecomers (as in Outcome 2)

-Two members of staff (experienced teachers) were appointed in January 2022 to investigate existing methodologies and good practice within latecomer centres across Wales and establish effective networks. Following the period of observing good practice, the staff created a detailed scheme of work bespoke to the area and incorporating 'cynefin' into the scheme. An area within YGG Pontardawe was identified and developed/ refurbished during the Summer term 2022 (WG immersion grant funding). A teaching assistant was also appointed and the immersion centre 'Y Cwm' officially opened in September 2022. The first block of immersion had 10 pupils attending and has been very successful. Currently, 49 pupils have attended the 'Y Cwm' this academic year (see table 10).

-There is an aim to open the second immersion hub in the south of the local authority in YGG Rhosafan, thus reducing transport costs and increasing the number of places available for pupils. There will be a slight delay with this target due to YGG Rhosafan being successful in the Sustainable Schools Challenge. As a result a new YGG Rhosafan will be built within the next 3 years and will incorporate a new immersion unit.

- Developing Welsh in English-medium schools

-*Welsh in English-medium team*- the team now consists of one Curriculum Development Officer (CDO) and 3 Teacher Development Officers (TDO). The CDO is responsible for making all the key decisions regarding the delivery of Welsh and Welsh language staff training in English-medium schools in NPT. The CDO manages the W(Em) team and informs and trains the TDOs to ensure a common approach and to maintain standards. The TDO produces and provides all teacher training (e.g. methodology courses / centralised training sessions / Welsh Coordinator training / Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus training. The CDO liaises with outside agencies (Yr Urdd / Menter Iaith / Rhagoriaith / Peniarth / UWTSD Sabbatical team / Swansea University Dysgu Cymraeg Bae Abertawe) and other counties (Swansea, Powys and Penfro) and represents the interests of NPT in meetings / forums. The CDO is responsible for verifying Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus schools and compiling all verification reports.

The TDOs provide support visits for all English-medium schools. A *minimum* of 3 visits per term is provided for every school with additional *targeted* visits provided for schools who request / require additional help / support.

During their visits the TDO provides support for:

- The Welsh Coordinator – help and advice re: planning / monitoring / policies etc
- The Siarter Iaith Lead – help and advice re: achieving Cymraeg Campus targets
- Classroom teachers – provide *in-class training* via exemplar lessons and create bespoke resources in response to need

- Teaching Assistants – provide practical advice and support with their role both in and outside the classroom
- Specific groups of pupils- Criw Cymraeg / Mat pupils / Guided reading sessions

In line with the expectations of the Curriculum for Wales, the Welsh government's Language Strategy and the stated objectives of the Siarter Iaith-Cymraeg Campus, the W(Em) team aims to promote a **holistic** approach to the teaching of Welsh in NPT schools. They aim to ensure that Welsh is taught as a *living language* in our schools rather than a subject on a timetable. The emphasis is placed on developing the skills of listening and speaking whilst providing pupils with authentic opportunities to use the language as a means of communication both across the curriculum and inside and outside the classroom. NPT schools have been trained in, and are expected to follow *Language Journey* methodology as devised by the CDO. This methodology is a step by step guide on how to teach Welsh effectively, placing the oracy skills of listening and speaking firmly at the start of that journey.

-*Cynefin*- In response to the significance of CYNEFIN within the Curriculum for Wales and the expectation for cynefin to be *driver for all topics and themes* in our classrooms (Estyn) the W(Em) team have provided support in the following ways:

- CDO organised a 10 week CYNEFIN project involving the TDOs and Coordinators from 3 NPT pilot schools (Baglan, Melin and Rhos) during which they studied the Cynefin of the 3 schools.
 - Cynefin websites for the 3 schools were created and shared with HTs and Coordinators during CYNEFIN courses in 2022.
 - A Cynefin Lead was appointed by the Local Authority in September 2022.
 - All clusters received Cynefin training from the Cynefin Lead in Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023.
 - Cynefin teams have been established in many NPT schools and the Cynefin Lead continues to provide support with the development of their websites.
 - A Traed, Cam, a Naid (feet, step and jump) approach to teaching is advocated by the W(Em) team and exemplar resources have been produced and shared by the CDO during Coordinator training courses.
- The Outcome 5 sub-group consists of partners (many named above) and meet on a termly basis to evaluate progress and set targets and actions arising from the annual plan, the 5 year plan and the 10 year WESP. These partners play a key role in delivering the activities within our schools.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Local Authority officers and the *WESP Outcomes* sub-groups are responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress against actions within the 10 year plan, the 5 year plan and the annual plan. A range of quantitative and qualitative data is

collected and analysed throughout the year in order to obtain an informed evaluation of progress and to set further targets. Information is shared through termly sub-group meetings and reported back to the full WESP forum annually.

OUTCOME LEVEL RISKS

- External partners not delivering Welsh-medium provisions/ courses/ activities
- No funding leading to courses/ activities (grant funded external providers) not being delivered
- Capacity of small teams/ Welsh-medium staff to continue to deliver growing number of activities/ provisions

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Keep up to date/ regular meetings with external partners to discuss/ foresee any future delivery issues.
- LA to look into funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision
- Develop internal provisions/ delivery within the local authority

Outcome 6

An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Outcome 6 ten year target:

All pupils with ALN within the local authority will have access to provision at all levels through the medium of Welsh. Collaboration with regional partners will provide a comprehensive range of resources, training opportunities and networking to ensure that Welsh medium provision will be of a high standard and complies with the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018. Early Years and pre-school WM ALN support, assessments and provision will provide increased confidence in parents when choosing Welsh medium education for their children.

The number and percentage of learners with ALN/ SEN by medium of school using PLASC data (table 18)

	Welsh-medium		English-medium	
	number	%	number	%
PLASC 2022	417	11.9	3873	21.9
PLASC 2023	327	9.2	2976	17.1

OUTCOME SUMMARY

- Progress against your duty under section 63 of the Additional Learning Needs Act and the Education Tribunal (Wales) 2018 to review your Welsh-medium education ALN provision and mapping exercises to develop and prioritise resources

-Datblygiad Addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg Cynhwysfawr (DACC) steering group-
One of the core aims of the ALN Act is to create a bilingual system of support for ALN. A series of strategic duties are aimed at driving progress towards a bilingual ALN system. In response, NPT have created a steering group for the development of inclusive Welsh-medium education (Grŵp Lliwio_Datblygiad Addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg Cynhwysfawr /DACC). The DACC group is therefore the working party sub-group for Outcome 6. The purpose of the group is to review Welsh-medium provision and identify the provision and resources required within the Welsh-medium sector that will ensure an equitable offer for Welsh-medium pupils and continuity in their journey in Welsh education, particularly during transition points. The DACC group have identified gaps in Welsh-medium ALN literacy provision and are currently developing resources that will facilitate a consistent approach in identifying and supporting literacy difficulties through the medium of Welsh. School staff

have been seconded for this work and will launch the resources within schools in the Autumn term 2023. Termly DACC meetings will continue as the review of provision available through the medium of Welsh is ongoing as resources develop and approaches to ALN evolve. Membership of the DACC group includes ALNCoS from both primary and secondary, Education Support Officers, Specialist Teachers, Educational Psychologists and the Transformation Co-ordinator. The DACC group is therefore able to link their review of ALP with wider strategic duties including those under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs).

- Welsh-medium Learning Support Centres
-YGG Rhosafan- A Welsh-medium 12 place Learning Support Centre is included in the plans for the new build YGG Rhosafan (Sustainable Schools Challenge) which will be completed within the next 3 years. Officers are currently in discussions regarding the design of the school and Centre.
-YGG Trebannws- work on establishing a Welsh-medium learning support centre at YGG Trebannws has started. This is a gradual, steady process transitioning from the predominantly English-medium previous provision to a bilingual provision and eventually to a fully Welsh-medium provision. Currently, only Welsh language pupils are being placed in the provision. It is expected that the last cohort of English pupils will transition to secondary provision within 2 years. At this point, subject to member approval, the Centre will become a Welsh-medium Learning Support Centre.
- The Outcome 6 sub-group are members of the DACC steering group and consists of many partners (named above). They meet on a termly basis to evaluate progress and set targets and actions arising from the DACC action plan, the WESP annual plan, the 5 year WESP plan and the 10 year WESP. These partners play a key role in developing and delivering the activities and resources within our schools.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Local Authority officers and the *WESP Outcomes* sub-groups are responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress against actions within the 10 year plan, the 5 year plan and the annual plan. A range of quantitative and qualitative data is collected and analysed throughout the year in order to obtain an informed evaluation of progress and to set further targets. Information is shared through termly sub-group meetings and reported back to the full WESP forum annually.

OUTCOME LEVEL RISKS

- No grant funding or late offer of grant funding leading to projects not being delivered within the grant period.

- External pressures and influences impacting on project progress.
- Capacity of small teams/ Welsh-medium staff to continue to deliver growing number of projects.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- LA to look into funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision.
- Effective planning to meet statutory timelines, collaborating with other services to share responsibilities, good practice
- Succession planning in order to identify where biggest pressures exist and what can be done to alleviate them. Feed these targets/ pressures into Outcome 7 targets.

Outcome 7

Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Outcome 7 ten year target:

An increased number of the NPT education staff will be able to teach through the medium of Welsh and Welsh as a subject. There will be an increase in Welsh medium staff able to teach specific subjects at secondary level. There will be an increase in the number, ability and confidence of staff in English-medium schools able to converse and teach Welsh, therefore increasing the amount of learners with access to Welsh-medium education at all levels throughout the Local Authority. NPT will attract and recruit excellent, bilingual leaders for our schools. All NPT schools will form communities that promote the Welsh language as a medium for education and community life.

Annual School Workforce Census Data (table 19)

SWAC 2021 - Welsh Ability			
Code	Non Teachers	Teachers	Total
W1	693	240	933
W2	337	311	648
W3	109	276	385
W4	22	105	127
W5	25	58	83
W6	139	257	396
W7	2		2
Total	1327	1247	2574

SWAC 2022 - Welsh Ability			
Code	Non Teachers	Teachers	Total
W1	702	233	935
W2	362	306	668
W3	97	283	380
W4	25	103	128
W5	31	58	89
W6	136	249	385
W7	4		4
Total	1357	1232	2589

SWAC 2021 - Teach/Work through WM			
Code	Non Teachers	Teachers	Total
T1	136	224	360
T2	36	73	109
T3	928	468	1396
T4	227	482	709
Total	1327	1247	2574

SWAC 2022 - Teach/Work through WM			
Code	Non Teachers	Teachers	Total
T1	138	226	364
T2	44	75	119
T3	953	448	1401
T4	222	483	705
Total	1357	1232	2589

T1 Teaching/Working through the medium of Welsh in current post

T2 Able to teach/work through the medium of Welsh but not doing so in current Post

T3 Not able to teach/work through the medium of Welsh

T4 Teaching Welsh as a subject only

Numbers undertaking a sabbatical course, or any other tailored Welsh course for teachers, offered through the National centre for learning Welsh (table 20)

	Number of teachers
2021-2022	3
2022-2023	6
2023-2024	2 (number accepted on next course)

Number of support visits to English-medium primary schools from Welsh in English-medium support staff 2022-2023 (table 21)

Cluster	Number of schools	Number of visits
Bae Baglan	7	75
Cwm Brombil	9	99
Cwmtawe	6	53
Cefn Saeson	5	63
San Joseff	4	53
Dŵr y Felin	6	66
Llangatwg	8	61
Total	45	470

Training for English-medium school staff- Welsh language and delivering of Welsh language (table 22)

Course title and number of sessions	Provider	Date	Number of staff/schools attended
Coordinator 'Curriculum' course x4	NPT Curriculum Development Officer	2021-2023	41/ 45 schools
Coordinator 'Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus' course x4	NPT Curriculum Development Officer	2021-2023	37/ 45 schools
Resourcing The Curriculum courses for N/R, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6 teachers x 14	NPT Curriculum Development Officer	2021-2023	138 staff
New Coordinator course x3	NPT Curriculum Development Officer	2021-2023	14 staff
Newly Qualified Teacher course x1	NPT Curriculum Development Officer	2021-2023	18 staff
Centralised GWRANDO adds x7	NPT Curriculum Development Officer	2021-2023	191 staff
Centralised DRILIO adds x3	NPT Curriculum Development Officer	2021-2023	80 staff

Cynefin course for Coordinators x4	NPT Cynefin Lead	2022-2023	45 staff
Cynefin course for HTs x1	NPT Cynefin Lead	2022-2023	20 staff
Cluster Cynefin adds	NPT Cynefin Lead	2022-2023	All 7 clusters
Tric a Chlic training for Reception / Year 1 / Year 2 teachers	NPT Teacher Development Officer	2021-2023	108 staff
Termly Welsh Language Courses for N/R 1/2 3/4 5/6	Swansea University– Dysgu Cymraeg Bae Abertawe	2022-ongoing	No figures available yet on those registered
Cymraeg bob Dydd course for teachers	Swansea University– Dysgu Cymraeg Bae Abertawe	2022-ongoing	No figures available yet on those registered
Cymraeg Bob Dydd course for TAs	Swansea University– Dysgu Cymraeg Bae Abertawe	2022-ongoing	No figures available yet on those registered

OUTCOME SUMMARY

- Increase in the Welsh in English-medium team**
 The Welsh (English medium) team now consists of one Curriculum Development Officer and 3 Teacher Development Officers and a Cynefin Lead Officer. The CDO is responsible for making all the key decisions regarding the delivery of Welsh and Welsh language staff training in English-medium schools in NPT. The CDO manages the W(Em) team and informs and trains the TDOs to ensure a common approach and to maintain standards. The TDO produces and provides all teacher training (e.g. methodology courses / centralised training sessions / Welsh Coordinator training / Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus training. The CDO liaises with outside agencies (Yr Urdd / Menter Iaith / Rhagoriaith / Peniarth / UWTSO Sabbatical team / Swansea University Dysgu Cymraeg Bae Abertawe) and other counties (Swansea, Powys and Penfro) and represents the interests of NPT in meetings / forums. The CDO is responsible for verifying Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus schools and compiling all verification reports. Information on courses provided are included in *table 22*.
- Planning for future workforce needs**
 Currently, there are plans to assess workforce needs for Welsh-medium primary schools, Welsh-medium secondary provision (and preparation for workforce needs in line with the proposed Full 14-16 Qualification Offer) and English-medium schools moving along the language continuum in line with the proposed Welsh Language Education Bill. NPT officers are also working with Meinir Ebbsworth on a study currently being undertaken on behalf of Welsh Government, and in particular around flexible models that would meet the needs of schools in going forward. These future national developments will be considered alongside local need in order to identify short term and long term plans for addressing vacancies and increasing the number of staff needed in schools, skills centres and ALN provisions.

- Planning to ensure that Welsh speaking central staff are allocated to Welsh-medium schools
Work has commenced on re allocating Welsh speaking staff within departments to Welsh-medium schools. Reorganisation had led to all Welsh-medium schools receiving support from Welsh speaking Bursars and PSOs. Where possible, Welsh speaking ALN support is allocated to Welsh-medium schools. This reorganisation within departments will assist in identifying gaps and future workforce needs.
- Partnership
YGYBD are working closely with PGCE students from Swansea University's School of Education ITE programme and Academi Hywel Teifi to train and promote teachers in Welsh-medium education. Thirteen students were placed in WM settings (YGYBD secondary phase sites) through this partnership in 2020-21 and 14 students in 2021-22, with a focus on subject needs within the workforce i.e. Welsh, English, biology, chemistry, physics, MFL, mathematics, DT and computer science.
- It is important to note that careful short term and long term planning as well as extensive internal and external partnership work is needed for this outcome. As a result, work on Outcome 7 in the first 10 months of the WESP plan has centred on building these partnerships. Detailed short term and long term aims will be set as a result of ongoing projects with our partners and will be fed into the annual plans. The Outcome 7 sub-group consists of many of these partners and will meet on a termly basis to evaluate progress and set further targets and actions arising from the annual plan, the 5 year plan and the 10 year WESP.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Local Authority officers and the *WESP Outcomes* sub-groups are responsible for setting targets and monitoring progress against actions within the 10 year plan, the 5 year plan and the annual plan. A range of quantitative and qualitative data is collected and analysed throughout the year in order to obtain an informed evaluation of progress and to set further targets. Information is shared through termly sub-group meetings and reported back to the full WESP forum annually.

OUTCOME LEVEL RISKS

- External pressures and influences impacting on project progress.
- External partners not delivering Welsh-medium provisions/ courses/ training.
- No funding leading to courses/ training (grant funded external providers) not being delivered
- No capacity/ funding in schools to release staff for training

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Keep up to date/ regular meetings with external partners to discuss/ foresee any future delivery issues.
- LA to look into funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision and release of staff to undertake training.
- Develop internal provisions/ delivery within the local authority.
- Succession planning in order to identify where biggest pressures exist and what can be done to alleviate them. Feed these targets/ pressures into future Outcome 7 annual targets.

Welsh in Education Strategic Development Plan

2023-2024

Objective	Action	Working Party /Partners/ responsibilities	Timescales/	Current position On target/ completed Requires further work/ ongoing Not on target/ yet to start
Welsh in Education Strategic Development Plan				
1. More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh				
Collect data and identify gaps TUGS 119	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse data from 2022 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and the Early Years Flying Start expansion plan 	Outcome 1 working party/ Early Years Officers/ Health, Swansea University/ Academi Hywel Teifi/ Menter Iaith/ RhAG	Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify geographical gaps in Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare provision including wraparound, 30 hours offer and Flying Start expansion 		Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create information booklets providing information on the benefits of bilingualism and addressing common fears will be created and used by the partners from initial perinatal communication with parents 		Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and amend the online admissions process in partnership with the admissions team for the process of applications for Nursery and Reception, so that information is strategically placed throughout the online application system to ensure families are able to make informed decisions about the language of provision they want for their child 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Open new Welsh-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify area and site for new WM primary school and childcare facility 	Outcome 1 working party/ LA Officers-	Jan 2022	

medium Primary school and childcare facility within the LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation process to obtain member approval 	SSIP, Education/ Early Years Officers/ Headteacher	Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of new school within the area and the wider community 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment work to existing building 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender process and appoint childcare provider for the facility 		Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint staff- Headteacher, teaching staff, TA's, admin, caretaker to be appointed 		Oct 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open new WM primary school to pupils 		Jan 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with RLDP officers to identify a site for a second WM primary school within the LA 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
2. More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh				
Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the demand for provision for Welsh-medium education on an annual basis-historical and projected data and surplus places 	Outcome 2 working party/LA Officers/ PENTAN/ Menter Iaith/ RhAG	Sep 2023-Sep 2027	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create parental survey to gather information on reasons for choosing WM education, confidence levels etc. Analyse the results (with specific attention given to school within the Swansea Valley with poor transition rates) 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft appropriate action plans to address and create demand in specific areas and within specific groups, including addressing surplus places in the north of the LA 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Continuum of staff training for EM schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify 4 pilot schools, 2 primary, 2 secondary with the aim of mapping out a continuum of staff training to be able to eventually create a category 2 stream within an English-medium school 	Outcome 2 working party/LA Officers/ Schools involved	Jan 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree upon specific quantitative data, targets and timescales for actions with all pilot schools in line with their need and current resources. 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Develop immersion provision for latecomers to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint staff to research into existing methodologies and good practice across Wales and to form effective networks 	Outcome 2 working party/LA Officers/ immersion staff/ WG/ Hub schools	Jan 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify 'hub' schools in the north and south of the LA. Develop and refurbish hubs from WG immersion funding grant 		Jan 2022	

the Welsh language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open the north 16 place provision hub in YGG Pontardawe – to include promotion, transport arrangements, further staff appointments, open days etc. 		Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open the south 16 place provision hub in YGG Rhosafan – to include promotion, transport arrangements, further staff appointments, open days etc. 		April 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group and LA officers to consider the future of an immersion provision post March 2025 (end of WG 3 year funding) i.e. funding, transport and to include provision in long term LA financial plans 		Sep 2023- March 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual cycle of evaluation to include targets and quantitative/ qualitative data 		Sep 2022- ongoing	
3. More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another				
Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the transition rates, analyse past and projected transition data, identify gaps/ weaknesses 	Outcome 3 Working party / LA officers/PENTAN/ YGYBD Cluster Group	Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather information and identify parents' concerns during transfer. 		Sep 2023- ongoing	
Curriculum Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a support package with Local Authority level support for schools to develop the visibility of the new curriculum with the focus on confidence in the Welsh language in both WM and EM schools 	Outcome 3 Working party / LA officers	Sep 2023	
4. More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh				
Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start the process of monitoring post 16 Welsh medium uptake past and projected, analyse data 	Outcome 4 Working party / LA officers/YGYBD/ involved schools/ Colegau Cymru	Sep 2023	

5. More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Siarter iaith/ Cymraeg Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-launch the Siarter iaith/ Cymraeg Campus ensuring that it is embedded in all new curriculum designs 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ school communities	Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WM and EM schools to reviewed and revisit previous Siarter iaith/ Cymraeg Campus targets and will achieve the pre Covid standards. 		Sep 2023- Sep 2025	
Gig Gymraeg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build on the huge success of our annual 'Gig Gymraeg' within the YGYBD cluster for Y6 and Y7 learners 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/Menter iaith/ PENTAN/ Clwstwr YGYBD	Sep 2022-ongoing	
EM Lead school for Curriculum Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a leading excellent practice English medium school within the LA 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ EM schools	Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This school will share resources and ideas and support other schools with their curriculum design, ensuring that Welsh culture, history and appreciation of the local area is embedded in their new curriculum 		Sep 2023	
Cynefin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NPT schools website 'Cynefin', created by learners, to promote modern Welsh culture, history and local area will be launched 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ WM and EM schools	Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Cynefin' website to added to on a regular basis in all Welsh medium schools 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Cynefin' website to be rolled out to all English medium schools 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
LA provision and third sector services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit to see what WM provision is available within the LA (both within school and in the community) and geographical gaps will be identified and filled i.e. provision from Urdd, PASS, Youth Service etc. 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ Academi Hywel Teifi/ Tŷ'r Gwrhyd/ Menter iaith/ Urdd/ PASS/ Youth Service/ school communities/other third sector services	Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools encouraged to use the Urdd Residential Centres to promote the Welsh language in a fun and relaxed environment 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WM and EM schools encouraged to partake in Urdd Eisteddfod activities with the aim of increasing confidence in the language and increasing awareness of Welsh literature, music and the arts 		Sep 2023-ongoing	

Provision and promotion of learning opportunities for non-Welsh speaking learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit of learning opportunities for non-Welsh speaking learners, parents / carers and grandparents or those who are hesitant in the language 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ Academi Hywel Teifi/ Tŷ'r Gwrhyd/ Menter Iaith/ Urdd/ RhAG	Sep 2023-ongoing	
6. An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018				
Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect detailed data and information to set a baseline for current provision, recognise gaps in provision 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools/ ALNCo	April 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set quantitative targets and time lines for improvement 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Information and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information and advice for children and young people and their families 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools/ ALNCo	Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and council websites include information about addressing the needs of pupils in Welsh-medium education and about specialist provision 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
DACC (Datblygu Addysg Cynhwysfawr Cymraeg)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up DACC working group consisting of ALNCO s, LA ALN officers, Headteachers, other LA officers 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools/ ALNCo s	Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold half termly meetings to discuss and address needs/ pressures on WM ALN, professional development needs and set targets and time lines for improvement 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
WM Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plans to establish a Welsh-medium learning support centre at YGG Trebannws 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools	Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plans to establish a Welsh-medium learning support centre at YGG Rhosafan (in line with Sustainable Schools Challenge/ Sustainable Communities for Learning programme) 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions to develop bilingual specialist playgroup and childcare provision to support the early identification of emerging needs for our youngest children 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA	Sep 2022-ongoing	

		officers/Early Years officers		
7. Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh				
Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a biannual audit and detailed analysis of Welsh speakers able to teach through the medium of Welsh in all sectors including include teachers, TA's, youth workers etc. 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers	Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use data to provide workforce planning in order to capture the required number of staff needed for the future and pinpoint schools (WM and EM schools) 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set biannual targets for increasing the proportion of the workforce with language skills at foundation level, and at intermediate level or higher 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit the number and place of work of all Welsh speakers within the Authority in order to ensure Welsh medium non-teaching staff are allocated to Welsh medium schools, thus strengthening provision and communication 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
National Sabbatical Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devise a system of targeting schools according to greater need to nominate individuals to attend the National Sabbatical Scheme 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/ WG/ EM schools	Sep 2023	
Workforce forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a workforce forum to respond to recruitment gaps and challenges in the authority 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers /	Sep 2023	
Partnerships and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on the effective ITE partnership between YGYBD and Swansea University and ensure maximum engagement with the new Primary programme. 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/ ITE providers/ YGYBD/ Swansea University/ Careers Service	Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGCE students from Swansea University and the Careers Service will hold regular information sessions with staff and pupils from Y10-13 in both Welsh and English medium schools, outlining the benefits of a career in education and the integral role the Welsh language plays in this 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Academi Hywel Teifi- Welsh Language courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop initial five-year programme of planning and development for teaching staff within the Local Authority to attend Welsh language courses run by Academi Hywel Teifi with focus on staff in English-medium schools with minimal Welsh-language skills, but provision for those wishing to brush up or enhance their skills will also be made available across all schools 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/Academi Hywel Teifi	Sep 2023-2027	

<p>Welsh Government Workforce Development Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Welsh Government Workforce Development Plan 	<p>Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/ WG/ partners</p>	<p>Sep 2023</p>	
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Tudalen 125

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag

Neath Port Talbot Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

5 Year Plan 2022-2027

To deliver NPT's 5 year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Objective	Action	Working Party /Partners/ responsibilities	Timescales/	Current position On target/ completed Requires further work/ ongoing Not on target/ yet to start
1. More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh				
Collect data and identify gaps 12/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse data from 2022 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and the Early Years Flying Start expansion plan 	Outcome 1 working party/ Early Years Officers/ Mudiad Meithrin	Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify geographical gaps in Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare provision including wraparound, 30 hours offer and Flying Start expansion 		Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Welsh-medium pre-school provision is available throughout the county 		Sep 2027	
Promotion and Partnership work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote partnership work with Midwifery and Health Visitors to assist early messages about the Welsh Language and bilingualism 	Outcome 1 working party/ Early Years Officers/ Health, Swansea University/ Academi Hywel Teifi/ Menter Iaith/ RhAG/	Sep 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create information booklets providing information on the benefits of bilingualism and addressing common fears will be created and used by the partners from initial perinatal communication with parents 		Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and launch a Welsh-medium Education platform on the NPT web site to promote, signpost and assist parents and pupils 		Sep 2024-Sep 2025	

Tudalen 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and establish effective partnership work with Swansea University/ Academi Hywel Teifi-embed the promotion of bilingualism into the midwifery course currently running at the University. 		Sep 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map out training from Cefin Campbell on the benefits of the Welsh language and bilingualism- start rolling this out to staff working within EY in NPT, LA and Health (including SALT), childcare sector etc. 		Sep 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a package/ strategy to promote the importance of transferring between Cylchoedd Meithrin and Welsh-medium primary schools and signpost clear progression routes in Welsh-medium education from childcare through to post-16 for all families. 		Sep 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and amend the online admissions process in partnership with the admissions team for the process of applications for Nursery and Reception, so that information is strategically placed throughout the online application system to ensure families are able to make informed decisions about the language of provision they want for their child 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Open new Welsh-medium Primary school and childcare facility within the LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify area and site for new WM primary school and childcare facility 	Outcome 1 working party/ LA Officers- SSIP, Education/ Early Years Officers/ Headteacher	Jan 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation process to obtain member approval 		Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of new school within the area and the wider community 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbishment work to existing building 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender process and appoint childcare provider for the facility 		Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint staff- Headteacher, teaching staff, TA's, admin, caretaker to be appointed 		Oct 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open new WM primary school to pupils 		Jan 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with RLDP officers to identify a site for a second WM primary school within the LA 		Sep 2022-ongoing	

Numbers and % of 3-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh									
2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
311	21.4%	331	22.8%	351	24.2%	370	25.5%	389	26.8%

2. More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Data collection and information gathering Tudalen 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the demand for provision for Welsh-medium education on an annual basis-historical and projected data and surplus places 	Outcome 2 working party/LA Officers/ PENTAN/ Menter Iaith/ RhAG	Sep 2023-Sep 2027	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create parental survey to gather information on reasons for choosing WM education, confidence levels etc. Analyse the results (with specific attention given to school within the Swansea Valley with poor transition rates) 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft appropriate action plans to address and create demand in specific areas and within specific groups, including addressing surplus places in the north of the LA 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Continuum of staff training for EM schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify 4 pilot schools, 2 primary, 2 secondary with the aim of mapping out a continuum of staff training to be able to eventually create a category 2 stream within an English-medium school 	Outcome 2 working party/LA Officers/ Schools involved	Jan 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree upon specific quantitative data, targets and timescales for actions with all pilot schools in line with their need and current resources. 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual cycle of evaluation to include targets and quantitative/ qualitative data 		Sep 2024-ongoing	
Develop immersion provision for latecomers to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint staff to research into existing methodologies and good practice across Wales and to form effective networks 	Outcome 2 working party/LA Officers/ immersion staff/ WG/ Hub schools	Jan 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify 'hub' schools in the north and south of the LA. Develop and refurbish hubs from WG immersion funding grant 		Jan 2022	

the Welsh language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open the north 16 place provision hub in YGG Pontardawe – to include promotion, transport arrangements, further staff appointments, open days etc. 		Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open the south 16 place provision hub in YGG Rhosafan – to include promotion, transport arrangements, further staff appointments, open days etc. 		April 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group and LA officers to consider the future of an immersion provision post March 2025 (end of WG 3 year funding) i.e. funding, transport and to include provision in long term LA financial plans 		Sep 2023- March 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual cycle of evaluation to include targets and quantitative/ qualitative data 		Sep 2022- ongoing	

Tudalen 130

Numbers and % of 5-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
288	19.7%	308	21%	327	22.3%	346	23.6%	365	24.9%

3. More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the transition rates, analyse past and projected transition data, identify gaps/ weaknesses 	Outcome 3 Working party / LA officers/PENTAN/ YGYBD Cluster Group	Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather information and identify parents' concerns during transfer. 		Sep 2023- ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft appropriate action plans/ transition plan to address and create demand in specific areas and within specific groups 		Jan 2024- ongoing	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual cycle of evaluation to include targets and quantitative/ qualitative data 		Sep 2024-ongoing	
Welsh language continuum policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a policy setting out the Local Authority's expectations of pupils continuing within the Welsh sector 	Outcome 3 Working party / LA officers/PENTAN/ YGYBD Cluster Group	Sep 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all schools support and implement the policy when dealing with parents, resulting in a collective responsibility to support parents and encourage confidence. 		Jan 2025	
Curriculum Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a support package with Local Authority level support for schools to develop the visibility of the new curriculum with the focus on confidence in the Welsh language in both WM and EM schools 	Outcome 3 Working party / LA officers	Sep 2023	
Plan for expansion in secondary WM provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider expanding the capacity within Welsh-medium secondary education as a result of increased numbers in outcomes 1 and 2 (planning stage in first 5 years-to be implemented in second half of the WESP cycle) 	Outcome 3 Working party / LA officers/ YGYBD SMT/ RLDP officers	Sep 2024-2027	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with Replacement Local Development Planning (RLDP) officers and Headteacher in order to identify options and timetables to implement the developments 		Sep 2024-2027	
4. More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh				
Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor post 16 welsh medium uptake past and projected, analyse data 	Outcome 4 Working party / LA officers/YGYBD/ involved schools/ Colegau Cymru	Sep 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft appropriate action plans/ transition plan to address and create demand in specific areas and within specific groups e.g. Early Years workforce 		Jan 2025	
WM Vocational Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial discussions with Colegau Cymru (Neath / Afan College), create baseline of available WM courses and analyse data of current uptake 	Outcome 4 Working party / LA officers/YGYBD/ Colegau Cymru/ WG/ Careers Wales	Jan 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Colegau Cymru and WG to understand available provision and workforce need in order to promote WM vocational courses 		Jan 2024-August 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft appropriate action plans/ transition plan to address and create demand in specific areas and within specific groups 		Sep 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Careers Wales and Colegau Cymru to develop a menu of Welsh medium and bilingual apprenticeships for the current pupils in the system, 		Sep 2024-2027	

	Careers Wales to promote Welsh language as essential skills for the future within the Local Authority			
WM Science GCSE/ A Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition the default language for Science GCSE in Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur to Welsh. 	Outcome 4 Working party / LA officers/YGYBD	Sep 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition the default language for Science A level in Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur to Welsh. 		Sep 2027	
5. More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school				
Siarter iaith/ Cymraeg Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-launch the Siarter iaith/ Cymraeg Campus ensuring that it is embedded in all new curriculum designs 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ school communities	Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WM and EM schools to reviewed and revisit previous Siarter iaith/ Cymraeg Campus targets and will achieve the pre Covid standards. 		Sep 2023- Sep 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siarter iaith/ Cymraeg Campus action plans/strategies will be used to ensure regular opportunities for learners, staff and the wider community to engage in activities that increase confidence in the Welsh language and promote Welsh modern culture and history 		Sep 2024- ongoing	
Gig Gymraeg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build on the huge success of our annual 'Gig Gymraeg' within the YGYBD cluster for Y6 and Y7 learners 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/Menter iaith/ PENTAN/ Clwstwr YGYBD/EM schools	Sep 2022- ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out the 'gig' ensuring that all Y6 pupils in WM and EM schools have access to a contemporary WM music festival on an annual basis, supported by Menter iaith CNPT. 		June 2024	
EM Lead school for curriculum design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a leading excellent practice English medium school within the LA 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ EM schools	Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This school will share resources and ideas and support other schools with their curriculum design, ensuring that Welsh culture, history and appreciation of the local area is embedded in their new curriculum 		Sep 2023	
Cynefin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NPT schools website 'Cynefin', created by learners, to promote modern Welsh culture, history and local area will be launched 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ WM and EM schools	Sep 2022- ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Cynefin' website to added to on a regular basis in all Welsh medium schools 		Sep 2022- ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Cynefin' website to be rolled out to all English medium schools 		Sep 2022- ongoing	

LA provision and third sector services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit to see what WM provision is available within the LA (both within school and in the community) and geographical gaps will be identified and filled i.e. provision from Urdd, PASS, Youth Service etc. 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ Academi Hywel Teifi/ Tŷ'r Gwrhyd/ Menter Iaith/ Urdd/ PASS/ Youth Service/ school communities/other third sector services	Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a menu of support for WM and EM schools within the LA 		Sep 2024-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third sector services will introduced a baseline and targets that will demonstrate their intention to increase community activities 		Sep 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools encouraged to use the Urdd Residential Centres to promote the Welsh language in a fun and relaxed environment 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WM and EM schools encouraged to partake in Urdd Eisteddfod activities with the aim of increasing confidence in the language and increasing awareness of Welsh literature, music and the arts 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Provision and promotion of learning opportunities for non-Welsh speaking learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit of learning opportunities for non-Welsh speaking learners, parents / carers and grandparents or those who are hesitant in the language 	Outcome 5 Working party /LA officers/ Academi Hywel Teifi/ Tŷ'r Gwrhyd/ Menter Iaith/ Urdd/ RhAG	Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a programme to ensure provision and promotion of learning opportunities for non-Welsh speaking learners, parents / carers and grandparents or those who are hesitant in the language in order to raise their confidence and assist with their children's education 		Jan 2024-ongoing	
6. An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018				
Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect detailed data and information to set a baseline for current provision, recognise gaps in provision 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools/ ALNCo	April 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set quantitative targets and time lines for improvement 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a biannual audit of the additional learning needs (ALN) of Welsh medium language learners and review our specialist planned places, in order to inform current and map future emerging need for Welsh medium provision for our most complex children and young people with ALN 		Sep 2024-ongoing	

Information and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information and advice for children and young people and their families 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools/ ALNCo	Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and council websites include information about addressing the needs of pupils in Welsh-medium education and about specialist provision 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
DACC (Datblygu Addysg Cynhwysfawr Cymraeg)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up DACC working group consisting of ALNCO s, LA ALN officers, Headteachers, other LA officers 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools/ ALNCo s	Sep 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold half termly meetings to discuss and address needs/ pressures on WM ALN, professional development needs and set targets and time lines for improvement 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
WM Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plans to establish a Welsh-medium learning support centre at YGG Trebannws 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/ WM schools	Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plans to establish a Welsh-medium learning support centre at YGG Rhosafan (in line with Sustainable Schools Challenge/ Sustainable Communities for Learning programme) 		Sep 2022-ongoing	
Tudalen 134	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions to develop bilingual specialist playgroup and childcare provision to support the early identification of emerging needs for our youngest children 	Outcome 6 Working party /LA officers/Early Years officers	Sep 2022-ongoing	

7. Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

Data collection and information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a biannual audit and detailed analysis of Welsh speakers able to teach through the medium of Welsh in all sectors including include teachers, TA's, youth workers etc. 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers	Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use data to provide workforce planning in order to capture the required number of staff needed for the future and pinpoint schools (WM and EM schools) 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set biannual targets for increasing the proportion of the workforce with language skills at foundation level, and at intermediate level or higher 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit the number and place of work of all Welsh speakers within the Authority in order to ensure Welsh medium non-teaching staff are allocated to Welsh medium schools, thus strengthening provision and communication 		Sep 2023-ongoing	

National Sabbatical Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise a system of targeting schools according to greater need to nominate individuals to attend the National Sabbatical Scheme 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/ WG/ EM schools	Sep 2023	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a system of targeting schools according to greater need to nominate individuals to attend the National Sabbatical Scheme with a view to enabling 3 teachers per year to attend 		Sep 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and ensure that the learning and knowledge is cascaded within each school that benefits from the scheme with a view to creating a changed culture, ethos and language practice within the school 		Sep 2025	
Workforce forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a workforce forum to respond to recruitment gaps and challenges in the authority 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers /	Sep 2023	
Staff recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create clear guidelines for use by schools, governing bodies and HR when recruiting new staff, outlining the expectation in terms of the Welsh language 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers	Sep 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Governing Bodies will be required to address this ongoing aim as a standing agenda item 		Jan 2025	
Partnerships and Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the effective ITE partnership between YGYBD and Swansea University and ensure maximum engagement with the new Primary programme. 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/ ITE providers/ YGYBD/ Swansea University/ Careers Service	Sep 2022-ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGCE students from Swansea University and the Careers Service will hold regular information sessions with staff and pupils from Y10-13 in both Welsh and English medium schools, outlining the benefits of a career in education and the integral role the Welsh language plays in this 		Sep 2023-ongoing	
Academi Hywel Teifi- Welsh Language courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop initial five-year programme of planning and development for teaching staff within the Local Authority to attend Welsh language courses run by Academi Hywel Teifi with focus on staff in English-medium schools with minimal Welsh-language skills, but provision for those wishing to brush up or enhance their skills will also be made available across all schools 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/Academi Hywel Teifi	Sep 2023-2027	
Welsh Government Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Welsh Government Workforce Development Plan 	Outcome 7 Working party /LA officers/ WG/ partners	Sep 2023	

Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to mainstream recommendations at local level to maximize and grow a Welsh teaching and learning workforce using a partnership approach to planning the workforce needs 		Jan 2024	
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Tudalen 136

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Name of Local Authority

Neath Port Talbot

Period of this Plan

2022-2032

This Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is made under Section 84 of *The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013* and the content complies with the *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019*¹⁻². We have given due regard to the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Ministers when setting our targets.

Signed: **Date:**

(This Plan needs to be signed by the Chief Education officer within your local authority)

¹ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

² [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

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Foreword

I am pleased to publish Neath Port Talbot's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032. This exciting Plan sets the direction of strategic planning for the growth of Welsh medium education in the County over the next decade.

This plan reflects our vision for promoting and ensuring meaningful access to Welsh language learning for pupils and staff across all phases and sectors and places the needs of our learners at the heart of our provision. We believe that all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh. As a result, we are committed to ensuring high quality provision and support that will enable all learners to benefit from universal access to Welsh-medium education and experiences.

We firmly believe that education is the vehicle that will produce Welsh speakers of the future, and we have a responsibility to stimulate and promote growth in the sector. This is at the heart of this plan, with the aim of ensuring that the Welsh language is not restricted to the classroom.

As an Authority, we are committed to achieving all of the ambitious aims within our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and will ensure that the Plan responds in a co-ordinated, proactive and ambitious way towards the achievement of the Welsh national targets for 2050 and the aim of having one million Welsh speakers.

Councillor Peter Rees

Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture

January 2022

Our ten year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in our area

The Vision

Neath Port Talbot Local Authority Borough Council recognises that language and culture are critical parts of an individual's identity and is committed to promoting and ensuring meaningful access to Welsh language learning for pupils across all phases and sectors.

Our vision for improving the planning and thus increasing the provision of Welsh medium education in Neath Port Talbot will facilitate the national vision for the Welsh language, to secure 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. We share the Welsh Government's vision:

...to secure favourable circumstances throughout the country that support language acquisition and use of Welsh language skills. We want to see an increase in language transmission in the family, early introduction of Welsh to every child, an education system that provides Welsh language skills for all

Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers (Welsh Government, 2017)

In Neath Port Talbot we will enable all learners, families and carers to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life. Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot. We believe that all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh. The authority underpins this principle by committing to enabling all learners to benefit from its universal access to this provision.

Our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-32, will be the cornerstone for this vision and will detail how we plan to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools and in the wider communities and how we plan for future growth. The plan details how we will secure further development over the next 10 years, January 2022 - January 2032. It aligns itself to:

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'
- Prosperity for All: the national strategy and the programme for Government, Taking Wales forward 2016-2021
- Welsh Government's national Welsh language strategy 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers by 2050'
- Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan 2017-21- A desire for learners to become increasingly bilingual and commitments to

encourage teachers with some ability to speak Welsh to further develop their skills

- The Welsh in Education, Action Plan 2017-21
Sets the direction for the development of Welsh-medium education
- Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Our statutory education system has a vital role to play in increasing the number of Welsh speakers and, as highlighted by Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy, "post-compulsory education and training providers have a key role to play in sustaining learners' Welsh language skills to meet the growing need for a bilingual workforce". In order to achieve our goals, we must significantly increase the number of school learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh-language skills in all settings and thus use it in their everyday lives.

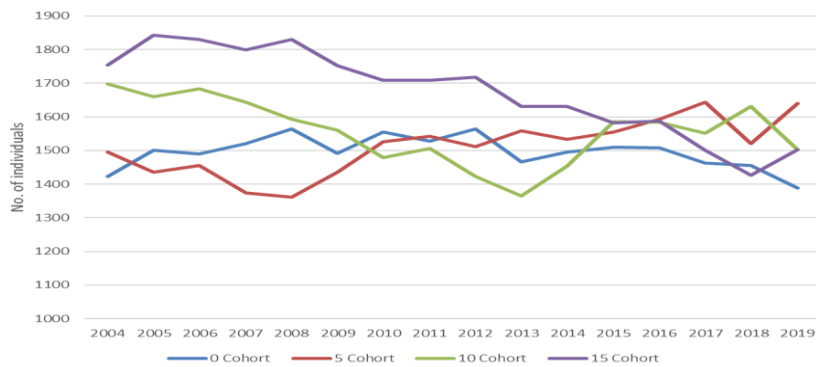
Welsh Government have set a target for Neath Port Talbot to increase the number of learners accessing Welsh-medium education of between 17% and 27% over a 10 year period. This target is based on increasing the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032. Our ambitious plan is to exceed the upper range of the target set by Welsh Government.

Current trends and projected forecasts

The overarching 10 year target is set as a result of a geographic and demographic assessment. The analysis tells us:

- The number of children within the zero age cohort gradually increased in the early 2000s but this process has now flattened out and returned to the lower levels previously seen at the beginning of the period.
- The three year average number of individuals within this cohort in 2017-19 is 1,436, which is 5.9% down on the level seen a decade earlier when the three year average for 2007-09 was 1,526 (90 individual per year higher).
- The age five cohort has displayed considerable growth over the last decade with the three year average 15.2% higher for this age group during 2017-19 than compared to 2007-09 (up from 1390 to 1601). This is in contrast with older age cohorts with the number of 15 year olds present within the County Borough seeing a sustained fall over the last 15 years, with the number in this age group now 17.7% lower than a decade earlier.

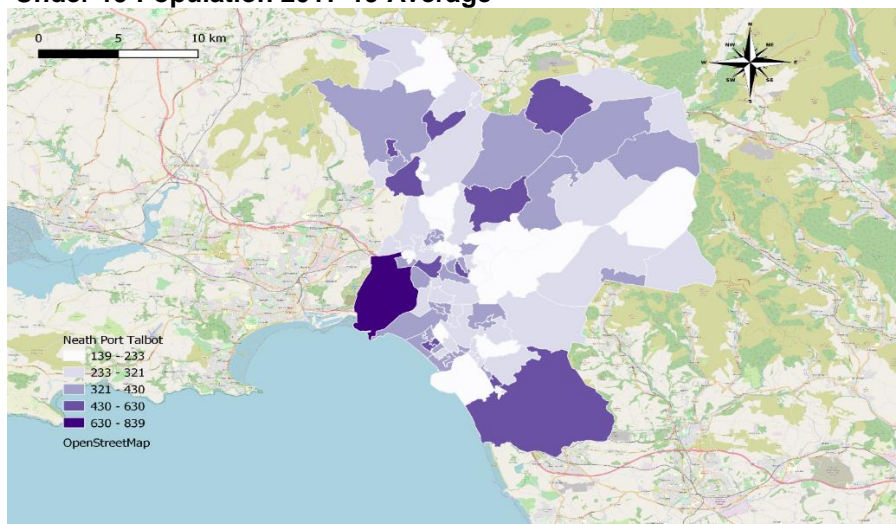
County level population chart



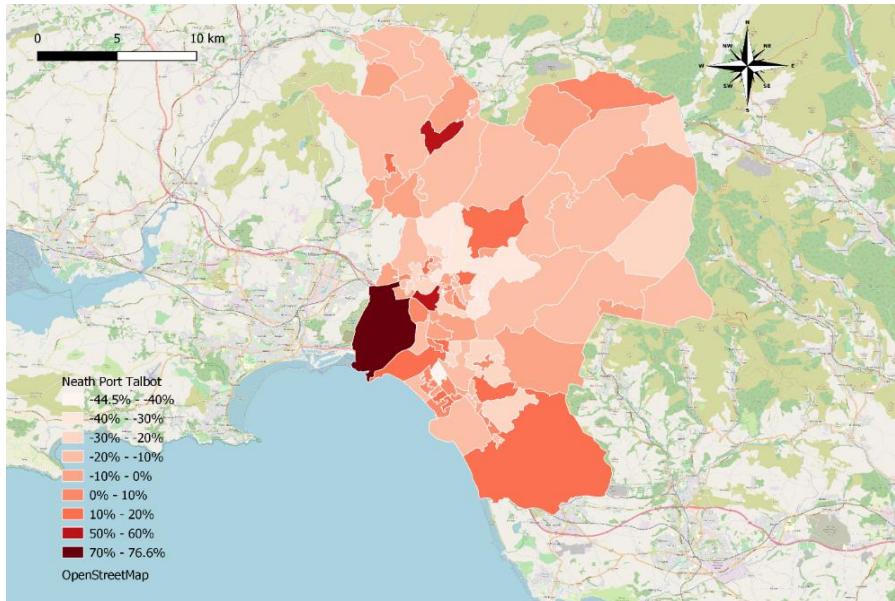
The above data shows a decrease in zero age population, however, an analysis of factors which will impact on the future of Welsh medium education has showed a projected plateauing in the school age population and a potential to substantially increase the number of Welsh medium learners within the next 10 years. The factors taken into consideration when conducting the assessment included population change, population density, population composition, existing Welsh language skills, current Welsh-medium learners and potential additional demand for Welsh-medium education.

The data from the assessment shows that some areas within the Local Authority are showing significant population growth in the under 19 category with one showing a population increase of 76.6% from a three year average of 475 in 2002-04 to 839 in 2017-19. The three year average for this area of 839 makes this the largest in terms of absolute population for this age group.

Under 19 Population 2017-19 Average



Under 19 % Population Change 2002-4 Average to 2017-19 Average



Analysis of the data shows that the strategic plan will require a proactive and reactive approach to include:

- establishing new Welsh-medium schools in areas where the demand for Welsh-medium education is identified
- creating a demand for Welsh-medium education in new geographical areas

Strategic Planning and links with the Local Development Plan

A termly meeting is held to share information and consider future pressures on school places, including those brought about by approved housing developments, and to develop the appropriate responses to these pressures. Information on approved housing developments and information on sites allocated within the Local Development Plan (LDP) will be considered along with pupil population forecasts to predict the likely impact of population changes at a local and authority-wide level. Due consideration will be given to the demand for Welsh-medium education, and its planned growth. Work has recently begun on the preparation of the new LDP (2021-2036). Through consultation and engagement with key stakeholders throughout the plan's preparation process, the new plan will consider whether site-specific education facility allocations will need to be made and what policies may be needed to secure education provision, for example, through planning obligations. The new LDP will consider the demand for educational land use for all ages, types of facilities and for Welsh-medium and English-medium provision. The WESP co-ordinator along with the Strategic School Improvement programme team have been included in developing the new LDP.

Achieving the Vision

In order to deliver the WESP our main objectives are:

- to bring forward a proposal to create a further 3 Welsh medium primary schools within the ten year plan
- to increase the transfer rates between pre-school and Welsh-medium school-based provision by 80% during the lifetime of the plan: we will deliver an action plan in conjunction with providers such as Mudiad Meithrin
- to ensure increased transition rates from Welsh-medium primary schools to Welsh-medium secondary schools with the aim of securing 100% transition rate per year
- to establish later entry point linguistic support for pupils wishing access to Welsh Medium Education through latecomer immersion provision for both primary and secondary learners as outlined in Outcome 2
- to ensure that Welsh language provision across all Welsh and English medium settings provides pupils with the skills and ability to become confident and sustained speakers of Welsh
- to ensure that post 16 provision through the medium of Welsh is strengthened and thus meets the needs and aspirations of all students
- to maintain the availability of transport in line with the approved council travel policy in order to promote access to Welsh-medium provision
- to ensure that children and young people with ALN receive linguistic equality of opportunity in terms of Welsh-medium education and support in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- to ensure that access, locally or regionally, to professional training to support the development of effective Welsh teaching and learning which responds to the identified needs of those working in both the English and Welsh-medium sectors
- to recognise Welsh as being essential in role specifications when recruiting all school-based staff; we will clearly outline our expectations in terms of skill-level requirement (from Level 0 to 3) and provide in-house training to support staff development
- to ensure that the WESP Forum has clear objectives to enable it to deliver the outcomes effectively

These main objectives are discussed in detail on the following pages, with a brief summary of the current position and our proposals for the duration of the WESP.

Current provision

Access to Welsh-medium education is met through existing primary and secondary school provision, mainly within the local authority and in a small number of cases in neighbouring authorities. We also facilitate access to secondary phase Welsh-medium education for out of Local Authority pupils, mainly from Powys, at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur. Recognising parental demand for more readily accessible secondary phase Welsh medium education, the local authority has recently established a second 11-16 campus in the south of the Local Authority

Borough. Transport has been provided in accordance with the authority's Home to School Travel Policy 2017.

The Local Authority complies with the statutory duties of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008 and currently the Council's policy is to provide discretionary free home to school travel assistance to those pupils attending their nearest suitable Welsh-medium education provision or the designated Welsh-medium education provision for the home address. Discretionary assistance for free home to school travel to Welsh-medium schools is subject to the specified distance criteria being met. Currently there is no requirement to provide free home to school travel assistance to pupils of non-compulsory school age, including those attending Welsh-medium Post-16 provision.

Swansea Valley – an area of linguistic sensitivity

The term 'linguistic sensitivity' is used to define those areas in Wales which require targeted and additional support where the language is deemed to be in a weakened state and where the number of speakers are in serious decline, and where the linguistic community may face challenges around the daily use of their language.

According to the 2011 Census, around 15.3% of the county borough's population could speak Welsh, which equates to 20,698 individuals. The vast majority of these speakers lived in the top of the Swansea and Amman Valleys with some communities such as Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Cwmllynfell and Lower Brynamman amongst the highest percentage of Welsh speaking areas in Wales. However, these are the areas that saw the greatest decline in terms of percentage and numbers of Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011.

The Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Promotion strategy highlights the importance of the area between Trebanos to Cwmllynfell and Rhos to Gwaun Cae Gurwen as possibly the *'most important in the county borough in terms of its linguistic significance as it contains the highest numbers and percentages of Welsh speakers.'*

The table below shows a significant drop in the number of Welsh speakers in these communities over 10 years. In 2011 the Welsh Language Board established a specific language promotion scheme for the Aman Tawe area in an effort to halt the decline of the Welsh language in this area.

Community	Number of Welsh speakers (2001)	Number of Welsh speakers (2011)	Change	% Comparable change
Cwmllynfell	741	669	-72	-9.72
Lower Brynamman	861	776	-85	-9.87
Gwaun Cae Gurwen	1,860	1,572	-288	-15.48
Ystalyfera	1,614	1,339	-275	-17.04
Trebanos	580	459	-121	-20.86
Godre'r Graig	580	473	-107	-18.45
Pontardawe	1,826	1,624	-202	-11.06
Alltwen	800	664	-136	-17.0
Rhos	692	588	-104	-15.03

2001 and 2011 census

Factors that contribute to linguistic erosion include:

- Lack of language transmission at home
- Out-migration / Immigration
- Negative perception of the inherent value of the language
- Lack of awareness of the advantages of bilingualism
- Lack of confidence in Welsh speakers
- The spread of English into traditional Welsh languages
- Mixed language marriages
- The power of Anglo-American influence on the interests of children and young people
- More deaths than births among Welsh-speaking families

A range of actions have been identified within this WESP which are aimed to support and develop the Welsh language within this area and other areas within the Local Authority which require additional support to ensure that numbers do not significantly decline further.

As not to hold back on realising the ambitious targets in this strategic plan, the current WESP does not include actions with regards to the Swansea Valley proposal. We commit to working close with Welsh Government to address the actions and consider the advice in the Impact Assessment. This further work will be annexed to the current WESP once a decision process has been completed.

Welsh-medium Childcare Provision within Neath Port Talbot

Name of provision	Location
Cylch Mwy Blaendulais	Seven Sisters
Tiddlywinks Childcare Centre	Ystalyfera
Cylch Aberafan	Aberavon
Cylch Brynhyfryd	Brynhyfryd
Lots of Tots	Tairgwaith
Meithrinfa Ddydd Ser Bach	Neath

Cylch Chwarae Castell-nedd	Neath
Meithrinfa Ddydd y Waun	Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen
Georgie Porgie's Cylch Tir Morfa	Sandfields
Cylch Chwarae Pontardawe	Pontardawe
Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd	Glynneath

Welsh-medium schools within Neath Port Talbot

Primary	Middle (3-19)
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Blaendulais	Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castell-nedd	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmnedd	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmllynfell	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Trebannws	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn	

Post 16 provision within Neath Port Talbot

Name of Provider
Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur
Coleg Afan Nedd
St Joseph's Sixth Form Centre

Outcome 1:

More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

Our early years ambition for the Welsh Language in Neath Port Talbot, involves us generating a culture where high quality Welsh Language services for families are not just easily accessible and available, but in demand; we need to create that demand. We feel, the key here is promoting and communicating the benefits of the Welsh Language and bilingualism as early as possible during a child's journey through education and services.

We recognise that parents decisions about their child's ultimate destination school, regardless of language, is often considered very early on in a child's life, or even during gestation. Identifying both universal and targeted provision contact points with families, and working in partnership is essential in fulfilling these targets.

In terms of our existing strategies and plans, it is essential for us to dovetail the many cross-cutting outcomes throughout the Early Years services we run, both as a Local Authority, and collaboratively with partners. These include:

- CCG: Childcare and Play- Supporting Families (3 focus areas, one of which is to support and assist families wishing to access provision through the medium of Welsh)
- Welsh Language Strategy – Childcare element within Priority 1
- Childcare Sufficiency Assessment – Priority: Improve access to Welsh medium and bilingual provision
- Play Sufficiency Assessment
- Flying Start Childcare
- Childcare Offer for Wales

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

The Childcare Act 2006 requires Neath Port Talbot Council, and other Local Authorities to shape and support the development of childcare in the local area to make it flexible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of the community. This is to ensure that parents, carers and families are able to access the childcare they need locally. Local Authorities are therefore required to assess the local childcare market to develop a realistic and robust picture of parents' current and future need for childcare. Having sufficient childcare in Neath Port Talbot means that families are able to find childcare that meets their children's needs and empowers parents and carers to make choices about work and training.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment data was not required by WG to be refreshed as initially planned during 2020, due to the pandemic. The last full CSA was 2017. This was reliant on SASS data that was not fully complete by the NPT CC sector at the time, so the data and information is not an accurate measure of the WM sector at the time.

3% of the 68 registered childminders in NPT class their main operating language as Welsh and English (2 childminders classified as Welsh/English, 66 class themselves as English only).

The new Childcare Sufficiency Assessment will be published in 2022 and this information will be included in the annual action plans that will accompany this WESP.

Distribution of Childcare Places

Based on data from June 2020, there were 9 wards within the Local Authority with no registered childcare provision (Welsh and English). Of these 9 wards, 3 were in the catchment area of existing Welsh-medium schools- Trebanos, Godre'r Graig and Coedffranc Central. It is therefore essential to address these areas within the first half of the WESP plan, with the aim of addressing the remaining areas in the second half of the plan.

Welsh-medium Childcare Data

From a snap shot taken 30th August 2021 from the NPT CIW childcare data shown below, 10.5% of the total 2199 available registered childcare spaces were Welsh Medium spaces:

Service URN	Service Name	Provider Address Town/City	Service Type	Service Sub Type	Maximum Capacity	Date Of Registration	Temporarily Closed
SIN-00004620	Cylch Meithrin Mwy Blaendulais	Blaendulais	Childrens Day Care	Sessional Day Care	12	37347	Open
SIN-00004621	Tiddlywinks Childcare Centre, Yst	Ystalyfera	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	43	37347	Open
SIN-00005342	Cylch Aberafan, Aberavon Integrated Children's Centre	Aberavon	Childrens Day Care	Sessional Day Care	12	38951	Open
SIN-00005645	Cylch Brynhyfryd Flying Start Playgroup	Brynhyfryd	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	?	40206	Open
SIN-00005723	Lots of Tots (Canolfan Maerdy)	Tairgwaith	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	52	39926	Open
SIN-00005753	Meithrinfa Ddydd Ser Bach / Little Stars Day Nursery	Neath	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	39917	Open
SIN-00006233	Cylch Chwarae Castell-Nedd	Neath	Childrens Day Care	Sessional Day Care	28	41346	Open
SIN-00006241	Meithrinfa Ddydd y Waun	GCG	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	41380	Open
SIN-00006588	Georgie Porgie's Cylch Tir Morfa	Sandfields	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	12	42009	Open
SIN-00007321	Cylch Chwarae Pontardawe	Pontardawe	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	14	42571	Open
SIN-00008668-SPWH	Cylch Meithrin Cwmnedd	Cwmnedd	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	20	43325	Open
				Total Spaces	231		
Service URN	Service Name	Provider Address Town/City	Service Type	Service Sub Type	Maximum Capacity	Date Of Registration	Temporarily Closed
SIN-00010201-SWQB	Clwb Plant Tiddlywinks, Yst	Ystalyfera	Childrens Day Care	Out of School Care	32	43517	Closed

In the short term, one 32 place WM setting is closed and is being supported to reopen, along with our current SSIP (Strategic School Improvement)/ WMG (Welsh Medium Grant)/ CCO (Child Care Offer) capital developments due to be completed, creating an additional 58 Welsh Medium spaces to be available before 2022. This increases the overall WM percentage to 14.6% by 2021/2022.

Flying Start

The number of children accessing Welsh language in Flying Start, accumulative, is as follows:

2017/18 - 104

2018/19 – 135

2019/20 -130

2020-21(during Covid) – 77

There will potentially be 34 more places available as part of the WM capital developments in YGG Pontardawe and YGG Tyle'r Ynn in 2021-2022.

Based on 2020/21 data, there were 452 Flying Start childcare places per annum across our settings of which 65 were category 3 (Welsh language) and category 2 (English/Welsh language) childcare settings equating to a total of 14.4%. The following table shows the transition rate from WM Flying Start places to Nursery education in WM primary schools:

Flying Start Setting	Transition rate		Destination Schools	Notes
	Welsh Medium Nursery	English Medium Nursery		
Cylch Brynhyfryd	66.6%	33.3%	YGG Tyle'r Ynn, Carreg Hir	
Cylch Aberafan		100%	Sandfields Primary	Setting on school site
Cylch Cwmnedd	50%	50%	YGG Cwmnedd, Blaendulais, Cwmnedd English	Setting on YGG school site
Cylch Castell Nedd	50%	50%	YGG CN, Gnoll, Alderman Davies	
Meithrinfa Dydd Y Waun (GCG)	100%		YGG GCG	Setting on school site
Cylch Pontardawe	100%		YGG Pontardawe	Setting on school site
Cylch Tir Morfa	100%		YGG Rhosafan	Setting immediately next to school site
Tiddlywinks Ystalyfera	100%		YGG Ystalyfera Bro Dur	
Lots of Tots Canolfan Maerdy	100%		YGG Ystalyfera Bro Dur, YGG Brynamman	

We recognise the need to increase the percentage of children accessing WM FS childcare entering WM Nursery Education. The current overall transition rate from WM FS Childcare to MW Nursery Education is 74%. 44 children (11 of which accessed English Medium FS Childcare) transitioned into WM Nursery during 2020/2021.

Flying Start Expansion- Phase One

Building on on-going works, in line with our WESP aims, at least 4 additional Welsh or bilingual settings are due to open near to, or in FS areas during 2022/23. These new settings will be used to offer and encourage Welsh language childcare to FS families. While we are committed to the increase and development of Welsh language childcare provision, we also recognise that childcare providers are enthusiastic about offering more Welsh language opportunities in their setting. We have staff that are passionate about the Welsh Language, working with the English Medium settings to improve the Welsh they offer through an awards based Welsh Language quality assurance scheme which includes support, access to training and drop-in Welsh language acquisition sessions. The change in categories will mean a move from category 1 English language settings to category 2 English / Welsh language settings over time.

Additional care will be taken when placing outreach placements, with amendments to outreach policies to include ensuring Bilingual/Welsh childcare is offered, along with benefits of bilingualism messages.

Outreach guidance is being reviewed to assist targeted support via the referral route for families in some key deprived communities that will not be covered by expansion in phase one, as “communities of interest”, so that those who need the support, are still able to

access the services they need, while those communities wait for expansion to reach their areas. We are confident that the 32 additional spaces will be utilised, with scope to use existing FS childcare settings to accommodate this. We hope this offer will have an initial offer of Welsh language provision as a first offer.

Additional Welsh speaking staff are being recruited into the FS parenting team, and our Welsh Language Dev Officer has developed a Welsh Award for Childcare settings to promote and improve the use of Welsh within settings

Once the Flying Start Phase One draft plan has been approved by NPTCBC AND SBUHB, quantitative targets will be set in the annual action plan for outcome 1.

Developing bilingual settings

While we are committed to the increase and development of Welsh language childcare provision, we also recognise that childcare providers are enthusiastic about offering more Welsh language opportunities in their setting. We have staff that are passionate about the Welsh Language, working with the English Medium settings to improve the Welsh they offer through and awards based Welsh Language quality assurance scheme which includes support, access to training and drop-in Welsh language acquisition sessions. The change in categories may mean over time a move from category 1 English language settings to category 2 English / Welsh language settings.

Capital Projects

There are a number of pre-school capital projects that will impact Welsh Medium Provision within the Local Authority outlined below which will significantly increase the WM places available:

Capital project	Brief outline of works	Estimated completion date	Additional WM Places
YGG Cwmllynfell	Increased classrooms and new childcare room	Sept 2021	24
YGG Tyle'r Ynn	Increased classrooms, new childcare room, new community space	Sept 2021	24
YGG Pontardawe	Increased classrooms, larger childcare space	December 2021	+10
Neath Central	New childcare setting	May 2022	24
			82

Family Information Service

Our Family Information Service is a pivotal part of Early Years information and support for families within NPT. During COVID its importance has been in the spotlight, with even greater reliance on seeking correct and up to date information on line for families.

The Early Years Team, is working closely with FIS, to develop its information for parents looking for WM groups, childcare and schools, and aims to highlight the benefits of bilingualism and the Welsh Language to parents in a fun and interesting way, including online presence, access to Welsh stories and rhymes, signposting to Welsh lessons for

parents etc. Work has already taken place to improve the WM schools landing page, but we acknowledge that there is work to be done to streamline the links between the FIS site and the NPT schools pages to ensure clear, easy to navigate information.

Mudiad Meithrin

As we move out of the restrictions of coronavirus, community groups will reignite, and we will work with Mudiad Meithrin officers to develop Cymraeg i Blant, Ti a Fi, and to offer early Welsh language opportunities for very young children and families. Cymraeg i Blant will aim is to increase the number of nursery age children that are able to speak Welsh. This will be achieved through sharing information and giving advice and support to parents on the benefits of Welsh medium education/childcare, the benefits of being bilingual and the importance of introducing Welsh to children as early as possible. Cymraeg i Blant will therefore contribute towards the Welsh Government’s target of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Mudiad Meithrin officers will continue to work with the Early Years team to develop and expand Cylchoedd Meithrin across the borough especially through their Set up And Succeed programme (Cwmllynfell and Tyle’r Ynn). We will continue to encourage all new and existing Cylchoedd to tender to deliver on our early years’ contracts including Flying Start, Early Years Education, Assisted and Supported Places as well as the Childcare Offer.

Nursery places

Pupils within the Local Authority start Nursery education at the age of 3 years old. The percentage choosing Welsh medium education at this stage is gradually increasing. N1 numbers (youngest Nursery cohort) increased in 2021 as a result of PLASC being later than usual due to the pandemic but the percentage fell from previous years. PLASC 2022 will provide more accurate figures for this cohort.

The percentage of pupils in N2 (oldest Nursery cohort) Welsh-medium schools in 2021 was the highest since 2011, with numbers increasing by almost 4% since 2017. Three year N2 cohort averages at all Welsh-medium primary schools in the south of the Local Authority are on the increase, this coincides with the availability of more accessible secondary Welsh-medium education with the opening of the YG Ystalyfera Bro Dur south campus in September 2017.

Plasc Pupil Numbers and Percentages in Welsh Medium Schools															
Year Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Nursery 1 - Numbers	94	111	90	89	103	108	87	110	92	81	85	104	109	112	155
Nursery 1 - Percentages	20.5%	21.9%	19.0%	19.2%	20.2%	22.0%	18.0%	20.5%	18.6%	17.7%	18.4%	21.1%	22.7%	23.7%	20.3%
Nursery 2 - Numbers	245	268	304	280	310	306	285	266	272	270	243	256	270	292	290
Nursery 2 - Percentages	18.6%	18.7%	19.8%	18.8%	21.2%	20.2%	18.6%	17.7%	17.3%	18.0%	17.1%	18.0%	18.7%	19.8%	21.0%

		Plasc Actuals - Welsh Medium Year Nursery 2															
No.	School	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
2213	YGG Y Wern	16	18	22	15	13	32	18	23	23	11	17					
2202	YGG Blaendulais	14	18	17	12	11	13	16	12	17	7	18	10	12	13	16	
2168	YGG Castell-nedd	39	38	48	34	49	58	54	43	46	60	43	48	53	58	59	
2205	YGG Cwm Nedd	25	25	31	28	44	19	27	23	23	15	11	9	9	27	21	
2149	YGG Gwaun Cae Gurwen	13	14	22	19	13	13	23	18	17	26	25	24	26	24	25	
2218	YGG Pontardawe	31	38	37	47	49	59	38	35	36	56	37	50	45	32	47	
2158	YGG Rhosafan	35	48	53	57	56	47	48	42	45	43	41	50	62	56	51	
2231	YGG Tyle'r Ynn	21	27	30	28	35	26	22	33	30	27	31	26	23	45	30	
2125	YGG Cwmgors	10	7	4	6	4	8	7	6	7							
2128	YGG Cwmllynfell	12	10	11	7	9	14	16	14	19	9	9	8	5	8	9	
2198	YGG Rhiwfawr	3	2	7	5	9											
2208	YGG Trebannws	20	16	18	19	14	17	16	17	9	16	11	10	15	10	11	
2139	YGG Y Glyn	6	7	4	3	4											
5501	YG Ystalyfera - Bro Dur													21	20	19	21
	Total - Welsh Medium	245	268	304	280	310	306	285	266	272	270	243	256	270	292	290	
	Total - NPT	1317	1434	1536	1489	1459	1512	1530	1505	1575	1497	1425	1420	1447	1472	1382	
	% - Welsh Medium	18.6%	18.7%	19.8%	18.8%	21.2%	20.2%	18.6%	17.7%	17.3%	18.0%	17.1%	18.0%	18.7%	19.8%	21.0%	

We recognise that we will need to expand our Welsh language registered childcare places, including Flying Start childcare places, with a focus on any further school expansion to enable continuity for families as well as areas where there is currently no Welsh language childcare provision. The expansion of childcare provision will require a focus on capital developments submitted to Welsh Government, as well as workforce development to ensure sufficient staff to run high quality Welsh language childcare. This in turn will lead to an increase in demand for Welsh-medium Nursery places and will lead to an increase of 3 year olds/ nursery children accessing Welsh-medium education.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Our aim is to increase the number of Nursery children receiving Welsh-medium education in order to reach our target of an increase of 208 pupils by the end of the 10 year plan. This will be achieved by implementing the following actions.

- The Council commits to creating a baseline and an operational plan that identifies further geographical gaps in provision in order to ensure that pre-school provision is available throughout the county by 2024. This will be in line with the 2022 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and the Early Years Flying Start expansion plan-Phase One.
- Promote partnership work with Midwifery and Health Visitors to assist early messages about the Welsh Language and bilingualism, to be shared though the perinatal and postnatal period. Information booklets providing information on the benefits of bilingualism and addressing common fears will be created and used by the partners from initial perinatal communication with parents.

- Partnership work with Swansea University/ Academi Hywel Teifi will embed the promotion of bilingualism into the midwifery course currently running at the University.
- Revisit the training run by Cefin Campbell with all staff working within EY in NPT, LA and Health (including SALT), childcare sector etc. It is important to regain some of the momentum lost during COVID, revisiting some of the good work that had started to impact how our own team members and our partners used and promoted Welsh and Bilingualism.
- Promote the importance of transferring between Cylchoedd Meithrin and Welsh-medium primary schools. This transfer is essential to ensure that progression from one to the other increases and reaches 100% by the end of the 10 year plan.
- Work with parents and carers to understand what information they need to inform their choices of language provision for education, including resources, web presence, activities etc. will be developed. They will focus on alleviating common worries and barriers. Partnership work with Menter Iaith and RhAG will be essential in the success of this campaign.
- Work with parents to ensure that a clear progression route in Welsh-medium education from childcare through to post-16 is identified for all families.
- The Local Authority will explore the possibility of using a promotional consultant employed specifically to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium education and to produce a promotional campaign i.e. website, leaflets, social media, posters, videos, to strengthen communication. A NPT website will be created outlining the journey of Welsh medium education for learners within the Local Authority. Menter Iaith and RhAG will play a pivotal role in promotion.
- Develop Welsh-medium wraparound childcare options to address gaps in existing provision and to support parents including parents accessing the 30 hour offer and Flying Start expansion in conjunction with our partners including Mudiad Meithrin through establishing new Cylch Meithrin settings for YGG Tyle'r Ynn, YGG Cwmllynfell, YGG Trebannws, YGYBD Primary sector as well as within the 3 new Welsh-medium primary schools which will open within the 10 year plan.
- Develop further Welsh-medium wraparound childcare options to support parents accessing the 30 hour offer and Flying Start expansion in conjunction with our partners including Mudiad Meithrin through expanding existing settings i.e. YGG Pontardawe, YGG Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen.
- Increase the number of Welsh-medium groups running within settings and schools i.e. Babi a Fi, Ti a Fi, baby massage, parenting classes to follow the YGG Tyle'r Ynn model (Ti a Fi alone increased Nursery numbers by 24 places).
- Regularly review the 'Neath Port Talbot Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Action Plan' with an emphasis on improving access to Welsh medium and bilingual provision by identifying and filling gaps in provision.
- Based on 2020/21 data, there were 452 Flying Start childcare places per annum across our settings of which 65 were category 3 Welsh language and category 2 English/Welsh language childcare settings equating to a total of 14.4%. We have a target in Flying Start to increase this percentage to 20% within the next 5 years, 25% by end of the 10 year plan by expanding provisions/ establishing new provisions.
- The Early Years team will continue to work with Mudiad Meithrin officers to develop and expand Cylchoedd Meithrin across the borough especially through their Set up And Succeed programme (Cwmllynfell and Tyle'r Ynn). We will continue to

encourage all new and existing Cylchoedd to tender to deliver on our early years' contracts including Flying Start, Early Years Education, Assisted and Supported Places as well as the Childcare Offer

- The Local Authority will support the Welsh Language Awards within English language childcare settings to progress through the continuum towards an increase in category 2 Welsh language childcare provision.
- Use the PSA (Play Strategy Assessment) to develop and encourage out of school activities in Welsh.
- The Local Authority will review and amend the online admissions process in partnership with the admissions team for the process of applications for Nursery and Reception, so that information is strategically placed throughout the online application system to ensure families are able to make informed decisions about the language of provision they want for their child.
- A programme of professional development will be created to ensure that partners are updated regarding what is available, increase confidence for those who speak Welsh already, provide opportunities to learn Welsh and ensuring Welsh is part of job vacancies moving forward.
- All partners will collaborate and support private childcare settings to ensure an increase in Welsh medium provision with the emphasis of promoting the advantages of bilingualism.
- Ensure sufficient provision for Nursery/ 3 year old provision at primary school level is easily available throughout the Local Authority. We will establish a new single form entry starter school in Skewen/ Neath Abbey area with the possibility of expanding/ transferring to a new purpose built WM primary school in Coed Darcy subject to member approval and compliance with the extant criteria of the Schools' Organisation Code.
- To bring forward a proposal to create a further 2 Welsh medium primary schools within the 10 year plan. Funding will be sought from the appropriate Sustainable Communities for Learning programme grant funding streams. The initial plan for opening the second school in the south east of the Local Authority will be in place by 2024. The location of the third School will be confirmed in the second half of the scheme.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

By the end of the 10 year plan, all pupils in all areas of the Local Authority will have easy access to Welsh medium education and Welsh pre-school education. Information regarding Welsh medium education and the benefits of bilingualism will be provided by all partners to parents throughout the educational continuum, from pre-birth to post 18 in order to provide clear, concise and cohesive information. Parents will be supported throughout their child's education.

Key Data

Numbers and % of 3-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
311	21.4%	331	22.8%	351	24.2%	370	25.5%	389	26.8%
2027 - 2028		2028- 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
408	28.1%	427	29.5%	446	30.8	465	32.%	484	33.4%

Outcome 2

More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

In Neath Port Talbot there are 10 Welsh-medium schools, 9 out of 55 primary schools and 1 Welsh-medium middle school providing for ages 3 -18yrs. There are also 7 English-medium secondary schools and 2 English-medium Special Schools.

Although showing a variation over the years, the numbers at reception age show an increase. Both the number and percentage of reception pupils in Welsh-medium schools increased for the third year in a row with the percentage higher than it has been since 2013.

Plasc Pupil Numbers and Percentages in Welsh Medium Schools															
Year Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Reception - Numbers	272	247	263	303	282	296	296	276	265	266	273	234	252	268	283
Reception - Percentages	20.1%	18.4%	18.3%	19.3%	18.5%	20.0%	19.3%	17.9%	17.2%	16.7%	17.8%	16.1%	17.2%	18.0%	18.7%

Plasc Actuals - Welsh Medium Year Reception																
No.	School	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
2213	YGG Y Wern	23	14	18	18	15	13	29	19	22	23	13				
2202	YGG Blaendulais	14	15	20	17	13	13	12	14	12	16	7	18	10	11	15
2168	YGG Castell-nedd	49	40	38	48	37	48	57	49	45	49	61	38	46	52	54
2205	YGG Cwm Nedd	21	24	24	33	27	42	15	24	23	21	15	13	10	9	27
2149	YGG Gwaun Cae Gurwen	22	14	12	23	17	15	14	21	17	22	26	22	23	24	23
2218	YGG Pontardawe	36	34	37	38	49	46	58	41	35	35	55	35	48	46	32
2158	YGG Rhosafan	43	35	47	51	54	57	46	47	41	43	44	40	47	63	54
2231	YGG Tyle'r Ynn	21	22	27	27	31	35	27	20	34	30	28	30	26	25	43
2125	YGG Cwmgors	4	10	8	3	6	5	7	7	6						
2128	YGG Cwmllynfell	10	12	9	13	5	13	15	18	14	19	8	9	10	5	8
2198	YGG Rhiwfawr	9	3	2	8	7										
2208	YGG Trebannws	19	19	15	21	20	9	16	16	16	8	16	11	11	14	10
2139	YGG Y Glyn	1	5	6	3	1										
5501	YG Ystalyfera - Bro Dur												18	21	19	17
	Total - Welsh Medium	272	247	263	303	282	296	296	276	265	266	273	234	252	268	283
	Total - NPT	1355	1341	1437	1572	1521	1479	1533	1542	1543	1596	1532	1457	1461	1487	1511
	% - Welsh Medium	20.1%	18.4%	18.3%	19.3%	18.5%	20.0%	19.3%	17.9%	17.2%	16.7%	17.8%	16.1%	17.2%	18.0%	18.7%

At present, the following is being implemented within the Local Authority:

- We currently monitor demand and identify trends for Welsh-medium education and use this information to plan for future provision.
- We ensure that proposals for appropriate Sustainable Communities for Learning include full consideration of Welsh-medium education.
- Targets are set to increase the capacity of Welsh-medium pre-school provision and to provide information for parents/carers that promotes the benefits of a bilingual education, seeking advice of best practice in other authorities. In terms of Welsh language pre-school provision, a snap shot taken 30th August 2021 from the NPT CIW childcare data shows that 10.5% of the total 2199 available registered childcare spaces were Welsh Medium spaces.

- The current SSIP/WMG/CCO capital developments will create an additional 58 Welsh Medium spaces to be available before 2022. This increases the overall WM percentage to 14.6% by 2021/2022.
- We work closely with Mudiad Meithrin to ensure expansion of pre-school provision across the authority and support the sector to recruit suitably skilled Welsh language care workers.
- Targets are set within the NPT Language Promotion Strategy plan to improve the support for parents/pupils and schools to move along the linguistic continuum through collaboration with Menter Iaith and RhAG.
- The authority has opened a second WM secondary campus in the south-east in September 2018 with a capacity for 650 11-16 pupils. It has stimulate interest and growth in WM primary provision in the areas of Port Talbot, Neath, Llandarcy, Briton Ferry and the Cwmafan area in subsequent years.
- All the Council's schools are regularly reviewed against specific criteria, and the need for sufficient places at Welsh-medium schools features in the reviewing process, the outcomes of which have included rationalisation of Welsh-medium schools, where appropriate, to maximise the available accommodation and improve teaching and learning opportunities. The need for Welsh-medium schools is addressed by a strategic approach to service planning and delivery.
- The below projects have recently been completed or are nearing completion. In total these projects will increase the number of Foundation Phase places available within primary schools by 150 F/T pupil places.

The projects are:

1. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe,

This project initially involved creating 3 extra classroom and childcare provision at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe. This project was awarded £1.6m grant funding.

Following more detailed discussion with the school the scheme was amended. At the schools request the current childcare provision and nursery/reception classes were relocated within the school to allow for work to take place without interruption, which necessitated remodelling 2 classrooms, providing extra toilet facilities and outdoor play area, converting the staffroom and office to provide childcare facilities and converting a reception area for storage.

The completed scheme will provide remodeled and extended childcare and nursery facilities along with 2 new build FP classrooms, a new entrance way, staffroom, meeting room and office and additional play areas, fencing and pathways, along with medium refurbishment of the hall.

As well as providing increased capacity the scheme also sought to relocate the main entrance and reception to the front of the school creating a new and more visible front of school which can be clearly seen by the road and nearby housing estate. With careful landscaping and signage of the school site it is hoped that the school will appear more attractive to parents who may be considering a WM education in their local area.

2. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmllynfell

At Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwmllynfell £640k was awarded to provide 1 extra classroom space and a childcare setting, with the aim of increasing the capacity of the school, improve Foundation Phase provision and provide space to develop pre-school Welsh-medium provision.

The scheme aimed to prevent drift to other schools in neighbouring authorities, strengthening the development of Welsh language in the area and impacting positively on the Council's Band B proposal at YG Ystalyfera Bro Dur (north campus) by increasing the number of children from the area choosing secondary education through the medium of Welsh.

The project has been successfully completed and both the new classroom and childcare provision are ready for use.

3. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn

The aim of this project was to create a more attractive and stimulating learning environment with high quality Welsh -medium childcare on site. In the longer term it was anticipated that this would ease accommodation pressures in the area, with demand for Welsh medium pupil places increasing year on year. £1.14m of funding was awarded which enabled the provision of 2 extra classroom spaces and a new Welsh medium childcare provision.

The project has been successfully completed and is a very welcome and timely addition to the school. Pupil numbers have already shown an increase with both nursery and reception classes full in September 2021.

4. Additional Projects

In addition, over the past 4 years there has been significant capital funding for major refurbishment projects in eight existing Welsh-medium schools. The investment, which secures the future of these schools, ranges from boundary wall and toilet/changing facility refurbishment schemes to a new build kitchen block, boiler replacement and re-roofing. A new build 4 block extension at YGG Rhosafan and a new 60 place Foundation Phase classroom provision at YGG Castell nedd has also been provided as part of the Reducing Infant Class Size grant.

Ensuring sustainable growth of Welsh-medium places and achieving an increase in demand will require detailed and informed planning to ensure that we create the demand across all outcomes. We recognise that more pupils accessing their statutory education through the medium of Welsh is key not just for the WESP but the NPT Welsh Promotion Strategy and the national Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

The actions laid out in this outcome will work towards the desired increase in pupils entering Reception at Welsh-medium schools by proactively planning to increase demand and also fill the 26.7% (632 places) of surplus capacity that currently exist in

our Welsh-medium primary schools. Annual detailed action plans will outline how the demand will be created in specific areas within the Local Authority.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Our target is to increase the number of Year 1 children receiving WM education by 208 pupils by the end of the 10 year plan (this will mirror the number of children in Reception class as they commence full time education). We will ensure that an increase is also reflected in the transition rates within Outcome 3 and 4.

- We will review the demand for provision for Welsh-medium education on an annual basis, analyse the results of our parental surveys and draft appropriate action plans to address and create demand in specific areas and within specific groups.
- In order to create and stimulate demand we will appoint a consultant to promote the benefits of WM education and produce a marketing campaign i.e. website, leaflets, social media, and to liaise with and strengthen communication between different stakeholders etc. Specific emphasis will be given to reducing surplus places in the North of the Local Authority.
- In order to create and stimulate demand we will work closely with Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith, Tŷ'r Gwrhyd and RhAG to inform parents/ carers of the benefits of Welsh medium education and bilingualism in order to ensure retention of pupils from Nursery to full time education. Welsh-medium primary schools in the north of the Local Authority have 459 surplus places (out of a total of 632). Specific emphasis will be given to reducing surplus places in the North of the Local Authority.
- Cylchoedd Meithrin will work closely with their local WM schools/ Family Information Service, Flying Start to ensure that a high percentage of children transfer to WM schools. Specific emphasis will be given to reducing surplus places in the North of the Local Authority.
- We will establish a new single form entry starter school in Skewen/ Neath Abbey. The current need for a Welsh medium school in this area is clear. The seedling school will have 210 places (one form entry) plus a 45 place Nursery. If the demand for Welsh medium education in the area continues to grow as expected, there is a possibility that the Welsh-medium seedling school will remain in Skewen and an additional Welsh medium school will be built in Coed Darcy to accommodate the increasing numbers. Alternatively, the starter school could transfer to a new building in Coed Darcy in line with capacity and pupil numbers. In depth demographic and geographic assessments will be completed in order to assess the situation when the developer achieves the required number of new build homes needed to trigger the construction of a new school as specified in the S106 Planning agreement. This will be subject to member approval and compliance with the extant criteria of the Schools' Organisation Code. Informal conversations have taken place with the head teachers of both YGG Tyle'r Ynn and YGG Castell-nedd around this proposal, and further more detailed discussions are expected to take place during the latter months of 2021, as it is recognised that it will be essential to gain the support and goodwill of these

schools to ensure that the proposed new school is promoted in the local area. Formal consultation has taken place and a final decision is expected in September 2022.

- Subject to member approval we will establish a new Welsh medium school in the east of the county borough. Early work on potential pupil numbers have identified that an increasing number of pupils currently travel from areas including Cwmafan, Taibach and Port Talbot town to YGG Rhosafan, which is continuing to also attract growing numbers of pupil from Sandfields, Aberafan and lower Baglan areas. We would also seek to create the demand for Welsh-medium education in this area in order to attract greater numbers of pupils from the lower Afan Valley and Margam areas which currently have low numbers of pupils accessing Welsh-medium provision. It is expected that funding for this new school would be sought from the appropriate Welsh Government capital grant funding stream available at the time. The initial plan for opening the second school in the south east of the Local Authority will be in place by 2024. We are currently working closely with Replacement Local Development Planning (RLDP) officers in order to identify possible sites and timetables to implement the build. Annual action plans for this outcome will further detail this development.
- To bring forward a proposal to create a third Welsh medium primary school within the 10 year plan. Funding will be sought from the appropriate Sustainable Communities for Learning programme grant funding streams. The location of the third School will be confirmed in the second half of the plan. We are currently working closely with Replacement Local Development Planning (RLDP) officers in order to identify possible sites and timetables to implement the build. Annual action plans will further detail this development.
- We will investigate using **pilot schools** with the aim of mapping out a continuum of staff training to be able to eventually create a category 2 stream within an English-medium school, starting at nursery and working through to Year 6 over a number of years. Early discussions have identified areas suitable for developing a scheme of this kind within the Swansea Valley and the Neath/ Baglan area. Information regarding the schools, specific quantitative data and timescales will be set and evaluated in our annual action plans.
- As a result of Welsh Government funding, we will develop immersion provision for latecomers to the Welsh language. The immersion provision will enable more learners to access Welsh-medium education at primary. The model will depend on need with the aim of having provision accessible to all areas of the Local Authority by the end of the plan.

Long term aim (Post March 2022-Local Authority funded) - The long term aim of the following model is to establish effective immersion hubs in both the north and the south of the Local Authority (in line with WESP targets). We will establish an immersion centre in YGG Pontardawe. This 16 place hub will open in September 2022 to stimulate a demand for Welsh-medium education in the north of the county. This location will also assist in developing the language in a linguistically sensitive area as well as potentially improving confidence and the transition rates to Welsh-medium secondary. The second hub in the south of the county will be located in YGG Rhosafan. This will also be a 16 place hub. We will look to establish provision for the secondary sector in the second half of the WESP with the aim of ensuring provision for late comers to Welsh medium education and pupils who are now in the system but need intensive linguistic support.

Short term aim (December 2021-August2022 WG grant funded)- The short term aim of the grant funding is to research into existing methodologies and good practice across Wales and to form effective networks that will assist in creating effective provision that will address learners' needs and support their progression both in the short and long term. An area within YGG Pontardawe will be identified and developed/ refurbished during the Summer term with the aim of officially opening a 16 place provision in September 2022. Resources for both hubs will be sourced and acquired during this period.

Quantitative targets will be identified and evaluated in the annual action plans and evaluation reports in order to ensure that enough demand is created and that outcomes are effective.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

All children in all areas of Neath Port Talbot will have easy access to WM education as they progress from one stage to the next. Additional provisions set out above and an increase in WM settings/ schools will allow this and will lead to the projected increase of 208 pupils.

Key Data

Numbers and % of 5-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
288	19.7%	308	21%	327	22.3%	346	23.6%	365	24.9%
2027 - 2028		2028- 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
384	26.2%	403	27.5	422	28.8	441	30.%	460	31.4%

Outcome 3

More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Where are we now?

All proposed projects mentioned above in Outcome 1 and 2 are aimed at increasing Welsh-medium provision and addressing key WESP priorities such as improved transition between Early Years, Foundation Phase, Key Stages 2 and 3 in specific geographical areas.

At present, the percentage who commit to YGYBD secondary phase is higher than it has been for many years (86% WM primary to secondary transition). Those who do not transfer are highest in Pontardawe, Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Trebannws and Ystalyfera. Although this remains a concern, the transfer percentages have improved significantly (+ 6%).

Plasc Pupil Numbers and Percentages in Welsh Medium Schools															
Year Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Year 7 - Numbers	160	152	171	183	163	165	178	195	165	188	212	213	249	257	248
Year 7 - Percentages	9.4%	8.9%	10.4%	10.9%	10.6%	11.1%	11.9%	13.2%	11.1%	12.1%	12.7%	13.1%	15.2%	15.2%	14.9%

	Year 6 School	Year 7 School																																
		May 2018 Y6 vs Sept 2018 Y7				May 2019 Y6 vs Sept 2019 Y7				May 2020 Y6 vs Sept 2020 Y7																								
		Out of County	Cohort	Bae Baglan	Cefn Saision	Cwmtrawe	Cwm Brombill	Cymer Alan	Dwr y Felin	Llangatwg	St Joseph's	Ystalyfera	Hendrefelin	Maes y Goed	Out of County	Cohort	Bae Baglan	Cefn Saision	Cwmtrawe	Cwm Brombill	Dwr y Felin	Llangatwg	St Joseph's	Ystalyfera North	Ystalyfera South	Hendrefelin	Maes y Goed	EHE	Out of County	Cohort				
####	YGG Blaendulais	10	30														10																	
####	YGG Castell-nedd	31	31														1																	
####	YGG Cwmlynyfelli	6	6																															
####	YGG Cwmnedd	5	18	1			1																											
####	YGG GCG	3	19			5																												
####	YGG Pontardawe	3	46			11																												
####	YGG Rhosafan	49																																
####	YGG Trebannws	1	17																															
####	YGG Tyle'r Ynn	28																																
####	YGG Ystalyfera - Bro Dur	1	16																															

The following is being implemented (along with a menu of other various transition activities) in the Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur cluster to maintain pupils in the sector:

- Ystalyfera'n cyfri- teachers from YGYBD attend cluster schools for 1 hour weekly to deliver a specific series of lessons
- Hawl i Holi-pupils and staff from YGYBD attend cluster schools and primary pupils have an opportunity to ask questions or voice any transition concerns/ anxieties
- Transition website for pupils transferring to YGYBD
- Additional transition days for pupils with ALN or anxiety
- Open days for pupils and open evenings for families
- Gwyl Haf- 3 day summer camp for Year 5 pupils based on a specific theme and followed by a presentation to parents

- Proms- vocal and instrumental. Y5 and Y6 pupils from cluster schools attend YGYBD and are taught by staff and pupils for the day. It is followed by an orchestral performance in the evening (instrumental) or a performance by the YGYBD Cluster Choir (half time Ospreys rugby in Liberty)
- Gig Tanio'r Ddraig- Y5, 6, 7 pupils attend a music festival in YGYBD playing fields annually with the best of current Welsh bands and talent performing
- Cluster sports day for KS2 pupils from feeder primaries on YGYBD playing fields

However, there is a fall in numbers and percentage of learners choosing Welsh-medium education in the post-16 period. The numbers below show the percentage within Welsh-medium schools but there is also a small cohort in St Joseph's studying Welsh A level/ AS level 2nd language Welsh, and a small cohort of students studying A level and AS second language Welsh in NPTC Group of Colleges (see outcome 4 for details).

Plasc Pupil Numbers and Percentages in Welsh Medium Schools															
Year Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Year 12 - Numbers	106	110	85	88	97	95	90	110	99	84	109	120	108	92	95
Year 12 - Percentages	49.5%	53.1%	44.0%	48.1%	45.8%	42.4%	44.8%	49.3%	45.8%	42.4%	46.8%	53.6%	48.2%	41.8%	40.1%
Year 13 - Numbers	78	89	98	91	72	93	81	67	93	99	65	87	100	95	82
Year 13 - Percentages	43.3%	48.1%	51.0%	47.4%	42.4%	42.5%	41.8%	37.9%	46.3%	49.7%	40.1%	48.1%	54.9%	50.0%	40.8%

Authority staff are working with Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur to consider how post-16 education can be provided in the most effective and efficient way considering what options are available for online provision or blended learning will enable us to implement the highest quality post-16 provision in a way that is compatible with the technology and techniques developed in recent months. This is a discussion but may offer or be part of a short term solution and possibly reduce travel requirements.

Consideration needs to be given to the post-16 provision at the Bro Dur site. This is outlined further in Outcome 4.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Our target is to increase the number of pupils receiving WM education by 208 pupils and to retain a higher percentage of these pupils within the system by the end of the 10 year plan. We aim to do this by implementing the following targets.

- The WESP forum will monitor the transition rates and to adapt and amend the Strategic Plan in line with the results of the data
- The Local Authority, along with the WESP working parties, will create a policy setting out the Local Authority's expectations of pupils continuing within the Welsh sector. All schools will support and implement the policy when dealing with

parents, resulting in a collective responsibility to support parents and encourage confidence.

- There will be central messages from the authority through our new Policy to ensure that pupils are encouraged to remain in Welsh-medium education when transferring from one key stage to the next.
- The Local Authority and the WESP forum will support and strengthen the work of the cluster and parents' confidence in the Welsh language. They will encourage early support and preparation within the Primary sector to communicate expected pathways to pupils and parents through the promotional strategies outlined in Outcome 1.
- Stakeholders i.e. schools, Menter Iaith, RhAG, Tŷ'r Gwrhyd will gather information and identify parents' concerns during transfer.
- The Local Authority will provide guidance in order to support parents and alleviate concerns. Services including the Family Information Service and admissions will play a key role in this support.
- The Local Authority will explore using a Promotional Consultant to implement the 'Choice Architecture Model' for organising the context in which parents decide on secondary education for their children.
- A Local Authority Policy will ensure that every school implements the Welsh Language Charter and sets targets aimed at improving Welsh language skills.
- There will be a Local Authority led programme of enrichment activities for schools (all sectors) to encourage development of Welsh language skills. Working in partnership with third sector providers i.e. Urdd, PASS, Tŷ'r Gwrhyd.
- There will be a Local Authority led programme of support for schools to ensure that Welsh is high on the agenda and is being promoted as a valuable and essential skill in line with Y Gymraeg 2050. This will be led by our Education Support Officers.
- The Local Authority will develop a support package for schools to monitor progress. This will be discussed and developed further during core visits from Education Support Officers. This support will include information on developing staff and pupils through various courses, signposting good practice and projects i.e. Cynefin (web based local Welsh history and culture platform for schools to develop).
- As a result of Curriculum Developments for Wales, there will be Local Authority level support for schools to develop the visibility of the new curriculum with the focus on confidence in the Welsh language.
- Case studies to market good practice and raise status (work in partnership with Menter Iaith) will be publicised via a promotional campaigns, social media and websites.
- Rich marketing programmes will raise the profile of the Welsh language and give Welsh-medium education a high status – A Brighter Future (working in partnership with Menter Iaith).
- There will be provision to provide an enhanced workforce skilling programme to meet the needs of outcome 3 in improving pupils' skills across all sectors.
- We will invest in immersion provision for latecomers to the Welsh language. The immersion provision will enable more learners to access WM education at primary and secondary level. The model will depend on need with the aim of having provision accessible to all areas of the Local Authority by the end of the plan. See outcome 2 for details.

- By the second half of the WESP, with growth at key stage 2, the Bro Dur site will reach a full capacity of 650, an increase of 150. As a result of this growth, we will need to consider expanding the capacity within Welsh-medium secondary education. We are currently working closely with Replacement Local Development Planning (RLDP) officers and Headteacher in order to identify options and timetables to implement the developments. Annual action plans will further detail this development.
- We will ensure that the whole educational journey from nursery to post-16 is clear to families in order to further develop confidence in choosing Welsh-medium. In order to ensure this continuum, we will need to develop and provide accessible Welsh-medium education, including post-16 provision at vocational and A level within the Local Authority. Development details and quantitative targets will be identified and evaluated in the annual action plans and evaluation reports.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

By the end of the 10 year plan we will see a significant increase in the number of learners transferring from WM primary to YGYBD as well as an increase in the number of learners remaining in WM education from KS3 to KS4 (see Outcome 4). It is intended to see an increase in the number latecomers changing to WM education as a result of successful immersion, as parents become more informed and confident with WM education.

Outcome 4

More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

As outlined in Outcome 3, pupils who have attended Welsh-medium primary education are strongly encouraged to follow the same continuum through the key stages.

Pupils at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur secondary phase are able to study all subjects at GCSE level through the medium of Welsh. Science is optional with learners choosing either to be taught through the medium of Welsh or English on the Ystalyfera site. At present YGYBD secondary phase offer in excess of 36 KS3 courses through the medium of Welsh at GCSE, BTEC, Welsh Bacalaureate, Agored Cymru Tystysgrif Lefel 2 and vocational CBAC level.

All sixth form pupils at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur secondary phase can study their chosen subjects through the medium of Welsh, with the exception of Science. At present, 28 pupils study A level Biology, 18 study A level Chemistry and 15 study A level Physics through the medium of English. These subjects are currently not available through the medium of Welsh.

The Local Authority recognises the need to cater for vocational courses through the medium of Welsh at KS4.

The data for assessed qualification in Welsh as a subject at GCSE, A level and AS level is as follows:

Numbers and % of pupils studying the first and second language Welsh specification at GCSE level

Year	11 Cohort	1st Language GCSE	2nd Language GCSE	2nd Lang (SC GCSE)	Total	Total % of cohort	% cohort 1st Language GCSE	% cohort 2nd Language GCSE	% cohort 2nd Lang SC GCSE
2018	1486	190	917	40	1147	77%	13%	62%	3%
2019	1456	166	1038	0	1204	83%	11%	71%	
2020	1513	171	984	0	1155	76%	11%	65%	
2021	1619	196	1061	0	1257	78%	12%	66%	

	AS Welsh 2nd Language	AS Welsh 1st Language	A Level 2nd Language	A Level 1st Language
2019	5	4	3	5
2020	1	5	2	5
2021	2	1	1	4

Numbers of pupils studying the first and second language Welsh specification at A and AS level (YGYBD secondary phase and St. Joseph's)

	Year 12 St Joseph's	Year 13 St Joseph's	Year 12 Ystalyfera	Year 13 Ystalyfera	Total year 12	Total year 13	Overall Total
2019	110	76	109	100	219	176	395
2020	121	99	92	88	213	187	400
2021	133	94	96	81	229	175	404

The NPTC Group of Colleges offers AS and A Level first and second Welsh language courses. Figures from the past three years can be seen below:

	AS Welsh 2 nd Language	AS Welsh 1 st Language	A Level Welsh 2 nd Language	A Level Welsh 1 st Language
2019	21	0	13	0
2020	8	0	11	0
2021	7	0	3	0

Also, to date units from the following courses at NPT Group of Colleges have been translated / delivered in Welsh or bilingually:

- Mathematics
- Construction
- Agriculture
- Sport
- Public Services
- Childcare
- Hairdressing

The Urdd also offers apprenticeships through the medium of Welsh within the Local Authority. The apprenticeships offer new opportunities to learn, develop and increase confidence in the workplace. From sports, outdoor activities and youth work apprenticeships to qualifications and accreditations, the Urdd offer a range of opportunities for all ages and abilities.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Our target is to increase the number of pupils receiving WM education by 208 pupils and to retain a higher percentage of pupils studying for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh and Welsh as a subject by the end of the 10 year plan. We aim to do this by implementing the following targets.

- Raise the status of the Welsh language as a medium of study and work across all education system partnerships.
- Develop a language and learning continuum across all progression steps. Promoting learner confidence and parental reassurance.
- Research and seek local knowledge on parents' attitudes in all schools where there is a lack of transition.
- Monitor post 16 welsh medium uptake. WESP to be adapted in line with data.
- At present, there is no vocational provision in the Local Authority outside YGYBD. The role of Colegau Cymru (Neath / Afan College) Vocational Courses – skills workforce, will need to develop to include Welsh medium and bilingual courses.
- Establish Bro Dur as a Post-16 Welsh Medium Vocational Qualification centre, providing pathways for ALL pupils in line with Scandinavian model where national qualification programmes are divided into two categories: preparatory and vocational. Preparatory programmes satisfy the requirements needed to study university courses in specific subject areas. Vocational education provides learning which builds on secondary education and prepares students for the labour market. It is developed and run in close cooperation with employers and industries.
- Provide courses that ensure an increase in the Early Years workforce in order to fulfil the increased demand for Welsh-medium education within the 10 year plan.
- Work with Careers Wales and Colegau Cymru to develop a menu of Welsh medium and bilingual apprenticeships for the current pupils in the system.
- Include the Urdd in future post 16 qualification discussions with the aim of increasing the number of students completing apprenticeships with the Urdd through the medium of Welsh.
- Increase numbers who choose Science GCSE through medium of Welsh in YGYBD (currently Welsh/ English optional). By 2025, the default language for Science GCSE will be Welsh. Pupils will be encouraged to choose Science through the medium of Welsh and will have to apply to opt out of the Welsh language course. By the end of the 10 year plan, 100% of pupils will complete their Science GCSE through the medium of Welsh. This target will be monitored closely in our annual plans and further mid-term targets will be set accordingly.
- Work towards transitioning A level science to Welsh medium (currently all English). By 2027 (to ensure progression from Welsh-medium GCSE), the default language for Science A level will be Welsh. Students will be encouraged to choose Science through the medium of Welsh and will have to apply to opt out of the Welsh language course. By the end of the 10 year plan, 100% of pupils will complete their

Science A level through the medium of Welsh. This target will be monitored closely in our annual plans and further mid-term targets will be set accordingly.

- English medium schools to provide and deliver high quality Welsh language Teaching and Learning in line with new curriculum and one equal qualification (no second language Welsh GCSE)
- Promote Welsh across the curriculum (and not Welsh in isolation) in all schools, with the expectation that all teachers will be able to promote, enrich and encourage the process of developing Welsh as a language.
- Provide a menu of language support and training for staff of all levels and identify gaps in provision.
- Employ a Welsh in Education Promotion Officer to support / lead the 'need for Welsh', with the aim of changing mindsets. Co-ordinate the provision across the Local Authority. Embed the new vision for Welsh medium and Welsh education across all providers.
- Provide support for Bro Dur as KS4 pupils transfer to KS5. Ensure suitable routes and transport for these pupils.

Careers Wales to promote Welsh language as essential skills for the future within the Local Authority, emphasising the requirement for Welsh language skills in all jobs by 2030.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

By the end of the 10 year plan, we aim to see a significant increase in the percentage of qualifications studied through the medium of Welsh as learners and parents become more confident in choosing Welsh medium education.

There will also be a wider variety of vocational qualifications taught through the medium of Welsh available within the Local Authority in order to allow full access of the Welsh language to all learners.

Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Where are we now?

The targets for this outcome have been developed alongside the targets set out in the Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (alongside Priority 1) with emphasis on promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language and increase its use in everyday life within schools and the wider community.

It also aims to promote the Curriculum for Wales Framework by ensuring that All learners should have appropriate pathways for learning Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life. It aims to support learners to use Welsh confidently and appreciate its usefulness to communication in a bilingual Wales.

The Authority recognises that having varied opportunities to use the Welsh language in different contexts within the school environment is key to promoting confidence. Learners, parents and carers will need to be supported and encouraged to participate in a variety of experiences and opportunities through the medium of Welsh in order to improve their confidence in the language.

The Siarter Iaith was an integral part of most schools pre Covid with most Welsh schools and many English medium schools increasing the social use of Welsh within school and the wider community in a variety of creative and successful ways. To date, the following data demonstrates the success of the Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus pre Covid:

- 9 Welsh medium primary schools have achieved the Siarter Iaith silver award,
- 1 Welsh medium primary school has achieved the Siarter Iaith gold award,
- 45 English medium schools are currently engaged in the Welsh Charter scheme 'Cymraeg Campus' at the moment,
- 17 English medium schools have achieved the Cymraeg Campus bronze award

Covid and long periods away from school sites has had a negative impact on this progress and the Authority recognises the need to promote and develop the Siarter Iaith in order to regain the confidence lost during lockdown periods.

The Authority also recognises the need to work with organisations such as Academi Hywel Teifi, Tŷ'r Gwrhyd, Menter Iaith, Mudiad Meithrin and Urdd Gobaith Cymru to provide learning opportunities for non-Welsh speaking learners, parents / carers and grandparents or those who are hesitant in the language in order to raise their confidence and assist with their children's education. This will be key to the success of our strategy.

Menter Iaith

Menter Iaith currently provide a wide range of opportunities for children and young people with the Local Authority:

- arrange staff training sessions for the Childcare sector
- arrange family activity sessions/ days e.g. fun days, singing sessions
- create and distribute language awareness packs with the aim of providing parents with the information needed to make informed choices about their child's education/ promote the benefits of Welsh medium education
- attend open days within schools and the community with the aim of providing information and promoting the Welsh language
- work closely with schools i.e. Gig Tanio'r Ddraig (Welsh music festival, Cwis Dim clem (quiz), language awareness sessions with staff, pupils and parents, information evenings with parents to promote transition to Welsh medium secondary education etc.
- arrange social events for primary age learners (outside of school hours) e.g. cooking sessions, parties, treasure hunts
- arrange social events and activities for secondary age learners e.g. surfing, youth clubs, fun days
- jointly employ a youth worker (with Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur) with a specific role of promoting activities through the medium of Welsh
- produce and share (via website) a wide range of Welsh medium resources
- produce and distribute 'Cymraeg Campus' newsletter to all English medium schools with resources, 'top tips' and ideas on how to raise the profile of Welsh in their local area
- Facebook group to support parents and teaching staff

Urdd

The Urdd provides a wide range of opportunities for learners and the wider community to participate in various activities to promote a sense of belonging and the Welsh language. These include:

- Eisteddfod: Pupils from the Local Authority have the opportunity to take part in over 400 competitions, from singing to cooking, dancing to designing websites, and writing stories to starring on stage
- sporting activities: provides opportunities across the Local Authority for every child and young person to embrace sport, through clubs, competitions, training, and regional and national sports festivals.
- residential centres: pupils from the Local Authority visit centres in Glan-llyn, Llangrannog, Cardiff and Pentre Ifan. This supports learning outside of the classroom and provides an excellent context for the use of the Welsh language in a fun environment.
- community and youth work: The Urdd Community Department focuses on providing arts opportunities to members within the Local Authority. They arrange activities to encourage and enable children and young people to socialise through the medium of Welsh outside the classroom. The Urdd also develop the Urdd's 'adrannau' and 'aelwydydd' (junior and youth clubs) and provide a range of Welsh-medium resources.

Ty'r Gwrhyd

Ty'r Gwrhyd is a Canolfan Gymraeg in Pontardawe, jointly established by Neath Port Talbot Council and Academi Hywel Teifi at Swansea University in 2016. Ty'r Gwrhyd houses a Welsh-language bookstore, and rents office space to Menter Iaith CNPT, Urdd Gobaith Cymru officers and Dysgu Cymraeg Ardal Bae Abertawe tutors. Welsh language educational courses are delivered at the centre, as are Welsh language lessons for adults. Community groups, including Merched y Wawr, Cylch Darllen Cwm Tawe and papur bro *Llais*, make regular use of the facilities at the centre. The centre hosts regular book launches, small art exhibitions, cultural and literary events and creative activities for children and young people. Ty'r Gwrhyd is also home to Cylch Ti a Fi Pontardawe and a reading club for primary age children which attracts pupils from throughout the Swansea Valley from Cwmllynfell to Clydach.

There is currently no provision within the Authority for children and young people who are latecomers to Welsh-medium education to access a Welsh language immersion centre, learners' needs are catered for within individual schools. This target is addressed in Outcome 2.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Our aim is to create and provide opportunities and experiences for all learners and the wider community to use Welsh and be part of Welsh life in order to increase confidence in the Welsh language and to feel a sense of belonging. We will do this by implementing the following targets.

- Designated staff will re-launch the Siarter Iaith ensuring that it is embedded in all new curriculum designs. Schools will progress on the Siarter continuum and will be supported along the journey with guidance and resources.
- By September 2022, all Welsh and English medium schools will have reviewed and revisited previous Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus targets and will achieve the pre Covid standards.
- By September 2024, the Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus will be an integral part of planning for the Curriculum for Wales within all schools, with an emphasis on a whole school progression approach (supported by our Welsh in Education officer and Curriculum Development Officer (Welsh in English medium)). This will increase learner and staff confidence in using the Welsh language and impact positively on the ethos of all schools.
- By September 2024, Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus action plans/strategies will be used to ensure regular opportunities for learners, staff and the wider community to engage in activities that increase confidence in the Welsh language and promote Welsh modern culture and history. This will lead to an increased awareness of the relevance/ importance of Welsh in their everyday lives. This will be monitored and supported by our Welsh in Education officer and Curriculum Development Officer (Welsh in English medium).
- We will continue to build on the huge success of our annual 'Gig Gymraeg' within the YGYBD cluster for Y6 and Y7 learners. We will aim to roll this out

across the LA, ensuring that all Y6 pupils in WM and EM schools have access to a contemporary WM music festival on an annual basis. This will be supported by Menter Iaith CNPT.

- We will aim to roll out the 'Gig Gymraeg' to all Y8 and Y9 pupils along with Y12 pupils at a large central venue i.e. Margam in order to provide an opportunity to speak Welsh and enjoy Welsh contemporary culture outside of school.
- A leading excellent practice English medium school has been identified and this school will share resources and ideas and support other schools with their curriculum design, ensuring that Welsh culture, history and appreciation of the local area is embedded in their new curriculum.
- The NPT schools website, created by learners, to promote modern Welsh culture, history and local area will be launched and added to on a regular basis in all Welsh medium schools and rolled out to all English medium schools.
- An audit will be undertaken to see what WM provision is available within the LA (both within school and in the community) and geographical gaps will be identified and filled i.e. provision from Urdd, PASS, Youth Service etc. Following the audit, a menu of support will be created for all schools within the LA.
- By September 2022, the Local Authority's agencies and third sector services will have introduced a baseline and targets that will demonstrate their intention to increase community activities.
- We will track and evaluate the targets annually using quantitative and qualitative data.
- All schools will be encouraged to use the Urdd Residential Centres to promote the Welsh language in a fun and relaxed environment.
- All schools will be encouraged to partake in Urdd Eisteddfod activities with the aim of increasing confidence in the language and increasing awareness of Welsh literature, music and the arts.
- We will work closely with partners including Academi Hywel Teifi, Tŷ'r Gwrhyd, Menter Iaith, Urdd to ensure provision and promotion of learning opportunities for non-Welsh speaking learners, parents / carers and grandparents or those who are hesitant in the language in order to raise their confidence and assist with their children's education. This will be in conjunction with the NPT Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, Priority 1.
- We will listen to our learners across all sectors and ages to obtain views and ideas on promoting the Welsh language, contemporary culture, history and a feeling of belonging. Pupil voice will be essential in reviewing and setting our annual action plan.
- As a result of Welsh Government funding, we will develop immersion provision for latecomers to the Welsh language. The immersion provision will enable more learners to access Welsh-medium education at primary. The model will depend on need with the aim of having provision accessible to all areas of the Local Authority by the end of the plan.

Long term aim (Post March 2022-Local Authority funded) - The long term aim of the following model is to establish effective immersion hubs in both the north and the south of the Local Authority (in line with WESP targets). We will establish an immersion centre in YGG Pontardawe. This 16 place hub will open in September 2022 to stimulate a demand for Welsh-medium education in the north of the county. This location will also assist in developing the language in a

linguistically sensitive area as well as potentially improving confidence and the transition rates to Welsh-medium secondary. The second hub in the south of the county will be located in YGG Rhosafan. This will also be a 16 place hub. We will look to establish provision for the secondary sector in the second half of the WESP with the aim of ensuring provision for late comers to Welsh medium education and pupils who are now in the system but need intensive linguistic support.

Short term aim (December 2021-August 2022 WG grant funded)- The short term aim of the grant funding is to research into existing methodologies and good practice across Wales and to form effective networks that will assist in creating effective provision that will address learners' needs and support their progression both in the short and long term. An area within YGG Pontardawe will be identified and developed/ refurbished during the Summer term with the aim of officially opening a 16 place provision in September 2022. Resources for both hubs will be sourced and acquired during this period.

Quantitative targets will be identified and evaluated in the annual action plans and evaluation reports in order to ensure that enough demand is created and that outcomes are effective.

- We will develop via a locally based task and finish group, a holistic plan which looks in detail at all aspects of the vitality of the Welsh language in areas of linguistic sensitivity and establish working groups to consider thematic issues such as the use of the language by the private sector, by voluntary groups and by young people in general. Areas for possible collaborative working:
 - Preschool Provision and location
 - Marketing Welsh-medium education
 - Provision and take up of Welsh for adults
 - Language confidence building events
 - Promoting the use of Welsh by private and voluntary organisations
 - Activities and entertainment for young people and young adults
 - Employment and economic development

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

All schools within the Local Authority will be fully engaged with Curriculum for Wales in conjunction with the Siarter Iaith. The Welsh language, contemporary culture and history will be integral to curriculum design. We will see an increase in learner and staff confidence and pride towards being Welsh and the Welsh language. The Welsh language and the associated extra-curricular activities will be inclusive and will radiate into the wider community, allowing all to have access and to develop their Welsh-language skills.

Outcome 6

An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Where are we now?

As a result of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018, significant changes are underway in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of all learners with ALN. All services within the local authority will be required to consider whether the child or young person needs ALP (Additional Learning Provision) in Welsh.

At present, for learners with significant ALN who cannot access mainstream education within primary and secondary schools, specialist provision is provided which include:

Primary LSCs	
Abbey	EYAC
Blaenbaglan	SpLg
Cilffriw	SpLg
Gnoll	ASD
Maesmarchog	ASD
Waunceirch	ASD
Blaendulais	MLD
Blaenhonddan	MLD
Croeserw	MLD
Trebannws	MLD
Tywyn	MLD
Tywyn	SLD
Tywyn	PMLD
Catwg	Sensory
Crynallt	SEBD
Awel y Mor	SEBD

Secondary LSCs	
Ysgol Bae Baglan E Band	MLD and SpLg
Ysgol Bae Baglan F Band	ASD, HI, SLD, PMLD
Dwr y Felin	ASD
Cwmtawe	ASD
Cwmtawe	SpLD
Cefn Saeson	SENC

Special Schools
Ysgol Hendrefelin
Ysgol Maes Y Coed

Currently the data provided from Welsh medium schools is not evidence enough for the requirement for specialist provision in a specific area of need. However, it is difficult to currently predict the level of need for specialist provision in the future. The authority will work to ensure *'all reasonable steps are taken to deliver ALP in Welsh for children and young people who require support through the medium of Welsh, with scope for increasing the delivery of ALP in Welsh over time'* (The ALN Code for Wales 2021, 3.2.(e)).

It is recognised that Welsh-medium schools need further support from the LA to build their capacity to meet the needs of learners with ALN. The authority continues to monitor this situation and continues to engage with the Welsh medium sector on demand and need.

Specialist services are able to provide almost all services through the medium of Welsh and best endeavours are made to recruit specialist staff who are able to work through the medium of Welsh.

The local authority has worked closely with schools over the past three years to prepare for the implementation of ALN reform. This has included training, workshops and cluster planning events. WM schools have contributed to and received bilingual tools to follow new decision making processes. A comprehensive bank of bilingual resources have been provided to our Welsh medium schools and the Inclusion Service will continue to work in partnership with Welsh medium schools to further develop robust Inclusive Learning Provision(ILP) and Additional Learning Provision (ALP) offers, to meet the range of needs of pupils with ALN.

NPT Inclusion Service has developed a regional Early Resolution and Dispute Prevention training package, to further develop parent partnership and training and bilingual materials have been provided to our WM schools.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

- Continue to collect detailed data and information to set a baseline for current provision, to recognise gaps in provision and to set quantitative targets and time lines for improvement over the 10 year plan.
- We will provide information and advice for children and young people and their families, ensuring school and council websites include information about addressing the needs of pupils in Welsh-medium education and about specialist provision.
- The Local Authority commits to develop plans to establish a Welsh-medium learning support centre at YGG Trebannws, ensuring that this is a gradual, steady process transitioning from predominantly English-medium provision that exists, to a bilingual provision and eventually to a fully Welsh-medium provision.
- We will include the provision of a 16 place Welsh-medium learning support centre in the plans to build a replacement YGG Rhosafan, as part of NPT's appropriate Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme Band C proposals.
- Continue to develop a comprehensive professional development training menu and support for teachers within our Welsh medium mainstream schools and for our Early Years and Childcare Sector. This will enhance the Inclusive Learning Provision (ILP) and Additional learning Needs Provision (ALP) offer within our Welsh Medium schools and Early Years settings, as set out in the new ALN Code for Wales 2021. This training and support offer, including a review of resources and appropriate assessment material, will be reviewed annually and

will be informed by any changing need within our WM mainstream schools and Early Years and Childcare Sector.

- Undertake a biannual audit of the additional learning needs (ALN) of Welsh medium language learners and review our specialist planned places, in order to inform current and map future emerging need for Welsh medium provision for our most complex children and young people with ALN.
- Support and enable the development of a variety of specialist preschool provision to facilitate the early identification of emerging needs for our youngest children, where Welsh is first language or there is a parental preference for Welsh medium provision.
- Invest in bilingual specialist playgroup and childcare provision to support the early identification of emerging needs for our youngest children, where Welsh is first language or there is a parental preference for Welsh medium provision.
- Invest in a bilingual specialist provision and specialist staff within the local authority or with regional partners, to secure the capacity to deliver a Welsh medium specialist provision for children and young people with more complex additional learning needs.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

All pupils with ALN within the local authority will have access to provision at all levels through the medium of Welsh. Collaboration with regional partners will provide a comprehensive range of resources, training opportunities and networking to ensure that Welsh medium provision will be of a high standard and complies with the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018. Early Years and pre-school WM ALN support, assessments and provision will provide increased confidence in parents when choosing Welsh medium education for their children.

Outcome 7

Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

Current data and targets can only be based on reported data reflecting the self-assessment of fluency by individual members of staff.

The most recent data about the education workforce in NPT shows a plateau in the percentage of school teaching staff able to speak Welsh and teach through the medium of Welsh.

Recent Workforce Data

At 31.3.2022, 843 employees self-reported that they are fairly fluent/fluent in speaking and writing Welsh. Of these, 514 were schools' employees. The total employee headcount on this date was 6385.

Previous data relating to school staff is outlined below:

SWAC - Teacher Welsh Language Ability																
SWAC Year	School Teaching Staff - Welsh Language Ability (Numbers)								Total	School Teaching Staff - Welsh Language Ability (%)						
	W1 - No Welsh Skills	W2 - Entry Level	W3 - Foundation Level	W4 - Intermediate Level	W5 - Advanced Level	W6 - Proficient Level	W7 - Not Obtained	W1 - No Welsh Skills		W2 - Entry Level	W3 - Foundation Level	W4 - Intermediate Level	W5 - Advanced Level	W6 - Proficient Level	W7 - Not Obtained	
2019	252	269	270	92	57	234	8	1182	21.3%	22.8%	22.8%	7.8%	4.8%	19.8%	0.7%	
2020	254	275	276	99	58	249	1	1212	21.0%	22.7%	22.8%	8.2%	4.8%	20.5%	0.1%	
2021																

SWAC - Teaching Through the Medium of Welsh												
SWAC Year	Teaching Through Medium of Welsh (Numbers)						Total	Teaching Through Medium of Welsh (%)				
	T1 - Teach/work in Welsh in current post	T2 - Able to teach/work in Welsh but not doing so in current post	T3 - Not able to teach/work in Welsh	T4 - Teaching Welsh as a subject only	No Answer	T1 - Teach/work in Welsh in current post		T2 - Able to teach/work in Welsh but not doing so in current post	T3 - Not able to teach/work in Welsh	T4 - Teaching Welsh as a subject only	No Answer	
2019	205		81	442	447	7	1182	17.3%	6.9%	37.4%	37.8%	0.6%
2020	218		77	448	468	1	1212	18.0%	6.4%	37.0%	38.6%	0.1%
2021												

A significant growth of the workforce able to teach Welsh and through the medium of Welsh is critical in order for Neath Port Talbot to succeed in delivering the growth of Welsh-medium education and Welsh speakers in our schools. We recognise that as well as recruiting a sufficient high quality workforce for our new Welsh-medium schools, we will need to upskill staff and the learning workforce in English-medium schools in order to ensure that a greater amount of teaching and learning is done through the Welsh language.

At present, the Welsh Sabbatical course is offered to all schools within the Local Authority. The numbers of staff who have attended the course is as follows:

Welsh Sabbatical Course- Numbers of NPT staff attending				
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	4	5	3	3

We recognise that there is a need to heavily endorse and promote this course in order to strategically increase the numbers of Welsh-speaking staff within our English-medium schools and succeed in our aim to provide bilingual education throughout the Local Authority.

To achieve a greater awareness and level of ability in the Welsh language within our English-medium schools, teaching staff within the Local Authority have been encouraged to attend Welsh language courses run by Academi Hywel Teifi (courses tailored to suit all abilities from entry level to higher level). The Local Authority monitors the number of staff attending and promotes the provision when needed.

At present, YGYBD are working closely with PGCE students from Swansea University's School of Education ITE programme and Academi Hywel Teifi to train and promote teachers in Welsh-medium education. Thirteen students were placed in WM settings (YGYBD secondary phase sites) through this partnership in 2020-21 and 14 students in 2021-22, with a focus on subject needs within the workforce i.e. Welsh, English, biology, chemistry, physics, MFL, mathematics, DT and computer science. Furthermore, all student-teachers on the PGCE programme receive mandatory 30 hours of Welsh-language learning/enhancement as part of their course (the provision is tailored to where the individual is on their language continuum and ranges from ensuring basic conversational Welsh to enhancing fluency). All are offered further Welsh language learning opportunities once they've achieved their qualification; all graduate with a good level of language awareness and understanding of the bilingual educational context of Wales.

From September 2021, the Swansea University Schools' Partnership (SUSP) will also deliver a unique one year full-time Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Primary with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). After experiencing teaching placements across the primary age phase, the student teacher can choose to specialise in Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 or All- Age contexts. The programme is heavily promoted in south Wales with a view to securing student-teachers that will enter the workforce in their home localities. By placing these student-teachers within our NPT schools as they train, we envisage forging links with potential new staff and securing a workforce that's well-equipped to address the changing face of education in a bilingual Wales.

Developments are also afoot in the NPTC Group of Colleges which has received further funding from Colleges Wales / The National Centre for Learning Welsh to recruit a Work Welsh tutor that solely delivers Learn Welsh courses to NPTC Group of Colleges staff. The Work Welsh target is to provide 120 hours of Welsh to increase bilingual and Welsh-medium delivery in post-16 education, therefore concentrating on academic staff. There are currently 26 staff on the scheme. The 'Welcome' course (Cwrs 'Croeso') has also given NPTC Group of Colleges staff an opportunity to learn and develop their Welsh language skills in the workplace. Due to the success of the course, Work Welsh have used NPTC Group of Colleges as an example in their past case studies for good practice. They were also awarded Work Welsh Employer of the year 2020. Online Work Welsh courses have been built into the College induction scheme for all new staff and are also offered as CPD targets to all staff, therefore

ensuring that staff at NPTC Group of Colleges continue to develop their Welsh language skills. The College has also developed a strategic approach (HR Linguistic Skills Strategy) to recruiting and training staff to close the skills gap between current capacity and the requirements identified in the new Welsh Language Standards and Towards Cymraeg 2050, by introducing a benchmarking exercise.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

We aim to increase the number of teaching staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh in all sectors by the end of the 10 year plan. We aim to achieve this by implementing the following targets.

- We will devise and implement a system of targeting schools according to greater need to nominate individuals to attend the National Sabbatical Scheme with a view to enabling at least 3 teachers per year to attend. The Local Authority will also monitor and ensure that the learning and knowledge is cascaded within each school that benefits from the scheme with a view to creating a changed culture, ethos and language practice within the school.
- The Local Authority will complete a biannual audit and detailed analysis of Welsh speakers able to teach through the medium of Welsh in all sectors. This will include teachers, TA's, youth workers etc. This data, along with projected pupil numbers and workforce planning data involving projected retirements, will be used to capture the required number of staff needed for the future and pinpoint schools, in order to drive the Local Authority's recruitment plans and Welsh-language learning initiatives for staff.
- Based on the data analysis of the biannual Welsh speakers' audit, we will set biannual targets for increasing the proportion of the workforce with language skills at foundation level, and at intermediate level or higher and will report on these as part of the annual monitoring.
- We will undertake regular analysis of all data sources to understand trends in the demand for Welsh-medium teachers. This will include projecting annual transition rates of learners from primary to secondary education and looking at trends in terms of numbers of teachers moving into leadership roles, moving schools or leaving/ retiring from the profession.
- We will undertake a regular analysis of how many staff have Welsh language skills in English-medium schools in order to identify gaps and target schools/ staff for further Welsh language training and immersion.
- By 2023, the authority aims to ensure that at least one member of staff has been identified in every English-medium Primary School who will have the linguistic skills to lead the Welsh language within the organization. English-medium schools will be required to identify a community of staff with Welsh-language skills that will drive their school's engagement with the language and the WESPs targets. Our aim here is to ensure whole school involvement in this agenda thus avoiding the risk of leaving isolated individuals to deliver on school and county-wide targets.
- The Local Authority will ensure that a teaching member of staff's ability to learn /improve their Welsh language skills is factored into that individual's

worktime and workload and that recognition of their progress and effort will be documented in their annual personal development record.

- The HR department will audit the number and place of work of all Welsh speakers within the Authority in order to ensure Welsh medium non-teaching staff are allocated to Welsh medium schools, thus strengthening provision and communication.
- We will establish a workforce forum by September 2023 to respond to recruitment gaps and challenges in the authority. The information gathered will form part of the national workforce strategy.
- The Local Authority commits to ensuring a professional support service that can speak Welsh by appointing and upskilling employees currently in the system.
- We will access schemes through Mudiad Meithrin to provide language immersion methods and training for staff across the county.
- The authority recognises its proactive role in promoting opportunities to engage with the workforce across the whole range of Local Authority services. One of the main responsibilities of the promotion Officer will be to facilitate this work - commence September 2022.
- The Local Authority will set out clear guidelines for use by schools, governing bodies and HR when recruiting new staff, outlining the expectation in terms of the Welsh language. School Governing Bodies will be required to address this ongoing aim as a standing agenda item.
- We will provide an efficient translation service within the Local Authority to ensure that Welsh and English correspondence have equal status.
- We will continue to build on the effective ITE partnership between YGYBD and Swansea University and ensure maximum engagement with the new Primary programme.
- PGCE students from Swansea University and the Careers Service will hold regular information sessions with staff and pupils from Y10-13 in both Welsh and English medium schools, outlining the benefits of a career in education and the integral role the Welsh language plays in this.
- We recognise the need to increase the early years workforce and practitioners who can speak the Welsh language in education and early years. We will work with partners to ensure and promote opportunities for practitioners to access Welsh-medium childcare courses. We will identify these gaps in our annual action plan for this outcome and will set targets accordingly.
- The Local Authority will seek to benefit from Welsh Government's pilot project to incentivise Welsh speakers that return from universities to help teach Welsh in schools.
- Teaching staff within the Local Authority will be further encouraged to attend Welsh language courses run by Academi Hywel Teifi with an initial five-year programme of planning and development identified for this area. The focus will be in the large on staff in English-medium schools with minimal Welsh-language skills, but provision for those wishing to brush up or enhance their skills will also be made available across all schools.
- The Local Authority will identify/ recruit potential leaders and support them when completing the 'Aspiring Leaders' course with the intention of continuing to complete the NPQH.

- Increasing the number of staff attending the Welsh Language Sabbatical scheme will be a target. We will investigate using **pilot schools** with the aim of mapping out a continuum of staff training to be able to eventually create a category 2 stream within an English medium school, starting at nursery and working through to Year 6 over a number of years. Early discussions have identified areas suitable for a scheme of this kind within the Swansea Valley, along with 3 other pilots in the Neath/Baglan area (2 primary and 2 secondary schools). Information regarding the schools will be detailed in our mid-term plan and specific quantitative data and timescales will be set and evaluated in our annual action plans.
- Welsh language awareness training will be made available for all non-teaching staff in the Local Authority's schools.
- To fulfill the aspiration of opening three schools over the 10 year period we will need to ensure at least 3 headteachers, a senior team for each school, class teachers and assistants during the establishment and development of each school. As plans develop in line with member approval and the RLDP, we will calculate the data on the exact staffing numbers needed for the new Welsh-medium schools in line with the proposals. These will be included in the annual action plans.
- We will review the Welsh Government Workforce Development Plan and seek to mainstream recommendations at local level to maximize and grow a Welsh teaching and learning workforce.
- In order to achieve the targets for increasing the number of learners in Welsh-medium education, we will need a partnership approach to planning the workforce needs. We will look to work with relevant stakeholders and Welsh Government in order to achieve these ambitious targets. Annual action plans will reflect these collaborative actions and quantitative short term targets will be agreed upon by all relevant stakeholders.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

An increased number of the NPT education staff will be able to teach through the medium of Welsh and Welsh as a subject. There will be an increase in Welsh medium staff able to teach specific subjects at secondary level. There will be an increase in the number, ability and confidence of staff in English-medium schools able to converse and teach Welsh, therefore increasing the amount of learners with access to Welsh-medium education at all levels throughout the Local Authority. NPT will attract and recruit excellent, bilingual leaders for our schools. All NPT schools will form communities that promote the Welsh language as a medium for education and community life.

How we will work with others to achieve our vision

The WESP sets out a requirement for each local authority to establish a Welsh Education Forum (WEF). The NPT WESP Forum comprises of headteacher representatives from Welsh-medium and English-medium primary and secondary schools, officers of the local authority and other stakeholders from our community including Menter Iaith, RhAG, Health, Mudiad Meithrin, Swansea University's Academi Hywel Teifi, Tŷ'r Gwrhyd and the Urdd.

The NPT WESP Forum met to offer its views during the initial planning of the document in July 2021. Following the initial meeting, working groups for each outcome, comprising of members of the forum, were formed. The working groups will meet termly to form and evaluate an action plan for their specific outcome. These action plans will be focused on achieving the overarching aims set out in the WESP document. Progress will be reported back to the full WESP forum on a termly basis.

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

This Integrated Impact Assessment considers the duties and requirements of the following legislation in order to inform and ensure effective decision making and compliance:

- Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Version Control

Version	Author	Job title	Date
1	R.Crowhurst	Head of Service	2022
2	K Windsor- Brown	Transformation Coordinator	2023

1. Details of the initiative

	Title of the Initiative: Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
	: Transformation
1b	Directorate: ELLLS
1c	Summary of the initiative: Plan for developing Welsh language across education settings
1d	Who will be directly affected by this initiative? Preschool, primary secondary and post 16 pupils
1e	When and how were people consulted? Consultation between November 2021 and January 2022
1f	What were the outcomes of the consultation? The plan received widespread support and approval

2. Evidence

What evidence was used in assessing the initiative?

The following evidence, information and data was used before and during the process of completing the WESP document. As a result, the WESP aligns itself to:

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'
- Prosperity for All: the national strategy and the programme for Government, Taking Wales forward 2016-2021
- Welsh Government's national Welsh language strategy 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers by 2050'
- Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan 2017-21- A desire for learners to become increasingly bilingual and commitments to encourage teachers with some ability to speak Welsh to further develop their skills
- The Welsh in Education, Action Plan 2017-21- Sets the direction for the development of Welsh-medium education
- Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

Further data was also collated from the NPT Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017, NPT Childcare CIW data 2021, NPT Local Development Plan, PLASC, 2011 Census, Family Information Service and a range of third-party partners including Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith, Urdd and Academi Hywel Teifi.

3. Equalities

a) How does the initiative impact on people who share a **protected characteristic**?

Protected Characteristic	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Age	x			The proposal will have a positive impact on children and young people of all ages. As a result of the WESP, the Council is expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education and increase the number of learners in Welsh medium education.

			<p>The outcomes reflect a learner's education journey and are consistent with the policy areas of Cymraeg 2050 and Education in Wales: Our National Mission. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 1: More nursery children/three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh • Outcome 2: More reception class children/five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh • Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another (Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4) • Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh (Key Stage 3 and 4) • Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school (Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4) • Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (Pre-school age to Key Stage 4) • Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh (Pre-school age to Key Stage 4) <p>In addition, there may be a positive impact on adults and older children if the Welsh language is learnt by younger children and spoken within the home setting.</p>
Disability	x		As a result of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Wales) 2018, significant changes are underway in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of all learners with additional learning needs (ALN). All services

			<p>within the local authority will be required to consider whether the child or young person needs ALP (Additional Learning Provision) in Welsh.</p> <p>Outcome 6 in the WESP is concerned with ensuring an increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with ALN. Targets in this section includes providing support for teachers within Welsh-medium mainstream schools. This will enhance the Inclusive Learning Provision (ILP) and Additional learning Needs Provision (ALP) offer within Welsh- Medium schools and Early Years settings, as set out in the new ALN Code for Wales 2021.</p> <p>The Council's WESP outlines the aim to invest in a bilingual specialist provision and specialist staff within the local authority or with regional partners, to secure the capacity to deliver a Welsh medium specialist provision for children and young people with more complex additional learning needs.</p> <p>Consultation replies stated that specific Welsh-medium Additional Learning Needs provision was needed throughout the Local Authority to ensure equal access to ALN pupils in Welsh-medium education. The WESP has been amended accordingly with the inclusion of two Welsh-medium support centres to be established during the 10-year plan.</p>
Gender reassignment		x	This is not a criterion considered in terms of the Council's education arrangements either for pupils or school staff, however, it is expected that all NPTCBC schools meet the needs of pupils and staff who are transgender.
Marriage & civil partnership		x	This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal
Pregnancy and maternity		x	This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal
Race	x		It is evident from WM school data that families from different ethnic backgrounds choose WM education, with many English families moving to the area and making the informed decision to educate their children in WM schools. Both the WESP and the Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Strategy aim to inform and support these families when making the decision about choosing WM education. These aims

			<p>significantly alleviate concerns and it is anticipated that this will lead to an increase in the number of pupils from ethnic backgrounds attending WM education.</p> <p>As part of the outcomes of the WESP there should be a promotion of increasing Welsh language across all ethnic groups, supported by the provision of Welsh language immersion centres across the local authority area.</p>
Religion or belief		x	<p>This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal, however, it is expected that the Council's educational arrangements across Welsh-medium and English-medium schools will meet the needs of pupils or staff members of different religions or with different beliefs.</p>
Sex	x		<p>Outcomes in the WESP aim to provide a plethora of opportunities for both boys and girls to develop and use Welsh outside of the classroom through cultural and sporting activities within school and in the wider community. These opportunities ensure that learners, both boys and girls, have access to the Welsh language both formally and informally, which could lead to an increase in the use of Welsh in the wider community.</p> <p>Transition data shows that there is no clear year on year trend of a specific sex transitioning from Welsh-medium Key Stage 2 education to English- medium education at Key Stage 3. Annual data shows a fluctuation of both sexes from a minority of schools transitioning to English-medium secondary education. This has been addressed in Outcome 3 with specific targets set for retaining all pupils within Welsh-medium education from one key stage to the next.</p>
Sexual orientation		x	<p>This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal</p>

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

To improve positive impacts_

- The Council has produced a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan document for 2022-2032, this document sets out all actions that will be taken to improve Welsh language outcomes in education and should be read in conjunction with this IIA.
- The WESP forum will monitor transition rates for pupils choosing to be educated through the medium of Welsh and will also monitor the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan document over a ten-year period (2022-2032) and mitigate any negative impacts by amending the Strategic Plan.

b) How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Public Sector Equality Duty**?

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation	x			As part of the WESP outcomes there should be a promotion of increasing Welsh language across all community groups, supported by the provision of Welsh language immersion centres across the local authority area. This provides opportunities across all communities and promotes the elimination of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
To advance equality of opportunity between different groups	x			The WESP aims to develop and expand the opportunities for using the Welsh language across all community groups. Additional information can be found in the outcomes of the WESP document.
To foster good relations between different groups	x			Opportunities are present in the WESP to ensure that groups work together to promote and develop the Welsh language, for example Welsh-medium schools supporting English –medium schools to further develop pupil and staff Welsh language skills.

What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

The WESP document is a 10 year plan with seven outcomes, each containing actions. This document will be monitored by both Members and the WESP forum.

4. Community Cohesion/Social Exclusion/Poverty

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
Community Cohesion	x			The WESP aims to promote community cohesion by creating opportunities to work together towards a common aim, developing the Welsh language. Specific actions within the WESP promote community cohesion, for example, Menter Iaith's family activity sessions/ days e.g. fun days, singing sessions; The Urdd's Community Department providing arts opportunities and arranging activities to encourage and enable children and young people to socialise through the medium of Welsh outside the classroom; further development of Ty'r Gwrhyd's community groups, including Merched y Wawr, Cylch Darllen Cwm Tawe and papur bro <i>Llais</i> , and activities including regular book launches, small art exhibitions, cultural and literary events and creative activities for children and young people. These activities aim to forge good relationships between Welsh-medium and English-medium communities.
Social Exclusion	x			There could be a positive effect on social exclusion through reaching the targets as stated in the WESP document, coupled with Welsh Government's desire for additional Welsh speakers across communities in Wales.

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Poverty			x	No impact on poverty because of the WESP has been identified.
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What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

The WESP document is a 10 year plan with seven outcomes, each containing actions. This document will be monitored by the Members, Welsh Government and the WESP forum.

5. Welsh

	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this effect?
What effect does the initiative have on: – people’s opportunities to use the Welsh language	x			<p>The WESP overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032. Outcome 5 in the WESP seeks to provide more opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.</p> <p>The targets for this outcome have been developed alongside the targets set out in the Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Strategy (alongside Priority 1) with emphasis on promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language and increase its use in everyday life within schools and also within the wider community.</p> <p>It also aims to promote the Curriculum for Wales Framework by ensuring that All learners should have appropriate pathways for learning Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life. It aims to</p>

			<p>support learners to use Welsh confidently and appreciate its usefulness to communication in a bilingual Wales.</p> <p>The Authority recognises that having varied opportunities to use the Welsh language in different contexts within the school environment is key to promoting confidence. Learners, parents and carers will need to be supported and encouraged to participate in a variety of experiences and opportunities through the medium of Welsh in order to improve their confidence in the language.</p> <p>The WESP therefore should impact positively on people’s opportunities to use the Welsh language.</p>
<p>– treating the Welsh and English languages equally</p>	<p>x</p>		<p>The WESP includes the aim to create and provide opportunities and experiences for all learners and the wider community to use Welsh and be part of Welsh life in order to increase confidence in the Welsh language and to feel a sense of belonging.</p> <p>By September 2022, all Welsh and English medium schools have reviewed and revisited previous Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus targets and will achieve the pre Covid standards.</p> <p>By September 2024, the Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus will be an integral part of planning for the Curriculum for Wales within all schools, with an emphasis on a whole school progression approach (supported by our Welsh in Education officer and Curriculum Development Officer (Welsh in English medium)). This will increase learner and staff confidence in using the Welsh language and impact positively on the ethos of all schools.</p> <p>Siarter Iaith/ Cymraeg Campus action plans/strategies will be used to ensure regular opportunities for learners, staff and the wider community to engage in activities that increase confidence in the Welsh language and promote Welsh modern culture and history. This will lead to an increased awareness of the relevance/ importance of Welsh in their everyday lives. This will be monitored and supported by our Welsh in Education officer and Curriculum Development Officer (Welsh in English medium).</p>

				The WESP therefore should impact positively on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
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What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

The WESP document is a 10 year plan with seven outcomes, each containing actions. This document will be monitored by Members, Welsh Government and the WESP forum.

6. Biodiversity

How will the initiative assist or inhibit the ability to meet the **Biodiversity Duty**?

Biodiversity Duty	+	-	+/-	Why will it have this impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity			X	This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider			X	This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal

environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.				
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What action will be taken to improve positive or mitigate negative impacts?

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7. Well-being of Future Generations

How have the five ways of working been applied in the development of the initiative?

Ways of Working	Details
i. Long term – looking at least 10 years (and up to 25 years) ahead	The WESP is expected to positively impact on pupils aged 3-18 and on older children and adults, and will aim to will improve wellbeing through the promotion of the development of the Welsh language leading to increased opportunities to participate in the language and culture of Wales
ii. Prevention – preventing problems occurring or getting worse	The WESP directly supports wellbeing objective 1 – ‘to improve the wellbeing of children and young people’ through the provision of enhanced opportunities and provision for current and future generations of primary aged pupils. It also supports wellbeing objective 2 –‘to improve the wellbeing of all adults who live in the county borough’ and wellbeing objective 3 ‘to develop the local economy and environment so that the wellbeing of people can be improved’, particularly through WESP Outcomes 5 and 7.

iii. Collaboration – working with other services internal or external	The WESP is always developed in consultation with both internal and external Welsh language groups and communities. The WESP forum comprises Neath Port Talbot officers and school and early years representatives, along with a number of external groups and organisations who have collectively developed actions within the draft WESP.
iv. Involvement – involving people, ensuring they reflect the diversity of the population	As above, a range of stakeholders have been actively involved in developing the draft WESP. The draft WESP has been subject to a comprehensive public consultation with a wide range of stakeholders for a nine week period between 5 th November 2021 and 7 th January 2022. Based on the statutory requirements set out in the Welsh in Education Strategic Planning regulations (Wales) 2019 (“ <i>the 2019 Regulations</i> ”) local authorities must consult with a range of stakeholders.
v. Integration – making connections to maximise contribution to:	Welsh-medium education is an integral and essential part of the learning offer in Neath Port Talbot and all children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and understand their lives through the medium of Welsh. This principle is underpinned by ensuring universal access to this provision across the county borough. Neath Port Talbot Council recognises that language and culture are critical parts of an individual's identity and is committed to promoting and celebrating Welsh language learning across all phases and sectors. The draft WESP aims to provide greater opportunities to enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and to use the language confidently in everyday life.
Council’s well-being objectives	The WESP directly contributes to wellbeing objective 1 – ‘all children have the best start in life and also supports wellbeing objective 2 –‘all our communities will be thriving and sustainable’ and wellbeing objective 3 - ‘Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations’,
Other public bodies objectives	The strategy supports and complements the Public Services Board’s wellbeing objectives

8. Monitoring Arrangements

Provide information on the monitoring arrangements to:

Monitor the impact of the initiative on Equalities, Community Cohesion, the Welsh Measure, Biodiversity Duty and the Wellbeing Objectives.

Progress of the plan will be monitored termly by WESP forum members and annually by elected members and Welsh Government

9. Assessment Conclusions

Please provide details of the conclusions reached in relation to each element of the assessment:

	Conclusion
Equalities	Positive impacts in relation to age, disability, race and sex; neutral impacts on all others. The WESP is a 10 year plan and will continue to be monitored during that period for any mitigating actions where necessary including changes to the strategic plan.
Community Cohesion/ Social Exclusion/Poverty	Positive impact
Welsh	Positive impacts
Biodiversity	No Impact
Well-being of Future Generations	Positive impact

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Overall Conclusion

Please indicate the conclusion reached:

- **Continue** - as planned as no problems and all opportunities have been maximised x
- **Make adjustments** - as potential problems/missed opportunities/negative impacts have been identified along with mitigating actions
- **Justification** - for continuing with the initiative even though there is a potential for negative impacts or missed opportunities
- **STOP** - redraft the initiative as actual or potential unlawful discrimination has been identified

Please provide details of the overall conclusion reached in relation to the initiative

Approving the WESP will result in positive impacts on most protected groups and on the development of the Welsh language. It will also ensure compliance with the requirements imposed upon the council by Section 84 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019.

10. Actions

What actions are required in relation to obtaining further data/information, to reduce or remove negative impacts or improve positive impacts?

Action	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	How will we know we have achieved our objective?
Monitoring the outcomes in the WESP	Members, Welsh Government and the WESP forum	Annually over the 10 year plan	Targets set in the strategic plan are achieved

11. Sign off

Version 1	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Rhiannon Crowhurst	Head of Service		2022
Signed off by	Andrew Thomas	Director		2022

Version 2	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Kate Windsor-Brown	Head of Service		2023
Signed off by	Andrew Thomas	Director		2023

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Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwiadol wag



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

30th January 2024

**Report of the Director of Social Services, Health & Housing –
Andrew Jarrett**

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is for Members to note the work undertaken throughout Social Services and to adopt the Director's Annual Report 2022-23.

The report was considered by the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Committee on 25th January.

Background

The purpose of the annual report is to set out the local authority's improvement journey in providing services to people in their areas, those who access information, advice and assistance, and those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. Under the new requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (SSWB) Act, the report needs to demonstrate how local authorities have promoted well-being and accounted for the delivery of well-being standards.

The former reporting requirements for Directors of Social Services in part 6 of the “Statutory Guidance on the Role and Accountabilities of the Director of Social Services” (Welsh Government June 2009) have been replaced as a consequence of both the SSWB and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

The requirements are that every local authority must produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions and the report must include:

- an evaluation of the performance in delivering social services functions for the past year including lessons learned (Part 8 Code on the role of the director);
- how the local authority has achieved the six quality standards for well-being outcomes (in a code about measuring social services performance made under s145 of the SSWB Act 2014);
- qualitative and quantitative data relating to the achievement of well-being outcomes (also set out in the code on measuring performance);
- the extent to which the local authority has met requirements under Parts 3 and 4 of the SSWB Act as set out in separate codes covering assessing needs and meeting needs;
- objectives for promoting the well-being of people needing care and support and carers needing support for the following year including those identified by population needs assessments under section 14 of the SSWB Act;
- assurances concerning:
 - structural arrangements enabling good governance and strong accountability;
 - effective partnership working via Partnership Boards;
 - safeguarding arrangements;
- the local authority’s performance in handling and investigating complaints
- responses to any inspections of its social services functions and an update on Welsh language provision;
- how the local authority has engaged people (including children) in the production of the report.

Financial Impact

Not applicable.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for adoption of the Director's Annual Report.

Valleys Communities Impacts

No implications.

Workforce Impacts

No implications.

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"

There is no impact under the Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts

Section 2(1) of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a general duty where a person exercising relevant functions must have regard (along with all other relevant matters) to the need to remove or minimise any factors which:

- (a) increase the risk of violence against women and girls, or
- (b) exacerbate the impact of such violence on victims.

The proposals contained in this report are likely to have no impact on the above duty.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the constitution for consultation on this item.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note and endorse the Director's Annual Report 22-23 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To ensure Neath Port Talbot Social Services meet the requirements that every local authority must produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions.

Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

Director's Annual Report 2022-23 – Appendix 1.

List of Background Papers

No additional papers required.

Officer Contract

Andrew Jarrett, Director of Social Services, Health & Housing, Neath
tel: 01639 763279 E-mail: a.jarrett@npt.gov.uk

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Social Services, Health & Housing Director's Annual Report 2022-23

www.npt.gov.uk

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Foreword



Welcome to my annual report reflecting the period April 2022 to March 2023. In my introduction last year I noted that we had faced one of the biggest healthcare challenges in a century and that the social care system had been pushed to the limits.

While we have emerged from the other side of a global pandemic, Social Services continues to deal with the legacy of Covid and faces new challenges. A cost-of-living crisis is putting additional pressure on our resources, services, staff and citizens.

Local volunteers and our team of Local Area Coordinators are busier than ever, while our Community Mental Health Teams have seen ever-increasing numbers of referrals, with so many people impacted by lockdowns and social isolation. And we have seen a sharp rise in the number of high risk victims of domestic abuse supported.

Staff, partners and communities continue to show remarkable commitment, compassion, adaptability, and determination to maintain services in these challenging times and for this I send my sincere thanks. Services affected by the pandemic have now fully reopened, with all such as our day services and respite services now operating at full capacity.

The deplorable war in Ukraine has led to a local Neath Port Talbot response with 267 citizens travelling around 2,000 miles, fleeing from their communities and welcomed into ours.

Recruitment and retention of carers remains a challenge across NPT and Wales as a whole. We continue to invest in staff training and advocate the benefits of working in the social care system.

With so much demand on services we continue to innovate, with increasing emphasis on supporting people in their own communities including through Assistive Technology, and adaptations to homes via Disabled Facilities Grants.

We have many challenges to face as a public service and as a community. By continuing to work together we will achieve our goal of ensuring the most vulnerable people get the support they need and deserve.

Andrew Jarrett
Director of Social Services, Health & Housing

Director's summary of performance

As at the end of the year 2,117 adults had a service and care plan (compared to 2,344 in the previous year), a near 10% fall, while those aged 65+ receiving a service was 1,788 (1,758 the year before).

We have remodelled Adult Services into three area networks mirroring the Health Board's GP Clusters to bring care and support closer to our communities, and we are building on our Prevention and Early Intervention, including identifying unpaid carers sooner.

Last year 225 adult carers assessments were completed, up one-third on the previous year, as well as 20 parent carer assessments, as demand returned following the pandemic.

Helping people return to their own homes and communities after leaving hospital is key, and the percentage of adults who received reablement who needed no further package of care increased to 71% from 64% the previous year.

NPT has seen a growth of recruitment agencies entering the local market which are presenting increased competition for social care staff recruitment. This trend could potentially destabilise the ability of local service providers to maintain and grow their local workforce.

As people continue to want to remain at home and providers unable to recruit and train staff this impacts on the residential care sector. When a person either in hospital or in the community requires a domiciliary care package, and the ability to meet this need is not available due to staff shortages the person has to be placed in a residential home which impacts on their independence and skills over time.

We strongly believe that a child's needs are best met by their own families if this can be safely supported. I am pleased to report that the number of Children Looked After continues to fall, standing at 258 (of whom 14 were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) at the end of March 2023, down from 268 in the previous year.

During the year 97% of children's assessments were completed within the target 42 days from point of referral.

The use of children's residential care home placements has increased by 40% over the last 12 months; this increase is due to a number of factors including

the impact of insufficient local placement availability within the local foster care market.

We continue to engage with Welsh Government including its 'eliminate profit from care' agenda and the potential risks and implications such approaches present to the local markets.

Hillside Secure Unit is continuing to review its service model to 'future proof' its service to ensure it is able to accommodate the future demands of the provision as well as being financially sustainable in the long term, and NPT's use of secure residential care home placements has remained stable.

The overall number of children and young people accessing advocacy services has increased in NPT by 11% over the last 12 months due to continued efforts to embed advocacy within local practice.

The last year saw 2,650 presentations to the Housing Options Service; an increase of 11% on the previous year, with an average of 40% due to some form of relationship breakdown either with a partner or within the family.

The service also saw an increase in presentations from private sector tenants, with an average of 25% being from tenants who have been served a notice to quit. This has increased due to the implementation of the Renting Homes Act in December 2022 which has resulted in over 50 landlords in NPT leaving the rental market. Temporary Accommodation (TA) numbers continue to increase with 205 households in TA at the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

The time taken to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) is recovering well, with the number completed for 2022/23 standing at 272, up a third on the previous year while the end to end time (referral to completion) improved to 245 days from 339 days in 2021/22.

Our Commissioning Unit provides support to and undertakes monitoring of the various service providers, including care homes, domiciliary care and others.

Partnership working remains important to us; we work closely with colleagues in Swansea Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, the third sector and the West Glamorgan regional partners on a plethora of activities including hospital discharges and mental health placements.

As usual we set a number of key priorities for the directorate last year to ensure we continue to meet the care and support needs of the people of NPT.

Priorities for 2022-23 – What we said we would do and what we achieved

- **To strengthen opportunities for early offers of help, to ensure vulnerable children, their families, and adults in need of support are having access to community based support services at the earliest opportunity.**
- ✓ We continue to invest in supporting families at an earlier stage through the strengthening of support services and the recruitment of a full time principal officer with responsibility for prevention and family support. We work in partnership with our colleagues including community services to ensure that we respond to challenges such as the current cost of living crisis and ensure that families have access to support when they need it. We provide family focussed support by working in partnership with families and building on strengths.
- ✓ We work collaboratively with families to build resilience and prevent problems escalating by providing early offers of help and support. We understand that children's needs are best met by their own families, if this can be safely supported. Helping families stay together is a key focus of Children's Services. Early intervention and prevention services helps reduce the number of children and young people reaching the threshold for care and needing to become care experienced, or support them to return safely to their families in a timely way. It is important that families receive the right support at the right time.
- ✓ We reviewed and aligned Adults prevention and early intervention services to place based clusters to ensure people have access to streamlined and timely support.
- ✓ We enhanced the number of Local Area Coordinators across the county borough to 14. The team work with circa 500 people on a 1-2-1 basis and another 400 people in community group settings. 40% of case work is being undertaken with people who aren't known to services and we are looking to increase this number.
- ✓ We completed the mapping of community hubs across the county borough, including food banks. Information from this exercise was fed into the Local Development Plan and used to support services through the cost-of-living crisis.
- ✓ We completed the review and restructure of Safe and Well Volunteering, to create an adult volunteer befriending service. There are currently 40 active volunteers working across the networks and work is ongoing to look at

more specialist volunteering opportunities for people with additional learning needs.

- ✓ We strengthened partnership working with the third sector, bringing a more coordinated approach to community engagement and development.
 - ✓ We provided support and funding of the warm spaces with partner organisations during the winter period to support individuals and communities with the cost-of-living crisis.
 - ✓ We piloted a falls response service within the Afan network, for individuals with a life line. This has been very successful with calls being responded to within 45 minutes, with over half of fallers remaining at home, avoiding a conveyance to hospital. Work is ongoing to support further rollout of the service.
 - ✓ We delivered targeted individual and community interventions directed and influenced by population health mapping undertaken with Public Health Wales.
 - ✓ Continued cross directorate partnership working, with the aim of bringing together services to support community accessibility and help people remain resilient.
 - ✓ Developed a draft Adults Social Isolation and Loneliness Strategy. The implementation plan is being coproduced with the community and partner organisations.
 - ✓ Implementing the development of a community focused school in partnership with Awel Y Mor primary school based in Sandfields, Port Talbot.
- **To support children and young people to live in safe, stable and permanent families and to ensure that only those children who need to be looked after are in care.**
- ✓ In the leaving care cohort, there is now a drive to focus on revocation of care orders where appropriate. We are developing a *When I am ready* cohort and supported accommodation including transitional models for post 16 young people.
 - ✓ In Youth Justice Services, young people in care would be supported by Children's Services and the teams involved with care experienced children, and plans are created in conjunction with Youth Justice and Early

Intervention workers to ensure that only young people who need to be looked after remain in care.

- ✓ Our 'business as usual' approach has enabled us to maintain a concerted effort in managing our Children Looked After population and ensuring that the long term care plans for our children and young people are regularly reviewed. During the period we have seen **65** children discharged from care in a planned way. This is a decrease on the previous year (**78**).

- **To further embed participation and engagement across the directorate, to ensure the voice of vulnerable children and adults are at the forefront of our services.**

- ✓ We have developed a Most Significant Change (MSC) approach which gathers stories from the frontline that are focused on capturing change outcomes that have resulted from an intervention or programme. Using MSC to capture stories provides a rich suite of qualitative information that can be used to inform practice, policy and decision making throughout the directorate.

- ✓ The Engagement and Participation Officer and the Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service have continued to deliver the Life Skills programme to support care leavers and the YJES service users. Over an 8 week period young people attend every Tuesday 10am to 1pm. The participants successfully learn a range of culinary skills and become competent at cooking healthy, budget meals. Further training around budgeting and laundry are also delivered. It has become evident the project offers more than basic life skills as the participants enjoy the social aspect and improved wellbeing from regular interaction with peers and professionals. The voice of the young people continues to be captured in the Exit Questionnaire conducted when young people no longer need the support of the service.

- ✓ A Young Persons Interview Panel was set up to help appoint a Principal Officer. Four young people designed questions to ask the applicants and feedback their thoughts and opinions to the senior panel. It was pleasing to see the chosen applicant was also one of the top interviewees selected by the young people. The YP Panel will continue to be involved in future management interviews.

➤ **To ensure a robust, resilient, compassionate and consistent approach to safeguarding practice across Social Care.**

Our approach to Safeguarding across Children and Adults continues to be streamlined and strengthened by the following:

- ✓ We have brought consistency in the recording of strategy discussions and strategy meetings across the Directorate; our designated safeguarding officer role is now well established and proving effective in response to professional abuse;
- ✓ A neglect tool has been developed in conjunction with the University of Birmingham, practitioners, parents and partner agencies to enhance our response to neglect, whilst recognising social harms and how such skews perceptions of neglect;
- ✓ We have worked regionally to understand our assessment of mental capacity and best interest meetings and the findings of audit work will shape standardised assessment tools moving forward; our response to harm outside the family home continues to be developed and refined and has extended across Adult Services;
- ✓ The rapid response to suspected suicide forum has been extended to respond to 'significant attempted' suspected suicides.
- ✓ The Corporate Safeguarding Group has led on the revision of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, which brings it in line with Wales' national Corporate Safeguarding Practice Guidance. The group has also revised its Terms of Reference and has also revised the Safeguarding Self-Assessment – to be administered in 2023/24. Unfortunately the rollout of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) has been halted, however the LPS project group will continue to take forward the key central tenets of LPS: necessity, proportionality and the need to better front-load the process. Our work on transitional arrangements has continued and we received funding from Welsh Government to make Parent Advocacy operational over the coming three years. We remain committed to make Neath Port Talbot the safest place in Wales for Citizens and are working closely with the many partnership boards: Community Safety, Area Planning, VAWDASV, Serious Organised Crime, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, Regional Safeguarding, Junior Safeguarding and CONTEST to achieve this goal.

- **Support people to live a fulfilling life at home, connected to the community and resources around them, and provide care and support where needed.**
- ✓ For both Leaving care and the Youth Justice services, community and resources are key. Most of our young people remain living in our area, and in education or further education where they are supported by either Youth Justice Intervention workers or social workers and Young People’s Advisors. We have developed and opened a fully functional resource centre where life skills training, interventions and support are provided, and young people across both cohorts are encouraged to develop their skills whilst maintaining their community links.
- ✓ Our 14 Local Area Coordinators cover the whole county borough, and work with on average 534 individuals who are supported through 1:1 provision at any one time, with community groups and activities promoted throughout the year.

- **To enhance the support afforded to unpaid carers of adults and the contribution they make to our communities.**
- ✓ In September 2022 we employed a full time Carers Development Officer focused on enhancing engagement with carers, identifying unpaid carers, improving access to support services, and improving the link between statutory and non-statutory support. We continue to contract with NPT Carers Service and have directly supported them in a successful bid for Carers Trust grant funding for short breaks. We also allocated time of the Carers Development Officer to provide NPT Carers direct support for administration of this grant.
- ✓ Since November 2022 we have undertaken an internal review of carer support, including the Council’s current Service Level Agreement for carers. This work initially focused an adult carers but has now been expanded to include both young carers and parent carers also. To date this has resulted in a demonstrator pilot in Neath Cluster that focuses on enhancing:
 - ✓ Integration of support, by identifying carers where individuals who are being cared for are receiving social work support and liaising between ‘cared for’ and ‘carer’ support providers;
 - ✓ Prevention and Early Intervention, by proactively identifying carers earlier in their carer journey. Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA),

- signposting and general (non-statutory) support provided to carers as early as possible from presentation to services;
 - ✓ Response time to meet carers' needs, by undertaking a proportionate carers needs assessment, which will identify if a carer needs statutory or non-statutory support;
 - ✓ Learning from the model and the outcome of the review of existing processes which will help shape a robust model of support for carers;
 - ✓ To date we have been involved in the design and delivery of the Regional Carers Strategy and a recent engagement event held in Swansea.com Stadium to understand 'what matters' to unpaid carers.
 - ✓ We have supported the Carers Partnership Board to undertake a carers' survey to enquire into carers respite/short breaks provision. These two exercises will form the basis of our own engagement with carers with the view to shaping our services for the future.
 - ✓ We have also employed a manager who now holds responsibility for services to unpaid carers.
- **To further develop the local social care market to improve the range and quality of services.**
- ✓ Our Commissioning Unit have continued to follow robust processes to ensure quality care is provided to vulnerable people when they need it. We have worked closely with a number of providers throughout the year to ensure that they are meeting quality standards of care and contract compliance and implemented Performance Management measures where providers have fallen below acceptable standards.
 - ✓ In addition to this we have commissioned a number of new services to support diversifying and transforming the way we deliver social care.
 - ✓ We delivered our first pan-disability Extra Care scheme, enabling individuals to live independently with access to support when needed. The scheme is made up of self-contained flats and access to 24-hour staff support to enable individuals to live independently. Those living at the scheme utilise communal areas to take part in activities such as cooking workshops and mindfulness sessions.
 - ✓ Officers have also worked with families to co-produce a supported living scheme, which specialises in supporting individuals with an ASD diagnosis. The scheme has been developed to ensure that the environment and care and support commissioned is centred on the needs of the individuals identified for the scheme. Officers worked with families, Care Managers, OT

and the Registered Social Landlord (RSL) on the property development and procurement of a support provider.

- ✓ We have piloted an outcome focused Domiciliary Care Model to move away from prescribed call times and ensure calls are delivered in line with people's changing needs and requirements. The pilot has had a positive impact and made an improvement to how quickly we can respond to requests for Domiciliary Care.

- **To continue the use of technology in supporting people to achieve their personal outcomes.**
- ✓ We have expanded our Assistive Technology offerings to include a mobile lifeline option to support confidence with independent outdoor mobility and access to communities.
- ✓ We secured capital funding and began remodelling and refurbishment work to provide a Digital Solutions Suite, to showcase and demonstrate how mainstream digital technology can support independent living, and/or enhance other care/telecare support.
- ✓ Prevention and Early Intervention Team are developing a digital platform to support community connections, reduce loneliness and isolation, and provide easy access to helpful resources to support self-management and wellbeing both online and in their communities.
- ✓ We are on target regarding our planned programme for upgrading all lifeline units to be ready ahead of retirement of analogue telephone lines and switch to digital by December 2025.
- ✓ Working closely with the Community Medicines Management Team we are supporting individuals to safely take their medicines using reminder and /or automatic dispensing devices.
- ✓ We continue to work with supported living residents to identify how technologies can support their independence, quality of life and personal outcomes.
- ✓ Working with the Fire Service we now ensure all lifeline packages include a smoke alarm that connects to the lifeline call response centre to ensure timely alert to emergency services.
- ✓ We have undertaken some exploratory work to establish how mainstream digital and Assistive Technology can support developing life skills in Bspoked which will go into work plans for 2023-24.

- ✓ We have also been piloting a mobile response service in Afan cluster area to explore how a lifeline based mobile response can impact on wellbeing for non-injurious falls and other non-medical emergencies.
- **To continue to develop a robust social care workforce.**
- ✓ We use succession planning, HR policies and procedures to sustain and maintain a strong stable workforce. We monitor sickness and absence from work and ensure staff maintain their training and development.
- ✓ In addition to areas of training and management oversight, we ensure everyone has a clear role, good supervision, and quality appraisals. Everyone has supervision in line with the NPT supervision policy and appraisals will form a part of that process going forward. We are committed to the health and well-being of our staff, and this is covered in our development days and will form part of everyone's appraisal. Staff well-being will be kept a priority. The building of staff morale has been essential to maintain commitment to reduce sickness and improve staff continuity.
- ✓ We are championing a research culture by promoting evidence-based guidance to support evidence-informed social care practice.

How are people shaping our services?

This is about how we find out what people think about our services so we can build on good practice.

Most Significant Change (MSC) Stories and Story Telling Panel

MSC is an approach which starts by gathering stories from the frontline that are focused on capturing change outcomes that have resulted from an intervention or programme. Unlike case studies, MSC stories are *by* people, not *about* them. They are first person stories that are led by the people being interviewed. We continuously seek the views of individuals that are involved within services in Social Care. This sometimes takes the form of a view on their plan or assessment, or historically we have sent feedback questionnaires at the point of case closure. But some of the evidence gathered in this way lacks the depth we would like to have. Using MSC to capture stories will provide a rich suite of qualitative information that can be used to inform practice, policy and decision making throughout the directorate. We will be offering opportunities

regularly for individuals to share their stories. Enabling and empowering individuals to have a voice more generally rather than specific to an intervention, a plan or an assessment will help illicit quality information that may not otherwise be captured. As well as those receiving services, the views of staff also inform internal practices and strategic planning.

This year we have been gathering stories from individuals receiving services across the directorate which are then be heard at a Story Selection Panel. The group listen to and reflect on a small number of stories by exploring what is significant and why. Participants will have different opinions on this, and exploring these differences helps them to deepen their understanding of the stories and each other. The learning and implications of the panel discussions are compiled into a short feedback report, with the stories and lived experiences of the individuals we support used to shape and inform policy and practice.

Community Safety Team

The Crime & Disorder Act places a duty on local authorities to ensure they work in partnership to reduce and prevent crime in their local area. One of the best ways for us to raise awareness of crime prevention campaigns and initiatives is to actively engage with our local communities whenever and wherever possible.

In order to achieve this, the Community Safety Team ensure delivery of a programme of suitable events and community talks in various areas of the county borough. During 2022/23 the team organised and/or attended **35** community engagement events to promote crime prevention campaigns and initiatives, and talk to residents about any crime or anti-social behaviour issues that are affecting them.



Community Safety event

We use the opportunity to talk to residents about: Domestic Abuse; Anti-Social Behaviour; Hate Crime; County Lines; Scams; Community Tensions; Business Crime; Terrorism.

We use the anecdotal information from these events to steer our future work and campaigns. Information is also fed back to any relevant forum like Tasking, Problem Solving Groups, or the Community Safety Partnership Board.

Since the pandemic and the start of the cost of living crisis, the nature of issues that our residents experience is different and ever changing. It is a challenge for the team to keep abreast of emerging issues and trends, ensuring we are able to provide the most appropriate advice and signposting, and develop campaigns to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime.

A Safer Croeserw

In partnership with

WILDFOX
YOUTH FOR WALES
COMMUNITIES IN WALES

Friends of Croeserw - FREE 'Roly Poly Entertainments LTD' providing Disco, Games and Dances

FREE Activities provided by NPT Youth Service Information from Wildfox Resorts

Partner Agencies Offering Advice - Communities For Work Plus - NPT Paws on Patrol
Community Safety - South Wales Police - Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
Family Information Service - The Childcare Offer - Housing Justice Cymru - Flying Start
Devon Wales Information - Victim Forum - NPT Recycling - NPT Road Safety Team
Local Area Coordinator - CVS

DATE	TIME	VENUE
16 MAR 2023	3PM- 6PM	CROESERW COMMUNITY CENTRE SA13 3PL

Advert for one of our events organised during 2022/23

The team also deliver talks to local community groups to provide information on home security and to promote our Feel Safe Scheme, which offers home security surveys and appropriate safety items to those who are vulnerable, on a low income and / or are impacted by domestic abuse.

During 2022/23 the team delivered **6** talks to local community groups.

The team produced 'Safe and Sound' newsletters every quarter, which were shared with the general public, local Councillors, members of our CSP Board, and partner agencies. These newsletters help to further raise awareness of crime prevention messaging

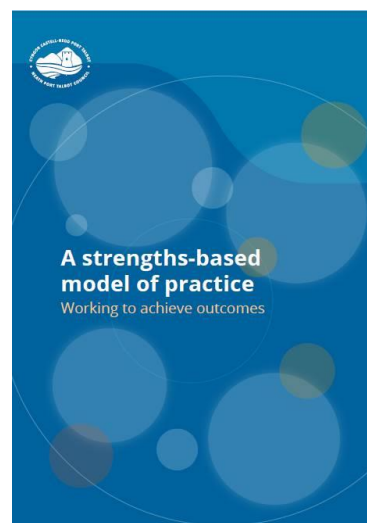
and campaigns, as well as notify residents of any emerging trends or matters to be aware of.

The team runs the Safer NPT Facebook page which reached **2,600** followers during the year.

Quality Standard 1 - Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve
This is about how we work in partnership to help people achieve positive outcomes.

We have continued to implement across all services the Outcomes Focused Approach introduced via the *Framework for Strengths-Based Practice Working to Achieve Outcomes* which was co-produced with Social Care Wales (SCW).

We focused training and development on linking in co-production, improving case recordings and working with parents and partners. Training is now part of all induction for new starters and students working in the authority to ensure that all are aware of the underpinning ethos of NPT to support the people we work with to better outcomes.



Following auditing plans within Children's Services we have developed additional training which will specifically look at how plans can be co-produced with families ensuring we are capturing the voice of the children and families we work with. This will also look at the introduction of the use of one page profiles in practice.

Consultant Social Workers (CSW) have continued to champion outcome focused practice within their teams holding peer group reflection sessions and this has been supported by three multi-agency training days completed on a patch basis with partner agencies from health, housing and third sector organisations. This training looked to improve joint understanding of communities and strengthen collaborative working and relationships between multiagency practitioners. There have been some challenges with this work to ensure that we get the right people to attend, however it is hoped that we will continue to build on this and hold regular repeats of the training to continue to spread the word across the Children's Services community teams. Discussions have begun regarding how this can be replicated in Adult Services.

Unpaid Carers

The pandemic has had a notable impact on unpaid carers with many reporting significant increased feelings of loneliness and isolation and worsening mental health. The pressures of caring for others has also increased, as community services have yet to return to pre-pandemic levels and traditional ‘face to face’ health care has been replaced by more online or telephone consultations. As such, the opportunities to identify and support carers has reduced.

The existing availability of formal care and mounting pressure on the NHS to release patients from hospital may also cause carers to provide longer-term care, including for patients with more complicated needs, adding to the pressure already placed on unpaid carers.

The care that unpaid carers provide is essential in the delivery and sustainability of Adult Social Care services. There would be significant costs if a carer were unable to carry on their caring role and therefore supporting carers to remain resilient should help to avoid any breakdown in caring.

An evaluation of support provided to adult unpaid carers has been completed which has identified several areas of improvement that would enable an unpaid carer to access more timely support, and work to progress these improvements is ongoing. To understand the “whole system” the next phase of the review will include carers engagement and a broadening of the scope to young carers and parent carers with the aim to enhance carer support in the county borough.

There are more than 20,000 unpaid carers in Neath Port Talbot

Supportive performance data for this quality standard

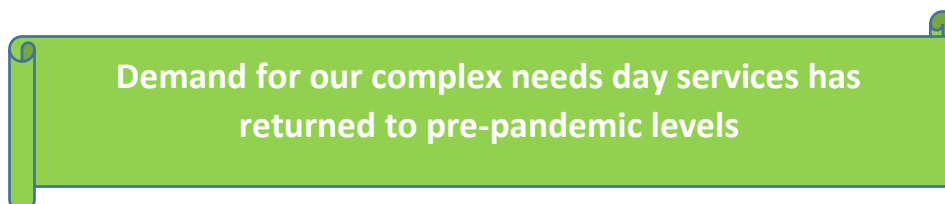
PI Reference	PI Description	April 21 - March 22	April 22 - March 23
New Measure PI24	The percentage of assessments completed for children within 42 days from point of referral	99.2%	97.0%

Quality Standard 2 – Working with people and partners to protect and promote people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being

This is about how we help people to look after their physical, mental and emotional health.

Complex Needs Day Services

Day services for people with complex needs are delivered across three sites in Neath Port Talbot, (Trem Y Mor, Brynamlwg and Rhodes House), providing high levels of care from day services staff and enabling individuals to receive support from Health colleagues including nursing staff, therapists and behavioural support. There are over 60 individuals attending the complex needs day services. Surgeries with Health staff have been set up at Brynamlwg facilitating direct contact between Health, Social Services and parents and carers. The day services also provide valuable respite care to families and carers, enabling them to take a break from their caring role. **Demand for day services remains high and the services are currently operating at full capacity.** Individuals attending day services are offered a range of activities within the day services bases and also in the community to enable them to meet their personal outcomes.



Demand for our complex needs day services has returned to pre-pandemic levels

Direct Payments

Direct Payments (DP) are offered, following an assessment, to people as an alternative to either in house services or commissioned care, allowing them to employ Personal Assistants (PAs) of their choice. Direct Payments enable people to exercise choice and control over the care they receive to meet their outcomes. 405 people were being supported with a Direct Payment package at the end of March 2023 compared to 395 at the end of March 2022.

The service has started to grow again following the effects of the Covid pandemic. As with other sectors of the social care market, **recruitment of PAs**

remains challenging and the service has focused on expanding its recruitment strategy. DP recipients employ people from the social care market, from within their network of family and friends, or use their DP to commission services themselves, and find creative solutions in using their DP for care and support.

Support to individuals is provided by the in-house Direct Payments Support Service (DPSS) which sets up new packages, provides employment guidance and supports with the recruitment of PAs as well as providing a range of other services including a training programme. The DPSS continued to deliver a comprehensive service throughout the year supporting employers and PAs to work as safely as possible and in line with employment law. Payroll support is provided by external organisations from the approved providers list. A Suitable Persons Service is commissioned from *Me, Myself and I* (Trading with Care) which provides valuable support to enable individuals who lack mental capacity to still access DP.



More than 400 residents in Neath Port Talbot have greater choice and control over their care and support by using Direct Payments.

We want more people to benefit but recruiting Personal Assistants is challenging.

We want to recruit more Personal Assistants (PA) so that more people can experience the benefits of Direct Payments for their care and support.

We think there are many people who haven't considered being a PA who would enjoy the role.

Case study – recruiting a Personal Assistant

After 35 years of working in the engineering sector, Ron had retired but realised he missed the routine and social interactions of a job. Ron decided he wanted to get a new part time job, something different to his previous role.

Working Wales referred Ron to the Neath Port Talbot Workways+ team. Workways+ helps people get jobs through 1-1 support, training, paid work experience and introductions to employers. Workways+ welcomed Ron and assigned him a mentor, Vicky.

Vicky suggested working in the hospitality sector, but Ron felt that wasn't what he was looking for, so Vicky then suggested social care as a Personal Assistant (PA) funded through Direct Payments.

The PA role really appealed to Ron and, with support from Vicky, interviewed for two care posts and was successful in both. Ron now supports two Neath Port Talbot residents and is employed for 16 hours per week, doing something he enjoys.

Ron said, *"Vicky was absolutely excellent, wonderful. The PA role is a million miles from my previous career and it is such a positive change for me. The role of a PA appeals to my caring side and it is very rewarding helping people enjoy their lives. I would say that anyone looking to get back into work, no matter their age, should give Workways+ a call"*.

Workways+ is part funded by the European Social Fund through the Welsh Government.

In-house Domiciliary Care and Reablement Service

The Council's Community Wellbeing Team (CWT) and Reablement Service delivers domiciliary care to people across the county borough. The teams focus largely on providing personal care (washing, dressing, toileting) and supporting people with medication and feeding. Offering both short- and long-term support, the teams use a reablement ethos to support individuals in their own homes to enable them to remain as independent as possible. Regulated by Care Inspectorate Wales, the in-house service (CWT and Reablement) delivers

care to 202 people, which is approximately one quarter of the local domiciliary care market. During the course of the year the service delivered a service to over 650 people. Plans remain in place to increase the share of the market and a recruitment and training officer has been employed to drive this forward.

Bspoked

Bspoked provides opportunities for adults with a range of disabilities, focusing on what each individual is interested in and what they'd like to achieve from the service. In the last year ICF (Integrated Care Fund) funding has been granted to enhance the Bspoked service from its previous training and employment model and develop it to become an independent living hub by creating two new training flats where people can develop daily living and independence skills, and where assessments can be carried out by practitioners. It is anticipated that this will support people to reach their potential and in some cases reduce their need for statutory care and support. The purpose is to create an environment which prepares and provides service users with the skills to develop their potential. Alongside the two training flats a range of other activities are offered which focus on supporting people to become as independent as possible, for example cooking, gardening, IT skills, woodwork, and a bicycle workshop. **There are currently 75 adults attending Bspoked but this figure is likely to rise as the opportunity to use the training flats becomes available.**



One of the training flats at Bspoked

Respite at Trem Y Mor

Overnight respite care for Adults with Learning and Physical Disabilities is provided in the Local Authority's respite unit at Trem Y Mor, a 16 bedded unit located on Aberavon seafront. The service provided care to 115 individuals in the last year. **This facility is now operating at full capacity and demand for the service is extremely high.** There are a number of residents who live there on a longer term basis whilst waiting for alternative permanent accommodation to be arranged which reduces the capacity for respite care for others. This service provides valuable respite care for families and carers enabling them to take a break from their caring roles. The residents receive a high level of care from an experienced and well-trained staff team, and are able to enjoy activities both within the home and in the community to enable them to meet their personal outcomes.



Trem Y Mor respite and day service

Sensory Support Team

The Sensory Support Team (SST) aims to maintain, promote and maximise independence for those with a sensory impairment so that they are able to live more productive and enjoyable lives, supporting them to achieve their personal outcomes.

The SST undertakes functional assessments of need and meets those needs via a range of interventions, including provision of advice, specialist equipment and signposting to relevant organisations. Mobility training is also provided. The SST works closely with other Social Services teams, Audiology and Ophthalmology Services in the local health board, and have well-established links with third sector community and hospital based sensory organisations as well as local Opticians.

In 2022/2023 the team received 387 requests for assessments across the Neath (145), Afan (140) and Upper Valleys (102) hubs.

During the year, SST:

- Closed 339 cases
- Undertook 279 home visits
- Assisted 81 clients to be registered as sight impaired/severely sight impaired
- Assisted 15 clients with Audiogram registration

Community Occupational Therapy Service (COTS)

The Community Occupational Therapy Service (COTS) aims to maintain, promote and restore independence for people of all ages, so that they are able to live more productive and enjoyable lives and achieve their personal outcomes. In the last year the team has integrated with social work teams in the network areas facilitating seamless and co-ordinated services for individuals. The team undertakes functional assessments of need and meets those needs via a range of interventions, including the provision of advice, equipment and adaptations. They also undertake manual handling assessments to support in-house and external domiciliary care providers and

informal carers, working closely with colleagues and partner agencies to provide a comprehensive service to maximise independence for people of all ages and to minimise risks.

In 2022/2023 the team received almost 2,000 referrals (including 519 manual handling assessments) across the Neath (738), Afan (797) and Upper Valleys (462) hubs, and provided a services to 1,617 people (up 10% on the previous year).

During the year, COT:

- Closed 1,873 cases
- Undertook 2,718 home visits
- Undertook 436 manual handling assessments
- Undertook 103 wheelchair assessments
- Placed 1,358 equipment orders
- Assessed 638 clients and recommended works of adaptation via Disabled Facilities Grant
- Assessed 369 clients and recommended works of adaptation to be processed by Tai Tarian and Registered Social Landlords

“All I can say is that I can’t fault her she was courteous, excellent and I would recommend to anyone. Brilliant service”

Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT)

Since coming out of lockdown the CMHTs have seen an increase in the number of people requesting support and mental health assessments undertaken. Both teams now have a Consultant Social Worker in post to support social work staff in developing outcome-based practice as part of the quality assurance mechanism. They also act as a resource to improve links with other Adults and Children's Services teams to develop an understanding of referral pathways in both primary and secondary mental health services.

Within the last year 24/7 mental health support is now available over the phone in Swansea Bay. People living in Neath Port Talbot (and Swansea) who need urgent support with mental health issues, or relatives seeking advice, can now call a team of mental health professionals for free, day or night. Calling 111 and choosing option 2 puts callers in direct contact with a team of 20 mental health professionals based at Neath Port Talbot Hospital, staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, offering a triage service and support or signposting as appropriate. Callers will be supported by fully trained clinicians working as part of a multi-disciplinary team including mental health nurses, psychological wellbeing practitioners and occupational therapists.



The CMHTs continue to remain responsive to the challenges of increasing demands on services and have a good working relationship with inpatient care services to ensure timely discharges from acute mental health units throughout the Swansea Bay University Health Board area.

One of the most significant issues for CMHTs is the lack of specialist accommodation (including residential, supported living and extra care) for people with a severe and enduring mental illness. As a consequence a number of service users are currently accommodated in high cost placements in neighbouring authorities. NPT Commissioning Unit are working proactively to understand the level of demand and in the process of developing a range of accommodation in NPT to address the identified deficits. A recent success story has been the development of a 5 bed Pan-Disability Extra Care facility in the Margam area. There are several service users known to the CMHT in this

particular resource where significant progress in achieving recovery-based goals has been made. One of our clients, who was previously street homeless and spent a number of years in acute mental health units and subject to a Supervised Community Treatment Order (CTO), is now ready to move to her own flat nearby and supported as part of a core and cluster arrangement.

Assistive Technology

Working with people's strengths, Assistive Technology (AT) can be used to promote health, wellbeing and self-management, and has potential to enable more resilient communities, thus reducing demand/reliance on more traditional support services.

The switch from analogue telephone lines to digital by December 2025 necessitates a timely upgrade of all analogue Lifeline based equipment and systems to ensure a safe and smooth transition. A key priority for the service, AT are now in the second year of the roadmap to achieve this 'digital switch' for 2,500 users of the service, and this is well underway with 38% of lifeline units having been upgraded so far.

Although challenging for AT and the technology enabled care industry, the switch to digital technologies opens many new possibilities and improved choice for citizens. Recently we introduced the Lifeline mobile service using a wearable device allowing individuals to raise an alarm when they are out and about. This has been well received by the 100 users of this service so far and proved valuable in promoting confidence to maintain outdoor activities and engage with their communities. This impacts positively on wellbeing, reducing loneliness and isolation, as well as playing an important role in falls prevention by maintaining levels of physical activity.

"My mum is 'severely sighted' and has not been out on her own since before Covid - she had lost her confidence and feared falling and not being able to use her phone to get help.

Since having the [mobile lifeline device] she started to go out for short walks. This was quickly followed by attending coffee morning by herself and now catching a bus and going into town alone. Mum takes the [mobile lifeline device] with her everywhere and finds it easy to use and charge up, it has really improved her confidence and increased my peace of mind knowing she can call me or the contact centre if she falls or needs any assistance."

Other exciting initiatives this year have included piloting a Mobile Response Service in the Afan Cluster Network area and creating a Digital Solutions Suite at Cimla Health & Social Care Centre to enable citizens to view and experience mainstream smart technology. It is anticipated this will be ready to launch in July 2023, and development will include wraparound facilities to support digital inclusion, working in partnership with Digital Communities Wales and NPT's Digital Inclusion ambassador.

Substance misuse

The Area Planning Board (APB) is a regional (NPT and Swansea) multiagency group which aims to ensure that people with substance use issues and their families are able to get the support they need when they need it. Our work is also focused around education and prevention, such as commissioning educational services in schools and ensuring that people have access to timely information and advice.

Each substance use agency commissioned by the APB has a testing target of 45 per quarter.

For the first time since pre pandemic we have tests recorded by every commissioned service, albeit some services have significantly lower figures. However, the total agreed target across all services has been more than achieved. There is still work to be done to ensure consistent levels of testing are being seen across all services, and a 'Test on Assess' model has been agreed.

One of the main priorities for the Team is to ensure robust oversight of overdoses and drug related deaths in the region, along with improving the harm reduction provision available for people.

We now have access to a wealth of data from key partners such as South Wales Police and the Health Board and consequently have a better understanding of where and when the overdoses are occurring. In addition, we have delivered, in conjunction with service providers, a 72 hour outreach response in which 70% of reported overdoses during the year received a follow up visit from an outreach worker. The number of specialist harm reduction interventions that have been delivered in the region has also improved. Data shows that there has been a 20% decrease in needle and syringe transactions

in 2022/23 compared to the previous year; a 31% decrease in unique individuals accessing the needle and syringe programme and a 55% increase in naloxone supply across the county borough. There has also been a 170% increase in the number of BBV (blood-borne viruses) tests completed during the year.

Ukraine response

NPT Council has condemned in the strongest possible terms the actions of Vladimir Putin and the Russian Government and has publicly expressed its dismay at the disregard for human life, national sovereignty and the international rule of law. This Council is committed to helping those displaced from their homes and arriving in Wales through the family sponsorship, Homes for Ukraine, or Welsh Government's super sponsorship route.

Through the "Team NPT" approach, we ensured that relevant people in the Council and across our partnerships were connected and involved. Together we ensured that families and individuals felt safe, welcome and got the help they needed to start a new chapter of their lives and be part of communities which are thriving and sustainable. This included ensuring that housing advice and support was in place, and that financial support was available. Together we put in place orientation support to help people settle and feel part of our communities, and that our communities remained cohesive, including signposting in respect of welfare benefits as well as employment and employability, and extolling the benefits of living in NPT.

Team NPT ensured that the children were safe and safeguarded and that they were enrolled into schools to get the best education, received free school meals, help with uniforms, pastoral care, transport to school and learning support including language support, and so get the best start in life or their new chapter in life.



In addition to the community response, Welsh Government asked NPT Council to host a welcome centre and also to provide support into a hotel commissioned for Ukrainians. There were considerable technical difficulties with the welcome centre site, which had to be overcome, and this would not

have been achieved without the support and expertise from our technical services directorate, IT and external partners.

The welcome centre opened in August 2022, and Adult Services established a Ukrainian support team to provide orientation support to guests at the welcome centre and the hotel. They have been innovative and creative in the support provided and have worked extensively with internal and external partners.

Supportive performance data for this quality standard

PI Reference	PI Description	April 21 – March 22	April 22 – March 23
Measure 20a	The percentage of adults who completed a period of Reablement and who have a reduced package of care after completion	19.5%	18.8%
Measure 20b	The percentage of adults who completed a period of Reablement needing no further package of care	63.8%	70.9%
Measure 21	The average length of time in calendar days adults (aged 65+) are supported in residential care homes	798	786
Measure 22	Average age of adults entering residential care homes	84	84
New Measure PI30	The percentage of children seen by a dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after	48.8%	21.6%
New Measure PI31	The percentage of Looked After Children at 31 st March registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement	91.6%	85.2%

Quality Standard 3 – Protecting and safeguarding people from abuse, neglect or harm

This is about helping to protect people who might be at risk of abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation.

Community Safety Team

The Community Safety Team help to ensure the residents of Neath Port Talbot feel safe and are safe, by delivering effective crime prevention initiatives and support across the county borough. The team deliver appropriate, relevant initiatives through a variety of means, in partnership with other organisations. Community Safety ensure that the effect any Crime and Disorder has on our local communities is minimised; with oversight, problem solving and providing support on key issues such as Domestic Abuse, Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime, County Lines, Scams, Community Tensions, Business Crime, Terrorism.

During 2022/23 the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) decided on its six agreed priority areas for the next 3 years;

- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Community Cohesion
- Serious Violence
- General Crime Prevention (including Community Engagement & Acquisitive Crime)
- Substance Use

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

The NPT VAWDASV Leadership Group is coordinated by the Community Safety Team. The Group continues to meet quarterly, and oversees the implementation of our local VAWDASV strategy. Excellent progress has been made in the 7 areas of work: Communications & Engagement; Children & Young People; Perpetrator Interventions; Early Intervention & Prevention; Staff Training; Accessible Services; Courts and Criminal Justice.

A lot of hard work has gone into the development of our revised VAWDASV strategy '*Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities*' for 2023-2026. This

is a joint strategy with the local health board that sets out the work we will do over the next 3 years.



Chief Exec Karen Jones pledges her support for White Ribbon Campaign

Our Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) Service, within Community Safety, supported **650** high risk victims of domestic abuse during the year. This compares to **522** in the previous year. The team continued to work to increased demands since pre-Covid, and the nature of the cases is far more complex in many instances. This remains an ongoing pressure within the service and an area of concern.

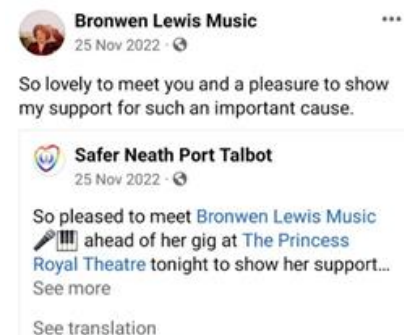
The Community Safety Team were able to utilise some grant money to purchase Christmas presents for the children of the high risk victims we were supporting. This was the first time the team have been able to do this, and these gifts were so gratefully received by the families who were experiencing very difficult, traumatic times. The team also really enjoyed coordinating this project and it really boosted morale.

The Community Safety Team were successful in receiving funding to purchase target hardening items to help victims feel safer, and be safer – alongside all other additional, usual support. This funding allowed us to buy Ring Doorbells, Dash Cams, Mobile Phones, Window Locks, Door Jammers and Personal Safety Alarms. It was reassuring for staff to give physical items to the individuals they support, as well as the holistic support and safety planning they offer. Items were so gratefully received by the families we are working with.

Last year we supported over 650 high risk victims of domestic abuse

The team have responsibility for coordinating the Domestic Abuse MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) forum. During 2022/23 there were **952** referrals into MARAC. There were **1,559** children linked to these referrals. **427** of the referrals were repeat cases, having been discussed at MARAC before.

One of the work streams of our VAWDASV strategy ‘Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities’ is centred on Communications & Engagement, ensuring we raise awareness of all forms of domestic abuse, encouraging people to seek help and support. The Communications & Engagement sub group organised a successful White Ribbon campaign during Nov 22 – holding an engagement event at NPT Hospital, gaining the support of Welsh Singer Bronwen Lewis in promoting our work, and running a successful “16 days of action” on our Safer NPT social media platforms.



Bronwen Lewis lends her support to the White Ribbon campaign.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The **Street Vulnerability MARAC** (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meetings are coordinated by the Community Safety Team and chaired by South Wales Police. The group meet bi-monthly to discuss some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, ensuring everyone has access to the most appropriate services for their needs. Last year the group discussed **16** new referrals. The meetings are well attended and well supported by partners, with good engagement. However, there are growing concerns regarding availability or access to mental health support post Covid. With changes to rules and regulations of rental properties, many Landlords have sold on their properties, limiting many of our options to support individuals into suitable, affordable accommodation. This adds further pressure to our Housing Options colleagues within the directorate.

Problem Solving Groups have been reinstated, with one for Neath and Pontardawe, and one for Port Talbot. These forums allow us, the Police and other partners to bring ongoing community issues for a partnership discussion and action plan. Issues raised here that cannot be resolved are escalated to the Community Safety Partnership Board. During 2022/23 there were increasing concerns of the use of Cannabis in private dwellings, youth anti-social behaviour in our town centres, and derelict properties. The group helps to inform campaigns of the Community Safety Engagement Team, such as ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) Awareness Week.

ASB Awareness Week

ASB Awareness Week

We're working together to make communities safer

#ASBAwarenessWeek

Join us at these upcoming events to find out more

Neath Town Centre	Port Talbot Market	Pontardawe Market
Angel Square	Transport Hub	Herbert Street
Friday 22nd July	Thurs 28th July	Friday 29th July
14.00 - 16.00	15.00 - 17.00	15.30 - 17.30

The team supported the first ever ASB Awareness Week – a national campaign to raise awareness of anti-social behaviour and to encourage victims to report incidents through to the right channels. The team held engagement events in Neath Town Centre,

Pontardawe Market and Port Talbot Market. These events proved really useful in speaking to many members of the public and local businesses. Colleagues from South Wales Police, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Tai Tarian, Coastal and Pobl attended these events alongside us.

We are working with partners to tackle anti-social behaviour

Paws on Patrol

We have been coordinating the Paws on Patrol scheme for over seven years, and it continues to go from strength to strength.

Paws on Patrol asks dog walkers to be our eyes and ears in their community whilst on their regular dog walks. It is usually dog walkers who will spot a change in their local area, such as graffiti, fly tipping, faulty street lighting, and anti-social behaviour. Dog walkers are also often the first on the scene of a crime, or may witness a crime taking place. We want to capture all of this information and empower our residents to report the issues they see.

The scheme has over **1,400** members, including 163 who signed up during 2022/23, and members receive quarterly newsletters or latest advice and information, as well as any crime trends or issues to be aware of.

The team regularly promote the scheme via social media and at regular engagement events. The scheme also offers us a 'light touch' way of engaging with our residents about more serious matters that they perhaps may not otherwise discuss, such as domestic abuse or hate crime.

During the year we were approached by Pembrokeshire Council who had heard about our scheme and wanted to develop their own. It was a pleasure to share our experiences and see their own scheme come into being.

Our Paws on Patrol Facebook page reached a total number of **1,100** followers during 2022/23, with some individual posts reaching as many as **70,000** people.



COMING SOON

Exclusive safety items for our members

Limited availability*

Advert to promote Target Hardening / Personal Safety item

During the year we were able to utilise some Target Hardening funding to provide our members with exclusive personal safety items. These reward members for their loyalty and support, but also act as an incentive to encourage new members to sign up.



Paws Event at Taibach

Hillside Secure Children's Home

Hillside Secure Children's Home continues to provide a unique environment, the only secure establishment in Wales providing care and support to some of the most vulnerable and complex children in the country, that cannot be met in other settings. We believe that all children deserve a safe, stable, happy, nurturing environment to grow up in and have the childhood they deserve. This year the completion of the extensive refurbishment to the home was completed which has gone a long way to providing the children with a more homely feel to their personal spaces whilst also enabling them to collaborate in choosing the décor of the communal areas. The children reporting the difference to their mental health and wellbeing as a result of the refurbishment is significant. Hillside is now aiming to be a centre of excellence, and will achieve this through:

- Having an experienced, resilient and happy staff group
- The children are happy and thrive in a home where they feel safe and valued
- The environment is bright, friendly and well-maintained where children have a voice in changes that are being made
- There is a trauma responsive ethos and culture that is embedded throughout the home.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

In December 2021, Neath Port Talbot Council was given formal notice directing it to comply with the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for UASC under the UK Government's Immigration Act 2016. A UASC is defined as an individual who is under 18 when the asylum application is submitted, is not being cared for by an adult who by law has responsibility to do so, is separated from both parents and has applied for asylum in the UK in their own right. The aim of the NTS approach is to achieve a fair and equitable distribution of UASC across the UK.

Initially NPT were asked to support two young people under this scheme, however this has increased over the last year and we have to date supported 16 young people, two of whom are now care leavers. All the young people that we are supporting have different nationalities, different cultures, different languages and different life experiences.

It has been challenging to find appropriate placements in very short timeframes, putting additional pressures on available foster placements and supported accommodation. The asylum process is significantly delayed at this time, therefore there will be a delay in young people being able to move on and access housing / benefits, meaning they are likely to be reliant on the Local Authority for a much longer period than initially anticipated.

There are significant pressures on placements for children and young people therefore it is important that we continue to develop a specific provision to meet the needs of these young people whom we are and will continue to support. To help them feel part of the local communities, some of the young boys have regularly attended training as part of the Kicks Project run by Swansea City Football Club. The club wanted



UASC boys form a Guard of Honour at Swansea City FC

to raise awareness of refugees and asylum seekers, so the boys were invited to attend one of the matches and acted as 'Guards of Honour' for the game.

In the last year we have supported 16 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

Supportive performance data for this quality standard

PI Reference	PI Description	April 21 - March 22	April 22 - March 23
New Measure PI27	The percentage of re-registrations of children on the local authority Child Protection Register	11.6%	14.7%
New Measure PI28	The average length of time (in days) for all children who were on the Child Protection Register during the year	278.1 days	269.2 days

Quality Standard 4 – Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

This looks at how we help people to learn and interact with other people so they can be part of their communities.

Community Independence Service

This service focuses on prevention following an increase in presentations of homelessness in NPT due to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. This includes tenancy support and reduction of homelessness supporting adults 16+ who are at risk of tenancy breakdown due to mental health, substance misuse, financial/debt issues. During the year 131 referrals accepted and started as new individuals to the service, with the team focus on outcomes for individuals based on their specific needs to develop independent living skills and facilitates a positive sense of wellbeing to ensure they are able to integrate and retain control in their day to day lives. This support is tailored and can often be diverse ranging from short term intervention around managing finances to multifaceted support over a longer period involving liaison between a number of professionals.



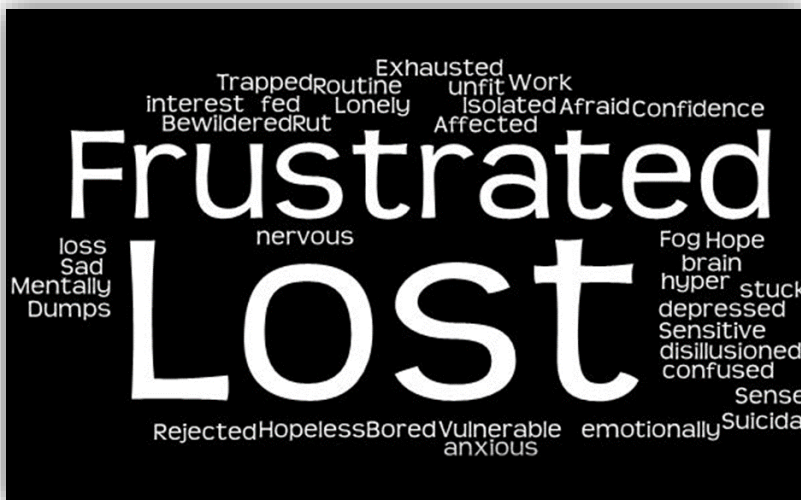
We have seen an increase in people presenting as homeless

Community Connecting Team

The Community Connecting Team (CCT) provide community based opportunities to vulnerable people from the age of 16 years' old living in Neath Port Talbot. This includes local activities for the people they work with to support them to become active members of their community. Groups include exercise, gardening and craft activities. We now have over 30 groups facilitated weekly (Monday to Friday) with more than 65 people known to attend groups regularly, not including occasional attendees that vary week to week.



Below are word clouds created from community group feedback:



How I felt before attending the group

How the group has changed my life



Local Area Coordination

Local Area Coordination aims to support people within the community to help them help themselves in order to build a better life, with more connected and inclusive communities.

There is no formal assessment or eligibility to be introduced to a Local Area Coordinator (LAC). LACs are introduced to people through their network of relationships in the community, membership of associations or groups or via formal service.

Local Area Coordination starts with a positive conversation with a person and a focus on strengths, skills, natural supports and finding non service solutions to make their vision of a better life happen.

Our 14 LACs cover the whole county borough, with population sizes ranging from 4,200 in the most rural area to 16,000 in the more urban areas. On average 534 individuals are supported through 1:1 provision at any one time, with 20% of referrals made for socialisation and 15% of all referrals with a mental health requirement. One third of those making referrals require intensive support of once a week or more, with most common support provided consisting of:

- Intervention to access to basic food, utilities and emergency benefits
- Support to maintain a safe living environment (practical and emotional)
- Support linked to poor mental health
- Navigation of services / advocacy e.g., housing, carer support
- Development of personal resilience and confidence
- Identification and maintenance of local connections to provide meaningful activity

On average direct support is given to three individual community groups by each LAC at any one time, with at least 65 other community groups across the county borough linked to a LAC on an ongoing basis. Circa another 500 individuals access these groups whilst regaining their confidence.

On average a LAC's workload is split 60/40 1:1 vs Community, although this varies by area and demand.

During quarter 3 alone 10 Safeguarding Referrals were made because of LAC involvement.

Approximately 40% of all individuals supported are not currently accessing other statutory services.

Safe and Well – NPT’s Volunteer Befriending Service

The Council’s Safe and Well service was established to provide a critical lifeline of support to people who needed to isolate during the pandemic. Through using volunteer support the service was able to provide shopping, prescription collection, and wellbeing checks to over 1,500 people across Neath Port Talbot. In September 2022 a service review began to ensure that it continues to respond effectively to the needs of our residents as the impact of the pandemic reduced. In February 2023 the service was relaunched as NPT Safe & Well – Befriending Service in response to the negative health and wellbeing impacts of loneliness and isolation on the people of Neath Port Talbot that had been significantly worsened as a result of the pandemic. We have developed the service slowly and carefully with the support of Befriending Networks Scotland to ensure that we have a clear and effective model of support for those who are the most isolated in our communities. Currently the service has 27 volunteers who provide regular befriending support to 42 people chronically affected by social isolation and loneliness. During the year our volunteers also provided support to local church donation points to sort through the vast amount of donations received from the public in response to the Ukraine conflict. These donations were transported to a temporary donation hub set up in Llandarcy Institute and the volunteers were a huge support to the Safe & Well team by assembling the shelving units and clothes rails, sorting over 150 bags and boxes of donations of toiletries, baby items, clothing and shoes, etc. and putting items out on display. Their invaluable support helped to quickly set up a well organised facility for Ukrainian families to have easy access to the supplies that they needed.

The facility is well organised and has been a fantastic support. It was such a comfortable and dignified way for them to have easy access to much needed supplies in difficult times.

Feedback from families

A new recruitment exercise has started with the hope of at least doubling our volunteer capacity to be able to provide more support to those that need it. Ongoing reviews of the service will continue to ensure the Safe & Well

Volunteer Service is able to continue to provide much needed support alongside our Health and Social Care Services.

Some of our successes with the Volunteer Befriending Service:

An 85 year old retired District Nurse wanted to volunteer but was unable to go out herself and was socially isolated, so she became a volunteer befriender for our service. She and the gentleman she supports speak on the phone twice a week. They have both lost their spouses and understand the impact of losing your loved one. Even though they have never met in person 'they feel like they have known each other for years'.

"I am relatively new to the area and from a different culture. Befriending helps me reach out to the community, learn the local culture, history and effortlessly integrate here and be a part of the society.

It also gives me satisfaction and happiness that I can provide support and companionship to older members of the society here, even if it's for a few hours a week. For me, it's important not only to have a career and family, but also to make a positive impact on the society I live in."

Feedback from a Volunteer

Supportive performance data for this quality standard

PI Reference	PI Description	April 21 - March 22	April 22 - March 23
New Measure PI32	The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who has experienced one or more change of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March.	5.3%	3.6%

Below are some quotes from people attending one of our community groups:

LAC Community Development Sandfields Library Case Study

Beatrix (Trixi)

"I'm originally from Germany and since my partner died I was on my own as I didn't know anyone. Now, although I'm a confident person, I'm also shy when meeting new people. I have new friends and really feel part of the community. I attend 3 different activities in the library, a few months ago, I didn't know where the library was."

John

"I hadn't left the house for 2 years until Aled introduced me to the coffee morning at Sandfields library. I now feel more confident, in-fact, I've even started going to gigs again. I'd never have done that a few months ago as I'd lost contact with my friends. I've now reconnected with them"



Terry - "I didn't leave the house for 2 years following a fall. I'm 90 and from London originally. Aled took me out for a few walks to build my confidence and also introduced me to Aileen. I now share a taxi with her. I have early stages dementia and I'm conscious of my speech. My new friends at the coffee morning have helped me realise that my speech is ok and I'm much more confident now and feel part of the community"

Aileen - "Due to my disability, I lost my confidence and sat in the house watching TV all day. Not only am I now attending the weekly coffee morning, I also go on Wednesdays too. I share a taxi with Terry and made a friend for life in Trixi. I often go and visit her at the weekends. My confidence was a 0 now it's through the roof"

Of the 8 people asked –

- 100% said that their confidence has improved as a result of attending the weekly drop in
- 100% said that they now feel part of their local community
- 100% said that they have improved their social circle and have made new friends
- 100% said that they are more aware of services available to them in the community or have a contact (LAC) that can connect them if needed

Quality Standard 5 – Supporting people to develop safely and to maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships
This is about helping people to achieve healthy relationships at home and with the people they are close to.

Participation and engagement

The Engagement and Participation Officer (EPO) and the Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service (YEIS) have continued to deliver the Life Skills programme to support care leavers and the YEIS service users. Over an 8 week period young people attended every Tuesday, where participants successfully learn a range of culinary skills and become competent at cooking healthy, budget meals. Further training around budgeting and laundry was also delivered. It has become evident the project offers more than basic life skills as the participants enjoy the social aspect and improved wellbeing from regular interaction with peers and professionals. The voice of the young people continues to be captured in the Exit Questionnaire conducted when young people no longer need the support of the service.



Girls' Rights Group "Hope" won a High Sheriff of West Glamorgan Award, NPT Children's Services Award and a NPTCVS Awards for their outstanding work. They have created an animation video to raise awareness of Period Dignity and improve girls' and young women's health. The video will be launched in due course and has attracted interest from the BBC. The group enjoyed their first ever residential stay. 15 girls enjoyed three nights in the wilderness and enjoyed numerous team building exercises. Hope have been awarded a £2000 grant and started work on their new project 'Safer Spaces for Girls'.



Safer Spaces for Girls project

To provide opportunities for children and young people with disabilities the EPO has continued to support the music group in Ysgol Hendre Felin. The group enjoy fun activities along with singing. Through links developed by the EPO, Circus Eruption attended the group on a fortnightly basis to teach circus skills. Music tuition has been provided giving members the opportunity to learn the piano and enjoy drum sessions. 15 children were taken on a trip to the Wales Millennium Centre to watch The Lion King theatre show.

In late November 2022 the Beaches 2 Beacons (B2B) project concluded. The project developed by the EPO in collaboration with Brecon Beacons National Park aspired to improve the emotional health and well-being of our children and young people through accessing the natural environment. The group participated in activities and environmental work throughout the year and received a John Muir Award for their efforts. B2B included hiking up Pen Y Fan, environmental work in Craig Y Nos Country Park and Talybont on Usk, rock climbing in Pontneddfechan, gorge walking, visiting an Iron Age Fort and more. The project cost £7,000 and 19 children participated. Due to the success of the B2B project planning is underway to deliver B2B in 2023.

Supportive performance data for this quality standard

PI Reference	PI Description	Apr – Mar 21 (4th QTR) Cumulative	Apr – Mar 22 (4th QTR) Cumulative
New Measure PI26	The percentage of Looked After Children returned home from care during the year	35%	Reported annually by Welsh Govt.
New Measure PI33	The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who has had three or more placements during the year.	4.08%	Reported annually by Welsh Govt.

Quality Standard 6 – Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

This is about helping people to improve their income, benefit from a social life and have a suitable place to live.

Disabled Facilities Grants

The demand for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) remained high and exceeded the available budget. Since the removal of the means test for small and medium works in August 2022 there has been a significant increase in demand for smaller adaptations. Recovery from the pandemic continued with the delivery time of a DFG reducing, however the contractors that carried out larger works were still very busy in the private housing market which is still causing a significant delay in larger work starting on site, while smaller works such as shower conversions have returned to pre-pandemic levels of delivery.

The time taken to deliver a DFG is recovering well, for 2022/23 the end to end time improved to 245 days from 339 for 2021/22, while the number of DFGs completed was 272 for 2022/23.

The rise in building material costs has had a significant impact on the budget, with extensions costing 50% more than pre-pandemic, such that larger extensions are now exceeding the maximum value for a grant.

The service has received a number of compliments from applicants where the new adaptations have made a huge difference in their lives by making their property a far safer place for them to live in, or the installed adaptations have given them more independence in the home.

Housing Options

The last year has seen a further increase in presentations to the Housing Options Service, rising from 2,406 in 2021/22 to 2,650, an increase of 11%. There were various reasons for presentations but an average of 40% were due to some form of relationship breakdown either with a partner or within the family (15% breakdown with partner, 25% breakdown within family).

The service also saw an increase in presentations from private sector tenants, with an average of 25% being from tenants who have been served a notice to quit. This has increased due to the implementation of the Renting Homes Act in December 2022 which has resulted in over 50 landlords in NPT leaving the rental market.

Temporary Accommodation (TA) numbers continue to increase with 205 households in TA at the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

The service has seen an increase in the number of families needing to access TA and a factor in this will be the increased presentations from the private sector as many larger families rely on the private sector due to limited stock of larger family homes within the county borough.

On average the split in TA is 80% single people and 20% families with as many as 40 families in TA at any one time, which is a considerable increase compared to pre-pandemic levels where average family numbers were in single figures.

The changes that were implemented by Welsh Government as part of the pandemic response have now been embedded into the Housing Wales Act as a secondary legislation change in October 2022.

All of the above have contributed to a significant budget overspend during the year.

We have a homeless prevention target of 60% of all cases where a prevention duty is owed. However, due to the implementation of the Renting Homes Act, many landlords were declining any offer of prevention support due to needing to sell their properties, so the level achieved of 53.7% was under target.

Use of B&B/hotels

Numbers of households, both single people and families, in B&B's and hotels is unprecedented. On average there are 120 households within NPT living in these types of accommodation, and it is acknowledged that this is unsuitable and should only be used in the short term. It is therefore part of the ongoing work to ensure use of these is reduced as much as is feasible within the current structure and demand, with a long term view of use being the exception.

Prevention

The longer term plan of reducing presentations and number of households in TA is very reliant on a robust prevention service. Early intervention work will increase to reduce the presentations that are made to the service at crisis point, or where prevention is currently no longer possible.

Part of this is to create a Tenancy Sustainment Panel, which will bring together RSLs to discuss cases as soon as an issue is identified that may result in the tenancy being lost. It is hoped the panel will be running by the end of the summer.

Empty properties

In response to the number of long term empty properties across Wales, the Empty Homes Scheme was developed by Welsh Government (WG) to provide grant aid to owners of long term empty properties for them to undertake the required works to bring them back into use.

WG have made an allocation of £50 million across Wales to fund the Scheme for a period of two years. Each participating Local Authority has been allocated a percentage of the funding based on the number of empty properties registered in the Authority area.

NPT has been awarded 4.8% of the available £50 million, which equates to £2.4 million over the two years of the Scheme with a required contribution from the authority of 10%. This Scheme could potentially result in over 100 empty properties being brought back into use across Neath Port Talbot over the period of the Scheme.

Social Housing Grant (SHG)

The SHG is the main capital grant provided by Welsh Government for the provision of affordable housing. It is used to fund housing schemes that meet local housing need and priorities as identified by the Local Authority. Local Authorities are responsible for choosing their Housing Association partners, who are paid SHG to develop, own and manage the affordable housing.

Examples of SHG Approved Schemes are:

- Social Rent, Intermediate Rent or in some instances Tenure Neutral;

- General needs, older persons, wheelchair adapted, supported housing, extra care, homebuy or mortgage rescue;
- New build, rehabilitation (or a combination) and existing dwellings/empty properties;
- A variety of procurement routes ranging from conventional tender, design and build, and package deals to off-the-shelf projects.

SHG Budget

The SHG budget is an annual budget allocated to Local Authorities by Welsh Government. The SHG programme is planned over three financial years with Local Authorities given a final confirmed budget for the first year and indicative budgets for the following 2 years. These are provided for planning purposes to enable Local Authorities to plan the delivery of their strategic housing priorities via their Programme Development Plan (PDP). Funding cannot be carried forward into future years, therefore it is important that Local Authorities monitor delivery of their programmes and maintain a reserve programme to ensure full spend.

NPT has experienced a significant increase to the SHG budget over the last few years with a 158% increase in 2022/23 (£12.8m) when compared with 2019/20 (£4.9m). The total allocated grant over the three year period of 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 is circa £40 million. This is welcomed as the latest NPT Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) states that, to meet demand, 412 affordable homes per annum need to be delivered in the first five years of the assessment period.

NPT SHG budgets are fully allocated for 2023/24 and 2024/25 and will continue to be monitored very closely to ensure all grant monies are spent in full.

SHG Programme Development Plans (PDPs)

Local Authorities are required to submit their PDPs which contain all Registered Social Landlord (RSL) schemes to Welsh Government on a quarterly basis. The PDPs provide key information on the timescales for delivering Local Authority strategic priorities. PDPs are monitored very closely through monthly PDP scheme update meetings with the RSLs, quarterly meetings with all RSLs

and Welsh Government, and regular meetings with our internal Planning and Estates departments.

SHG Developments

Circa £8.3m of SHG was drawn down during 2022/23 to supply a mixture of general needs housing, older person's housing, mental health supported living and learning disability supported living.

Assuming there are no unforeseen issues or delays SHG schemes typically take around 2 years to develop from start to finish, with an RSL typically drawing down a portion of their allocated SHG to purchase a plot of land (*Acquisition*) in year 1 and then the remainder of the grant drawn down in year 2 to build (*Construction*).

We are currently projected to deliver a total of 685 homes via the SHG scheme during the period 2022/23 to 2024/25.

Welfare Rights

The Welfare Rights Unit is a specialist section, which deals with supporting people claim the benefits, to which they are entitled. The Unit helps local residents via a self-referral, Social Services or other support services; advice is provided on their benefits entitlement. The Unit offers a public helpline, support with form filling and representation at appeals tribunals, assisted via funding from Communities for Work/Families First. During 2022-23, the unit ran a number of outreach advice surgeries throughout the county borough.

The Unit also continues to work in partnership with Macmillan, who provide funding for Macmillan benefit advisors.

Despite the on-going resource challenges during the year, the Welfare Rights Unit assisted **2,704** people and was successful in obtaining **£7,046,831** in benefits for people within Neath Port Talbot, with a **95% success** rate at appeal representation. The Unit retains the ***Advice Quality Standard*** through Recognising Excellence Limited; this is a significant achievement for the Unit and means that the people of Neath Port Talbot can be confident in the service and the advice given by the Unit. Of these figures, the Macmillan team opened over **810** cases during 2022/23; this was carried out completely via telephone,

given the Covid restrictions still in place in Health settings and the inability to provide advice clinics at the hospitals bases. Macmillan raised **£2,389,357** in benefits during the period. The re-establishment of a hospital-based service will be considered in 2023-24.

Welsh Language

Social Services continued to consolidate arrangements in relation to the Welsh Language and the **“More Than Just Words”** Active Offer (whereby a service is provided in Welsh without someone having to ask for it). Directorate senior officers work with corporate colleagues to promote and support the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards and the development of the Council’s Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (WLPS) 2023-28, which will be out for public consultation early in 2023-24. Additionally, the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report will be published by 30 June 2023 to meet the statutory deadline. The directorate received no Welsh language complaints during the year.

Supportive performance data for this quality standard

PI Reference	PI Description	April 21 - March 22	April 22 - March 23
New Measure PI25	The percentage of children supported to live with their family	69.70%	70.90%
New Measure PI34	The percentage of all care leavers who have completed at least 3 months of education, training or employment in the past 12 months since leaving care	63.60%	63.3%
New Measure PI34	The percentage of all care leavers who have completed at least 3 months of education, training or employment in the past 24 months since leaving care	33.30%	66.6%
New Measure PI35	The percentage of care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year	3.51%	3.52%

How we do what we do

This is about how we support our workforce, make best use of our resources and financial planning, as well as our governance arrangements.

Our workforce and how we support their professional roles

We continue to offer a blended approach to training across Adults and Children's Services, which has been beneficial in both supporting the recruitment of staff to the sector, as well as the continuing professional development of existing staff to support their re-registration with Social Care Wales. We have continued to raise the profile of the various roles within Social Care and worked with Neath College to offer Health and Social Care students work experience opportunities in the Community Wellbeing Team; their experience was further reinforced by access to other training that supports the role of a Social Care Worker, such as Client Manual Handling.

Five Training Officers have completed a Digital Learning Design (DLD) Level 3 Award qualification which has enabled them to design interactive e-learning training for staff across Social Care Services, continuing to build upon a blended-learning approach to learning and development.

We have continued to embed Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and Positive Behaviour Management (PBM) across Learning Disability and Complex Needs Services to ensure staff safely manage and support individuals' behaviours that challenge when accessing our Day Service and Respite provisions. They provide expert advice and guidance and support the multi-disciplinary process when exploring the most appropriate and safest way to manage behaviours.

Training Officers have been trained to carry out Dementia Care Mapping, which provides the service with an action plan for staff to adapt how they provide care and support to individuals living with Dementia to avoid placement breakdown. We also offer a rolling programme of Dementia Training to internal and commissioned staff including; Introduction to Dementia, Understanding Difficult Behaviours and Meaningful Activities.

We also work closely with Community Occupational Therapists, Health, Community Wellbeing Team, and commissioned providers in developing knowledge, skills and practice relating to the implementation of Single-Handed Care (SHC). This involves exploring safe and alternative ways of providing client handling care and support in the community with one staff member, with commissioned providers actively engaging in this way of working.

During 2022/23 a total of **2,696** training places were accessed by staff across Adult Social Care Services.

In Children & Young People's Services (CYPS) there has been an emphasis on an outcome focused care and support approach and training on outcomes has continued to be rolled out. Using the *NPT Strength Based Model of Practice: 'Working to achieve outcomes'*, bespoke training has been developed to improve joint understanding of communities and strengthen collaborative working and relationships between multiagency practitioners.

We continue to support Consultant Social Workers to deliver refresher training and provide ongoing mentoring within their teams regarding personal outcomes. Focus has been given to linking in co-production, improving case recordings, working with parents and partners, and the development of principles and practice guidance to support a consistent approach to outcome-focused case recording.

The roll out of our Safeguarding Adults and Children from Exploitation interactive training pack continued, raising awareness of county lines, criminal and sexual exploitation, trafficking, radicalisation, and hate crime for both adults and children. Further training has been provided on the role of the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian.

In response to recommendations around work with child sexual abuse, sessions have been provided on harmful sexual behaviour, women who sexually abuse, understanding and preventing online child sexual abuse, sibling abuse, and understanding and assessing the protective carer in the context of child sexual abuse. Specific sessions have been delivered directly to parents.

We have also made significant strides forward ensuring Children's Services has a trauma informed workforce.

During 2022/23 a total of **3,891** training places were accessed by staff across Children's Social Care Services.

During the year we have provided **51** Social Work Degree Practice Learning Opportunities (placements) across Levels 1-3, for students from Cardiff Met and Swansea University. This includes 12 students that are seconded from Neath Port Talbot to the social work degree programme through the Open University. Social work teams across Adult and Children's Services have been invaluable in offering high quality placement experiences and, for the first time

in a while, we have had enough practice educators within the authority which meant that we have not had to outsource to independent external practice educators.

Championing a Research Culture

In 2022 The NIHR Academy were seeking to support individuals or teams to develop team or organisational-level research skills and/or capacity as practice-based research leaders, and by doing so to become research champions within the adult social care sector. We have two Consultant Social Workers (CSW) in Social Services, Liza Turton and Rachel Scourfield, who were successful in their bid to focus on developing a research informed culture in NPT Adult services. This research award will run for a 14-month period where the two CSWs will work intensively with pilot teams in developing practitioners to use guidance and research to support evidence-informed practice. By providing the opportunity for our CSWs to be involved in a research project such as this has led to a number of collaborations that we are able to utilise with other organisations such as the London School of Economics, Social Care Wales, NICE, Swansea University, CARE and Cardiff University and the IMPACT Assembly. Research like this is often undertaken led by academics. For practitioners to be afforded the opportunity to do this is firmly putting Neath Port Talbot on the map in developing and championing a research culture within the organisation.



Launching a research-informed culture in Adult Services

Quality Assurance across the Directorate

Our quality assurance activity across the directorate, overseen by the Quality Practice Strategic Group, provides confidence to the department and other stakeholders that its processes and services are being well managed. It validates the consistent use of procedures and standards, and ensures that staff have the correct knowledge, skills and attitudes to fulfil their roles and

responsibilities in a competent manner. This is undertaken through the Quality Practice and Learning Framework which sets out how NPT will learn from all activity completed to ensure that children, adults, families and carers are being supported in the right way at the right time, and understand what difference has been made. This framework provides a level of confidence about service delivery and the positive impact on children, adults, families and carers in NPT, whilst also measuring impact, such as what difference are NPT and its partners making.

Our guiding principles for embedding the Quality Practice and Learning Framework are that:

1. Children, young people, adults, families and carers are at the heart of what we do. The focus of quality assurance must be on impact and outcomes for the child, young person or adult in their journey through our social work and safeguarding systems.
2. The approach to Quality Assurance will be underpinned by Restorative Practice, and a desire to examine and capture best practice. This means that quality assurance activity is done “with” staff, rather than “to” or “for”, in ways that build relationships and are characterised by respecting each other’s perspectives, high expectations, high support and high challenge, to enable use to learn, improve and change.
3. Throughout the quality assurance processes the views of children, young people, adults, families and carers are integral to improving our services, we will where reasonable and practicable to do so, gain the voice of those who have received our services.
4. Our multi-agency and collaborative working with our partners, whether statutory or third sector will be enriched and where practicable we will include them within our quality assurance processes.

Our financial resources and how we plan for the future

Following last year's local elections, NPT saw a new 'Rainbow Alliance' administration and political leadership. Good working relationships between Councillors and Officers have been maintained and developed, and the Directorate continues to enjoy the advice, support and guidance provided by its Cabinet and Committee Members and, indeed, the wider Council. Partnership working is paramount to the planning and sustainability of service provision, and the Directorate works closely with partners across Health, private and third sector organisations, as well as neighbouring local authorities.

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The medium term financial outlook over the next five years is extremely challenging. With inflation currently running at 8.7% (CPI May 2023) and the national living wage rising by 9.7% in 2023/24 there looks to be no let-up in the cost increases facing the Council. In addition, the Directorate is having to support more people with more complexities. The current MTFP to 2027/28 includes pay and inflationary increases, unavoidable service pressures and local growth pressures arising from changing demographics. The Council have continued to support the Directorate financially with considerable growth in the budget. However, it is clear that without significant additional central government funding in coming years the outlook is bleak and some difficult decisions will need to be made about the prioritisation of services.

After taking account of assumed Welsh Government funding over the period 2023-2028, there remains a significant funding gap. Work is ongoing in relation to developing a number of strategies to close this gap.

Children's Services and the not for profit agenda

A key component of Welsh Government's new vision for children's services is the *Programme for Government* commitment to remove private profit from the care of looked after children. Whilst the principle of not taking profit out of the care market is absolutely supported this is a significant policy of change which risks driving more supply out of Wales. The delivery of this commitment will affect change across the whole care system in Wales. The duty on NPT in

relation to children looked after is that services are not contracted out to for-profit companies but remain with public sector and not-for-profit providers.

[Our partnership working, political and corporate leadership, governance and accountability](#)

Governance

The Council has adopted the 2016 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework, developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). To comply with the Framework, the Council must publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively. Senior Officers from within the Directorate play an active part in the production and monitoring of the AGS.

Complaints & Representations

The Social Services Complaints and Representations Procedure is based upon the good practice guidance issued alongside the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representation Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014. The procedure is available to ensure that everyone who makes a complaint about social services in Neath Port Talbot has a right to be listened to properly. Their best interests must be safeguarded and promoted. Their views, wishes and feelings must be heard. Their concerns should be resolved quickly and effectively.

Following the easing of Covid restrictions, face-to-face meetings have been reinstated where requested and the Complaints Team has continued to provide a responsive service in supporting complainants in addressing their complaints and their desired outcomes.

The Complaints Team dealt with 68 formal Social Services Stage 1 complaints during 2022-23 across Children's Services, Adult Services and Business Management (including Corporate complaints); with a further three Stage 2 complaints. This is an increase from the previous year. Activity in dealing with

complainants on an 'informal' basis is far greater, with the Team being proactive in supporting Managers to achieve satisfactory outcomes for service users, their families and carers.

The Team also recorded/reported on 115 compliments received across Social Services.

Looking ahead: our priorities for 2023-24

Our services are now fully reopened after the pandemic, but this does not signal a complete return to 'business as usual'; rather we look to continue to promote innovative and sustainable ways of providing social care and support. We therefore set out the following as our key directorate priorities for the coming year:

Children and Young People Services

Placement sufficiency

- We are committed to an approach that puts children – and families – first. We will work with families to help them stay together, but we will also ensure there are enough foster placements available for those who need a safe and stable environment.

Recruit, retain and develop a highly skilled workforce

- When social workers have the tools and time to do their job well, it makes a huge difference to children's and families' lives. We want a valued, supported and highly-skilled social worker for every child and family who needs one.

Demand and complexity

- For the majority of children, the best place for them to be is at home with their family, but some families need support to do this. We will provide specific and targeted support to families facing a range of challenges.

Adults Services

Helping people to help themselves

- We will promote self-care and help people to remain in their own communities with minimal intervention.

Building relationships and making connections

- People are the most important asset we have in NPT. It is the relationship between family and friends, between the cared for and the carer, within communities, and between businesses, employees, and customers that has the biggest impact on people's lives.

Living the life you want

- We will continue to promote prevention and early intervention as well as informal care and support. But there will always be people who need more formal care and support. This should put the individual first so that their desired outcomes - how they want to live - are met.

Housing and Homelessness Services

Implement a more strategic approach

- We will work more closely with partners and other Council departments to ensure we make best use of our resources.

Reduce homelessness

- We want to make sure that homelessness is rare, and when it does occur it is brief and doesn't happen again.

Increase access to appropriate affordable housing

- We want to work with landlords and others to increase the amount of available accommodation.

Support those with social care needs to live well in their communities

- We will offer new models of care to help people live in their communities longer, whether they are older, disabled or are young people leaving care.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn fwriadol wag

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

30th JANUARY 2024

Report of Director of Strategy & Corporate Services

Mr N Daniel

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Corporate Plan Annual Report 2022-2023

Period: 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Purpose of Report

1. To present the Corporate Plan “Reset, Review, Recover” Annual Report for the period: 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 to Council for adoption.

Executive Summary

2. The 2021 ‘Let’s Talk’ campaign provided an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to provide their views, concerns, and ideas to help shape what the council does in the future. The feedback helped shape the [2022-2027 Corporate Plan](#) and set out four new well-being objectives. The Plan was approved by Cabinet on 28th February 2022 and adopted by Council on 1st March 2022.
3. The Annual Report 2022-2023 provides an account of the four well-being objectives and progress made against the council’s outcomes and priorities for 2022-2023, as set out in the council’s Corporate Plan 2022-2027 for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.
4. The report is required to meet statutory duties set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Part of the requirement asks councils to consider whether the well-being objectives remain relevant or whether changes to those objectives should be considered. In preparing this Annual Report for 2022-2023 we have considered the well-being objectives and they have remained the same for 2023-2024. We will look

to review our Corporate Plan outcomes and priorities for the period 2024-2027.

5. Overall, we were on track in delivering all four well-being objectives for 2022-23.

Background

6. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires all councils to set well-being objectives which seek to maximise the council's contribution to the national well-being goals, whilst also embracing the sustainable development principle. The council is further required to report each year on the extent to which the well-being objectives it has set have been achieved.

Our progress and performance

7. Under each of the four well-being objective there are actions we planned to take to deliver improvements during 2022-2023. Of the 76 actions included within the Corporate Plan 88% (67) were on track. Of the suite of 60 performance measures 34 have comparable data of which 77% (26) either achieving their target or improved/maintained performance.

Some of our key achievements during 2022-2023 include:

- Implementation of Additional Learning Needs Education and Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
- 34% of all 0-4 year olds have accessed Flying Start
- 657 children and young people accessed enhanced fully funded and low cost play and leisure opportunities.
- Utilised £2m of council budget to support those impacted by the energy crisis
- 39 organisations supported through the Food Poverty Grant
- £4.25m approved to 'Clean up and Green up' our towns, valleys and villages
- Secured over £17m via UK Government's Levelling Up Fund
- Developed our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy
- Successfully awarded the Freeport bid
- Supported over 800 individuals into training, work experience or employment

- Secured UK Government Shared Prosperity Funding to deliver a wide range of anchor projects and grant schemes
- Launched the 'Invest in NPT' website
- Worked with schools, colleges and local employers to offer 1,876 training weeks for traineeships, apprenticeships and work experience
- Continued to deliver on our Swansea Bay City Deal projects

Financial Appraisal

8. The council's net budget for 2022-2023 was £338.020m. The actual net expenditure, or outturn position for the council excluding schools, shows a net underspend of £1.607m after ring fenced reserves.

Integrated Impact Assessment

9. There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment for the Corporate Plan Annual Report.

Valleys Communities Impact:

10. The Annual Report provides an update on the progress made in delivering projects to support valley communities.

Workforce Impact

11. The progress described in this report was achieved whilst the workforce responded to the increased demand in service need and the introduction of hybrid working.

Legal Impact

12. This Annual Report discharges duties in Section 3 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Risk Management

13. The Corporate Plan Annual Report must comply with provisions within Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Failure to produce a compliant report can lead to a Certificate of Non-Compliance by Audit Wales and statutory recommendations the council would be obliged to address. The risk of non-compliance is considered low as the Report follows the same format as previous years when a Certificate of Compliance has been achieved.

Consultation

14. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

15. It is recommended that Council adopts the Corporate Plan “Reset, Review, Recover” Annual Report for the period: 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.
16. It is recommended that the Leader of Council be given delegated authority to make such changes as may be needed to the Annual Report prior to publication, provided that such changes do not materially alter the content of the document considered by Council.

Reason for Proposed Decision

17. To meet the statutory requirements set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Implementation of Decision

18. The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendices

19. Appendix 1 –Corporate Plan “Reset, Review, Recover” Annual Report 2022-2023.

List of Background Papers

20. Neath Port Talbot Corporate Plan 2022-2027: Recover, Reset, Renew
21. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Officer Contact

Noelwyn Daniel, Director of Strategy & Corporate Services

E-mail: n.daniel@npt.gov.uk

Caryn Furlow-Harris, Strategic Manager - Policy & Executive Support

E-mail: c.furlow@npt.gov.uk

Louise McAndrew, Corporate Strategic, Planning and Governance Officer

E-mail: l.mcandrew@npt.gov.uk



RECOVER, RESET, RENEW



Corporate Plan Annual Report 2022-2023



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council



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Foreword

2022-2023 delivered another year of highs and lows, not only felt throughout our communities in Neath Port Talbot but across the world. We have seen inflation and energy costs rise to unprecedented levels, forcing many of our residents, businesses and support organisations into a cost of living crisis.

This council has again, as we saw during the Covid pandemic, worked to administer / provide over £9 million of financial support to residents via its Hardship Relief Scheme, cost of living support scheme and administration of the fuel support scheme. We have also been able to provide signposting to community hubs, foodbanks and support services.

We have also witnessed the suffering of those fleeing Ukraine following the invasion by Russia and we have worked, like many other local authorities across the UK, to provide a humanitarian response and housed a number of vulnerable families here in our county borough through the hosting of a Welcome Centre on behalf of Welsh Government, hotels and with nominated families.

Whilst it has been difficult to navigate through yet more uncertainty Neath Port Talbot has a significant amount of regeneration projects and investment coming to the area, which in time we hope will provide a wealth of jobs and supply chain opportunities for local people and businesses.

From the approval of planning for the Afan Valley Wildfox development and the announcement of our successful bid for the Celtic Freeport, to the continuing progress being made in the Neath Valley to house the Global Rail Centre of Excellence, it is evident that Neath Port Talbot continues to thrive and together we can achieve remarkable things.

**Councillor Steve Hunt,
Leader of the Council**

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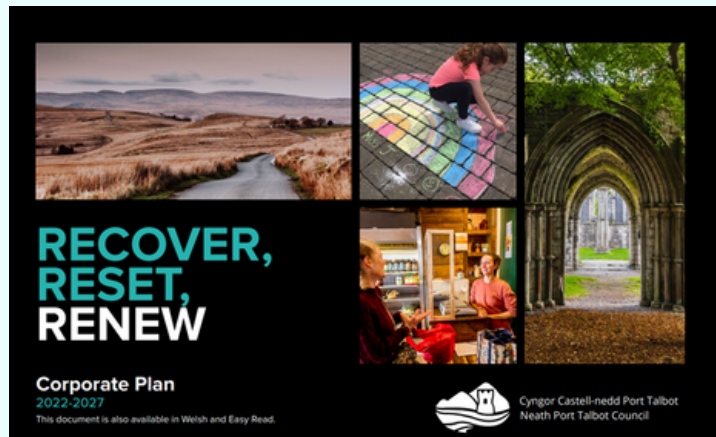




Introduction

The 2022-2023 Annual Report provides a balanced overview of progress made against the four well-being objectives, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2022-2027 – Recover, Reset, Renew.

This Annual Report is part of our statutory duty to report under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.



The following well-being objectives were introduced and approved by Council in 2022.

- ↳ All children get the best start in life.
- ↳ All communities are thriving and sustainable.
- ↳ Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations.
- ↳ Local people are skilled and access high quality, green jobs.

Under each well-being objective a number of improvement outcomes and priorities were set out. The improvement outcomes provided the overall position we are aiming to achieve by 2027 and the priorities set out the strategic actions we will take to deliver that improvement during the twelve month period.

Whilst reviewing our progress for 2022-2023 we reflected upon our well-being objectives and their relevance at the current time. In preparing this Annual Report for the 2022-2023 financial year, the council is required to consider whether the current well-being objectives remain relevant or whether changes to those objectives should be considered. The well-being objectives will remain the same for the coming year (2023-2024) but we will look to review our Corporate Plan outcomes and priorities for the period 2024 - 2027 following the Let's Keep Talking campaign.

Our Corporate Plan 2022-2023: Recover, Reset, Renew set out our plans to move on from the turbulent times which unfolded as a result of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Many of our services were, and continue to be stretched and whilst we continue to be ambitious in our plans for the future, we need to be realistic in relation to the achievement of our well-being objectives and the availability of funding and resources to sustain those plans.

In that review, we will also take into account the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act which has now been given Royal assent. As part of the four principles being brought into being we will revisit our well-being objectives to ensure 'decent work' is replaced with 'fair work' in accordance with the Act. Our current well-being objectives enable us to demonstrate contribution to the seven national wellbeing goals, take into account our ongoing recovery work following the pandemic and enable us to drive forward the following priorities over the short, medium and long term. This is illustrated in the table set out on page 9. All four of our well-being objectives are broad in nature and all four contribute to all seven national well-being goals.

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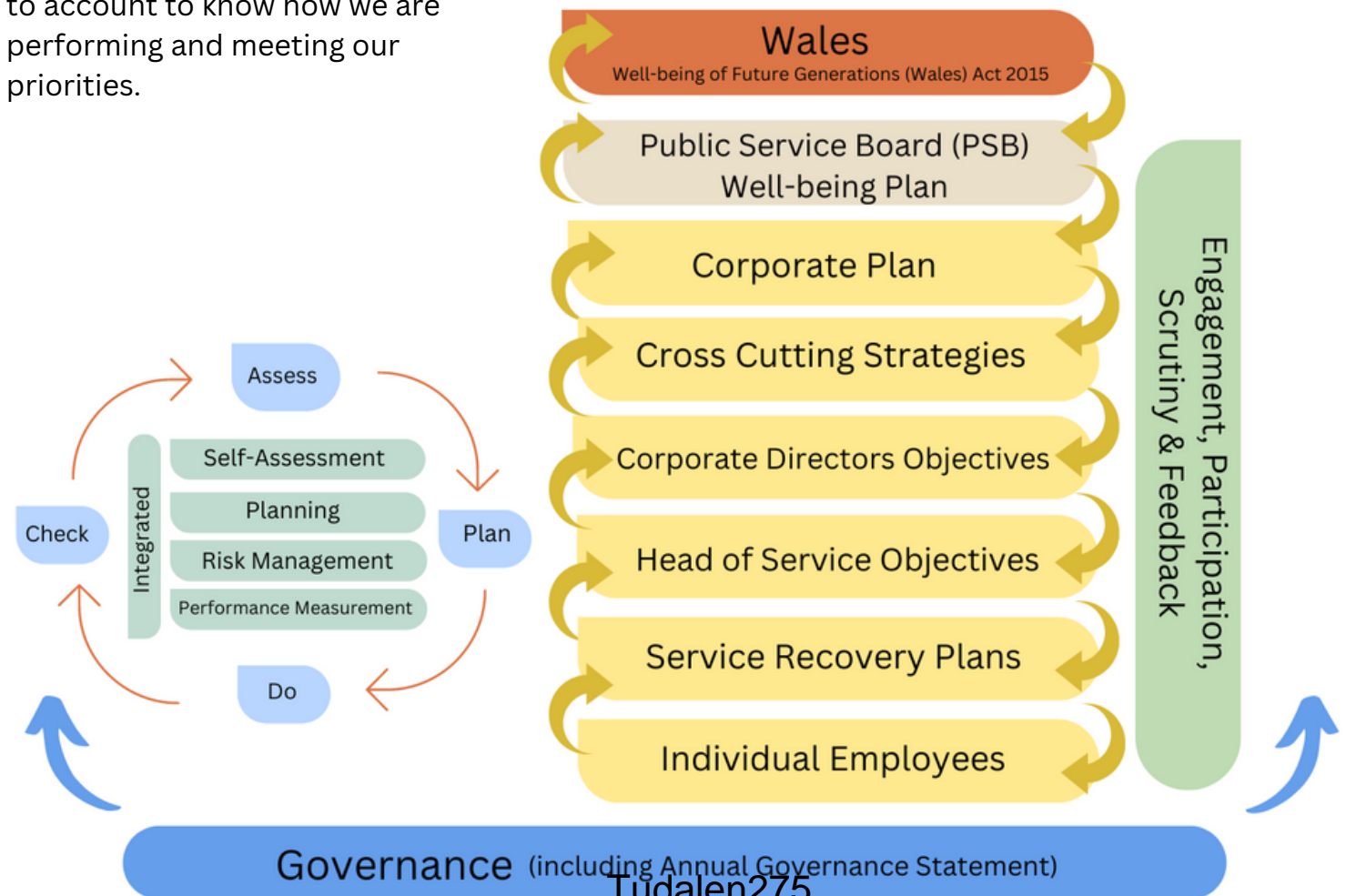
Managing Performance

During 2022-2023 our Corporate Performance Management Framework (CPMF) was updated to set a clear direction for the council that links/joins up all council business from employee level up to council level, and where everybody is clear how they contribute to achieving the council's vision, purpose and priorities.

It is imperative that our planning (including financial and workforce planning), performance and risk processes are robust and interwoven into our decision making at every level of the organisation. Reliable, timely and accurate information is important for us and to those who hold us to account to know how we are performing and meeting our priorities.

Our revised CPMF:

- Supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan vision, purpose and priorities;
- Helps improve services and outcomes for people;
- Helps embed self-assessment throughout the organisation;
- Helps to ensure the council is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively to deliver value for money;
- Further strengthens planning, performance and risk culture across the organisation;
- Helps inform decision making and improve planning;
- Improves performance scrutiny;
- Improves the integration of key planning activities;
- Helps identify poor performance; and
- Joins up all council business from employee/individual level up to council level, where everybody is clear how they contribute to achieving the council's vision, purpose and priorities.



Council Governance

The council has a number of process in place to ensure our governance is robust.

Self-Assessment

To ensure the council meets its statutory duty under the Local Government & Elections Act (2021), an annual self-assessment has been produced to demonstrate our governance arrangements and progress. Our self-assessment sets out our strong relationship with our stakeholders through engagement, participation, scrutiny and feedback.

This important relationship is an integral part of how we operate on an ongoing basis - enabling the delivery of good quality services and supporting improvement. It's also important for those who hold us to account to know how we are performing and if we are meeting our objectives. Our stakeholders include service users, the public, local businesses, employees, elected members, community organisations, partners and trade unions.

The self-assessment covers the following key strategic themes:

1. Corporate Planning (Role of Council)
2. Workforce Planning (Getting the Best from the Workforce)
3. Leadership (Leadership & Management)
4. Procurement (Procurement & Commissioning)
- 5 Risk Management (Effective Risk Management)
6. Digital, Data & Technology (Data & analytics / Assets & Technology)
7. Financial Planning (Managing Expenditure / Managing Income)
8. Physical Assets & Facilities

View the council's 2022-2023 Self-Assessment (TBA)

The corporate self-assessment asks us to determine:

- ↳ How well we are doing?
- ↳ How do we know?
- ↳ What are we going to do to improve?

The self-assessment for 2022-2023 includes an update on a number of improvements areas identified in 2021-2022 and sets out improvement areas for 2023-2024. A number of performance measures are also included in self-assessment that provide an overview of progress for a selection of services/enables.



Council Governance

Annual Governance Statement

In addition, our governance arrangements are also set out in our Corporate Performance Management Framework and Annual Governance Statement.

The council has adopted the 2016 Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) to develop our Annual Governance Statement. The 2016 framework explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the council to carry out its functions effectively and highlights the systems, processes, cultures and values by which the council is directed and controlled.

The Annual Governance statement for 2022-2023 sets out 13 improvement areas for 2023-2024.

All of the arrangements below feed back into our performance cycle and inform our self-assessment, planning and decision making processes.

Strategic Level

- ↳ 2022-2027 Corporate Plan progress
- ↳ Corporate Plan Annual Report
- ↳ Organisational Development Programme Board
- ↳ Council Annual Self-Assessment report
- ↳ Progress on our cross cutting plans and strategies
- ↳ Chief Officer Objectives
- ↳ Budget monitoring
- ↳ Risk Management
- ↳ Annual Governance Statement
- ↳ Council level compliments and complaints data
- ↳ Key Performance Indicators

Service Level

- ↳ Service Recovery Plan (SRPs)
- ↳ Benchmarking
- ↳ Ad-hoc service reports

Individual Level

- ↳ Annual performance appraisals

View the council's
2022-2023 Annual
[Governance Statement](#)

Internal Corporate Governance Group

The council's Corporate Governance Group meets on a quarterly basis to ensure that the governance arrangements of the Council are robust and fit for purpose, and report back to Corporate Directors Group.



How our Well-being Objectives contribute to the National Well-being Goals



Neath Port Talbot Council's Well-being Objectives / 2022-2023

WBO 1- Best start in life

WBO 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable

WBO 3 - Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

WBO 4 - Jobs and skills

7 National Well-being Goals

	WBO 1	WBO 2	WBO 3	WBO 4
A Prosperous Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Resilient Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A more equal Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A healthier Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of cohesive communities	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language	✓	✓	✓	✓
A globally responsible Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓

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How our Well-being Objectives embed the Sustainable Principle

Neath Port Talbot Council’s Well-being Objectives / 2022-2023

WBO 1- Best start in life

WBO 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable

WBO 3 - Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

WBO 4 - Jobs and skills

Collaboration



Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

Integration



Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

Involvement



The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

Long-term



The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the long-term needs.

Prevention



How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

The general purpose of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales, take the needs of future generations into account. The Act is designed to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with sustainable development principles. The work we do to achieve our corporate vision takes into account the Well-being of Future Generations five ways of working and is embedded across the council to contribute to the vision.

Strategic level - We will initiate a strategic change programme to ensure we are embracing a ‘one council’ strategic approach to achieving the vision.

Corporate level - corporate strategies will be realigned to support the achievement of the vision and the delivery of the strategic change programme.

Operational level - Every service and function within the council will align their service recovery plans to maximise their contribution to achieving the vision that we have set.

Individual level - All employees feel valued and motivated and understand how they play a part in our strategic and operational approaches. Training and development for all employees, supporting the delivery of the corporate plan, focusing on the key priorities and making best use of the training resources available.

Partnership Working

Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board (PSB)

During the summer of 2022, the Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board published its second local assessment of well-being which was informed by the findings of the council's Let's Talk survey undertaken during 2021.

The findings of 'Let's Talk' along with local and national data and information provided a clear picture of well-being in our area highlighting our assets and our challenges.

NPT and Swansea Public Services Boards jointly commissioned Swansea University to provide a summary analysis of the information gathered. Elements of this have been included in the summary document which draws out the key themes of the assessment. Full details can be seen here nptwellbeing.wales – [Well-Being-Assessment](#)

Due to the joined up approach in developing the Well-being Assessment, the Public Services Board aligned their well-being objectives with those of the council, in order to progress in an efficient way and provide overarching added value as a Public Services Board.

A series of steps have been agreed which will help the Board to meet the well-being objectives. These steps will be driven by a governance structure of existing partnerships where possible, which will work together in an integrated way, building on existing work and relationships to deliver the work on behalf of the Public Services Board. Following the twelve week consultation period, which ran from December 2022 to March 2023, the finished Well-being plan was published on 4th May 2023. It can be viewed here [Well Being Strategy | NPTCBC \(nptpsb.org.uk\)](#).



Corporate Joint Committee

Formally constituted in January 2022, the Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales covers the local authority areas of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea.

The Committee will improve the regional planning, co-ordination and delivery of transport, land use planning, economic development and energy covering South West Wales. The Committee is made up of representation from Carmarthenshire Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Pembrokeshire Council and Swansea Council, as well as the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

The Corporate Joint Committee has been created as a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

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Swansea Bay City Deal

The City Deal is expected to give the Swansea Bay City Region a permanent uplift in its Gross Value Added (GVA) of £1.8 billion and will generate almost 10,000 new jobs over the next 15 years. The investment is divided across a portfolio of nine headline projects and programmes delivering a total of 35 individual projects throughout the counties of Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire.

There are a number of City Deal projects based within Neath Port Talbot these include:

Homes as Power Stations

The Swansea Bay City Deal Homes as Power Stations (HAPS) project is a regional 5 year programme led by Neath Port Talbot CBC on behalf of the City Deal local authorities, which aims to deliver smart, low carbon, energy efficient homes through a coordinated approach across the region, ultimately leading to a reduction in fuel poverty and its impact on health and wellbeing and contributing to carbon emission reduction targets and alleviating the housing shortage to address the housing need.

The HAPS programme targets both new build projects and the retrofit of existing buildings. The aim is to provide proof of concept in the public sector at relatively small scale with the intention of scaling up activity across the region and sectors. The ‘pathfinder’ project is currently on site at the former Hafod Care Home in Neath – this is a collaborative project between Neath Talbot CBC, Pobl and Swansea University – SPECIFIC.

Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth

The Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth programme is made up of seven inter-linked projects under four themes:

- The award winning, energy positive Technology Centre building on Baglan Energy Park, providing flexible office space for start-up companies and indigenous businesses, with a focus on the innovation, ICT and R&D sectors. The excess energy from solar and other renewable technologies will be converted into hydrogen at the nearby Hydrogen Centre to be used to fuel hydrogen vehicles
- A specialist facility which will support the steel and metals industry in Port Talbot, Wales and the UK, while reducing its carbon footprint.
- Decarbonisation projects including a low emission vehicle charging network, as well as air quality monitoring and a hydrogen stimulus project
- An Industrial Futures project to address the gap between demand and supply for businesses and available land in the Port Talbot Waterfront Enterprise Zone, with a hybrid building providing production units as well as office space to support start-ups and indigenous businesses in the innovation and manufacturing sectors



Well-being Objective 1

Best Start in Life

Of the 21 key actions we had detailed in the Corporate Plan to deliver during 2022-2023, we were 'on track' with 17 actions and 4 were 'just off' track.



Published our **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan**

2,426 childcare spaces available



34% of 0-4 year olds accessed Flying Start support



Launched the Children and Young People's Engagement and Participation Strategy

1189 Benefited from the funded **FREE CHILD-CARE OFFER**

657



Children and young people engaged in fully funded play activities as a result of the Welsh Government Playworks Holiday Fund.

Roll out of free school meals to Years 1 and 2 (ages 5 to 7). From September 2023 we will provide free school meals to all primary school pupils – **a year ahead of our target.**

1275 Young Carers Awareness sessions delivered

19.7% of Year 1 pupils are receiving education through medium of Welsh and more Year 11 pupils studying Welsh first language (13.1%)



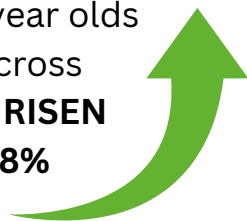
2.2% of Year 11 leavers were Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET). **Our second lowest ever figure.**

Continual reduction in the number of children on the Child Protection Register.

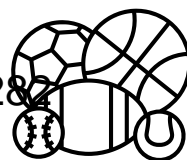


658 pupils across primary and secondary schools have accessed School Based Counselling Support.

Number of 16-24 year olds in employments across Neath Port Talbot **RISEN from 50.6% to 65.8%**



Apprenticeships for 16-24 year olds **working in the council** increased **from 19 to 28**



46% of children take part in sport three or more times a week. Highest rate in Wales

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 1

Best Start in Life



Supporting our children and young people is critical to ensure we remove inequalities and provide the best start in life. In our Corporate Plan 2022-2027 we asked:

Why is this important?

Covid-19 has had a significant, adverse impact on children and young people, with disruption to their learning and consequences for their social development and physical and mental wellbeing; 35% of children aged 7-24 live in the 20% most deprived wards in Wales; 84% of children entered nursery without the appropriate literacy, language and communication skills to access the curriculum; 27% of pupils of school age are entitled to free school meals; Flying Start aims to offer support to at least 25% of all children aged 0-4 in the most deprived wards in each local authority. This is not a universal offer, however, needs based referrals, strong links with our multiagency partners and local need targeting within the Flying Start Outreach Programme allows the programme's eligibility to reach much further to those who need it most; A significant percentage of pupils finish statutory education without the expected levels in language, mathematics and science; Over half of the pupils who are eligible for free school meals do not achieve a grade C or above in either language or mathematics; Too many children and young people are being excluded from schools on a fixed term and permanent basis; At least a quarter of children in our schools have a known or identified Additional Learning Need; 2,237 young people aged 16-24 are economically inactive in Neath Port Talbot – some of these consider themselves unfit for work due to mental health issues; and The Welsh Government has set a target that 1 million people will speak Welsh by 2050 and we need to play our part in helping to achieve this.

Summary Progress during 2022-2023

Overall we, are on track in delivering this well-being objective for 2022-2023. Some of our key achievements during the year include the ahead of schedule roll out of free school meals to those in years 3 and 4, the expansion of Flying Start seeing an additional 129 children and their families access the full programme, and at least 225 beneficiaries outside of eligible Flying Start areas benefitting from the programme's "Outreach" engagement, including funded childcare, specialist Midwifery and intensive early years parenting. This has increased Flying Start coverage to 34% of all 0-4 year olds. We have also published our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, which details our plans for growth over the next 10 years and the percentage of 5 year olds receiving education through the medium of Welsh and the percentage of year 11 pupils studying Welsh first language is increasing year on year.

We are adhering to Welsh Government's timeline for the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Education and Tribunal Wales Act 2018 and the conversion of Statements to Individual Development Plans (IDPs). During the academic year 2022-2023 the majority of learners within the mandated cohorts have had their Statements of SEN converted to Individual Development Plans.

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Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

We are continuing to work towards completing the Band B projects of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme (previously 21st Century Schools and Education Programme). During 2022-2023, the council's Cabinet also considered the next phase (Band C) which will enable funding applications to be submitted to Welsh Government.

Our education services have made massive strides to ensure children and young people were able to return to school and play settings alongside implementing the role out of the new Curriculum for Wales and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales Act 2018 (ALNET) which is still being rolled out across the borough.

Whilst schools across Neath Port Talbot were reopened to all pupils, attendance rates across primary and secondary age groups are still struggling and whilst provisional academic year 2022-23 attendance rates show a slight increase on the previous year, they are still lower than pre-pandemic attendance rates with 291 (Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) – January 2023) children still being educated at home.

Some learners established a pattern of not attending school during the pandemic that they and their families have found difficult to revert from. Many of these challenges existed before the pandemic, but some have deepened since, and as a result some families have become harder to reach and engage. There is more work to do to increase school attendance rates and reduce school exclusions, which has risen from 525 in 2021-2022 academic year to 760 in 2022-23 academic year.

During the academic year 2022-2023 the School Based Counselling Service has supported 658 pupils over 3894 counselling sessions. Of the 109 primary aged pupils accessing support, 70 were below the statutory Year 6 age. NPT is consistently ranked highly in the top few authorities across Wales in terms of recording positive outcomes as a result of therapeutic intervention. The top presenting issues for counselling support are Anxiety, Family and Anger. In response to this, the service has developed training for school staff to best meet the needs of those pupils presenting with issues around 'anger'. In addition, the service is providing self-care groups and will be picking up one to one counselling work with parents.

The Inclusion Service has developed a multi-disciplinary forum so that guidance can be offered to schools from different professional perspectives. The 'forum team' will ordinarily consist of a school-based counsellor, a wellbeing service practitioner, an educational psychologist and a practitioner from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). During 2022-2023, 140 cases were discussed. Of these cases, 42% empowered school support, 23% resulted in Inclusion Service input and 35% resulted in other referrals including CAMHS, CAMHS School Liaison, SPOC, Team Around the Family.

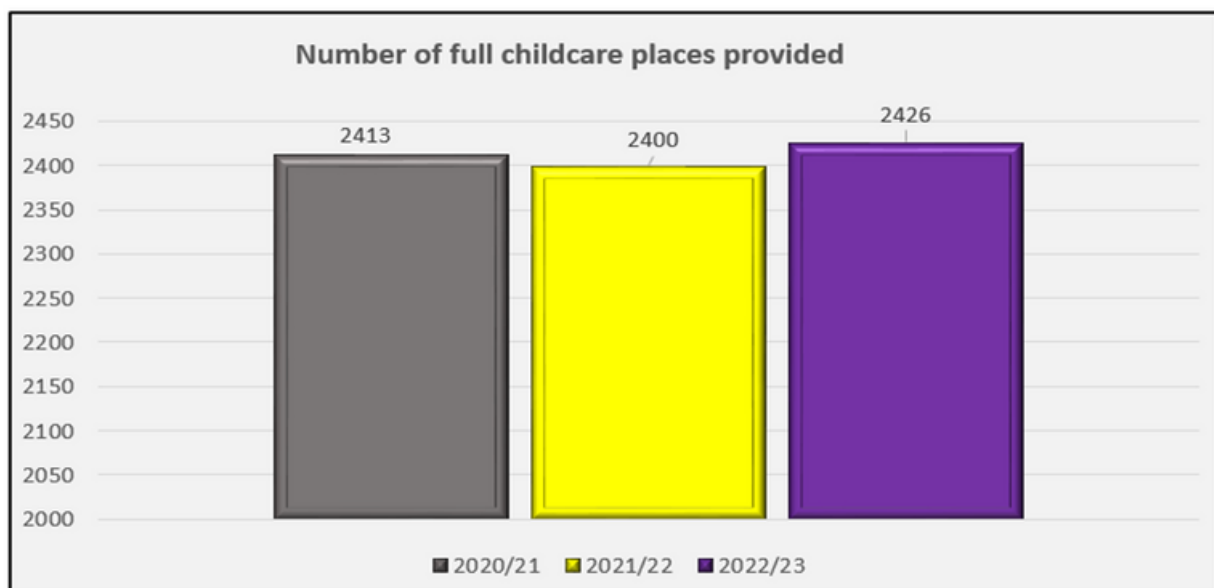


Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

Progress on our 2022- 2023 Corporate Plan Actions and Measures:

Of the 21 key actions we had detailed in the Corporate Plan to deliver during 2022-2023, we were broadly on track with 17 and 4 were 'just off' track. Our Corporate Plan measures have been linked to the relevant actions.

- We have supported our school leaders to ensure all schools re-opened fully following the pandemic and have well established development plans to focus on recovery. In addition, council services have supported schools to help pupils and families recover.
- Significant progress has been made in ensuring a more equitable early year's offer by exceeding its Flying Start expansion goal of engaging an additional 127 children aged 0-4, taking the total amount of children accessing early years support to 502. As a result, our Flying Start programme has exceeded the national target of 25% coverage, increasing to 34% of 0-4year olds accessing Flying Start support. Two small additional areas of Margam and Port Talbot are now within the Flying Start footprint, with Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen now being fully eligible.



Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:

The total number of childcare places provided across Neath Port Talbot is 2,426, increasing from 2,400 the previous year.

As per Welsh Government requirements, we have commissioned the services of a software company to develop an online IDP platform. A designated 'IDP Systems and Process Officer' has been appointed to lead this piece of work ensuring the specifications requirements are met. In addition to the consideration of council maintained IDPs, between 1st September 2021 and the 31st of August 2022, ALN Inclusion Panel also considered 197 Statutory Assessments (SA) under the previous SEN Framework. During this period, 168 Statements of SEN were also issued and no appeals to the Special Education Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW) were lodged. 100% of Statements of SEN and/ or IDPs were produced within the statutory timescale 'excluding 'exceptions'. Exceptions refer to those cases where advice requested from professionals is submitted outside of timescales, which is outside of the control of the ALNSS, along with those cases where further dialogue is needed with parents/carers following the issue of the proposed plan.

Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

- The Inclusion Service and NPT Schools have a robust quality assurance framework in place to monitor and review the impact of IDPs. Inclusion Service Managers work with Swansea Bay University Health Board to quality assure Health provision. The ALNSS Manager undertakes the quality assurance of all LA maintained IDPs and an Inclusion Service Officer is currently working with school clusters to develop a quality assurance framework for school maintained IDPs.
- We enhanced free and low cost play and leisure opportunities for children and young people and outcomes included:
 - ↳ 657 children and young people engaged in fully funded play activities as a result of Welsh Government Playworks Holiday Fund. The fund has been used to improve the quality of play provision with a focus upon closing identified gaps in provision. Activities have included open access play sessions, family play opportunities, sports camps and summer play schemes for children and young people with additional support needs.
 - ↳ The Physical Activity and Sport Service are based in a school setting for primary and secondary to provide sporting and physical activities opportunities.
 - ↳ Physical Activity and Sports Team, in partnership with Early Years and Flying Start Childcare Team provided Physical Literacy and active play workshops to children and their families within childcare settings across Neath Port Talbot .
 - ↳ Results of the School Sport Survey, a national survey of pupils from years 3 to 11, looking into attitudes, behaviours and opportunities for young people in sport, show Neath Port Talbot scored highest in Wales in the following three key areas:
 - The number of children who take part in sport three or more times per week (46%);
 - Those participating in community club sport outside of school (71.6%);
 - Those participating in community sport at least once a week (62.3%).
- Services across Inclusion and the Think Family Partnership ensure that there is a clearly articulated offer to parents and professionals. The Inclusion Service has also ensured capacity across Early Years to meet the requirement of the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (ALNET) Act. The Inclusion Service offer of support has been effectively shared with schools and families through our website and social media in addition to face to face workshops.
- All primary schools have begun working under the Curriculum for Wales. All secondary schools are preparing for a September 2023 start for years 7 & 8. Levels of engagement in curriculum workshops and training are very high. The renewed focus on developing a shared understanding of progress is priority at local and national levels. This process is being supported at local, cluster and national levels.

Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

- Inclusion Service staff regularly attend the community 'Supporting Additional Needs Parent/Carer Forum' on a half termly basis to improve communication and consultation. These sessions are always productive and those who attend are invited to contribute honest views in relation to what the service is doing well and what could be done better. Families are also provided with a number of ways to contact the service should they need to, including a central email address and via the Inclusion Service website. Families are also signposted to SNAP Cymru, a national charity that offers support, guidance and advocacy to children and young people with additional learning needs and their families.
- Free school meals are now available to all pupils from Reception to Year 4 and will be rolled out to all primary school pupils from September 2023.
- We worked to ensure those children in need of protection are safeguarded and they can grow up in a loving and stable family, some of this work included:
 - ↳ Working collaboratively with families to build resilience and prevent problems escalating by providing early offers of help and support. There has been a continual reduction in the number of children on the Child Protection Register with the number stabilising at 43 at the end of March 2023.
 - ↳ Supporting families at an earlier stage through the strengthening of support services and the recruitment of a full time principal officer with responsibility for prevention and family support.
 - ↳ We work in partnership with our colleagues in adult services to ensure that we respond to challenges such as the current cost of living crisis and ensure that families have access to support when they need it.
 - ↳ Our approach is about what matters to children and families and to understand the impact we have and the difference we make we have a dedicated Strategic Lead for Participation and Engagement. Listening to the voice of the child is paramount in all the work we do. In May 2022 we were successful in achieving the Children in Wales National Participation Standards Kitemark. We also promote Children's Rights through the development of Children's Rights Champions across the service by working to the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
 - ↳ Worked with partner agencies: statutory, third and voluntary sector. Effective practice in response to need, threat, risk, harm would not be possible without partnership working and there are many forums in place to bring key partners together to respond to current and emerging trends, patterns and themes, these being: Partnership Interface Meeting, Local Operational Safeguarding Group, Strategic SAFE Partnership Group.



2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

- To ensure those young people leaving full-time education have a clear pathway to move into further training or education or work NPT Employability, Skills and Training and Youth Service continue to provide a service working alongside DWP, schools, colleges, and other external agencies to encourage engagement. The Youth Support Multi Agency Group continues to meet quarterly bringing together a range of partners to discuss youth unemployment and youth homelessness.

The percentage of 16-24 year olds in employment across Neath Port Talbot has risen from 50.6% in 2021-2022 to 65.8% in 2022-23, a significant positive increase.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:

- We make sure it is clear for young people leaving full-time education how they move on to further training or education in a number of ways including:
 - ↳ Schools work with Careers Wales to ensure pupils have opportunities to discuss pathways after school
 - ↳ The Youth Service also provide additional support if required to pupils and after the school journey.
 - ↳ Skills and Training provide summer schools for those who need additional support after school finishes at year 11 and engagement courses for young people. Apprenticeships are also available through this route.
- We continued with our work to support young people leaving fulltime education to help them move on to further training or education or work.
- We are currently implementing ALNET across the post 16 sector and are working collaboratively with Partners to increase the number of young people with ALN who are accessing education, training or employment post 16. Draft post 16 protocol has been developed which includes an enhanced transition framework (MATSM - Multiagency Transition Screening Meetings). This has been successfully piloted in Llangatwg Comprehensive School and will be rolled out to all secondary schools in NPT

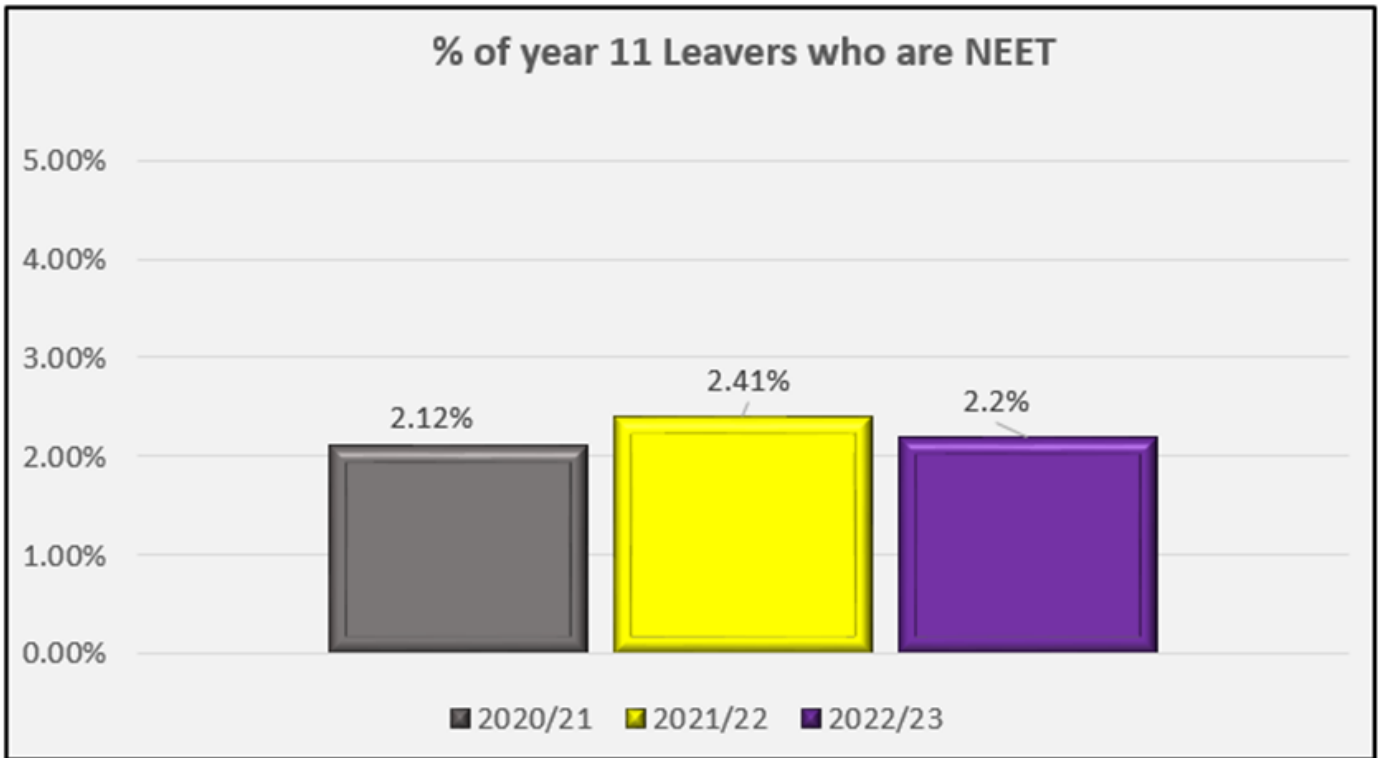
The number of young people who present as not in education, employment or training between the ages of 16 and 18 has risen from 3.6% in 2021-2022 to 4.3% in 2022-2023.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:



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Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life



- We have increased the number of work experience and apprenticeship opportunities offered by the council to young people (aged 16-24) from 19 in 2021-2022 to 28 in 2022-2023, of which 26 have finished their apprenticeship and achieved a qualification. We are currently working with Wildfox, Freeports and other local businesses as part of the skills mapping exercise to ensure that work experience, volunteering, apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships are explored as a pathway into local industries for our people in NPT.
- We continue our role as corporate parents and help young people leaving care to have appropriate supported transition to enable them to access and sustain appropriate accommodation which includes working with young people, foster carers, our colleagues in Housing and continually reviewing our accommodation needs for young people.

The number of young people who transitioned from year 11 and were Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) totalling 35 his equated to 2.2% of Year 11 leavers and is our second lowest ever NEETs figure. This is also the closest we have ever been to the Welsh average which for 2022-23 is 2.1% and ranked 13th in Wales.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:



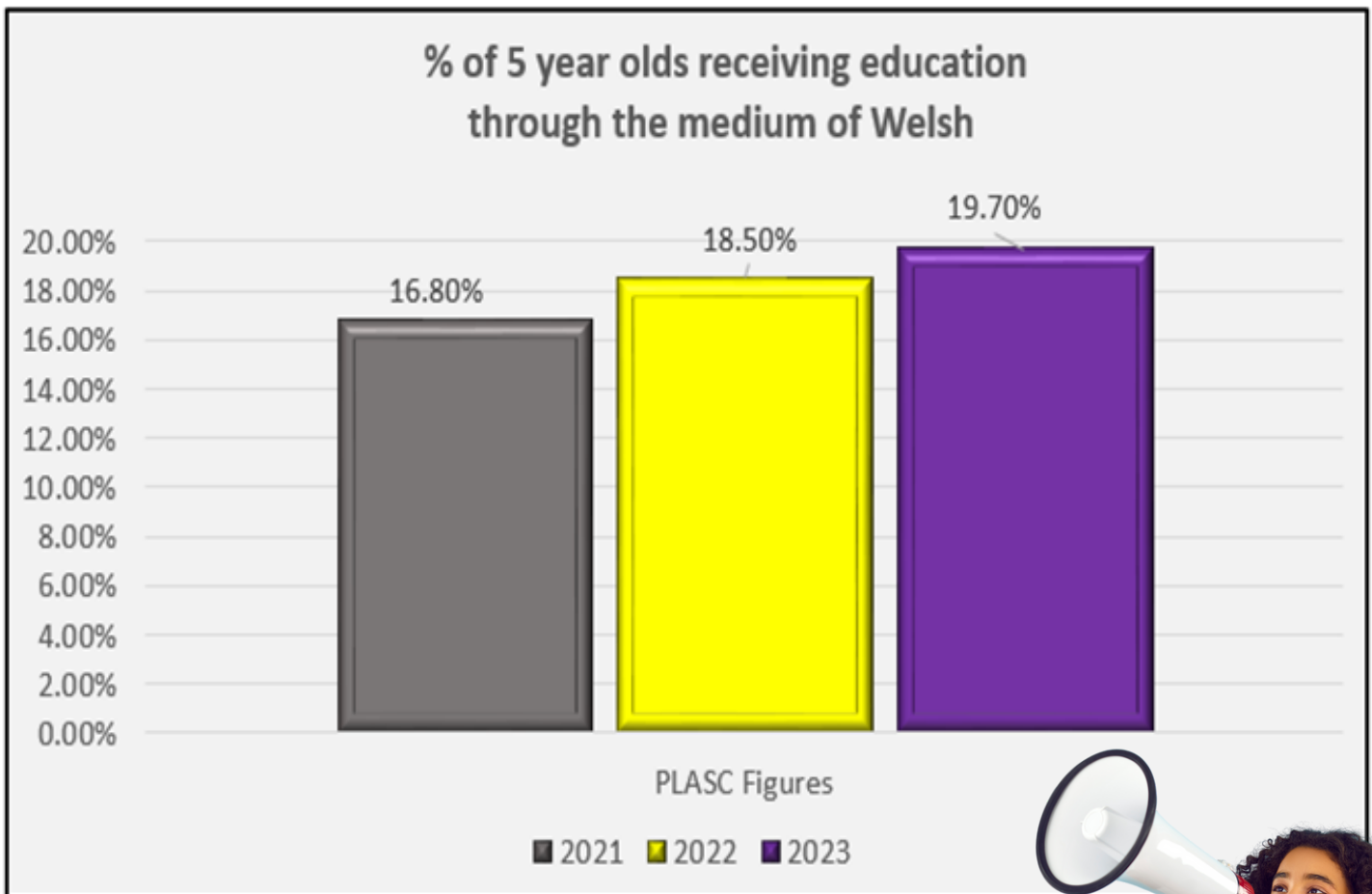
Tudalen289

Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

- The Children and Young People’s Leadership Group has been established with work underway to develop a Children and Young People’s Plan and Early Years Strategy so that all services for children and families are easy to identify and use, meet people’s needs and that our communities are child friendly
- We continued to provide opportunities to enable all learners, families and carers to benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh. We implemented the final year of the previous WESP action plan and achieved targets.

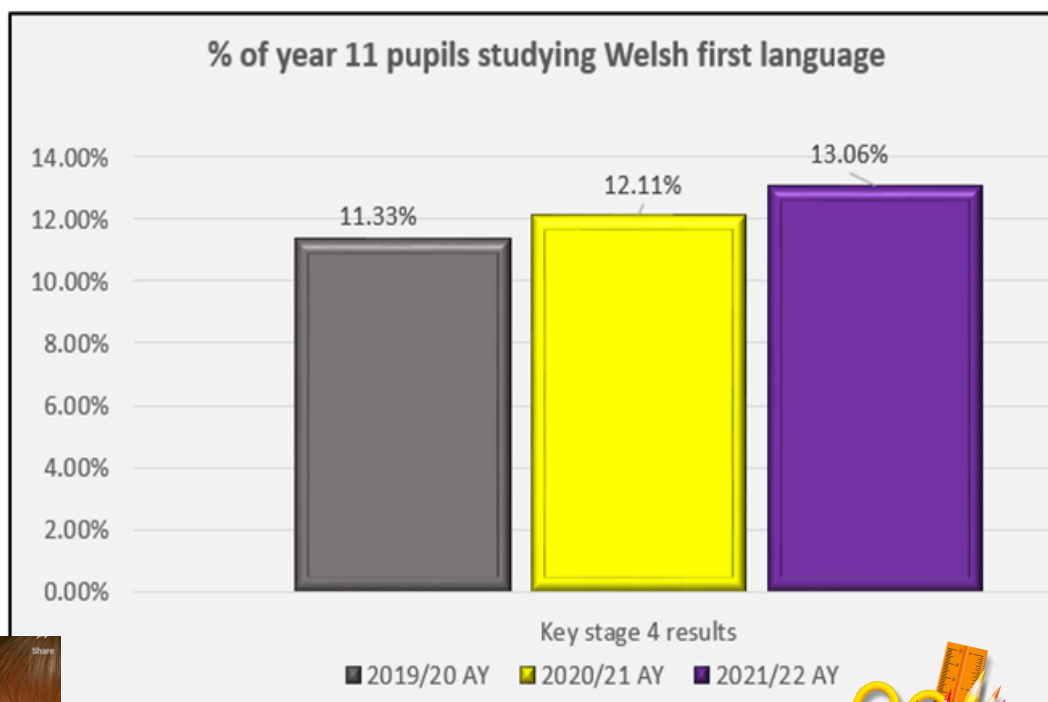
19.7% (287 pupils) of our 5 year olds are receiving education through medium of Welsh, which has increased from 18.5% (279 pupils), with 13.1% (208) of year 11 pupils studying Welsh first language which has also increased from 12.1% (196 pupils).

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measures:



Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

- With the development and implementation of our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan we will further strengthen our commitment to the Welsh Language, our traditions and culture. We have met our first year targets and opened the first Welsh-medium starter school Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tregeles (see link below). The Plan details how we intend to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools and in the wider communities and how we will plan for future growth over the next 10 years (January 2022 - January 2032).
- We are working collaboratively with colleagues across Swansea Bay University Health Board and the FEI sector and are making good progress in reviewing our joint planning, commissioning and service delivery arrangements for children who have additional needs



Embracing Welsh Language for future generations



The newly refurbished Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tregeles is located in Neath Abbey has been developed as part of Neath Port Talbot Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Providing pupils with an exciting and motivating learning environment embracing the principles of the new curriculum for Wales, with the aim of promoting the Welsh language, wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

The exciting development reflects the council's vision for promoting and ensuring access to Welsh language learning for pupils in Neath Port Talbot. All children should benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh.

Take a look at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tregeles - Neath Abbey - YouTube

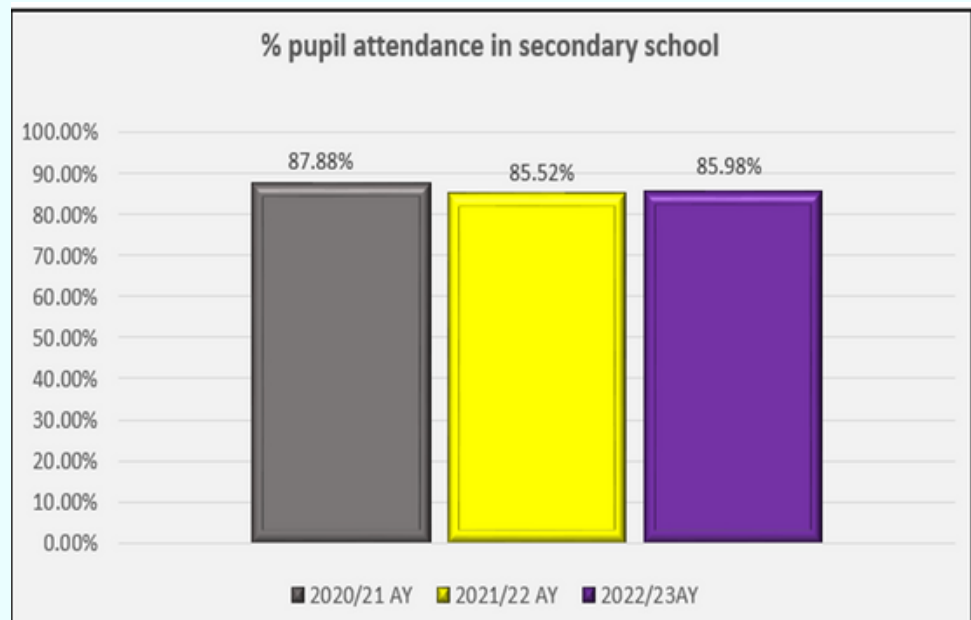
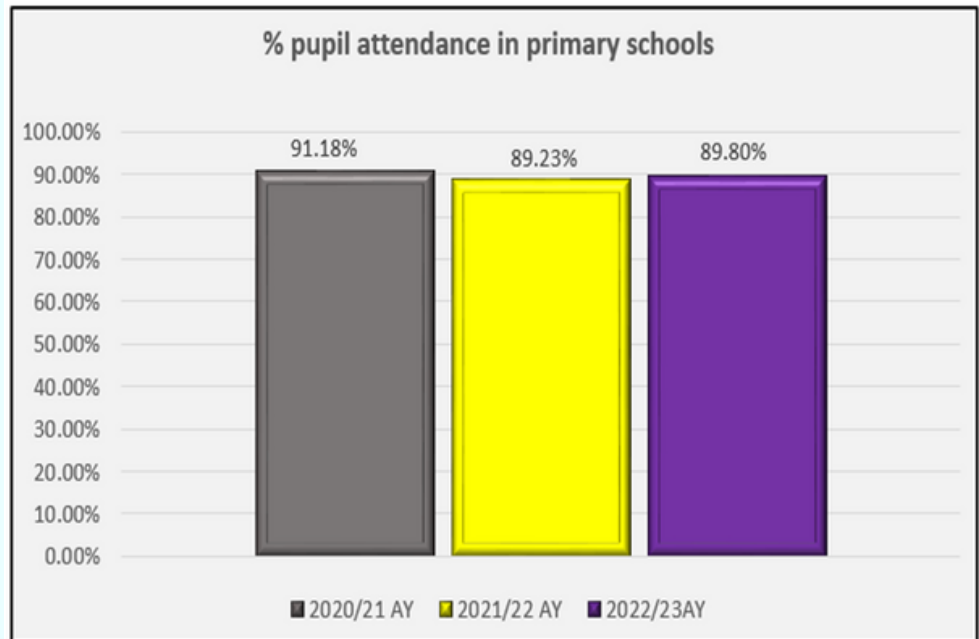
"Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tregeles will provide high quality provision and support that will enable all learners, their families and the wider community to benefit from access to Welsh-medium education and experiences."

Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

More work to do:

There were 4 actions assessed as 'just off' track for 2022-2023, these were:

- Provisional attendance data for the 2022-2023 academic year shows attendance figures have risen on the previous year by around half a percent and final figures will be published in the coming months, however, the increase is not at a rate comparable with other local authorities around Wales who have achieved a higher increase. It has also been noted that there is a significant attendance gap between pupils who are categorised as eligible for free school meals and non-free school meals, and again between pupils designated as having Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and those non-SEN/ALN.

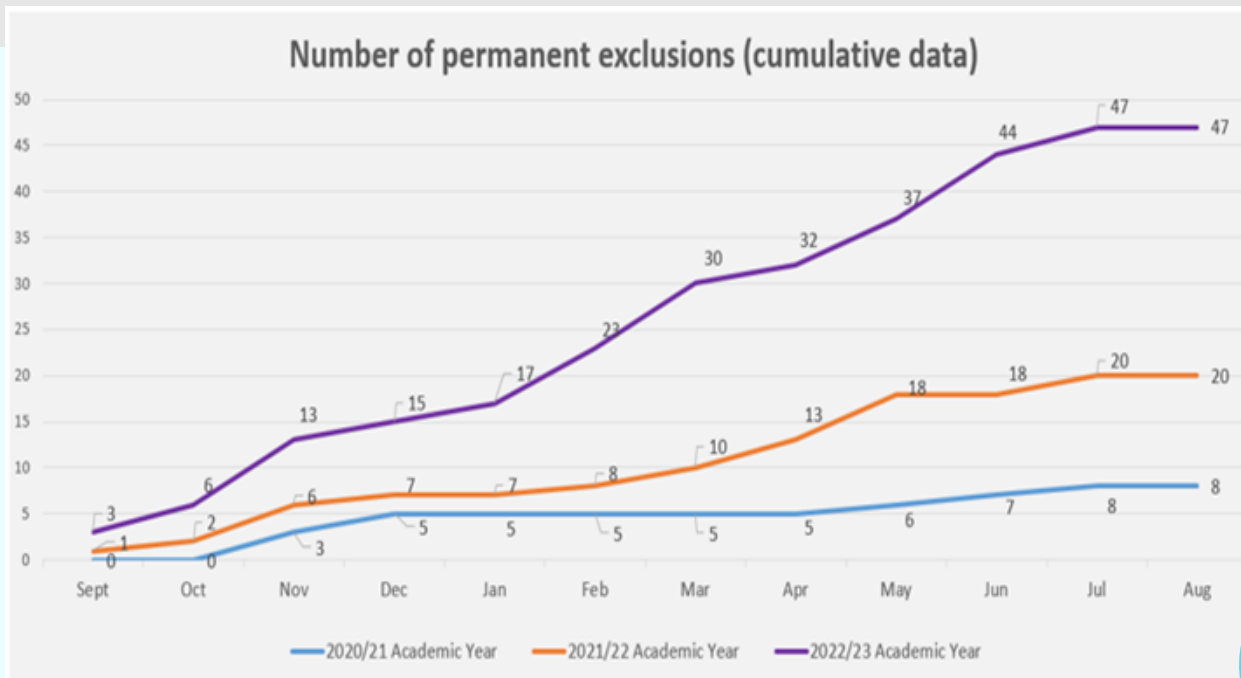


2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

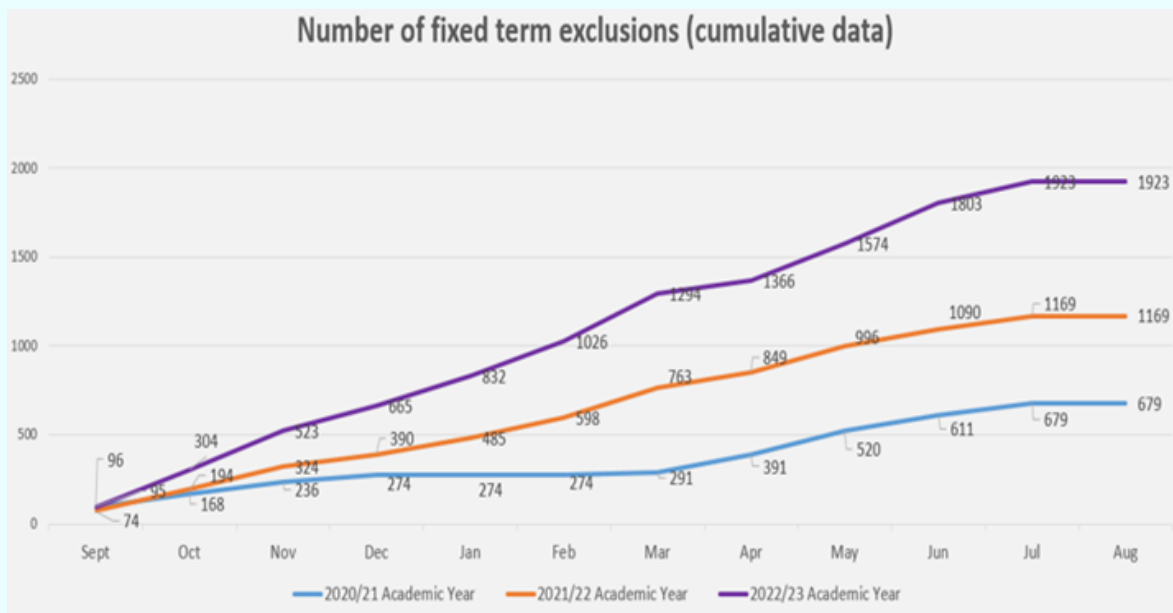
More work to do:

We have seen the number of pupils excluded from school rise by 235 pupils to 760 pupils in the 2022-23 academic year, taking the total exclusion figure to 3.62% from 2.47% in 2021-2022. The number of exclusions has also risen sharply as shown below.



Linking Corporate Plan Measure:

Linking Corporate Plan Measures:



The number of pupils not within the education system data is not available at the moment

% of children, young people and families accessing early intervention support - data is not available at the moment.



Well-being Objective 1 - Best Start in Life

More work to do:

Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP) panel has reported an increase in complexity of need in referrals placing additional pressures on early intervention services to meet these needs. In addition, council monitoring information highlights that non-engagement with services by children and families is an area of concern. As a result, the local authority is undertaking a review of the EIP panel process to ensure early intervention and support is delivered effectively. This review will be used to inform and develop the work of the EIP and support services. The continued successful development of the EIP panel support service is a key priority for the service.

To ensure there is effective early intervention in place for our children, young people and families our Adult Community Learning team has worked with schools and provided Family Learning and progression routes in 9 schools. Sessions have been particularly successful where parents have progressed onto a range of courses e.g. Food Safety, Childcare, Child Psychology, Classroom Welsh, and Cooking on a budget, ADHD, Autism Awareness. All parents engaged in current sessions have completed at least one Literacy/Numeracy accredited course last term. In addition, a programme of song and rhyme sessions at all eight council libraries has provided opportunities for young children and their families to develop literacy skills together, as well as providing the children with an opportunity to develop social interaction and communication skills.

There is more work required to develop systems to support Young Carers identified in schools and develop a young carer's forum. The current demand for Young Carers Group has exceeded our venue and staffing capacities resulting in the offer being once a fortnight rather than weekly. In addition, transport to Young Carers Group provision is a barrier and there is currently insufficient funding to meet the demand. However some of our positive progress during 2022-23 included:

- ↳ Awareness raising sessions to enable us to identify potential young carers delivered to 20 primary schools where 629 young people attended and 6 secondary schools where 562 young people attended. Sessions have also been delivered to targeted groups including LGBTQ+, Speech & Language Club and Youth Clubs where 84 young people attended. In total Young Carers Awareness sessions were delivered to 1,275 young people during this period.
- ↳ We currently have a very successful and enjoyable provision which the Young Carers and families really appreciate. 211 young people were referred to the Young Carers provision and 36 weekly group sessions were delivered with an average attendance of 15 young carers a night. 94 of these Young Carers needed support with their transport to access the provision.
- ↳ Young Carers are represented on the Youth Council; Young Carers are allocated 2 designated seats on the Youth Council. We have continued to implement the Young Carers ID card. 22 Young Carers were part of the ID Card Pilot scheme during this period

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

We were on track in delivering what we had planned to do for 2022-23 for this well-being objective. Of the 15 key actions we had planned to deliver during the year, we were 'on track' with 14 and 1 was 'just off' track.

£139,000 provided to **39 organisations** through the **Food Poverty Grant**



8 businesses registered with **2** NPT Buy Local



Increased Local Area Co-ordinators (LACs) from 6 to 14, who supported 1,127 people and helped set up 13 new community groups.

Welsh Government Warm Spaces fund help provide **32 Warm Spaces** within communities which had **5,819 attendances**



ec employers for carers has been implemented across the council



Completion of Rapid Re-housing Plan

1442 members signed up

PAWS on Patrol

98% of households had access to the internet with download speeds of at least 30Mbit



Reduction in anti-social behaviour incidents



Administered over £9m of UK & Welsh Government funding via Fuel Support Scheme, Unpaid Carers Grant & Self-Isolation scheme

Fly tipping incidents have reduced over last 2 years from 1,566 to 886



Partnership developed with Warm Wales to deliver £2m initiative to support those most impacted by the energy crisis

1,849 children received community safety; domestic abuse & cyber-crime lessons through our Crucial Crew.



Number of carers needs assessments undertaken increased from 167 in 2021-22 to 225 in 2022-23

JOB

Supported **137** individuals either from jobless households or who have a long term health condition / disability into employment

2,810 micro-enterprises in 2022 compared to 2,750 in 2021

Tudalen295

120 high risk domestic abuse victims had **extra support and their homes were made safer/ more secure**



2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

Ensuring our communities are thriving and sustainable means people live healthy, long and good lives in communities where people get along together and support one another. During our Corporate Plan 2022-2027, we asked:

Why is this important?

Covid-19 has had an adverse impact on many people with more people becoming lonely and isolated. There has been a disproportionate impact on young people, women and people from BME backgrounds; there were 144,000 people living in NPT in 2021.

This is expected to grow to 147,000 by the mid-2030s; The population is ageing – the number of people retired is growing but the number of young people is declining; People are living for longer and living healthier lives but life expectancy and health life expectancy is below the rest of Wales and the gap between those who are best and worst off is significant; GVA (Gross Value Added) is lower than the Welsh average; 27% of children are eligible for free school meals; There are estimated to be over 20,000 unpaid carers in the county borough; There is a need for more affordable housing of a good quality; and We expect to see a 35% increase in those aged 65+ who will be living alone by 2035.

Summary Progress during 2022-2023

Overall we, are on track in delivering this well-being objective for 2022-2023. Covid-19 has had an immense impact on the social care system, including the increasing demand on domiciliary care to enable individuals to remain in their own homes rather than enter a care home and providers facing recruitment challenges to meet that increasing demand. As at March 2023, the council supported 694 people through the delivery of 9,315 hours of domiciliary care per week, this figure includes both externally commissioned provision and in-house provision (Community Wellbeing Team - CWT).

It is likely that this demand will continue to increase over the coming years to support our ageing population. Some of the achievements during 2022-23 include increasing the number of local area coordinators from 6 to 14. These local area coordinators supported 1,127 people and helped set up 13 new community groups. As a council we administered over £9m of UK and Welsh Government funding via the Fuel Support Scheme, Unpaid Carers Grant and Self-Isolation Scheme; we increased the number of carers needs assessments undertaken from 167 in 2021-22 to 225 in 2022-23.



2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

To allow us to transform homelessness services and to meet Welsh Government's requirements as highlighted in the "Ending Homelessness – High Level Action Plan 2021-26" our Rapid Rehousing Plan has been developed and published during the year, moving away from the use of temporary accommodation. The Plan takes into account the current position of homelessness across the county borough and sets a whole system transformation, the steps required in line with Welsh Government's expectations and covers a transition period of five years to enable the desired outcomes to be achieved.

Whilst we have strengthened our housing and homelessness arrangements which included leasing 39 units of interim accommodation for homeless households (an increase on the 27 units we made available in 2021-22), the percentage of households prevented from becoming homeless has reduced. Also to note the percentage of people (16+) living in households in material deprivation is showing an increase in the borough and across Wales. (Based on National Survey for Wales results).

Our Cabinet approved extra funding of £4.25m to "clean up and green up" towns, valleys and villages and the cleanliness of our streets has improved with fewer fly tipping incidents; there were fewer anti-social behaviour incidents during the year, 120 high risk domestic abuse victims had extra support and their homes were made safer/ more secure (however, the number of high risk domestic abuse incidents increased further during 2022-23) and the Paws on Patrol scheme continues to go from strength to strength with 1,442 members now signed up.

In addition to the work undertaken to invest in our schools over recent years, during 2022-2023 we have welcomed a variety of capital investment within our communities and exciting opportunities into the county borough as a whole, and have seen a number of visions come into fruition.

We will further progress our work to develop a corporate policy to encourage and support council staff to volunteer.

Progress on our 2022- 2023 Corporate Plan Actions and Measures:

- Of the 15 key actions we had detailed in the Corporate Plan to deliver during 2022-2023, we were on track with 14 and 1 was 'just off' track. Our Corporate Plan measures have been linked to the relevant actions below.
- We developed our work at neighbourhood level, mapping local assets (and mapping community vulnerabilities) and this information will provide a foundation for identifying community needs and developing interventions to address those needs effectively.



2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

- We continued to work with the community and other partners to identify opportunities for additional informal care and support networks to be developed. Some of this work included:
 - ↳ During 2022-23 the Prevention and Early Intervention Service had 26 approved volunteers with 21 providing support to individuals referred to Adult Social Services.
 - ↳ Implementation of a befriending service as part of Adult Social Care's Prevention and Early Intervention offer. This is the first volunteering provision established within Adult Social Care and follows on from the success of the Safe and Well Scheme during the pandemic.
 - ↳ Unpaid carers are an invaluable asset, and in recognition of this a dedicated team has been established to enable focused work to be undertaken to explore existing service approaches and enhance operational relationships between services, unpaid carers and commissioned providers.
 - ↳ An internal review into unpaid carer processes and procedures has commenced and is planned to be completed by late 2023.
 - ↳ We increased the number of carers needs assessments (unpaid or paid carers) undertaken from 167 in 2021-22 to 225 in 2022-23.
 - ↳ 'Employers for Carers', a Carers' Trust initiative has been implemented across the council, to ensure staff that who provide unpaid care for others are recognised and supported within the workplace.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measures:

National Survey for Wales data shows that 30% of people surveyed in Neath Port Talbot Volunteer. This is the same as the All Wales figure for 2022-23.

National Survey for Wales data shows that 17% of people surveyed in Neath Port Talbot feel lonely. This is one of the highest percentages in Wales and above the All Wales figure of 13%.



We had included five other National Survey for Wales measures in our 2022-27 Corporate Plan to assess our progress, however these were not surveyed during 2022-2023.

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measures:

- We increased the number of Local Area Coordinators (LAC) from 6 to 14 to support the community. Local Area Coordinators work with residents to make links to local support networks to improve well-being and reduce demand on care and health services. This increase means we can provide support across the borough as opposed to just in certain areas and this has brought greater consistency in the way we work. During 2022-23 the LAC service had 1,127 access their service, all would have received support with approximately 500 people receiving one to one support at any one time.
- We mapped and identified that there are 107 groups that are used as community hubs across NPT and we are in the process of creating a digital map of these hubs. During 2022-23, 13 new community groups have been set up with support from our Local Area Coordinators.
- Collaboration with Neath CVS (Council for Voluntary Services) and community and voluntary groups is ongoing, with the establishment of three forums facilitated by NPT CVS across the Primary Care Clusters. This work will help increase opportunities for local people to participate in decisions that affect them and provide greater support for the work of local councillors in their ward.
- Funding to communities was provided through the provision of several grant schemes to help with the cost of living which included:
 - ↳ 39 organisations supported through the Food Poverty Grant which amounted to £139,000;
 - ↳ Welsh Government Warm Spaces fund help provide 32 Warm Spaces within communities which had 5,819 attendances, where people could congregate to take pressure off their own household energy costs. The council made many of its own premises available including libraries, community centres, and theatres.
 - ↳ We administered over £9m of UK and Welsh Government funding via Fuel Support Scheme, Unpaid Carers Grant and Self-Isolation Scheme.
 - ↳ A partnership with Warm Wales was initiated to deliver the council's £2m initiative identified to support those most impacted by the energy crisis.

National Survey for Wales data shows that 48% of people surveyed in Neath Port Talbot had an adult mental well-being score of 48, which is the same as our score for 2021-2022. Local Authority scores range from 46 – 50 with 15 of the 22 local authorities having scores of 48 or 49.

% of residents who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area was not measured as part of the 2022-23 National Survey for Wales.

108 of our buildings or assets (e.g. bowling greens) are leased to Voluntary Sector groups and 17 to Town & Community Councils

National Survey for Wales results report that the percentage of people (16+) living in households in material deprivation is showing an increase in the borough from 14% in 2021- 2022 to 21% in 2022-2023. The all Wales rate is also showing an increase from 11% to 16%.

No up to date information is available to measure the people living in household income poverty relative to the Welsh median and no data is available to measure the gap in employment rate between those with a long-term health condition and the overall employment rate. However, during 2022-23 our NPT employability team supported 137 individuals either from jobless households or who had a long term health condition /disability into employment.

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

- Prevention and Early Intervention Service had 26 approved volunteers with 21 providing support to individuals referred to Adult Social Services.
- In July 2022, Cabinet approved extra funding of £4.25m to “clean up and green up” towns, valleys and villages. During 2022-23, 12 new operational posts were created to undertake works such as pathway edging, overgrowth clearance, additional cleansing etc. The Neighbourhood Services team delivered significant improvement across the borough. A Keep Wales Tidy survey found that 95.7% (All Wales performance is comparable at 96%) of our streets were clean in 2022-23 compared to 92.85% in 2021-22.



£4.25 million approved to “clean up and green up” Neath Port Talbot.

95.7% of our streets were clean in 2022-23 compared to 92.85% in 2021-22.

In December 2022 a £4.2m programme of additional works to ‘clean-up and green up’ was approved to make improvements to towns, valleys and villages.

The programme included £200,000 to be spent on improvements at public toilets, £445,000 on cleanliness (involving new electric street vacuums and sweepers), £142,000 on improved grass mowing, £800,000 on improved playgrounds and green spaces and £300,000 on improved bus shelters. A further £344,000 for footbridge maintenance, £201,000 on improved waste services (including extra vehicles), just over £1m will go on improved highways (jet patching of rural lanes, extra surfacing in the valleys and pothole machinery) and £150,000 on additional tree management work.

£200,000 was budgeted for improvements at Gnoll Country Park (rebuild/re-design of toilets, electricity hook-up and an adventure park), £50,000 for improved countryside structures and £290,000 for ad-hoc improvements at the Aberavon Seafront (including the sunken gardens), Neath Town Centre (planters and storage), repair/replacement of town and valley street signs, the Talbot Memorial Park and Victoria Gardens bus station.

The money, from additional Welsh Government funding and the council’s approved spending programme, allowed this extensive clean up and green up programme to support one of the earliest priorities of council’s Rainbow Coalition - to improve the “public realm”. This is a significant step forward in achieving the aim of improving the environment for communities and neighbourhoods across Neath Port Talbot, with residents telling us they want safe, clean and attractive neighbourhoods.

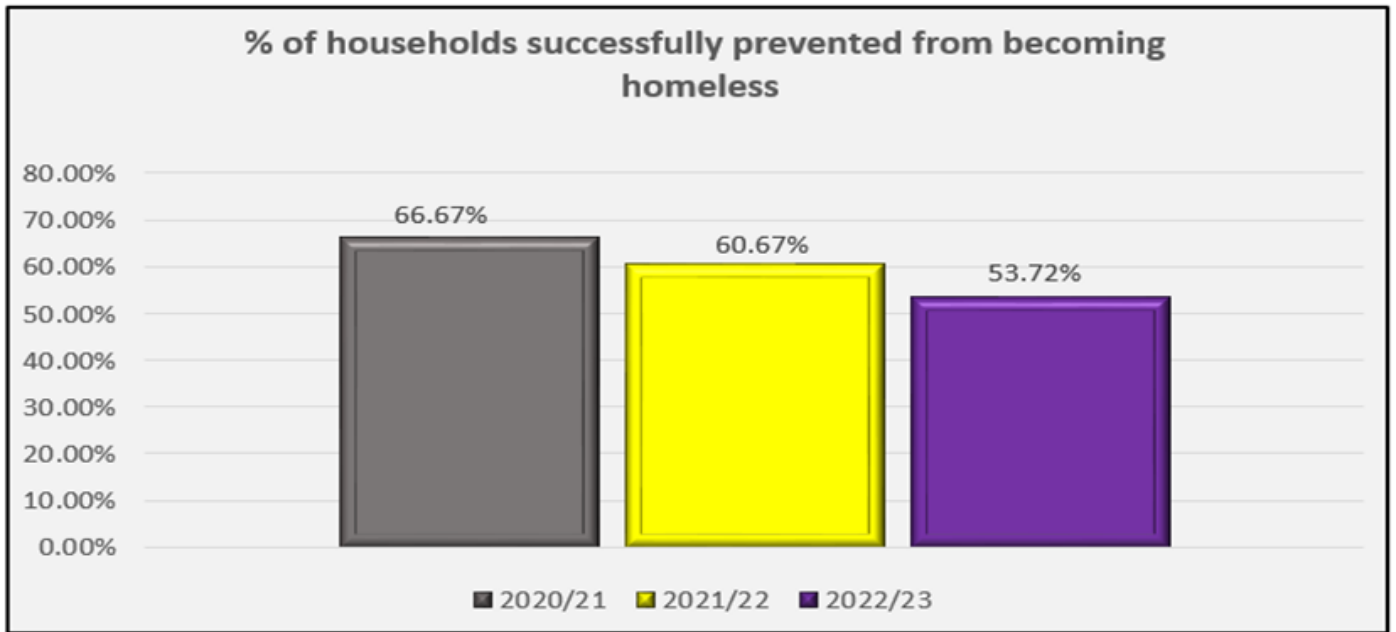
During 2022-23, 12 new operational posts were created to undertake works such as pathway edging, overgrowth clearance, additional cleansing etc, with the Neighbourhood Services team delivered significant improvement across the borough.

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2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

- We strengthened our Housing Strategy function and capacity and appointed an interim Head of Housing and Communities.
- We have worked to strengthening the council's response to homelessness and housing, completed, approved and began to implement the new Rapid Rehousing Plan. Improvements from these changes are expected to be realised from 2023-24.



Percentage of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless for 2022-23 was 53.72%, which was lower than previous year's performance and below our target (both at 60%).

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Plan
Measures:



Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

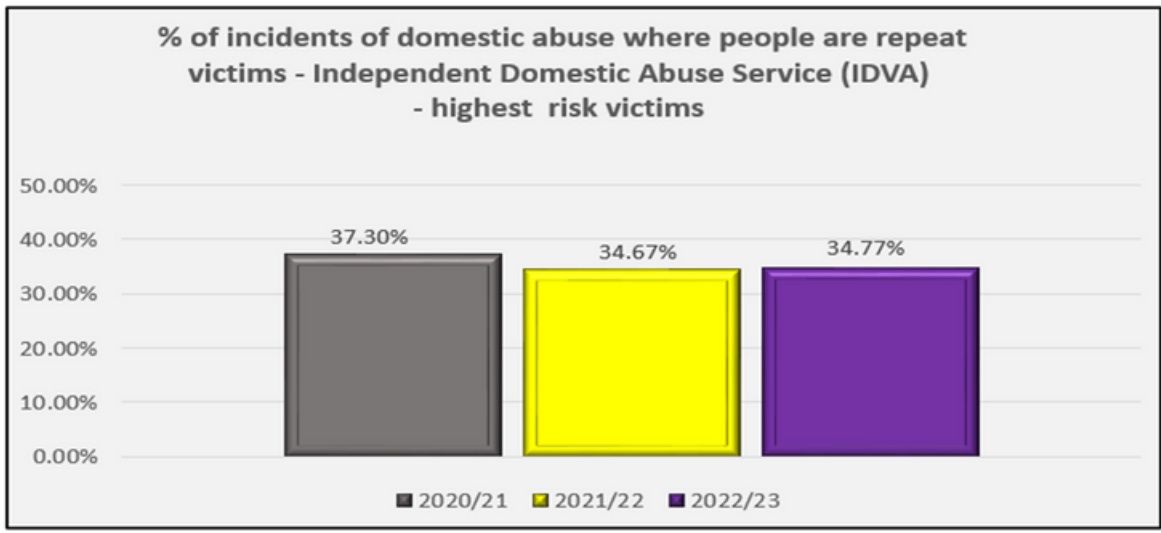
Linking Corporate Plan Measures:

- We continued to work through our Community Safety Partnership to address the problems posed by alcohol, illegal drugs which includes responding to non-fatal overdoses by providing rapid interventions and support, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour. This work included :

We saw a reduction in the number of anti-social behaviour incidents reported across the county borough, down from 3,957 (police data) in 2021-22 to 2,278 in 2022-23. The reduction is mainly due to the Covid breaches data reported in 2021-22. People subject to the anti-social behaviour warning process also reduced from 11 in 2021-22 to 6 in 2022-23.

- ↳ Resetting and agreeing new service priorities for 2023-24;
- ↳ 1,849 children received age-appropriate community safety lessons; domestic abuse, cyber-crime through our Crucial Crew work;
- ↳ The Paws on Patrol Scheme continues to go from strength to strength. There are now 1442 members signed up, 163 new members in 2022-23. This scheme provides a number of benefits such as a 'neighbourhood watch' type of initiative and also brings together the community, both partners and residents, in working towards making our communities a safer place to live;

The percentage of incidents of domestic abuse where the people are repeat victims for 2022-23 is broadly as 2021-22 and better than 2020-21, albeit above our target of 31%. The increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents has risen since the pandemic, which has affected the figures. We will continue to support the rising cases of referrals. Despite the increase in cases being referred, engagement rates with positive outcomes stands at 68%. In addition, we were successful in a funding bid which enabled us to support 120 high risk domestic abuse victims to make their properties safer/more secure and offered holistic support.



- We began to take actions that will implement our commitment to the place making charter and commissioned the preparation of a regeneration strategy for the physical regeneration of the primary towns and some of the secondary and tertiary settlements of NPT. The strategy will focus on creating quality and improved public spaces, strengthening the connections between people and their places and improve the places they live, work and play.

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 2 - All Communities are Thriving & Sustainable

- The implementation of the Renting Homes Act saw many landlords leave the local market due to increased responsibilities on landlords. Affordability in the current climate has also been an issue. However, we have worked closely with Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) and private landlords to increase the number of interim and move on accommodation units. During 2022-23 we leased 39 units of interim accommodation for homeless households, this is an increase on the 27 units we made available in 2021-22. In addition, several new developments are at various stages of planning and construction to deliver additional interim and move on units.
- We have commissioned consultants to prepare a report to highlight ways in which the Council can enhance and develop local spend, while considering different procurement approaches such as the "Preston Model", Circular & Foundational Economy concepts to develop a tailored NPT Procurement Strategy to support local procurement and supply chain development. In addition, we secured funding to employ a Social Value Policy Officer to support the development of activities that support local job creation, upskilling of residents and promotion of employment opportunities to achieve a better quality of life and support economic growth. There are 298 businesses registered with NPT Buy Local.

Linking Corporate Plan Measures:

98% of households had access to the internet with download speeds of at least 30Mbit per second in 2022-23.



In 2022 the ratio of enterprises to local units in NPT increased from 0.79 in 2021 to 0.80 (i.e. 80% of businesses operated from a single premises and 20% from more than one) in 2022. This means that the number businesses operating from more than one unit has fallen slightly.

There were 2,810 micro enterprises in NPT in 2022 compared to 2,750 in 2021. Whilst an increase, the overall proportion of micro businesses compared to all businesses has reduced slightly, by around a half a percent. At 87.8%, micro enterprises make up the majority of all businesses and are an important contributor to the economy. The slight increase in the number of businesses employing 10 is positive, indicating either business growth, or the attraction of larger start-ups or investors to NPT.

More to do:

- One of our 2022-23 actions hadn't progressed as planned. A working group has been established to develop a corporate policy to encourage and support council staff to volunteer, which is supported by NPT CVS with the aim of achieving a standardised approach to volunteer management across services. However, progress during 2022-23 stalled slightly, and as such the work has been rolled forward to 2023-24.



2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

Overall, progress has been made in delivering on activities impacting our environment, culture and heritage, with funding for a number of significant projects being approved as part of the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund. From a total of 18 actions, 15 actions are 'on track' with 3 'just off track'.



People who say they can speak Welsh (age 3 and over) has increased from 22.8% to 23.4%

£2 million investment in historic environmental assets including Margam Castle and Neath Abbey Ironworks



Development of the Heritage Strategy, Culture Strategy and Destination Management Plan



287 hectares and 30 km of council owned land managed for biodiversity, an increase of 126 hectares and 7km

94 Volunteers working on a variety of Neath Port Talbot Council owned nature sites.



Less residual waste ('black bag' waste) generated per person.

65% of people across NPT attend or participate in arts, culture or heritage activities 3 or more times a week

% of people aged 16+ participating in sporting activities 3 or more times a week **has risen to 38%** and adults active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week **has risen to 62%**

28 organisations supported via Third Sector Grants totalling **£528,760**

Shared Prosperity funding secured to deliver **£2.5million Heritage, Culture, Tourism and Events**



884 hectares of council owned land used for green space or local nature reserves, an increase of **64** hectares

A '**bee friendly**' approach to managing our verges and grasslands was adopted by the council



£17,755,359

Secured via UK Government's Levelling Up Fund for the Vale of Neath Heritage Corridor Visitor Attraction.

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

As people actively conserve, improve and enjoy our stunning natural environment, treasure the Welsh language and are actively engaged with the rich sporting, cultural and industrial heritage of the area, we asked:

Why is this important?

Heritage is integral to our culture, people's sense of identity and sense of belonging which in turn impacts on people's health, wellbeing and social inclusion. Heritage and culture also contributes to the economy, supporting paid employment, helping to attract inward investment and generating value through voluntary action – part of our wider place shaping agenda. The Welsh language is a very important part of our heritage and culture. We support the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 ambition to achieve a million people able to enjoy speaking Welsh by 2050. The importance of protecting our natural environment has, of course, never been so prominent.

The Welsh Government officially declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and a Nature Emergency in 2021, recognising the significance of these two interrelated challenges and the urgency in tackling them. The natural environment is vital to our communities and provides us with all our basic needs. It gives us all a better quality of life and opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and Wales' natural beauty and heritage, giving people the choice to become more physically active. People come from far and wide to experience our environment and it is intrinsically linked with Welsh culture and language. While the area has many strengths, it also experiences relatively high levels of poverty, deprivation, ill-health and disability.

There is a strong focus on encouraging people of all ages and from all backgrounds to adopt active lifestyles to improve physical and emotional wellbeing. There is also a need to grow more quality jobs in the local leisure and tourism industry and to continue the long tradition of fostering local talent to achieve success as elite athletes and to perform on the world stage.

Summary Progress during 2022-23

Overall we, are on track in delivering this well-being objective for 2022-2023. Good progress has been made in delivering on activities impacting our environment, culture and heritage, with funding for a number of significant projects being approved as part of the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund.

During 2022-2023 we saw the initial development stages and consultations for our key culture and heritage strategies and destination management plan. These documents will provide a blue-print for the future on how we want to develop and nurture our county to celebrate our culture and heritage and will allow us to apply for funding, attract investment and resources.

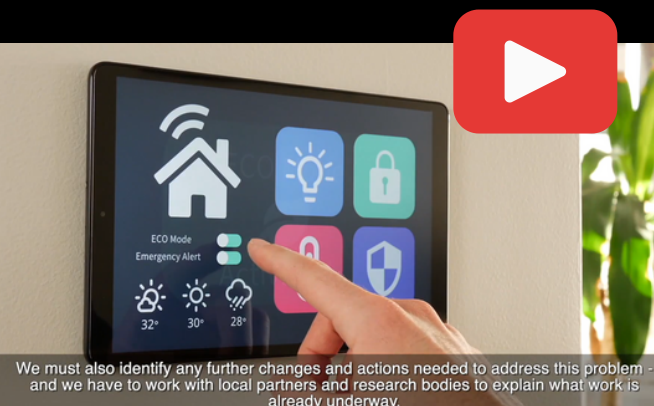
Other key achievements during the year included the approval of Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) to initiate the Heritage, Culture and Tourism Fund, which can be accessed by public, private and voluntary sector partners, to deliver the priority heritage, culture and tourism projects and initiatives across the county. We have also seen an increase in visitor numbers to the borough in the last two years and numbers are now just below pre-pandemic levels with a 1.9% increase on pre-pandemic levels of staying visitors.

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

In September 2022, the council declared a climate emergency and called upon the UK Government to do the same. In doing so, we acknowledged the effects of climate change that can already be seen throughout the world. With more intense and frequent hurricanes and wildfires, severe flash flooding and sobering droughts. Record breaking heatwaves in July 2022 added additional pressure on local residents and devastating storms which have resulted in an enhanced regional focus on sea defence works.

In declaring the climate change emergency we will look to articulate further the wider actions we need to take to ensure Neath Port Talbot becomes carbon neutral by 2030. These actions will be included within the review of our Corporate Plan for 2024 onwards.



The council acknowledged the effects of climate change can already be seen throughout the world. The doorstep effect of climate change are detrimental to the residents of Neath Port Talbot and its time we demand change. Not just for our generation but for our children and grandchildren and all those who follow. The clock is ticking on the time for fossil fuels so let us not be those fools who rest on the inactions of others but rather chart and enhance a renewable course for Neath Port Talbot.

At the start of 2023 the new leisure complex opened in the heart of Neath Town Centre. Featuring a six-lane 25m swimming pool with associated learner pool, two group exercise studios, a 100-station gym, a health suite, retail floor space, child care facilities a café and a modern library. The library hosts 16 public computers, Wi-Fi throughout including Wi-Fi printing, a dedicated children's library, a family history research area and local studies collection, two meeting rooms and self-service kiosks. The build is designed to have a major beneficial impact on the town centre, increasing sustainability, vitality and footfall and providing a significant boost for health and wellbeing.

Physical activity related measures are showing positive results comparing to the rest of Wales and in relation to Welsh language, more people say they can speak Welsh. Further work will take place this year on the actions where we are 'just off track'. In the main these actions are to promote the work done by local groups, making it easier for others to appreciate, understand and enjoy our local environment, heritage and culture and around climate change awareness and our action planning for decarbonisation.

Whilst the 64% target for waste reused, recycled or composted has been achieved for 2022-23, performance of 64.73% is lower than the previous year. A Waste Strategy action plan was adopted in April 2023 with the aim of achieving the 70% recycling target by 2024/25.

Tudalen 306

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

Progress on our 2022- 2023 Corporate Plan Actions and Measures:

Of the 18 key actions we had detailed in the Corporate Plan to deliver during 2022-2023, we were 'on track' with 15 and 3 were 'just off' track. Our Corporate Plan measures have been linked to the relevant actions below:

- The council's Third Sector Grant fund supported 28 organisations during 2022-2023 totalling £528,760. Many of the activities being run by voluntary organisations and community groups carried on with activities that were implemented during the pandemic. During the year the window for 2023-2024 funding opened with an unprecedented amount of applications being received, the total amount approved for funding was £692,610, which will support 43 organisations during the forthcoming financial year (2023-2024).
- We were proud to host the Mayor's Citizens Awards in Margam Orangerie, celebrating the success of the work of volunteers and community groups, and the achievements of those making a difference across NPT. Some of the winners of those awards included:
 - The South Wales Miners Museum – winner of the Environment & Heritage Award
 - Carl Bradley's 'Boot Room' – winner of the Community Champion's award
 - Denise Francis & Afan Arts – winners of the Performing Arts Award
 - Jeremy Dummer, Cwrt Herbert Colts u15 Football Team – winner of the Volunteer of the Year award
- Over the course of the year, volunteer numbers increased to 94 working on a variety of council owned nature sites across Neath Port Talbot through the Connecting GI and Lost Peatlands project and projects at Craig Gwaldys Country Park. The Lost Peatlands project has been running outdoor learning sessions enabling local children to learn about and experience their local environment, learn about peatlands and the important wildlife in the area. In addition, family outdoor health and wellbeing sessions have been provided encouraging local families to get out into their environment and to encourage confidence in natural play. Projects at Craig Gwaldys have also supported the local schools to use the Park for outdoor learning.
- The council's large workforce plays a huge part in being ambassadors for the county borough contributing to the conservation and enjoyment of our local environment, heritage and culture. As part of workforce development and staff induction our training and development team have produced a training booklet and eLearning package.



Tudalen 307

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

- A Welsh Language Promotion Strategy was developed (approved July 2023). Through the strategy, our work in schools and other key areas of work this figure should positively increase year on year. The strategy, which has been prepared following a county wide consultation and close working with partner organisations, will further develop three key strategic themes of increasing the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of Welsh and creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context.

The number of people who say they can speak Welsh (age 3 and over) in Neath Port Talbot has increased from 22.8% (31,400 people) to 23.4% (32,300) with 12% of people saying they speak Welsh daily increasing from 10.1%.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:

- To ensure our work and development of the county borough takes into account our future generations we have a duty to carry out impact assessments when undertaking policy and service change. During 2022-2023, 164 officers and 46 Cabinet and Scrutiny members undertook training.
- We provided opportunities for children, young people and citizens to learn about their local environment, heritage and culture which included:
 - ↳ 31 school sessions and 31 community outreach sessions have been delivered providing opportunities to learn more about the history and heritage of the borough including object handling sessions and site visits / tours for adults and children (including talks, workshops, library & club sessions). The school sessions have been informed by the NPT conceptual model for the curriculum which has the ‘four purposes’ at the centre and which will require teachers to teach differently; it gives greater flexibility to schools in designing their curriculum.
 - ↳ 4 meetings of NPT Heritage Network have been held in addition to local history society’s forums. We have been proud to launch NPT’s Young Archaeologists’ Club (children aged 8-16) which began in February with 13 sessions taking place to date, including organised trips and an archaeological excavation with the Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust.
- We continue to drive forward the implementation of the council’s Biodiversity Plan - Nature-Wise training has been provided for Margam Park staff and engineers, along with members training on biodiversity. A ‘bee friendly’ approach to managing our verges and grasslands was adopted by the council and has allowed for an increase in wildflower species and insects such as bees which pollinate them in support of the council’s Biodiversity Duty Plan and the NPT Nature Recovery Action Plan. The bee-friendly scheme continues to deliver key outcomes for the Plan, with additional sites being added on an ongoing basis.

We increased the area of council owned land (or within council control) used as green space, local nature reserves from 740 hectares in 2021-22 to 884 hectares in 2022-23.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

- The NPT State of Nature report has been published and is available [online](#). The NPT Nature Partnership continues to meet every 2 months with the NPT4Nature sub-group, which was established early 2022, meeting quarterly to engage community groups with opportunities to access expertise and discuss ideas.

Linking Corporate Plan Measure:

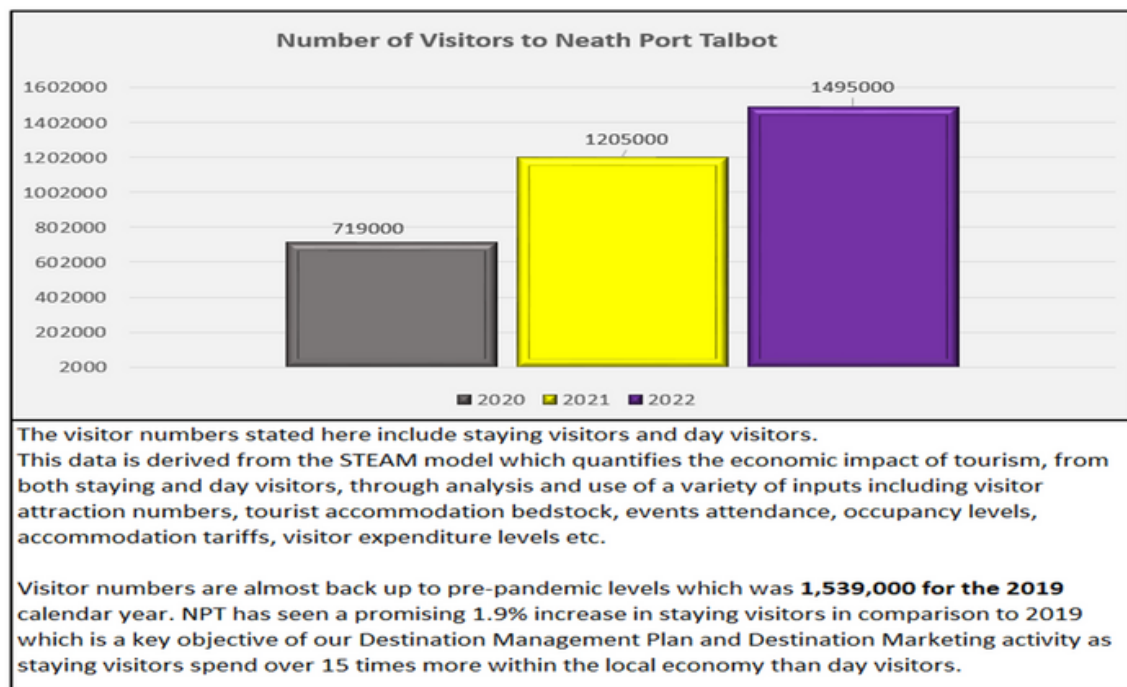
We increased the extent of council owned land (or within council control) that is protected through designation and/or is subject to appropriate management for biodiversity conservation as set out in an approved management plan from 160.8hectares and 23.12Km in 2021-22 to 287 hectares and 30Km in 2022-23.

- Strategic development has progressed well to prepare the culture strategy, heritage strategy and destination management plan – which was approved by Cabinet in September 2023. The strategies are structured around a set of strategic themes and supported by a prioritised action plan of projects and initiatives which support the overall aims. The strategic direction is to create a Neath Port Talbot where everyone has an equal chance to participate in the rich culture of the borough; be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous with a sense of belonging, citizenship and place. In addition, we are working in partnership with Natural Resources Wales to devise the Afan Forest Park masterplan which will guide investment in visitor infrastructure across the destination over the coming years.

2022-23 National Survey for Wales data shows that 65% of people surveyed in Neath Port Talbot attended or participated in arts, culture or heritage activities 3 or more times a week. This places NPT joint 9th of 22 councils across Wales.

Linking Corporate Plan Measure:

Visitor numbers have increased significantly over the last two years and are now only slightly below pre-pandemic levels.



- We were on track in delivering our planned programme of projects and service changes to improve access to local sport, leisure, culture and heritage; deliver planned projects to conserve our local environment,
- Preparatory work continued following the decision to bring leisure services back under the direct management of the council, including the set-up of the project board.

Tudalen 309

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

- We continued to seek external funding opportunities to conserve and enhance the local environment, culture and heritage which included:

- ↳ Grant funded projects delivered include Lost Peatlands Project – National Lottery Heritage Fund, Connecting Green Infrastructure Project – Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing Fund (WG/EU), various nature projects including Stepping Stones – Welsh Government’s Local Places 4 Nature, Craig Gwladus – National Lottery Heritage Fund; National Nature Service case study, Coastal Communities Capacity funded by Welsh Government. Further funding has been secured from WG/NLHF for green infrastructure.
- ↳ £17.7 million secured via the UK Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to deliver the Vale of Neath Heritage Corridor Visitor Attractor Project.
- ↳ Shared Prosperity funding secured to deliver £2.5million Heritage, Culture, Tourism and Events Fund between 2023 and 2025. Eligible for public, private and voluntary sectors to apply.
- ↳ £2 million has been invested in historic environmental assets including Margam Castle, Neath Abbey Iron Works, our Registered Parks and Gardens namely Jersey Park and Talbot Park.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:

Total value of funding secured to enhance the quality of the visitor experience



Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measures:

2022-23 National Survey for Wales data shows that 62% of adults surveyed in Neath Port Talbot were active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week. This is an increase on the previous year and places NPT 6th across Wales.

2022-23 National Survey for Wales data shows that 38% of people (16+) surveyed in Neath Port Talbot participated in sporting activities 3 or more times a week. This is an increase on the previous year of 34% and places NPT joint 12th across Wales.

School Sport Survey, a national survey of pupils from years 3 to 11, found that 46% (2021-22 data) of pupils were participating in sport three or more times a week (hooked on sport) This is above the Welsh average of 39.5% and the highest rate of the 22 Welsh councils.

Up to date information relating to % students (aged 16-19) participating in at least three occasions of sport per week is not available.

The extent of council owned land (or land in council control) that is designated or meets the criteria for designation as a Site of Importance for Conservation (SINCs) has increased to 785ha from 782ha in 2021-2022.



2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations



- We started work to set a new strategic direction for leisure and recreation as part of the culture strategy.
- We continued to strengthen planning and partnership arrangements and new partnerships are being developed so that greater weight is given to conserving and improving the local environment, heritage and culture. Also, the NPT Destination Management Plan process has provided additional consultation to inform the Afan Forest Park Masterplan which is being produced in partnership with NRW (Natural Resources Wales).

£2m invested in protecting historic environment assets in 2022-23

Linking Corporate Plan Measure:

The percentage of designated historic environment assets that are in stable or improved conditions has improved from 64% in 2021-22 to 65% (259 of 399) in 2022-23.

More to do:

There were three actions assessed as 'just off' track for 2022-23, these were:

- Work is well underway in delivering a Strategic Framework for Communications and Marketing which will promote the work done by local groups, making it easier for others to appreciate, understand and enjoy our local environment, heritage.
- More work to do to increase the engagement of the workforce and citizens in the climate change agenda, however a variety of awareness events relating to the lost Peatlands project and the GI project include climate change messages.
- Work is ongoing to develop the council's Net zero 2030 Strategy & Action Plan (Costed Plan) which will support the refreshed DARE (Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy) Strategy. The DARE strategy is scheduled to be updated within the second quarter of 2023 with the following improvement programmes currently being developed and or updated:

↳ Solar PV Programme

↳ 21st Century Schools programme – net zero new build programme

↳ Energy and Carbon Management Engagement Exercise – operational buildings

↳ Fleet – Electric transition programme

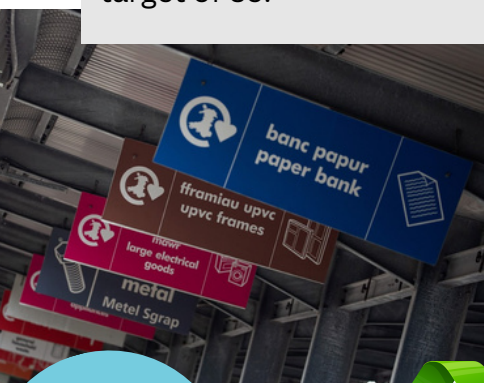
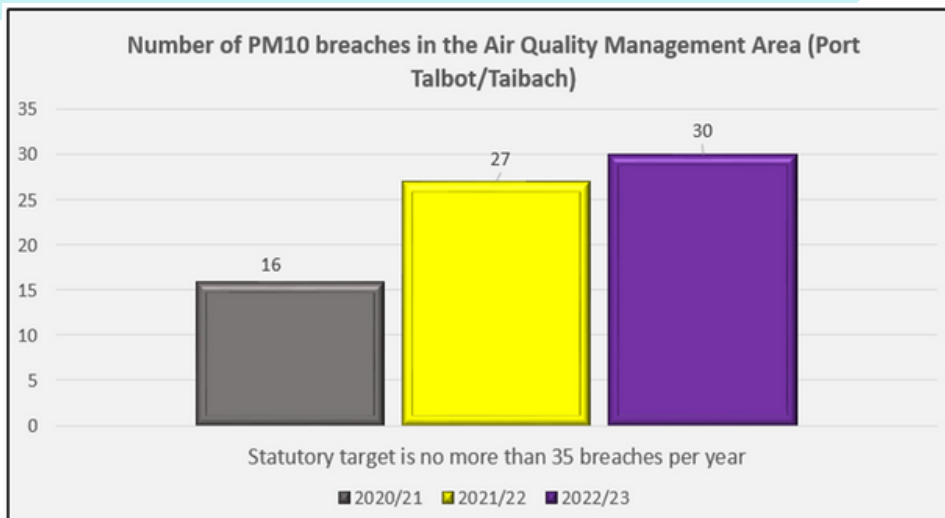
2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 3 - Our Local Environment, Culture & Heritage Can Be Enjoyed By Future Generations

Linking Corporate Plan Measure:



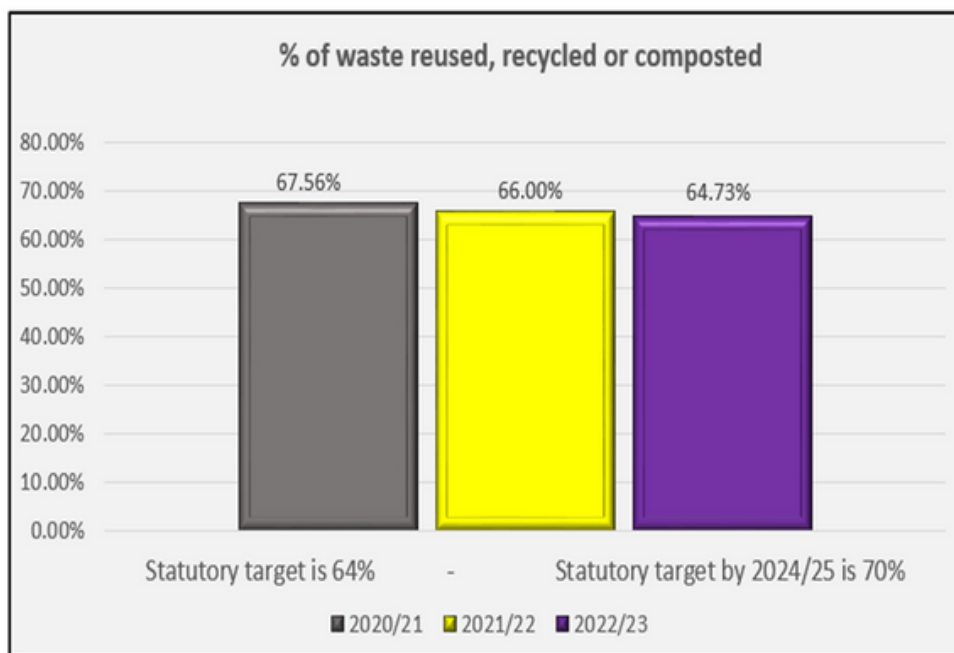
Number of PM10 breaches in the Air Quality Management Area (Port Talbot / Taibach) has slightly increased from 27 to 30 over the last 12 months, however this remains within the statutory target of 35.



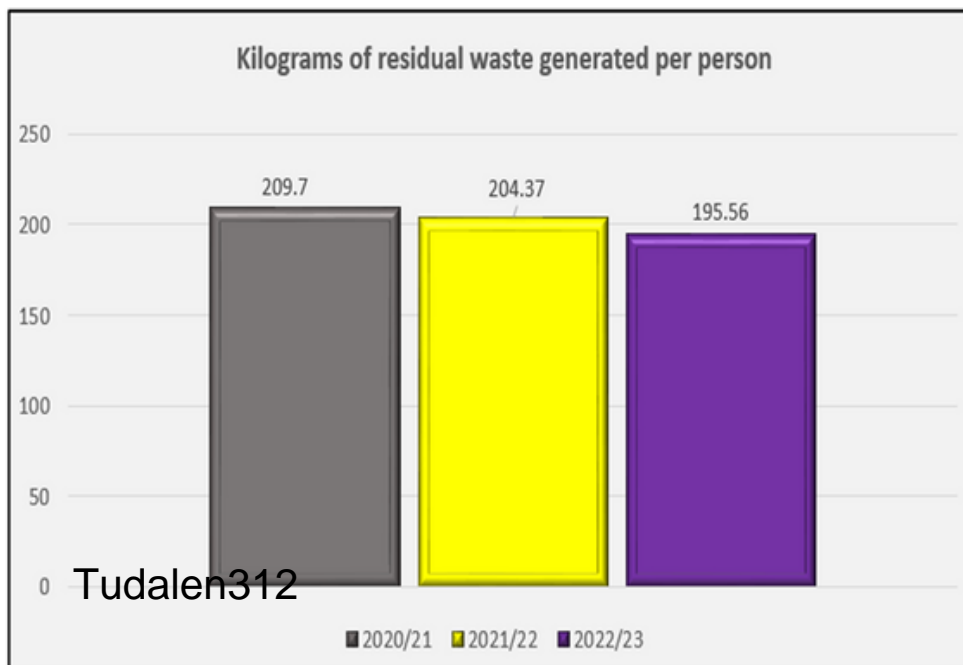
Linking Corporate Plan Measure:



Whilst the 64% target for waste reused, recycled or composted has been achieved for 2022-23, performance of 64.73% is lower than the previous year. A Waste Strategy action plan was adopted in April 2023 with the aim of achieving the 70% recycling target by 2024-25.



The amount of residual waste generated per person continues to decrease, for 2022-2023 the amount is currently weighted at 195.56 kilograms.



Tudalen 312

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

We were on track in delivering what we had planned to do for 2022-23 for this well-being objective. Significant progress has been achieved to deliver on the jobs and skills agenda over the last 12 months. Of the 22 key actions we had planned to deliver during the year, we were on track with 21 of the actions with one 'off track'.

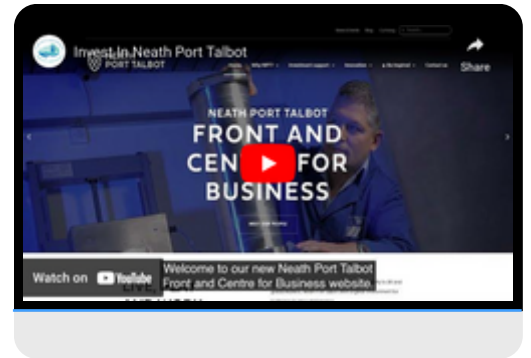
£32,660,854

Secured via UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund and Multiply programme.



309 jobs were created or safeguarded as a result of financial support by the local authority

Assisted **233** business start-up enquiries



Launched the 'Invest in NPT' website to place business opportunities in NPT front and centre in Wales

Supported over **800** individuals into training, work experience or employment



Increased council apprenticeships from **78 to 110**



Brought **97** long term problematic properties back into use

515 Business enquires resulting in advice, information or financial support being given to existing companies

Worked with local employers to deliver **1,867** training weeks for **apprenticeship, traineeships & work experience** with companies



Opened in Aberafan Shopping centre providing employment support, advice and training

Identified **£576,000** worth of council staff accommodation savings

We have accessed £47.7m from the UK Government City Deal grant for the Supporting Innovation & Low Carbon Growth Programme & £15m for the Homes as Power Stations Programme.



Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

Within our Corporate Plan for 2022-2027 we set out how we plan to work with our partners to create the conditions for more secure, well paid and green work in the area and support local people into those jobs, we asked:

Why is this important?

The world of work is changing rapidly, disrupted by the explosion in digital technology advances and now by the response to the climate emergency; Covid-19 has caused an economic shock across the economy.

Businesses have been affected in very different ways; NPT has a distinctive industrial base, which includes the UK's largest steel producer and a wide range of SME manufacturers; NPT has a number of strategic employment sites and there are many opportunities for economic growth including new green jobs as industry and society decarbonises; the area is well served by rail, road and the deep water harbour is a strategic asset; The local economy is reliant to a large extent on the activities of a small number of key industries; 88% of local businesses employ less than ten employees; Start-up rates and business survival rates are on a par with the Welsh average; There are significant numbers of people commuting into the county borough – possibly for the high quality of jobs; there are also significant number of people community out of the county borough for jobs of more modest value;

Summary of Progress during 2022-23

Significant progress has been achieved to deliver on the jobs and skills agenda over the last 12 months. Overall we, are on track in delivering this well-being objective for 2022-2023.

As part of our continued commitment to the regeneration of our valley communities work on the £250m Welsh and UK Government funded Global Centre of Rail Excellence (GCRE) continued to progress during the year.

The 550 hectare facility, situated on the former Nant Helen opencast site and Onllwyn Washery in Neath Port Talbot, stretches into neighbouring Powys and will include two test loops, one being a 6.9km electrified high speed rolling stock track with a maximum speed of 177km/h and the other a 4km 65km/h test track. Other facilities at the site will include a dual-platform test environment, rolling stock storage and maintenance facilities, operations and control offices, staff accommodation and connections to the nearby main line.

This transformational project will create more quality jobs and is likely to be a catalyst for further new opportunities and investment into our communities. It will put this part of Wales on the map as the go-to country for UK and international train manufacturers, network operators, the wider industry and academics to research, test and develop the latest technologies in green transport for the global rail industry.

On the opposite side of the county borough, again placed in one of our valley communities already famous for its mountain bike trails, the Afan Valley will become home to the Wildfox Adventure Resort. The incredible investment plans for a £250m resort will include a 50-bed hotel, spa, restaurant, viewing area, 570 lodges and biking and walking trails.

It will be the first of a series of new Wildfox resorts across the UK and when completed, the resort could create up to 1,000 jobs in addition to the large number of jobs proposed during the construction phase.

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

The 132 acres of land at Pen y Bryn, close to Croeserw and Cymmer will offer significant economic benefits to the area and would have no unacceptable impact on visual amenity and the character of the area as a whole, highway and pedestrian safety, residential amenity, pollution and biodiversity.

In addition to the above, our successes continued during 2022-23 some of which include continued progress with our City Deal projects; our employability programmes came together and supported 2,839 and opened The Opportunity Hub in Aberafan Shopping centre providing employment support, advice and training.

309 jobs were created and or safeguarded as a result of financial support by the local authority; we increased council apprenticeships from 78 to 110; we continued to support local businesses and business start-ups; brought 97 long term problematic properties back into use and we also secured funding of £1.25 Million from Welsh Government to further progress work to provide an Integrated Transport Hub at Neath Railway Station.

The one action which was 'off track' for 2022-23 related to working in partnership with Transport for Wales to explore the feasibility of introducing a pilot of the Fflecsi bus service in the upper Afan valley. This is currently on hold due to funding.

Progress on our 2022- 2023 Corporate Plan Actions and Measures:

Of the 22 key actions we had detailed in the Corporate Plan to deliver during 2022-2023, we were on track with 21 and 1 was 'off track'.

Our Corporate Plan measures have been linked to the relevant actions below.

- We continued to support and work with developers to deliver the Global Centre of Rail Excellence and Wildfox Resort.
- We reviewed our training offer to help people adjust to the changing labour market and delivered a significant range of training support and opportunities. Individuals were also supported to develop CV's and prepare for job interviews. Some of the training opportunities included:

↳ Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus supported 132 people onto training;

↳ Workways+ arranged 143 training places on courses;

↳ Our Economic Development team worked with employers to support individuals to complete 1,867 training weeks for apprenticeship, traineeships and work experience;

↳ Worked closely with Ukrainian people that have been housed in NPT and we have provided training sessions to make links and build relationships.

↳ Skills and Training Unit was awarded Jobs Growth Wales+ contract. 124 learners commenced on programme (including 34 learners transferring from Traineeships). 79% (90) of these learners progressed into employment/further learning by 31st March 23;

↳ Adult Learning are working in partnership with support services to upskill individuals in preparation for employment and deliver our employability programme, currently working with 8 primary schools, engaging 58 parents /families.

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

- The Learning and Training Development Team delivered and/or supported a range of training courses and 20,644 attendees' completed courses during 2022-23. Some outcomes are listed below.

↳ We continued to develop clear pathways for local people interested in working in the council and during 2022-23 there were 110 council employees on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes - an increase on the previous year figure of 78 with 22 employees achieving their apprenticeships in the year. We also supported 17 work experience council placements for pupils across a range of services and 77 employees achieved leadership and management qualifications. Further opportunities, skills and training were also provided through the employability schemes.

↳ Developed a new programme to encourage secondary and tertiary education leavers to work in the Health & Social Care Sector (H&SC) and encourage greater knowledge and understanding of the roles in social care. The initial phase was a pilot of H&SC cohorts in 4 secondary schools in NPT and 2 tertiary colleges (Gower / NPTC Group). The programme includes offering experiential opportunities for students to understand what it is like to have dementia, poor eyesight or severe hearing problems. Also included, a tour of the Dementia Bus, sight and hearing inhibitors and materials to support lessons. A total of 223 staff and pupils completed the experience. During 2022-23, 86 Health and Social Care qualifications were completed across the council. We also supported 47 social work degree student places and 31 social work qualifications were completed.

- Our NPT Employability programmes came together and created an inclusive triage referral process where external agencies could refer into a single point of contact. We ensured we provided a personalised employment support service that meets the needs of both the work ready participant and those with complex barriers preventing them from entering the job market.
- NPT Employability supported 2,839 referrals during 2022-23 and supported 848 people, aged 16+ to gain training, volunteering, work experience, sustainable employment or support those who are experiencing 'in-work poverty'. The referrals included Workways+, CFW, CFW+, Salvation Army, Prime Cymru, Careers/Working Wales, Swansea Working, Employability Bridgend, our Youth Service, Cyfle Cymru to name but a few.
- Also, as part of NPT Employability programme, a Hub opened in December 2022 at Aberafan Shopping Centre funded by Communities for Work Plus. This Hub offers residents support with employment, volunteering and training. Known as the "Opportunity Hub" where we also provide a Warm Hub Space, we are able to bring the teams together to organise mini recruitments fayres in Construction, Health and Social Care and Security.
- We worked with local employers, schools and colleges to increase the number of quality apprenticeship opportunities and ensure these opportunities are seen as attractive to those seeking work. Our Economic Development team worked with local employers to support individuals to complete 1,867 training weeks for apprenticeship, traineeships and work experience. A number of apprenticeship schemes were supported through the employability schemes the Skills and Training Unit within the Education Directorate and our Corporate Learning, Training and Development Team.

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

In supporting our commitment to decarbonisation, in March 2023, we received confirmation that our **Celtic Freeport bid was successful**. This opportunity will be a catalyst to put us at the forefront of the world's green energy revolution. Our residents will soon be working in the industry of the future, learning the skills for securing green, well paid jobs. The Celtic Freeport consortium comprises of Associated British Ports (ABP), Neath Port Talbot Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and the Port of Milford Haven.

**Accelerating Wales'
Green Economy**



The bid's strategically located tax and customs sites span almost 250 hectares in Pembrokeshire and Neath Port Talbot and **will deliver an accelerated pathway for Wales' net zero economy generating over 16,000 new, green jobs and skill opportunities for future generations**. From welders to data scientists, these will be well paid, long-term roles underpinned by fair working practices and inclusive workplaces.

“This great news is the first step towards a much brighter future here in our county borough.

I look forward to working with our partners to make sure local people and businesses have the best possible benefit from what's now in front of us.”

Karen Jones, Chief Executive of Neath Port Talbot Council



Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

- Our Economic Development and Education officers across the employability teams completed an audit to identify the future work requirement of local employers and any shortfalls in the local learning provision. The findings will inform the Employability and Skills Strategy for NPT which is being developed with key partners, both internal and external, to set out a long-term Employment and Skills Plan for NPT.
- We strengthened the council's Business Support team to help local businesses recruit skilled people and to help local learning providers. Through the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Anchor project the team has created 7 new posts and 4 existing posts have been enhanced to take on additional responsibilities.
- The Neath Port Talbot Local Investment Plan was developed and consulted on with internal and external stakeholders and informed the Regional Investment Plan for the Shared Prosperity Fund. Cabinet agreed the Regional Investment Plan on the 28th July 2022, which was subsequently approved by UK Government in December 2022:
 - ↳ Five strategic anchor projects were approved to deliver key priorities of the Investment Plan addressing the challenges and opportunities of the county borough: 1.Place, 2.Valleys & Villages, 3.Sustainable Communities, 4.Enhanced Business Support for Growth & 5. Innovation, Employability
 - ↳ Five UKSPG grant schemes were developed to address the challenge and opportunities identified in the Investment Plan, not duplicating the anchor projects:1.Heritage, Culture, Tourism and Events Fund, 2. Sustainable Communities Growth Fund, 3. Valleys & Villages Prosperity Fund, 4. Business Investment Grants & 5. Third Sector Growth Fund
- We established the mechanisms to implement the actions set out in the Local Economic Development Plan.
- We launched the 'Invest in NPT' website to place business opportunities in NPT front and centre in Wales in February 2023 which has seen an increase in users.
- We are on track in our work to develop new green jobs locally and regionally via NPT led City Deal projects such as Homes as Power Stations and Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth. We are also looking at opportunities from the emerging "green economy" and key projects such as Freeports and Celtic Sea (FLOW). Regionally, we have secured £56,250, alongside match of £75,000, to deliver a regional skills project with Microgeneration Certificate Scheme (MCS) certifiable green skills provision.
- We are on track with our work to target businesses seeking to grow or expand within the decarbonisation and renewable energy sectors and encourage them to focus their growth plans within the county borough. This work included:
 - A brief for the NPT Clean Growth Hub Phase 2 (part of the SPF Business Anchor project) planned to be completed by the end of June 23.
 - The Neath Port Talbot led City Deal funded Homes as Power Stations Project Manager has commissioned a supply chain mapping exercise to map out the gaps in the renewable technology for housing supply chain.

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

- The Homes as Power Stations Project Manager will launch the regional Supply Chain Fund to support businesses to diversify to form part of the renewable technology in housing supply chain.
- A number of projects have been delivered throughout our main town centres to aid recovery. Some of this work includes bringing back empty premises to use for both commercial and private accommodation (97 long term problematic private properties were brought back into use during 2022-23) and larger town regeneration projects such as the Plaza Cinema and the new leisure centre, library and retail development in Neath. As part of the Shared Prosperity Fund, we have launched the Valleys and Villages Prosperity Grant initiative, which will allow us to fund projects previously covered by the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Programme, enabling us to target and prioritise our outlying valley communities.
- Our Procurement team commissioned consultants to help develop a tailored NPT Procurement Strategy which will help enhance and develop local spend and further supporting employment of local people and development of local businesses.

**Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measure:**

During 2022-23, 22 tenders were awarded to SME (small medium enterprise) and local operators. 131 were issued during 2021- 22 which is not comparable as it included numbers from the passenger transport/home to school figures and 14 were issued during 2020-21. Figures though are increased compared to previous years and work continues to further promote arrangements in this area.

- We strengthened engagement with local businesses and as part of the delivery for the Shared Prosperity Fund Business Anchor project, a series of community events are being planned for valley and town centre locations to promote business support services and provide hands-on advice to new and existing businesses across NPT. Engagement work continued with Associated British Ports; the offshore company RWE (Rheienisch Westfalische Elektrizitatswerk); Wildfox and GCRE (Global Centre of Rail Excellence) to discuss ways in which we can support local sourcing; supply chain development and encourage local employment and training, i.e. a series of Meet the Buyer events will be delivered in 2023.
- We continued to support local businesses and supported them in their recovery. During 2022-23, the UK Government announced the Shared Prosperity Fund support for local authorities. Work started on developing a new project to support businesses. Alongside this development work, business services team continued to deliver its internal funding provision which supported 65 businesses investment projects with the potential to create/safeguard over 300 jobs and generate more than £1.1m of private sector investment to support the local economy.
- The Economic Development team recorded 515 business enquires resulting in advice, information or financial support being given to existing companies (this included supporting both social enterprises and micro businesses), assisted 233 business start-up enquiries and 309 jobs were created and or safeguarded as a result of financial support by the local authority.

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

- We completed our work to plan to target business support for areas where there is the greatest economic inactivity. A series of events are now planned for our rural and town centre communities. Branded 'Let's Talk Business' events will provide hands-on advice to new and existing businesses throughout the county borough.
- Building on the success of the previous Community Renewal Fund (CRF) project which established a Manufacturing/ Engineering Business Forum, further work is now planned as part of the delivery of the SPF Business Anchor project. This involves the continuation of the Business Forum as a mechanism for businesses to collaborate and share information, to setting up sub-groups to discuss key issues around ICT; Decarbonisation; Skills & Training and Funding. This will provide essential business intelligence to help inform the development of future economic development strategies and policies and shape further funding bids.
- We continued to develop plans to provide an Integrated Transport Hub at Neath Railway Station during 2022-23 and we have secured funding of £ 1.25 Million from Welsh Government for 2023 – 2025 to further progress this work.
- We continued to support community transport car schemes to expand electric vehicle (EV) community cars with schemes in Cymmer, Glynneath and the Amman Valley. The community transport scheme is continuing to grow. The community transport service provides an enormous social and economic benefit to our communities. Some of this work includes:
 - ↳ An Electric Vehicle charge point is now installed and working at Cymmer Swimming pool and a zero emission electric vehicle is now in service;
 - ↳ A charge point was purchased for location at Glynneath Training Centre and installed in June;
 - ↳ Amman Valley schemes - have taken delivery of an electric car which will be used for the Community Car Club i.e. volunteer drivers can use a car to collect vulnerable passengers or if someone does not have a car they can use the car from the car club.

We have made 16,000 square foot of high quality and light industrial space available at our technology centre of which 26.5% has been occupied.

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Plan
Measure:



2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

Linking
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Plan
Measure:

No data is currently available for the percentage of people aged 16-24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), however the percentage of year 11 leavers not in education, training or employment (NEET) improved from 2.4% to 2.2% (2022 data), our 2nd lowest figure ever, the percentage of 16-18 year old who were NEET increased slightly from 3.6% to 4.3% and the percentage of young people in employment (16-24) significantly improved from 50.6% in 2021 to 65.8% in 2022.

% of working age adults qualified to level 3 or higher for 2022 is 62.9% which is lower than the All Wales figure of 66.8%. Our NPT figure is higher than the previous years figure of 56.5%, however, the data is not comparable to previous years due to the changes to the qualification questions in the Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey.

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Measure:

% of working adults with no qualifications for 2022 is 8.6%, which is just above All Wales figure of 8.3%. For the same reason above, previous years data is non comparable, however the 2021 figure for NPT was 10.8%.

Data for 2022-23 for the number of work based learning programmes in Neath Port Talbot is not available yet. However the 2021-22 academic year data reports 2,685 programmes.

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Measure:

Across the county borough the percentage of people who are economically inactive has risen from 25.1% (21,600) people in 2020/21 to 26.63% (22,900 people) in 2022/23, which has been impacted by the pandemic and the economic climate. The council has worked hard during 2022-23 through its employability programmes to positively impact these figures. All Wales levels have also seen an increase from 23.5% to 24.5%.

Across the county borough the percentage and number of workless households has risen from 19.8% (8,800) in 2020/21 to 22.7% (10,000) in 2022, which has been impacted by the pandemic and the economic climate. All Wales levels have reduced slightly from 17% to 16.6%.

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Measure:

Latest Gross Value Added data published by Stats Wales is for 2021 which shows that the GVA per head in £ in Neath Port Talbot has risen from 16,082 in 2020 to 17,713 (provisional data) in 2021.

County wide data for 2022 relating to new business start-ups, businesses ceasing trading and business survival rates is not available yet. We currently don't hold data on the percentage of businesses that are social businesses.

Linking
Corporate
Plan
Measures:

2022-2023 Reflection

Well-being Objective 4 - Jobs & Skills

- As part of the City Deal, we launched the Waterfront Property Development Fund, which will provide the funding necessary to bridge that gap between value and cost to address the shortage of new quality business space within the borough, particularly for our SME's and start-up businesses. In addition, we have launched our 'Place' Anchor Project as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), whereby the council has taken the initiative to construct new starter units ourselves for our valleys communities. We plan to construct units at Glyncorrwg, Cwmwgors and Nant y Cafn by 2025. We are also in the preliminary stages of a proposal to deliver several new workshops at our Sandfields Business Centre site.

In addition to the above, and linked to the corporate measure related to total operational costs of assets of the council, we have identified £576,000 worth of council staff accommodation savings that will be taken out of the budget over 3 years 2023-24 to 2025-26.

Linking
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Plan
Measure:

More to do:

The one corporate plan action which was 'off-track' for 2022-23 for this well-being objective related to working in partnership with Transport for Wales to explore the feasibility of introducing a pilot of the Fflecsi bus service in the upper Afan valley. This is currently on hold due to funding.



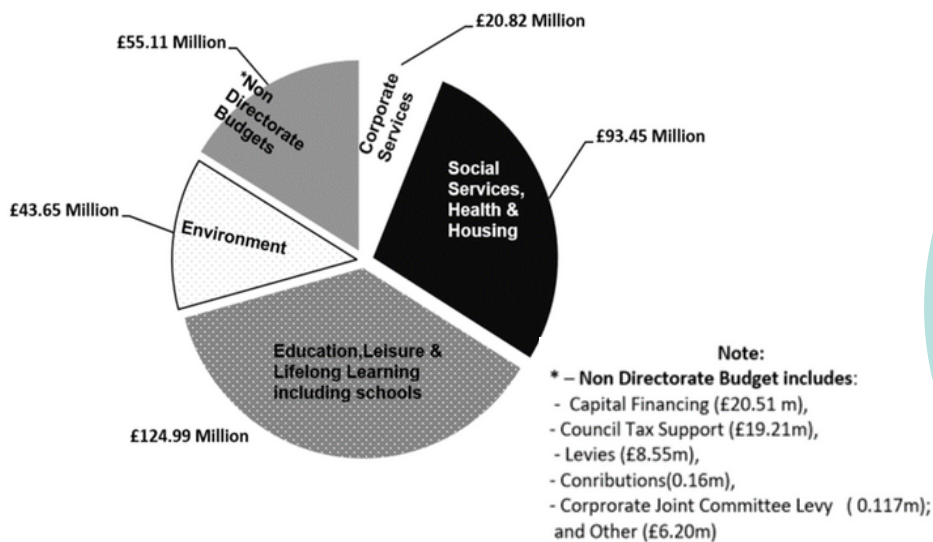
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Finance & Spending

The council's net budget for 2022-23 was £338.020m. The actual net expenditure, or outturn position for the council, showed a net underspend of £1.607m which was then utilised to create a strategic regeneration capacity building reserve (£1.5m) with the balance going into a contingency reserve (£107k).

Throughout 2022-23 we were successful in reclaiming £7m from the COVID hardship fund for a variety of schemes such as a free school meals, self-isolation scheme, Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) enhancement scheme and winter fuel payments.

NPTCBC Total Net Budget 2022-23



On 2nd March 2023, the council approved the 2023-24 budget of £360.977m following stakeholder consultation. In order to set a balanced budget a number of savings were identified (£14.352m) alongside a one-off use of reserves to the value of £3.5m and a council tax increase of 4.5%

Our Capital Programme also delivered c£44m of capital investment to improve facilities across the county borough. This includes:

- ↳ Completion of the council's Band B 21st Century Schools programme;
- ↳ Progress the regeneration programme including completion of Harbourside, Neath Town Centre redevelopment, Plaza, and the Technology Centre.
- ↳ Further investment of £3.977m into Disabled Facility Grants to assist people to live at home;
- ↳ Investment of over £3m in Schools Capital Maintenance and Highways and Engineering Maintenance improvements.
- ↳ City Deal – progression of the Homes as Power Stations and the Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth projects.
- ↳ Progression of the remodelling of the council's Waste Facility at Crymlyn Burrows as a Transfer Station with enhanced recycling capacity and facilities to accommodate the Council's expanding recycling operation.

Equalities & Diversity

Helping meet the challenges faced by residents over recent years has been at the forefront of our work - not least in addressing the inequalities faced by many - notably as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, cost of living crisis, education, accessibility and by society itself.

We aim for a society where everyone can take their rightful place, on an equal footing where barriers to leading full and rich lives are a thing of the past and opportunities abound for everyone to fully participate in the social, economic and environmental aspects of their communities.

Our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020-2024 was just one contributory factor in our work to help achieve this. The Plan, developed during the pandemic, at the time of the international condemnation of the killing of George Floyd and the greater awareness of Black Lives Matter

required us to re-evaluate our equality objectives and identify more immediate actions to address some of the inequalities experienced at that time.

Since this last iteration of the SEP our world has changed once again. These changes have brought with them different and/or greater challenges and inequalities for our communities and ourselves.

In order to help address the position we have begun a review of our equality objectives the outcome of which will help focus our work to reduce, and where possible, eliminate inequalities and better align the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 with our other statutory plans and in particular the Corporate Plan 2024-2027.

In light of recommendations from three Integrated Impact Assessment audits, undertaken during 2021-2022, an action plan has been developed to improve the approach, quality and effectiveness of our assessment process.

The action plan, which encompasses both specific and more general aspects of the assessment process is in the early stages of implementation.



Welsh Language

Our commitment to the principle of the Welsh language standards continues and we strive to comply with them, as applied to us, in what remains a difficult financial and resource limiting environment.

Our Welsh Language Standards Annual Report highlights our work in implementing the standards as well as identifying areas where more work is required. Performance monitored by the Welsh Language Commissioner, and reported in the latest report for 2022-2023, identified improvements in compliance across a range of services.

Confidence in meeting the standards as applied to the council received a further boost with no complaints received via the Welsh Language Commissioner during 2022-2023.

In recent weeks, the Welsh Language Tribunal has upheld the decision of the Commissioner in relation to a complaint received originally in 2021.

The basis of the referral to the Welsh Language Tribunal was more than just a challenge to the Commissioner's decision; it was to address the concerns of the impact the interpretation of the Welsh Language Standards could have on any consultations that the council embarks on in any subject matter thus seeking further legal and practical guidance.

We recognise that Welsh is more than a language, it is part of our very being - whether born here or not. It is woven into the fabric of our lives - even if not instantly recognisable; our place names, forenames, colloquialisms, are all rooted in the Welsh language.

The second iteration of our [Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023-2028](#) goes beyond just the use of Welsh: it aims to permeate the fabric of our society, from helping ensure language courses are available for all who wish to learn and providing an environment in which it can be used, to celebrating and raising awareness of its place in our heritage and culture, our daily lives and as part of our visitor

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Have your say on what matters to you

Your feedback on this Annual Report is valued and at a local government level this means a commitment to listen to all voices. It is key for those voices to be heard and to work together with our communities to explore and resolve issues of concern, promote and recognise achievements and face new challenges together.

Our council is strongly committed to fostering a culture of partnership with local people and communities, encouraging and supporting them to participate in our decision making, and keeping them informed about how their participation has influenced decisions. This commitment can be viewed in our [Public Participation Strategy](#).

Contact us via email: policy@npt.gov.uk or post:

Chief Executive,
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Port Talbot,
SA13 1PJ

We want to hear from you!

You may also want to become part of our Citizens Panel. The Panel enables residents to take part in research relating to the council. This means you will be able to tell us what you think about council policies, priorities and/or services.

All feedback helps us to understand residents' perspectives and is used to help make decisions. You do not need any knowledge of council services to become a member of the panel. We are looking for a variety of views from a range of different people. You may be asked to take part in online questionnaires, informal discussions, workshops, telephone interviews and other forms of consultation.

If you would like to join up please complete the recruitment questionnaire.

We also have a number of consultation/engagement events about various services which we promote in the press and on the website which you can access via the following link: <http://www.npt.gov.uk/haveyoursay>

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Visit the council's website at www.npt.gov.uk

