



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

2.00 PM THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2023

***MULTI-LOCATION MEETING - COUNCIL CHAMBER, PORT TALBOT
& MICROSOFT TEAMS***

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

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1. Chair's Announcements
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 12*)
4. Annual Report (*Pages 13 - 26*)
5. Housing and Communities - Mid-Year Progress Report (*Pages 27 - 60*)
6. Pre-Decision Scrutiny
To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board agenda for Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports included for Scrutiny Members)
7. Committee Action Log (*Pages 61 - 62*)

8. Forward Work Programme 2023/24 (*Pages 63 - 64*)
9. Urgent Items
Any urgent items at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Section 100BA(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
10. Access to meetings
Access to Meetings to resolve to exclude the public for the following item(s) pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the relevant exempt paragraphs of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

PART 2

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

K.Jones
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Friday, 15 September 2023

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: **Councillor C.Galsworthy**

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

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

Notes:

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

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Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee
(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot & Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

13 July 2023

Chairperson: Councillor C.Galsworthy

Vice Chairperson: Councillor H.C.Clarke

Councillors: O.S.Davies, J.Jones, P.D.Richards and S.Rahaman

Officers In Attendance R Davies, J.Hodges, C.Howard, A.Jarrett, A.J.Thomas, K.Warren, A.Bradshaw, S.Bradshaw, L.Morris, E.O'Brien, S.Waite, C.Jones, C.Frey-Davies, Ms.S.Jenkins, N.Maund, N.Jones, H.Short, V.Smith, M.Weaver, E.Gibbs, E.Bennett, S.Jones and A.Thomas

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

1. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

It was confirmed that the committee would be scrutinising items 7, 8, 9 and 10 from the Cabinet Board Agenda.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. **Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

Neath Port Talbot Adult Social Care Strategy 2023 - 2026

The Head of Adult Services delivered a presentation outlining the pressures faced by the directorate and highlighted why and how Neath Port Talbot will need to work differently going forward.

Members welcomed the content of the presentation but commented that transport could present an issue when promoting social networks and self-management; members questioned if community transport was being considered as part of the future plans? Officers responded that the plans are only achievable if they are part of a council wide approach. When discussing the preventative agenda, solutions need to be broader than just through the Social Services directorate.

With reference to the mention of sensory adaptations in the report, members felt that in order to reach more people the sensory adaptation service needed further promotion to GPs; members questioned if there are there are any plans to work more closely with Health Care services to promote this service? Officers responded that the three staff in the Sensory Team are attached to the Community Occupational Therapy Team, working with hearing and visual impairments. The experienced team work closely with health services, but further work can be undertaken to improve on this. Officers advised there is a Welsh Government initiative working alongside Health Board services to improve sensory impairment services.

Members asked how the service will measure results and report back to the committee going forward. Officers responded that costed business cases have been developed for every scheme and these will be presented to committee when appropriate. Results will be measured as the schemes progress and any required information will be provided, as requested.

Members queried the timeline for community hubs and raised concern that any potential suitable empty buildings may fall into disrepair if the timeline was too great. Officers confirmed that this issue has been raised with Cabinet and Corporate Directors; there is presently regional and council capital money available and any plans need to progress quickly to take advantage of this funding. Work will be carried out over the summer with decisions starting to be made in late August/ early September. Some plans need to progress

imminently but other potential schemes such as the Older Person Village and Gelligron may need to be discussed over a longer timeframe.

Following scrutiny, the recommendation was supported to Cabinet Board.

Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan 2023-26

The Head of Housing and Communities delivered a presentation on the draft Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan 2023-2026, reiterating that there is currently a high degree of pressure on the housing system and the scale of change required cannot be underestimated.

Members thanked the officer for the interesting presentation and queried if consideration had been given to a model where the council purchased houses where adaptations were not possible and re-homing residents in adapted social housing as a means of increasing the council housing stock. The officer advised that this approach had not been considered but could be discussed further outside of the meeting to explore the feasibility.

Members queried the scheme enabling the authority to purchase empty properties to bring them back into use. The officer confirmed that previously the authority had bought a number of empty properties, as mentioned in the plan, and this opportunity will be explored further going forward. Currently, the Environmental Health team are mapping the location of empty properties; certain funding streams are available through the Welsh Government to eradicate homelessness and this is one work stream that Neath Port Talbot are investigating.

Members asked if Neath Port Talbot had links with private developers. The officer confirmed that currently the relationship with private developers is not the same as the relationship with registered social landlords but it is hoped that this may be developed in the future. The officer advised a meeting with planning had recently been held to establish how links to the planning process could be developed, to investigate how the level of affordable housing could be increased when proposals for new developments are submitted. There is also work ongoing to look at private landlord forums to help

stimulate the market and give developers more information so they are aware of local needs

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety thanked the officer for the presentation and scrutiny committee members for their attention to the report. It was noted that this is the first Housing and Homelessness Strategic plan of its kind for Neath Port Talbot and comes at a time of unprecedented pressures. The Cabinet Member expressed appreciation for the hard work of the housing teams and for coming together in a committed way. He outlined that the housing crisis is presenting a number key challenges for officers, staff, elected members and housing association partners. Developing the housing plan will require a whole council approach and this new strategy will give a framework to address the challenges.

Following scrutiny, the recommendation was supported to Cabinet Board.

Neath Port Talbot Children & Young People Social Care Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026

The Head of Children Services gave a presentation on the NPT Children and Young People Social Care Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026.

Members expressed concern over the waiting times for children with traits of neuro diverse conditions who are waiting for CAMHS and NDD Pathway appointments, the current waiting time for a CAMHS appointment is 3-6 weeks whilst the NDD pathway waiting list is 28 months. Members' questioned if children services and education were working with children affected by this issue, especially those who are on reduced timetables or facing exclusion. Members acknowledged that this is an issue across Wales and delays may affect children negatively as they transition into adulthood. The Head of Service acknowledged the concern and commented that this is a feature in many young people's history and is a nationwide issue. An ongoing meeting led by education has commenced to look at pastoral support plans and support specifically targeted for children and young people in this area. It was acknowledged that this is an issue across the council and numbers have increased; there is still development work to do in this area.

Following scrutiny, the recommendation was supported to Cabinet Board.

The Director gave a summary of the 3 presentations, Heads of Service were asked to be candid regarding the challenges faced by their services. Challenges have included; the ability to staff particular services, the increase in the amount of people who need services and the complexity of issues. Challenges are related to a Covid legacy, and it was noted that the recovery for Social Services and Housing would take some time. The Director stated that Welsh Government policies on insourcing, not for profit, new housing laws, although well placed needed appropriate funding. The next stage is for plans to be costed and brought to scrutiny and cabinet, it was noted that all directorates are facing pressures which will need to be looked at as a whole and prioritised going forward. Discussions will be needed on how statutory services will be funded going forward. The Director complimented the Heads of Service proactive approach.

The Chair thanked the Director and directorate staff for their hard work and innovative ideas in planning how to overcome challenges.

Children & Young People Services, Adult Services and Housing & Community Safety - 4th Quarter (April 2022- March 2023)
Performance Report

Members questioned the percentage of re-registrations for children on the child protection register and asked how could the service be confident that children are not being de-registered too quickly? Members also requested an explanation of the system where referrals are made which don't meet the child protection threshold.

The Head of Childrens Services responded that much work has been carried out on the child protection data, and regular strategic and operational meetings are held with team managers, social workers and partners. It was noted that the numbers are low but when they are presented in a percentage format the figures appears higher. The Head of Service advised there is rigour in the system. Referrals of previously registered cases are considered within 24 hours and a decision would be made by the team manager in conjunction with partners. The decision to re-register a child is a multi-agency decision and the opportunity is used to understand why they have come back on the register and the learning is fed back into the system. The Head of Service was confident that the right mechanisms and systems are in place to monitor and learn from cases. Work on re-

registration has been presented to members previously and it was agreed that this work would be re-circulated.

Members questioned the figures for safeguarding on page 262 of the report, of the 1392 reported allegations of abuse, only 271 were necessary of enquiry and members asked for an explanation on how these decisions are made. Officers confirmed that the referral format is set up to receive early intervention referrals through to safeguarding. In the first 24 hours following a referral, enquiries are undertaken with other professionals, families and significant others to build a fuller picture and following these enquiries a decision is made on how to proceed. This may be under section 47 (children) or section 126 (adults) where the referral requires more investigation to understand the information presented. It was clarified that although not all cases warrant safeguarding procedures, there are other strands of work that may take place following referrals such as intervention prevention, Team around the Family (TAF) or Care and Support.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

5. **Forward Work Programme 2023/24**

This item was noted.

6. **Urgent Items**

There were none.

7. **Access to meetings**

Resolved: to exclude the public for the following item(s) pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the relevant exempt paragraphs of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

8. **Asylum Dispersal and Refugee Settlement**

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

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

There were no items scrutinised.

CHAIRPERSON

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Social Services Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee 21st September 2023

Report of the Social Services Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee Chairperson

Matter Information

Wards Affected:

1. All Wards.

Annual Report of the Social Services Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

Purpose of the Report:

2. To update members on the work undertaken by the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee for the civic year 2022/2023 and to note and commend the report to Council.

Background:

3. To provide an overview of the work of the committee for 2022/2023.

Financial Impacts:

4. No Impact.

Integrated Impact Assessment

5. There is no requirement at this stage to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for information only.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

6. No impacts.

Workforce Impacts

7. No impacts.

Legal Impacts

8. No legal impacts.

Risk Management Impacts:

9. No impacts.

Consultation

10. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

11. That the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee note and endorse the annual Report 2022/2023 attached at Appendix 1 and commend to Council.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

12. To note and endorse the Annual Report 2022/2023 of the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee.

Implementation of Decision

13. Immediate.

Appendices

14. Appendix 1 - 2022/2023 Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee Annual Report
15. Appendix 2 – Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee summary of items considered

List of Background Papers

16. None.

Officer Contact

17. Cllr Charlotte Galsworthy - Chair of the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

Cllr.c.galsworthy@npt.gov.uk

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1. Chair's Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I present the Annual Report for the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee May 2022 – April 2023.

This report provides the opportunity to reflect on the work that has been undertaken by the committee and its attempts to ensure that any decisions taken are in the best interests of the citizens of Neath Port Talbot

This report covers a time of worldwide crisis as the war in Ukraine continues to have a very real effect on worldwide and local communities. The cost of living crisis is also significantly affecting our local population.

The Scrutiny Committee worked during the year to scrutinise various decisions to be taken by the Council.

The Committee continued to monitor quarterly performance management data and scrutinise the information received. The committee scrutinised various decisions including the Future of Trem Y Glyn, Rapid Re-Housing Support, the Leasing Scheme Wales and an Extension to the provision of a Welcome Centre in respect of Ukrainians fleeing the conflict.

The committee also continued its own work and received information pertaining to statutory nuisances in Environmental Health, Adults and Childrens Single Point of Contact and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Vice Chair, Councillor Helen Clarke for her continued support along with the Cabinet members , Councillor Alun Llewelyn, Councillor Jo Hale and Councillor Sian Harris, who have been present at the meetings to listen to and consider the views of the committee prior to making any decisions .

Finally, I would like to thank the officers for their invaluable support, continued hard work, professionalism and guidance throughout the year

Councillor. C.Galsworthy, Chairperson
Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

2. Introduction to Scrutiny

The Centre for Public Scrutiny suggests that there are four key principles to effective Scrutiny and they are:

1. provides ‘critical friend’ challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers
2. enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
3. is carried out by ‘independent minded governors’ who lead and own the Scrutiny process
4. drives improvement in public services

Scrutiny is an integral part of the Council’s political structure and in many ways it plays a key role in assisting the Cabinet. Scrutiny Committees in the Council have met regularly through the year and have considered a wide range of issues. A number of the Scrutiny Committees have undertaken some in depth work as part of their forward work programmes, and this is highlighted within this document.

The Scrutiny Committees within the Council are:

- Cabinet
 - Policy & Resources Sub
- Education, Skills and Wellbeing
- Social Services, Housing and Community Safety
- Environment, Regeneration & Streetscene Services

Each of the Committees includes a mix of non-Executive Councillors that is politically balanced to reflect the political balance of the Council. The Chairs and Vice Chairs plus the Committee Membership are decided annually by Full Council. Each Committee meets at least 8 times during a Civic Year.

3. Purpose of Annual Report

3.1 The main aim of this report is to highlight the work that has been undertaken by the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Committee Scrutiny Committee 2022-2023.

3.2 The document may also facilitate discussions on additional items that could be included within the work programme for 2023/2024.

4. Overview of the work of the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Committee 2022/2023

4.1 Number of Meetings

The Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee met on 8 occasions during 2022/2023.

4.2 The Work Programme 2022/2023

Generally the agendas for the scrutiny meetings have been consistent with those outlined in the forward work programme. The Committee agree its Scrutiny work programme during their Forward Work Programme Workshop on 13th October 2022.

It is acknowledged that the workshop session took place later than planned due to the death of Queen Elizabeth II and the subsequent cancellation of all meetings during the official mourning period.

When developing the work programme it was essential to give consideration to the key plans and strategies of the Council. The work programme also includes the results of any external inspections that had been undertaken within a specific service area or on a corporate level.

The review of the work of the Committee is included in the following pages has been structured to reflect the key roles of the Committee: Pre-Decision Scrutiny (which included policy development and review) and any items they wished to look at as part of their remit (usually for information purposes)

5. Key Issues considered during 2022/2023

Throughout the civic year the Committee is consulted on a number of areas that require decision. These range from routine general issues to the larger more complex decisions. Cabinet Board Members are in attendance during discussions and any views of the Committee are taken on board prior to making a decision.

The Scrutiny Committee also undertakes the performance monitoring role by considering a wide range of reports. Members challenge the information that is included which enables them to understand the issues facing the service. These reports are monitored on a quarterly basis.

As well as scrutinising key decisions, the Committee identifies topics within their remit in which they wish to look at in more detail. These items are usually for information purposes e.g. updating Members on specific projects of work.

The Council is well placed to demonstrate the improvements it has made to the scrutiny function and it is essential that we continue to build on these developments and I look forward to the next year as we take forward the priorities of the Council.

- Issues considered

May 2022 – April 2023

As detailed in the table attached at Appendix 1.

6. Scrutiny Contact Information

The Scrutiny Team are located in the Chief Executive's Policy and Democratic Services section and their contact details follows:

Name	Position	Contact Details
Alison Thomas	Senior Scrutiny and Project Management Officer	E-mail a.thomas6@npt.gov.uk Tel: 01639 763300

Tom Rees	Scrutiny Officer	E-mail: t.rees1@npt.gov.uk Tel: 01639 763922
Pamela Chivers	Scrutiny Officer	E-mail: p.chivers@npt.gov.uk

Alternatively if you think Scrutiny should consider a certain area or issue as part of their work programme then please e-mail democratic.services@npt.gov.uk

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Appendix 2

Committee Name:	Social Services, Housing & Community Safety Scrutiny Committee			
Number of Meetings held during the Council Year: 8 (including FWP Session)				
Date of Meeting	Issues Considered	Information/Monitoring/Decision	Amendments	Task and Finish Group Created
27th June 2022	Contractual Arrangements for the Prevention and Wellbeing Service	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
11th October 2022	NPT Youth Justice and Early Intervention Plan 2022-2023	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Rapid Re-Housing Report	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Future of Trem Y Glyn	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Quarter 1 Performance Indicators	Monitoring - scrutiny Members noted the report	None	N/A
10th November 2022	Establishing a Managed Account and Payroll Support Framework	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Procurement of a Specialist Domiciliary Care Framework	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Uplift To Older People Care Home Fees	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
15th December 2022	Environmental Health - what is a Statutory Nuisance	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Children & Young People and Adult Services - 2nd Quarter Performance Report (April 2022- September 2022)	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Quarterly Performance Management Data 2022-2023 - Quarter 2 Performance (1st April 2022- 30th September 2022)	Monitoring - scrutiny Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Directors Annual Report	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Leasing Scheme Wales	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Grant Arrangements For The Provision Of Warm Spaces Funding	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A

26th January 2023	Consultation 2023/2024 Budget Proposal	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Asylum and Refugees Resettlement Jan 23	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Anti-social behaviour and homelessness	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Audit Wales Report On Direct Payments For Adult Social Care	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Manager's Report On Hillside Secure Children's Home	Monitoring - scrutiny Members noted the report	None	N/A
	The Procurement Of a Social Care Case Management Platform	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
9th March 2023	Adults and Childrens Single Point of Contact	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Early Intervention and Prevention Support within Childrens Services	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	West Glamorgan Safeguarding Annual Report	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Housing Support Grant Annual Report 2022	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Quarter 3 Performance Indicators	Monitoring - scrutiny Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Substance Misuse Action Fund - Grant Agreements	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Participation in Welsh Government Empty Homes Scheme	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Contractual Arrangements for a Range of Services Funded Through the Housing Support Grant 2023/24	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Extension to the provision of a Welcome Centre in respect of Ukrainians fleeing the conflict	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
20 April 2023	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	West Glamorgan Partnership Area Plan 2023-2027	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A
	Continuation Of Orientation Support To Families Settled Under The Afghan Relocation And Assistance (ARAP) Scheme	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A

	Contractual Arrangements for a Third Sector and Non-Regulatory Services funded by Social Services, Health and Housing	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Contractual Arrangements for a Range of Children and Young People Services funded by Social Services, Health and Housing	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Hillside Manager's Report	Information Only - Members noted the report	None	N/A
	Eco 4 Flex Scheme	Decision - recommendation was supported to the Cabinet Board	None	N/A

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

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

21st September 2023

Report of the Interim Head of Housing and Communities – Chelé Zandra Howard

Matter for Information

Wards Affected: All Wards

Housing and Communities Department – Mid-Year Progress Report

Purpose of the Report

The Housing and Communities Department was established in January 2023, this report sets out progress against key programmes of work over the first half of the department's establishment. In addition this report provides a response to questions raised by Scrutiny Committee.

Executive Summary

In January 2023, an Interim Head of Housing and Communities was appointed to oversee the newly established Housing and Communities Department ("the Department").

The Department brings together a number of Council functions including, Community Safety Team, Area Planning Board Team, Refugee & Asylum, Housing Strategy, Homelessness, Housing Support and Housing Adaptations & Renewals.

Each of the above areas have their own work streams and priorities, this report sets out some of the key achievements against the various programmes of work.

This report also answers questions that were posed by Scrutiny Committee in July 2023 and sets out key areas of work that is being progressed by the department.

Background

Following the presentation of the Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan (Background Paper One) to Scrutiny Committee on 13th July 2023, a number of questions were raised in relation to how the Department was working to resolve the identified challenges.

Whilst the Department has only been established since January 2023, significant work has already been progressed against a number of key Department priorities and clear plans of action are in place to work towards resolving some of the most challenging issues facing communities within Neath Port Talbot.

Since the Department is newly established and in light of questions raised in Scrutiny, Officers have developed a mid-year update report (Appendix One). This report covers some of the key projects undertaken across the whole Department, each team within the Department has its own extensive work plan and so this report does not include business as usual and is not meant to represent the Department's work plan in its entirety.

A response to the questions raised by Scrutiny Committee is provided below.

Question One - Private sector housing is more expensive than local housing allowance and Registered Social Landlords ("RSLs") cannot accommodate demand – what is being done to address this issue?

Answer One – The Rapid Rehousing Plan (Background paper Three) sets out an action plan to address these issues, a Rapid Rehousing Coordinator came into post in May 2023 and is responsible for supporting the Council to progress this five year Plan (2022-2027). The intention of this Plan is to transition from the current baseline homelessness position, to providing more suitable models of accommodation and support, including moving away from the use of temporary accommodation.

Alongside the Rapid Rehousing Plan, are a range of actions within the Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan (Background Paper One) to help stimulate the development of more affordable housing. This includes utilising Social Housing Grant (“SHG”) to develop more affordable housing.

The Department update at Appendix One sets out some of the work being undertaken in these areas.

Question Two: What are the waiting lists for RSL’s and what housing is being developed through SHG?

Answer Two: Officers use waiting list figures from our largest RSL, Tai Tairan, for the purposes of strategic planning. The reason for this is that a household may be on the waiting list for more than one RSL operating in Neath Port Talbot and so combining this information would not provide an accurate picture of demand. Tai Tairan’s waiting list as at 31.07.23 was:

Band	Number of Households
Urgent banding	203
Gold banding	286
Silver banding	569
Bronze meeting	2391
Total	3449

In relation to the use of SHG, we are currently projected to deliver a total of 661 homes in Neath Port Talbot via this capital scheme during the grant period 2022/23 to 2024/25.

Question Three: How many private houses are available in Neath Port Talbot.

Answer Three: This is not information that is collected by the Department. The development of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) is led by the Planning & Public Protection Department and contains information on the local housing market. The LHMA has been submitted to Welsh Government for their approval.

The draft LHMA indicates the following tenure breakdown in Neath Port Talbot in 2020.

Tenure	%	Number of Households
Private rental	10.67	7,033
Social Housing	19.02	12,534
Owner Occupied	70.31	46,342

Question Four: How many people are homeless and what are the demographics and circumstances?

Answer Four: Please refer to Appendix Two, which provides a breakdown of this information.

It is clear from both July presentations to Housing Options and from cases open to Housing Options that the biggest reason for approaching the service is due to tenants of private sector properties needing advice or assistance. This may be due to a notice already having been served, or for advice if they are pre-empting a notice due to the changes brought in by the Renting Homes Wales Act in December 2022. Some changes to the Renting Homes Wales Act were not fully implemented until June 2023, which is likely to be the reason for high numbers in July.

Relationship breakdowns remain a consistent reason for becoming homeless, with 41% of all open cases being due to either a relationship breakdown or breakdown with family/friends which has impacted on their accommodation. There are mediation services available and when it is appropriate this service is offered to applicants.

Question Five: What emergency accommodation for those that become homeless are operated by the Council?

Answer Five: Please refer to Appendix Two, which provides a breakdown of all temporary accommodation (“TA”) operated by the Council.

Question Six: How can we make TA better/more available?

Answer Six: This is a key action within both the Rapid Rehousing Plan and Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan, currently there is an overreliance on Hotels/B&Bs, which is not an optimal environment for people and is very costly. The Department update at Appendix One sets out some of the key work to date in this area.

The leased stock of TA has increased almost 300% since 2020 and discussions with RSL’s continue to be had on availability of properties that can be leased by the Council. The current leased portfolio is a mix of short and long term leases. Short term leases are generally 12 months and currently several properties are leased in areas of further development e.g. county flats where properties are vacant pending redevelopment but are planned for a later phase of redevelopment so the void properties are then utilised for TA.

A considerable amount of work is currently ongoing to minimise the use of hotels for families. This includes a process to ensure that any families placed in hotels are moved to a self-contained unit when one becomes available to ensure that time spent in hotels is as short as possible. There is also a considerable amount of work underway to

source family sized accommodation with plans for RSL's to utilise a WG capital grant to purchase more family sized properties.

The current ratio of single people to families in TA is 4:1; however Officers recognise the significant impact on families and children that are living in hotels and therefore sourcing family accommodation is a high priority for the Department.

Financial Impacts

This report has no financial impacts as it for information purposes.

Integrated Impact Assessment

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

Valleys Communities Impacts

This report has no valleys communities' impacts as it for information purposes.

Workforce Impacts

This report has no workforce impacts as it for information purposes.

Legal Impacts

This report has no legal impacts as it for information purposes.

Risk Management Impacts

This report has no risk management impacts as it for information purposes.

Consultation

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item as the report is for information purpose.

Recommendations

To note the contents of the report.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To ensure oversight of the Housing and Communities Department work programme.

Implementation of Decision

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

Appendices

Appendix One: Update Report;

Appendix Two: Homelessness Data.

List of Background Papers

Background Paper One: [Draft Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan](#)

Background Paper Two: [Draft Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy](#)

Background Paper Three: [Rapid Rehousing Plan](#)

Background Paper Four: [Housing Support Grant Strategy](#)

Officer Contact

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Appendix One – Mid-Year Progress Report on Key Projects

<u>Strategic Housing</u>	
Housing and Homelessness Strategy	<p>A three year Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan has been drafted and is currently out for consultation. This consultation will take place over three months and includes a number of stakeholder events. The draft Plan sets out for key areas of focus with a number of actions to take forward over the three year period. The priority areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a More Strategic Approach • Prevent Homelessness • Increase Access to Appropriate Affordable Housing • Support Those with Social Care Needs to Live Well in Their Communities
Private Rental Sector Rescue	<p>A local private landlord with a large portfolio decided to retire and began issuing notice on his tenants so that the properties could be sold with vacant possession. Neath Port Talbot Council (NPT CBC) worked in partnership with Welsh Government (WG) and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to prevent nearly 30 households from being evicted.</p> <p>Using Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP) Grant the Council and RSLs purchased a number of homes from the landlord to prevent the families from becoming homeless with NPT CBC purchasing five of the properties. As the purchased homes were in a poor condition, TACP was also used to make the necessary improvements.</p> <p>As a result of this work, a number of families were prevented from becoming homeless and now have improved living standards.</p>

	<p>The total cost of purchasing and renovating the properties to NPT was around £260k, with around £606k being provided by WG, the annual rental income for NPT CBC will be around £42,000.</p>
Eco4 Scheme	<p>ECO4 is an energy efficiency scheme which places a legal obligation on energy suppliers to deliver energy efficiency and heating measures to the least energy efficient domestic homes occupied by low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households, in order to improve their energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.</p> <p>To enable local households to access ECO4 Flex, NPT CBC must state publicly through a Statement of Intent (SOI), the criteria it intends to adopt to identify the households that meet the Flex eligibility criteria. The SOI confirms NPT CBCs intention to participate in the Flex scheme and enables contractors / agents to engage with eligible residents on behalf of Energy Suppliers. Warm Wales administers the scheme with NPT CBC signing the declarations to approve the claims.</p> <p>Between March 2023 and mid-August, NPT CBC have agreed 111 declarations. Equating to over £16,000 in fees for the Council and £1.1m in energy efficiency works carried out funded by ECO.</p>
Empty Homes	<p>In March 2023, NPT CBC agreed to take part in WGs Empty Home Grant Scheme to further reduce the number of long-term empty properties in the area and increase housing supply.</p> <p>To take part in the scheme, NPT CBC agreed to invest up to £240,000 with WG providing up to £2.4 million of funding over the two year scheme period. The scheme works by providing grants to eligible homeowners to undertake the necessary work to bring the property back into use.</p> <p>The response to this scheme as at 15/08/23 is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 requests received • 25 requests progressed to survey

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 properties surveyed • 18 schedules completed • 4 properties formally approved • 2 properties cancelled as no eligible works identified. <p>The total cost of identified eligible works to date has been £509,345.50 and the total value of approvals is £124,841.64</p>
Leasing Scheme Wales	<p>This is a scheme in which private sector landlords rent their property to NPT CBC for a guaranteed period of 5-10 years, a grant can also be provided to make improvements to the property. The aim of this scheme is to increase access to good quality private rental properties at the local housing allowance rate.</p> <p>NPT CBC receive around 3-4 enquires a week but very few then become formal requests and unfortunately to date we have not entered into any agreements with landlords, this low interest is reflected across Wales. The main reason for the low interest is that landlords are do not wish to rent their properties at the local housing allowance rate.</p> <p>In total we have received 10 formal requests, the majority of these were subsequently withdrawn due to the cost of works required to bring the properties to an acceptable standard.</p>
Home Adaptations	<p>Home adaptations funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and ENABLE is a well-established area of work and supports people to remain independent within their own homes. There continues to be significant demand for works, which has to be balanced against the available budget, which is £3 million for DFG and £280,000 for ENABLE.</p> <p>As at 13/07/23, 59 DFGs have been delivered, with an end to end time of 266 days, which is a reduction from last year's average of 308 days.</p>

<p>Housing with Care Fund</p>	<p>This WG capital grant is overseen on a regional basis by the West Glamorgan Partnership and is used to develop specialist accommodation for people with social care needs.</p> <p>NPT CBC have worked with RSLs to submit a bid to WG for a total of six new developments this year and work is progressing to deliver these schemes. These schemes will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 buildings containing a total of 4 apartments in each building for adults with social care needs • 2 supported living schemes for a total of 6 adults with social care needs • 1 supported accommodation service for young adults transitioning from foster care <p>The total funding requested from WG for these developments is just under £2.5 million and will enable people with social care needs to live more independently in the community. Those that will move into the schemes may be currently residing in out of county care home placements or looking to transition from their family home.</p> <p>These schemes provide much better personal outcomes for people and the cost of care services is more efficient than traditional care home placements.</p>
<p>Social Care Accommodation</p>	<p>A number of schemes to support people with social care needs that commenced in 2021 have now been concluded, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist supported living service for 3 adults with complex ASD • Adapted super bariatric accommodation • The core element of a core and cluster service for people with physical disabilities, the cluster element is in progress and anticipated to conclude by the end of this year

	<p>Work is also progressing on a specialist scheme for people that have mental ill health and are at risk of experiencing repeat episodes of homelessness and insterutionised care due to vulnerabilities relating to their mental health.</p>
Older Persons Village	<p>A business case is in the process of development which will set out a proposal to develop an older person's village on Council owned land. This scheme will help better manage the pressures facing adult social care and provide improved options for our older population that may need assistance to remain independent.</p> <p>This is a complex area of work and the scheme will be a first for Neath Port Talbot. Potential areas of land have been identified and work is ongoing to understand what funding may be available to support this development.</p>
Violence against Women, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Accommodation Review	<p>A review of building based VAWDASV support services is in progress with an intention to undertake public consultation on a proposed new model of supported accommodation. The intention of this work is to ensure that services are responsive and flexible to the needs of those that require refuge. Officers are being proactive in ensuring that Service User feedback is at the centre of the review and any recommendations made, take peoples lived experance into account. There are currently a number of Service User focused surveys in place, which are being facilitated by Service Providers. The surveys will close on 8th August and the next stage of the review process will be collating and analysing the feedback.</p>
Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP)	<p>NPT CBC have worked with RSLs to submit a bid to WG for capital funding that will support our objective of reducing homeless families. If successful, the funding will be used to purchase around 55 family homes, which will be a mix of 'buy backs' (where an RSL buys back a property that they used to own and was subsequently sold to the tenant) and open market purchases.</p> <p>Some of these homes will support our 'temp to perm' model, which is explained further on in the report.</p>

<p>Social Housing Grant (SHG)</p>	<p>The SHG is the main capital grant provided by WG the provision of affordable housing. Local Authorities are responsible for choosing their Housing Association partners, who are paid SHG to develop, own and manage the affordable housing. Our 3 year rolling budget is circa £40m and this is managed via the Programme Development Plan (PDP).</p> <p>A more strategic approach to allocating SHG has been implemented in which a panel consisting of various Officers from Estates, strategic planning, planning, social services, homelessness services and strategic housing assess the viability, impact and benefits of proposals against an agreed criteria.</p> <p>Other work includes the development of geographic information mapping to better understand patterns, relationships and geographical context of developments.</p> <p>To further improve the strategic approach to SHG allocation, a survey of all relevant stakeholders has recently been undertaken.</p> <p>We are currently projected to deliver a total of 661 homes via the SHG scheme during the period 2022/23 to 2024/25.</p>
<p>Modern Methods of Construction</p>	<p>Significant work is underway to look at how modern methods of construction can be optimised in Neath Port Talbot. Methods such as modular accommodation can be completed in much shorter timeframes and can be erected on land that is less viable for traditional construction methods. In addition, these buildings are highly energy efficient and can be mobilised to different locations.</p> <p>There are opportunities to utilise Council land that may not traditionally be attractive to developers, such as old car parks and to work with WG to obtain capital funding to build modular housing that can quickly accommodate those that become homeless. A business case is currently in development setting out proposals to progress this type of development.</p>

Homelessness

Review of Housing Options Structure

The existing Housing Options Team is not currently equipped to manage the significant change in demands, not just in terms of the number of people requiring a service, but also the complexity of people coming into services and the requirement to implement a Rapid Rehousing approach to managing homelessness. Whilst Officers are dedicated, the gap between demand and resources has impacted on their ability to deliver an optimised service and an inability to move the service towards the Rapid Rehousing approach.

In light of this, a comprehensive review of the current structure has been undertaken and proposals of a new structure developed. The proposed new structure will completely transform the operation of the team, including enhanced staff supervision and specialist training in areas such as trauma informed practice.

The Community Independence Service (CIS) have now relocated from Social Services to Housing Options and is being refocused to support households that are experiencing homelessness. For example, the team are now working with people moving on from temporary accommodation and helping resettlement.

Increasing the Number of Lettings to Homeless People

One RSL has committed to offering 100% of vacant properties to Housing Options and negotiations are ongoing with other RSLs to try and increase the number of properties that are allocated to those that are owed a homeless duty.

Alongside this, there will be closer work with RSLs to guarantee a higher proportion of properties allocated to those that are homeless within new developments.

Increasing Dispersed Temporary Accommodation

To reduce reliance on B&B's, Officers have been working RSLs to lease units for Housing Options to provide temporary accommodation.

	<p>To the end of the 2022 calendar year, the service had a total of 34 leased units (excluding the hostels). Work is ongoing with RSL's, Tai Tarian in particular to increase this stock level in order to reduce the reliance on hotels for families. In 2023 so far, 13 additional units have been sourced and are occupied, with a further 19 due to be brought online imminently. This brings the total of leased units to 66.</p> <p>Tai Tarian have several new developments under way and some are subject to a phased development due to the size. In these cases the current void units which are subject to re-development in approx. 12 months are being offered to Housing Options as leases. These cannot be long term due to the development programme but enables us to focus on reducing hotel use while other factors are considered in how we intend to reduce temporary accommodation use long term.</p> <p>Consideration is also being given to working with the private rental sector to increase temporary accommodation options, with Officers in negotiations with a provider of temporary accommodation who operates across Wales.</p>
Strategy to Reduce Families in B&Bs	<p>In response to the alarming and sharp rise in families with children residing in B&Bs, a strategy has been implemented to prevent this situation from occurring. Whilst it has not yet been possible to completely prevent families from needing to move into B&Bs, the number of households have been significantly reduced. Prior to this work, numbers were in excess of 30 families at any one time but figures as of 21/8/23 are 13 families with a total of 16 children.</p> <p>Work to reduce this number includes prioritising families for dispersed temporary accommodation, where applicable working closely with children social services so that there is a more holistic approach to supporting the family and increasing the number of dispersed temporary accommodation units operated by NPT CBC.</p> <p>This work does not necessarily reduce the number of families needing to be placed in hotels at point of presentation, but will reduce</p>

	<p>the amount of time spent in hotel accommodation prior to moving into a self-contained unit.</p>
Strategy to Reduce Homeless Families	<p>Whilst there may be a reduction in the number of families with children residing in B&Bs, there are still a notable number of families that are homeless and living in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>As previously noted, NPT CBC is working with RSLs to apply for TACP funding in order to purchase a number of family homes, which will be prioritised for homeless families in temporary accommodation/B&Bs.</p> <p>One of the main barriers for homeless families obtaining long term accommodation is having a history of rent arrears, with landlords concerned that the household will be unable to sustain ongoing household payments. This situation is compounded by the fact that families residing in NPT CBC operated temporary accommodation are unable to evidence to a landlord that they are now able to make reliable rent payments, as their housing allowance is directly paid to the NPT CBC and families may not have responsibility for the same level of utility bills as they would in a secure tenancy.</p> <p>To help families overcome this barrier, NPT CBC are about to pilot a “Temp-to-Perm” model with participating RSLs. Families will be provided with temporary accommodation but will be responsible for paying rent to NPT CBC and will also be supported by Officers to manage their housing related finances. After a period of demonstrating that they have been able to maintain their tenancy, they will be offered a permanent tenancy either in their current accommodation or an alternative home.</p> <p>A number of RSLs have agreed to be part of this pilot and families have been identified.</p>
Tenancy Sustainment Panel	<p>A tenancy sustainment panel is being developed with RSLs and support providers in order to ensure that residents who might be struggling with their tenancy receive early interventions. By working</p>

	<p>in partnership across organisations to identify at risk households, this multi-agency approach will ensure that focused work takes place with a household before issues escalate and their tenancy is placed at risk, thereby reducing the number of households that become homeless due to tenancy failure.</p> <p>It was anticipated that the panel would be in place by summer, however there has been a delay due to the need to ensure that all organisations have the correct data sharing processes and protocols in place.</p>
Housing First	<p>When the Rapid Rehousing Transition plan was written, there were 31 people with severe and multiple disadvantages or complex support needs, who were identified as potential beneficiaries of Housing First. At present, these people are largely housed in the Ambassador Hotel in Neath. There is current no Housing First provision in NPT.</p> <p>Work to progress this model has begun following the appointment of a Rapid Rehousing Coordinator in May 2023, who is currently researching different approaches and engaging with stakeholders to inform our model. We are taking a strategic and collaborative approach to ensure a successful Housing First launch that aims to include wider homelessness prevention measures, accessible housing option advice, increase of housing supply, robust partnership working and flexible wraparound housing support.</p>
IT Review	<p>Neath Port Talbot is currently reviewing its IT platforms and is in consultation with users to identify solutions and development needs for each team. The existing Housing Options data base enables front line staff to deliver the service fairly effectively and efficiently, it is felt with some refinement and additional service options, the data base can evolve to meet the needs of the service, alternatively a new system can be built based on existing parameters.</p> <p>NPT has also started to improve the digital platforms for service users, and this needs to continue to make the website accessible for</p>

	<p>people in emergency situations to present as homeless. The current Housing Options landing page provides limited advisory information and pushes demands to telephone and emails contacts, resulting in low value demands on the service which can often be managed by providing additional supporting information on the webpage using a variety of methods such as informative animation videos.</p> <p>Workshop sessions will be held with a selection of front-line staff to discuss and agree what system developments are required and what data reporting tools are needed. The initial staff workshop was arranged for the start of August, however, due to staff changes at a senior level within the service, the workshop has been put back to the end of September. The working group that attends the workshop will also consider changes needed to the Housing Options webpage.</p>
<p><u>Refugee and Asylum Support</u></p>	
<p>Ukrainian Humanitarian Support</p>	<p>In March 2022, a corporate operational group was established to develop and implement a humanitarian response for people arriving from the Ukraine into our communities through the sponsorship routes. This included NPT CBC hosting a Welcome Centre and providing support into a hotel commissioned for Ukrainians by WG.</p> <p>A key feature of our work has been to welcome people into initial or temporary accommodation, and then to work with them to secure more sustainable long term accommodation.</p> <p>Following an announcement that WG intended to wind down the Welcome Centre, the pace of work to support guests to move into more sustainable longer-term housing has been accelerated.</p> <p>At the time of writing, 6 of the 13 families from the Welcome Centre had confirmed accommodation to move into, with another four families in the process of securing accommodation.</p>

	Alongside supporting guests at the Welcome Centre, the team have also supported 51 guests that have stayed in the hotel to move into longer term accommodation.
Afghan Relocation Assistance Policy Scheme	Following the UK Government decision to close hotels for Afghan households who fled Afghanistan following the Taliban's takeover, NPT CBC have supported one household to obtain accommodation with the area.
<u>Community Safety Team</u>	
Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy	<p>The 'Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy' has been refreshed for 2023-2026. This outlines the work to be undertaken over the next 3 years to eliminate all forms of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, and ensures the NPT CBC discharge its duties under the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>The strategy was developed through consultation with partners and survivors of domestic abuse. This is our third iteration of the strategy since 2016 and excellent progress has been made since this time.</p> <p>The 7 key areas of work within the strategy are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications & Engagement • Children & Young People • Perpetrators • Early Intervention & Prevention • Training • Accessible Services • Criminal Justice <p>Each of the above has a series of actions which will be overseen by the VAWDASV Leadership Group and its sub groups. The strategy will be officially launched in autumn 2023.</p>
	The Council operated Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service supports those considered very high risk victims of

	<p>domestic abuse. The team continues to work to increased demands when compared to the same period last year.</p> <p>The referrals of high risk domestic abuse victims into the service are far more complex in nature, post Covid pandemic. However, engagement rates remain high, at 65%.</p> <p>The team continue to work with South Wales Police and local specialist providers to manage this demand, and ensure victims are appropriately supported with robust safety plans in place.</p> <p>This element of the service remains heavily reliant on grant funding for staff salaries.</p>
<p>Paws on Patrol</p>	<p>The scheme continues to empower our residents to be the eyes and ears in their local community, reporting the issues they see whilst out and about. The scheme also offers us a very light touch way of engaging with residents about other community safety related topics such as domestic abuse and hate crime.</p> <p>So far during 2023, 87 new members have signed up to our Paws on Patrol scheme, meaning there are now over 1400 members. Alongside promoting membership at all events attended by the Community Safety Team, there have been four events specifically to promote Paws on Patrol.</p> <p>An annual survey was conducted early on in the year, responses were very positive and the feedback from members will be used to shape the service over the coming year.</p> <p>Quarterly newsletters are distributed to our members with information on latest trends, emerging issues, as well as general crime prevention and safety advice.</p>

Grant Funding	<p>During the first 6 months of the year, the Community Safety Team were successful in securing 2 additional grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £4,000 from Tata Steel to fund our annual Crucial Crew Event. This covered the cost of venue hire, press release (including vlog), uniforms for facilitators and refreshments. This would otherwise have been funded via NPT CBCs core money, so has helped our teams' budget position for the year. • £5,000 from WG for Target Hardening equipment – This funding will allow us to purchase home security items for the high risk victims of domestic abuse that we are supporting. This includes items such as Ring doorbells, window locks, door jammers, security lighting, dash cams etc. Being able to offer items like this to the people we support, offers an extension of the holistic support and helps with risk management.
Community Cohesion	<p>WG continue to fund Community Cohesion activity across Wales. During the first six month of the year, the Community Safety Team have organised several key events, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first NPT Pride - in partnership with local LGBT community groups, Local Area Coordinators and local Councillors. • The Mayors Interfaith Afternoon Tea at Margam Orangery – This event saw many people from our local BAME community come together to celebrate their contribution to our local community during the Covid-19 pandemic. • Windrush Coffee Morning – This event commemorated the 75th Anniversary of Windrush, with an informal coffee morning. Events were replicated across the region and were well attended. • Chai & Chat – In partnership with CVS we are supporting weekly Chai and Chat sessions, aimed at women in our local

	BME Community. These weekly sessions are now being attended by over 20 people each week.
A Safer' Events	<p>The Community Safety Team are trialling a new approach to their Community Safety engagement events – ensuring they are bespoke to each area of the borough they visit. Officers use local intelligence, and anecdotal information to ensure the most appropriate services attend with us on the day. So far this has generated greater footfall, and allows residents to speak to us about what matters to them most.</p> <p>Events undertaken to date are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'A Safer Briton Ferry' • 'A Safer Cadoxton' • 'A Safer Croeserw' • 'A Safer Dulais Valley' • 'A Safer Glynneath' <p>Events in Sandfields and Ystalyfera will also be arranged during 2023.</p>
Distribution of Grants to Local Community Groups	<p>The Community Safety Team continue to form part of the Afan Tawe Nedd Crime Prevention Panel, and provide small grants of £500 to the local community in order to support diversionary activities for young people.</p> <p>This year, the following local clubs have received funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trefelin BGC Under 5's & Under 6's • Taibach RFC Under 16's • Port Talbot Town Cricket Club • Tonmawr Under 13's Rugby • Aberavon Harlequins RFC U7s • Ynysygerwn Sports and Social Club – Junior Team • Neath Netball Under 15's • Llandarcy AFC U14s • Afan Lido Gymnastics Club • Surf School Wales Youth Related Activities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neath Cricket Club Junior Team • Resolven RFC Juniors • Tata Steel Cricket Club Junior Team • South Wales Police Football Tournament
Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnership	<p>An application totalling £275,000 to the Home Office Safer Streets Grant has been made for a regional project to help tackle anti-social behaviour, violence against women and girls, and acquisitive crime.</p> <p>A further bid within the region of £50-60,000 is being developed for the UK Shared Prosperity fund to enable to continuation of the 'The Hangout' provision for young people in need of diversionary activities.</p>
Crucial Crew	<p>Crucial Crew is Community Safety's flagship event, and has been running for 27 years. Each year, at least 1500 Year 6 pupils attend the event, and visit a series of 10 minute safety workshops.</p> <p>The aim of Crucial Crew is to make sure young people stay safe over their summer holidays and during their transition from primary to secondary school.</p> <p>Workshops include Fire Safety, Water Safety, Healthy Relationships, Road Safety, Railway Safety and many more. This year, we were also supported by Ysgol Cwm Brombils Year 10 drama students, who provided a 10 minute peer education production to every school, which was incredibly emotive and thought provoking.</p>
<u>Area Planning Board Team</u>	
StEPS	<p>In response to a Matters of Serious Concern report in relation to continued high levels of drug related deaths and long waiting times for prescribing, the APB undertook a Strategic Evaluation of Prescribing Services.</p> <p>The outcome of this Evaluation was a recommendation to develop a new prescribing model, which would be made up of 4 Elements: a single point of entry (which would provide rapid access to</p>

	<p>prescribing); followed by a three tiered arrangement with Low Intensity; High Intensity; and Additional Health Needs Elements alongside a Co-occurring Wellbeing Therapies and Counselling Hub (CWTCH).</p> <p>Existing services have been asked to put forward proposals to increase and amend their existing provision to meet the needs of the agreed new StEPS model. This model will be implemented as a pilot project.</p> <p>The APB set an implementation date of the 30th June 2023, however there have been a number of challenges resulting in this being delayed, with a revised timescale of 30th September 2023 now being worked to.</p>
Substance Misuse Counselling Service	<p>Following a successful bid to WG for funding, the Substance Misuse Counselling Service has been established. The project will create a trauma informed mental health support hub for people with co-occurring mental health and substance use needs in the Western Bay area.</p> <p>The service commenced in August 2023 and will be delivered alongside the StEPS prescribing model to provide dedicated wellbeing support for those with complex needs, especially around co-occurring mental health and substance use issues. The service will be available for all those engaged with substance use services (Newid) and providers can refer directly in for support.</p>
Western Bay Drugs Commission	<p>Figure 8 Consultancy have been commissioned to lead a commission to explore the high number of drug-related deaths in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature, extent, and impact of substance use across the region. • drug-related harms and deaths (inclusive of illegal, illicit, prescription and alcohol use). • the wider (cultural, economic, familial, psychological, and social) determinants and influences of problematic substance use.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being a critical friend to all stakeholders (local commissioners, communities, leaders, and providers). <p>Since it started the Commission has met formally three times and a range of further activity planned, with a report planned for March 2024.</p>
Service User Engagement Service	Funding has been made available to the Council to deliver a Service User Engagement Service. The funding will create one full time fixed term post commencing in September 2023 until March 2025. The Engagement Officer will further build on the Peer Network that was set up to deliver Peer to Peer Harm Reduction interventions to become a functional Service User Forum for the region that is led by service users. A Service User Engagement Framework will also be developed.
First Point of Contact (FPOC) Evaluation	<p>The FPOC developed by the APB Team to improve access into services has been in operation for a year. As such, it was agreed that an evaluation of the service would be undertaken.</p> <p>The APB Team has worked with our Peer Network, who undertook mystery calls into the service to provide feedback on the service they received. The Peers used their own life stories and experiences and were fully supported by the APB Team.</p> <p>Monitoring Officers also linked with Peers in Cwm Taff to carry out similar calls in order to make comparisons. Data from the FPOC has also been analysed and audits carried out on live cases.</p> <p>The final report is due to be presented to the Commissioning, Finance and Performance Sub Group and will include recommendations to improve the service going forward and recognising good practice.</p>
Alliance Commissioning	This work has been delayed whilst waiting to appoint a Programme Manager to drive forward the necessary transformation. A post holder came commenced work towards the end of July and is now progressing the necessary work to establish an 'Alliance'.

	<p>The commissioning and development of an 'Alliance' will seek to combine resources across the range of partners currently commissioning substance use related services within the West Glamorgan footprint and enable them to pool budgets. The overall budget will be utilised to commission an Alliance of providers, creating a 'single' organisation delivering a whole system approach.</p> <p>The new integrated services will be easy for those requiring a service to understand and access, focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for people. The commissioning of the service will ensure co-production is embedded in the process and so will ensure people with lived and living experience of substance use are included in all aspects of the service.</p>
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Appendix Two – Data on Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation

Presentations to Housing Options

Total new presentations received in 23/24 financial year so far:

Month	Number of households
July 2023	200
June 2023	232
May 2023	269
April 2023	217

Reasons for homelessness – all applications received in July 2023 (200 in total):

Homeless Reason	Total	
Breakdown of relationship with partner - Non Violent	25	12.50%
Breakdown of relationship with partner - Violent	13	6.50%
Current Property unaffordable	4	2%
Current Property unsuitable (Including Disrepair)	14	7%
In Institution or care	1	Less than 1%
Loss of rented or tied accommodation (including Illegal Eviction)	38	19%
Mortgage Arrears (Repossession or other loss of home)	5	2.50%
NOT HOMELESS – advice only (no assessment required)	12	6%
Other (including homeless in emergency, returned abroad, sleeping rough or in a hostel)	15	7.50%
Other Violence	2	1%
Other relatives or friends no longer able to accommodate	27	13.50%
Parent no longer willing or able to accommodate	25	12.50%
Prison Release	9	4.50%
Rent Arrears Private Sector	5	2.50%
Rent Arrears Social Landlord	5	2.50%

Gender (by lead applicant if family or couple)	Total
Non binary	1
Male	87
Female	112

Age range	Total
16/17	2
18 to 25	42
26 to 60	143
60 +	13

Cases Open to Housing Options As At 31.07.23 (511 open cases)

Reasons for homelessness

Homeless Reason	Total	%age
Breakdown of relationship with partner - Non Violent	54	10%
Breakdown of relationship with partner - Violent	27	5%
Current Property unaffordable	5	1%
Current Property unsuitable (Including Disrepair)	32	6%
In Institution or care	4	1%
Loss of rented or tied accommodation (including Illegal Eviction)	167	33%
Mortgage Arrears (Repossession or other loss of home)	8	1.50%
Other (including homeless in emergency, returned abroad, sleeping rough or in a hostel)	33	6.50%
Other Violence	6	1%
Other relatives or friends no longer able to accommodate	67	13%
Parent no longer willing or able to accommodate	66	13%
Prison Release	29	6%
Rent Arrears Private Sector	11	2%
Rent Arrears Social Landlord	2	less than 1%

Age range of all open applicants	Total
16-17	2
18-25	78
26-60	384
60+	36

Gender of all open applicants	Total
Male	227
Female	282
Trans gender	2

Temporary Accommodation (TA) Stock Profile from 2020 to 1.8.23

Type of TA	2020	2021	2022	2023 (as at 1/8)
Self contained units leased by LA from RSL's	22	22 (see note 1)	34	63 (see note 3)
Buildings owned by LA (by number of rooms – see note 4)	17	18 (see note 2)	18	18
Hostels leased by AL from RSL's (by number of rooms – see note 5)	9	9	9	9

Note 1 – due to lockdown, all moves were suspended so no properties were becoming void to enable RSL's to assist with increasing TA stock. Once restrictions were lifted, stock started to increase again.

Note 2 – communal lounge was repurposed as a bedroom to increase capacity

Note 3 – discussions are ongoing with RSL's on increasing leased units and numbers are increasing on a regular basis.

Note 4 – Beaufort House x 15 rooms and Rhodes House x 3 flats

Note 5 – Lewis Rd x 5 flats and Golwg Y Dre x 4 flats – both leased from Pobl

TA Resident Profile As At 31.7.23:**Number of households in temporary accommodation**

Month	Number of Households
31 st July 2023	197
30 th June 2023	196
31 st May 2023	208

Reasons for homelessness for all TA residents

Reason For Homelessness (31/7/23)	
Loss of rented or tied accommodation (including Illegal Eviction)	46 23%
Parent no longer willing or able to accommodate	38 19%
Other relatives or friends no longer able to accommodate	31 15%
Breakdown of relationship with partner - Non-Violent	22 11%
Prison Release	17 8%
Other (including homeless in emergency, returned abroad, sleeping rough or in a hostel)	12 6%
Breakdown of relationship with partner - Violent	11 5%
Current Property unsuitable (Including Disrepair)	9 4%
Other Violence	3 1.5%
Rent Arrears Private Sector	3 1.5%
In Institution or care	2 1%
Termination of AST	2 1%
Mortgage Arrears (Repossession or other loss of home)	1 less than 1%

Age	Number
16/17	0
18-25	39
26-60	146
60+	12

Gender	Number
Male	111
Female	85
Transgender	1

Families in TA as of 31.7.23

Total number

Family Units	52
Total Children	102

Breakdown by Accommodation Type

Accommodation Type	Family Units	Children
Hotels	16	19
Self-Contained Units	36	83

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Social Services, Housing & Community Safety Scrutiny Committee
Actions and Referrals Update – 2023-24

<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Minuted Action / Referral / Request</u>	<u>Progress Update</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Target / Completion Date</u>	<u>Completed / On-going</u>
8.6.2023	(Renamed in the meeting as Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service Grading Analysis of the Youth Justice Plan 2022-2023)	Members requested a visit to Base 15.	Suitable date arranged with Officers	Alison Davies	Visit arranged for 22 September 2023 10.00-12.00	Completed
13.7.2023	Children & Young People Services, Adult Services and Housing & Community Safety - 4th Quarter (April 2022- March 2023) Performance Report	Work on re-registration has been presented to members previously and it was agreed that this work would be re-circulated.	Information received and circulated to Scrutiny Committee Members	Keri Warren	5.9.2023	Completed

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Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

(All starting 2pm unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Contact Officer
2023		
13 th July	Asylum Dispersal, Refugee and Ukrainian Response	Claire Jones
21 st September	Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 22-23	Chair Cllr C.Galsworthy Alison Thomas (Dem Services)
	Housing and Communities – Mid-Year Progress Report	Chele Howard
16 th November	Local Area Coordinators	Sarah Waite
	Hospital Discharges	Adrian Bradshaw/Sorelle Jones
2024		
25 th January	Respite Services	Sarah Waite/Sue Bradshaw
21 st March	Direct Payments	Sue Bradshaw /Adrian Bradshaw/Lisa Morris
2 nd May		

- **To be programmed into the cycle**

Report on personal assistants – Angela Thomas/Maggie Hayes

Unpaid Carers - It was suggested in meeting on 8.6.23 that a report should come back to Scrutiny in six months' time.

