

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

***2.00 PM THURSDAY, 1 MAY 2025***

***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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**PART A**

1. Chair's Announcements
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 18*)
  - 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**Part 1**

4. To consider items from the Cabinet Forward Work Programme
- (a) Annual Report of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy, Implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015. (Pages 19 – 70)

## **Part 2**

5. To consider items from the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme
  - There are no Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme items for consideration

## **Part 3**

6. Performance Monitoring
  - (a) Social Services Complaints and Representations Annual Report 2023-2024 (Pages 71 – 87)
  - (b) Quarter 4 2024/2025 Social Services Performance Data (Pages 89 – 104)

## **Part 4**

7. 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).
8. 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 B**

9. Scrutiny of Private Items from the Cabinet Forward Work Programme
  - (a) Delegated Authority for the Purchase of Emergency Accommodation to Alleviate Homelessness - Exempt under Paragraph 14 and 16 (Pages 105 – 140)
10. Scrutiny of Private Performance Monitoring Reports
  - (a) Hillside Managers Report -Exempt under Paragraph 13 (Pages 141 – 160)

- (b) Hillside Responsible Individuals Report -Exempt under Paragraph 13 (Pages 161 – 174)

**F.O'Brien**  
**Chief Executive**

**Civic Centre**  
**Port Talbot**

**24 April 2025**

**Committee Membership:**

**Chairperson:**      **Councillor C.Galsworthy**

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

**Councillors:**      H.Davies, H.Davies, O.S.Davies, S.E.Freeguard,  
J.Jones, A.R.Lockyer, A.Lodwig, P.D.Richards,  
D.Whitelock and C.Williams

**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.*

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

**Members Present:**

**13 March 2025**

**Chairperson:** Councillor C.Galsworthy

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

**Councillors:** H.Davies, O.S.Davies, A.R.Lockyer,  
P.D.Richards, D.Whitelock and C.Williams

**Officers In Attendance** R.Davies, C.Howard, A.Jarrett, A.Thomas,  
K.Warren, I.Finnemore, C.Frey-Davies,  
L.McAndrew, E.O'Brien, M.Rafferty, R.Griffiths.  
S.Jones, L.Williams and P.Chivers

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

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1. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Helen Ceri Clarke, (Item 5A) –  
Personal, Friend works for a partner agency named within the report.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meetings held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 & 23rd January 2025 were approved as accurate records of proceedings.

4. **To consider items from the Cabinet FWP**

Members considered items from the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

**(a) Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Plan**

Officers advised members of an administrative error in the report; the report covered 2024-2025 and not 2023-2024 as stated in the agenda pack. Additionally, officers advised members of a change to the recommendation in the draft cabinet report contained within the agenda pack. The Plan for the year 2024-2025 outlines the strategies and initiatives aimed at delivering youth justice services across Neath Port Talbot and provides a comprehensive overview of the performance from the previous year.

Members commented positively on the level of detail contained within the report and were pleased that additional funding had been sourced to fund the hairdressing provision. Members enquired if more detail could be provided, on work ongoing to reduce permanent exclusions, and whether statistics could be provided relating to young people within the service with links to a neurodiverse condition. Members acknowledged that work has been undertaken on the neurodiverse agenda but there is more work to do.

Officers advised members that the structure of the report was prescribed by the Youth Justice system. Funding has been secured, and the hairdressing provision can continue for another year, there will also be a provision for barbering. The Youth Management Board is actively working on reducing exclusions and engaging staff within schools to support at-risk pupils. The plan includes a speech and language pilot in two schools and an audit to provide early support to families.

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing and Chair of the Management Board, shared concern over the number of excluded young people with links to the Youth Justice Service. A report will be taken to the next board meeting and a deep dive analysis of the children involved in exclusions and youth justice has been requested.

Members requested that this analysis is reported back to scrutiny. Members questioned whether managed moves had been considered within the data, it was noted that children have been moved between schools to prevent exclusions.

Officers confirmed that neither managed moves or children educated at home has been explored.

The Head of Children and Young People Services confirmed that data collection in this area is of concern; families have advised staff that they have felt pressure to educate children at home, work is ongoing with the Education Department in relation to this.

The Chair shared this concern and requested more work is undertaken in this area.

The Director advised the committee, that at their request, the scope of the work that has already been requested, could be extended to include those areas; this will be feedback to this committee and possibly also the Education Scrutiny Committee.

Following scrutiny, members supported the recommendation in the Cabinet report.

5. **To consider items from the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

Members considered items from the Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

(a) **Western Bay Area Planning Board Annual Report 2023/2024**

The Head of Housing and Communities provided a brief overview of the report contained within the agenda pack. The report outlines the activities and achievements of the Area Planning Board (APB) for the financial year 2023-2024, alongside areas of future focus. It was noted that 2023-2024 was a period in which a significant programme of transformation was undertaken, there has been an improvement in a number of areas, further improvements are anticipated as the APB continues to drive forward the transformation programme to improve services and outcomes for people.

Officers provided an overview of some of the achievements outlined in the report and areas of ongoing work.

Members enquired whether naloxone medication would be available for use within communities or whether specialist training was required to administer the medication.

Officers confirmed that this has been considered but there are difficulties due to the national circuits for defibrillator containers. Consideration is being given to including boxes next to defibrillator containers, however, financial constraints are an issue. There is an awareness of hot spot areas for overdoses and staff working in these areas are trained and carry naloxone. It was noted that individuals at risk of overdose would be unable to administer the naloxone themselves but were encouraged to carry the kits to assist with other individuals who may overdose.

Officers advised members that there has been a 22% decrease in blood-borne virus screening; this has been as a result of positive work. Neath Port Talbot are the only authority in Wales to have services achieving micro elimination of Hepatitis C in line with World Health Organisation objectives. In relation to drug-related deaths, there has been a 23% decrease in Neath Port Talbot for the current year. However, the APB remains vigilant about emerging threats in the drug market, such as potent synthetic opioids such as nitazines and xylazine. The APB continues to monitor these trends and collaborate with partners to address the challenges.

Members questioned whether the crime rate could rise due to an increased cost for some drugs.

Officers stated that they would be unable to answer this question, and this was a question for colleagues in policing. Officers confirmed that in police custody suites, there is potential for drug testing which is matched across the typology of offending. Support is available in police custody suites to assess and triage people in relation to their drug or alcohol use, so there is an ability to look at how offending and drug markets are influencing behaviours in the population.

Members asked for clarification regarding the data, and whether one person was recorded in a number of services.

The APB is committed to improving services and outcomes for people, working collaboratively to ensure support for all. The report highlights the importance of understanding the wider picture behind performance indicators to respond effectively to changing needs. The APB aims to streamline services with a single entry point and provider for clinical and non-clinical services by the end of the year. Officers confirmed that there was a first point of contact in current



services, with a freephone number, online referral form or drop in service.

Members asked for clarification regarding people being refused residential rehabilitation if their condition deteriorates.

Officers confirmed that if a person's health deteriorates during the application process, this is taken into consideration before a person commences a residential rehabilitation, as it could affect their ability to complete the rehabilitation successfully.

Members expressed concern regarding the different death rates between males and females and the high death rates in Neath Port Talbot. The Chair requested sight of statistics in relation to drug use with links to people with neurodiverse conditions.

Officers confirmed that the statistics for male/female death rates reflect the national picture with more males taking drugs and females less likely to come forward for support. Work was undertaken on this topic and a suite of recommendations were implemented within the Harm Reduction Subgroup; one area is for gender specific support. In relation to neurodiversity, there is limited data available. It was acknowledged that this needed to be addressed within new services so that there is full understanding of the demographic and how they can be supported.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety thanked the team for their contribution. This is a complex field, and many residents will be unaware of the work conducted by the council to protect people from the harmful effects of substance use. It was noted that tackling issues is complex due to the changes in new drugs available. Gratitude was expressed for the staff who have developed the Alliance model, which was hoped would better coordinate services across agencies. There is a need to publicise the role that the council undertakes and how important the work is.

Members commented on the reasons that young people were using substances and questioned how substance use could be prevented.

Officers agreed that this was a challenging area and partnership working was important, particularly with Public Health to change the narrative around substance use.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

**(b) Update Report in relation to Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Service for Adult Services**

The Head of Adult Services advised members that the report contained details of the significant developments that had been made, in relation to service delivery for the Adult Single Point of Contact (SPOC) service.

Members commented on the improvements that had been made to the average call waiting time and asked for examples of the types of calls that were received into the service. Members requested more information on the Magic Notes system and a visit to observe, if possible.

Officers confirmed that the types of referrals received were varied and included police reports in relation to domestic violence, individuals for aids and home adaptations and referrals around self-neglect issues. Following a referral, officers will discuss the best course of action which could include an assessment within the team or signposting/referrals to other services. The Magic Notes system, if individuals consent to using, has enabled a quicker response time. The system can be used by staff on tablet devices, mobile phones and laptops. There are high expectations of the uses of the system, and it was hoped that the use of this technology would enable more enhanced assessments to be undertaken at the front door, to minimise delays and enable people to access services more quickly. A pilot program at the front door has been successful, and the initiative is now being expanded across all adult services by the year end. A dedicated staff member has been assigned to oversee this rollout, and progress reports can be brought back to committee.

Members commented on the strong support that the initiative has received from management, and although there are cost implications, these may be justified due to the potential benefits.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

**6. Performance Monitoring**

Members considered performance monitoring items.

**(a) West Glamorgan Safeguarding Annual Report**

Officers advised members that the report covered the functions of the Safeguarding Board, the primary function is to coordinate safeguarding responses for children and adults across the region, involving various agencies and organisations. The report outlines the board's member agencies, its structure, and how it gathers feedback from organisations to ensure safeguarding remains a priority and continues to evolve in this growing area.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### **(b) Neath Port Talbot Biennial Safeguarding Report**

Officers advised members that the report highlights the significant efforts undertaken and addresses the challenges faced in Neath Port Talbot over the past two years. Covering the period from 2022 to 2024, the report highlights the resilience and commitment of the safeguarding teams amidst increasing demands and growing complexity. The report includes children's services, adult services, and corporate safeguarding, addressing harm and risks within the home, outside the home, and across organisations and institutions.

Members advised officers that questions would be forwarded to them and requested a written response be circulated to the committee.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### **(c) Corporate Plan - Performance Monitoring Q3**

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing, advised members that the report outlined the quarter three performance data in relation to the Corporate Plan. Officers were available to answer members questions on functions in relation to the remit of the scrutiny committee, or questions relating to the general formatting of the report or the corporate plan.

Members expressed dissatisfaction with the layout of the report but commented that this has been raised in other forums.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

**(d) Q3 2024/2025 Social Services Performance Data**

The Director of Social Services, Health & Housing, advised members that the performance measures in the report represented the suite of performance information that had been identified for scrutiny. Further data can be provided, if requested by scrutiny.

Officers provided members with narrative around each of the measures provided in the report:

**Measure 1 – Percentage of Adults Successfully Prevented from becoming Homeless**

This Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is important to monitor the implementation of improvement measures aimed at increasing prevention and managing demand. Following a restructure in the Housing Options team to enhance prevention support, there has been a notable improvement this year compared to the previous year. Continuous monitoring of these figures is essential to prevent as many people as possible from becoming homeless.

Members referred to the percentage figure contained in the report and questioned whether this figure was an increase or decrease.

Officers confirmed that the figure is based on the number of people that are owed a statutory homeless prevention duty and the data outlined the successful cases from that number. Further information will be provided to members on the most recent figures.

Members noted that including the figures in the report, instead of percentages could reflect successes more accurately.

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing, agreed that in future reports, figures would be included in addition to percentages and longer trend lines would be provided to assist scrutiny.

**Measure 2 - Average Number of Days to Deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant from First Point of Contact to Certification**

The measure examines the demand and pressure on disabled facility grants. A recent report brought to scrutiny highlighted the budget pressures and long waiting times for necessary aids and adaptations. A number of proposals were suggested to help better manage demand. This KPI is important for assessing the impact of any changes made by officers and the

council, to improve access to Disabled Facilities Grants for those most in need.

**Measure 3 - Commissioning: The Number of Hours of External Domiciliary Care (18 +)**

The efficiency of the brokerage system for domiciliary care has outpaced the external market. The report lacks information on the Trem y Glyn reablement unit, which could potentially slow down the transition to residential care and reduce reliance on domiciliary care. By providing a period of reablement, people will be able to return home with either a reduced or no care package. The data is work in progress and provides information relating to budgeted hours but does not provide the full picture of planned work to counter issues. Further reports will be available in the autumn.

Members enquired whether the number of beds planned for Trem Y Glyn was sufficient.

Officers advised that analysis has been undertaken in relation to the number of beds required, based on models in neighbouring authorities. The model is correct for the needs of the population, however, if demand increases this can be revisited.

**Measure 4 - Integrated Community Services: The Number of People in Care Homes (Residential & Nursing) 18+**

The number of people placed in residential and nursing care has increased by thirty, resulting in an unbudgeted financial pressure of £1.5m.

**Measure 5 - Number of Children Looked After**

The Head of Children and Young People's Services, advised members of the decline in the number of children requiring care, emphasising robust early intervention and preventative services. The importance of providing support to foster carers and rehabilitating children back home, was highlighted. For older children, the preference is for planned returns home rather than unplanned ones, which can lead to poor outcomes. The target for continued reduction is achievable. Officers commented on the success of the transformation programme, reaching the target for step-down carers for children in residential care. Officers can provide members with more information concerning the positive outcomes, if appropriate.

The committee agreed that going forward, performance data could be presented by charts, with a verbal briefing provided by officers, at the

meeting to stimulate debate. This approach can be adapted going forward, if necessary.

### **Measure 6 – Number of Children on the Child Protection Register**

The Head of Children and Young People's Services, noted that historically, the number of children on the Child Protection Register has been very high. This has diminished the effectiveness of social workers and support plans, for families requiring a written child protection plan, for a child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Work has been undertaken with partners and the Conference Review Service to reassess thresholds and the definition of significant harm. Previously, children were included on the Child Protection Register due to partners mistakenly believing it was necessary to receive social services support. The ongoing collaboration with partners and internal efforts, has resulted in a confident workforce, strong relationships with partners, and the inclusion on the register of only those children who meet the criteria.

Officers explained that while the number appears to be rising, it is important to consider the trajectory over the past 18 months. The number naturally fluctuates, and the recent increase is within the expected range of common cause variation. There is no indication of any specific issue in practice, and this will be continually monitored. Currently, the number has decreased to seventy-four, showing that the number remains relatively constant over time.

The Director of Social Services, Health & Housing discussed the importance of providing more detailed information on children placed on the Child Protection Register. It was suggested that the data was broken down into categories such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. This detailed breakdown would offer more insight. The committee agreed to this suggestion for future reports.

### **Measure 7 – Number of Children Receiving Care & Support**

The Head of Children and Young People's Services emphasised the importance of providing early support to families in need, rather than taking a harder line, which can lead to worsening situations. It was noted that the number of families needing support has increased since COVID-19, with many families now seeking help who previously would not have. The current number of families receiving support is about half of what it was in 2012.

Officers provided further detail on the wide range of support available to

families, wherever they sit within the service. The support focuses on parenting, this could involve helping to improve routines, boundaries, supporting families to get children back into school, reintroducing families into community activities, helping families with their home conditions and supporting families to plan and cook healthy meals. There are close links with Flying Start provisions, childcare, nursery groups, mother and baby groups and libraries for early intervention work.

The service supports young people's emotional well-being through group and individual programmes aimed at improving confidence, self-esteem, and overall well-being. These programmes also encourage participation in community activities, especially important post-COVID. Work is undertaken with partners in Community Safety and the Youth Service to physically support young people in engaging with their communities. Support is provided to improve home conditions for children and young people, including healthy eating and managing teenage behaviour to help young people stay with their families. Techniques such as non-violent resistance (NVR) parenting are used, relationship-based play, and mediation to enhance parent-child relationships. The support offered is tailored to each family's needs, utilising staff skills creatively to ensure comprehensive assistance.

Members asked whether support given to families around recycling and waste, was provided by Social Services or the Waste team.

Officers confirmed that work is undertaken with different departments within the authority. There are close links with the waste department, to ensure that families have the appropriate information and equipment relating to waste and recycling collections.

The Director of Social Services, Health & Housing, advised members that the data is collated because Children's Services had faced significant challenges previously when the system became overwhelmed. It was expected that figures would fall between 600 and 750 but if this were to rise, it would indicate increased pressure on social workers, reduced service responsiveness, and potential system overload. Therefore, it is essential to monitor these figures moving forward.

Officers informed members that Team Around the Family was a separate, growing team, linked with Families First and provided early intervention and prevention. Families receiving care and support can step down to Team around the Family for ongoing assistance, and step back up if needed. The

number of children supported by Team around the Family can be provided, upon request. This team offers an additional layer of support before statutory services are involved, ensuring a continuous flow of assistance.

**Measure 8 – Percentage of Re-registrations on the Child Protection Register**

Officers confirmed that there was only one re-registration over the course of the last year. When a child is removed from the Child Protection Register, it is a multi-agency decision. The manager and data systems flag certain cases, which are then discussed for learning opportunities which are feedback across the service and partnership. This helps in understanding and managing risk moving forward, making it an important marker to monitor closely.

Members questioned how long the child was removed from the Child Protection Register before re-registration.

This information was not available, but Officers will arrange for this to be circulated to the committee.

The Chair reiterated the importance of this measure, to monitor trends.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

**7. Selections of items for future scrutiny**

Officers advised members of changes that had been made, with the agreement of the Chair, to the Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme; members were given the opportunity to request further items for consideration. Members were informed that in consultation with the Chair, an additional scrutiny committee meeting had been arranged for 8th April, where the following reports would be considered:

- Purchase of Emergency Accommodation to Alleviate Homelessness
- Western Bay Regional Partnership Board
- Update on Social Services Transformation Programmes

Members were advised that the following reports had been removed from the forward work programme:



- Permission to Consult and Pilot an Alternative Night Time Support - Officers have advised that this report is not required at this time, more information will be provided on the way forward when available.
- Commissioning Intentions for Housing First Service - This report has been removed from the Cabinet Forward Work Programme as a decision is no longer required.
- Young People Housing Support Grant Funded Services Permissions to re tender – this will be dealt with under the new Contract Procedure rules.
- The Community Safety update been removed as the contents of the report will be included in an all member seminar which will take place on 24th of April, this will provide an understanding of the work of the Community Safety team.

The following report has been moved on the Cabinet Forward Work programme, Members have been advised of this change and members have not selected this item for scrutiny.

- Permission to Tender for Emergency Accommodation for Women, Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

Members noted the Forward Work Programme.

## 8. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**Cllr. C Galsworthy**  
**CHAIRPERSON**

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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**

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2025**

#### **MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

##### **WARDS AFFECTED:**

All Wards

##### **Report Title:**

Annual Report 2023-2024 of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy; implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015

##### **Purpose of Report**

To allow for pre-decision scrutiny of the Annual Report 2023-2024 of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy; implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015 by scrutiny members.

##### **Background**

The scrutiny committee have selected this item for pre-decision scrutiny before it is presented to Cabinet on 21<sup>ST</sup> May 2025 for monitoring.

**Financial Impact**

Not applicable.

**Integrated Impact Assessment**

Not applicable.

**Valleys Communities Impacts**

Not applicable.

**Workforce Impacts**

Not applicable.

**Legal Impacts**

Not applicable.

**Risk Management Impacts**

Not applicable.

**Crime and Disorder Impacts**

Not applicable.

**Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts**

Not applicable.

**Consultation**

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

**Recommendations**

Members to note the report.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft Cabinet Report -

Annual Report 2023-2024 of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy; implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015

### **List of Background Papers**

Not applicable.

### **Officer Contract**

Chelé Zandra Howard, Head of Housing and Communities  
[c.howard@npt.gov.uk](mailto:c.howard@npt.gov.uk)

Elinor Wellington, Principal Officer Community Safety  
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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Cabinet**

**21<sup>st</sup> May 2025**

### **Report of the Head of Housing and Communities – Chelé Zandra Howard**

#### **Matter for Monitoring**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All Wards

#### **Annual Report 2023-2024 of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy; implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

The purpose of the report is to monitor progress made on the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy; implementing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015 (“the Strategy”).

The Strategy (Background Paper 1) sets out the seven objectives of the Neath Port Talbot Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Leadership Group.

Attached as Appendix 1 is the first annual report of the Strategy, for 2023/24. Within the document it sets out for each objective what the partnership wanted to achieve between 2023 and 2026, and what has been achieved so far.

Further annual reports will be brought back to Cabinet for 24/25 and 25/26.

### **Executive Summary**

The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 was introduced to improve arrangements for the prevention of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence; improve arrangements for the protection of victims of such abuse and violence; and required the appointment of a National Adviser on gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence;

The Act placed a new general duty on Local Authorities to have regard (along with all other relevant matters) to the need to remove or minimise any factors which increases the risk of violence against women and girls or, exacerbate the impact of such violence on victims.

The Act also placed a duty on Local Authorities and health boards to produce and publish a local strategy for the Local Authority area and then to take reasonable steps to achieve the objectives set out in the local strategy.

In 2017, Neath Port Talbot's first 'Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities' Strategy was prepared. This was a 3 years Strategy, overseen by the VAWDASV Leadership Group. The Strategy is now on its third iteration.



Significant progress has been made across all areas of VAWDASV related support and services.

The objectives within the Strategy mirror those in the original Strategy, but the actions within them are new, to be delivered on between 2023 and 2026.

Attached, at Appendix 1 is the annual report of the latest Strategy, the delivery of which has been supported by the Neath Port Talbot VAWDASV Leadership Group.

## **Background**

The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve arrangements for the prevention of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence; improve arrangements for the protection of victims of such abuse and violence; improve support for people affected by such abuse and violence; and requires the appointment of a National Adviser on gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Act created a number of new responsibilities for Local Authorities in Wales including a duty to prepare and public a strategy for the Local Authority's area, jointly with the relevant health board.

In order to meet the requirements of the Act, the former Domestic Abuse Strategy Group (DASG) was disbanded and replaced by a new multi-agency Leadership Group. There has been sustained with senior commitment to the Group over the last 9 years and significant progress has been made on all aspects of the Strategy. This commitment has continued with the development of the revised Strategy for 2023-2026.

As with the original Strategy, this revised Strategy follows the structure of the Welsh Government's National Strategy for Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, enabling the

local partnership to demonstrate its contribution to delivering the national policy objectives established by the Welsh Government. It includes all of the areas of activity that are set out in various statutory guidance documents, but most importantly, it identifies the strengths and challenges for this area and sets out a series of achievable actions to help us to achieve our long term vision:

*“To prevent and eradicate violence against women, domestic abuse sexual violence by promoting equality, safety, respect and independence to enable everyone to live from abuse and the attitudes that perpetuate it.”*

### **Key Objectives**

There are seven objectives set out in the Strategy:

#### **1. Communications & Engagement**

To Increase awareness and challenge attitudes towards violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

#### **2. Children & Young People**

To Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong

#### **3. Perpetrators**

Increased focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based on victim safety

#### **4. Early Intervention & Prevention**

Make early intervention and prevention a priority

#### **5. Training**

Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate response to victims

## **6. Accessible Services**

Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services across Neath Port Talbot

## **7. Courts & Criminal Justice**

Increased focus on improving the recognition of and responses to violence against, women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in all criminal justice proceedings

The annual report demonstrates progress made on each of these objectives.

### **Financial Impacts:**

No implications

### **Integrated Impact Assessment:**

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

### **Valleys Communities Impacts:**

No implications

### **Workforce Impacts:**

The Act & Strategy has resulted in a workplace Domestic Abuse Policy and the introduction of Safe Leave, for staff who are affected by any form of VAWDASV.

The Act continues to impact on commissioning activities that fall within the scope of the Act, which in turn may have particular workforce implications e.g. the requirement to deliver training that meets the requirements set out in the National Training Framework.

**Legal Impacts:**

The preparation and publication of a Strategy and annual report will ensure the Council discharges its statutory duty as required within the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015

**Risk Management Impacts:**

There is a risk of non-compliance with the duties introduced by the Act if sufficient resources are not provided to Local Authorities to cover the costs of the associated activities. This risk has been mitigated by ensuring proposed actions within the Strategy can be delivered within existing resource, albeit there is a continued need to refocus how those resources are best used, and work closely with partners to explore the potential to draw in additional funding.

**Crime and Disorder Impacts:**

The Council has a legal duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with “due regard to the need to prevent Crime and Disorder in its area”.

The strategy associated with this annual report will assist the Council in discharging its duties under the above mentioned act and the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015

**Counter Terrorism Impacts:**

No implications

**Consultation:**

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

**Recommendations:**

No recommendations – for monitoring only

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: 2023-24 Annual Report of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities' Strategy (2023-2026)

**List of Background Papers:**

Background Paper 1: Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy (2023-2026) [Healthy Relationships For Stronger Communities Strategy 23-26 Final Version.pdf](#)

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# Healthy Relationships For Stronger Communities Strategy

## ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24



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Health Board



# Introduction

- ▶ The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015 placed a duty on Local Authorities and Health Boards to jointly prepare a strategy for their local area in order to improve prevention, protection and support for victims.
- ▶ The first Neath Port Talbot Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy was launched in 2017, revised in 2020 and current strategy is now in place from 2023-26.
- ▶ The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Leadership Group has overseen the implementation of the strategies with various sub-groups commissioned to undertake certain objectives and actions
- ▶ This Annual Report highlights the 7 key objectives of the strategy, the actions within them and the achievements made so far, as well as the work still to be undertaken



# Strategic Objectives of the Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities Strategy

1. Communications & Engagement
2. Children & Young People
3. Perpetrator Intervention
4. Early Intervention & Prevention
5. Training
6. Accessible Support
7. Criminal Justice

# Communication & Engagement

*Increase the reports of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in Neath Port Talbot, through awareness raising and challenging attitudes*

## In the Strategy, we said we would;

1. Continue the Regional Communication & Engagement group on a regional basis and ensure the membership of the group remains inclusive. Membership to be expanded where appropriate to include:  
»a. Area Planning Board representative
2. Continue to raise awareness of the following initiatives to further encourage victims to come forward and access appropriate help and support: »a. Live Fear »b. Clare's Law» c. Bright Sky »d. Ask Angela
3. Actively promote the Respect Helpline for victims and perpetrators during local engagement events
4. Continue to amplify Welsh Government campaigns regarding VAWDASV, to ensure we play our part in strengthening the messages and making them recognisable across all areas of Wales
5. Consider alternative approaches to engage with marginalised groups, encouraging more people to come forward if they are experiencing VAWDASV
6. Develop, launch and evaluate a local Sexual Violence Prevention campaign, using local data to ensure messages are targeted at those who may be at most risk within our communities as well as identifying perpetrator behaviours
7. Increase awareness of sexual exploitation and street harassment through local, regional and national campaigns
8. Maintain an annual calendar of national and local events and activities

# Communications & Engagement

## Progress So Far...

- ▶ Regional Group membership extended to include representatives from New Pathways, Department of Work & Pensions
- ▶ Annual White Ribbon campaign promotes local and national campaigns including Clare's Law, Bright Sky, Respect and continual rolling campaigns ensure regular awareness raising of all relevant material
- ▶ Monthly Safer Community events held across Neath Port Talbot providing regular opportunities to promote VAWDASV awareness and signpost to local and national support services. Focus on ensuring VAWDASV is everyone's business and bringing difficult conversations into all arenas
- ▶ Regional Heads Up campaign further extended across the hair and beauty industry in partnership with South Wales Police Operation Prunella and NPT Be Safe Team. Aiming to upskill staff in identifying domestic abuse and providing confidence in handling sensitive conversations. Information packs distributed promoting Live Fear Free and Respect helplines as well as local service providers
- ▶ Safer NPT/Be Safe Team extended Safe Spaces into Neath and Port Talbot Town Centres as well as all civic buildings and libraries

# Communications & Engagement

## Progress continued...

- ▶ Calan DVS took part in Neath Port Talbot's Safeguarding Week and offered three events, Supporting LGBTQ+ CYP, ACE's Recovery and sharing our journey to working with Survivors of Sexual Violence
- ▶ Calan DVS held consultations with children & young people as well as adult victims/survivors of domestic abuse in order to inform practise, identify gaps in service and develop a model to address emerging issues
- ▶ Thrive Women's Aid continues to offer their Edge programme offering support to marginalised groups

*Safer NPT White Ribbon 2023 Facebook campaign reached over 21,000 followers;  
the most engaging posts included information on  
Trauma bonding, Gaslighting and Coercive Control*

# Children & Young People

*Increase awareness in children, young people and adults of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and empowering them to positive personal choices*

## In the Strategy, we said we would;

1. Continue to work towards a Whole School Approach across NPT
2. Through the Relationship & Sexuality Education Group, ensure the Healthy Relationship lesson continues delivery to all schools across Neath Port Talbot, ensuring take up is monitored and increased over the next 3 years
3. Explore opportunities for challenging misogynistic behaviour and toxic masculinity with young people, considering the influence of social media
4. Use existing initiatives (such as Crucial Crew, It's Your World Well-Being Workshops, the Healthy Relationship Lesson, Spectrum programme and the Whole School Approach) to ensure all children are aware of services or points of contact with whom they can share any concerns they may have about their own relationships or their friends, family or others in the community
5. Raise awareness of all Welsh Government VAWADSV campaigns targeted at CYP with an emphasis on challenging misogyny and developing conversations about acceptable language and behaviour
6. Consider increased opportunities to engage with those in higher education settings about healthy relationships, consent, peer on peer abuse and problematic sexual behaviour, misogyny and related topics

# Children & Young People

## Progress So Far...

- 1501 Year 6 pupils from 52 primary schools received a Healthy Relationships workshop at the annual Crucial Crew event
- Stori were able to deliver Healthy Relationships education to 790 pupils across NPT and included 50 teachers in the sessions.
- Camau Training has delivered Healthy Relationships education to 1425 pupils in secondary schools
- Camau training has been approached by a number of schools requesting further lesson delivery in topics not currently covered including: consent within relationships, sexual harassment, family dynamics and misogyny. A survey was undertaken with Safeguarding leads to assess the requirement for expansion of content
- Camau Training has delivered sessions to NPT college providing information on positive masculinity and consent
- Thrive Women's Aid has delivered Healthy Relationship content to local secondary school including issues around consent. Plans to deliver same content to local college.
- Thrive has delivered RESPECT RYPP Programme for young people using violence towards parents and intimate relationships

# Children & Young People

## Progress continued...

- ▶ Calan DVS supported 29 children and young people through its refuge services, 92 children and young people through the Ar Trac Project, 14 children through the Drawing and Talking Project, 100% of these young people reported that they felt heard and listened to
- ▶ Calan's Ar Trac Team held 5 consultations with children and young people across the Neath Port Talbot area. These consultations help informed the practices of the organisation and identify any gaps in services and develop models to address the gaps
- ▶ Stori has engaged with families via a number of programmes including the Nurturing programme, identifying and understanding certain CYP behaviours
- ▶ Safer NPT continues to promote positive masculinity through local and national social media campaigns, including the Welsh Government's Call Out Only and Sound Lad.
- ▶ Safer NPT has linked with Plan International to explore ways of awareness raising around misogyny and challenging low level behaviour through Bystander training with schools.

# Perpetrator Programme Development

*Increase the focus on holding those who commit abuse to account and supporting those who may carry out abusive or violent behaviour to change their behaviour and avoid offending*

## In the Strategy, we said we would;

1. Ensure perpetrators of domestic abuse receive appropriate intervention to disrupt and change perpetrating behaviours
2. Promote interventions like Reprovide across the region to raise awareness and encourage participation
3. Ensure there are suitable referral pathways, to encourage referrals, use and attendance of all perpetrator programmes
4. Consider what measures we can take to improve the identification of perpetrators and engage them in programmes that tackle their behaviour and hold them to account
5. Work with Housing Options to monitor the number of perpetrator evictions under the Renting Homes Wales Act, which states 'perpetrators of domestic abuse can be targeted for eviction to help prevent those experiencing domestic abuse from becoming homeless; supporting the aims of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 to provide preventive, protective and supportive mechanisms in the delivery of services'



# Perpetrator Programme Development

## Continued...

6. Work with Housing Options to monitor the number of perpetrator evictions under the Renting Homes Wales Act, which states 'perpetrators of domestic abuse can be targeted for eviction to help prevent those experiencing domestic abuse from becoming homeless; supporting the aims of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 to provide preventive, protective and supportive mechanisms in the delivery of services'
7. Explore opportunities to work with female perpetrators and perpetrators of sexual abuse
8. Continue to promote and develop clear referral pathways to CLEAR to support men who have identified concerns about their behaviour
9. Continue to work with local specialist providers to support families and identify the most effective interventions
10. Work with the Communications and Engagement Group to encourage workplaces to develop a zero tolerance environment to workplace harassment by raising awareness with organisations and sharing consistent messages

# Perpetrator Programme Development

## Progress So Far...

- ▶ Calan DVS delivered the Inspiring Families Programme to 27 families across Neath Port Talbot. This is a 10 week assessment programme for families who have chosen to stay together. It can strengthen and stabilise families and provides professionals with a robust framework to assess the parent's behaviour
- ▶ Calan DVS took part in the Reprovide Randomised Control Trail led by Bristol University. The Reprovide programme was successfully delivered up until the end of April 2024 During the trial, Calan along with Reprovide, successfully recruited 21 men take part in the trail, testing a group intervention to help men who are violent or abusive in their relationships with women
- ▶ Calan DVS delivered its first pilot ACEs Recovery Toolkit to low level perpetrators of domestic abuse. The 10-week programme is written to assist any individuals who have experienced ACE's that have resulted in emotional trauma and are in a position to take part in a group. It is designed to assist each of them in looking at ways to develop positive lifestyle coping strategies i.e. behaviour change
- ▶ The DRIVE programme launched in Neath Port Talbot in September 2020, funded by the PCC has continued to deliver perpetrator interventions across Neath Port Talbot, working with high risk perpetrators identified in Neath Port Talbot Marac

# Perpetrator Programme Development

## Progress continued...

- ▶ Thrive Women's Aid are working with low-level perpetrators implementing the CLEAR programme, part of the Change That Lasts model. The programme works with the whole family, ensuring safety of victims and children while raising awareness of healthy relationships
- ▶ Thrive are working closely with Tata Steel to raise awareness of CLEAR and other family support services following the closure of part of the organisation resulting in 2500 local redundancies.
- ▶ Indicators of perpetrator behaviour and appropriate signposting is included within Group 3 training. 'Ask and Act' trainers receive regular updates which have included a session delivered by DRIVE.
- ▶ The implementation of IRIS (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety) continues roll-out across the Health Board area, the programme includes raising awareness of perpetrator behaviour and advice on signposting

# Early Intervention & Prevention

**Make early intervention and prevention a priority - To reduce the number of repeat victims and reduce the number of high risk cases.**

## **In the Strategy, we said we would;**

1. Continue to work with Housing Support Group, the Area Planning Board, Community Safety and Families First commissioners to refocus funding in line with a new service model
2. Consider the work of the Dr. Jane Monckton Smith when planning or commissioning services
3. Continue to work with South Wales Police on the Early Action Together programme, incorporating ACE'S into their work and integrating services into the Social Services front door
4. Work with the Communications and Engagement Group to conduct research to identify unidentified need - working with local services to better understand the needs of marginalised groups in our area, identifying any gaps in current provision
5. Continue to support local services in developing targeted outreach provision to tackle violence against those experiencing harm or exploited by the sex industry
6. Continue to support the roll out of IRIS across the region
7. Consider further working with Welsh Women's Aid to deliver on their Change That Lasts Model

# Early Intervention & Prevention

## Progress So Far...

- Commissioning work resumed after the pandemic and will undertake a 3 phase a public consultation from 2024.
- Work is ongoing between South Wales Police and Social Services on the Early Action Together programme
- The Communications and Engagement Group has been tasked to consider alternative ways to engage with marginalised groups in our communities. We will continue to research how to identify unidentified need.
- ▶ All Health visiting staff have been trained in how to use the Welsh Levels of Care Framework. This includes the agenda around ACE's and development of a refresher training, planned for 2024/25.
- ▶ The Health Board has a health IDVA based at ED Morriston Hospital. She takes referrals for patients and staff completing risk assessments, signposting and providing ongoing support.

# Early Intervention & Prevention

## Progress continued...

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- ▶ Calan DVS delivered 18 LBGTQ+ online professional discussions around LBGTQ+ affirmative approaches with 136 professionals attending these sessions.
- ▶ Thrive Women's Aid has embedded the Change That Lasts approach into their working practises
- ▶ Thrive delivers a RAPID project to provide domestic abuse specialists to work alongside attending Police Officers responding to calls of a domestic abuse nature with team members based at Neath Police Station
- ▶ New Pathways specialist sexual violence support and counselling services across Neath and Port Talbot increase clients understanding of vulnerabilities and thereby reduce the risk of re-victimisation of people who experience sexual violence
- ▶ New Pathways Compass project is targeted at early intervention and prevention of harmful sexual behaviour and aims to reduce the risk of inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviours escalating to the level where significant harms are caused and criminal justice services are involved

### IRISi

Since it's implementation in 2020, 204 referrals have been made to the service and 451 health professionals in GP practices across Swansea Bay have been trained.

# Training

*Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors*

## In the Strategy, we said we would;

1. Provide Group 1 training to all new NPT staff as part of their induction and provide refreshers to existing staff in line with the National Training Framework
2. Work with local service providers to ensure they continue to receive appropriate training on complex needs in line with Groups 4 and 5 of the National Training Framework
3. Ensure all agencies in the local VAWDASV partnership continue to give a commitment to training plans within their own organisation over the next 3 years
4. When delivering VAWDASV training, continue to give consideration to the recommendations of local Domestic Homicide Reviews, to ensure everyone feels confident to signpost victims to appropriate support services or VAWDASV champions
5. Continue to raise awareness, through our training roll out, of the 'Safe Leave' policy for NPT staff who are affected by VAWDASV For 2023-26

# Training

## Continued...

For 2023-26, on a regional basis we will;

1. Continue to roll out 'Ask & Act' Group 2 Training promoting the Ask & Act Pathway and regional specialist partners to priority groups of staff across NPT in partnership with Swansea
2. Roll out 'Ask & Act' Group 3 Training to organisational champions across the region in partnership with Swansea, Swansea Bay University Health Board and specialist regional partners
3. Provide accredited local authority and health board 'Ask & Act' trainers with additional training to support their continuous professional development and the sustainability of their training
4. Work with Welsh Women's Aid and partners to deliver Group 6 of the National Training Framework to all local members and senior leaders



# Training

## Progress So Far...

- ▶ 1695 (26%) NPT Council Staff have been trained to Group 1 learning outcomes in 2023-24
- ▶ In total, 5972 (92%) of NPT staff have now received Group 1 VAWDASV Training, including our hard to reach services, since publication of the National Training Framework in 2016.
- ▶ *12,310 SBUHB staff have completed Group 1 VAWDASV Training to date, 4,297 SBUHB staff have received Group 2 VAWDASV Training*
- ▶ *451 GP practice staff have received IRIS Training*
- ▶ The Training Plan has been further developed to include regional roll out of Group 2 Ask and Act training with Swansea LA and Swansea Bay University Health Board
- ▶ Group 2 Ask & Act Training has been provided to 88 professionals within NPT Council bringing the total to 517 since 2016.
- ▶ A regional Ask and Act steering group with Swansea and SBUHB guides the roll out of Group 2 and 3 training.
- ▶ Local support services are promoted as part of training. Staff are advised on where to refer those who need support and on the new regional Ask and Act pathway for referral.
- ▶ Live training is continually updated to include the latest information on campaigns, services and changes to legislation, where appropriate.

# Training

## Progress continued...

- ▶ 9 members of staff from NPT Social Services and Education have achieved accreditation to deliver Group 2 and 3.
- ▶ A regional trainer upskilling day was held in March 2024 for 30 regional trainers providing new information on partner services; the IRIS service and Stalking and Harassment in particular
- ▶ Group 3 Workplace Champions training is delivered regionally in partnership with Swansea, SBUHB and specialist partners. *NPT has 14 champions so far, SBUHB have trained 42 champions in 2023/24*
- ▶ Calan DVS delivered IRIS training across Swansea Bay University Health Board to 129 Clinicians & 79 admin staff, totalling 32 fully IRIS trained practices across the delivery area
- ▶ Calan DVS extended its expertise by delivering training to over 600 professionals in other organisations, fostering a wider impact through shared learning and development
- ▶ New Pathways offered a wide range of free specialist sexual violence training for professionals across the region including:

Sexual violence awareness, Trauma informed practice, Dealing with disclosures of sexual violence, Vicarious Trauma, Perpetrators of Sexual Violence, Older People and Sexual Violence, Autism and Trauma

***Training has continued to be evaluated to ensure a high standard and consistency of delivery.***

# Accessible Support Services

*Provide all victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs-led, strength-based, inter-sectional and responsive services across Wales*

## In the Strategy, we said we would;

1. Continue to have regard for VAWDASV Commissioning Guidance in our practice so that those who commission services can ensure activity is better informed, more joined up and value for money, ensuring that specialist services in NPT meet victims' needs
2. Further develop links with local specialist providers who meet the needs of people affected by other forms of violence such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
3. Work with Supporting People to complete the commissioning exercise to implement a new service model for Accommodation and Support
4. Implement the findings of the Review of Social Services response to domestic abuse to improve support which is survivor informed and joined-up with good communication channels across all organisations
5. Continue to support the new RAPID project delivered in partnership by Thrive Women's Aid and South Wales Police For 2023-2026, on a regional basis we will;
6. Consider ways to further expand the provision of the SWAN service across the region

# Accessible Support Services

## Progress So Far...

- Regular meetings with Housing providers and specialist providers continue with the VAWDASV strategic lead and IDVA service manager.
- Multi-agency review into Social Services response to cases with domestic abuse was undertaken throughout 2023 and action plan prepared for implementation from 2024/5.
- Calan DVS were awarded capital funding to purchase a property in Neath that would support victims who weren't suited to female communal refuge living. As a result, a property was purchased in February of 2024 and will be a dedicated male refuge
- Calan continues to offer the Myriad Programme, an 8-week recovery and resilience programme for LGBTQ+ victims of domestic abuse.
- Work has continued on Calan's first Sexual Trauma and Recovery Centre and its doors will officially open in Autumn 2024

# Accessible Support Services

## Progress continued...

- ▶ Thrive's EDGE project continues to offer support to marginalised women facing barriers to support
- ▶ Thrive's SWAN project provides practical and emotional support to improve the safety and wellbeing of women who are exploited by the sex industry through street sex work, parlour sex work or online and cam work. SWAN offers a flexible and non-judgemental service through 1:1 appointments, outreach provision and crisis support. We provide a quick response to address the immediate support needs of women who are sexually exploited
- ▶ Thrive offers support informed by equality, diversity, inclusion and intersectionality. They also work alongside other specialist agencies such as BAWSO if further specialist support is needed in areas such as FGM
- ▶ New Pathways provided 1:1 specialist sexual violence services (including Sexual Assault Referral Centre services and crisis support, ISVA, Sexual Violence Wellbeing Support and Specialist Sexual Violence Counselling) to over 650 people across the Neath Port Talbot region.
- ▶ New Pathways recognises LGBTQ+ people are disproportionately affected by sexual violence. Their LGBTQ+ project worked throughout 23-24 to gather views from wide range of LGBTQ+ people, including those with intersectional needs, on how to reduce barriers and develop accessing to sexual violence services in partnership with a specialist LGBTQ+ service provider

# Criminal Justice

*Increase focus on improving the recognition of, and responses to VAWDASV in all Criminal Justice proceedings*

## In the Strategy, we said we would;

1. Work in partnership with South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to further improve outcomes; to reduce the number of repeat victims; and to identify how we can intervene effectively much earlier
2. Continue to work in partnership with the Police and Courts, to identify what needs to change to better support victims, including victimless prosecutions and how evidence is gathered
3. Continue to increase awareness with local solicitors, magistrates, and legal reps of the importance of recognising all forms of VAWDASV and providing appropriate responses in family court situations
4. Continue to promote the use of remote evidence facilities across the region. To ensure victims are fully aware of the service and are appropriately supported throughout the court process

# Criminal Justice

## Progress So Far...

- ▶ The Regional Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) Steering Group continue to meet quarterly and continues to bring together local partners across the local criminal justice system to ensure a joined - up and cohesive criminal justice response to domestic abuse. Creating better outcomes and lived experience for survivors and victims of domestic abuse.
- ▶ Regionally, through the SDAC Steering Group, we have participated in the DA Best Practice Review during 2024 with Criminal Justice partners working together to consistently improve the experiences of the criminal justice system for victims, witnesses, and people who have offended across Wales
- ▶ Neath Port Talbot IDVA Service continue to work closely with the Regional Court IDVA in partnership with South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to improve outcomes and experiences for victims and reduce the number of repeat victims.
- ▶ Neath Port Talbot IDVA Service continues to work in partnership with the South Wales Police and HMCS to improve communication and support for victims, including victimless prosecutions and gathering of evidence.
- ▶ Data has shown an increase in the volume of Domestic Abuse work within the court. Conviction rates have been between 70% and 80% and this has been near or above the national average figures.

# Criminal Justice

## Progress continued...

- ▶ Thrive has provided awareness sessions to all Magistrates in the local area and works closely with solicitors in the local community to provide legal sessions on site at Thrive's office.
- ▶ Thrive delivers awareness to training to local solicitors on VAWDASV.
- ▶ Thrive delivers training to all Police officers on a regional basis through the RAPID project to better inform practice and outcomes.
- ▶ Further plans are underway to develop the remote facility for Family Court.
- ▶ Thrive and South Wales Police submitted a joint application for funding to deliver the RAPID project. This work will see Thrive join the first response team for incidents of domestic abuse to improve the experiences had by victims and their children when a report of domestic abuse, coercive control, stalking and harassment is made. This project will also deliver comprehensive training to Police Officers to raise their awareness and knowledge of these areas.



# Overall Summary Of Progress

- ▶ The VAWDASV Leadership Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis with excellent support from stakeholders
- ▶ Comms and Engagement Sub Group, RSE sub group and Ask & Act sub group have been maintained, with some Task & Finish Groups also being convened (e.g. Social services Review, Safe Spaces for Women, RSE Wellbeing Pilot)
- ▶ The IDVA service capacity has doubled enabling the team to provide a much-strengthened service. Victim engagement remains increased following the pandemic and team morale is hugely improved
- ▶ A VAWDASV Leadership Group Development Day was held in January 2024, bringing together stakeholders and service providers to examine the Strategic Objectives and identify priorities for Neath Port Talbot over the coming year
- ▶ SBUHB have a Health IDVA based in ED, Morriston Hospital to support high risk victims, both patients and staff, often at the point of crisis.
- ▶ IRISi has continued to be rolled out across the Swansea Bay University Health Board footprint, providing access to victims who are often hard to reach.

# Next Steps

## We will ensure that:

- ▶ The work of the VAWDASV Leadership Group remains a key priority area for the Local Authority and the Community Safety Partnership Board
- ▶ Local objectives align with those of the Wales National VAWDASV Strategy
- ▶ We will continue to support the VAWDASV Blueprint model, contributing to workstreams where appropriate
- ▶ Strong partnerships will be maintained between statutory, voluntary and third sector agencies in order to drive towards the objectives outlined

# Healthy Relationships For Stronger Communities Strategy

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# Healthy Relationships For Stronger Communities Strategy

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# Summary of Report

- ▶ the key objectives of the strategy
- ▶ the actions within them and the achievements made so far
- ▶ any work still to be undertaken

# Communications & Engagement

- ▶ Regional Communications Group extended membership and meets quarterly
- ▶ Annual calendar of events to forward plan campaigns



Heads Up campaign extended to encompass SWP Op Prunella.

Successful White Ribbon campaign in 2023 with over 21,000 reach on social media.



Safe Spaces extended to all NPT Town Centres, Civic Buildings and NPT Libraries



# Children & Young People

Healthy Relationships sessions delivered to 1501 pupils at Crucial Crew, and to over 2200 pupils in schools through partnerships with Camau Training and Stori's Spectrum project.



Calan DVS supported 29 children and young people through its refuge services, 92 children and young people through the Ar Trac Project

Safer NPT promoted positive masculinity through local and national social media campaigns, including the Welsh Government's Call Out Only and Sound Lad campaigns and continues to explore further methods of tackling misogyny through partnerships with local schools and colleges.



# Perpetrator Programme Development

PCC funded Drive project continues to work with high risk perpetrators of domestic abuse.



In NPT, 59 high-risk perpetrators have engaged in the programme since it's introduction with 66 associated victims and 120 children

Calan along with Reprovide, successfully recruited 21 men to take part in a trial, testing a group intervention to help men who are violent or abusive in their relationships with women



Indicators of perpetrator behaviour and appropriate signposting is included within Group 3 training. 'Ask and Act' trainers receive regular updates which have included a session delivered by DRIVE

# Early Intervention & Prevention



New Pathways *Compass* project provides early intervention and prevention of harmful sexual behaviour and aims to reduce the risk of inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviours escalating to the level where significant harms are caused

Health IDVA at Morriston Hospital, takes referrals for patients and staff completing risk assessments, signposting and providing ongoing support.

Since roll out in 2020, 204 referrals have been made to the service and 451 health professionals in GP practices across Swansea Bay have been trained.



Calan DVS delivered 18 LBGTQ+ online professional discussions around LBGTQ+ affirmative approaches to 136 professionals

# Training

5972 (92%) of NPT staff have now received Group 1 VAWDASV Training, including hard to reach services

12,310 (80%) of SBUHB staff have received Group 1 VAWDASV Training in the past three years



451 GP practice staff have received IRIS Training

Group 3 Workplace Champions training is delivered regionally in partnership with Swansea, SBUHB and specialist partners. *NPT has 14 champions, SBUHB trained 42 champions in 2023/24*

# Accessible Support Services

Calan DVS were awarded capital funding to purchase a property in Neath that would support victims who weren't suited to female communal refuge living. As a result, a property was purchased in February 2024 and will be a dedicated male refuge

New Pathways provided 1:1 specialist sexual violence services (including Sexual Assault Referral Centre services and crisis support, ISVA, Sexual Violence Wellbeing Support and Specialist Sexual Violence Counselling) to over 650 people across the Neath Port Talbot region.



Multi-agency review into Social Services response to cases with domestic abuse was undertaken throughout 2023 and action plan prepared for implementation from 2024/5

Shrive's SWAN project provides practical and emotional support to improve the safety and wellbeing of women who are exploited by the sex industry SWAN offers a flexible and non-judgemental service through 1:1 appointments, outreach provision and crisis support.

**Work has continued on Calan's first Sexual Trauma and Recovery Centre and its doors will officially open in Autumn/Winter 2024**

# Criminal Justice

The Regional Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) Steering Group continue to meet quarterly and continues to bring together local partners across the local criminal justice system to ensure a joined - up and cohesive criminal justice response to domestic abuse.



Thrive has provided awareness sessions to all Magistrates in the local area and works closely with solicitors in the local community to provide legal sessions on site at Thrive's office

Thrive delivers training to all Police officers on a regional basis through the RAPID project to better inform practice and outcomes

Neath Port Talbot IDVA Service continue to work closely with the Regional Court IDVA in partnership with South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to improve outcomes and experiences for victims and reduce the number of repeat victims.

# Next Steps

## We will ensure that:

- ▶ The work of the VAWDASV Leadership Group remains a key priority area for the Local Authority and the Community Safety Partnership Board
- ▶ Local objectives align with those of the Wales National VAWDASV Strategy
- ▶ We continue to support the VAWDASV Blueprint model, contributing and sharing information where relevant
- ▶ Strong partnerships will be maintained between statutory, voluntary and third sector agencies to drive towards the objectives outlined



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

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

**1st May 2025**

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

### **Matter for Information**

**Wards Affected:** All

### **SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

#### **Purpose of Report**

To report on the operation of the Directorate's Complaints and Representation procedures from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, including comparisons, where relevant, against activities in previous years.

#### **Executive Summary**

Social Services Departments have been required by statute to operate a complaints and representation procedure since 1991. Neath Port Talbot Council operates its procedure in line with Welsh Government guidance.

The Annual Report, attached as Appendix 1, provides Members with a summary of the complaint and representation activities during 2023-24.

**Financial Impacts**

No Implications.

**Integrated Impact Assessment**

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

**Valleys Communities Impacts**

No Implications.

**Workforce Impacts**

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

**Legal Impacts**

There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

**Risk Management Impacts**

There are no known risks associated with this item.

**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);
- 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.

**Counter Terrorism Impacts**

There is no impact on the duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.



## **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.

There is no impact on the above duty.

## **Consultation**

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

## **Recommendation**

This item is for monitoring purposes.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

Not applicable.

## **Implementation of Decision**

Not applicable.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Social Services Complaints and Representations  
Annual Report 2023-24.

## **List of Background Papers**

A Guide to Handling Complaints & Representations by Local  
Authority Social Services – Welsh Government (August 2014).

## **Officer Contact**

Leighton Jones, P.O. Governance & Policy Support  
email: [l.jones@npt.gov.uk](mailto:l.jones@npt.gov.uk)

Lisa Cody-Davies, Governance & Policy Support (Designated  
Complaints Officer) Tel. No. 01639 763445  
email: [l.cody-davies@npt.gov.uk](mailto:l.cody-davies@npt.gov.uk)

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# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL**

## **SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

### **ANNUAL REPORT 2023 / 2024**

**SOCIAL SERVICES  
COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS 2023-24**

**CONTENTS**

1. Introduction
2. Why do people complain?
3. Summary of the complaints procedure
4. The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
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6. Safeguarding of children and adult protection
7. Statistical information 2023/2024
8. Lessons Learned
9. Achievements in 2023/2024
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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and relates to the Children's Services and Adult Services, within the Directorate of Social Services, Health and Housing, which jointly comprise the social services function within Neath Port Talbot Council.

Legislation requires social services authorities to maintain a procedure for considering complaints and representations and the purpose of this report is to provide a review and statistical analysis of the complaints, comments and compliments received by Social Services during the reporting period.

## **2. WHY DO PEOPLE COMPLAIN?**

The most common reasons reported for making a complaint include:-

- to be heard;
- that concerns be recognised, acknowledged and taken seriously;
- that appropriate action be taken to remedy problems and avoid similar incidents in the future;
- to receive an apology.

## **3. SUMMARY OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

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.

The procedure is a positive response by the Directorate to create an atmosphere of partnership and participation with users of services. They are also established to protect the rights of the service users.

It is the Directorate's policy that all complaints must be resolved as quickly as possible and as close to the point of delivery as is possible. The aim is to resolve complaints, informally at a local level with speed, fairness and understanding.

There are two formal stages to the procedure which covers both adult and children's complaints.

### **Stage 1: Local Resolution**

The policy and procedure aims to ensure that people who complain have their concerns resolved swiftly and, wherever possible, by the people who provide the service locally.

The complainant/service user is provided with the opportunity to discuss their concerns with local staff and management. A response must be provided by the manager within 10 working days of the date of receipt of the complaint. The timescale can be extended with the agreement of the complainant (usually a further 10 working days).

### **Stage 2: Formal Consideration**

Where a complaint cannot be resolved at Stage 1, it will be referred to Stage 2. An Independent Investigating Officer (I.I.O.) is appointed by the Director (or their representative) to investigate the matter. In the case of children's complaints, an Independent Person (I.P.) is also appointed to oversee the investigation process in accordance with statutory requirements. Both individuals are not permitted to be employees of the local authority.

The I.I.O. produces an investigation report. A formal written response (which will include reference to any recommended action(s)) is then provided to the complainant by the Director of Social Services.

Completion of the investigation and the accompanying report should be achieved within the statutory timescale of 25 working days; again, an extension can be made with the agreement of the complainant.

## **4. THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES**

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales provides an external independent service for the purpose of considering complaints made by members of the public in relation to all local authority services, including social services. The Public Services Ombudsman also has jurisdiction to examine and determine complaints of injustice as a result of maladministration on the part of the local authority.

The Ombudsman will normally require complainants to have sought redress, in the first instance, via the local authority's complaints procedure prior to accepting and investigating a complaint of maladministration on the part of the local authority.

## **5. MEMBER REFERRALS**

The Complaints and Representations Procedure does not preclude the right of an individual to approach their Local Councillor, Assembly Member or Member of Parliament. They undertake an important role in handling concerns and queries that individual constituents may have. Collectively, these are called Member referrals and they can range from comments and queries to complaints.

If an elected Member does not consider it to be appropriate to deal with a concern, the matter can be referred to be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure.

## **6. SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND ADULT PROTECTION**

Protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse has to be the paramount consideration. Child abuse or the abuse of vulnerable adults will include in this context physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial or material abuse, and neglect. Appropriate guidance is available relating to both adult and child protection.

Any complaint or representation that raises concerns about child protection the protection of a vulnerable adult should be referred immediately to the appropriate safeguarding officer or where a criminal act is known or suspected, the police. There should be no complaints investigation while there is any chance of compromising the child or adult protection investigations. This does not rule out aspects of the complaint being pursued at a later date where and when this is right.

## **7. STATISTICAL INFORMATION 2023/2024**

### **Number of Representations Received**

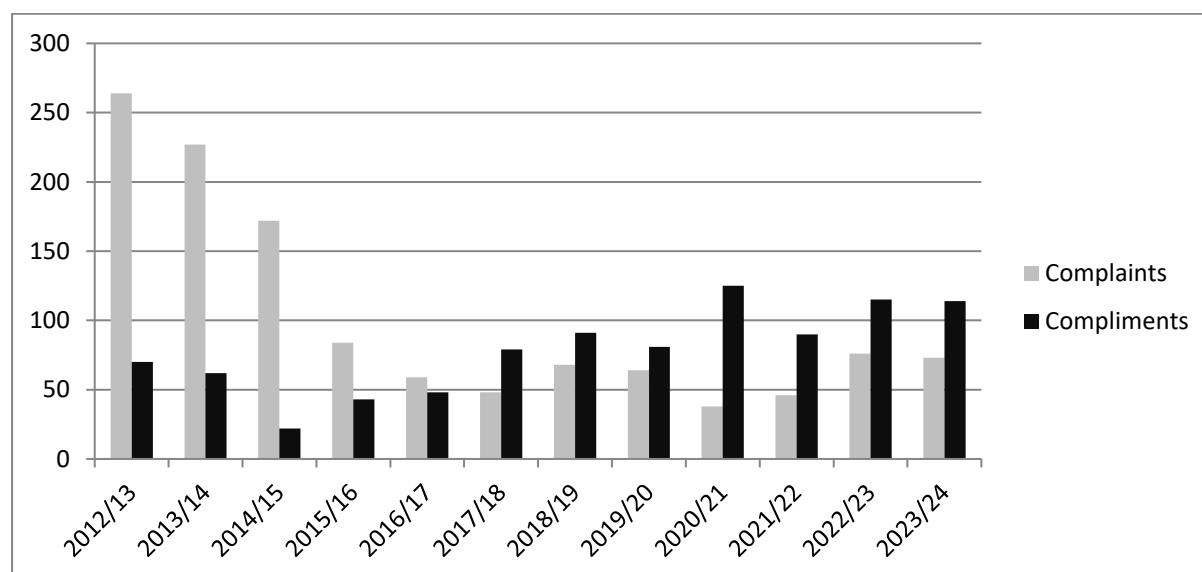
The following information provides details of the number of representations (complaints and compliments), received in relation to the delivery of social services during the reporting period:

**Table 1 – Number of Representations Received 2023/2024**

	<b>Complaints</b>	<b>Compliments</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Children's Services</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Business / Corporate</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>

The following table provides a comparison with previous reporting periods.

**Table 2 - Number of Representations Received - Year-on-Year Comparison**



### Stages at which complaints were resolved

**Table 3 - Statutory Complaints Procedure 2023/24**

	Adult Services	Children's Services	Business / Corporate
Stage 1	21	43	5
Stage 2	2	3	1

### Timescales for Completion of Complaints (Stage 1)

As mentioned earlier in the report, the timescale for completion of Stage 1 complaints is 10 working days, with a further 5 working days for a written response (15 working days in total).

**Table 4 - Timescales for Completion of Stage 1 Complaints**

	Response within (working days):	
	2023/24 15 days	2023/24 15+ days
Adult Services	12	9
Children's Services	15	28
Business / Corporate	3	2
Total	30	39



As can be seen from Table 4, **43.5%** of formal Stage 1 complaints during 2023/24 were responded to within the agreed extension time.

It should be noted that there are genuine reasons for being unable to meet the prescribed timescales, for example, some cases can take longer due to the complexity of the issues raised and the need to ensure that cases are thoroughly investigated. In these cases, an extension to the timescale (of a further 10 working days) is normally agreed with the complainant.

The Complaints Team work closely with officers to ensure complaints are responded to in the most timely and efficient way possible.

### **Outcomes**

The Directorate records outcomes to complaints, therefore, each complaint outcome is generally identified within one of the following categories:-

- Upheld
- Partially Upheld
- Not Upheld

The focus upon outcomes is seen as an important aspect and is utilised in measuring performance, learning from complaints and continuously improving services. Outcomes for each service area have been recorded as follows:

**Table 5 – Complaint Outcomes 2023/24**

	<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>Children's Services</b>	<b>Business / Corporate</b>
Not Upheld	5	20	3
Partially Upheld	3	12	0
Upheld	13	4	2
Other	0	7	0

A total of 19 complaints were upheld in 2023/24 which equates to 27.5% of complaints received. A further 15 (21.7%) were partially upheld.

### **How Complaints were resolved**

A variety of methods were used to resolve complaints. Each complaint was considered separately and the most appropriate method of resolution applied. Methods include:

- liaison by complaints officers with senior managers to identify/agree immediate resolution;
- managers meeting with complainants to discuss their concerns;
- provision of explanation (written) as to reasons for decisions;

- provision of an apology (written), where appropriate;
- action taken to change a decision;
- independent investigation; and
- mediation.

All statutory complaints received a written response offering an explanation, outlining recommendations and/or identifying corrective action. Those complaints found to have been upheld or partially upheld received a written apology, where appropriate.

Complaints found to have been not upheld did not normally involve provision of a written apology, although, in some cases, it was appropriate to apologise for a particular aspect if there was a need to focus upon individual learning issues highlighted as a result of the complaint.

### **Nature/Range of Complaints**

Examples of the most common complaints received were as follows:

- lack of / poor communication
- staff attitude / conduct
- disagreement with assessment / care plan / reports / statements
- unacceptable delays

### **Corporate Complaints Procedure**

There are instances whereby aspects of a complaint do not fall within the remit of the social services statutory complaints procedure and in such cases, the Authority's Corporate Complaints Procedure is utilised.

### **Complaints Resolved at the pre-Complaints Procedure stage**

The Complaints Team also carries out a significant amount of work in dealing with and resolving concerns at source, for example, in cases whereby the issues raised are able to be immediately resolved and do not require being formally addressed at Stage 1. This involves Complaints Team staff ensuring that they liaise quickly with appropriate Team Managers to identify and agree swift actions to be taken so as to resolve concerns immediately.

This is an area where significant improvements have been made by the individual service areas to ensure these complaints are dealt with appropriately and effectively.

### **Welsh Language**

There have been NO complaints received during this reporting period that have been communicated via the medium of Welsh, nor has there been any complaints in relation to the Welsh language/Welsh standards.

## Compliments

Compliments are also regarded as important information that can be used to identify good practice. Compliments are therefore reported centrally and the statistics included in management reports.

### Table 6 – Compliment Examples

A selection of the compliments received during 2023/24 are set out below:

<p><b>Adult Services</b></p> <p><i>Dear Sir / Madam, it is a privilege for me to write this feedback.</i></p> <p><i>X has been a critical pillar of support in ensuring our mum, Y, received the best care available. From arranging the initial care package in early 2022 to enable mum to be discharged from hospital to the final stay in X Care Home, X has gone above and beyond in meeting us, discussing with us the various options and putting in place the most suitable care. At all times, X had mum's interest at heart as well as her safety. It was because of X's diligence our mum had a good quality of life up to her passing at the end of August 2023. Without this support, mum's end of life would have been much more challenging and probably an unhappy time.</i></p> <p><i>As a family we are so very grateful to X and the whole care team (each and every one) who looked after mum tirelessly and made her feel happy. Each member of staff who cared for mum at home went out of their way to treat mum with respect and dignity and always as a person – she looked forward to each visit and the conversation.</i></p> <p><i>I know services are severely strained and demands continue to grow but we have experienced the very best and I sincerely believe that other service users benefit immensely from that same care and diligence. Please keep up the good work! All the very best".</i></p> <p><b>- Service User's Relative in relation to the Neath Network Team</b></p>
<p><i>"To all staff at Trem y Mor Respite Service, thank you all for care and support over the last 30 years that you have given to X while she has been coming for her breaks. We wouldn't have been able to continue our caring without these invaluable "holidays".</i></p> <p><i>best wishes to you all".</i></p> <p><b>- Relatives in relation to Trem-y-Mor Respite Service</b></p>
<p><i>"I wish to let you know about one of your exceptional colleagues, her name is X (OT). X was so professional and caring and always listened to myself and my husband.</i></p>

*X always showed and behaved with the most up respect for us. She went above and beyond to make sure everything was done correctly for us. We are so grateful to X and your office we thank you very much.*

*Please, if possible, pass a copy of this letter just so she knows what an exceptional job that she is doing.*

*SHE REALLY DOES CHANGE PEOPLE's LIVES. Thank you again".*

**- Services users in relation to the Community Occupational Therapy Service**

### **Children's Services**

*"Hello, I am X's mum I got your email from Y as I feel good social workers are hard to come I wanted to inform how I am very pleased and grateful for the comments you have made in X's assessment and for the way Y has worked with me whilst I did a lot of work to make the changes for my kids to feel safe and not worry about me and so I had a positive safe and happy life. The way Y has been with me has made me feel that I can seek advice from the social worker positive or negative this is a massive thing to me I feel Y worked really well around my learning difficulty and always made sure I understood what I was being asked when couldn't attend meetings Y would ring them to get their views and always rearranged when X had important appointments or when I had to stay at hospital and always reassured me how well I was doing and praised me and X's dad. Y went to no end to make sure X's dad was safe and do all checks which massively reassured me that with all checks done he was definitely safe And I can honestly say when Y closes we would be gutted to lose her but at the same time we understand X doesn't need a social worker at this time. Many thanks"*

**- A parent in relation to the Sandfields Children's Team**

*"When a TAF worker was suggested to us as a family, I was terrified! But in walked you with your unwavering support and listening ear, in your time with my family you have probably heard more variations of the "F" bomb than you have your entire life and never judged. X and I cannot begin to thank you for all your support it really has meant the world. I'm going to miss you that's for sure. You're amazing at what you do, and your next family will be blessed as we have been. Thank you for everything. Lots of love"*

**- A parent in relation to the Team around the Family (TAF Team)**

*"Thank you for allowing me to attend the meeting today, I really felt like I was heard and listened to".*

**- A looked after child (age 15) in relation to the Conference & Review Service**

<b>Business Support</b>
<p><i>“WOW!!!! Thank you for your effort. I was beginning to think that X had passed away. I really hope that she gets in touch with me. She is my only sibling. My thanks and best regards”.</i></p> <p><b>- Member of public in relation to Governance &amp; Policy Team</b></p>
<p><i>“Hello X, Thank you very much. You have been so helpful and a credit to the social services”.</i></p> <p><b>- Complainant in relation to the Complaints Team</b></p>

## 8. LESSONS LEARNED

Evaluation of the information generated from complaints has highlighted a range of actions to be taken to improve services for clients. Action plans, where necessary, are formulated to reflect the actions agreed as part of the resolution process. Monitoring of the action plans is undertaken by each service to ensure that actions are implemented.

## 9. ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023/2024

Achievements during 2023/24 include:

- Reviewing Complaints Leaflet and supporting literature;
- Preparation for implementation of new, external database, including data cleansing exercise in line with records retention policies;
- Supported the introduction of *Llais* Advocacy Service;
- Assisted in the development of Children’s Services’ Complaints literature.

## 10. OBJECTIVES FOR 2024/2025

Plans for 2024/25 include:

- Review of the Social Services Representations and Complaints Policy & Procedure;
- Implementing the new Mosaic database, along with the safe migration of data; and
- Continuing to build on the relationship with *Llais* Advocacy Service;

## 11. CONTACTS

### **Designated Complaints Officer,**

Neath Port Talbot Council,  
Social Services, Health and Housing Directorate,  
Neath Civic Centre, Neath, SA11 3QZ  
Tel: 01639 763445 email: [complaints@npt.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@npt.gov.uk).

### **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**

1 Ffordd Y Hen Gae,  
Pencoed, Bridgend, CF35 5LJ  
Tel: 03007 900203  
website: [www.ombudsman.wales](http://www.ombudsman.wales)

### **Llais Advocacy Service**

Neath Port Talbot & Swansea Region,  
Cimla Hospital, Cimla,  
Neath SA11 3SU  
Tel: 01639 683490  
website: [www.llaiswales.org/in-your-area/neath-port-talbot-and-swansea](http://www.llaiswales.org/in-your-area/neath-port-talbot-and-swansea)

### **Care Inspectorate Wales,**

Welsh Government Office  
Sarn Mynach  
Llandudno Junction LL31 9RZ  
Tel: 0300 7900126  
email: [ciw@gov.wales](mailto:ciw@gov.wales)

### **Children's Commissioner for Wales,**

Llewellyn House  
Harbourside Business Park  
Harbourside Road  
Port Talbot SA13 1SB  
Tel: 01792 765600  
email: [post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)

### **Older Person's Commissioner for Wales**

Cambrian Buildings,  
Mount Stuart Square, Butetown,  
Cardiff, CF10 5FL  
Tel: 03442 640670  
email: [ask@olderpeoplewales.com](mailto:ask@olderpeoplewales.com)

**Leighton Jones**  
**Designated Complaints Officer**  
**July 2024**

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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**

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2025**

**Report of the Heads of Children's Services, Adult Services and  
Housing & Community Safety (Keri Warren, Angela Thomas &  
Chele Howard)**

**Matter for Monitoring**

**Wards Affected: All**

**Report Title: CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE, ADULT SERVICES  
and HOUSING & COMMUNITY SAFETY – 4<sup>th</sup> QUARTER (April  
2024 – March 2025) PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report:**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the agreed Performance Information for Children & Young People Services, Adult Services and Housing & Community Safety for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Period (April 2024 – March 2025). This will enable the Social Services, Housing & Community Safety Scrutiny Members to discharge their functions in relation to performance management.

**Executive Summary:**

2. This report specifically highlights performance against a selection of key Performance Measures from within the Children & Young People, Adult and Housing and Community Safety service areas. The selection of reported Measures emanates from the reporting options presented to Scrutiny Members on 12<sup>th</sup> December, by Andrew Jarrett, Director of Social Services, Housing and Community Safety.

**Background:**

3. Failure to produce a compliant performance monitoring report within timescale could lead to non-compliance within our Constitution and hinder the full and transparent scrutiny of performance across the Directorate. This report enables Members to monitor and challenge performance across the Children & Young People, Adult Services and Housing and Community Safety service areas, whilst considering required reporting obligations.

**Financial Impacts:**

4. No Implications

**Integrated Impact Assessment:**

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

**Valleys Communities Impacts:**

6. No Implications.

**Workforce Impacts:**

7. No implications.

**Legal Impacts:**

8. No implications

**Risk Management Impacts:**

9. There is little or no risks associated with the information contained in this report.

**Crime and Disorder Impacts:**

10. 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”

11. There is no impact under the Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 through the information contained in this report.

### **Counter Terrorism Impacts:**

12. The information contained in this report is likely to have no impact on the duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

### **Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:**

13. 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.
14. The information contained in this report is likely to have no impact on the above duty.

### **Consultation:**

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

**Recommendations:**

16. That members note the report.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

17. Not applicable.

**Implementation of Decision:**

18. No decision to be made. For information only.

**Appendices:**

19. Appendices listed as follows: -

- a. **Appendix 1** – 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Performance Measures (April 2024 – March 2025).

**List of Background Papers:**

20. None.

**Officer Contacts:**

- David Harding – Specialist Teams & Performance Manager (Children's Services). Email: [d.harding@npt.gov.uk](mailto:d.harding@npt.gov.uk)
- Lynette Jones – Business Strategy Officer (Performance - Adult Services). Email: [l.jones7@npt.gov.uk](mailto:l.jones7@npt.gov.uk)

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **Appendix 1**

# **SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY**

**(QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MEASURES)  
(April 2024 – March 2025)**

## Contents

**Page 3:** Measure 1 - Percentage Successfully Prevented from Becoming Homeless

**Page 4:** Measure 2 - Average Number of Days to Deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant from First Point of Contact to Certification

**Page 5:** Measure 3 - Commissioning: The Number of Hours of External Domiciliary Care, aged over 18

**Page 6:** Measure 4 - Integrated Community Services: The Number of People in Care Homes (Residential & Nursing)

**Page 7:** Measure 5 - Number of Children Looked After

**Page 8:** Measure 6 - Number of Children on the Child Protection Register

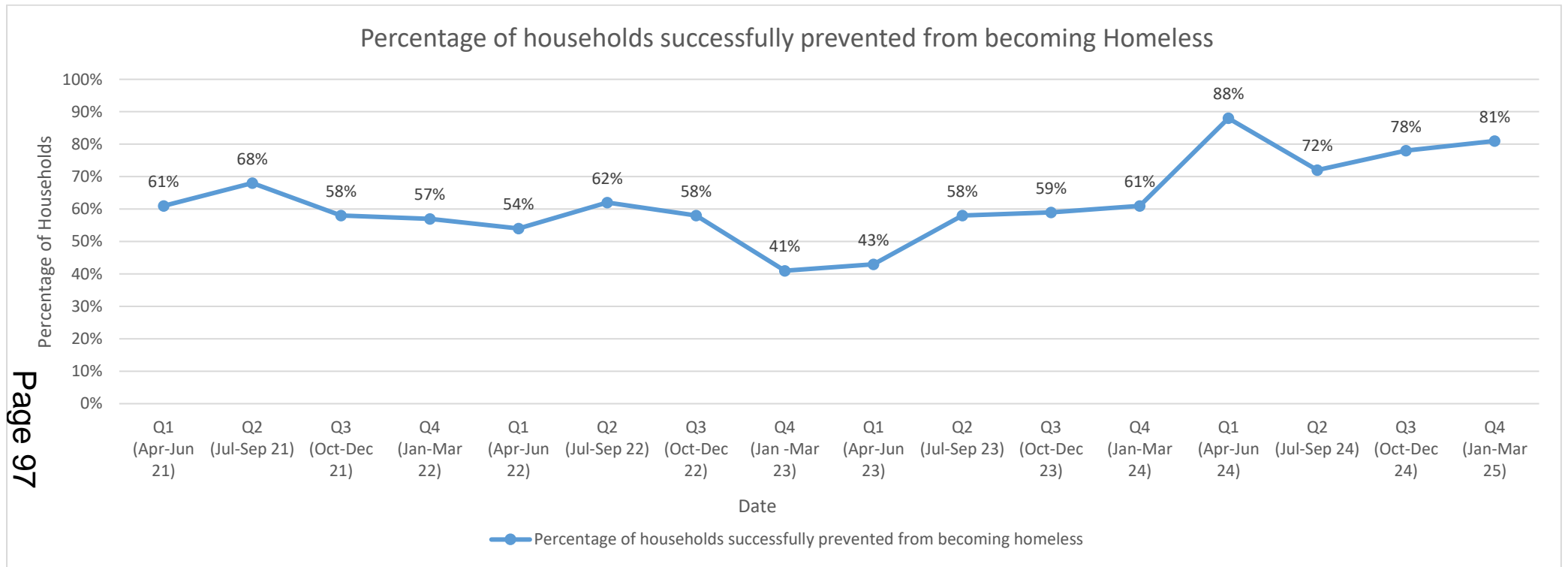
**Pages 9:** Measure 7 - Number of Children Receiving Care & Support

**Page 10:** Measure 8 - Number of Re-registrations on the Child Protection Register

Page 96

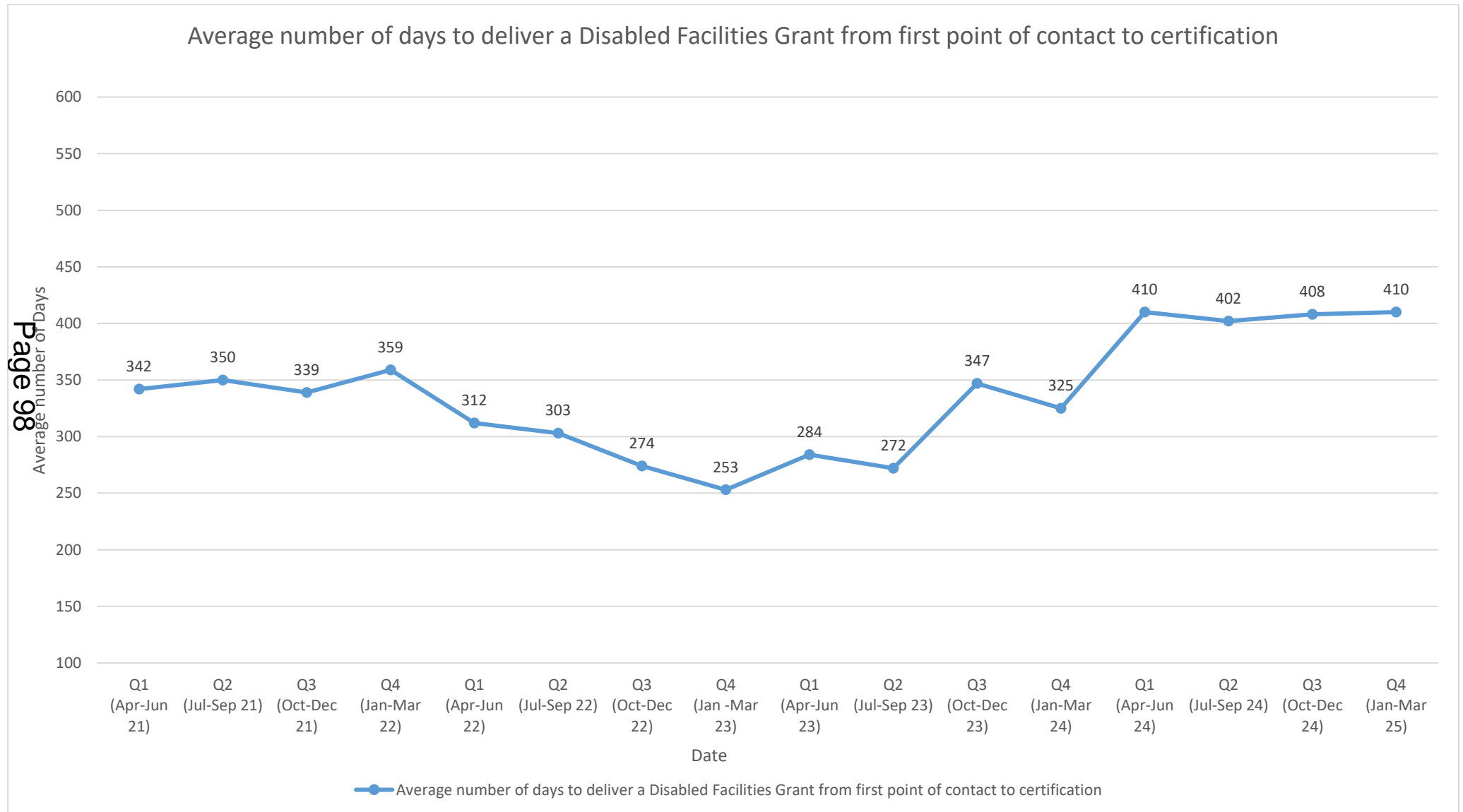


## Measure 1 – Percentage of households Successfully Prevented from Becoming Homeless

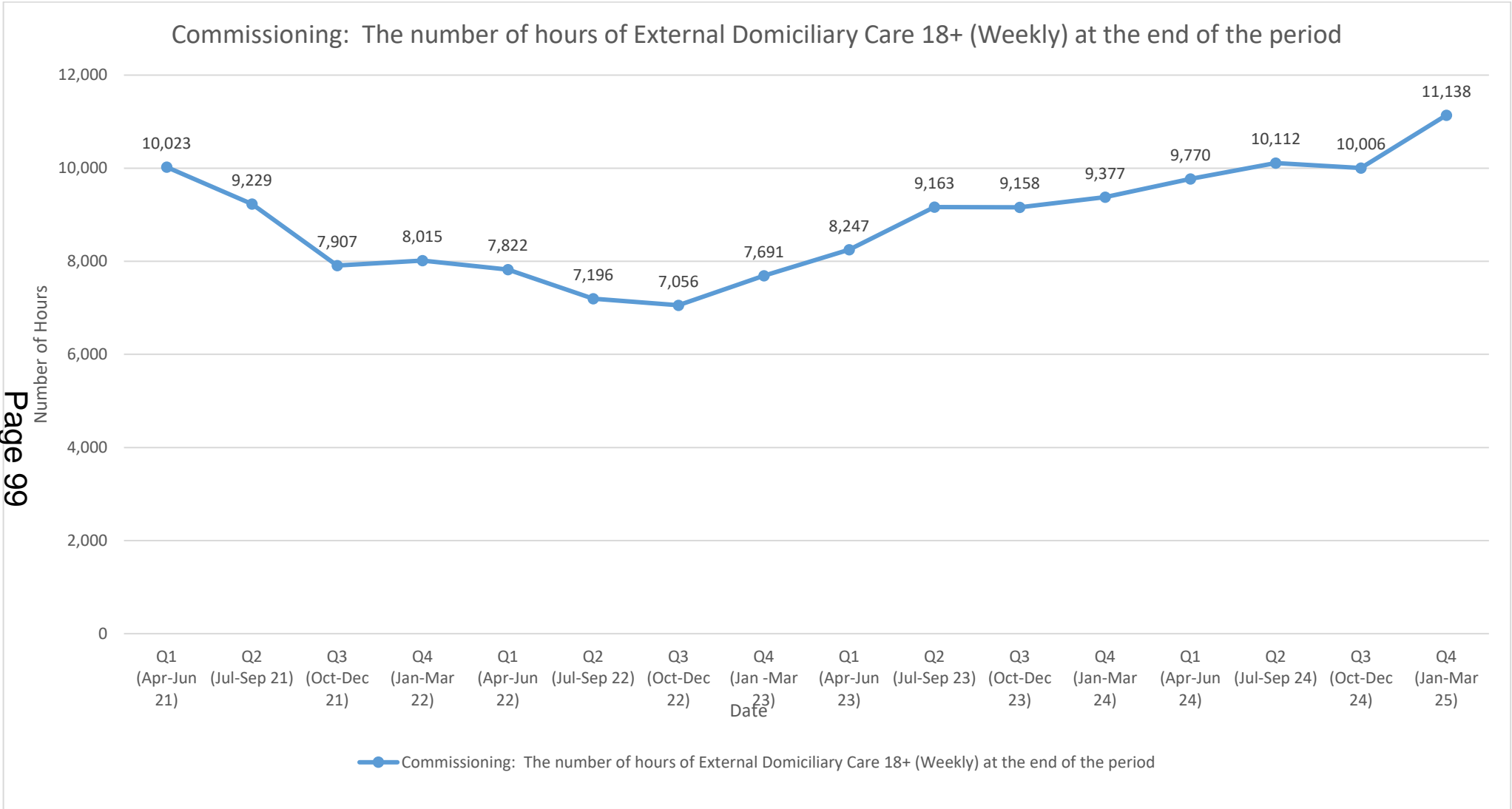


	Q1 (Apr-Jun 21)	Q2 (Jul-Sep 21)	Q3 (Oct-Dec 21)	Q4 (Jan-Mar 22)	Q1 (Apr-Jun 22)	Q2 (Jul-Sep 22)	Q3 (Oct-Dec 22)	Q4 (Jan - Mar 23)	Q1 (Apr-Jun 23)	Q2 (Jul-Sep 23)	Q3 (Oct-Dec 23)	Q4 (Jan-Mar 24)	Q1 (Apr-Jun 24)	Q2 (Jul-Sep 24)	Q3 (Oct-Dec 24)	Q4 (Jan-Mar 25)
Number of Households successfully prevented from becoming homeless	47	55	67	67	75	78	79	64	71	64	40	34	31	31	32	39

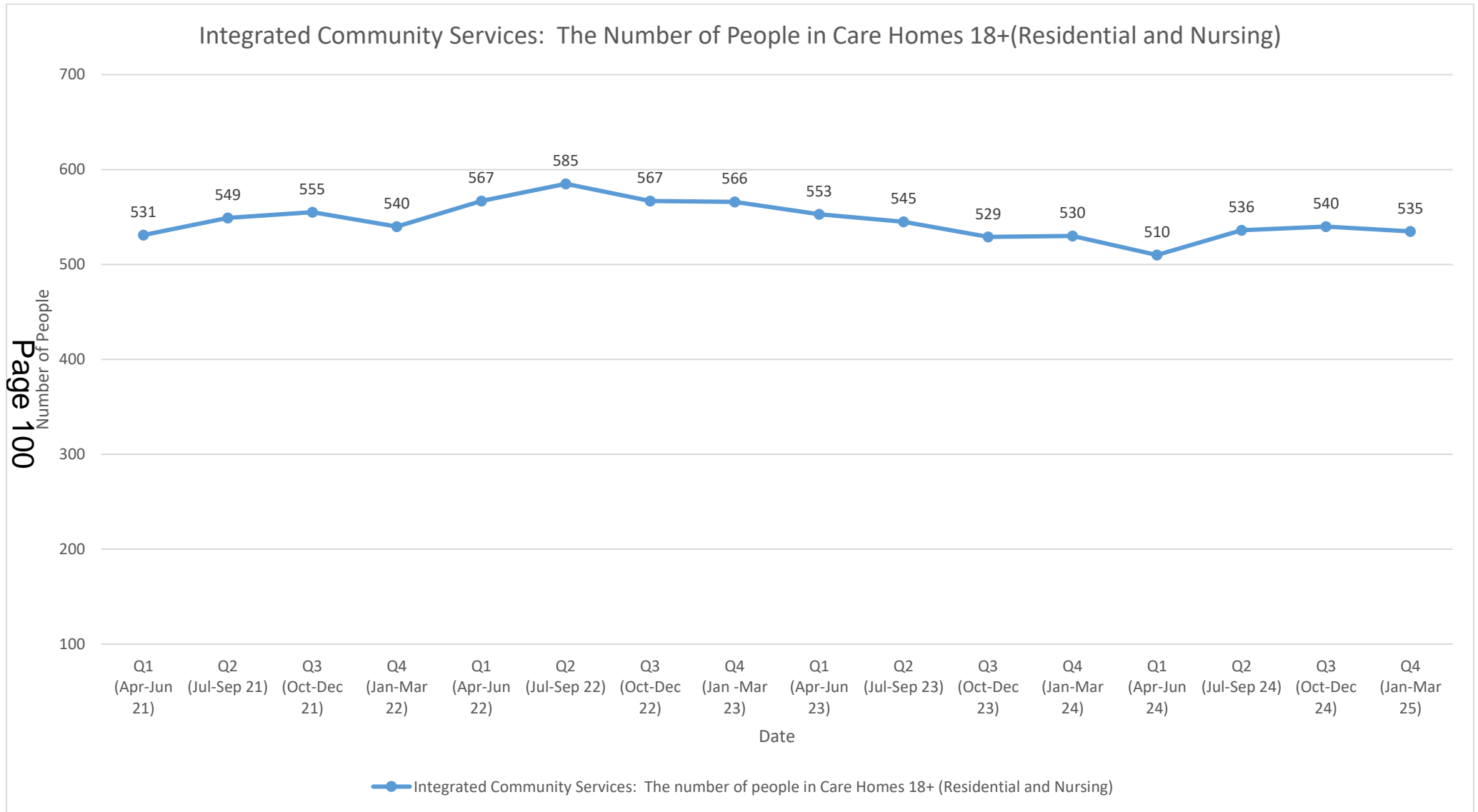
## Measure 2 - Average Number of Days to Deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant from First Point of Contact to Certification



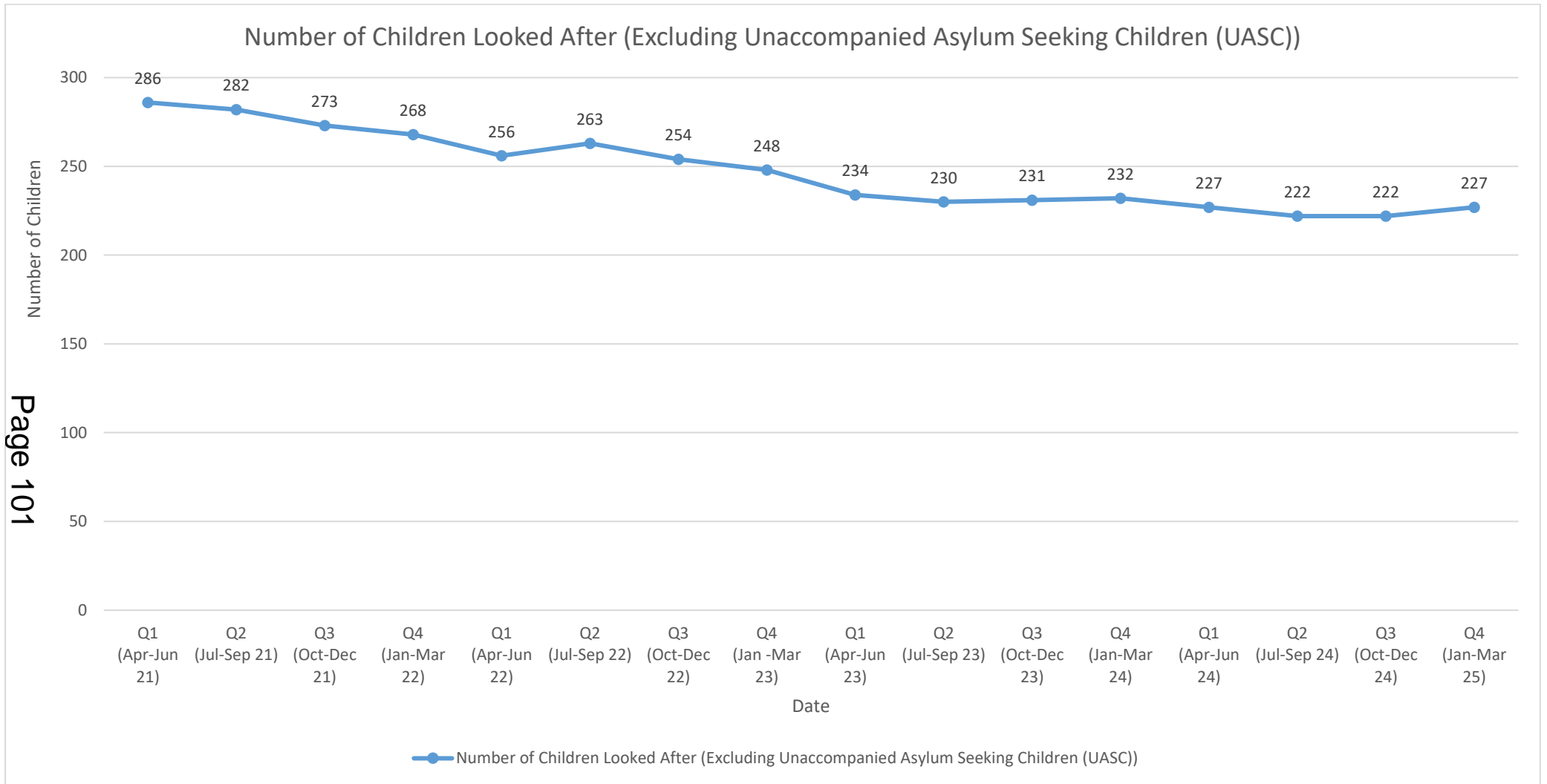
**Measure 3 - Commissioning: The Number of Hours of External Domiciliary Care (18 +)**



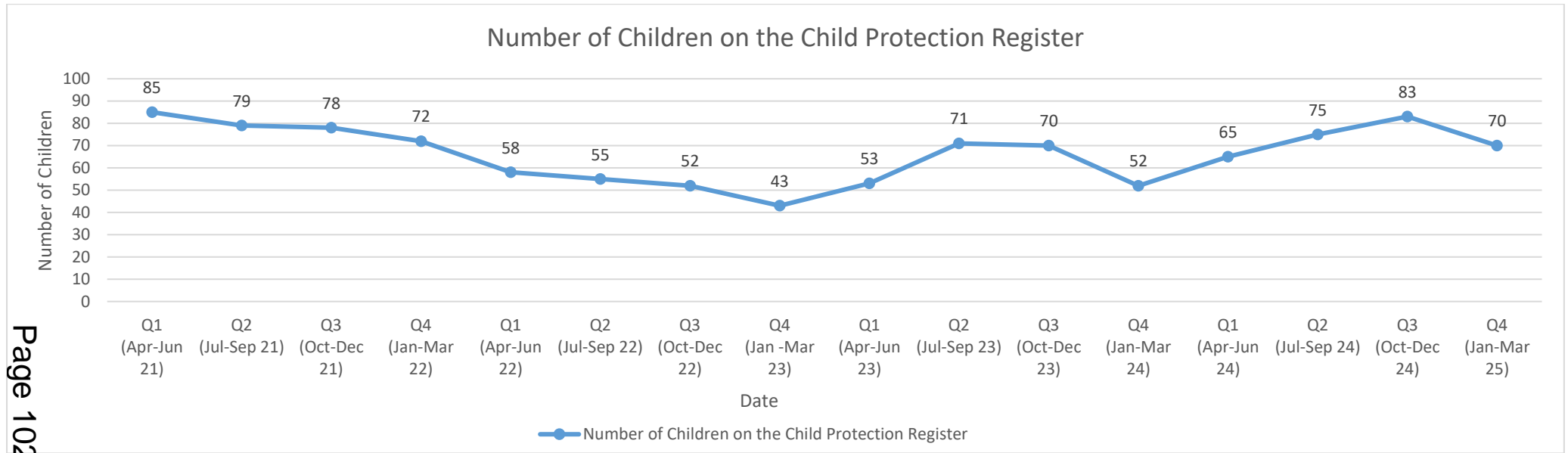
## Measure 4 - Integrated Community Services: The Number of People in Care Homes (Residential & Nursing) 18+



## Measure 5 - Number of Children Looked After

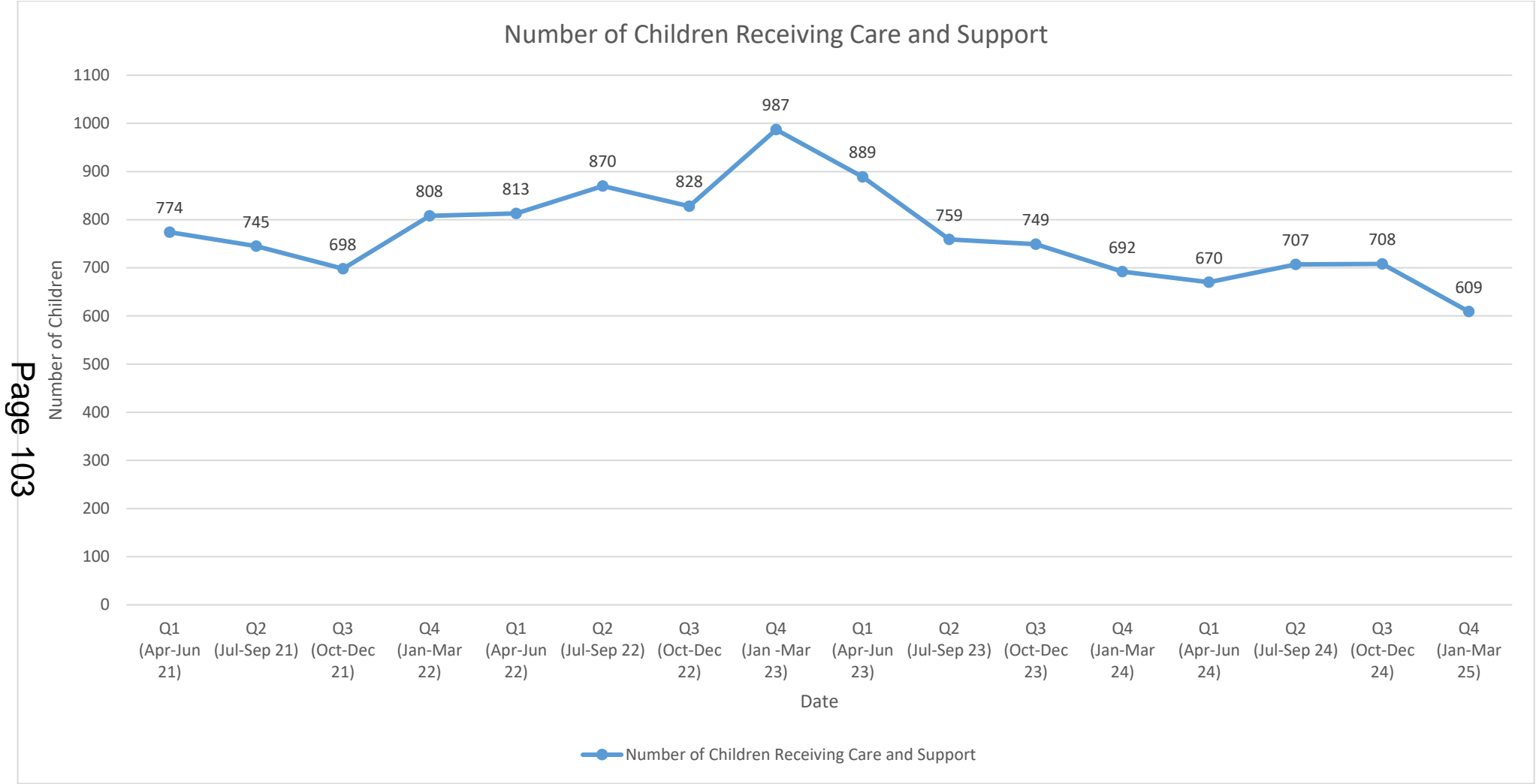


## Measure 6 – Number of Children on the Child Protection Register



Q1 (Apr-Jun 24)		Q2 (Apr-Sep 24)		Q3 (Apr-Dec 24)		Q4 (Apr 24-Mar 25)	
Emotional Abuse	18	Emotional Abuse	29	Emotional Abuse	26	Emotional Abuse	31
Neglect	28	Neglect	19	Neglect	26	Neglect	22
Neglect, Physical Abuse	4	Neglect, Physical Abuse	3	Neglect, Physical Abuse	6	Neglect, Physical Abuse	0
Neglect, Sexual Abuse	7	Neglect, Sexual Abuse	9	Neglect, Sexual Abuse	8	Neglect, Sexual Abuse	7
Physical Abuse	2	Physical Abuse	5	Physical Abuse	15	Physical Abuse	8
Physical , Emotional Abuse	3	Physical , Emotional Abuse	4	Physical , Emotional Abuse	0	Physical, Emotional Abuse	
Sexual Abuse	3	Sexual Abuse	5	Sexual Abuse	2	Sexual Abuse	2
		Neglect, Physical, Emotional Abuse	1			Neglect, Physical, Emotional Abuse	

Measure 7 – Number of Children Receiving Care & Support



## Measure 8 – Number of Re-registrations on the Child Protection Register





By virtue of paragraph(s) 14, 16 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 14, 16 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 14, 16 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A  
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