



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
NEATH PORT TALBOT SOCIAL CARE HEALTH & WELL-BEING
CABINET BOARD**

5 July 2021

**Report of the Director of Social Services, Health and Housing –
A.Jarrett**

Matter for Information

Wards Affected All Wards

**THE NPT YOUTH JUSTICE AND EARLY INTERVENTION
RESOURCE CENTRE**

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is update Members and inform them about the new Youth Justice and Early Intervention Centre which is also a Children Services' resource, formally the Abbeyview Day Centre for people with complex needs.

Executive Summary

The Manager's update report (Appendix 1) sets out the need and request made to Andrew Jarrett, Director of Social Services, Health & Housing and Welsh Government for the Acquisition of Abbey view Day Centre to be repurposed for the Youth Justice and Early Intervention and Children Services Resource Centre.

Background

The Manager's update report (Appendix 1) sets out the need and request made to Andrew Jarrett, Director of Social Services, Health &

Housing and Welsh Government for the Acquisition of Abbey view Day Centre to be repurposed for the Youth Justice and Early Intervention and Children Services Resource Centre.

The planning stage is key to achieving successful change. Developing a feasibility strategy for this resource centre aimed to ensure that the proposals were well thought out, evidenced, and transparent. These proposals were used to consult with multi-agency partners and corporate members of NPT Council and were presented to the Youth Justice Management board in July 2020.

The update outlines the following:

- Making the case for change;
- Background and reasons for consideration;
- The need for a Neath Port Talbot Intervention and Resource Centre;
- What were the organisational risks if this change did not happen?
- SWAT Analysis;
- The strengths of a joint resource centre:
- YJEIS Resource Centres in Wales;
- Staff Consultation and Trade Union consultation.
- Aims and objective.
- Timescales and costings.
- Impact Assessment
- Impact on practice and workloads:
- Staffing and the staffing structure
- PPE
- Current financial position.
- Evaluation.

Financial Impacts

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

Not required – for information purposes only.ba

Valleys Communities Impacts

No impact – the Pack has no spatial impact on our valleys communities and does not link to the impacts identified in the Cabinet’s response to the Council’s Task and Finish Group’s recommendations on the Valleys.

Workforce Impacts

No Implications.

Legal Impacts

No implications.

Risk Management Impacts

There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

Consultation undertaken is outlined in the Manager’s update report attached as Appendix 1.

Recommendations

No recommendations - for information only.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

Not applicable.

Implementation of Decision

Not applicable.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Manager’s Update Report.

List of Background Papers

None.

Officer Contact

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The New Youth Justice and Early Intervention Centre

Update Report

**Alison Davies
Principal Officer,
Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service**

Executive Summary

This document sets out the need and request made to the director of social service Andrew Jarret and Welsh Government for the Acquisition of Abbey view day centre to be repurposed for the Youth Justice and Early Intervention and Children Services Resource Centre.

The planning stage is key to achieving successful change. Developing a feasibility strategy for this resource centre aimed to ensure that the proposals were well thought out, evidenced, and transparent. These proposals were used to consult with multi agency partners and corporate members of NPT Council and were presented to the Youth Justice Management board in July 2020.

Making the case for change

Background and reasons for consideration

On the 1st April 2019, the Youth Offending teams across Western Bay disaggregated and NPT now hosts a stand-alone service for Youth Offending and early intervention. A new management board has been formed and prior to the COVID pandemic had met twice, and held two development days. Since COVID the board has regrouped albeit virtually and continue to meet bi-monthly. This management board serves NPT alone, and holds the YJEIS to account.

The rationale for disaggregation was that the (previously named) YOT teams need to focus on their own geographical areas and the demographic of those areas, providing services for the young people of

Neath and Port Talbot. The new name for the team is the Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service (YJEIS).

Following publication of the final HMIP report in March 2019 and combined with the planned exit of Bridgend who are now part of Cwm Taff health board, the decision was taken to disaggregate the Youth Justice Service, as the HMIP Inspection report published in March 2019 highlighted areas of concern. Moving forward NPT will continue to evidence its ability to deliver the statutory functions laid out in the Crime & Disorder Act and subsequent legislation independently. Cabinet is represented on the management board by Councillor Alan Lockyer. The management board is chaired by the Director of social services Mr. Andrew Jarrett.

The need for a Neath Port Talbot Intervention and Resource Centre.

Prior to disaggregation NPT YJEIS, were able to access and had contributed to the Swansea resource centre. A resource centre was and continues to be essential for the YJEIS to carry out appropriate interventions, learn new skills and promote educational and vocational learning. The projects undertaken prior to COVID at the Swansea resource centre included: a music project, emotional wellbeing, trade tasters, IT skills, basic skills (maths & English), crafts, bike maintenance, welding. Often this engagement resulted in young people working towards NOCN qualifications as Swansea is an accredited centre. Post disaggregation, one of the key objectives was finding a local resource centre in Neath Port Talbot to continue with these and other interventions. It was formally agreed at the YJEIS management board

in November 2019 that Neath Port Talbot needs an Intervention centre of their own to meet the complex needs of our young people and give them the services needed to support them, and deter them from criminal or anti-social behaviours. It was further agreed that NPT also needed this provision to support our ISS interventions that require 25 hours per week over 7 days for 3 months. We also wanted to develop our education provision which could be used as a support and alternative to permanent exclusion, use the provision to develop our emotional health and well-being provision, life skills training and hairdressing and beauty tuition to build the self-esteem of our young people and introduce them to a range of vocational training opportunities. Additionally, in terms of some of the NOCN qualifications, it could be possible to utilise other services within NPT as moderators i.e. youth service.

At the beginning of 2020 and as a YJEIS, we consulted with staff and identified a suitable venue. At that point in time, we thought that one of the biggest challenges for the YJEIS (and one that would need evidencing to the inspectorate on their return) was finding a suitable premises, and funding and developing the resource/ intervention centre. We had no idea at that point the incoming global pandemic was going to be the biggest challenge, probably of the century!

All of this was pre-March 2020, when the world as everyone knew it changed because of the Global Pandemic. Since lockdown we have had to modify our interventions, hold socially distant meetings with young people, and been very creative in the way we work. The statutory work has been maintained and there have been some great interventions, at

a time of year when we were blessed with pretty good weather, and garden visits, walk and talk, litter picking and cooking and life skills sessions via I-pad and Zoom became the norm. Virtual courts resumed and progressed into live courts, and we identified a need for increased safe face to face time in child centred environments.

Children Services were facing the same difficulties as the YJEIS. Child protection work and family visits although continued proved challenging through the winter months and assessments as we exit the pandemic need dedicated time, safe spaces and social distancing. Both Children Services and YJEIS need spaces which are safe, can promote contact, between children and their families, can full fill the range of statutory function required be the courts for OOC, (out of court disposals) and intervention in the YJEIS .

On that basis Children Services and the YJEIS worked collaboratively and developed the resource centre , taking into consideration the need for social distancing hand sanitising, PPE and all of the other COVID-19 guidance that now forms part of everyday life.

What were the risks if this change did not happen?

The YJEIS building in Cramic way is not a COVID safe environment for the numbers of YJEIS staff it was intending to hold, or interventions that need to be undertaken. The kitchen facilities, stairs, handrails and upstairs offices meant that maybe only 5 or 6 people were able to be in those offices at any one time the two meter rule could not be adhered to upstairs because the corridors are too small if people are passing each

other. The kitchen would have to remain closed as it is too small to re-open and the toilets are also a concern.

There is only one intervention room this is large however, but the level of work needed with young people cannot be undertaken in this environment going forward. Children services also need safe spaces which are accessible and large and open to undertake their assessments, promote contact and undertake parenting work etc.

If these spaces were not found we faced the risk of not managing the interventions that have to be undertaken, skills and training for young people are not been accessed as they were, and there could be potential slippage for children services in the court arena which potentially could mean drift for very vulnerable young people.

SWAT Analysis

The strengths of a joint resource centre:

Space;

Safety;

Progressing statutory and intervention work;

Maintaining professional standards and interface with children and young people;

Shared costs;

An incremental approach to the 're-opening of services';

Encouraging home working where appropriate;

Developing better IT facilities including remote access to courts.

Weaknesses-

The need to develop a bespoke centre was more limited because of costs, however although a consideration and we were prepared to compromise, we managed to secure a substantial WG grant provided the work was completed by the end of the financial year (March 2021). The centre could have been used as it stood, but needed more development.

COVID restrictions meant everything was taking longer and needed more risk assessment. The position of the centre in Neath Abbey means that transport needs to be considered and transporting young people will need to be risk assessed, although with PPE and sitting in the back opposite seats of cars, this is achievable.

Threats

A second or recurring spike of Covid, became a threat, especially as we entered winter and the second lockdown became more restrictive and difficult than the first. Without a resource centre we would not be meeting the post inspection action plan recommendations and we would not be in sync with the other YJEIS across Wales, which could impact negatively on a future inspection.

Early intervention and prevention would not be restarted properly without a resource centre going forward especially into the second Covid winter months.

Opportunities

This was an incredible an opportunity to design a safe space and begin a transitional and recovery plan as NPT opened back up. It was also an opportunity to evidence the positives of integration and alignment with

children services which has been positive and enhanced the YJEIS and developed the consultant social worker role within the service.

We accepted that funding was a major stumbling block especially as the centre will be used in a more limited way in terms of numbers. However, the centre is large, spacious with lots of break out rooms, there will not be the need for office space in the way that was before COVID, as home working will remain in place, thus giving more room for the centre to be used as a resource for direct work for larger parts of the whole service.

This will be an opportunity to develop education provision and skills training in our own centre this will be invaluable for young people who have had limited education throughout 2020.

This is an opportunity to develop a multidisciplinary team further and ensure that trauma informed practice is also developed to ensure emotional well-being is high on the agenda for young people alongside CAMHS. Intervention and liaison with partner agencies for example Better Futures and Education.

This was an opportunity to work with a resource centre that was in situ, and one that although needed development, was structurally sound. We initially asked for 200k which was rejected. However we were then awarded 200k by Welsh Government provided the resource centre was completed by the end of the financial year i.e. March 2021.

There was an opportunity to develop the outside spaces into a community garden with raised beds and ensure work can take place

outside. There was an opportunity to develop the workshop space needed for education and training skills, there was an opportunity to develop an outside gym.

YJEIS Resource Centres in Wales:

All other Youth Offending Service in Wales have access to or 'own' a resource centre. It is accepted that this forms the basis of successful interventions and engagement with young people. We needed to ensure that NPT had this in their suite of resources to manage the statutory requirements of the YJEIS and to provide the service that our young people need.

Staff Consultation and Trade Union consultation.

Staff will be changing their work base and this will need to go through the formal consultation process in terms of homeworking and the resource centre. This will be aligned with the transition plans being prepared by the local authority which will include both home working and office working. I have begun talking to the staff at the YJEIS who have contributed to the development of the plans for the resource centre. The views of the staff and young people about the resource centre pre- COVID were very positive. Since its development staff cannot wait to access it, and to begin the face to face work that they have missed so much. Some staff had visited the centre before lockdown and this was generally positive. Once they see what has been achieved and what we can offer I am convinced that they will be as delighted as I am. These introductory visits begin the week beginning 26th April.

The management of change consultation process will begin shortly and is normally 30 days. Timescales for moving into the centre have been achieved and the centre has been developed and is ready to operate. It is absolutely amazing for young people and for safe working within COVID restrictions.

Employee support will be provided throughout the consultation process, via HR and the Occupational Health department if needed.

Aims and objective.

- To develop Abbeyview Day Centre into a children and YJEIS resource centre: **Completed.**
- To develop the safe spaces needed for our service users across NPT and gradually open up the services. **Completed.**
- To ensure that all of the statutory and prevention work can be undertaken in the safe spaces with the correct guidance and restrictions in place. **Ongoing**
- To begin a 'blended approach' to face to face social work and intervention work in the resource centre, and the incremental stages preparing for recovery. **In progress**

Timescales and costings

The resource centre became empty in July 2020. We assessed the work that needed to be done. A working group has been set up and Leighton Jones fed this into the corporate board to ensure that children services and the YJEIS views were represented and the needs of the services were fully met going forward.

I am delighted to report to members that the resource centre is now finished, on budget, on time and looks incredible. I would anticipate it being able to be used by mid-May 2021 by the time risk assessments are carried and screens are and social distancing spacing are put in place. Facilities, under the guidance of Richard Jenkins pulled out all the stops to make this happen, and to carry out all works needed. They really deserve recognition and a thank you from the YJEIS.

The resource centre has kitchen facilities, large intervention rooms, shower and laundry facilities for young people, admin space, a wellbeing room, craft room and IT suite, a hairdressing room, video conference facilities, an outside gym, raised garden beds and lots of outside space for reparation projects, and even a train carriage that we plan to restore with our young people, with the guidance of the original owner Mr Latham from Skewen.

Impact Assessment

The resource centre will have a positive impact on the lives of the young people and the families that we serve. From a YJEIS perspective socially distant interventions will be completed, education and training can resume, Accredited Projects including the K9 project can continue, partnership working can increase.

We would look to develop the centre outside of normal office hours including weekends and evenings and intervention workers would adjust their hours accordingly to meet the needs of the young people following PHW and WG guidance. Young people participation could resume with

more rigour. The participation officer has indicated his desire to be based there (flexibly) and therefore young people's engagement and participation will be a key feature of all our work going forward.

From a children services perspective, contact visits can resume in safe spaces, court assessments can continue which will avoid drift in the family court arena. Parenting support and interventions can resume. CP monitoring visits can be more rigorous. Training spaces can be utilised.

The centre could be utilised by TAF and FAST workers. Team keeping in touch and development days could be built in. This will all have to be continually risk assessed of course alongside the professional guidance from PHW and WG and the rapidly changing face of COVID 19.

Impact on practice and workloads

After many months of uncertainty, the use of a resource centre will provide the depth and rigour to the assessments for both YJEIS and children services, that practitioners have been concerned that we have not been able to carry out as we did pre COVID. Eventually we will, when safe to do so, open up and return to some normality, the centre will be established by then and will evolve as the services do in relation to COVID.

The extent of the space available in Abbey view, is far bigger and more open than the current YJEIS building and offices, which unless radically altered would never be conducive to meet the needs of the service. Young people are now being consulted as to the most appropriate name for their resource centre and so far, suggestions have been Abbey Shed,

the Hwb and The Shed, I am confident the young people will come up with the best ideas.

Staffing and the staffing structure

Staffing and the staffing is currently aligned to meet the needs of the service in the YJEIS. This centre will enable the existing staff to predominantly work at home but to eventually work safely with young people when they need to do the face to face contact at the centre. Two meter markings and screens will form part of the risk assessment for the new centre. The centre will have an administration presence during all opening hours.

PPE

The amount of PPE required in the centre will form part of the wider council assessment and provision and estimated of what will be needed are being submitted to the corporate group.

Current financial position

The centre has been developed within budget, of the grant that was given us. I am currently looking at a training flat pod to utilise in the grounds for route 14 plus and YJEIS and to address some of the life-skills training needs for our young people, at a cost of about 50k, which we looking for further COVID funding for later in the year.

Evaluation

The progress and success of the development of Abbey view has been kept under constant progress review and reported back to The YJEIS management board, CSMG, and the YJB.

I have also prepared a power point for Members to see the centre and as we open up you are invited to visit at your earliest convenience.

The proposal is that we move out of Cramic way permanently as of May 10th 2021 and our new base will be Abbey view youth justice and early intervention centre in Skewen Neath.

Youth Justice Board (YJB) Cymru

I would like to share some good news with members, in that YJB Cymru have informed officially this week that the progress of the NPT YJEIS has been such that we have been deescalated out of the service of concern protocol and have been congratulated by the YJB for the work that has been undertaken to improve the service and reach the standard required, until we are next inspected. Please see the paragraphs from the YJB formal notification below.

"The progress that has been made in the delivery of justice services to children since then is significant and we would like to commend Neath Port Talbot on the way in which you have approached your improvement journey and focused on development of the service and the needs of the children, families and the communities you serve.

We have seen evidence of practice improvement from a variety of sources: data presented, discussion with managers and staff, effective leadership, improved staff morale and through attendance at the management board. As a result, we have progressively reduced our formal involvement with you and

frequency of meeting to review progress against the post-inspection action plan. We were also very pleased that Neath Port Talbot agreed to become a pathfinder project to support our activity to strengthen youth offending team (YOT) governance arrangements by sharing its own experiences, developing its own documentation and obtaining examples from other YOTs. This work is contributing to a re-fresh of the YJB's management board guidance.

Taking all the information into account the YJB is satisfied that Neath Port Talbot youth justice and early intervention service has made effective and sustained progress against its improvement plan and its ability to deliver positive outcomes for children in the justice system. As such we are pleased to formally de-escalate Neath Port Talbot from YJB priority status, and we will no longer be formally engaging with Neath Port Talbot as a priority service going forward. YJB Cymru are still available to support you should any significant matters arise.

We would like to thank you, your leadership team and staff for meeting the challenges you faced post-inspection and the impressive progress you have made. The YJB commends you on the changes that your service has made along its improvement journey and the impact that this will have on outcomes for children."

YJB Cymru Lynzi Jarman

**Ali Davies
Principal Officer,
Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service**