

Appendix 5 - Other Supporting Evidence

1. Introduction

1.1 As part of the 'Let's Talk' initial engagement phase, other supporting evidence and secondary research relevant to what matters to people in Neath Port Talbot was gathered and considered. The purpose was to identify any findings that might support or contradict the themes from 'Let's Talk' feedback and the draft revised wellbeing objectives.

1.2 This drew on a range of sources:

- Canolfan Maerdy Outreach Youth Work Findings 2021 (involving 650 young people in GCG and Lower Brynamman)
- Community Impact Assessment Survey, took place in June 2020 and received 1,259 responses.
- Discussions with people who use the Bspoked service (took place on 14.10.21 with 5 service users)
- 'Let's Talk' Facebook comments (55)
- NPT business questionnaire (20 responses)
- Race Equality Action Plan Report November 2020 (Neath Port Talbot Black Minority Ethnic Community Association), 143 total responses. During 2020 the NPT Black Minority Ethnic Community Association worked in partnership with the NPT Community Safety Team and the Vulnerable Learner's Service (VLS), to produce two surveys, one aimed at adults, the other at young people.

2. Best Start in Life

Every child has the best start in life

2.1 Let's Talk feedback: What matters?

- Being safe;
- Being happy;
- Having a stable home life;
- Spending time with family, friends and pets;
- School – getting a good education;
- Growing up to be strong and healthy;
- Having good quality parks, sports facilities and other youth services;
- Having enough money;
- Being able to get a job and being able to afford to live in decent accommodation; and
- Affordable buses to access services

2.2 Supporting evidence

2.2.1 Canolfan Maerdy Outreach Youth Work:

Included in the findings were that young people are bored; some engage in random acts of destruction/petty crime/lighting fires (linked to boredom, frustration, and being disengaged); they want a dedicated youth space, a skate park, free activities locally, somewhere to legally ride motorbikes locally. This echoes the 'Let's Talk' feedback that having good quality parks, sports facilities and other youth services matters to young people.

Poverty and food shortages was a common theme as was families struggling to feed young people (exasperated by the lockdowns), lending further support to the 'Let's Talk' feedback that having enough money matters to young people.

2.2.2 Community Impact Assessment Survey

Almost half of respondents said they were worried about the impact Covid was having on schools and universities. The main worries were about the affect pandemic disruption could have on the quality of education, uncertainty around exams and the move to home schooling.

2.2.3 'Let's Talk' Facebook comments

Several echoed the need for more facilities and things for children and young people to do. Examples of comments included:

"I would like to see more parks for children";

"There's nothing for the kids";

"Our youth have no where (sic) to go to let off steam, socialise or discover who they are"

2.2.4 NPT business questionnaire

There were two responses that referred to young people in terms of "what matters to you and your business for the future?":

"We can create employment especially for the young people in our local community, is a priority"

"To employ young people, now that we are allowed to open"

2.2.5 Race Equality Action Plan Report 2020

When asked if bullying was a problem in school most of the young people who responded felt that it was not a problem. However, several of the respondents to the said they did not feel safe where they live or at school, citing bullying or racist name calling by their peers or neighbours.

For the children and young people survey, when providing reasons for why they disliked living in the area, responses included:

"it's boring and nothing for kids or teens to do...";

*"boring - no facilities; need more activities like youth club, skate park";
"not many places for young people to hang out without paying money"*

3. Thriving and Sustainable Communities

People live healthy, long and fulfilled lives in thriving and sustainable communities where people get along together and support one another

3.1 Let's Talk feedback: What matters?

- Contact with family, friends and pets;
- Being safe;
- Being healthy; good access to health services;
- Having a secure job and a good work-life balance;
- Children have access to good education and schools stay open;
- Community relations; having events that bring people together;
- The arts, our culture and heritage;
- Better bus services;
- Cleaner and better maintained streets and green spaces;
- More and cheaper outdoor leisure facilities;
- More support and facilities for young people;
- Ensuring elderly and vulnerable people are supported; and
- Better interaction with the council

3.2 Supporting evidence

3.2.1 Canolfan Maerdy Outreach Youth Work

A number of the findings supported the need for community relations (having events that bring people together), more and cheaper outdoor leisure facilities, and more support and facilities for young people. These include that young people are bored; some engage in random acts of destruction/petty crime/lighting fires (linked to boredom, frustration, and being disengaged); they want a dedicated youth space, a skate park, free activities locally, somewhere to legally ride motorbikes locally.

3.2.2 Community Impact Assessment Survey

The importance of the role family, friends and pets have in supporting well-being was clear in the responses, with the majority saying that keeping in touch was their main way of coping with staying at home. Almost three quarters of respondents thought that people were doing more to help others since the start of the pandemic, yet more than half of those who responded felt lonely.

3.2.3 Discussions with people who use the Bspoked service

Ensuring vulnerable people are supported was a strong theme that in this discussion. In particular, participants had missed attending their day services and day centres (although they were highly complementary of the support they had received from Bspoked staff online throughout the pandemic.

Other issues raised were:

- Seeing family and friends was seen as important
- access to health services – face-to-face access has been more difficult since the start of the pandemic and telephone consultations with GPs and dentists were highlighted as something the group thought was bad about the pandemic;
- litter and dog fouling were highlighted as things participants didn't like about where they live;
- taking part in crafts was highlighted as something participants liked about where they live, as was dancing, listening to music, drama, quizzes and bingo; And
- the need for better bus services was also seen as important.

3.2.4 'Let's Talk' Facebook comments

Issues around litter were raised in two comments, examples of comments included:

"Littering needs to be firmly addressed with a robust policy of fining offenders!";

"I would personally like to see something to combat the amount of litter that keeps getting dumped there! Some countries have machines that collect litter in return for money"

The need for improved bus services was also raised by some. Examples of comments included:

"Regular evening bus services between Briton Ferry and Swansea"

"Buses that go from here to Pontardawe"

"Better bus company need buses in the evenings, people can go out then"

3.2.5 Race Equality Action Plan Report 2020

Almost half of those who responded to the adult survey feel very strongly that they are part of the local community in Neath Port Talbot. However, when respondents chose what they believed to be the top 3 issues in the area, unemployment was the highest result, followed by drugs and alcohol then access to services.

4. Ensuring our natural environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Natural processes are restored and they mitigate and have developed greater resilience to climate change.

People actively conserve, improve and enjoy our stunning natural environment, treasure the Welsh language and are actively engaged with the rich sporting, cultural and industrial heritage of the area

4.1 Let's Talk feedback: What matters?

- Keep the past alive, promoting and celebrating our heritage to strengthen our sense of identity and sense of belonging;
- Help to protect, preserve and maintain our historic and heritage sites for present and future generations;
- Promote our Welsh language, traditions and culture;
- Help all generations to connect with our natural environment, heritage and culture;
- Improve facilities for walking and cycling; and
- Help our community and voluntary groups to sustain and further develop their important work

4.2 Supporting evidence

4.2.1 Community Impact Assessment Survey

Most respondents said they place a higher value on accessible green spaces since the beginning of the pandemic. Others focussed on changes in their behaviour they hope to continue, including driving less but walking and cycling more, spending more time in their gardens or their allotments and recycling more.

4.2.2 Discussions with people who use the Bspoked service

Going for walks was highlighted as something participants liked about where they live, as was going to the rugby club.

4.2.3 Race Equality Action Plan Report 2020

The majority of respondents to both the adult's and the children's surveys said they liked living in Neath Port Talbot, reasons given include:

“because of easy access to places like the beach”
“people around here are very friendly and it is a safe place to live”

Those who said they didn't like living in Neath Port Talbot gave a number of reasons, including:

“not many places for young people to hang out without spending money”
“because of the smoke from the factory”

5. Jobs and Skills

Working with our partners we create the conditions for more secure, well paid and green work in the area and help local people acquire the skills they need to access those jobs

5.1 Let's Talk feedback: What matters?

- Being able to generate enough money to stay in business and have a good standard of living;
- Being able to adapt as markets change;
- Financial support to mitigate the impact of Covid-19;
- Addressing anti-social behaviour, particularly in the towns;
- Creating employment and being a good employer;
- Transport – affects ability to employ people and customer volumes;
- Managing growth;
- Help with recruitment and with training;
- Maintaining and growing the customer base, business profile and marketing;
- Price and stability in the supply chain; energy costs;
- Digital connectivity and digital skills; and
- Help with sites and premises

5.2 Supporting evidence

5.2.1 Canolfan Maerdy Outreach Youth Work

Some of the findings highlighted anti-social behaviour (e.g. *“alcohol is a problem- stolen from parents/guardians; marijuana is a problem- stolen from parents/guardians; food has been stolen from community- mostly from garages and outhouses where they know a separate fridge/larder is kept; random acts of destruction to people’s property, random acts of destruction to business properties”*). However these could be linked to boredom, frustration and feeling disengaged, together with poverty and food shortages / families struggling to feed young people.

5.2.2 Community Impact Assessment Survey

Many of the responses focussed on the loss in household income they have experienced since the start of the pandemic. Whilst others suggested financial support, better awareness of available benefits and more courses for those with caring responsibilities could help alleviate some pressures.

Other respondents identified a number of important things employers could do to help employees feel safe and supported when the lockdown is eased and people return to the workplace, including:

- being supportive and flexible
- Providing clear guidance and communication
- keep listening
- provide job security
- look after the wellbeing of staff

5.2.3 'Let's Talk' Facebook comments

Twelve of the comments echoed the need to address anti-social behaviour. Examples of comments included:

"NO ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TOLERATED" signs up and more cameras around problem areas';

"Unfortunately there are a lot of people that roam the town drinking, doing drugs and being antisocial";

"Get rid of all the Drugs more police"

5.2.4 NPT business questionnaire

Responses to the business questionnaire generally reflected the feedback on 'what matters' from 'Let's Talk'. Examples of comments in response to "What matters to you and your business for the future?" and "What do you think the council could do to help your business going forward?" included:

"try and get the business back to making a profit rather than a loss each month and to be able to retain our staff"

"More financial and practical support in helping business recover from the pandemic e.g. grants for marketing to reinvigorate custom"

"I have been broken into... I also worry about my personal safety"

"transport is a big a issue"

"Developing our product range and enhancing our current offering. In addition growing the servicing side of our business"

"We are still extremely busy and need more staff to help but they are not forth coming"

"Keep growing and stay afloat"

"Energy Prices - I am a small business and have a higher usage then most (2 kilns) of electricity. I need to understand how this will impact me"

5.2.5 Race Equality Action Plan Report 2020

Respondents were able to choose what they believed to be the top 3 issues in the area. Unemployment was the highest result, followed by drugs and alcohol.

When asked if they felt safe in in the community that they live in, an overwhelming amount of respondents stated that they felt safe (75%), with only 8% feeling that they were unsafe or very unsafe. Encouragingly, 90% of respondents felt safe enough to go out in the community alone

More than half of respondents to the adult survey said as a person from a Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) background it is difficult to find employment. Similarly, half of the respondents believed that there not enough opportunities to progress in their job and that there are fewer opportunities for BAME people to work in the public sector.

Conversely, when asked if BAME people were treated fairly in the workplace 70% stated that they were.