



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills & Culture Cabinet Board

17 February 2022

Report of the Head of Early Years, Inclusion & Partnerships – Hayley Lervy

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Think Family Partnership Update

Purpose of the Report:

To provide Members with an update on the work of the Think Family Partnership, including delivery of key programmes and services for children, young people and families.

Executive Summary:

The Think Family Partnership oversees delivery of a number of programmes and service areas, many of which are funded through Welsh Government (WG) grant streams:

- Families First and Early Intervention & Prevention Panel
- Flying Start and Early Years
- Childcare Offer
- Family Information Service

- Children's Play
- Early Years Integration
- Child Development Fund

The partnership also ensures that the authority meets duties in relation to the Childcare Act 2006 and the Children & Families (Wales) Measure 2010, through undertaking the required Childcare and Play Sufficiency Assessments. New assessments are required to be submitted to WG by end June 2022 and work is underway on both, with engagement with parents and stakeholders planned for the coming months.

The Early Intervention Panel continues to improved access to support services for families, with over 5,800 referrals being received since the introduction of the panel

Childcare providers continue to be well supported through the provision of sustainability and new development grants, and also through the implementation of the childcare offer. Additional support has been provided throughout the pandemic.

Additional capital and revenue funding has been received for children's play and applications have been invited from internal and external providers to deliver a range of opportunities for children and young people.

Background:

The Think Family Partnership manages delivery of a number Welsh Government programmes - Families First, Flying Start, Childcare Offer Wales, Childcare & Play – and also supports the authority in meeting its legislative duties in relation to:

- Sections 22 and 26 of the Childcare Act 2006 – to secure sufficient provision of childcare and to undertake childcare sufficiency assessments;

- Section 27 of the Childcare Act 2006 - to provide information for children, young people, families and professionals on a wide range of family related topics;
- Section 11 of the Children & Families (Wales) Measure 2010 – to assess for and secure sufficiency of play opportunities for children (0-17 years) in the local authority area.

Programmes and teams are funded in the main through Welsh Government (WG) grants and, therefore, use of monies must comply with the terms and conditions of each individual grant stream.

Since the last update to Members in 2019, the Think Family Partnership has received additional funding through WG's Early Years Integration Pathfinder programme and Child Development Fund, and also funding to support children's play. Whilst the additional funding has been welcomed to support children and families in NPT, it has created capacity issues in many areas of the overall team. Updates on the implementation of the grants are included in the report. A table providing an overview of funding received during 2021/22 is provided as Appendix 1.

Programme/Service Updates

The report will provide updates on:

- Families First and Early Intervention & Prevention Panel
- Flying Start and Early Years
- Childcare Offer
- Family Information Service
- Children's Play
- Early Years Integration

- Child Development Fund

1. Families First and Early Intervention & Prevention Panel

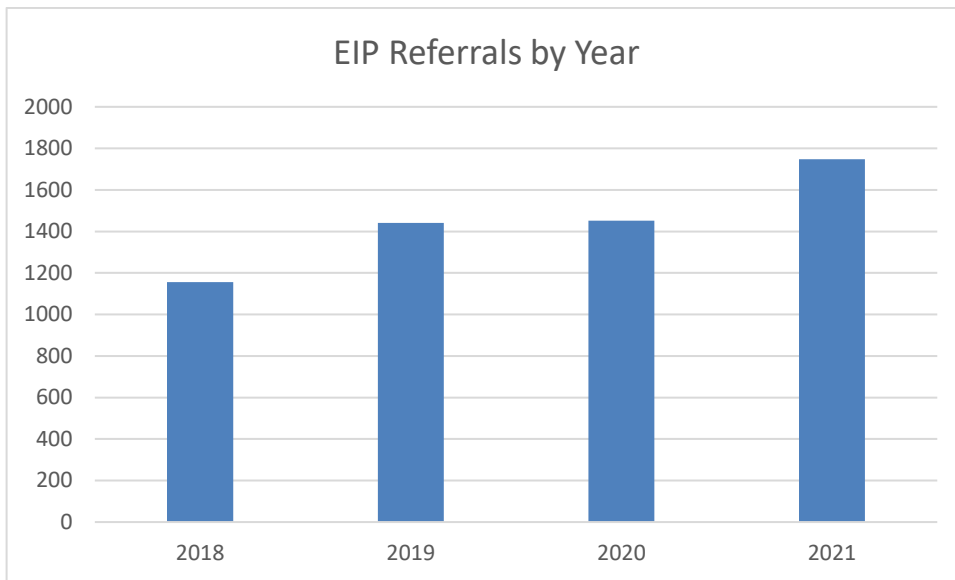
Families First is a Welsh Government early intervention and prevention programme aimed at improving outcomes for children, young people (0-25 years) and their families. The programme has a number of key elements:

1. Team Around the Family
2. Joint Assessment Family Framework (TAF Assessment)
3. Strategic Commissioning
4. Disability Focus

In 2017, a range of services were established to deliver support services for children, young people and families for the period 2018 to 2022. Services are delivered through both internal and external providers. In November 2021, Members approved a report for a one year extension to contracts and agreements for services funded through the Families First grant, from April 2022 to March 2023.

Participants access services through the multi-agency Early Intervention & Prevention (EIP) Panel, via a referral to the Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Families can refer themselves or are identified and referred by partners, with the families' consent. Between April 2018 and December 2022 over 5,800 referrals were received by EIP Panel. Other services can also be accessed via panel, as all panel members are able to accept referrals.

The graph below illustrates the growth in referral numbers since 2018.



Two of the Families First funded services delivered internally are managed through the Think Family Partnership – parenting and Sandfields West Children’s Community.

Parenting

Delivered by the Children and Families Team, the service supports parents from the time of conception up to parents of teenagers, across the county borough area. This includes a range of drop-in, informal, and evidence based parenting sessions and programmes, and delivery of family-based events. The services are aimed at working with parents strengthen parenting capacity, develop and build resilience, and sustain positive change in the best interests of children.

The team work in conjunction with the Flying Start parenting team to avoid duplication and to co-deliver programmes. The team have developed own online programmes in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure that a range of support is available to meet the needs of families. The online delivery of programmes will now remain as part of the overall service provided to participants.

The team have taken a staged approach to reintroducing face to face delivery in response participants' growing need more directly connect with other families and with their support worker. Interventions with parents and early years children, such as Stay and Play and baby massage, have been well attended with other parents already signed up for future group.

Other, more formal parenting groups for parents of older children, such as Family Links Nurture and Talking Teens are also being offered, with participant numbers growing slowly.

Additional capacity is currently being built into the team in response to the introduction of Section 1 of the [Children \(Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment\) \(Wales\) Act 2020](#) (Children Wales Act), which will come into force on 21 March 2022. This will remove the defence of reasonable punishment and all physical punishment of children will be illegal in Wales, including by parents and anyone acting in loco parentis in any setting in Wales. The Police will be able to offer an out of court disposal (O OCD) to a parent who has physically punished their child. A condition of the O OCD would be engagement in parenting support which is intended to develop positive non-violent parenting practices. The additional capacity will support both parenting teams in responding to O OCD referrals from the Police for parenting support. Numbers of referrals, engagement by parents etc. will be monitored following the introduction of the Act. The Children & Families Team Manager is working with Social Services, Swansea Council and the Police to ensure that clear pathways and processes are in place to implement this.

Sandfields West Children's Community

Sandfields West Children Community (SWCC), based at Tir Morfa, aims to be a one stop shop for families in Sandfields West, providing information, advice and support to families in the community.

Through Families First, a Children's Community Lead is funded to work in partnership with agencies to support families' engagement

with services, particularly to address priorities of improving school readiness and promoting the emotional health and wellbeing of young people.

Engagement throughout the pandemic has been difficult, however good progress has been made in developing the Children's Community as a valuable resource in the area:

- With funding awarded from the All Wales Play Opportunities Grant (AWPOG), the outdoor area has been improved to encourage greater use by children and families.

Councillor Wood has offered Members' Fund monies to develop an outdoor equipped play area on the site, and work is ongoing to complete this.

Further outdoor work is being planned in partnership with Tai Tarian.

- A Local Reference Group has been established with representation from residents, local services, schools and Councillors to ensure that the Children's Community continues to understand local needs and to strengthen links with the community.
- Engagement with families has been mainly through online and social media platforms, with a digital Easter event being held with partners. Face to face work is gradually being reintroduced with partners delivering groups, such as perinatal support and parenting. Physical activity sessions are also planned with the Council's Physical Activity & Sport Service to develop early year's motor skills and coordination.

2. Flying Start and Early Years & Childcare

Flying Start

The Flying Start (FS) programme provides support for families with children who are under 4 years of age and consists of four key elements:

- Childcare for 2-3 year olds
- Enhanced Health Visiting service
- Parenting Programmes
- Speech, Language and Communication

In addition to these, the programme in NPT also delivers:

- Midwifery
- Early Years Education Psychology
- Outreach childcare provision via EYMAP (Early Years Multi Agency Panel)

Key data from across the programme is included as Appendix 2.

Childcare

The programme engages with 28 childcare settings in NPT. All settings are well established and continue to provide quality childcare for Flying Start children.

Flying Start settings within NPT have embraced the challenges resulting from COVID 19 and continue to deliver a high quality, essential part of the Flying start programme despite the extra restrictions and considerations. All FS settings are now open.

All Flying Start settings have been provided with a subscription to Adventures with Alice training and resources due to restrictions in face to face training. The programme is designed to reignite a passion for play, promote the best possible practice, and inspire ideas that will enable every child to grow and learn in their settings. Flying Start settings will close individually for 5 inset days throughout the year to carry out their own training sessions guided by Alice Sharp and with support from their Development Officer and Training Officer. Discussions are in the process to arrange the next volume of Alice Sharp training for next year.

A new Welsh in Childcare Award is being developed to launch in five English language childcare settings. This will include termly training courses and partnership working with Menter Iaith and Urdd Chwaraeon.

A small amount of capital was available for Flying Start from Welsh Government this year, with NPT securing approx. £136,500.

Enhanced Health Visiting

The health visiting team, with their cap of children/families set at 1845 were working over 10% higher than their expected cap of families during 19/20 and 20/21. The team continues to work very close to their cap so far this year, but maintain caseloads safely in delivering an enhanced All Wales Healthy Child Programme (HCW) FS areas across Neath Port Talbot.

Throughout the pandemic, the HCW programme and additional FS visits have been carried out virtually, or over the phone, with garden visits if needed, and home visits reserved for essential contacts only, to maintain the safety of families and health staff.

Parenting

The team provides support to families within Flying Start areas in Port Talbot, Neath and the Swansea Valley, through delivery of structured and informal programmes, both one to one and in groups.

COVID adaptations have led to virtual working with families using various video interaction platforms including MS Teams, and introducing PowerPoint presentations to help demonstrate visually to families how making changes to the way they parent. This has not come without its challenges, however, positive outcomes in completion of the Family Links Nurture program and individual packages of support have been achieved.

Garden visits, alongside walk and talk sessions have been key in developing trusting relationships between the parenting worker and parents during the pandemic.

Speech, Language and Communication

The Speech and Language (SAL) element of the project is delivered by Therapists and Assistants seconded from Swansea Bay University Health Board, who attend Parent and Toddler Groups and the Flying Start Childcare settings. They identify very early any issues with children and encourage parents to help their children with speech development. Face to face has been limited to mostly virtual during the pandemic months, with joint virtual visits and online group delivery.

During 2020-21, the team adapted their service delivery model in response to the COVID 19 pandemic and Welsh Government guidelines. During the initial part of this year the support provided to children and their families was delivered via virtual platforms. As the year progressed processes were set in motion to re-start face to face contacts in 'Clean spaces' or the patient's home using Personal Projective Equipment. The FS SLT were also affected this year with redeployment where 0.4 WTE sessions were lost to support the NHS response to the Pandemic.

Universal messages were delivered via the Neath Port Talbot Flying Start Facebook page and Swansea Bay Speech and Language Therapy Services Facebook page in the form of videos of activity suggestions and signposting to BBC's Tiny Happy People.

The SAL element has provided virtual groups, delivering 'Learning to Talk' key messages; provided assessments via telehealth platforms or face to face; and attended multi-disciplinary team meetings with the EP service, childcare settings and Health Visitor service, to support children identified to be at high risk to developing persistent SLC difficulties or ALN.

| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 (end Dec) |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| Parents accessing virtual groups | 52 | 89 |
| Requests for targeted support | 51 | 40 |
| Assessments | 116 | 90 |
| Families completing min. 4 Adult Child Interaction Therapy | 23 | 64 |
| Multi-disciplinary team meetings | 52 | 45 |

Midwifery:

The small team of midwives have continued to deliver a specific antenatal and postnatal service to vulnerable mothers, mainly aged 20 years and under, with additional work with 20-25 year olds when need and capacity allows. Hours available in the team have been greatly reduced over the last year, with COVID related recruitment issued within the health board.

Work includes diet, nutrition and exercise; smoking cessation; hand expression; antenatal colostrum harvesting breastfeeding; sexual health awareness; contraception; positive mental health; bonding & attachment; the development of the brain and the prevention of ACE's. Key statistics are included in Appendix 2. Throughout the pandemic, very few visits could take place virtually so risk assessments and recommended PPE have been used to continue delivery of the support.

Educational Psychology

Educational Psychologists (EPs) work on early identification and intervention of additional needs and work closely with childcare settings to aid transition into nursery. They visit families at home when necessary to deliver intensive support and at present there are 2.5 full time equivalents operating within the programme.

The EPs work with childcare settings on strategies to assist development of children and can agree to provide the child with

additional support from a dedicated childcare worker placed within the setting. They also work alongside the parenting team to enable early assessment and statementing where needed. FS EPs conduct multi-agency transition meetings in playgroup or school, which are attended by parents and all professionals working with the child to support the most vulnerable FS children to manage the transition to nursery school. EPs utilise a Person Centred Planning approach to enable a child centred approach to transition. One Page Profile training has been made available to all childcare settings to support their participation in this process.

The EPs and ALNLO continue to provide 'Work it Wednesday' sessions to build staff confidence on various topics, such as Solution Circles and Supporting Children with ALNs' Wellbeing. The sessions have also provided an opportunity to ask EPs direct questions. A helpline has also been launched for parents.

Childcare Advice sessions have been introduced for settings to speak to professionals for advice around specific behaviour/situations they are experiencing in their setting.

Early Years and Childcare

The team support and develop the childcare sector in NPT and also leads on ensuring that the Council meets its statutory duty to undertake a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA). The team have been instrumental in supporting childcare in NPT during the pandemic, and have been commended by the sector for their knowledge, support and information, making sure that all providers were kept up to date as guidance changed, and ensuring providers felt supported at all times.

They continue to support the settings to ensure they are as COVID secure as possible, accessing risk assessments, policies and procedures via umbrella organisations, as well as supporting managers to keep up to date changes to the Protective Measures Guidance from Welsh Government.

Childcare providers receive support visits from the team to provide advice and information, and to encourage participation in initiatives, such as the Healthy & Sustainable Pre-School Scheme (HSPSS).

The WG HSPSS aims to promote the health of pre-school aged children by working with childcare settings to encourage positive health behaviours in children from an early age. Currently, 42 providers are involved with the HSPSS scheme in NPT.

Assessment visits have been paused during the pandemic, however, one setting has agreed to pilot a virtual HSPSS accreditation process, which will explore options such as virtual tours and online group sessions for question and answers on certain aspects. This work will continue in the coming year.

Public Health Wales identified four key priorities for HSPSS during the continued Covid restrictions:

- Physical activity and Outdoor play
- Mental and Emotional Health, Wellbeing and Relationships
- Hygiene
- Nutrition and Oral Health.

Settings were extensively consulted regarding the four priority areas to explore the challenges they faced, how they were equipped to address the four priority areas. Settings were supported financially to purchase resources linked to the priority areas.

Outdoor play is a focus for all childcare settings, as WG guidelines continue to encourage more outdoor provision for the children.

Working with the PASS team, an Early Years Delivery Plan is being introduced, that will continue next year. The programme will start with four Flying Start settings and then roll out to other settings.

Work has recently commenced on the latest CSA, which is due to be submitted to WG by the end of June 2022. Actions from the CSA will be taken forward through the multi-agency Early Years and Childcare Group. Sub groups from the group have been paused due to

restrictions but they continue to report on specific targets, including Transition, Promoting Welsh, Supporting and Promoting Childcare, Childcare Offer, Training and Workforce Development.

Training

A programme of free training is offered to childcare settings each year, delivering key mandatory courses and also a range of other courses designed to support the delivery of quality childcare. Courses have been delivered online during the pandemic, with delivery including safeguarding and behaviour management, Signalong, Food Safety, and Paediatric First Aid.

The introduction of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act has seen training provided by the Additional Learning Needs Support Team (ALNST). The FS and EY team have been attended train the trainer Person Centred Approach (PCP) and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), and have also received Babbling Babies training by a member of the SALT team. They are now able to offer support and advice as well as signposting to ALNST as part of their support visits.

Feedback from childcare providers highlighted that the sector have been overwhelmed with ALN training and ongoing Covid issues. In response, the training programme was paired back to deliver only mandatory courses. However, the training programme will build on this in 2022-23, with training planned around child development, observation, play and play based learning as well as domestic violence training, to be delivered by Welsh Women's Aid.

Transition

All children within NPT now follow the same transition process as they leave childcare.

Cluster planning meetings are arranged by the ALN Transition Officer and attended by the Childcare Training and Transition Officer. Schools are advised of any children due to start the following term

with significant need and individual transition meetings arranged where necessary.

Similarly, any information which needs to be passed on for those children with no identified ALN, the Childcare Training and Transition Officer will make contact with schools to advise them of this.

Childcare settings continue to link with schools on an individual basis to pass on transition information sheets. Where relationships have not yet been developed the Childcare Training and Transition Officer will support the passing of information, as well as acting as a link to facilitate transition meetings for those who do not have an identified ALN, should a meeting be necessary.

Financial Support for Childcare

The team administer a number grants to support sustainability, development and access to childcare. During the COVID pandemic, additional support funding was awarded to all local authorities to support the childcare sector as they maintained “business as usual”.

The team manages a grant panel awarding childcare provision with grant funding. The Early Years Grant Panel make these awards in a joint panel with Childcare Offer Small Capital Grants to remove any duplication.

| Year | Grant | £ | No. settings benefitting | Purpose |
|-------|------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 20-21 | NPTC O Gam I Gam | £138,300 | 29 | ALN and financial support for low income families |
| 20-21 | WG CWTCH Grant | £102,700 | 48 | |
| 20-21 | WG Childcare Providers Grant | £7,455 | 3 | Sustainability through Covid |

| | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|----------|----|------------------------------|
| 20-21 | WG uplift to sustainability fund | £133,957 | 96 | Sustainability through Covid |
| 21-22 | WG uplift to sustainability fund | £173,500 | 66 | Sustainability through Covid |

In addition to the above, funding was secured from WG for childcare settings delivering Flying Start and/or the Childcare Offer to improve IT at their settings.

3. Childcare Offer

The Childcare Offer Wales is a Welsh Government funded initiative and aims to provide funded childcare to working families with three to four year olds, where both parents work the equivalent of at least 16 hours per week at the national minimum wage.

Since the introduction of the offer in NPT in 2018, 2065 children have benefitted from the Offer enabling parents to return to work, take up employment or continue in employment with less worry over the cost of childcare.

During 2021-22 (to end December), 547 applications have been received – with 458 of those currently active. At the end of 2021 there were 550 children receiving funded childcare through the scheme.

A total of £1,719,144 has been paid to childcare providers for 382,031 funded childcare hours (April – December 2021).

There are 182 registered childcare providers signed up to deliver the offer. 119 of these are based in Neath Port Talbot with the rest in neighbouring Local Authorities. This includes a range of childminders, full daycare and sessional settings.

Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS)

At the height of the pandemic, from April 2020 to August 2020, the Childcare Offer was temporarily suspended and replaced by C-CAS.

This scheme provided childcare for children aged 0-5 of keyworkers as well as children identified as vulnerable.

In NPT, C-CAS provided 214,649 hours of funded childcare for 48 children identified as vulnerable and 38 keyworker's children, enabling parents to keep working in vital roles throughout this period.

CCO Capital

Circa £5m was awarded to NPTCBC for 2019 - 2023 for capital builds to address childcare gaps in line with Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Childcare Offer for Wales needs.

Additionally, joint applications for Welsh medium education grants, including childcare and community capital builds has seen additional childcare developed within WM primary schools, with the aim to increase the number of children accessing WM nursery education. This fund is now aligned under Childcare Offer. Our Early Years and Childcare Team will continue to support these developments and the future provision running from them, making sure that families are aware of the WM opportunities across the county borough.

| Setting / Location | Childcare places/additional places (est.) | Status | Allocation as at 22 December 2020 |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------|
| Rhos Primary | 32 | Complete | £660,000 |
| Wauanceirch Primary | 32 | Complete | £610,000 |
| Abbey Primary | 24 | Due March 2022 | £555,000 |

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----|----------------|------------|
| Cwmavon Community | 32 | Due March 2023 | £1,000,000 |
| Castell Nedd Central | 24 | Due May 2022 | £250,000 |
| YGG Blaenddulais | 32 | Due March 2023 | £1,000,000 |
| YGG Tyle'r Ynn | 32 | Complete | £510,000 |
| YGG Pontardawe | +10 | Complete | £550,000 |
| YGG Cwmllynfell | 24 | Complete | £360,000 |

Capital Small Grants

A small grants pot was also made available to enable registered childcare providers to make small capital improvements to their setting, supporting them to deliver the Childcare Offer.

Since April 2021, NPT has awarded £234,885 of capital small grant funding from Welsh Government to ensure that settings can improve their provision and support the children accessing Childcare Offer. This includes £65,544 of Covid Recovery funding to enable settings to provide Covid safe delivery of childcare. This has included covered outdoor areas to enable children and staff to spend more time outdoors, additional handwashing facilities, improved ventilation systems and safer handover areas with one way systems.

4. Family Information Service

All local authorities in Wales have a duty under Section 27 of the Childcare Act 2006 to provide a comprehensive, up to date and accurate information on a wide range of topics, including childcare, education and family learning services, and health and wellbeing services. This is delivered through the Family Information Service

(FIS), which is accessible by phone, e-mail, social media, the NPT Family website and through outreach engagement.

As part of the online presence, a services search function is available to give families access to a range of information and support. The functionality is generated through Dewis.

FIS also respond directly to enquiries from families, via telephone, email and social media.

| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 (end Dec) |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Email | 1,260 | 668 |
| Social Media | 169 | 58 |
| Telephone | 115 | 296 |
| Website | - | 79 |
| | 1,544 | 1,101 |

| Reasons for 2021-22 Enquiries | |
|----------------------------------------|-----|
| Childcare offer | 512 |
| Help with promotion | 167 |
| Childcare | 129 |
| Holiday Provision | 56 |
| Playgroups | 56 |
| Flying start provision | 42 |
| Leisure activities | 30 |
| School admission | 24 |
| Family support | 19 |
| Children and Young People's activities | 17 |
| Other | 12 |
| Parent & toddler groups | 10 |
| Childminders | 8 |
| Financial information | 7 |
| All information | 4 |
| Day nurseries | 4 |

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Training | 3 |
| Early Years entitlement | 1 |
| Total | 1,101 |

Short term funding has been secured to second an existing member of the FIS team to undertake more in depth work to understand the barriers to services registering and maintaining their information in the Dewis database. The work will also explore how information hosted on the FIS website can be more inclusive to families with visual or hearing difficulties or where English is not their first language, and also ensure that information is available to meet the needs identified from the enquiries data.

This work will be undertaken between January and March 2022, and the findings will be used to inform further developments for 2022-23. Additional funding is being sought through existing grants in order that work can continue.

5. Children's Play

Managed through the Children & Families Team, this element of the Think Family Partnership leads on ensuring the authority's compliance with the duty to assess for and secure sufficiency of play. Welsh Government require a full Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) to be completed and submitted to them every three years with an annual action plan and progress report. A new assessment is now underway and is due to be submitted to WG at the end of June 2022. The PSA will be reported to Members in a separate report following completion of the assessment.

An area of work that is often underfunded by WG, during 2021-22 a number of additional funding streams were awarded to the Council via the All Wales Play Opportunities Grant to take forward actions from the current PSA:

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Holiday Play | £45,527 |
| Winter of Wellbeing | £281,613 |
| Summer of Fun | £204,000 |
| Capital | £235,000 |

Applications were invited for all grants, from both internal and external providers. Information can be provided to members on individual projects funding, if required.

WG have indicated that Holiday Play funding is likely to continue into 2022-23.

6. Early Years Integration

In 2019, both Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Council, along with Swansea Bay University Health Board were invited by Welsh Government to become part of the Early Years Integration Transformation Programme (EYI), also known as Pathfinder, along with 6 other PSB areas across Wales. Neath Port Talbot Council is the lead authority and grant recipient for the regional project and a Steering Group has been established to oversee the direction of the work.

The purpose of the funding and the overarching ambition of the programme is to develop a joined up and responsive early years' system to ensure every child has the best start in life. In order to meet this ambition, Welsh Government has grant funded Regional Pathfinder Programmes to:

- Create an early years system to deliver services in a co-ordinated, integrated and timely way
- Support local partners to re-configure early years services focusing on planning, commissioning and identifying and addressing needs.
- Identify barriers to integration and ways to remove, reduce or rationalise them.

Funding is provided for the employment of two EYI Co-ordinators, one for Neath Port Talbot and one for the Swansea, and also to test/pilot new ways of working to explore opportunities for system and service delivery change.

The funding awarded for the region for 21-22 has been utilised to build on the previous work and to regionalise projects based on 4 themes which are seen as priorities going forward:

Family Support

Focusses on providing a co-ordinated approach to early years services within the Upper Valley GP cluster, which has been identified as an area of need and one with lower engagement in early years services. A lack of support services and key professionals based in the area has been acknowledged as a barrier to engagement, making it difficult for families to build rapport and trust with professionals. The model looks at linking early years services together and for families receive a seamless journey through services engaging at the earliest possible time preferably at the anti-natal stage.

A range of support is offered by a Specialist Health Visitor and parenting worker, funded by the project, with a timetable of groups for families to reduce isolation and building relationships within the community, whilst being able to access support and advice from a range of professionals who attend the groups. Where it is identified that a family need more intensive support then 1:1 support will be offered.

Links have been made with schools in the cluster and drop in sessions are available for families within the schools on a monthly basis to access advice and support as required.

It has been reported by the team working in the cluster that they have worked with 74 children to date identified with their families receiving

various support around mental health issues, breast feeding/weaning support, parenting advice with specific referrals to paediatrics and Speech and language therapies via EYMAP for children with emerging ALN.

10 referrals from schools have been made for support with speech and language, parenting and toileting and schools have reported that there is an increase in support needed for these issues due to the impact that the pandemic has had on children's developmental delays.

Speech Language and Communication

In 2020-21, the speech and language element of the project was piloted in Swansea, as speech and language services are different in the two local authority areas. Going forward, NPT will be piloting a model in line with our Flying Start model in the hope of streamlining the SALT pathway and to have a universal service across the county borough.

Physical Literacy and Nutrition

In conjunction with the Health Visiting and Dietetics services, an advice line has been established to offer support and advice to Health Visitors around nutrition support in the early years. This service is delivered regionally and was piloted by Pathfinder over the last year. A shared portal has been developed to offer ongoing advice and information going forward for Health Visitors and training has been delivered to key stakeholders working with families to offer consistent advice around nutrition and diet.

Due to the success of the pilot other funding streams will be explored going forward to ensure the continuation of the service.

Transition through Health services.

A Wellbeing Wallet is currently being developed by SBUHB midwifery services to support expectant mothers through pregnancy and ensure a smooth transition into health visiting. This aims to ensure that

patients will not need to retell their stories to different services. Midwifery and Public Health are taking the lead on this project with health visiting having input into it also. The wallet is expected to be ready to be piloted at the end of this financial year with two midwifery teams across the region (one in NPT and one in Swansea) piloting it. There will be public consultation into the development to ensure it will be user friendly.

Indicative funding has been given by WG for the next two years which will enable the work to continue and develop.

7. Child Development Fund

In September 2020, WG introduced a new Child Development Fund to provide additional developmental support to children and families who are in greatest need and disadvantage through of the impact of Covid-19. Initially indicated to be one off funding, the grant has again been awarded in 2021-22 and will continue into 2022-23.

In 2021-22, NPTC was awarded £362,000 from the grant, which has allowed the Council and its partners to address the immediate needs of children (0-5 years) and families most impacted by Covid. This included several projects, which to date has helped to achieve the following:

- The appointment of a 'Recruit Dietetic Assistant Practitioner' to establish 8 Nutrition Skills for Life Get Cooking programmes to support families with children 0-5 years of age gain practical skills to achieve healthier diets.
- The delivery of 20 Forestry School sessions to provide children and families with stimulating outdoor play opportunities.
- The delivery of 6 Family Wellbeing Sessions (to 18 families per week) to encourage family interaction - parental engagement and enhance the overall wellbeing of the whole family.
- The full time employment of a 'child nursery nurse' to work alongside Swansea Bay child disability team to support children

and families' behaviour, development, mental health and well-being while awaiting paediatric assessment – delivered to 178 children.

- The identification of 9 childcare placements for children with ALN/ Developmental delay, where families did qualify for other support programmes.
- 12 high level childcare staff remain in place to support settings with children with emerging needs - supporting up to 48 children across 10 settings with bespoke packages.
- 11 socialisation & interaction programmes were delivered, comprising of 80 sessions. A total of 362 individuals (children and parents/ guardians) booked onto sessions. This included - physical activity sessions, play, drama, art, music, soft play, yoga and circus skill sessions.

Financial Impacts:

No impact

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:

No impact

Legal Impacts:

No impact

Risk Management Impacts:

No impact

Crime and Disorder Impacts:

No impact

Counter Terrorism Impacts:

No impact

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

No impact

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations:

No recommendations.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

No decision required.

Implementation of Decision:

No decision required.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Think Family Partnership Grant Funding 2021-22

Appendix 2 - Key Flying Start Statistics 2020-22

Officer Contact:

Hayley Lervy, Head of Early Years, Inclusion & Partnerships,

h.lervy@npt.gov.uk

Angeline Spooner-Cleverly, Participation Co-ordinator, [a.spooner-](mailto:a.spooner-cleverly@npt.gov.uk)

[cleverly@npt.gov.uk](mailto:a.spooner-cleverly@npt.gov.uk)

Allison Harris, Think Family Partnership Manager,
a.t.harris@npt.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Think Family Partnership Grant Funding 2021-22

| Grant Name | Value | Purpose (as per offer letter) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All Wales Play Opportunities (AWPOG) | £45,527.00 | To meet some of the actions in 2021 – 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) Action Plan. |
| Childcare Offer - Childcare | £2,847,346.00 | To deliver the childcare offer |
| Childcare Offer - Additional Support (same letter as above) | £70,860.00 | To support children with additional needs to access the Childcare Offer |
| Childcare Offer - Admin Grant | £146,151.00 | To prepare for, and deliver the Childcare Offer |
| Child Dev Fund | £362,277.00 | To provide additional developmental support to those children and families who are in greatest need who have been impacted most by Covid-19. |
| Early Years Integration (Co-ordinators) | £99,986.00 | Appointment of co-ordinators for Early Years Integration Pathfinder programme (regional project). |
| Early Years Integration (Piloting and Testing) | £421,146.00 | To test new ways of working to support co-ordination of early years system across the Neath Port Talbot and Swansea region. |
| Children & Communities Grant (Flying Start) | £3,850,463.00 | To deliver the Flying Start programme. |
| Children & Communities Grant (Families First) | £1,928,839.00 | To deliver the Families First programme. |
| Children & Communities Grant (Childcare & Play) | £102,700.00 | To identify and meet gaps in out of school childcare provision based on the results of the Childcare Sufficiency |

| Grant Name | Value | Purpose (as per offer letter) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Assessments and Play Sufficiency Assessments. |
| Childcare Offer (CAPITAL) | £4,015,000.00 | To provide sufficient childcare places to meet demand generated by the Childcare Offer - Extension from initial award letter |
| All Wales Play Opportunities Grant (AWPOG) - Summer of Fun | £204,000.00 | To meet some of the actions within the 2021 – 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) Action Plan. |
| All Wales Play Opportunities (AWPOG) | £10,000 | To help with the preparations for the 2022 full Play Sufficiency Assessments. |
| Capital funding - CCO and FS. | £480,000 | IT resources for CCO and FS childcare settings Additional funding for CCO capital projects Additional funding for CCO small grants pot |
| All Wales Play Opportunities Grant (AWPOG) Capital | £235,000.00 | Capital works to help with meeting PSA |
| Children & Communities Grant (Childcare & Play) | £10,000.00 | To undertake CSA |
| Children & Communities Grant (Childcare & Play) - not had confirmation of value | £156,283.00 | Childcare sustainability |
| All Wales Play Opportunities Grant (AWPOG) - Winter of Wellbeing | £281,613.00 | Assessment (PSA) Action Plan; To build on the success of the Summer of Fun and provide more opportunities for children and young people aged 0-25 to develop their social, emotional and physical well-being outside of the school day. |

| Grant Name | Value | Purpose (as per offer letter) |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Out of Court Parenting Support | £21,000.00 | This grant application covers both the preparation Year (1 December 2021 – 31 March 2022) and Year 1 (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023) of the Out of Court Parenting Support Grant. - £35,000 for 2022/23 |
| One off Parenting Support | £28,300.00 | Increasing the skills, knowledge and resources of the parenting and wider workforce with methods and techniques to manage inter-parental conflict, particularly in the event of family stresses and pressure resulting from Covid 19 |

Appendix 2

Key Flying Start Statistics 2020-22

| FLYING START TEAMS | 2020-2021* | 2021-22 (end Dec 21)* |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PARENTING | 2,968 home visits 74 Individual courses 11 group courses (including 2 Nurture Programmes) | 572 home visits, 111 Individual courses 8 group courses (including 6 Nurture Programmes) |
| HEALTH VISITING | 2,394 home visits covering 2001 individual children. CNN's carried out 3,434 home visits and held 31 Informal Groups | 3,752 home visits covering 1730 individual children. CNN's carried out* 2,355 home visits and held 18 Informal Groups |
| SALT | 837 home visits and held 20 individual courses and 4 group courses. | 990 home visits and held 67 individual courses. |
| MIDWIFERY | 428 AnteNatal appointments and 35 Post Natal appointments. They gave out over 20 breastpumps | 250 AnteNatal appointments and 41 Post Natal appointments. They gave out over 60 breastpumps |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CHILDCARE | On average 464 childcare places were made available each month over 27 settings (6 welsh medium). In which 579 new individual children took up childcare (73 in Welsh Medium) during the year. | On average 453 childcare places were made available each month over 27 settings (6 welsh medium). In which 404 new individual children took up childcare (32 in Welsh Medium) during the year. |
| ADDITIONAL SUPPORT (ALN) | 59 children received additional support | 65 children received additional support |
| OUTREACH | 35 children received FS from outreach provision. | 58 children received FS from outreach provision. |

Figures include virtual/online contacts