

## Appendix One – Mid-Year Progress Report on Key Projects

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Homelessness

Review of Housing Options Structure

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

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

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

Increasing the Number of Lettings to Homeless People

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

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

Increasing Dispersed Temporary Accommodation

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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