



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

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

### **NEATH PORT TALBOT SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY CABINET BOARD**

**25<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

#### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES – K. WARREN**

##### **Matter for Decision**

##### **Wards Affected:**

All wards

#### **NEATH PORT TALBOT CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SOCIAL CARE STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2026**

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

To inform members of the outcome of the consultation on the draft Neath Port Talbot Children & Young People Services Social Care Strategic Plan 2023-25 (“Valuing our children’s future”).

##### **Executive Summary:**

This Strategic Plan sets out how Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (‘the Council’) aims to create a system that works for all children, young people and families where we work together to provide and commission integrated services for children and young

people. Our ambition is for children to have the best start in life with their family, in their school and in their community.

## **Background:**

On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Cabinet Board approved a 60 day public consultation of the Plan.

The Plan set out the Council's proposals for the medium term future of Children & Young People Services in Neath Port Talbot, and covers the functions of:

- Placement sufficiency (the right service at the right time)
- Recruit, retain and develop a highly-skilled workforce (a highly-skilled social worker for every child and family who needs one)
- Demand and complexity (providing specific and targeted support for families facing particular challenges)

A range of engagement and consultation activities took place between 31<sup>st</sup> July and 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023 to help inform the Plan. The purpose of this was to:

- Provide a mechanism for people to contribute their views of the Plan, make comments and suggestions, including alternative proposals
- Find out whether people agreed or disagreed with the proposals and the reasons why.

Our fundamental vision for Children and Young People Services remains: children, young people, families and communities are at the heart of what we do. We are proud of the positive outcomes achieved to date and the strength of partnership working. We are also ambitious for the future and for our children and young people, and we have high expectations of ourselves and partners, working with children, families and communities to improve outcomes.

Children's needs are best met by their own families if this can be safely supported. Helping families stay together is a key focus of Children's Services. Early intervention and prevention services can reduce the number of children and young people reaching the threshold for care and needing to become Children Looked After (CLA), or support them to return safely to their families in a timely manner.

We must manage risk effectively with families that are approaching the threshold for care, and work to ensure we only provide care to those children who need to be looked after outside of their family, and are supported to remain in the family home when it is safe to do so. We will provide a range of effective interventions which support families to make changes whilst always ensuring that children and young people are kept safe.

Furthermore, the Strategic Plan will be subject to regular review to ensure it maintains relevance.

A copy of the Strategic Plan is attached at Appendix 1.

### **Financial Impacts:**

Taking forward the priorities within the Strategic Plan will be undertaken in line with the available budget.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment:**

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016). The first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment was required.

An overview of the Integrated Impact Assessment has been included below in summary form only and it is essential that Members read the Integrated Impact Assessment, which is attached to the report at Appendix 4, for the purposes of the meeting.

- No negative impacts identified at this stage and the indication is that the impact will be positive. Processes are in place to monitor the impact for any unintended negative consequences.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts:**

The Strategic Plan is a high level document intended to meet the needs of the whole county borough including the valleys communities.

Furthermore, as actions to take forward the priorities within the Strategic Plan are developed, consideration of the impact on supporting valley communities will be given as part of the individual impact assessments.

### **Workforce Impacts:**

The contents of this report do not have any impact on the Council's workforce.

### **Legal Impacts:**

There are no legal implications associated with this item.

### **Risk Management Impacts:**

There are no known risks associated with this item.

## **Consultation:**

On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023, Members approved a 60 day public consultation in respect of the Plan. During this period, 31<sup>st</sup> July to 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023, the consultation was promoted via the Council's website and other media, staff teams and forums.

A consultation document, an easy read version of the Strategic Plan, and plan on a page were all developed prior to the consultation. In addition, all materials are available in Welsh.

Unfortunately, no responses were received. Whilst it does not necessarily suggest an endorsement of the Plan, it can also be said that no negative feedback was received and, given how widely the exercise was publicised, could be interpreted as suggestive of general support for the proposed Plan.

## **Recommendations:**

Having due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment it is recommended that Members approve the Neath Port Talbot Children & Young People Services Strategic Plan 2023-26 as detailed in Appendix 1.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To ensure a range of good quality care and support is available to meet the needs of vulnerable children resident in Neath Port Talbot.

## **Implementation of Decision:**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Children's Social Care Strategic Plan 2023-26

Appendix 2: Children's Social Care Strategic Plan – Easy Read

Appendix 3: Children's Social Care Strategic Plan – Plan on a Page

Appendix 4: Integrated Impact Assessment

**List of Background Papers:**

None

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