



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH Port Talbot COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board

01st February 2024

Report of the Head of Education Development

Matter for Monitoring

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title: Youth Service Update

Purpose of the Report:

To provide Members with an update on the Local Authority Youth Service.

Executive Summary:

Neath Port Talbot Youth Service provides Youth Work support to young people within Neath Port Talbot. This is carried out by 48 full time and over 60 part time staff using a range of provision.

The service is heavily dependent on external grants with over 75% of its funding coming in from a range of sources, this has led to a shift away from open access services to a more targeted youth work offer.

The Youth Service has continued to recover from the Covid 19 pandemic. During 22/23 the Youth Service supported 6,592 young

people aged 11-25 which was an increase of 1,310 young people from the 21/22 period.

All of the existing community based youth clubs have reopened and this year we have used the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) to develop Youth Work activities in some areas where there was lack of provision. During 22/23 Youth Clubs engaged with 1,411 young people an increase of 494 on the previous year. These clubs provide young people with educational, social and recreational activities as well as giving young people access to youth work advice and support.

The more targeted youth work offer focuses on vulnerable young people and youth workers engage with these young people on a one to one basis and also using group work. Targeted youth work support is offered to Young Carers, LGBT+ young people, young people with speech, language and communication needs, caseload young people from Early Intervention Panel, young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), Young people who are struggling in schools, young people with emerging mental health issues such as loneliness and social isolation, young parents, care experienced young people, Electively Home Educated (EHE) young people and young people who are at risk of homelessness.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme has now fully reopened in Neath Port Talbot and this year we held our first Awards Presentation Evening since before the pandemic. This event was attended by approx. 650 guests with 280 young people receiving an award. Awards were handed out to young people. Young People achieved at all levels Bronze, Silver and Gold.

The youth service also offers young people relationship and sexuality education (RSE) and advice both within schools and in their communities. This is delivered through youth workers who are also trained in sexual health.

The Youth Council who provide opportunities for young people to have a say in matters and issues that impact on their lives have been very active during this year. The Youth Council has 42 members from a range of provisions and groups. The Youth Council also has a Youth Mayor, Deputy Youth Mayor, one member of the Welsh Youth Parliament and a member of the British Youth Parliament.

The Youth Service also coordinates the Food and Fun programme which is a free school-based education programme that provides food and nutrition education, physical activity, enrichment sessions and healthy meals to children during the school summer holidays.

The Youth Service continues to develop and respond to new challenges. This year we have been developing community work in response to recovery from the pandemic and the results of the Lets Talk consultation. We have also been providing free community based youth clubs and warm spaces to young people to help with the cost of living crisis.

Background:

Neath Port Talbot Youth Service currently employs 48 full time staff and over 60 part time staff and we are currently recruiting volunteers to deliver a range of supportive and educational activities to young people aged 11-25. Please see the Youth Service Structure attached (Appendix 1).

Neath Port Talbot Youth Service sets out in its vision to encourage and enable young people to have fun, participate in all opportunities available to them and to gain the skills needed to become happy, confident and fulfilled adults and members of their communities. This is backed up by the service Mission Statement to deliver good quality learning, social and recreational opportunities and activities through highly motivated, well trained and enthusiastic youth workers in safe and friendly places accessible to all young people.

In recent years there has been a shift towards more targeted youth work across Wales and within Neath Port Talbot which has come from external funding sources. During 2021/22 grant funding equated to 75% of the Youth Service budget and this has increased again in the 23/24 financial year with the addition of the Shared Prosperity Grant.

Youth Service Provision

The Youth Service contact with young people dropped during the pandemic to 6% of 11-25 year olds (1,597 young people) for 2020/21. This increased during 2022/23 to 27% of 11-25 year olds (6,592 young people). This placed us as the Youth Service with 4th highest engagement numbers in Wales. The Youth Service continues to provide a mix of universal, targeted and specialist provision.

Youth Clubs

Neath Port Talbot Youth Service still delivers youth work to young people aged 11-18 via 12 community based youth clubs. These clubs are situated in Blaengwynfi, Bryn, Croeserw, Cymmer, Sandfields, Taibach, Bryncoch, Cimla, Crynant, Cwmllynfell, Glynneath and Seven Sisters. We have also recently opened up new external grant funded youth clubs in Neath, Cearwern and Trebanos. The Trebanos Youth Club is our first ever Welsh Language Youth Club. Opening times for local authority youth clubs can be seen in Appendix 2.

The new community based Youth Workers have developed a range of provisions including outreach and detached youth work in a range of areas and this team also provides activity days and community events in areas of need. This work is carried out in partnership with voluntary sector organisations and groups in particular the Boys and Girls Club of Wales.

Youth clubs plan, deliver and evaluate their work systematically, measure outcomes achieved with young people. Outcomes include accreditation programmes, Junior Leaderships Awards and

certification of achievements that provide recognition of young people's learning in relation to our curriculum framework. Young people are also offered an opportunity to engage in a number of trips and events throughout the year that not only celebrate their achievements but encourage new cultural learning.

Ongoing issues impacting on our community based youth clubs include staffing pressures due to recruitment issues, and our club staff have also told us that there is added pressure on staff who are now having to work with young people who present complex health issues although not exhaustive they include; self-harm, sexuality and relationships issues.

Targeted provision

Targeted provision is much more focused and can be aimed at specific groups of young people with particular needs such as young people who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) or targeted due to certain characteristics such as young carers, LGBT or Speech and Language. This provision is funded through a variety of external sources including, Welsh Government Youth Support Grant, Children's Community Grant and the Shared Prosperity Fund. Each funding stream has its own requirements and is subject to change dependent on the direction of the funding provider.

Families First

Focuses on One to One Caseloads, Vulnerable Groups and Young Carers.

Youth workers focus on early intervention and prevention activities for young people. Caseloads are allocated via the Early Intervention and Prevention Panel. Vulnerable groups supported at present are the LGBT group, Speech, Language & Communication group and finally the Young Carers Club. Through Families First youth work interventions:

At the end of quarter 3 the families first youth worker have achieved the following: 89 (87% of those asked) Young people demonstrate an improvement in emotional/mental wellbeing, 83 (81%) Young people

report an improvement in own resilience, 88 (86%) young people have stated that their family relationships have improved and 66 (80%) families have reported an improvement in family resilience

Welsh Government Youth Support Grant

Focus on 3 main areas:

NEET young people aged 16-18;

Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing;

Youth Work support for at risk of Homelessness young people.

NEET Support

The NEET aspect of this grant has been provided to enable the authority to implement the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework along with employing The Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator post who oversees the development of systems and procedures to ensure young people are able to make an effective transition to post 16 employment, education and training. Working with schools, Careers Wales and post 16 education and training providers the co-ordinator focuses on early identification of young people at risk of becoming NEET and re-engaging those that are NEET into employment, education and training.

The Keeping in Touch (KIT) team have helped identify tier one young people whose status is unknown to Careers Wales and move them into appropriate tiers. At the end of quarter 3 the KIT workers successfully moved 108 young people into a more appropriate Tier which equates to 79% - target is 70%

The team also helped NEET young people achieve successful outcomes. 30 young people received support this year with 25 young people achieving a successful outcome which equates to 83% - target is 60%

The 25 young people having a positive outcome includes outcomes such as entering employment, gaining a qualification or engaging with other services from a referral.

Some of these outcomes included 12 young people entered further learning, 2 young people entered paid employment and 6 entered work based learning.

A new remit for the KIT team this year was to provide support to Year 11 Electively Home Educated (EHE) young people to make a successful transition to a post 16 destination. The team supported 25 EHE young people into a positive destination.

Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing

The Welsh Government funded Youth Support Grant is aimed at the early identification and support of young people with emerging mental health, emotional or wellbeing issues and young people who are lonely and socially isolated.

The young parents group is thriving with 42 young parents being engaged with an average of 26 young parents attending on a regular basis. Sessions are delivered on a Tuesday afternoon and Friday morning. The young parent's group work with Flying Start and the NHS Perinatal Community Nurse who has a mental health remit. The group is very well received by its members who have built up very good support networks and have bonded and are now supporting each other beyond the group sessions. The parents now have built such a good relationship with the Youth Workers that they are more comfortable in asking for support, help and advice. This includes seeking support due to the cost of living crisis such as food bank items.

This team also support the following groups:

- Young Parents
- Young Carers
- LGBT young people
- Care experienced young people

Youth Work support for at risk of Homelessness young people

Welsh Government provide funding to support young people aged 14-18 who are at risk of homelessness through targeted youth work. This funding is used to support young people using a 2 strand approach:

- Strand 1 is awareness raising workshops for schools & youth groups developed in partnership between the statutory and voluntary sectors and young people. This year 517 young people have taken part in the awareness raising sessions.
- Strand 2 is targeted bespoke support for young people identified as being at risk of homelessness. So far this year the Youth Workers have supported 24 young people who were at risk of homelessness.

Horizons post 16 support (SPF)

The Horizons Project is a Shared Prosperity Funded Programme that provides support for young people who need additional help to sustain their engagement on a reduced Jobs Growth Wales Plus programme of learning and provide NEET young people with opportunities to engage on an innovative six week role on roll off provision, with a focus on improving mental health, wellbeing and providing coping strategies, to move them closer to being able to access EET.

To date the Horizons Programme has engaged with 82 young people with 64 gaining a qualification, 66 having improved their life skills, 62 demonstrating a positive change of circumstance, skills, motivation or confidence, 62 stating that they now feel more confident about entering in EET and 63 stating that they now feel more positive about themselves.

The Horizons Programme also provides outreach enrichment activities for NEET young people who are socially isolated and who do not leave their homes. This includes supporting young people in their homes with the aim of helping develop the confidence and social skills to at some point leave the house and engage in activities to help them progress further. To date the team have engaged with 15 young people and achieved the following outcomes:

10 young people stated that they now have less barriers into employment and into skills provisions;

6 young people have engaged with a specialist service as a result of intervention;

12 young people have demonstrated a positive change of circumstance, skills, motivation or Confidence

11 young people now feel more confident about entering in EET

12 feel more positive about themselves and their wellbeing.

Youth Service Legacy Team

The Children's Community Grant (CCG) provides School based youth work support for young people aged 15-16 in year 11 of all secondary schools within Neath Port Talbot. The Legacy Youth Workers support young people identified by their schools, using the Vulnerability Assessment Profile and discussions both within and outside of the school environment. The Legacy team is targeted with supporting those young people to make a positive transition at the end of year 11 and to best support them into a positive Education, Employment or Training destination.

Year 11 destination statistics collated by Careers Wales indicate that the number young people transitioning from school into Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) has reduced steadily from 7.1% in 2009 to 2.2% in 2022. The latest information from Careers Wales shows Neath Port Talbot's figure of 2.2% was achieved last year 2022 (**See Appendix 3**). Legacy staff are still feeling the impact of the pandemic and poor attendance levels on school leavers and the increase in support they need to transition.

This still leaves us slightly above the Welsh average of 2.1% which is the closest we have ever been to this.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

The Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award Scheme has now successfully relaunched in Neath Port Talbot in all secondary schools with almost all having young people gaining the award. This year 358 young people have signed up for the award with 347 gaining the award at the following levels:

237 young people gained the award at Bronze Level,
109 young people at Silver Level and
1 young person at Gold Level.

The DofE presentation evening was very well received this year with over 650 guests in attendance and 280 young people being presented the award. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme Report was released in June 23 and for the 22-23 reporting period NPT was ranked 2nd best with the number of young people who achieved the award (306yp) and ranked Best in Wales for its completion rate of 55%.

Relationship and Sex Education [RSE]

The Youth Service make a significant contribution to the delivery of RSE within the local authority and support the lessons in the locally devised RSE Key Stage 3 pack. The pack enables Teachers, Youth and Nurse Practitioners to deliver RSE in secondary educational schools across NPT. The Youth Service manages the NPT RSE group which brings together all relevant partners involved in RSE reporting to the VAWDASV Leadership Group.

Relationships Advise Drop in Service [RADS]

The Youth Service also provide a free relationship and sexual health service to a number of our youth clubs, schools and colleges at convenient times for young people. This work is delivered by youth workers trained in the field of sexual health. RADS staff deal with a range of issues including; safe relationships, contraception,

pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted infections (STI's), LGBT and many other health issues. Additionally, they provide barrier contraception, pregnancy testing, advice and support to access secondary sexual health and other health service to address; substance misuse, eating disorders, smoking cessation, sexual exploiting, abusive relationships, self-esteem and mental health issues. The Youth Service provides a daily on-call emergency service for RADS.

Youth Council

The Youth Council is supported by the Youth Service who fund a dedicated worker, venue and travel costs to projects and events which include reward activities. The local authority cabinet members are also considered partners along with the young people resident in NPT.

There is a constant cycle of recruitment for the Youth Council due to young people moving on to college and university. The Youth Council is the representative voice of young people aged 11-25 in Neath Port Talbot and has been recognised as the first point of contact for youth engagement in decision making by the Local Service Board and County Councillors.

The members come from schools and a range of targeted groups (**See Appendix 4**). The Youth Council have representatives on the British Youth Council, a member of the Welsh Youth Parliament, Children's Commissioner Advisory Panel, and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Youth Health Board and also on the advisory group for ongoing health related projects. This work involves members attending meetings to feed in to national participation events and campaigns/promote youth council work locally to raise the profile of NPT Youth Service and local authority.

The Youth Council have recently developed and delivered a survey to capture what the most important issues are for young people. The Survey is called Change Starts With You and was delivered to all

schools, the local authority youth clubs, targeted groups and young people attending post 16 provisions. In total the Youth Council received 1,173 ballot papers and the top 3 results were 1st Racism (18.7%), 2nd Sexual Health (11.8%) and 3rd Bullying (11.3%). These issues will be the new focus for the youth council. It is worth noting that the cost of living was a very close 4th with 11.0% of the votes. See **Appendix 5** for full results

Youth Mayor and Deputy Mayor

The Youth Service continues to support the elected Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor. Both act as the voice for all young people across the local authority and will shadow the Mayor of Neath Port Talbot. Elections for the new Deputy Youth Mayor will take place in February. The role of the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor has grown since its start and now has a full calendar of events and they are often called upon to showcase the voice of young people from NPT.

Food & Fun

Food and Fun is run each year by the Youth Service and gives children the chance to take part in various fun and physical activities, learn about food and nutrition, as well receiving a healthy breakfast and lunch. 15 Schools took part in the Food & Fun programme during the summer with 28 cohorts (each cohort is up to 40 young people). The Food and Fun scheme was able to provide a family meal each week within the school. The income received to deliver the food and fun totalled £313,127.

School staff are trained by the NHS Dietetics' Service to a level 2 standard in food and nutrition. To help deliver the activities that run throughout the day, the Schools and Youth Service teamed up with the WRU, Swansea University, NPT Pass, University of Wales Trinity St. David, and the Council's Play Team. Activities such as five-a-side football, arts and crafts, interactive lessons about nutrition, table tennis, archery were delivered as well as arranging family day trips.

This year the Food and Fun scheme funded food parcels to all young people that took part. The Youth Service and Youth Council packed over 16,500 items into bags for the primary schools. These parcels were delivered and very well received.

Gold Quality Mark

This year Neath Port Talbot Youth Service was successful in applying for the Gold Quality Mark in Youth Work. This is in recognition of the work that the service delivers to young people and to gain the Gold Award youth service must have gained the Bronze and Silvers Awards.

The Gold Award focuses on the strength of partnership working, the use of management information, the creative use of resources in meeting the needs of young people and how well the youth service recognises the achievements of young people, the impact of youth work and how this is celebrated.

Financial Impacts:

There are no implications linked to the report but Members should note that the Youth Service is now 76% externally funded through external grants all of which are currently either annual funding streams or are due to expire 31st March 2025 with SPF delivery stopping in December 2024.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring purposes.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications.

Workforce Impacts:

No implications.

Legal Impacts:

No implications.

Risk Management Impacts:

Funding streams associated with Neath Port Talbot Youth Services work is currently funded through external grants which currently expire on the 31st March 2025 and SPF delivery stopping in December 2024. There is ongoing work seeking extensions on the Communities First Legacy and a Shared Prosperity Fund bid to help sustain community youth work and post 16 youth work.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations:

This report is for monitoring only.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

This report is for monitoring only.

Implementation of Decision:

This report is for monitoring only.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Youth Service Structure

Appendix 2 – Youth Clubs Info

Appendix 3 – Destination figures

Appendix 4 – Youth Council Membership

Appendix 5 – Change Starts With You Results

List of Background Papers:

N/A

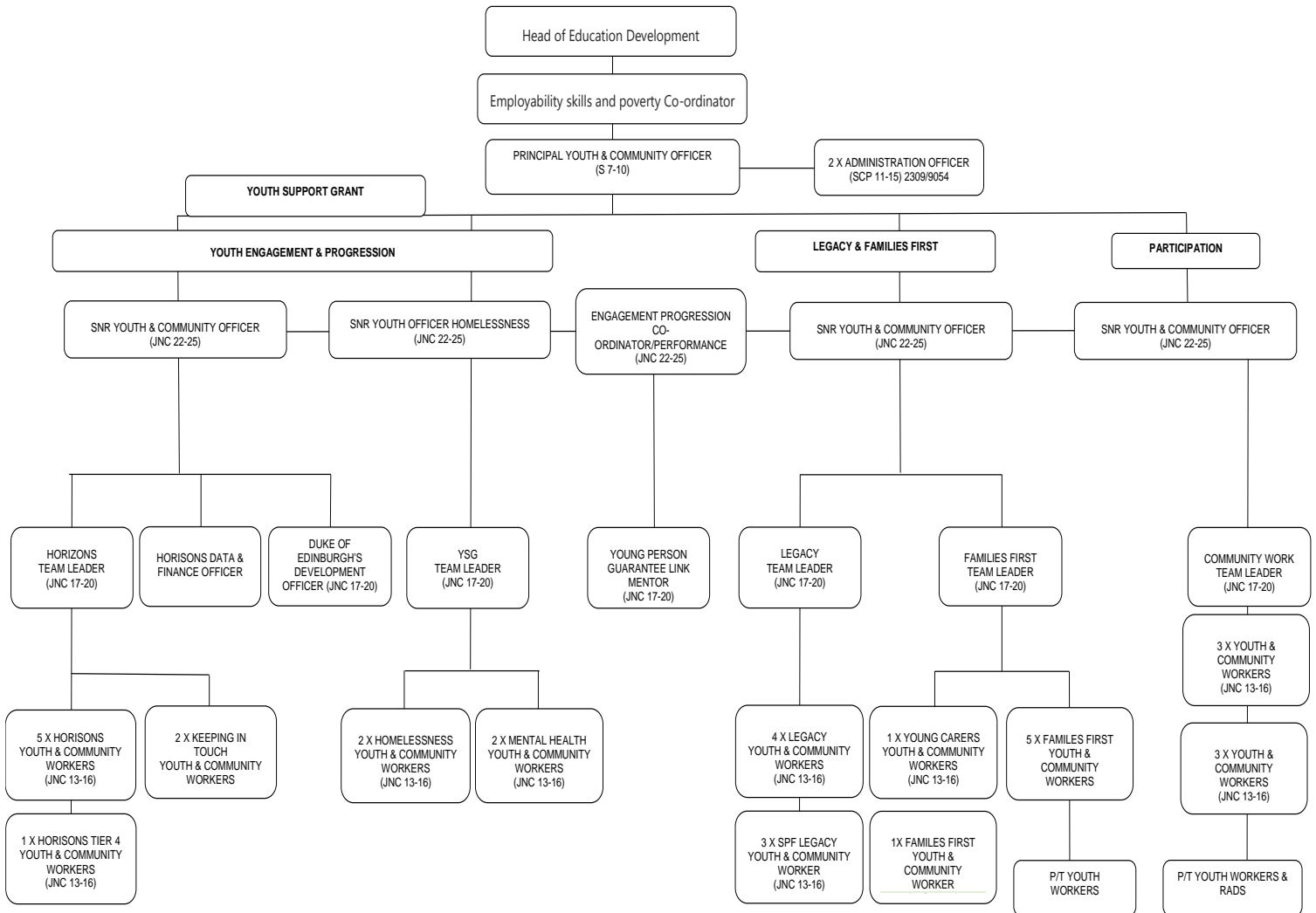
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Appendix 1 Youth Service Structure



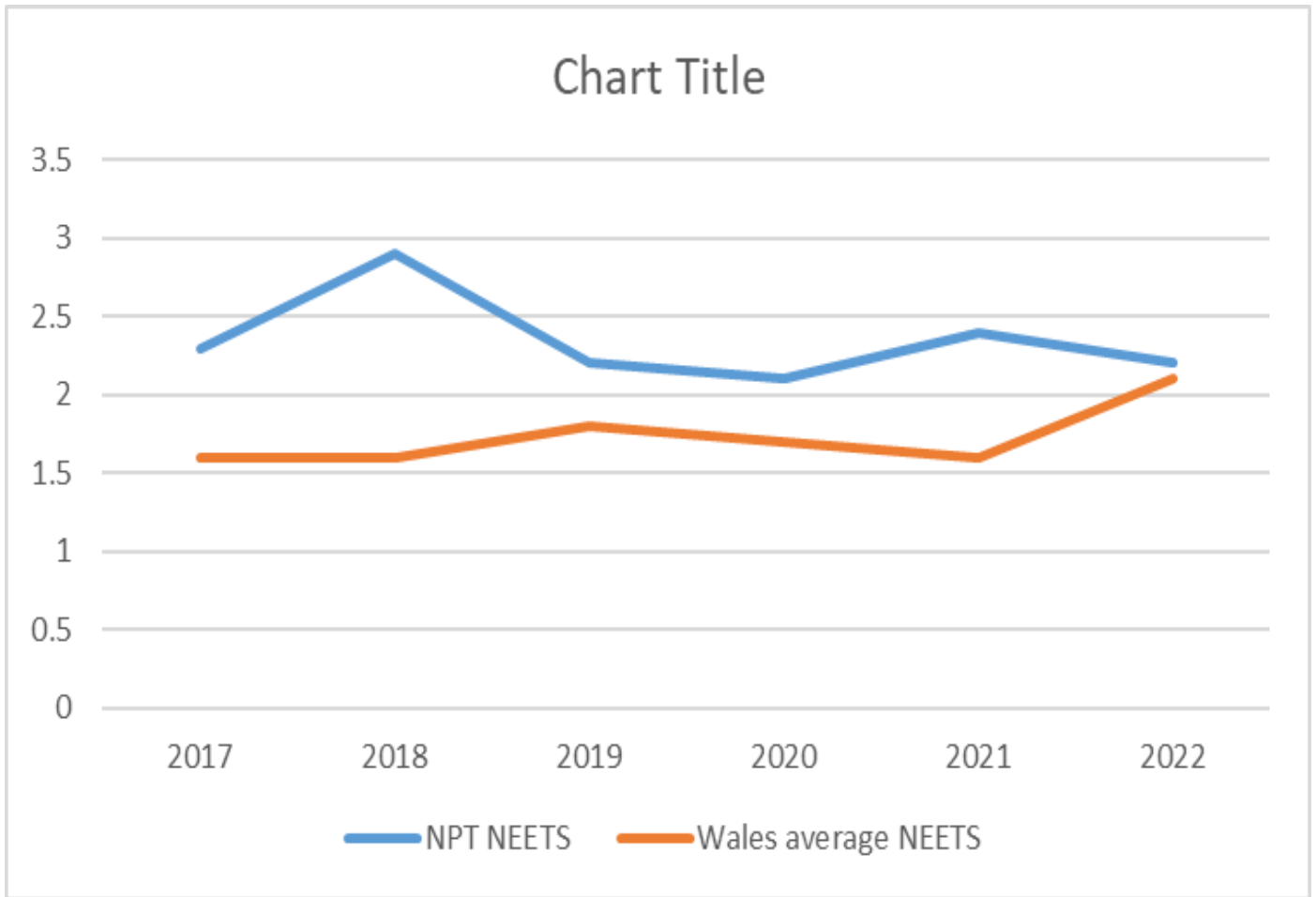
Appendix 2 Youth Clubs Information

Youth Clubs In Your Area

Youth Club	Location	Meeting Times
Cwmlynnell Youth Club	The Welfare Hall	Weds 6:30pm-8:30pm
Bryn Youth Club	The Community Centre	Fri 5:00pm-8:00pm
Blaengwynfi Youth Club	The Library and Public Hall	Wed 5:45pm-7:45pm
Glynneath Youth Club	The Training Centre	Thurs 6:30pm-8:30pm
Trebanos Welsh Language Youth Club	The Community Hall	Thurs 6:30pm-8:30pm
Seven Sisters Youth Club	The Community Centre	Thurs 6:00pm-8:00pm
Brynoch Youth Club	The Community Centre	Thurs 7:00pm-9:00pm
Crynant Youth Club	The Community Centre	Tues 6:00pm-8:00pm Fri 6:00pm-8:00pm
Croesnew Youth Club	The Community Enterprise Centre	Mon 6:00pm-8:00pm
Mae'r Dy Welsh Language Youth Club	Canolfâ Maerdy-Tairwaith	Tuesday 6:00pm-8:00pm
Caewern Youth Club	The Community Centre	Tues 6:30pm-8:30pm
Neath Drop In	The Tutor Centre	Weds 6:30pm-8:30pm
Cymmer Youth Club	Alan Valley Swimming Pool	Thurs 6:30pm-8:30pm
Sandfields Youth Club	Ygol Bae Baglan	Tue 7:00pm-9:00pm Thurs 7:00pm-9:00pm
Talbach Youth Club	The Community Education Centre	Tues 7:00pm-9:00pm Thurs 7:00pm-9:00pm
Cimla Youth Club	The Community Centre	Mon 6:00pm-8:00pm
Postcarder Hub	Ty'r Gwelyd Centre	Weds 4:00pm-6:00pm

 For more information contact the Youth Service on 01639 763030

Appendix 3 NEET Destination Chart



Appendix 4 Youth Council Membership

Youth Council Members 2023		
Schools		
Bro Dur – 4 reps	Dwr Y Felin – 4 reps	YBB – 4 reps
M P	E H	K P
M G	R D	L M N
Vac	Vac	L G
Vac	Vac	Vac
Cwm Tawe – 4 reps	Cwm Brombil – 4 reps	Cefn Saeson – 4 reps
A P	J P	C A
P J	E W	G S
F M	Vac	J D
L T	Vac	M J
St Josephs – 4 reps	Llangatwg – 4 reps	Ystalyfera – 4 reps
A J	E H	A S
A L	E G	F D
G R	E D	Vac
S O	Vac	Vac
Groups		
Neath College – 4 reps	Young Carers – 2 reps	LGBTQ+ - 4 reps
M K	A V	W
Vac	E J	D F
Vac		C I
Vac		GSA
Speak and Language – 2 reps	Retained Members – 8 reps	6 Form – 4 reps
G H	B T	
M J	B C	
	O L	
Vulnerable Learners – 2 reps	I W	
J K	E S	
O J		

Appendix 5 Change Starts with You Results

Topic	Rank	Percentage
Racism	1	18.7%
Sex Health	2	11.8%
Bullying	3	11.3%
Cost of Living	4	11.0%
Child Poverty	5	9.6%
Mental Health	6	8.9%
Youth Homelessness	7	7.3%
Environment	8	6.6%
Waiting Times	9	6.1%
Substance Misuse	10	4.6%
Transport	11	3.6%