



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

### **Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board**

25<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### **Report of the Head of Early Years, Inclusion and Partnerships**

Hayley Lervy

**Matter** for Decision.

**Wards Affected:** All

**Report Title:** Children and Young People's Plan

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

- To provide Members with feedback on the consultation with stakeholders regarding the proposed new Children and Young People's Plan, which has been developed with partners by the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Service (ELLLS) Directorate, on behalf of the Neath Port Talbot Children and Young People's Leadership Group. This group reports to the Public Services Board.
- To request Members' approval to formally adopt the Plan, which will provide a clear framework for working in partnership to ensure all children and young people have the best start in life.

#### **Executive Summary:**

This report will provide Members with information on the proposed Children and Young People's Plan following consultation with stakeholders and to request permission to formally adopt the final Plan.

## **Background:**

As set out in the previous report presented on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024, the Children & Young People's Plan has been developed to capture priorities for making a difference to the lives of children and young people in Neath Port Talbot and will help to inform future service delivery and commissioning of services according to identified needs.

The Plan articulates specific priorities in relation to children and young people aged 0-25. It reflects the priorities for children and young people as outlined in the Neath Port Talbot Corporate Plan, the Public Services Board (PSB) Wellbeing Plan and also aligns with priorities identified in individual partner agency plans.

Work on developing the Plan has been initiated by the Neath Port Talbot (NPT) Children and Young People's Leadership Group. The Plan has been developed with contributions from a wide range of stakeholders, including, but not limited to, the Early Years and Childcare team, Families First team, Family Information Service, the Inclusion Service, Education Development Service, Children and Young People Services, Youth Service, school leaders, Neath Port Talbot college, Public Health, Swansea Bay University Health board, Council for Voluntary Services and third sector partners. Children and young people across our mainstream and special schools have been at the centre of shaping the plan, along with engagement with families. Engagement took place with seldom heard groups, including children with experience of care, young carers and families with experience of domestic violence. This process has ensured that key priorities are well understood and gaps in service provision identified.

The aim is that the Plan will provide evidenced based priorities for services within the NPT Children and Young People's Leadership Group to implement. This will inform how we co-construct, plan and deliver services for children, young people and their families. Outcomes and progress relating to the priorities will be monitored through the NPT Children and Young People's Leadership Group governance structure. This will provide clear purpose and direction in taking forward the Plan.

## **Response to consultation:**

The Children and Young People's Plan has been subject to a public online consultation. In addition, there has been extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders, including children and young people who

have been consulted further to their involvement in its development. Workshops were held with children and young people from a range of backgrounds. This included learners from English and Welsh medium primary, secondary and special schools including under represented and vulnerable groups, to ensure a cross section of views were gathered. All children and young people were very honest and insightful regarding how the Plan positively reflects issues important to them. They felt that mental health is the most important issue that effects children, young people and families, and being able to access support at the right time is vitally important. Children and young people felt that the promotion of children's rights is important and needs to be taken seriously by everyone. Children and young people felt that ongoing engagement and participation should take place so we can continue to understand the issues that affect them.

Nearly all consultation respondents liked the layout and design of the Plan. The language within the plan clearly communicated the Plan's vision and priorities. However, a minority of respondents felt that the data within the Plan could be presented in a more succinct format. The Plan has been updated to ensure data is presented effectively.

Overall, consultation respondents agreed with the vision and priorities articulated in the plan. However, many respondents felt that there needed to be more detail regarding actions in the Plan. This will be addressed through the establishment of partner delivery groups for each priority area, who will develop detailed action plans which will be monitored and evaluated by the NPT Children and Young People's Leadership Group. Following consultation, the Plan has been amended to include the next steps in the establishment of delivery groups and a clear programme of work to deliver on the five key priorities.

The most important themes that emerged during the development and consultation process have been around how all children, young people and their families need to have effective and meaningful support available throughout their developmental journey. Engagement and consultation evidenced the impact the cost of living crisis and the longer term effects of the pandemic are having upon all stakeholders, particularly in relation to mental health. Consultation respondents felt that effective partnership working is key to implementing meaningful and valuable actions to achieve the priority outcomes. The Plan provides a framework to ensure that partners in the NPT Children and Young People's Leadership group are accountable for achieving the agreed vision and priorities.

This Plan provides strategic priorities for partners within the NPT Children and Young People's Leadership Group to implement, in order to ensure what matters to children and young people is at the centre of how we plan and deliver services (**see Appendix 1**).

**Next Steps:**

Moving forward work will continue with children and young people to produce a young person friendly version of the Plan.

The NPT Children and Young People's Leadership Group will establish delivery groups and action plans to articulate how the vision and priorities will be achieved.

The Plan will be translated into Welsh and a Welsh language copy will be available following formal adoption of the Plan by Members.

**Financial Impacts:** No impact

**Integrated Impact Assessment:**

A First Stage Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed (**Appendix 2**).

**Valleys Communities Impacts:**

Positive – the Plan will ensure the voices and opinions of communities and groups of children and young people are considered and that key actions will be purposeful. This will help to inform future commissioning of services according to prioritised need.

**Workforce Impacts:**

No impact

**Legal Impacts:**

No impact

**Consultation:**

Consultation was undertaken with stakeholders including schools, internal and external partner services and agencies, Council for Voluntary Services, Third Sector organisations, and children, young people and families. The Plan has been subject to public consultation.

**Recommendations:**

That Members approve the formal adoption of the Children and Young People's Plan, as detailed at appendix 1 of the circulated report.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

The Children and Young People's Plan will aim to ensure that all children and young people have the best start in life. Implementation of priorities for making a difference to the lives of children and young people in Neath Port Talbot will help to inform future service delivery and commissioning of services according to prioritised need. The NPT Children and Young People's Leadership Group will oversee the delivery of the plan and be accountable for partners working collaboratively to achieve the priorities within the Plan.

**Implementation of Decision:**

Decision to be implemented after the three-day call in.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Children and Young People's Plan

Appendix 2- Integrated Impact Assessment- First Stage

**Officer Contact:**

Hayley Lervy Head of Head of Early Years, Inclusion and Partnerships  
[h.lervy@npt.gov.uk](mailto:h.lervy@npt.gov.uk)

Sarah Griffiths, Co-ordinator for Early Years and Partnerships  
[s.griffiths4@npt.gov.uk](mailto:s.griffiths4@npt.gov.uk)

Allison Harris, Think Family Partnership Manager  
[a.t.harris@npt.gov.uk](mailto:a.t.harris@npt.gov.uk)