



# Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Plan 2024-2025

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## Foreword from Andrew Jarrett, Chair of Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Management Board

As Chair of Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Management Board, I am very pleased to present the Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25, which has been developed and agreed with youth justice partners. It provides a review of our performance and developments over the last year, as well as creating an opportunity to plan for the forthcoming year. It sits alongside other key local partnership plans, such as Neath Port Council's Plan for Children & Young People's Social Care Strategy 2023-2025, the South Wales Police and Crime Plan 2021-25; the Local Criminal Justice Board Plan; Supporting Victims and Witnesses: A Joint Strategy for South Wales 2021-2026, Safer Neath Port Talbot Partnerships Strategic Intent Document 2024-2027, Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board Wellbeing Plan and Neath Port Talbot Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan 2024-2029.

The delivery of youth justice services in Neath Port Talbot is based upon the guiding principles of a Child First youth justice system as set out below:

- Prioritise the best interests of children, by recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, is developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.
- Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and to make positive contributions to society.
- Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.
- Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, by using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

The Youth Justice Service has a critical role to play in protecting the wellbeing, safety and welfare of children and young people so that both they and their families are supported to receive the right help at the right time. The Youth Justice Services is an integral part of Children's Services and work in close partnership to ensure:

- a) The best interests of the child or young person are a key consideration in decisions taken.

- b) Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility with children and young people's safety being of paramount importance. This is collectively understood and the expectation for everyone to contribute to keeping children safe is clear.
- c) Safeguarding is fully embedded as a work stream, with robust monitoring, reviewing and evaluating systems in place, and services that embrace and develop a learning culture through audits, child practice reviews and internal learning reviews.
- d) Ensuring children, young people and families are central to decisions about them, and their voice and experiences are heard and responded to.
- e) Information is shared in a timely way, avoiding the need for continuous or repetitive assessment and 'starting again', understands and responds to the whole family's needs.
- f) Services are adaptable, flexible, responsive and inclusive and should not be impaired by gender, ethnicity, ability, sexuality or age.

It is very positive to note that Youth Justice Service staffing remains stable and consistent, and no risk has presented in terms of the team's ability to deliver statutory services in the period. The team benefits from long-serving managers and staff who possess a wide range of skills and experience. Staff have accessed relevant training to ensure that team members individually and collectively continue to provide quality services, develop their practice and achieve good outcomes for children, young people, their families and communities. The majority of the team's staff live within Neath Port Talbot and/or have worked within the borough for a significant number of years and as such, they understand the county's demographic profile and are well placed to identify the most appropriate services for children and families.

We are fortunate in Neath Port Talbot to have strong partnerships with our key statutory partners as well as wider support services. Locally this has supported multi-agency working to effectively disrupt concerns linked to serious violence and the criminal exploitation of children and young people, resulting in the partnership being finalists in the TeamSWP Awards 2023 in the category of Exceptional Problem Solving in Partnership Award as well as receiving recognition at the Inaugural Safer Communities Awards 2023.

Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service has achieved many other successes this year including gaining the Communication Access Award for the second year in a row. Additionally, the service had a recent mention at the Senedd where we were lauded for the excellence of our SLT provision and regarded as the

blueprint for SLT in Youth Justice in Wales. This provision continues to expand with the service running a speech and language pilot in a local secondary school, with the aim of reducing exclusions and improving outcomes for children and young people in education.

Base 15, the Children and Young People's Resource Centre continues to be a valuable resource to the YJS, Children's Services and the community. The YJS continues to provide consistent, high quality interventions to young people and as a service, are continually looking to build on and diversify the offer available to children and young people. This is supported by excellent organisational delivery, good quality out of court disposal work, efficient supervision of statutory orders and outstanding governance and leadership. This of course means improved outcomes for children and young people, the communities of NPT and the victims of crime.

The Management Board has met regularly. A newsletter is produced for the management board quarterly and opportunities are provided for board members to observe practice within the service. Youth Justice Team staff are regularly involved in meetings with the Management Board, and a wide range of information and data has been presented so that the profile of the need of children is well understood and responded to.

The Board is committed to embracing the 'Child First' principles. I am strongly committed to this approach and ensuring that the guiding principle of recognising the potential of all children and young people is reflected across all the work that we do. We need to hear and understand more about the lived experiences of children and young people in Neath Port Talbot who are at risk of offending and who have encountered the youth justice system and use this to improve the provision of support.

In 2024-25, as this plan articulates, we aim to build on the current foundations to deliver highly effective youth justice services by providing strong operational and Board leadership, which evidences our commitment to the children, young people, victims and wider community.



**Andrew Jarrett Chair  
NPT YJS Management board**

**July 2024**

## Introduction, Vision and Strategy:

### 1) Introduction

Youth Justice Services were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 with the principal aim being to prevent offending behaviour by children. The Act imposed a duty on each local authority together with its statutory partners, Police, Health, and Probation, to ensure that adequate Youth Justice Services are available in their area.

The legislation also imposed a duty to develop, produce and implement a Youth Justice Plan each year under Section of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act states that the Youth Justice Plan should set out how youth justice services in their area are to be provided, funded, the leadership and governance arrangements, and as well as key information about the Service to ensure quality and effective youth justice services.

This Plan outlines the services' vision, priorities, and strategy for 2024-2025. The Plan follows a mandated template by the Youth Justice Board. The plan sets out how our service and management board will collectively ensure children have access to trusted adults and services and how we will engage with children and victims of crime to ensure that their voices influence and shape the way we respond to their needs. Our Plan builds on what we already do well, strengthening our partnership approach to lower the number of children entering the Youth Justice System. We will maintain our low custody rates, and continue work towards reducing our yearly re-offending rate. Our strong partnership arrangements and services will be focused on tackling areas where the data highlights a concern including First Time Entrants (FTEs), school exclusions, and youth violence.

### 2) Vision & Strategy

Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service have an agreed vision statement for the service, which has been jointly agreed by the management board and team to underpin practice:

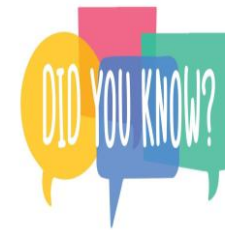
*To support young people and their families who are involved in, or on the fringe of, offending or anti-social behaviour. Integral to this is their safety and well-being, ensuring they remain protected from harm and exploitation, whilst balancing their risks with the impact on victims of crime and their communities. It is our objective to improve outcomes for our young people in all areas of their lives in order to achieve their potential and to make a successful transition to adulthood.*

In order to realise this vision, the following strategies underpin our work:

- A commitment to providing a multi-agency and fully integrated service. This plan includes a full section on how we are promoting and developing a Child First Trauma Informed Service.
- Seeking the views of children in all stages of their interaction with the service, and a focusing on building positive relationships and empowering children to fulfil their potential and facilitating and enabling outcome focused practice.
- To complete holistic and timely assessments which are child focused and view the young person as child first.
- To ensure children and young people are central to everything we do and ensure that their voice is heard. The child first approach will also consider the rights under the UN convention, and their agency in decision making processes and meetings about them.
- Ensure that we secure best practice, innovation and outstanding quality in all that we do to reduce criminal justice demand.
- Reducing demand by preventing offending and diverting children and young people from the formal justice system.
- Grow and sustain a positive and stable workforce.
- Work with victims and communities to repair the harm from offending.
- Listen to children's and victim's opinions and use them to shape what we do.
- Building resilience within families and local communities.
- Recognise the important role families play in preventing children from getting involved in crime.

### 3) Local Context

The County Borough of Neath Port Talbot is located on the coast between the City & County of Swansea to the west and the County Borough of Bridgend to the east. Neath Port Talbot also shares boundaries with Carmarthenshire, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Brecon Beacons National Park. Neath Port Talbot covers an area of over 44,217 hectares with the County Borough, broadly divided into two areas, this being the coastal corridor and the valleys. The valleys are rural in aspect and contain scattered communities throughout whilst Neath and Port Talbot are the main towns and are more densely populated, continue to be the focus for house building as well being the predominate locations for employment in the county where Tata Steel and the Council are the largest employers.



Key facts to consider for the Borough:

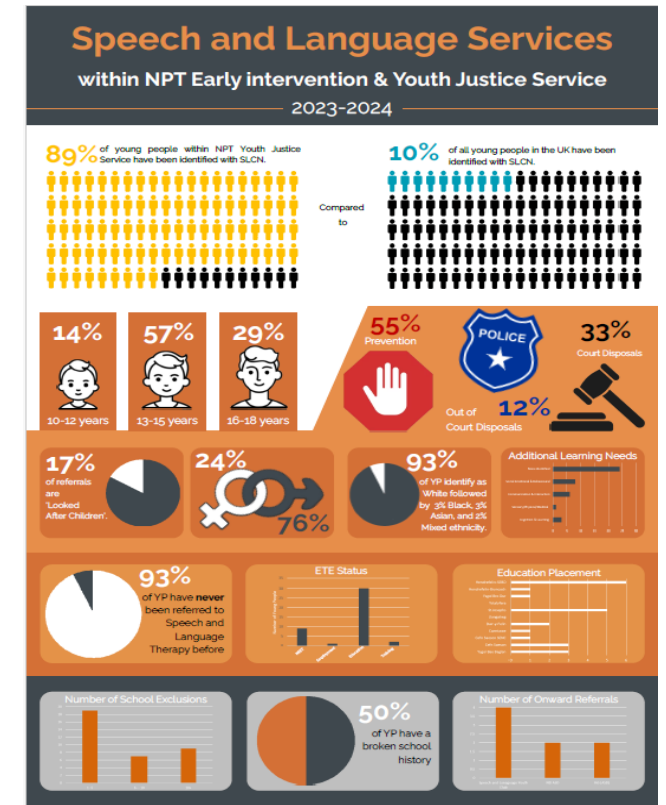
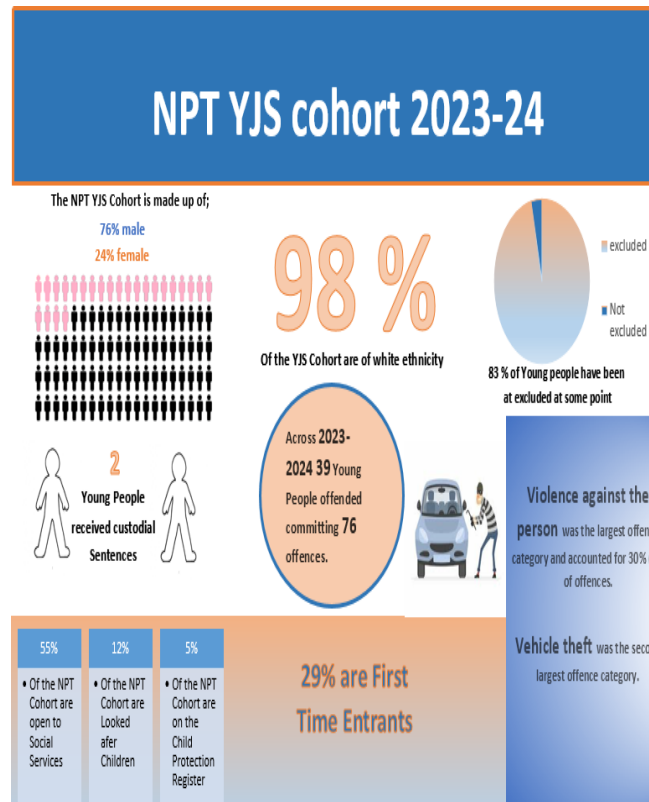
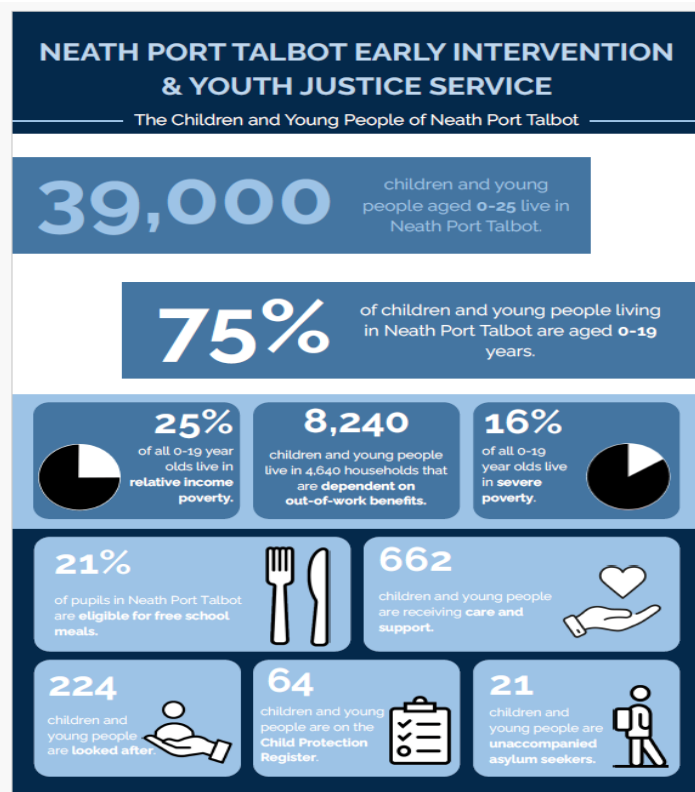
- The age profile of NPT is in line with the average for Wales.
- Lower proportions than the Welsh average in NPT able to speak Welsh, read Welsh, write Welsh and understand spoken Welsh.
- NPT is less ethnically diverse than the average for Wales.
- NPT has a greater proportion of residents with poorer health and greater disability than the Welsh average.
- A greater proportion of residents in NPT are providing unpaid care than the average for Wales (14.6% compared to 12.1%) and a significantly greater proportion (41.2%) are providing more than 50 hours unpaid care a week.
- NPT has a lower proportion who are economically active than the average for Wales (71.2% compared to 75.7%).
- The population over 16 have lower qualifications than the Welsh average.
- The 2011 ONS Census data identified 47 Gypsy and Traveller households within NPT, out of a total of 1,004 in Wales.

The population of Neath Port Talbot is 142,898 according to mid-2023 population figures. The population is predominately white (97%), with non- white minorities representing the remaining 3% of the population. English is the main language spoken by 98.6% of the population, with the proportion of people who can speak Welsh recorded at 13.5% according to the 2021 census; a decrease of 1.8% when compared with the figures recorded in 2011 census.

According to mid-year population estimates published for 2023, males account for 49.0% of Neath Port Talbot's 142,898 population, while females made up 51.0% of the total. Neath Port Talbot's age structure shows the working-age population to be 86,806 which is 61.1% of the population. People 17 and under represent 19.6% of the population, and over 65s represent 21.6% of the population.



According to the mid-year population estimates published for 2023, those aged between 10 years and 19 years of age account for 12.7% of the population of Neath Port Talbot. Below is information relating to the general 0-19 population across NPT as well the YJS cohort, in respect demographics of the cohort, a brief offending profile and the breakdown of SLCN's of the YJS cohort.



Violence against the person offences is the largest offence type; which is consistent with the picture nationally. The number of children looked after across the remit is in line with the number of children looked after general child and young person population locally, evidencing no disproportionality. Work is ongoing nationally reduce the criminalisation of young people who are looked after and locally, we need to revisit the protocols and re-establish relationships with local care homes; this work is in progress. There has been a significant increase in First Time Entrants over the last 12 months and the reduction of this is a key priority for the service across this year. Engagement in education for our cohort is a concern with a number of young receiving multi exclusions.

## Governance, Leadership & Partnership Arrangements

NPT Youth Justice Service is an integral part of Children's Services and as such is accountable to the Head of Children Services, Keri Warren and the Director of Social Services, Health and Housing, Andrew Jarrett. As service, we are also accountable to the YJB and NPT YJS Management Board, which is chaired by Andrew Jarrett and has been since its inception in April 2019. The Vice Chair of the Board is Sharron Wareham, Children's Service Manager Better Futures Cymru.

NPT YJS has an effective local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high quality, personalised and responsive services for all children as set out earlier in the plan. Achieving this is supported by representatives with the right level of seniority attending the board and being fully immersed in the work of the YJS.

The management board includes all statutory partners, namely the South Wales Police, the National Probation Service, Health, Housing, Education and Children's Services. Outside of this, the Board benefits from membership from our wider partner agencies, including those from the third sector. At Board, the agencies that are represented include the cabinet member for Children's Services, Better Futures, Careers Wales, NPT Group of Colleges, Hillside Secure Unit, Adferiad (substance misuse services) as well as a representative from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. A representative from Judicial Services is a board member but due to Court commitments, it is difficult for them to attend board meetings. Therefore, the YJS Principal Officer and the Operational Manager meet with Court representatives on a regular basis and a service level agreement is in place.

In supporting the work of the Board, new board members receive an induction into their role from the principal officer along with an induction pack, which includes an outline of the function of the board and an explanation of the data sets used. These documents have recently been reviewed and updated. There has been a focus on developing the board so that all members understand their role and responsibilities. This has included board development days, which have helped to establish working links with the staff team and supported the board. This has increased the board members knowledge of the work of the YJS. As the board has developed, the development days now focus on scrutinising specific areas of practice.

The Management Board are sighted on all aspects of the Youth Justice Service via multi-modal means. The Principal Officer provides and will continue to provide a briefing paper at each board meeting, which includes updates on the service as a whole, progress against action plans as well as specific service area updates, for example, staffing, courts, and actions arising from the last board. A safeguarding report is produced on a quarterly basis and includes information on a range

of safeguarding data, including referrals to social services, information regarding contextual risk, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences, Prevent (Channel), YJB Serious Incident Notifications as well as complaints, compliments and comments. Performance reports are presented at board meetings at different points throughout the year, including six-monthly reports, a yearly profile of the YJS cohort and year-on-year comparisons. These are scrutinised by the Board and often result in requests for deep dives or audits being carried out within the team, to support understanding of emerging themes or concerns in more detail, in order to provide a steer on service delivery moving forward.

The board continues to promote constructive professional challenge from members but this is a two-way process with board members being held to account in evidencing how they promote and support the work of the YJS within their own organisations; this is supported by the requirement for all Board Members to complete a quarterly partner agency update to board that focuses on in-service updates, how the work of the YJS has been promoted across the service and any difficulties working in partnership with the YJS. An example of the information shared by partners is provided in the embedded partnership update from Better Futures at the end of this section, where within this report for example, data is provided that shows that 17% of the consultation clinics undertaken across NPT are provided to the YJS and that the YJS have undertaken work to support reduction in recidivism in 21% of cases discussed during consultation clinics.

There are robust processes in place for the board to hear the views of children and young people. This has been achieved via multi-modal means including through the children and young people attending board meetings or through video recordings, WhatsApp messages, and consultations, which are shared at board meetings. There has been a children's rep at the board meetings previously, but as with the transient nature of the service, this young person has now moved on from the service. In taking this forward, we are now considering a number of different options to ensure the longevity of this role and opportunities for young people as well as considering the introduction of a six-monthly newsletter produced for board by young people documenting and feedback back on things that matter to them and they want to relay to Board.

Wider issues that impact on offending behaviour and young people on the periphery of offending are prominent on the wider agendas of other key strategic groups across Neath Port Talbot. The Youth Justice profile has been raised across the directorate, and throughout the strategic partnership boards to drive forward work the work of the services and wider partnerships. The YJS is represented for example on the Children and Adult Regional Safeguarding Boards,

the Corporate Safeguarding Board, the Community Safety Partnership, Better Futures Partnership, SNPT IOM Steering Group, SAFE Strategic Meeting (contextual safeguarding), the Western Bay Regional Contest Board and the Quality Practice Strategic Group. Equally, we have representation on the operational equivalents to these including for example, Channel Panel, the Quality and Performance Management Group, Police led Problem Solving Groups for NPT, Anti-Social Behaviour Case Management Meetings, the MAPPA Operational Group Meeting and the Community Safety Partnerships Tasking Group. Through the latter group for example, we have recently reviewed the Anti-Social Behaviour Processes locally and set this within the context of wider partnership working including direct reporting lines and boards that the group will feed into going forward. This document is in the process of being written and on completion will set out a clearer and shared vision for responding to Anti-Social Behaviour locally including early and targeted prevention.

The YJS Principal Officer has held various senior management roles within Neath Port Talbot, and Welsh Government and has over 23 years of senior management and leadership experience. The principal officer has held the chair of the Better Futures Partnership and Vice chair of the HWB Doeth partnership for a number of years. The Operational Manager has worked for the YJS since 2008 as a social worker and then as a senior practitioner before becoming the Operational Manager. The Operational Manager represents NPT YJS on all the above meetings/partnerships and is a key player in Out of Court disposal meetings, and the meetings with the magistrates and court users. Both officers are accredited child practice reviewers.

There is a leadership team within the YJS comprising the Principal Officer, Operational Manager, Senior Practitioners, Consultant Social Worker, Information Manager and Business Manager. The leadership team are all knowledgeable about youth justice and work well together to support the team. The Principal Officer, the Operational Manager, Information Manager and Business Manager attend the management board, and other staff members attend to present on specific pieces of work. There is a two-way constructive and supportive relationship between the board and the YJS staff. Communication from the board is shared at management and team meetings and board members attend team meetings. It is important that the staff are updated about the strategic intent of the board and that the board is updated about the operational matters in Youth Justice. Work is ongoing to facilitate this.

An outline of the posts within the team is provided in Appendix 2, whilst the breakdown by gender and ethnicity is provided in Appendix 3 with a workforce comprising of 31 staff as well as 10 volunteers. A workforce profile is further provided under the workforce development section below. Operationally, the service has forged good working relationships with partner agencies including the community and voluntary sector and individually, members of the team

have built and continue to strengthen these relationships. Relationships that exist that support the work of the YJS including the delivery of interventions to support young people include Victim Focus, the NPT Road Safety Team, Mid and West Wales Fire Service, Local Area Co-ordinators, Bulldogs Gym, Community Benefits Team, Ocean Therapy, Careers Wales, Better Futures and the Youth Service for example. A Senior Practitioner from the service also sits on the Early Intervention Panel (EIP), which supports partnership working and ensuring that young people access the right support, at the right time by the most appropriate agency.

The Operational Manager writes a newsletter for the board so that members are kept updated on YJS issues as well as personal and professional achievements of the team. In previous years, there has also been a junior newsletter; however, as mentioned above, the aim is to rejuvenate this going forward.



Newsletter June  
2024.docx



Better Futures Partner  
Agency Update for th

## [Update on the Previous Year](#)

### 1) [Progress on prioritise in previous plan](#)

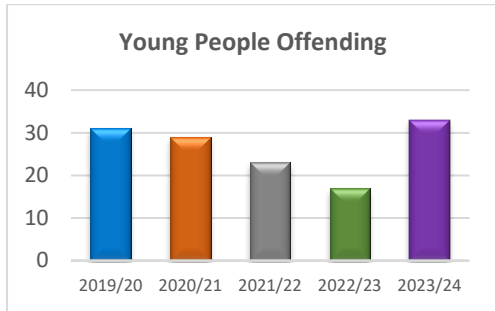
The 2023-24 strategic plan for NPT YJS outlined 4 key priorities, which were:

- Strategic and Operational Safeguarding
- Workforce development
- Victim Feedback
- Devising a strategy to reduce exclusions alongside education

Over the past 12 months, the YJS has continued to drive forward practice and make progress against these key priority areas. This has been driven forward at both a strategic and operational level and the partnership recognise the hard work and dedication of the managers and practitioners within the YJS who have strived to continue to improve delivery and practice against the backdrop of financial uncertainty. A detailed update against each of these priorities have not been provided here as the information can be found within the wider report.

## 2) Performance over the previous year (2023-24)

### Young People who have offended:



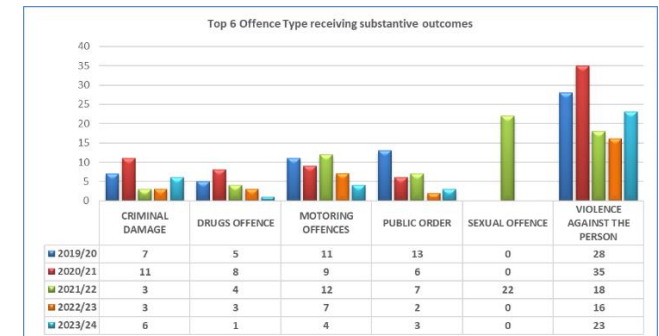
2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
31	29	23	17	33

During the last financial year, the number of young people receiving a substantive outcome for offending increased to almost double that of the previous year. This was a change in the trend noted over recent, previous years where they had continually decreased. The figures have been calculated from the year as a whole and not those that received an outcome in the 4 individual quarters combined, as some young people received more than 1 outcome per year.

### Offences:

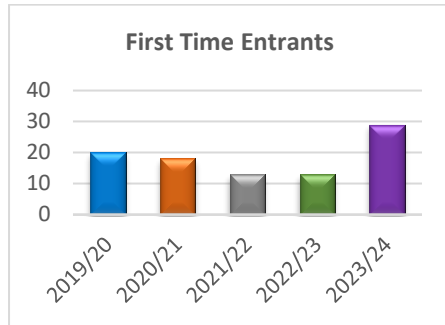


2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
76	88	82	51	76



In previous years, whilst the number of young people offending reduced the number of offences remained relatively stable. However, in 2022/23 the number of offences reduced considerably. This year, 2023/24 the number of offences returned to those seen previously due to the increase in the number of young people offending. As evident in the second graph, violence against the person offences was the largest offence category and this was consistent when broke down into Out-of-Court Disposal and Court work.

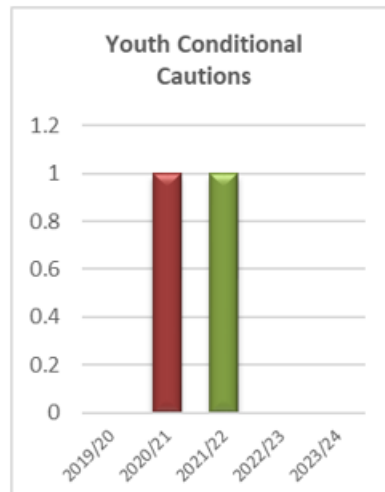
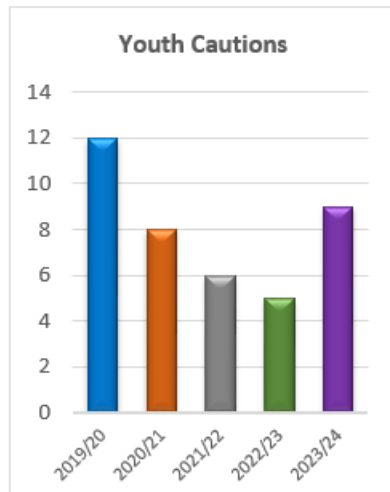
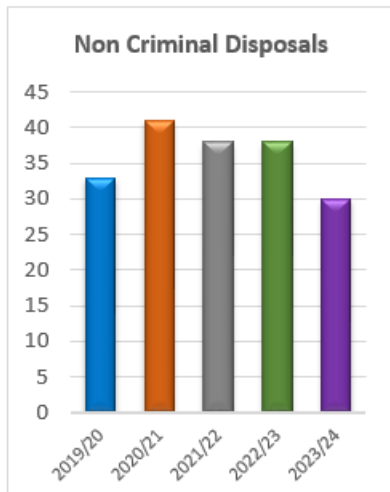
**First Time Entrants (FTEs):**



2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
20	18	13	13	29

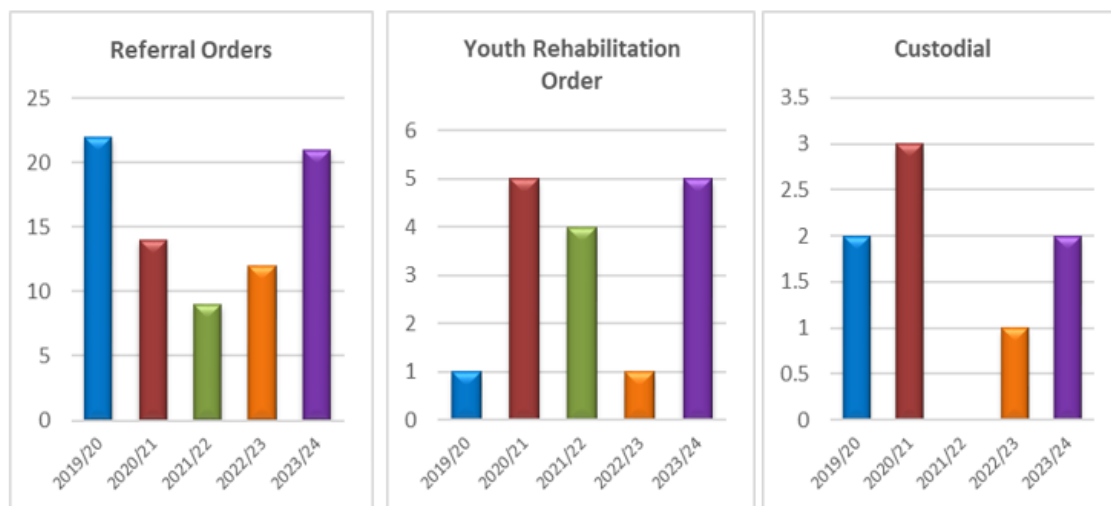
These figures are taken from local reporting and show a significant increase in the number of First Time Entrants this year. The latest published figure from the YJB puts Neath Port Talbot above the average rate per 100,000 for Wales, but just below the YJS Family Average. 50% of the FTEs were not known to the service; the other young people, had either been known via Prevention or Bureau. 4 young people had been open on both Prevention and Bureau Interventions. Of the 29 young people, 8 received a Youth Caution, 17 received a Referral Order, 2 a Youth Rehabilitation Order, 1 a Custodial Sentence and there was 1 Fine. The main category of the offences were Violence Against the Person category.

**Out-of-Court Disposals:**



The number of Non-Criminal Outcomes given this year were lower than in previous years. Again they outweighed the number of Youth Cautions which is what is expected; however, these have increased for the first time in several years. There were no Youth Conditional Cautions issued.

## Court Outcomes:



Across 2023, there was a significant increase in Court outcomes. Following a reduction in the number of Referral Orders in recent years, this year saw a 75% increase. These outcomes are reflected in the increase in the number of young people offending and offences noted earlier as well as the number of young people who committed their offence in the previous year, waiting to go to Court. Once received, these outcomes nearly doubled the number received in the previous 12 months. There were also increases in the number of Youth Rehabilitation Orders and Custodial sentences across 2023-24.

## Reoffending:

April 17-March 18					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Offender	%Reoffending
29	15	82	5.47	2.83	51.7%

April 18-March 19					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Offender	%Reoffending
45	23	107	4.65	2.38	51.1%

April 19-March 20					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Offender	%Reoffending
48	26	94	3.62	1.96	54.2%

April 20-March 21					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Offender	%Reoffending
34	16	44	2.75	1.29	47.1%

April 21-March 22					
Cohort	Reoffenders	Reoffences	Reoffences/Reoffender	Reoffences/Offender	%Reoffending
28	11	51	4.64	1.82	39.3%

The figures for Neath Port Talbot are taken from those published in the Youth Data Summary (YDS) by the Youth Justice Board

Both the number in the cohort and the percentage of the cohort reoffending has decreased again in the latest reported 12-month period, following an increase during the previous years. The percentage of reoffending at around 39% is lower than several authorities in Wales but still remains higher than the YJS Family average (32.7%).



## Plan for the forthcoming year

### a) Child First

Ensuring children are at the heart of our work, feel listened to and involved in the support they are receiving is well embedded in youth justice practice. The service promotes a 'Child First' focus utilising strength and relationship-based approaches, which take account of trauma, adverse childhood experiences and other developmental and structural factors to help achieve the best outcomes for the child or young person. As a service and board, the four tenants of the Child First Principles will be embedded into practice as follows:

**Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children:**

Care is taken in all contact with children, young people and families to ensure that all information gathered through referral, screening and assessment processes is accurate, timely and reflects multi-agency involvement; and, most importantly, reflects what the child, young person and their families/carers to say about their situation and circumstances. Children, young people and their families are seen at home or within environment where they feel safe and comfortable. At the outset of engagement with a child, young person and their family, their preferred language of choice is established, how they would prefer to communicate outside of appointments (letter, text, WhatsApp, phone call) as well as what their strengths and interests are as a family so these can be built on over the course of engagement.

The team use a trauma informed approach ensuring that assessments put young people's behaviour in context identifying and recognising the impact of trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) as well as stress reactions. Successful intervention and safety planning hinges on understanding the underlying reasons why the young person offended in order to consider how best to support the development of a range of skills, bolster or establish protective factors and address their needs and risks; such planning considers how to increase safety and how to avoid reinforcing trauma. The way we work is sequenced, structured and relationship based and this is central to trauma-informed approaches as is the young person's active participation and acceptance of support; ensuring the support offered is not beyond their skills and developmental capacity and that the right person(s) is involved in supporting the young person. Key to this is the completion of a speech language and communication screening and where concerns are raised, a full assessment will be completed by the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) in the team, who will feed into the intervention plan providing case managers with strategies on how to best engage and support the young person in line with their level of functioning. As part of NPT Children Services, we prioritise outcome focused interventions giving children and their families agency in the key decision made with them, supporting a process of 'doing with, not doing to' young people, hearing their voices, and giving them voice, choice, and control of areas of their lives alongside structure and support within the realms of the Youth Justice Service.

**Evidenced by Case Example:**

A case manager was asked to complete an assessment on a young person due to concerns around aggressive and bullying behaviour in the community, as well as behaviour in regard to making 'false' allegations against other young people and professionals. There were also concerns raised regarding regular fabrication of life events, which had also led to trouble for this young person. The case manager considered that the fabrications were due to self-esteem issues which had stemmed from a childhood which involved chronic emotional neglect, and eventual foster accommodation. The young person was struggling with boredom and feelings of anger/ aggression which led to outbursts. They had a love of animals and wanted to work with them in some form in the future. In conjunction with other colleagues in the team, the case manager was able to get the young person a volunteering position with the Greyhound Trust, where they thrived, and was able to make positive relationships with the other volunteers. They were able to spend time with YJS staff to discuss their difficulties around making friendships. YJS staff were able to sensitively challenge their fabrications and considered that their experiences at the Greyhound Trust, and how valued they became there made a significant impact to their self-esteem, and had a resultant positive effect on all concerning behaviours. Since being opened to the YJS, the young person has now started college completing an animal care course. It is hoped that as a service, we will complete a final piece of emotional regulation work with the young person, with a view that we can then close due to positive completion of his plan.

**Promote children’s individual strengths and capacities to develop their prosocial identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society:**

Attempting to address children’s offending behaviour without understanding the context of trauma can result in unsuccessful and sometimes detrimental interventions. We know that adversity affects children’s brain development and that experiencing trauma in a child’s early years or in utero is linked to antisocial behaviour and offending. Additionally, the impairment of neuro-cognitive development may make it difficult for these children to understand and comply with criminal justice interventions and to comprehend the consequences of breach for example. Failure to take account of experiences of trauma and its impact upon child development and emotional well-being will limit the potential benefits of the Youth Justice Service’s intervention (Beyond Youth Custody, 2016).

All practitioners in NPT YJS are Trauma informed trained and aware of the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences on young people. More recently appointed and any newly appointed members of the service will be offered trauma informed training across 2024-25. NPT YJS is committed to the development of a Trauma Informed Approach across the service and investment in training is key to supporting this. Over the last few years, the service has taken forward Relationship Based Practice that is underpinned by the Trauma Recovery Model, which assists practitioners to guide young people through change.

The workforce has undertaken the three-day Trauma Recovery Model training and embedded the principles of this model within our everyday practice, ensuring that assessments put young people’s behaviour in context identifying and recognising the impact of trauma and ACEs as well as stress reactions. Successful intervention planning hinges on understanding the underlying reasons why the young person offended in order to consider how best to support the development of a range of skills, bolster or establish protective factors and address their needs and risks; such planning considers how to increase safety and how to avoid reinforcing trauma. The way we work is sequenced and structured and this is central to trauma-informed approaches as is the young person’s active participation and acceptance of support; ensuring the support offered is not beyond their skills and developmental capacity and that the right person(s) is involved in supporting the young person. Ensuring the workforce have access to support systems and management oversight to minimise the risks and effects of vicarious trauma is also central in our work to support young people.

The ECM (Enhanced Casework Management) continues to be available in the service, to support trauma-informed practice, which is a psychology led, multi-agency approach for young people with complex needs and risks, enabling effective tailoring and sequencing of interventions, recognising the trauma and adverse events children have experienced. Our trauma champions in the team continue to support the team integrate knowledge into policy and practice.

The use of trauma informed practice allows for an in-depth understanding of the circumstances of the child and family in the provision of prevention and diversion services through to re-settlement planning. It allows for recognition of the child’s strengths and capacities to support them to desist from offending and to keep them safe. Across 2024-25, the service is looking to further embed trauma informed practice. The team has recently received training from the Forensic Adolescent Consultation Service (FACS) to support improved trauma informed case recording. Additionally, work in relation to restorative options has been reviewed and draft practice documents developed through a trauma informed lens to ensure that reparative work with children and young people can be supported to develop a pro-social identity by helping them to engage in positive and constructive activities and to develop beneficial interactions with others whilst supporting educational attainment (document embedded within the section on Restorative Approaches and Victims).

**Evidence provided through example of reparation delivery:**

A young person was supported as part of their reparation to volunteer at a local Youth Club, following which they decided to continue volunteering in their own time. As a result of the young person’s involvement, their mother has also joined the Youth Club as a volunteer and is attending role specific training. Through reparation, the family has become more integrated within their local community, are building new relationships and are enhancing their own skillset and sense of wellbeing.

**Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system:**

The YJS and management board members actively promotes opportunities for diversion via Out of Court Disposals, prevention and signposting to ensure that the best outcomes for children, young people, and victims are achieved. Across 2023-24, the Youth Justice Service has embedded within its Out of Court work, the diversion of specified motoring offences from Court, supporting young people to engage in targeted work prior to the delivery of the Out of Court Disposal and allowing for a non-criminal outcome to be issued. An example of such an outcome for a young person is provided below (Example 1). Additionally, partnership working with the police has supported the increased use of Outcome 22 and again an example of this is provided below (Example 2).

**Evidenced by Case Example 1:**

A young person was referred for consideration of an Out of Court Disposal for offences of no licence and no insurance. During assessment process with the young person, intervention was simultaneously delivered by the YJS seconded police officer and the road safety team covering four sessions focusing on driving and the law; driving offences; motorbikes, scramblers and quads and the impact of such offences on others. At the Out of Court Disposal Panel, this supported the delivery of Youth Restorative Disposal (non-criminal outcome), which concluded the end of the YJS involvement as there were no other support needs identified during the assessment.

**Evidenced by Case Example 2:**

A young person was referred for consideration of an Out of Court Disposal for an offence of Common Assault with the victim being a same aged peer. Through the Youth Justice Victim Worker contact, the victim and their parent were in agreement that the young person should not be criminalised for their actions and reported that they had apologised for their behaviour, which had been accepted and their situation was described as amicable. Having considered the views of the victim and the circumstances of the young person including multiple vulnerability considerations, the panel decided that the most appropriate way to deal with this matter was to issue an Outcome 22.

Initial discussions have taken place within South Wales Police to consider the diversion of young people who have committed robbery offences (with no violence) for consideration of an Out of Court Disposal; however, whilst this has not been progressed further; as a partnership this is something we are keen to continue to explore. Additionally, NPT YJS are in initial discussions with South Wales Police to pilot deferring the delivery of an Out of Court Disposal for drug possession offences, until the young person has been given an opportunity to engage with educational awareness work, supporting the delivery then of an Outcome 22 response. It is hoped that this pilot can be taken forward across 2024-25.

Toward the end of the last financial year and moving forward into 2024-25, the YJS been undertaking targeted group work in schools, to support the management of young people with identified behavioural concerns that are evident within and outside of the school environment to prevent an escalation, maintain their placement within education and prevent their contact with the formal justice system. This work has the benefit of targeting limited resource and preventing the need for individual referrals into the YJS; however, this remains an option should it be identified that individuals in attendance would benefit from additional 1-to-1 support. The nature of the work delivered to the group is tailored to the concerns identified and as such, no group will be run the same. Currently, this work is carried out by one member of the team; however, the plan moving forward is to have a named worker linked to each secondary school to support the building of better working relationships, having a single point of contact to support the targeted response to concerns as they arise. These members of the team have recently under training delivered by Better Futures to support

**Encourage children’s active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningfully collaboration with children and their carers:**

Our commitment as a service and board to this is demonstrated through the ‘voice of the child’ section below.

Participation and engagement is supported by the wider councils Children & Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy; however, as a service, we are in the process of formulating our own strategy, co-produced by young people to drive forward practice internally. NPT Participation Officer has a key role in supporting practice in this area and collectively, through young people’s forums, opportunities for co-creation as well as informal and formal feedback and evaluation, we strive to make improvements and ensure that practice is more responsive to the needs of children and young people.

Some key areas of practice that have been developed and/or continue to be taken forward across 2024-25:

- **Feedback** – As a service, we already capture feedback from children and young people about their contact with the service and our work with them; however, we have recently developed additional feedback forms to establish the views of young people at earlier points in the system including at Court, at the Out of Court Disposal Panel and Referral Order Panels to drive forward practice and ensure that improvements are made and a quality service is provided at every contact with the service. These feedback mechanisms are being finalised and will be introduced into practice by September 2024.
- **Provision of Information** – NPT YJS already has a number of information leaflets written to support young people’s understanding of a range of community and custodial disposals that may bring them into contact with the YJS; however, we have recently expanded the leaflets to support young people’s understanding of their wider contact with the justice system including police bail, Court processes, and report requests. These leaflets have all been reviewed by our Speech and Language Therapist to ensure that they are easily understood by children and young people. These leaflets are currently in the process of being translated into Welsh and once this has been finalised; the leaflets will be introduced into practice. As a service, we are hoping that these will be in use by September 2024.
- **Development of a YJS webpage** –through the self-audit in respect of our compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, as a service we identified that we need to develop a webpage via the Council’s website that is both accessible to children and young people as well as victims of crime providing them accessible information about the Youth Justice Service and the support that is available.
- **Introduction of administrative support at Court** – In late 2023-24, the service introduced the additionally of a business support officer to attend Court alongside the Court Officer. The aim of this role was to free up the court officers time completing the administrative tasks to allow more time to be spent with the young people and their parents/carers preparing them before Court to ensure they are fully informed and supported to participate in the Court process as well as after Court to ensure that they fully understand the outcome of the Court hearing and next steps. Introducing this role was also about providing members of the administrative team with opportunities that sit outside of their prescribed roles within the team, supporting them to gain experience and knowledge and enhance their skillset. To date, this has proven successful and the role of the business support worker at Court will be further developed across 2024-25.

**b) Voice of Child**

In Youth Justice and indeed in social work generally, the challenge of establishing the ‘voice of the child or young person’ is often present when considering multi-agency working because of competing organisational agendas and priorities. Thematic evidence regarding young people’s voices (Smeaton, 2013, Gilligan, 2016, and Hallett, 2017) advocated that when hearing the voice of young people and acknowledging their agentic position, communication with young people should be pivotal to multi-agency or multi-disciplinary practitioners. Engaging young people in decision making and accepting responsibilities for their actions

and future is critical to developing skills as constructive members of their community; Article 12 of the UNCRC (**United Nations Convention for the rights of the Child**) establishes the right of young people to participate where decisions are being made that affect their future. In NPT, young people's voices are integral to everything we do and set out to achieve and remains one of our core priorities to ensure that our services are shaped and influenced by those who engage them. This work is supported by the YJS participation lead and the team as whole working closely with the Participation Officer for the local authority. We have various routes for co-creation and active participation as outlined below:

#### **YJS Management Board (YMB)**

Regular opportunities are created to ensure the voice of our children are heard at the most strategic level in the Youth Justice Service. Children and young people attend or make representation at every management board meeting. The involvement of our young people at board wherever possible and in a constructive and empowering way, adds depth and narrative to the board and is widely welcomed. Case studies are brought to the Board, and these are valued by members, who have expressed how this made the purpose and values of the Board more authentic. The lived experiences of children and their families keep the business of the board grounded and tends to strongly support the collective commitment to improve outcomes for justice-involved children. The NPT Management Board is ambitious to 'hear' the voice of children and young people and are committed to review participatory methods to better understand their lived experience to help us to design and deliver services which fully embrace the 'Child First' ethos. This is incorporated as a strategic and operational priority and forms part of the forward work plan of the YJS Management Board Operational Sub-group.

The quarterly newsletter produced for the management board to update them on all aspects of practice across the team is well received and as such, moving forward as a service, we would like to support young people to write a newsletter to the Board that supports them in providing updates on the things that matter to them.

#### **Recruitment:**

The YJS over the last year has work towards ensure that young people's voices are at the forefront of the recruitment process, which has seen a representative of the Youth Justice Service involved in all recruitment exercises across the last year. To date, young people have been actively involved in the recruitment of the YJS education worker, bail remand and ISS worker, and senior practitioner and will shortly be involved in the recruitment of a social worker within the team. This area of work is supported by the development of a recruitment document, which currently is in draft and involves a young person's sheet to record their

observations in relation to the interviews. Young people who have been engaged in the process to date have provided feedback on how helpful and easy the form is to use. A copy of the YJS recruitment document and form is embedded for reference.



YJS Draft Recruitment  
Documents 2024-25.d

### **Assessment & Intervention Delivery:**

The voice of the child is a golden thread throughout Children's Services, including youth justice. It is incorporated into assessments, plans and contracts undertaken with young people as part of their court or pre-court intervention. The relationship-based approach applied across all aspects of service delivery supports this. The Asset Plus, the YJB structured assessment and planning tool, includes a young person self-assessment and parent self-assessment both of which are integral to informing the subsequent intervention with young people and their personalised plan as they offer rich insight into their experiences, perceptions, strengths and ideas. These are regularly revisited at various stages of the intervention, through which they offer insight into the effectiveness and impact of our work with young people and families. Additional to this, the Speech and Language Therapist has embedded within their practice, the use of the Talking Mats provision, which is a communication tool that increases the capacity of young people to think about and communicate effectively about the things that matter to them. Moving forward across 2024-25, the wider use of Talking Mats will be taken forward and embedded into daily practice.



Talking Mats  
Template.docx

### **Feedback:**

Children are encouraged to provide feedback at key stages of their involvement with the Youth Justice Service. For all young people closing to the service, there is an opportunity to reflect on the impact of their contact with the YJS and feedback on overall service delivery, relationships with workers and how things can be improved. To date, this has been completed by the LA Participation Officer; however, this has not proved successful as speaking with a new person has presented barriers to engagement. Moving forward, we will be looking at alternative methods of collecting this feedback from young people and their families utilising resources from within the service. Outside of this, the voice of the young person and their parent/carer, is captured at other key junctures including

formal reviews of intervention plans as well as through programme specific feedback and evaluation. Routes are being created to explore young people’s feedback at other key points within the system including their experiences at Court, Out-of-Court Disposal Panels and Referral Order Panels to understand how being involved within these processes feels, whether they are facilitating meaningful engagement and resulting in intervention plans that are co-created, where applicable. Consideration is being given to establish the voice of young people around their experiences of their time spent in police custody and their understanding of what was to happen to them next, post release. Moving forward, the feedback collated will be collated and six monthly reports will be provided to the YJS Management Board to highlight the views of young people and their parents/carers and used to shape and drive forward practice. The YJS shares feedback received from young people and their families in the form of letters, thank you cards and emails with the LA complaints department as well as the YJS Management Board. Case study information is also provided to the latter and other reporting forums on the outcomes young people have achieved.



Court feedback form.docx



O OCD feedback form.docx



Referral Order feedback form.docx

### Young Person Feedback

- 1) Thank you all for the support. I won’t see you all as much anymore, you have seen me go through my ups and downs and made it better. I will miss you all.
- 2) I am not getting into as much trouble as I before I started working with the YJS. I felt supported and I enjoyed talking to my worker in our sessions. I liked listen to my worker as this helped me look at problems in a different way. School and family life are the major changes I have made since working with the YJS. Whilst I am not in, I now want to go back to school and that feels weird.
- 3) I really wanted to thank you for everything you've done for my family and I these past months and words couldn't explain how amazing you and the team have been and how much you're support has meant to me. I'm finally landed I can grow as a person now and move on in life.
- 4) Just heard I was NFA. I wanted to thank you for everything you've done for me and the time and work you've put in to help me, you made me feel safe as a person and really changed a mind-set in me as well to show me I can move on in life and I can do great things and to keep my head down and get on with it.

### Parent/Carer Feedback

- 5) My daughter’s behaviour has been excellent. She shares everything from her sessions with me so I am aware of what is going on. The support has been great and I wanted to share that my daughter thinks the world of you.
- 6) Thank you for all the lovely words you said about X today at her early revocation in Court. She wouldn’t be where she is today without you. You’re truly amazing and we can’t thank you enough.
- 7) My son loved being with YJS and his behaviour has improved significantly.
- 8) He really enjoyed his time doing all of the activities. I like the fact that he took part in some activities he would not normally participate in and had certain messages delivered to him from a different perspective. Thank you for the time spent with my son.

## Participation Forums:

The LA Participation Officer has very strong links with the YJS and brings most of their groups from the LA to access the facilities at the resource centre (Base 15). The participation officer includes the YJS cohort in the invitations for activities and participation events that they run internally, with one of these being 'Hope', the girls right group that is driven forward and campaigning for the rights of girls including safer spaces for girls and women. This group has been hugely successful in their campaign and has included young females open to the Youth Justice Service and a provision that we will continue to support internally.

Additionally, the LA Participation Officer in conjunction with the YJS participation lead have undertaken YJS specific consultation and participation events around key themes. Across 2024-25, there will be a number of events held to drive forward a participation strategy for the YJS that is co-produced by young people, starting with understanding what participation and engagement means to them.

Outside of this, through the initial introduction of the Independent Living Skills Programme within the Youth Justice a number of years ago, as a service we have been able to build on this offer to include nutrition and emotional wellbeing, with the content and the delivery of the group being young person led, allowing for an approach that is both flexible and responsive to the needs of the young people. As such, no two groups are the same but are built around supporting young people to prepare for independence including cooking, budgeting and laundry skills as well as supporting their own physical and emotional wellbeing.

## **Youth Justice Plan young people consultation:**

In June, the YJS undertook a consultation exercise with children and young people open to the service at the time to see what has worked well and how could things be improved across the service. This consultation exercise was done via an online survey that was made available to young people via a QR code. Whilst there was not a great uptake in respect of completion, 9 young people participated in the YJB Plan consultation exercise answering the questions provided in the table. The responses are a sample of direct quotes that illustrate the themes and have been used to inform and shape plan priorities for 2024-2025. The feedback offers reassurances that the priorities of the service continue to be appropriate.

Questions:	Responses received:
What do you like about the Youth Justice Service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a break from home; it's nice to get out and I learn stuff</li> <li>• Gets me out of the house.</li> <li>• Someone to talk to.</li> <li>• I enjoyed doing sessions like street gangs and county lines, ASB, weapons, exploitation, healthy/unhealthy relationships.</li> <li>• It's alright like, the boys down here are tidy.</li> <li>• Its fun and I enjoy it.</li> <li>• I like going out with my worker and doing surfing, going for rides and stuff.</li> <li>• I enjoy going out on activities.</li> <li>• Surf therapy.</li> <li>• They support me around school.</li> <li>• I like doing cooking sessions with my worker.</li> </ul>
What don't you like about the Youth Justice Service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some of the other young people in the group I attend, have a lack of respect.</li> <li>• Going to the beach.</li> <li>• Nothing.</li> <li>• Theory work.</li> <li>• The coffee they make.</li> </ul>
Do you find it difficult living in Neath Port Talbot? Tell me more about that. Do your friends feel the same?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, you never feel safe in Port Talbot because people aren't safe and there is lots of antisocial behaviour in the area.</li> <li>• Yes, due to the ASB in the community.</li> <li>• Yes, people living in Neath are troublesome. They want to argue over everything and always hold a grudge.</li> <li>• Yes, there is not much for people my age to do. It's a boring area.</li> <li>• Yes, it's scruffy. It's not a place you would like to go on holiday, although my friends don't mind Neath Port Talbot.</li> <li>• No, my friends like it too. It's just alright.</li> </ul>
How can we make the Youth Justice Service Better?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor activities.</li> <li>• Offering activities like swimming.</li> <li>• Regular small group work.</li> <li>• New basketball hoop for the centre.</li> <li>• More opportunities to do cooking.</li> </ul>



## 9) Resources & Services

The budget structure for the delivery of services is comprised from a diverse range of sources, and a breakdown of this and the contribution made per source is provided in Appendix 4. The YJS funding consists of core funding from NPTCBC, the YJB grant and statutory partner contributions. In addition, funding is received from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) as well as from Welsh Government via the Children and Communities Grant (CCG) Promoting Positive Engagement (PPE). The Youth Justice Board Grant, partnership contributions and available services are used to deliver youth justice services in accordance with the Youth Justice Team priorities set out in this plan.

The YJB grant is a main stream of funding which the service uses to finance staffing and resources to deliver across all functions within the YJS, namely preventing and reducing offending. The local authority's financial contribution, through Children's Services, is the largest contribution supporting the financing of staff as well as ensuring that the YJS staff are equipped to meet the needs of the children and young people we are support; this is achieved through available budgets to run our resource centre (Base 15), delivering training, purchase equipment, programmes and fund activities for children and young people as an example. In addition to this, the financial contribution from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is used to fund specific areas of work contributing to the funding of the substance misuse workers in the service as well as the role of the bail, remand and ISS worker. The funding from Welsh Government supports prevention work, Out of Court Disposals, and restorative approaches and victim work. Additionally, all Youth Justice Services in England and Wales were given a Turnaround funding allocation from the Ministry of Justice to assist in the delivery of early intervention services for children on the cusp of offending; this funding ends on 31/3/25. These grants are formally reported against either on a quarterly or half yearly basis – this requires a considerable amount of information gathering and performance oversight.

The Police also make a significant contribution to the partnership. South Wales Police support the work of the service through the provision of a full-time police officer and we have nominated Sergeant from the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) team aligned to the YJS. These roles support the day to day working of the team, through the sharing of information regarding young people who have come to police attention overnight whether this be a safeguarding response or through potential offending. Additional to this, the police play a key role in implementing safety and public protection plans for young people where there are multiple and complex concerns, through direct working with the team as well as through other forums including MAPPA. The oversight from the Sergeant from the IOM Team also assists with the transition of young people to Probation and monthly Youth to Adult (Y2A) meetings

with both Probation and the Police drive forward practice in this area. Additionally, the police have lead on and funded multi-agency partnership responses to address issues locally including emerging gang concerns and anti-social behaviour.

The National Probation Service provide a 0.4 full time equivalent Probation Officer who oversees transition to adulthood work; this post has been vacant since January 2024; however, a Probation Officer has been identified and will start with the service in September. Outside of this, the National Probation Service have funded a regional Youth to Adult Transition Worker via a pilot project until the end of March 2025; this a full-time post operating across NPT YJS, Swansea YJS and Swansea Probation. This post has been invaluable in supporting the role of the Probation Officer but more so, in the latter few months the role has bridged the gap between the YJS and Probation. The successful transition of young people to Probation has been supported by the relationships this worker has been able to build up with young people and their families prior to transfer, which has then continued post transfer, allowing for a child focused and trauma-informed approach to continue. This post also has a preventative and educational role working with young people at risk of further offending as they approach eighteen.

Health provide funding for a 0.4 full-time equivalent CAMHS practitioner to support our children with mental health needs within NPT YJS. Additional to this, there is a training element to the role, supporting the team to identify the requirement for and deliver training in respect of working with young people with mental health needs post holder works. Across 2024-25, a mapping exercise of the team's training needs around mental health will be undertaken to shape the delivery of this offer going forward. Outside of this, the YJS has access to a named Sexual Health Nurse should any young person in contact with the YJS need to access these services.

Our performance will be improved as we move through 2024, through the continued building and strengthen of partnerships locally to ensure that we continue to identify and respond to the changing needs of our shared cohort of children and young people at risk. The introduction of the an operational sub-group will drive forward the work of the YJS Management Board, where the priorities for 2024 focus on participation and the voice of the child, work with victims, diversionary work as well as working alongside education to reduce exclusions and improved educational outcomes for young people.

## 10) Board Development

In November 2023, the YJS Service Manager conducted an internal review of the Management Board focusing on three key lines of enquiry that considered the current strengths and areas for development which took into consideration the golden threads of 1) the voice of the child and 2) Anti-Discriminatory Practice, Diversity & Disproportionality. The three lines of enquiry were:

- Enquiry 1 - The strength of NPT management board: Are the right people at the table.
- Enquiry 2 - The extent to which partners can respond to the evolving youth justice strategic landscape and key performance indicator (KPI) developments.
- Enquiry 3 - The effectiveness in which board members advocate for Youth Justice within their own services and with partners.

The paper was presented to the YJS Management Board in December 2023, which set out a number of recommendations to be taken forward across 2024-25. One of these recommendations was implemented at the outset of 2024-25 and saw the set of an operational sub-group to the Management Board. A Terms of Reference (TOR) has been developed to ensure that there is a strong and diverse membership, to drive forward delivery on our strategic priorities and development a forward work plan for the service. The key areas for focus of the operational group across 2024-25 include 1) Out-of-Court Disposals, 2) Work with Victims of Crime (including ensuring the voice of victims is given equal priority), 3) Participation and the Voice of the Child and 4) Education (including reducing exclusions and improving educational outcomes for young people). Embedded within this report is the internal review of the YJS Management Board and TOR for the Operational Sub-group.



Internal Review of the  
NPT Management Bo:



Draft Operational  
Delivery Group TOR J.

## 11) Workforce Development

Workforce development has and will continue to be a priority for the service. Retention of qualified social work staff in NPT YJS and the impact of this for maintaining effective youth justice practice do not appear to be a risk to delivery at this juncture, although it is important to recognise that resources must be allocated to meet the additional training and necessary management support needs of new and/or inexperienced staff across the service. However, the

opportunity for all staff to learn and develop is a crucial factor in achieving the aims of the Youth Justice Service. The Service is committed to supporting staff to develop and maintain the level of skills and knowledge required by their role. Experienced Youth Justice managers play a major role in identifying and reviewing staff learning needs through day-to-day oversight of practice, supervision and the performance appraisal process. There will continue to a drive this year is to ensure everyone has a clear role, good supervision and quality appraisals. We consistently achieve 90% or more supervision rates. Everyone has supervision in line with the NPT supervision policy and appraisals will form a part of that process going forward. Additionally, some members of the team access clinical supervision via the Enhanced Case Management Process. We also are committed to the health and well-being of our staff, and this is covered in supervision, forms part of everyone's appraisal and during staff development days.

The Team Manager regularly holds team meetings which assist in helping to support staff and disseminate performance information, learning and good practice. Service Development Days and Practice Development Days for staff will continue to be used to bring staff together across the service to share practice and promote skill development, focus upon emerging practice and to receive training input. The LA Human Resource Team and the YJS senior management team are fully engaged with supporting the team delivering and overseeing induction training for new starters. Outside of this, there is a wide range of training opportunities provided by our Corporate Learning and Development Team, with all staff required to attend mandatory e-learning courses relating to key policy areas. Staff can also utilise the Youth Justice Resource Hub to access youth justice specific e-learning as well as external webinars and briefings across a range of practice areas. Training opportunities available to the team can be accessed by YJS volunteers, supported by the YJS Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Neath Port Talbot Council Children's Service promote a culture of learning from practice and support the undertaking of multi-agency or single agency peer reviews of a young person's contact with services. In recent months, the service has been involved in one multi-agency review and there is one more planned to take place across 24-25, with the potential for a further two with referral requests to be submitted shortly. The learning from these reviews is taken back into the team to support practice and disseminated wider across the directorate in the form of a 7-minute briefing (attached).



7 Minute Briefing  
May 2024.docx

Over the last year, the team have been supported to complete a range of training and below is snapshot of some of the courses attended. Learning from these courses has in part been already embedded within the service; the completion of the Couch to 5k is an example of this and more information is included under the Evidence Based Practice and Innovation section. Across 2024-25, as a service we plan to further utilise the skills and knowledge learnt by staff who attended specific training by introducing the availability of additional interventions; this includes the Space Toolkit training, which is a trauma informed educational toolkit designed to support parents & carers or children & young people through the challenge of growing up in an ever-changing stressful world. Across 2024-25, there are a number of training courses already identified (some of which have been delivered); however, a skills audit will be undertaken across the team to support with the identification of ongoing training needs.

Training attended by the team:	How training will be embedded:
Effective Practice Award Child First (3 workers)	Trauma case recording FACS – delivered (whole team)
Effective Practice Award Trauma Informed Practice (3 workers)	Better Futures schools intervention programme – delivered (7 workers)
SPACE Toolkit Training (1 worker)	PSR training (in-house)
Couch to 5K Leaders Award (1 worker)	PAD training
Respect training (2 workers)	Mountain Bike Leaders Award
Practice Assessor Award (1 worker)	AA refresher training
Trauma Informed Diploma in Mental Health (1 worker)	AA training for the SCH
CSA lead (1 worker)	
County Lines training (whole team)	

**Workforce Profile:**

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the YJS was fully staffed for directly employed permanent posts, with a total of 19.7 posts; a full breakdown of which is provided in Appendix 4. In regards to sickness, there has 59 days lost to sickness across 20 posts, during the last financial year. Last year saw one practitioner completing their social work qualification and move across to one of the children’s services community team. Further opportunities for internal staff to undertake the social work qualification were made available to those eligible at the outset of this financial year; however, no applications were received from the YJS. This will continue to be a qualification route available to the team on an annual basis.

The staff cohort continues to have a varied and eclectic mix of skills and experience, with a large proportion of the workforce being with the Youth Justice Service in excess of 10 years. This provides stability and knowledge within the service; however, the new starters for this year and last year that have joined the team bring with them a wealth of experience from within the secure estate, education, and residential care. The building of staff morale has been essential to maintain staff commitment, reduce sickness and maintain staff continuity. The staff cohort is reflective of the local community in respect of members of staff from an ethnic minority background (3.2%); however, it is not reflective of the gender split in the general population, with females accounting for 61% and males accounting for 39% of the workforce. This needs to be a key priority consideration for service moving through the recruitment process. In respect of the Welsh language, 19% of the workforce have written and verbal Welsh language skills, which is above that of the general population; this is positive as it supports the service to deliver services through the medium of Welsh if requested, with those who can speak Welsh spanning a number of roles including the seconded Police Officer, Speech and Language Therapists, the Victim Liaison Worker, and a volunteer.

## 12) Evidence based practice & innovation

The service continues to benefit from strong partnership links that supports the delivery of a diverse range of interventions to meet the needs of our children and young people. Over the last year and across the outset of this financial year, these partnerships and community links have gone from strength to strength and as such, we have additional provisions available for our cohort.

The YJS has a strong partnership with Children's Services, and there are three trained child practice reviewers within the service. A YJS multi-agency risk review meeting is convened if a child is assessed as high risk for safety and wellbeing and/or risk of harm to others. The meeting is chaired by a senior practitioner and all staff involved with the case will attend, including any partner agencies working with the child. The YJS is a key multi-agency partner in the contextual safeguarding responses across the local authority at both a strategic and operational level, with the partnership being finalists in the TeamSWP Awards 2023 in the category of Exceptional Problem Solving in Partnership Award as well as receiving recognition at the Inaugural Safer Communities Awards 2023.

The service continues to work in partnership with Better Futures through the provision of monthly exploitation clinics, where consultation takes place with practitioners for cases involving exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour and child sexual abuse. Additional to this, practitioners within the team are provided

with shadowing opportunities and supported to deliver the lower level work that sits outside the remit of Better Futures. Through this partnership, we also benefit from the sharing of up to date research and the provision of specialist training.

Whilst not evidenced-based, we have developed and undertaken a range of creative and innovative projects, small and large, which enhance the support we provide to children and young people within youth justice service as well as the wider directorate and across education. Many of these provisions are delivered via group work but can also be accommodated for delivery on a one-to-one basis. Some of these interventions have been developed in response to the changing profile of the cohort including an increase of girls in contact with service as well as increasing concerns in relation to the exploitation risks linked to county lines and gangs. Over the next year, we will continue to analysis the needs (including unmet needs) of the young people in contact with the service to support the service in ensuring we have access to the right interventions to support young people to make better choices and achieve better outcomes. Some examples of the interventions that are on offer and will continue across 2024-25 are outlined below.

**Perfectly Imperfect Girls Programme:**

The YJS in conjunction with multi-agency partners have developed a targeted girl's group programme that is delivered over a day; the content of the group work is adaptable and can be delivered to both a younger (10-14) and older (14-17) audience. The development of this group by YJS who reached out to partners for support was in response to the growing cohort of young females coming into contact with the YJS and there were concerns in relation to their exploitation both criminally and sexually within the local community as well as concerns in relation to low level anti-social behaviour. Over the course of the programme, the young females are supported to explore a range of topics including antisocial behaviour, community safety and how the police can support young people; substance misuse awareness; exploration of support in school and post 16 education; mental health advice and signposting; sexual health support and exploitation. At the end of the programme, there is an organised pampering session that involves the girls having their hair and nails done as well as a lesson on how to apply false eyelashes; this was arranged in consultation with the girls who were also supported to name the project for future delivery. Distance travelled tools have been utilised to measure outcomes across the project as well as gain general feedback from all three groups that have run to date; the results of which were really positive and encouraging. The feedback was scoring their knowledge and understanding of the topics covered before and after the event and there were improvements in all areas with the biggest increases reported around mental health and exploitation. Also 100% of the girls said they would recommend this for other young people and when asked what were the best parts of the day some of the comments received were *"everything"* and the *"police"*; the latter comment is excellent as one of the aims of the project was to break down barriers between young people and professionals, in particular the police. Additional feedback from a young person is provided as follows *"I was nervous at first because I didn't know anyone. I gave it a go and it was a good day in the end. I liked being part of a group that had similar experiences to me and they knew what it was like to be arrested. I was able to talk about what happened to me and not feel judged because they got it"*. Taking this forward into future delivery, distance travelled tools will be extended to include the measure of softer outcomes as well as outcomes related to knowledge and insight more broadly.

NPT Youth Justice Service will be shortly submitting the details of this programme onto the Resource Hub at the request of the YJB to support other Youth Justice Services in considering its implementation in response to an increase of young females in contact with youth justice services.

### **YJS Summer Programme:**

Every summer the YJS aim to deliver a provision to young people to support their positive engagement in activities at a time where there are reduced provisions available to young people and spend greater time in the community with their friends, which for some will bring increased risks both in terms of their own safety and wellbeing as well as the potential for involvement in offending.

Last summer, in conjunction with Neath Port Talbot Cynnydd Project, the Youth Justice Service arranged a 3 day programme. Two specific programmes were developed, one targeting young males (delivered twice) and the other targeting young females. Both of these programmes were set up with the aim of targeting young people who were engaged with either service. The aim of both programmes was to support young people in gaining skills and knowledge to support a healthy lifestyle and make informed choices. The programmes set up involved a mix of workshop sessions as well as fun activities and trips. The success of this provision was provided to the YJS Management Board via a report, which is embedded.

Whilst this year's offer will be scaled back due to available finances, the team have been created and have developed a provision that is meaningful and engaging following a consultation exercise with a group of young people open to the service. Taken into account the consultation exercise and the feedback gained from last year's provision, activities will be delivered over a longer period delivery as opposed to delivery over 1 week as it was last year.



Youth Justice Service  
Summer Activities Rep

### **Surf Therapy:**

The YJS has recently started working with a surf therapy provision in Swansea that has been successful in gaining funds to work with individuals in contact with the criminal justice system. There are two provisions available, one covering adults open to the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) team and the other for young people in contact with the Youth Justice Services across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea. With regard to the later, separate programmes are run for each service, and take place over a block of 5 sessions. These sessions are held on Caswell Beach and are 2.5 hours in duration. The aim of the sessions is to improve the mental wellbeing of young people through the power of surfing; this is done through surfing as well as beach based activities that centre on mindfulness. Young people open to NPT YJS commenced this provision on 6<sup>th</sup> June and those in attendance have enjoyed to date. The aim is that those that attend the first course have the option to return on the second course to act as mentors for the new starters. The YJS has received some informal feedback from a parent whose son attends this provision, where they shared with a member of the team the following:

***"I want to pass on a massive thank you to all supporting the Surf Therapy. I often feel overwhelmed with 'mum guilt' and feel the service is offering X opportunities that I cannot support myself"***

### **WRU Rugby Camp**

Acting on the feedback from young people who attended the summer activities programme in 2023-24, a rugby provision was set up for October half-term. This provision was a one day camp run by the WRU hub officers offering the completion of the Rugby Leaders Certificate involving theory and practical tasks. 8 young people attended the camp and achieved a certificate in rugby leadership as well as gaining many other valuable skills including working as a team and communication as well as supporting their physical and emotional wellbeing through exercise and being outdoors. With established links now in place, as a service, we are hoping to run a rugby camp at least twice yearly during school holidays going forward.



### **The K9 Project (in collaboration with South Wales Police)**

This is a 3-day group programme delivered alongside Police that aims to engage, discuss and educate young people on the dangers and risks associated with knife crime, county lines, and substance misuse. The two substance misuse workers are heavily involved in the delivery of sessions on this project given the focus on awareness raising around the risks associated with substance misuse, county lines and dealing. Outside of the formal delivery of work, a key element of this project is about building trust and respect between professionals and the young people, creating an opportunity to understand the issues and concerns as seen by the young people enabling us to respond to them in the most appropriate way. This project is run at several points throughout the year and mainly during school holidays; both substance misuse workers are involved in the delivery of all the programmes scheduled.

NPT Youth Justice Service will be shortly submitting the details of this programme onto the Resource Hub at the request of the YJB to support other Youth Justice Services in considering its implementation in response to an increase of young females in contact with youth justice services.

### **Bike Maintenance Project:**

Two members of the team, a social worker and a substance misuse worker have undertaken training that supports them both to teach basic bike maintenance to others. However, across 2023-24 this roll out of this project was limited to the delivery to a few young people because of capacity within the team and the space that we currently had available was small. Moving into 2024-25, we have secured the support of a retired bike fitter who will lead on the project and as well as purchased a summer house that has been built in the grounds, that will support deliver to small groups. To this end, as a service we hope to roll out bike maintenance from September 2024 onwards where young people will be supported to upcycle a bike for themselves and/or to be donated as part of reparation to the Mr X Appeal. They will be supported to gain an ASDAN certificate in bike maintenance alongside the learning of practical skills. We have linked up with the NPT Road Safety Department as part of this project and we will be offering Road Safety Levels 1, 2 & 3 to all young people who engage to promote their safety whilst using a bike on the roads. Young people who upcycle a bike for themselves will also be provided with a helmet should they not already have one.

It is hoped that once this project is up and running, we can offer spaces to local secondary schools to support with maintaining young people in education or add additionally to reduced timetables. We also aim to work closely with the Case Assessment and Progression (CAP) Team who work with young people who are twice permanently excluded.

### **Gardening Project:**

Although a little delayed, the YJS are in the process of setting up a gardening project within the service. We were fortunate to obtain a small pot of money at the end of the last financial year that enabled us to purchase a greenhouse and other associated items, which some young people across the services are currently involved in assembling onsite. Whilst we appreciate we have likely missed the opportunity to produce much produce this year; the plan is that we will start small and progressively expand the project year on year. It is hoped that the produce grown can be used both within the service as part of the Independent Living Skills Project to support young people to learn about the seed to plate journey as well as be donated to foodbanks as part of reparation. Additionally, any flowers grown can be both taken home to parents and/or donated to churches and care homes as part of reparation. The reason for setting up this project is that the benefits of being outdoors and in particular, gardening are well documented. Being outdoors is good for a person's psychological wellbeing and promotes exercising, whilst gardening fosters responsibility in young people, plants offer a great way to connect with the environment and growing food encourages healthier eating habits. The project has not formally been named and will be done in consultation with young people.

### **Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing Group:**

The YJS in conjunction with the LA participation Lead are running a Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing group that is built around independent living skills; however, outside of this, it is very much lead by the young people in attendance. They have successfully run two groups, making some slight alterations on how group 2 was run based on lessons learnt from group 1 and the feedback from young people. Some of the sessions delivered at the request of the young people have centred on county lines, substance misuse, peer relationships and general discussions around health and wellbeing. As part of group 1, they identified that they would like to have intervention from the Grief Preacher, Jamie Denyer who delivers motivation talks speaking from his own experience of family bereavement where a family member was killed through one punch. This was opened out to a wider cohort of young people to attend and was an intervention that was well received by all in attendance. From the delivery of group 2, it became apparent, that lots of young people have difficulty with good sleep hygiene and as such, one of the intervention workers is looking to pull together a resource on this topic.

Over the course of their attendance at the group, young people are supported to complete an ASDAN certificate either in PSHE or Activities and Peer Tutoring.

### **School Based Group Work:**

The YJS has started undertaking targeted group work in school, to support the management of and retention of young people in school with identified behavioural concerns that are evident within and outside of the school environment. This has the benefit of targeting limited resource and preventing the need for individual referrals into the YJS; however, this remains an option should it be identified that individuals in attendance would benefit from additional 1-to-1 support. The nature of the work delivered to the group is tailored to the concerns identified and as such, no group will be run the same.

Group work sessions are currently being carried out by the YJS Development Worker; however, the plan is to upskill other members of the intervention workers team to enhance this offer and consider dedicating a worker to each comprehensive school supporting the building of good working relationships.

To date, 3 groups have been delivered across two secondary schools reaching a total of 14 young people (12 males & 2 females). The sessions are run weekly and are an hour duration, with the blocks lasting between 6 and 8 weeks. The focus of each group has been slightly different but some of themes covered include anti-social behaviour, violence awareness, vaping awareness, consent and healthy relationships, CCE/County Lines, knife crime and first aid.

### **ASDAN Certificates:**

NPT YJS purchased a Programmes membership allowing us to access a range of ASDAN programmes, including short courses. We have access to over 30 titles to choose from including PSHE, Gardening, Beliefs and Values, Hairdressing, and Volunteering. Young people are able to access these to bolster their formal education and they are supported to complete the work by members of team. Over the last year, we have linked the delivery of an ASDAN certificate to a number of our interventions to support young people achieving educationally whilst engaged with the YJS. Moving forward, as a service we have reviewed practice across reparative approaches through a trauma and ACEs informed lens and feel through the development of supportive relationships, young people can be supported through reparative activities to engage with informal learning and thrive. WE envisage this being achieved through the completion of specific ASDAN certificates linked to the relevant reparative activity, which is delivered in a way that minimises class based learning and written assignments and is more flexible in approach, being more reliant on the undertaking of practical tasks, photo evidence, witness statements and topical discussions. Please see embedded Trauma and ACEs informed document within Restorative Approaches and Victims section.

### **Hairdressing:**

With funding no longer available to the service to run the previous City & Guilds Hairdressing provision, at the end of the last financial year, we secured an additional pot of money that allowed us to pilot a new hairdressing offer to young people. Already delivering ASDAN certificates, we were able to establish that there was one linked to hairdressing and beauty that we could deliver. This ASDAN required a young person to complete a minimum of 10 hours of work to achieve the certificate and would offer the young people a taster in hairdressing to see if this is something that they would like to pursue as a career option in the future. Internally, we run the programme over 6 weeks and each week, there was a mixture of theory and practical tasks, with the latter being delivered by a tutor from Skills & Training supporting those in attendance to learn how to for example, wash and blow dry hair, as well as do various up do's including plaiting. The young people in attendance were expected to attend for a minimum of 2.5 hours each week, with some of this time being allocated to making and eating breakfast as it is well known in research that those who have consumed breakfast have better brain function, memory and attention, which supports learning.

5 girls were enrolled on the course, 3 of which were internal to YJS and we received 2 additional referrals from the Case Assessment and Progression (CAP) Team who work with young people who are twice permanently excluded from school due to their poor behaviour and/or offending. Unfortunately, 2 of the girls did not complete the course as they only attended the first two sessions. However, 2 of the girls fully completed the course and 1 enjoyed it so much, she is now being supported by the CAP Team who are looking to find her a hairdressing placement. The remaining young person who was the youngest of the group at 13 years of age, in the main attended and has completed some of the theory work and it is hoped across the next couple of weeks, on a one-to-one basis, YJS staff can support her to complete the remaining tasks so she can also achieve the ASDAN certificate. Attending this 6 week course, outside of the practical hairdressing skills, the girls would have also developed softer skills including active listening, team work, problem solving, turn-taking, presentation of work, creativity, tidiness and time management.

Moving forward into 2024/25, the services ability to run this course was potentially at risk, however, having run this provision, at a fraction of the cost of the previous provision, we are confident that we can continue to offer access to hairdressing on this basis. As service we may need to scale back the attendance of an outside tutor from every week to every other week to reduce costs, but our own staff who run the course are now confident in being able to support those in attendance on alternative weeks to practice the skills learnt in the previous week in the salon. Additionally, we intend to offer up spaces on the course to schools to support reduced timetables or those at risk of exclusion with a request for a small contributory cost, which will then be used to support successive programmes.

### **Turnaround Project:**

NPT Youth Justice Service as with Youth Justice Services across England Wales have benefitted from Turnaround Project that is funded until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. This funding has supported us to employ a dedicated Turnaround Worker (4 days), secure an additional day to a current social worker post (taken the post up to 4 days) as well as fund the provision of Grade 4 Speech and Language Assistant. The focus of the Turnaround Project within NPT YJS has been the provision of support at the front end of the service, namely bail support, support to those who are given a Community Resolution (Street RJ) and/or engaged via the Anti-Social Behaviour processes. Funding available through this provision has supported young people to access specialist interventions such as Outside and Equine Assisted Learning as well as supporting access to sporting activities, leisure activities and promoting family time.

With the funding being withdrawn at the end of the financial year, the YJS risks losing these posts and the ability to access specialist provision for young people at the front end of the service; however, we will continue to offer support to young people through the routes identified above as we did prior to the grant albeit scaled back.

### **Couch to 5k**

A member of the team with running experience and links to a local running club has been supported to undertake the Couch to 5k Leaders Award. On completion, this has been introduced into the team and has to date been utilised to support a young person to complete their reparation as well as being linked as an offer to the Independent Living, Nutrition and Wellbeing Group. As part of reparation, a young person successfully completed the Couch to 5K and then went onto successfully run a 5K part run raising money for the British Heart Foundation alongside the person trained to deliver the programme and their case manager. The young person raised a total of £255 for a charity that had a personal connection for them.

## 13) Evaluation

### **Equine Assisted Learning:**

As a service, we were heavily involved in the set up and commissioning of the Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) provision that is available across the borough of Neath Port Talbot. Over the last year, EAL has continued to be a referral route for young people open to the YJS across the remit of the service including prevention. EAL is a form of experiential learning that includes horses and a facilitator working together with a person to create positive change. EAL often includes a number of beneficial equine activities such as observing, handling, grooming, groundwork, and structured challenging exercises focused on the young person's needs and goals. EAL provides unique non-verbal opportunities for young people to enhance self-awareness, recognize maladaptive behaviours and identify negative feelings. Research highlights that this approach has had positive results for people with social difficulties and mental health needs that can result in significant changes in cognition, mood, judgement, insight, perception, social skills, communication, behaviour and learning. This programme is run within NPT YJS as the service supported one of our senior practitioners to undertake the extensive training with the aim of working in partnership with her through the use of her own horses to deliver tailored programmes to young people. The programme aims include building relationships and trust, building emotional resilience, raising self-awareness, improving emotional wellbeing, understanding boundaries, improving social and communication skills, improving impulse regulation, boosting confidence and self-esteem and offering opportunities for self-growth with nature. Published Research including Stock (2016) and Wilson (2020) highlight that this approach has had positive results for people with social difficulties and mental health needs that can result in significant changes in cognition, mood, judgment, insight, perception, social skills, communication, behaviour, and learning.

Over the last 12 months, 21 young people have been referred to EAL through the YJS for intervention supported by engagement with horses. The reasons for the referrals are varied and include bereavement and loss, emotional wellbeing, healthy relationships, emotional regulation, conflict management and many

more. 13 of the young people that were referred in were funded to access this provision through core funding; however, 8 of the young people were funded through additional CCG money the YJS received. Additional young people accessed this provision through Turnaround funding.

Whispers Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) program has been subject to a brief deep dive by conducted by Hwb Doeth earlier this year. The results of this thematic analysis were positive; however, it was noted that a more rigorous evaluation is required to provide robust and reliable findings. A short report was published in June 2024 and is embedded within this document for the reader's attention.

Unfortunately, despite this due to financial constraints the YJS are no longer in a position to fund the referral of young people open to the Youth Justice Service to Equine Assisted Learning outside of the Turnaround provision. The commissioning of this provision is a significant loss to the service and the young people as all the young people who have been fortunate to access the provision have provided such positive feedback and reported that it had made a significant difference to their overall wellbeing and relationships. This has recently been flagged to the management board where discussions took place around the availability of grants and it is hoped that a joint application can be made with the EAL providers to secure access to this resource moving forward.



Whispers EAL  
program - Hwb Doeth

### **School Exclusion Speech and Language Pilot Project**

Speech and Language provision is well embedded within NPT YJS and we are noted to be leading in SLCN practice across Wales. Over the couple of years, as a service, we have contributed to the evidence available in relation to understanding the extent of SLCN in youth justice, through the provision of written and oral evidence presented at the Senedd Cymru Equalities and Social Justice Committee spotlight inquiry on 5 December 2022. Additional to this, we have contributed to workforce development through the delivery of SLCN Workshops at the Hwb Doeth Conference in March 2023 with a focus on supporting other YJS' on how to embed SLCN into their Service. Lastly, we presented at the Youth Justice Summit on Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) on 24 January 2024. Embedded below is the written evidence presented in advance to the Senedd in 2022 as well as the presentation delivered in January 2024. Within the latter document, how the service is funded and operates within the YJS is documented, providing an outline of the different roles that form the SLC team within the service. Particular mention needs to be made to the provision of the Band 4 SLC Assistant post funded through Turnaround on a

regional basis, which has proved invaluable in supporting the development of a wealth of resources that are SLCN friendly and accessible to all young people; delivering 1-to-1 direct SLC intervention work and has developed and embedded Lego Therapy and Nail Art Therapy (latter developed from the principle of Lego therapy to meet the needs of girls within the service) into the service. With Turnaround funding ending on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, this post is at risk and as such, will be flagged as a concern to the Management Board, given the value it brings to the service.

Outlined in the presentation document is information relating to the next steps for the Speech and Language within the YJS. Taking learning from the good practice and subsequent evaluation undertaken by Milton Keynes YJS in 2019, NPT YJS have introduced a Speech and Language Pilot Project with a local comprehensive school. The aim is to identify pupils most at risk of exclusion (fixed and permanent) and offer the provision of a speech and language assessment to establish if there are unidentified underlying needs that are driving the behaviour, following which the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) will provide a report and consultation service to the school to support them to implement strategies to support the young person. The report will also be shared with the parent and young person to support the development of strategies that can be implemented individually by them and by the parents to support them within the home. This pilot commenced in May 2024 and is available to pupils across Year 7 and 8; this project will be ongoing and at the start of the new academic year, the SALT will be working with schools to identify those who have transitioned from primary school where there are presenting concerns. The young people engaged in the pilot will be tracked for a period of 6 to 12 months and feedback will be elicited at different junctures from all involved parties to establish what difference it has made, including the impact on behavioural points and/or exclusions. A presentation is embedded below that sets out our local offer (adapted from material provided by Milton Keynes YJS).



NPT YJS SLCN  
evidence for Senedd.c



Embedding Speech,  
Language and Comm



NPT YJS School  
Exclusions Project 202

#### 14) Priorities for the coming year

We have had another good year in NPT Youth Justice Service, navigating through the end of the pandemic, ensuring service recovery plans are fit for purpose, developing our Base 15 children and young people's resource centre, and receiving a good grading for last year's YJS plan which means we can build on that

grade for this year. These results speak for themselves and is testament to the commitment of all the staff involved but more specifically to the resilience and commitment of our young people who want better outcomes and who are often the ones best placed to tell us as professionals what will help them the most. Within this, is also hearing the voice of the victims of crime and the voices of our multi- agency partners. We are developing the voice of youth justice experience young people through the consultation/ feedback and we are hoping to develop an easy version of the plan in leaflet form for young people to contribute to and develop the service they want going forward. Therefore, giving young people agency and a voice in this plan, and in all of our work going forward remains integral to our practice. Further information on participation as a priority is contained within other sections of this plan. We know that we have achieved a great deal, but we recognise that it is not the time to rest on our laurels, but to build on the recommendations made by the inspectorates and capitalise on the identified strengths. We will simultaneously ensure that we improve the areas identified as needing development. Consideration is being given to approaching YJSIP for a peer review on areas to be determined by the YJS management board and our multiagency partners. The priorities for the service going forward are:

### **Strategic & Operational Safeguarding**

This was a priority across last year's plan and will remain a key priority for the team moving forward as it is central to everything we do across the YJS. Mechanisms remain in place internally to ensure there is management oversight and monitoring of safeguarding responses and plans. Outside of this, the YJS will continue to be represented across the various strategic and operation safeguarding forums and work closely with children's services and other multi-agency partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

### **Reducing permanent exclusions rates for children and young people in the Youth Justice System**

In order to understand this area of work and drive forward practice and build on the progress that has already been achieved, the YJS Management Board have requested a report that outlines what is already being done locally across the LA and by the YJS to reduce exclusions. The Board has asked the service to consider data that shows a correlation between exclusions and offending locally as well as looking at the impact of economic disadvantage, disability, ethnicity and gender. In particular, the Management Board have requested consideration of neurodiverse young people and collectively are we getting the response right.

### **Improving engagement and educational attainment for children and young people in the Youth Justice System**

The YJS Management Board have requested a report to support next steps with this regards to this priority. In particular, the Board have requested a deep dive into home schooling for the YJS cohort comparing this against those who are home schooled within the general population, to see whether there is any disproportionality considerations.

### **Staff recruitment and retention in NPT YJS**

Staff retention in NPT YJS is not problematic, we are a long standing and established service with experienced and committed practitioners. However, there are a number of posts within the service that are granted funded and due to come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025; these roles have a significant and positive impact on intervention delivery across the team, covering three distinct areas of practice, namely Youth to Adult Transitions, bail support and the delivery of direct work to address SCLNs. Should these posts be lost, then the delivery of specific interventions like the Couch to 5k will no longer be available to the service (at least in the short term). These posts will be flagged to the YJS Management Board to see if our partner agencies can provide support moving forward. Evaluations will be undertaken regarding the value of the roles in the hope that we can secure additional funding through submitting relevant grant applications.

### **Workforce development**

Continue on the work of last year, the drive remains to ensure that everyone has a clear role, good supervision and quality appraisals. Additional to this, mapping out the training needs of the team alongside areas within the service, where specialist training and knowledge is required will support us in planning for and the delivery of training across the year. Across this year, we would like to drive forward areas of specialisms for staff to support their continued professional development and hone in on their areas of interest. It is already known that one of the social workers in the team would like to take on the lead for supporting the work with girls across the service

### **Work with Victims**

This was a key priority within last year's plan and as evidenced within the restorative approaches and victim section, this area has been subject to a full review and progress has been made. Policy and practice documents pertaining to this area of practice are under development and are subject to oversight by the sub-group of the Board. A recent self-audit was completed against the Victims Code and an action plan developed to drive practice forward following identification of gaps in practice. Additionally, an annual report on work with victims has seen a number of recommendations to take this work forward including considering the demographics of victims and review whether there are identified services to meet their needs locally.



### **Violence (including serious violence) and Exploitation**

Violence against the person is the largest offence type and this is consistent across Out-of-Court Disposal and Court Work. It has consistently been the largest offence type over past years; however, the tide seems to be changing with an increase in serious violence offences being more prevalent as evidenced by the completion of 8 Serious Incident Notifications last year. In addressing practice in this area moving forward, the YJS needs to learn from other areas that have successfully tackled violence and exploitation concerns; this likely to involve a multi-model and multi-agency response across all remits of the service, in particular enhancing the provision at the front end of the service to prevent these offences happening in the first instance. There is already good partnership arrangements in place both strategically and operationally to drive this work forward. Data contained within the annual victim report is suggestive of the need to increase the focus of work at the front end of the service to target Peer-on-Peer Violence alongside Adolescent to Parent Violence (APV) and we will review how we can take this forward with our early intervention and prevention remit alongside our partner agencies.

### **Participation and the Voice of the Child**

This has been identified as a key priority area by the YJS Management Board and delivery against this priority will be overseen by the operational sub-group. There is already a lot of good work in place across the service and this has been documented in the section on voice of the child earlier in the plan. The next step for the service is to co-produce a participation strategy with young people, starting with understanding what participation means to them.

### **First Time Entrants**

As evidenced within the data, NPT YJS has seen a significant increase in the number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) compared to previous years. This is a concern and a trend that we don't want to see repeated across 2024. A deep dive analysis is underway to understand the backgrounds of these young people, including their contact with services to establish if there were missed opportunities and lessons learnt will be taken forward in practice.

### **Diversification work**

As outlined within another section of this report, the YJS in conjunction with Swansea YJS and South Wales Police plan to review practice across this remit, ensuring that appropriate mechanisms are in place to divert young people away from the formal justice system and supporting where possible, the delivery of non-criminal outcomes including the increased use of Outcome 22.

## **Disporportionality & Diversity**

This is a golden thread throughout the work of YJS. An *'Addressing Disproportionality work stream'* will be developed via the Delivery Sub-Group and a Disporportionality Action Plan developed in conjunction with the wider Council's Ethnicity, Diversity & Inclusion commitments.

### **15)Standards for children**

The introduction of 'Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019' required all youth justice services to undertake a base-line self-assessment in 2021. An initial action plan was developed and significant progress was made across all National Standards areas. Since this time, as a service we have monitored compliance against these standards via the Information Manager within the team and the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). In October 2023, the YJS were required to complete and submitted to the YJB a self-assessment in respect of National Standard 2: Work in Court. This self-assessment was split into two parts: a strategic audit of governance arrangements and an operational audit. Whilst overall, the audit evidenced good practice, there were a number of areas that required improvement. As such, an action National Standards action plan to drive forward Work in Court was developed and whilst progress against this plan has not gained as much traction as we would have liked, this will be driven forward across this year. Additionally, across this year, the service will undertake internal audits against other National Standards including Standard 1:Out-of-Court Disposals as with this being a key area priority for the service, the findings will feed into a forward work plan developed and overseen by the operational sub-group.



NS Court Work  
Action Plan Nov 2023.

### **16)Service development**

The Youth Justice Service will continue to make good use of the YJB oversight and support function across this year to drive forward the service and be our critical friend, providing challenge as well as highlighting areas of good practice. In regards to the latter, the YJB has recently asked the YJS to write up a number of interventions that we deliver to be included on the Resource Hub, to support the consideration of such interventions by other services across England and Wales.

There is always valuable learning to be gained from HIMP reports and recommendations from other Youth Justice areas across the Country and these will be used to inform service and Board development. Reference has already been made of the YJS learning from other agencies evidenced by us piloting a

provision that has successfully been implemented within Milton Keynes and yielded positive results. The Regional Safeguarding Board publish a wide range of reports and learning reviews which will also be used to inform practice. NPT YJS refer cases for single agency and multi-agency peer review, with one completed in last couple of months and another one planned for September; two further referrals are to be submitted to the Director and Chair of the YJS Management Board for progression to a peer review. Additional to this, child practice reviews (CPRs) that a published nationally will be utilised to reflect on and drive forward practice across the service. A number of CPR's have already been identified by the operational manager for peer learning within the team. Staff will be encouraged to use the YJB Resource Hub to keep up to date with evidenced based practice and good practice, as well as thematic research. Consideration will be given to other external pieces of work, such as consultations with children and young people, and any emerging recommendations will be considered for inclusion in the team's action plan and/or will be routed through the Management Board. During the last 12 months and as we have moved forward across this year, several Youth Justice Service policies have been created, and these will be progressed via the Management Board in forthcoming months. As previous policies and procedures for the service were roughly written at the same time, there is now a need to review these across this year and update in line with new legislation, guidance and practice nationally.

There will be a focus on ensuring that the service promotes good accessibility and information sharing through the development of a webpage, meeting the needs of young people and their families alongside victims of crime. The service will continue to build upon participation and engagement to ensure that feedback is meaningfully used to shape aspects of service delivery. Attention will be given to strengthen Welsh language skills and delivery if required, and all youth justice data linked reports will include full consideration of Equality, Diversity and disproportionality.

#### **Challenges, risks, and issues to service delivery**

- An increase in work demands and duties not accompanied by increased revenue, leading to non-delivery of performance, reduced staff morale, lack of confidence by stakeholders.
- Lack of continued funding to renew temporary intervention worker posts within the team past the end of the financial year including those posts funded by Turnaround and the pilot post funded by the National Probation Service. This has and will continue to be flagged to the Management Board as ongoing concern.
- Lack of career progression opportunities within the team and potential for staff turnover, although this is offset to a degree through opportunities for members of the team to apply for the social work training via the LA alongside other options to gain formal qualifications.
- Increased austerity could place greater demand on the need for a Youth Justice response.
- The economic and social climate alongside other world or environmental events that impact on offending rates and requires a youth justice response.

- A requirement to provide a number of Intensive Supervision and Surveillance packages at any one time as this will divert resources from elsewhere in the service and potentially impact on service delivery.
- Inconsistencies with the bespoke IT system to support effective practice; YJS uses a standalone database that does not link up with the systems used by children's services.
- Workloads and demands are increasing but resources are diminishing.
- Education provision for young people could be improved to prevent exclusions and support reintegration back into mainstream provisions - School is a protective factor for young people in terms of preventing offending/re-offending and permanent exclusion has been identified as a critical event that can lead to young people becoming vulnerable to criminal exploitation. We have made progress on this since the last plan and we understand that there is more to do, there is increased engagement with Neath college and all of the schools in the area. We are developing an education strategy with our partners.
- Victim engagement feedback could be improved to ensure that it effectively informs and drives improvement in service delivery; however, work with victims has recently been reviewed within the service and mechanisms are being put in place to improve this.
- YJS is not able to consistently reduce re-offending rates amongst a small cohort of young people.
- Inability to attract and retain volunteers to support with key functions within the Youth Justice Service. Recruitment drives are ongoing and this area of practice is now being supported by YJS' across Wales coming together to see what they can collective do to address the issue.
- The service could offer more to volunteers to support the youth justice service and help them integrate into the team. Thus, further training should be considered so that they remain up to date with youth justice developments and practice.

## National Priority areas

### 1) Children from groups that are overrepresented

Due to the demographics of the local areas, the service does not have a high number of young people from groups, which are over represented.

The service does however collate data in relation to these groups such as gender and ethnicity. Should a trend be noted that an area has increased then the service can respond this by developing an intervention. A good practice example of this is linked to the 'perfectly imperfect' girl's programme that was developed due to an increase in the prevalence of girls becoming engaged in the youth justice system. The areas covered throughout the course of the programme include antisocial behaviour, community safety and how the police can support young people; substance misuse awareness; exploration of support in school and post 16 education; mental health advice and signposting; sexual health support and exploitation.

Disproportionality and diversity as a key thread for the YJS; therefore, we need to be clear about our oversight arrangements including timeframes and how outcomes would be evidenced.

Since the last inspection, there has been an understanding and focus on disproportionality locally; specifically, girls, care-experienced children, and more recently UASC young people and the local traveler community. However, as recently documented within the review of the board, it is felt that we need more ambition and recognition of the need to better understand the local demographic and issues related to diversity and disproportionality, particularly in relation to race and ethnicity, but also gender and sexuality. It was also suggested that the board and possibly the YJS need to better understand the lived experience for children and their families across diverse communities in NPT. Within this, we need to have a clear overall picture of the specific cultural groups and communities in NPT and fully understand how this impacts on the Youth Justice cohort, in turn informing the services they might require.

Taking the above into consideration, an *'Addressing Disproportionality work stream'* will be developed via the Delivery Sub-Group and then this group will lead on a Disproportionality Action Plan in conjunction with the wider Council's Ethnicity, Diversity & Inclusion commitments. Additionally, it has been recommended that this sub-group could work alongside an *'Increasing Participation workstream'* to ensure that the interventions are dovetailed. As this sub-group is a fairly new development work around the development of an action plan is ongoing.

Ongoing Diversity and Disproportionality training for Board members and practice staff, to include Unconscious Bias, Cultural Competence & Humility Training needs to be regularly provided which could help to address the development of interventions, which explore cultural heritage, identity, gender politics and the implications for supporting NPT children, whilst also ensuring strategic commitment and oversight. Furthermore, as a Welsh-based Youth Justice management board, given the national drive and legislative requirements in Wales, the Board will need to assure itself that the importance of the Welsh language is reflected in the Disproportionality Action Plan that is developed to ensure it is integral and in line with Council priorities, which includes all documents being produced and translated, and ascertaining a child's language preference.

There are already measures in place across the YJS to monitor disproportionate outcomes across diversionary and court work. Data reports are produced for Board and the analysis is used to enable conversations to take place that recognise the impact of the criminal justice system on those in contact with and ask challenging questions as to whether young people with a similar offending profile have had a disproportionate outcome based on gender and/or ethnicity. The YJS management team have recently identified and flagged to board a potential issue within the Court arena that requires greater scrutiny. As such, an audit

has been requested by Board relating to the sentencing of young people to Referral Orders. This audit will focus on comparative analysis over the last 5 years on the sentencing of young people to Referral Orders for like offences as well as deep dive analysis at case level drawing out any disproportionality within the system linked to ethnicity, gender, age, nationality, make-up of the bench etc. This audit will then be presented to the Board and an action planning considered at Board level to tackle any challenges raised within the report.

In conjunction with Children's Services, we are working establishing a data set to capture outcomes in relation to the socioeconomic status of the families that we are working with alongside capturing data in relation to where they reside in respect of local wards and where this ward sits on the Index of Multi-Deprivation. This will support the YJS and wider services to consider the needs of the young people and their families in service planning and delivery; this is particularly important in the current economic and energy crisis.

## 2) Policing

The Youth Justice Service benefits from a seconded police officer that sits within the team and as such has improved the communication between agencies. The police officer is able to share timely information relating to young people held in police custody, offences, and bail conditions. The team are able to share issues linked to vulnerability and other identified issues such as speech and language difficulties that could affect their time in custody. The police officer works closely with the team in implementing safety and public protection measures for complex young people who present a high risk of re-offending for example; this includes placing markers on address and/or young people so if they come to police attention, the concerns are evident immediately as well as liaising with external police forces when young people move in and outside of our area. Additionally, the YJS police officer plays a key role in developing relationships with young people engaged with the service, with aim of breaking down the barriers between them and the police. The YJS police officer plays a key role in early intervention delivering key messages across secondary schools in the area on key issues, for example the delivery of knife crime assemblies. Additional to this, the previous YJS police officer was instrumental in developing and delivering the K9 Project and forging a good working relationship with a victim of knife crime who supports delivery. The current police officer will take forward the delivery of this provision within the service. The YJS police officer is also heavily involved in the set up and delivery of the Out-of-Court Disposal Panel as well as ensuring that the YJS receive the referrals for preventative support for young people who have received a Community Resolution (Street RJ).

Oversight of the YJS police officer is provided the Sergeant with responsibility for the IOM Team; this provides a streamlined oversight of young people as they transition across to the National Probation Service. Regular meetings are held with the Sergeant for IOM and Probation to discuss the 17+ cohort as well as practice matters relating to youth to adult transitions. The IOM Sergeant has a good working relationship with the YJS Operational Manager regular contact is maintained to discuss young people, who present a heightened risk of offending and/or serious harm to others as well as those who are at increased risk of exploitation locally.

The service has very good relationships with the Community Safety Partnership and officers based within the directorate who have responsibility for Anti-Social Behaviour. The Principal Officer currently is a member of the Community Safety Strategic Management Board and the Operational Manager is a member of the Operational Delivery Group, this ensures that the service is well represented and best placed to work collaboratively. The YJS Operational Manager and the social worker with responsibility for ASB within the team, attend monthly meeting with the police and staff from the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, with the aim of identifying young people at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour at an earlier time and to provide support to prevent an escalation in behaviour.

A good example of collaborative working is the disruption work carried out as part of Operation Sentinel that focussed on several identified hotspot areas within Neath Port Talbot where a multi-agency group of staff completed outreach work within these areas as a way of diverting young people into positive activities within the local community. Across the summer of 2023, the YJS provided a programme of activities that targeted key young people linked to an emerging gang in the area with local PCSO's supporting this work. Work of this nature continues across 2024, with recent meetings being convened between the Police, YJS and other multi-agency partners in response to exploitation concerns in a local area and adults of concerns, which resulted in the issuing of Community Pin Warnings. The impact of these measures are being monitored by the multi-agency group and additional disruption tactics will be implemented if required.

As part of the Early Intervention and Prevention offer within Neath Port Talbot, there is a PCSO linked to Team Around the Family (TAF) and the Early Intervention Panel (EIP) who is able to work collaboratively with other agencies including the Youth Justice Service. A business case has been submitted to the police for consideration of additional resource into the YJS via the allocation of a PCSO; the YJS are waiting on a response to this proposal.

### 3) Prevention

The rate of children entering the justice system is influenced by the effectiveness of local prevention and diversion activities. 'Prevention' refers to work with children who have been identified as being at risk of going on to commit offences in future if they do not receive additional help. In Neath Port Talbot, we place a great emphasis on Early Intervention and Prevention and believe that engaging with families at the earliest opportunity reduces the likelihood for statutory intervention. We practice in an Outcome Focussed way in line with the Social Service Wales Wellbeing Act, where families work alongside agencies to make positive changes to the areas of their lives that matter to them.

The Youth Justice Service offers preventative support to children and their families with the aim of preventing young people from entering the Youth Justice Service. Referrals for support can be made directly to the team or can come via the Early Intervention Panel that is a multi-agency panel where support services are allocated based on the needs of the family. A senior practitioner within the team sits on the Early Intervention Panel (EIP), and as such is able to gate keep any potential referrals at that juncture for eligibility and suitability for the service; ensuring that there is no delay in the system through inappropriate referral and that young people are directed at that point into the most appropriate service. During the last 12 months, the YJS have declined a number of referrals as it was felt that their needs could be best met by another service that would avoid any negative connotations that being open to a YJS may have on their current situation. Through sitting on EIP, this also opens up a route for referral into the panel for consideration of exit strategies for ongoing support.

A recent example of diversion at EIP to other services involved a young person who was referred into EIP by the Early Help PCSO for wider support linked to concerns around anti-social behaviour. This young person had been discussed in a recent ASB meeting and YJS had agreed to pick him up from EIP as he had been placed on a Stage 2 warning; however, on the day, through discussion at EIP, a decision was made for the young person to work with the Youth Service as they had a previous relationship with them and felt that they would be better placed to pick up with the young person quickly. An agreement was put in place that should there be no change within an 8 week period, that the young person would be brought back to EIP for discussion and a decision made at this point for YJS involvement with the young person's consent. This decision was relayed by the YJS to the wider ASB meeting for oversight, who fully agreed with the approach taken. The young person was monitored regarding their ASB involvement and it was reported that they engaged well with the Youth Service.

The number of children and young people accessing prevention interventions continues to account for the largest proportion of our work within the YJS. Over the last 12 months (1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024), there have been 55 new referrals for prevention that have started within the period, with a total of 86



children and young people (this includes 31 young people who had interventions ongoing from the previous period). 70% of these referrals were for boys and whilst this is not reflective of the gender split in the general population, it is representative of the population of girls who offend locally. The number of referrals received in the last 12 month period was down compared to the number of referrals received in the previous 12 month period. When comparing the figures, this was a 29% reduction in individual referrals; however, in part this can be attributed to some of the young people meeting the criteria to be considered under an alternative provision with YJS. Additionally, the YJS has been working proactively with partner agencies including the Police, Community Safety, the Besafe Team and Education to deliver outreach support as well as with schools delivering targeted group work to young people who are on the cusp of offending where these behaviours are spilling over into school. Ordinarily, these young people would have been referred in on an individual basis. Targeting behaviours through group work is an effective use of YJS resources but there are also additional benefits for the young people in attendance including:

- Relationships building with peers
- Increased self-awareness
- Improved communication
- Peer assisted learning through sharing of diverse perspectives and ideas to addressing a problem
- Young people can test themselves, see themselves reflected in others, challenge and be challenged and have an experience of belonging
- Reducing behaviours of concern within the school environment with the potential for maintenance of their placement provision and impacting positively on exclusions.

Children's Services continue to be the largest referrer into YJS. The majority of these cases are co-worked by both agencies to address the presenting welfare concerns coupled with the behaviours that place them at increasing risk of coming into contact with the Youth Justice System via more formal means. Increasingly, concerns are being evidenced amongst this group in relation to their risks of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and in particular, links with County Lines. A partnership approach to contextual safeguarding and addressing the risks linked to harm outside the family continues to evolve within NPT to respond to these concerns. The YJS form part of a multi-agency County Lines Dial In weekly led by the police that supports the sharing of intelligence linked to drug lines coming into to the area to support the protection of young people potentially at risk of exploitation by OCG's as well as links to more local dealing

and any concerns arising; at the forefront of this meeting and others that the YJS attend, is that young people are victims of crime, often receiving NRM status and safeguarded from harm.

Increasing the referral rate from other partner agencies, in particular education remains a priority in 2024. It is hoped that the introduction of school based group work and the SLCN pilot project will support this as will the plan to develop the former provision by upskilling the workforce and linked a named worker to each secondary school to support group work delivery and forge better links so we can as a service be more responsive.

The delivery of early intervention support will continue across 2024 working in partner with the Police, the Besafe Service, the Youth Service, Education and the Community Safety Team to identify emerging concerns and provide outreach work to address these matters before they escalate. This work will be enhanced across 2024 through the provision of an outreach van that is fully kitted out to support engagement with young people. As part of this provision, a foodbank for young people, run by young people, will be set up. Police led Problem Solving Groups (PSG) run across NPT that are attended by multi-agency partners will be key in identifying emerging concerns and driving some of this work forward.

A data report for the services work across prevention is embedded below:



Prevention Data  
2023-24.docx

During 2022/23, the Ministry of Justice funded the introduction of the Turnaround programme aimed at 'children on the cusp of the youth justice system' to prevent young people becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour by providing support to them and their families. This provision allows us to provide support to young people and their families who have been subject to police bail or Released Under Investigation (RUI), engaged via a ASB intervention or have received a No Further Action (NFA) outcome via the police or courts. In Neath Port Talbot the allocated funds for this programme have been utilised through the recruitment of staff, purchasing resource and supporting young people to engage in services such as equine assisted learning, Outside and constructive activities. It is a concern that the Turnaround funding will cease at the end of this financial year, this is likely to impact on the range of preventative support that we are able to offer.

#### 4) Diversion

Referrals for consideration of Out-of-Court outcomes from the police has seen a year on year reduction when drawing comparisons of the same 12 month period over the last few years. This practice is consistent with the Youth Justice Blueprint for Wales where the aim is to reduce the number of young people being unnecessarily criminalised and alternatively, diversionary support put in place to prevent further offending with non-criminal outcomes being the main outcome of young people being considered via the Bureau. Whilst this is positive it has already been mentioned earlier on in the report, that we have seen an increase in First Time Entrants (FTEs), which can be attributed to young people committing more serious offences that have seen them be charged straight to Court and not eligible for diversion; this is evidenced in the figures provided where by 21 young people received a Referral Order in the 12 month period and two young people received a custodial sentence. A number of these young people were not known to the service prior to charge with serious violence, counter-terrorism offences and arson being their index offence. As already reported, such figures are a concern and address FTE's will be a priority for the service moving forward, with a deep drive already underway to review the circumstances of the young people and their contact with services to establish if there were missed opportunities.

Additionally, in line with the Youth Justice Blueprint for Wales, NPT YJS have set up a reporting mechanism with South Wales Police supported by the seconded YJS police officer, to ensure that we receive notifications when Community Resolutions are issued to offer preventative support at the earliest opportunity preventing any further contact with the criminal justice system in the future. This level of intervention is proportionate to the identified behaviour and often can involve a one off session and referral onto more appropriate universal services, if this support is not already in place. The oversight of these notifications and the response of the YJS is subject to scrutiny by the Out-of-Court Scrutiny Panel, taken into account the voluntary nature of the contact and the young person's right to decline support once provided with all the information from which they can make an informed decision. The scrutiny panel is co-chaired by the Principal Officers for Safeguarding from both Swansea and NPT LA and are held quarterly where data reports are provided to better understand the profile of the diversionary cohort as well as the securitising of decisions made by the Bureau panel on individual cases, with 3 cases from each local authority area been discussed at each panel. At the most recently held panel, the police and both Youth Justice Services advocated for thematic case audits going forward so we can discuss consistency in outcomes across the region and get a real feel for

During 2023-24, NPT YJS in conjunction with Swansea YJS and South Wales Police worked on a pathway to support the return of motoring offences for consideration of Out-of-Court disposal; however, this has now progressed to a force wide initiative. It was implemented in August 2023 and since this time, we have successfully diverted 2 young people from Court for motoring offences that was dealt with via an OOC. Both young people completed the intervention prior to attending Bureau and as a result received a YRD, a non-criminal conviction. Initial discussions within South Wales Police also considered the potential of expanding the Out-of-Court diversionary remit to include low level robbery offences (not involving a weapon) and whilst these discussions have not progressed any further, NPT YJS are keen to be involved as a pilot area if they do.

Across the last year, there has been a greater use of Outcome 22 and it is the aim of the service in conjunction with South Wales Police to consider wider use of these outcomes moving forward. NPT YJS are in discussions with the IOM Sergeant with oversight for the Out-of-Court Panel in considering a pilot project for substance misuse offences coming through the Out of Court Disposal Panel that defers the young person receiving an OOC outcome until they have completed an awareness raising intervention, with the intention then, they can be considered for an Outcome 22 (No Further Action). It is hoped that this pilot can progress in the second half of this financial year. A data report for activity in this area across the last year is provided below.



OOC data report  
2023-24.docx

In the coming months, NPT YJS in conjunction with Swansea YJS and South Wales will be reviewing the policy documents relating to OOC work following recent publications including case management guidance for OOC and recommendations from HMI Probation inspections. This area of work is a key priority area for the service and will be overseen by the operational sub-group.

## 5) Education

There is one full-time Education Worker within NPT YJS., who is well established in post and has developed good working relationships with the local secondary schools and alternative provisions as well as post sixteen providers. This has been assisted by the fact prior to joining the team, the YJS Education Worker worked within a local secondary provision, so already had established links and a working knowledge of the system, the challenges and pressures

faced by both young people and schools. The YJS Education Worker is visible in schools and attends the Schools Wellbeing Leads Meetings to provide updates on the work of the YJS and how it links with education; this has included sharing the offer to access provisions within the service to bolster reduced timetables or prevent exclusions for example. Through established relationships with the CAP Team, who work with young people twice permanently, this offer ensures that young people can be supported to access these provisions maintaining their links with learning. Links are in place with the Additional Learning Need Support Services (ALNSS) Team that ensures Children and Young People (CYP) with the most complex Additional Learning Needs (ALN) are provided with the Additional Learning Provision (ALP) required to meet their identified needs and achieve the best possible outcomes during their time within Education. The Education Worker has access to the Education Database supporting the service to understand the historic and current education history and needs of a young person in contact with the service, and moving forward will have access to the LA Individual Development Plan (IDP) Platform to support accesses of IDP's of young people open to the service. The YJS Education Worker meets monthly with the Legacy Team, who supported Year 11 pupils across the local authority who have identified as needing additional support to ensure they transition into a positive post-16 destination.

Since being in post, the Education Worker has developed many links with post-16 providers to support the YJS cohort in accessing further education, training or employment; this includes linking in with Careers Wales, NPT Group of Colleagues, the Princess Trust, the Community Benefits Team, the Department for Work and Pensions, Skills and Training and the Legacy Team. The Education Worker attends a number of meetings relating to the provision of post-16 opportunities including monthly Youth Support Multi-Agency Group Meetings that explores local provisions and opportunities for young people. Additional to this, the YJS Education Worker has been instrumental in forging links with the LA Community Benefits Team and meetings monthly with a Community Benefits Officer who shares opportunities locally including work experience.

If difficulties are identified at time of assessment by the case manager, then the Education Worker will support the young person and their family to overcome these and ensure that the young person has access to education. The Education Worker attends weekly case management meetings that allows information sharing and support being provided at the earliest opportunity. An education support template has been developed that captures the voice of the young people and their families around their educational needs, focusing on what has and hasn't worked well in the past, to assist with the development of a next steps plan around re-engaging with or increasing access to education.

The service benefits from an arrangement where Careers Wales Officer spends allocated time at the resource centre and is able to offer information and advice to young people in relation to their career development.

NPT YJS have an ASDAN Programmes membership allowing us to access a range of ASDAN programmes, including short courses. The YJS Education Worker oversees this provision and as already mentioned within the innovation section, we are trying to drive forward this provision, ensuring that it is widely accessible to all young people access the service. Moving forward, the Education Worker will be playing a key role in setting up a full timetable of provisions within the YJS that are mapped against achieving a ASDAN certificate so that those not engaged in education, training or employment have opportunities available to them. It is envisaged that we will work closely with schools and the CAP Team so that we can provide additional opportunities to those on reduced timetables, support with transition back into schools and possible be considered as an alternative to an exclusion.

The Senior Management Group in Children's Services have regular meetings with the Senior Management Group within Education where priorities are raised, discussed and address. There are several work streams that are reviewed which include children excluded from school, early years and participation.

The Interim Principal Officer currently sits on the Strategic Monitoring Group for Pastoral Support Plans (PSP), this allows sharing of information and the opportunity for early identification of young people at risk of permanent exclusion and offering the appropriate support to reduce the risk of exclusion.

During 2023/2024, there were 132 young people who at the point of beginning their intervention had received an exclusion from school, with many young people receiving multiple exclusions. This was a recognised priority need across last years plan and a lot of work has been undertaken with multi-agency partners to start to address this, for example, the Speech and Language School Exclusion Pilot that it is running within the YJS. As a service, we recognise that there remains a lot to do and as such, this remains a key priority for the service across this year. The Board are fully sighted on these issues and have requested further analysis and deep dives on school exclusions and those Electively Home Educated (EHE). The operational sub-group will drive forward work and ensure that there is a forward work plan in relation to education. There are representatives from across Education that sit on this sub-group that will be key players in ensuring changes are made to improve outcomes for young people.

## 6) Restorative approaches and victims

Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service recognises the importance of delivering a high-quality service to victims of youth crime. The role of the Victim Liaison Worker is pivotal in ensuring all victims of youth crime are contacted within timescales and are offered restorative justice opportunities and interventions to help repair the harm to victims and communities. Safety planning for victims and public protection is considered and planned for via multi-agency sentence planning meetings and risk reviews as is the child or young person's own experiences of being a victim. Our Victim Liaison Worker facilitates restorative meetings and conferences and ensures the impact on victims is considered in young people's interventions plans where appropriate. The service has good links with Victim Support including signposting and liaising with provision for supporting young victims.

Through the role of the victim worker, our aims are to:

- Ensure that all support undertaken with victims is underpinned by and delivered in line with the Ministry of Justice Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.
- Increase the young person's understanding around the impact of the behaviour and how this has affected others.
- Provide young people with an opportunity to have a positive impact on their community.
- Support those harmed by crime and antisocial behaviour to have their voices heard.
- Facilitate the Restorative Process to enable all of the above, whilst recognising that participation in any restorative processes is on an entirely voluntary led basis, confidential and assessed for suitability by Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service staff.

Across the service, there is a drive to maintain a consistent approach to the delivery of work with victims and maintain high standards. The service has recently reviewed practice against the Ministry of Justice Code of Practice for Victims of Crime by undertaking a self-assessment, which has been embedded within this document. Resultantly, policy and practice documentation has been reviewed, updated or re-written to support this area of work. As outlined within the self-assessment, there are areas of work that are in progress; however, as a service there is one area that needs particular attention and this relates to developing a webpage for NPT Youth Justice Service, to support us in publishing information about our service including the offer to both victims of crime as well as children, young people and their families; this will be taken forward across 2024-25.

Work with victims as with any other area of the service, is overseen and scrutinised by the YJS Management Board. A recent annual report on victim work was presented to Board providing an overview of the work of the YJS Victim Liaison Worker in supporting victims of crime and should they choose to, their

engagement in restorative approaches including the wider delivery of reparation work undertaken within the service. The report also provided an overview of victim satisfaction with the service they received via the feedback elicited at the end of their involvement with the Youth Justice Service. Lastly, the report focused on providing an update of the direction of travel and priority areas for this area of practice moving forward. The report has been embedded providing a wider overview of restorative approaches and victim work in NPT YJS and the direction of travel across 2024-25.



NPT YJS Victim Code  
Self Assessment - Ma



Annual Victim Report  
to Board 2023-24.doc

Outside of this role, our Victim Liaison Worker supports the induction of new staff members and delivers on the induction and ongoing refresher programme for volunteers within the service. Additional to this, the Victim Liaison Worker provides conflict resolution and mediation training to the wider directorate and council as required.

NPT YJS have a wide variety of reparation projects to cater for the needs and interests of young people in contact with the service but also have the ability to support young people to explore and engage in projects of their choice that may not currently be available within the team. As a service we have currently reviewed our work in relation to restorative approaches to ensure that they are trauma and ACEs informed and that young people can gain educational certificates and other outcomes from their engagement through supportive relationships; the former is being achieved by linking the completion of an ASDAN to each reparation project. For additional information relating to this provided in the below embedded document.



TRACE Informed  
Restorative Approach

## 7) Serious violence, exploitation & contextual safeguarding

The Youth Justice Service acknowledges the strong link between the exploitation of children and young people via county lines and gang related activity and the association between the supply of drugs and serious violence in communities. As a result of these criminal activities harm is caused, not only to the community and victims, but also to the children who are often victims themselves and, as a result, may become drawn into criminal activity.



As a service we closely monitor for violence against the person offences (which encompasses homicide and weapon offences), robbery and drug offences, which have a gravity score of 5 and above through data analysis. The team reports on serious incidents in line with the YJB Serious Incident Notification: Standard Operating Procedures for Youth Justice Services in England and Wales (2022), with 8 young people flagged via this mechanism across 2023-24. In addition to this, incidents are reported to the YJS Management Board and via approval from either the Head of Service or Director (depending on the referral request), young people involved in these incidents can be escalated to the West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board for consideration of a Child Practice Review or can be managed internally via a single or multi-agency peer review. The Youth Justice Service is involved in the work of the Serious, Violent and Organised Crime Board, attend County Lines Dial Ins and receive timely information from the Community Safety Partnership via a community tensions document outlining presenting and emerging concerns locally. Youth Justice Staff consider the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for relevant cases and work closely with the Independent Child trafficking Guardians (ICTGs) and Children's Services who hold an initial Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) strategy meeting and ongoing reviews to co-ordinate the development of a safeguarding response.

The YJS is represented on Contest Board. The YJS Principal Officer is Vice Chair of Channel Panel and the Operational Manager is a standing member and is responsible for completing the screening request for individuals that are to be discussed via this forum in respect of any previous contact with youth justice services. The YJS have established links with Prevent Counter-Terrorism Police Officers who are available to discuss possible referrals as well as provide advice and support. The YJS have in the past 12 months had two young people discussed via Channel Panel and worked closely with multi-agency partners to mitigate the risk. An example of this involves the effective partnership working with Counter-Terrorism Police and Probation in supporting the management of a young person whilst on bail for their serious offences of this nature right through to their sentencing exercise that resulted in a custodial outcome.

At the time of writing, the Principal Officer continues to be the chair of the Better Futures multi-agency partnership and the service has access to units for therapeutic intervention for young people at risk of exploitation or involved in exploitative situations as well as access to monthly consultations to discuss any presenting concerns and seek advice and support on the next steps. Additionally, we have a child sexual exploitation lead within the service, which in conjunction with other leads across the LA will drive forward system change in safeguarding organisations response to child sexual abuse, building confidence and competence across the workforce in this area of practice, ensuring that the team are up to speed on the latest research and have timely access to resources.

The YJS Operation Manager attends the MAPPA Operational Group, which support the sharing of information and relevant updates to practice. The YJS Operational Manager has previously delivered training on behalf of this group to practitioners and being part of audits scrutinising the work of MAPPA. The YJS make the relevant referrals into MAPPA where additional oversight and risk management is required; across last year a number of young people were managed via this process. The YJS also make referrals into MARAC as required and contribute to all relevant safeguarding processes such as strategy meetings and child protection case conferences held by Children's Services. Internally, the YJS hold sentence planning meetings for all young people within the Court process as well as risk review meetings for young people assessed as a high risk in respect of harm to others or their own safety and wellbeing; these meetings are multi-agency (internal and external professionals), discuss the risks posed and develop an appropriate risk management plan.

There is a fully embedded workstream within the YJS that acknowledges that our young people often engage in behaviours that involve taking risk, and that they are sometimes best placed to manage those risks alongside us. Therefore, we promote a culture of risk awareness, risk assessment and management, balancing risk versus danger, and using language with and about young people that is non- blaming or judgemental. A system is in place to monitor the safeguarding referrals made by the team to ensure that practitioners are provided with support to challenge any response they are not satisfied with, and ultimately to step in to escalate our concerns.

The recently established SAFE Strategic Partnership Group is a partnership between the Local Authority, Community Safety Partnership, Youth Justice Service and other agencies including voluntary and third sector organisations who have duties, responsibilities and an interest in keeping young people across Neath Port Talbot safe from risk of harm outside of the family home. The partnership aims to support practice development pertaining to harm outside the family home through a collaborative culture that recognises all partners and agencies as critical allies in the bid to tackle all harms outside the family home. In this shared space all partners, which includes parents and communities will be perceived as equal and trusted partners.

The Local Authority continues to be committed to addressing contextual risk through the ongoing work of the Be Safe Service who work collaboratively with the Youth Justice Service, the Community Safety Partnership, the Police and the Youth Service. There has been previous mention made earlier in the report in relation to the work of this partnership and its achievements in disruption work locally as well as plans for ongoing outreach work supported by the purchasing of a van fully kitted out for this purpose. Ongoing outreach work will be responsive to identified hotspots linked to Anti-Social Behaviour as well offending and exploitation concerns, the community as well as the needs of young people. The feedback received from young people across the service both via the

consultation exercise and through informal feedback (Appendix 5) confirms the need for outreach work locally to support young people in feeling safer whilst in the community by hopefully disrupting behaviour and providing a safe adult for young people to reach out to. Additionally, this information points to the need to the YJS to provide educational information around a young person's rights when they are stopped and searched by the police. It also confirms the need for a focus on peer to peer violence both as a preventative and reactive measure.

As a service, we have extra support via a regional CAMHS nurse, stronger links with the third sector, and housing re youth homelessness to support safeguarding responses. There are strong links with the Senior Lead for Youth Homelessness within Children's Services and the Interim Principal Officer has been part of the development of the recent Housing Strategy that has been developed. The relationship between the Head of Housing and the Children's Service Senior Management Group is very positive with plans to improve the housing offer to our young people being discussed.

#### 8) Detention in police custody

The following process and practice documents are in place across NPT YJS to minimise the unnecessary use of remands for young people appearing before Court. The documents referred to below have been reviewed by the Youth Justice Management Board and all staff within the team are fully aware of these documents with the social workers, court officers and managers ensuring that they are operational within the service. The Youth Justice Service are very experienced at creating bail support packages that meets the identified needs of the young person whilst balancing the potential risks in line with National Standards.

**Seconded YJS police officer's daily custody and tracker checks** – YJS police officer undertakes daily duty checks to establish if there are any young people in custody overnight; they will liaise with custody, regularly reviewing the police computer system for the most up to date information on a young person's journey through custody. The YJS police officer will liaise with the YJS management team regarding support required including the provision of an Appropriate Adult as part of the duty officer's role is to address any concerns to granting bail through the provision of YJS contacts as part of police bail.

**Turnaround Project & YJS Voluntary Bail support** - Voluntary bail support is provided under either of these provisions, with the latter providing support for those that fall outside the remit of Turnaround i.e. those who are care experienced, those who have Child Protection status and those who have previously been subject to a Court Order. Support will be offered and provided to young people who are released under investigation (RUI) or subject to conditional police bail, hopefully reducing the likelihood of a remand application being made post charge.

**Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Remand Management Strategy** – the aim of this document is to support NPT YJS workers and volunteers in maintaining a consistent standard of delivery to all children and young people, from arrest and detention at the Police Station through to appearing before the court, bail

& bail supervision, remands to local authority accommodation and into the secure estate. It also allows partner agencies, Police and the Courts to know what it can expect from the NPT YJS when it is providing a particular intervention. The principles on which this document is based are consistent to those applied throughout the YJS, in that the young person and their families shall be treated with respect and without prejudice in all their dealings with YJS workers. The fundamental principles contained within the document underlying remand management indicate that NPT YJS will seek to provide to the Police and the Courts the least intrusive, feasible and appropriate option for the young person which will also provide appropriate levels of protection to the public; where remand to youth detention is considered as a last resort and where absolutely necessary to protect the public. Prior to remand to Youth detention, remand with Local Authority Accommodation should be the initial consideration and liaison with Children's Services as per local arrangements.

**Neath Port Talbot Bail and Remand Management Guidance** - Step by step approach from Appropriate Adult to potential Remand to Custody.

**Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Court Bail/Remand Process** – is a flowchart outlining the processes for Court work, providing a clear step-by-step guide of working through the bail remand options from least intrusive to most intrusive, support the worker to only consider remand to youth detention as a last resort and where absolutely necessary to manage public protection and risk.

**Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice and Children's Services Joint Working Arrangements** - in line with these arrangements, where there are seen to be issues concerning accommodation, the YJ in conjunction with Children's Services must make all reasonable enquiries including home visits where appropriate, in order to ensure that wherever possible parents and carers take responsibility for the welfare of the young person. It is only when all reasonable actions have failed that a Remand to Local Authority Accommodation is to be considered and

**Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Intensive Supervision & Surveillance (ISS) Practice Guidance for Case Managers** - ISS policy outlining the eligibility for, provision and management ISS Court Bail.

**Appropriate Adult Arrangements** – During working hours, the Youth Justice Service provides Appropriate Adults rota via staff or YJS volunteers. Outside of core hours, the NPT Emergency Duty Team will support the provision of AA's to young people in custody either directly themselves or through facilitating the attendance of a YJS volunteer. EDT will advocate for their release from of a young person from custody in line with joint working arrangements or provide alternative accommodation in line with PACE. Where this is not possible, EDT will liaise with YJS operational manager and arrangements will be made to cover remand court the next day, including at weekends. EDT have access to NPT YJS Childview database. There is a Senior Management group operating an on call rota during evenings and weekends who are able to offer advice, guidance and authorisation for plans relating to children, young people and families. This supports young people to be released from custody at the earliest opportunity.

All of the above documents support NPT YJS to effectively minimise the use of remands; however, these documents are outside of their review deadline and an internal review is currently in progress to ensure that they comply with any wider legislative changes and national policy updates pertaining to this area of practice.

## 9) Remands

Across the service, there are clear policies and procedures in place that support practice across the team when a young person is remanded into custody. The team works very closely with parents (where appropriate), Children's Services, and the secure estate to ensure that children have their needs met in line with their 'looked after' status.

During 2023-24, 3 young people were remanded into custody (2 males & 1 female). One of the young males was not previously known to the Youth Justice Service whilst the other two were, with the other male having a significant history with the service having been subject to both the highest tier community order, a previous custodial sentence and noted to offend whilst subject to bail. Grievous Bodily Harm and Possession of Bladed Article in a Public Place were the charges for two of the young people whilst Possession with Intent to Supply and associated drug related offences were the charges for the other. All three young people remanded, received a custodial outcome on sentence. Only one of these young people were sentenced in 2023-24, whilst the remand period of the other two was longer due to the complexity of their Court processes and saw them sentenced at the outset of 24-25. The ethnicity classification of the 3 young people were: British White (2) and Black (1).

At a strategic level within the Local Authority, there is a working group looking at the accommodation needs of our most complex young people across NPT. Young people open to the Youth Justice Service sit within this remit. The YJS Operational Manager attends these meetings ensuring that the accommodation needs of our young people are considered and in particular, focus is given to the accommodation needs of young people at risk of remand, as often a lack of suitable placement is the reason why a bail application is not successful.

Operationally, as a service we have always been able to offer robust bail packages to the Court as a direct alternative to remand; however, with the expansion of the provisions available within the service and our links externally, I am confident of our position to continue to do this moving forward.

## 10) Use of custody & constructive resettlement

The use of custody has decreased significantly over the past ten years and is reserved for those where the offence is so serious that a community sentence cannot be justified. The impact of custody on young people is well documented; it can have a damaging effect on many aspects of their lives, disrupt education and put a strain on family relationships that could lead to a breakdown of relationships and in turn, a loss of accommodation on release. Young people in custody are amongst the most complex and vulnerable in society and as such, planning to support their successful transition back into the

community upon release needs to start from the outset of the sentence, and needs to involve working closely with the young person and their family, the secure estate and multi-agency partners that can contribute to and/or advocate for services and provisions to be put in place for young people. The YJS play a key role in supporting contact between the young person and their family and facilitate transportation when necessary. Maintenance of key relationships with YJS staff whilst in custody is also pivotal during this period and all staff engaged with the young person are expected to visit the young person whilst subject to a custodial sentence. Use of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) is a key part of supporting successful transitions and will be utilised when available to a young person. This area of practice is supported by constructive resettlement policy and practice documents. These documents have been written to ensure that protocols around the resettlement of detained children and young people are being managed effectively by Neath Port Talbot YJS and those services supporting the resettlement plan. These documents are understood by the workforce and oversight of this area of practice is provided by the Board, where there is statutory partner representation of key agencies (Housing, Probation, Police & Social Services) at a strategic level that have a role to play in constructive resettlement. The YJS strategically are represented on various accommodation groups and strengthen the presence of the YJS at Neath Port Talbot Accommodation Panel and 16+ panel will serve to drive forward the accommodation needs of our cohort, particularly on release from custody.

### 11) Working with families

As a Youth Justice Service we complete a holistic assessment that considers all aspects of family life and the impact this could have on the child or young person. We ensure that parents/carers are included in the process to ensure that they feel part of the process and support their child with their engagement with the Youth Justice Service.

Parenting support continues to be an intervention available across the service remit and we currently have 3 members of the team trained to deliver the Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) parenting programme, as a strategy to help parents regain control in the home. By managing their children and young people's behaviour differently, this can impact positively on offending and re-offending behaviour, particularly ongoing offences within the home including Adolescent to Parent Violence. Those that deliver parenting support across the team also enlist the support of their colleagues including the substance misuse worker for example, to provide advice and support around what to look out for and how to respond to concerns that their child may be using substances. We also offer families the opportunity to engage in mediation as a means of improving family relationships and dynamics. Outside of 1-to-1 parenting support, the YJS in

conjunction with the Be Safe Team set up a parent drop in that ran monthly from a community location. The group was set up in the hope that it can be led by parents to support each other as well as direct professionals as to the support they felt they would like to access as well as what if any information sharing sessions would be of value. Unfortunately, this group did not progress beyond a couple of months as there was little take up.

The Youth Justice Service sits within Neath Port Talbot Children's Services, as such there are very positive working relationships between staff that ensures a consistent approach to supporting children, young people and families. Additionally, the service is a core representative at the Early Intervention and Prevention Panel which is a multi-agency forum that aims to provide support to families at an early stage with the aim of preventing escalation to statutory services. The Youth Justice Service have strong working relations with Team Around the Family (TAF), which is the Early Intervention and Prevention Service within Neath Port Talbot where collaborative working is at the core. The relationship between The Youth Justice Service and the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is good with open communication between teams to ensure the best outcome for children and young people. The team will submit safeguarding referrals into SPOC and with the support of the management group will challenge an outcome when appropriate. This positive working relationships continues into the Community Teams who are responsible for managing children who are subject to Care and Support Plans, Child Protection Plans or subject to the PLO process. The Youth Justice Operational Manager attends the management meeting held in Children's Services that enables information to be shared in relation to training, service updates, issues and good practice.

Across this year, the YJS will look to embed the Supporting Parents and Children Emotionally (SPACE) Toolkit into practice to extend the provisions available to families, which supports the delivery of a 5-week programmes for both parents & carers and children & young people.


## In Conclusion

This plan has been developed alongside NPT YJS Management Board Members, partners, staff and young people, achieved through meetings, consultation, as well as formal and informal feedback. This plan has been agreed by the YJS Management Board and will also be shared with Children's Services Management Group (CSMG) and the Social Service Scrutiny Committee (Health and Housing). Once ratified, it will then be placed before the YJB as per statutory requirement, to receive YJB funding for the service. It will be refreshed and resubmitted annually. It is the intention of the service to produce a young person easy read version alongside this plan; and we hope we can achieve this in collaboration with the LA Participation, YJS Participation Lead and young people in

contact with the service. The plan is a fluid document and will be used to monitor the objectives and progress of the service as we move through the next 12 months.

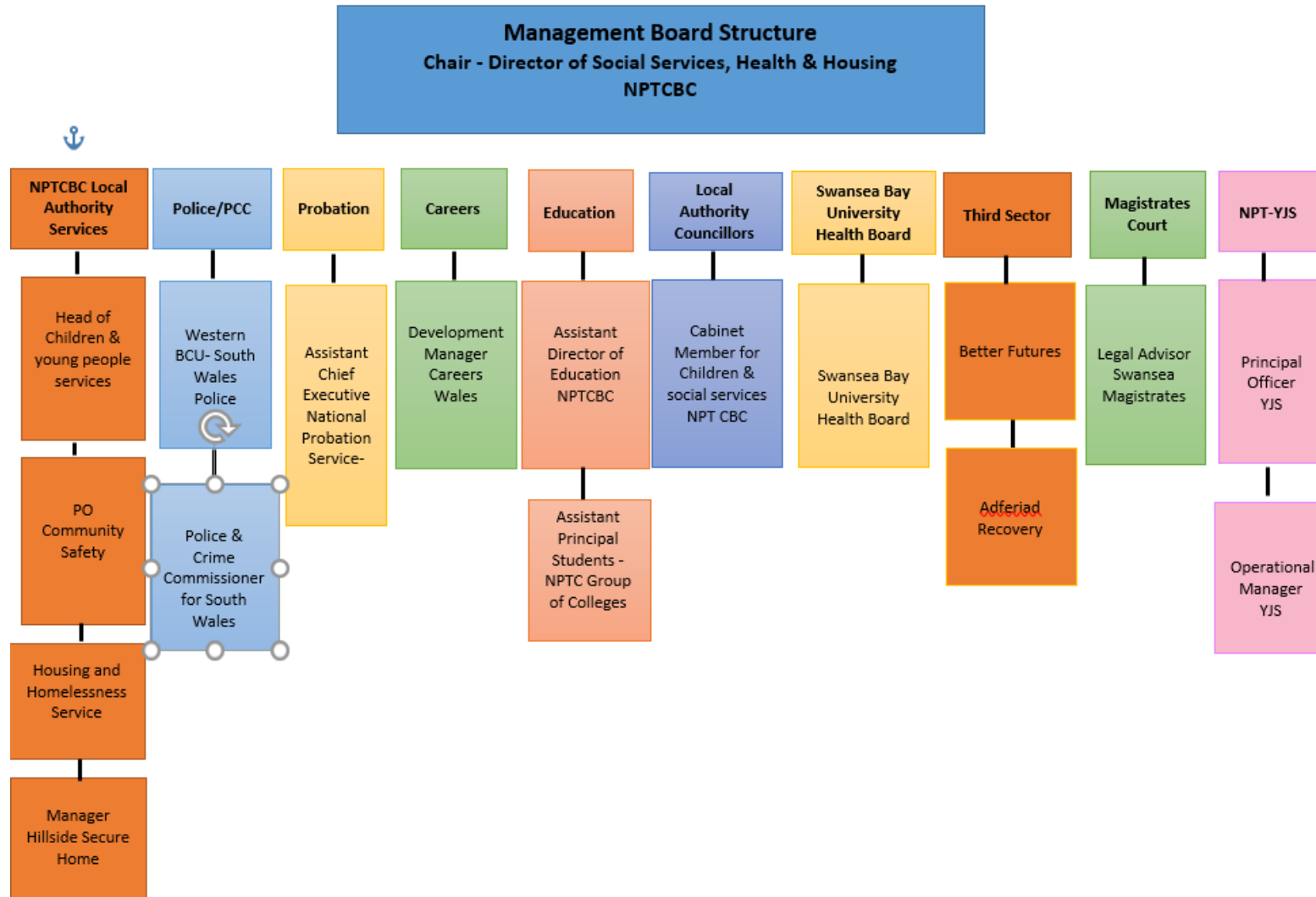
*Amanda Turner, Operational Manager Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service*

### Sign off, Submission and Approval

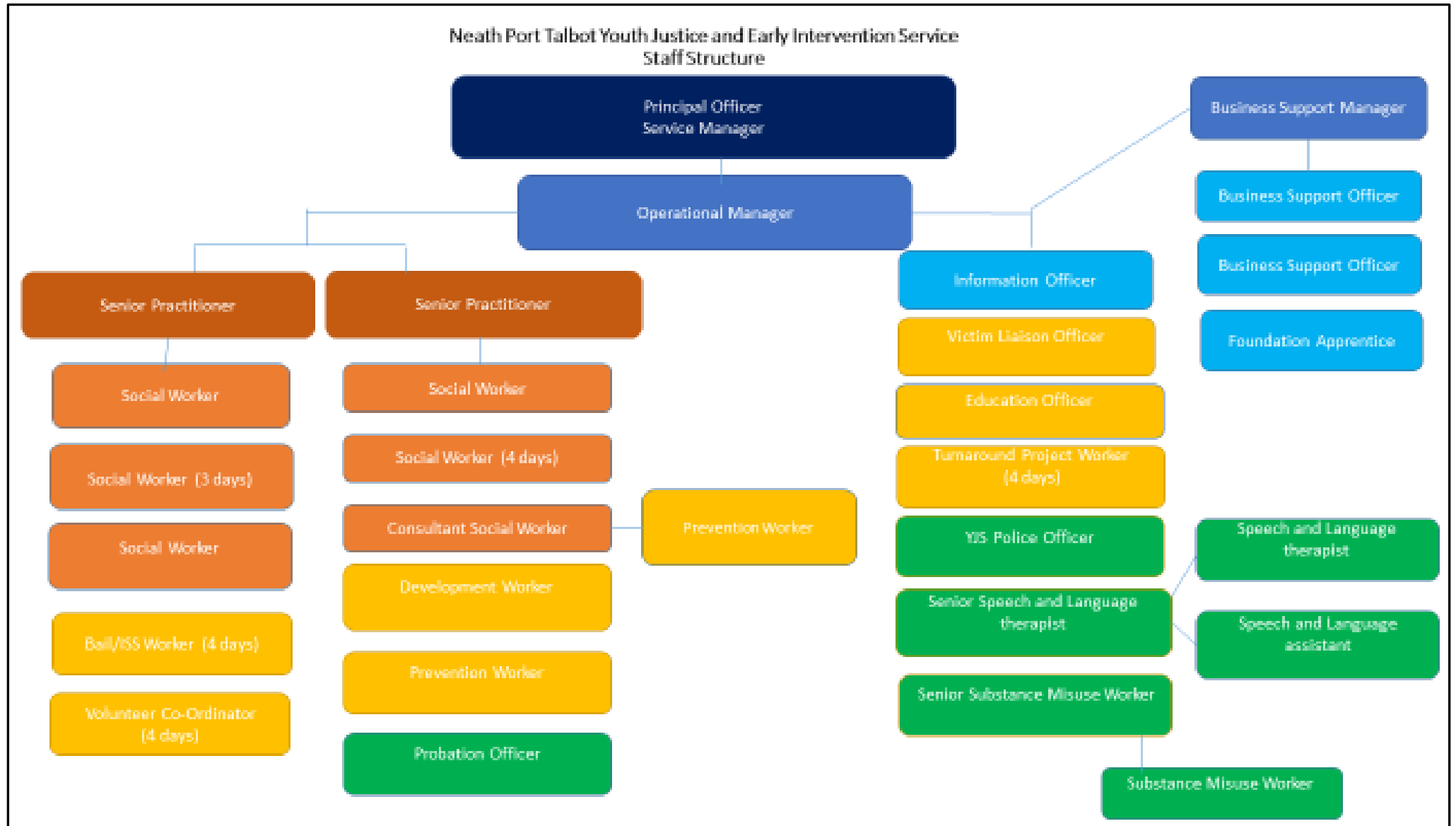
Signature	
Chair of Board : Andrew Jarrett	
Date	8 <sup>th</sup> August 2024



# Appendix 1 – Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Management Board Membership



## Appendix 2 – Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Staffing structure



## Appendix 3 - Summary of ethnicity, sex and known disability of staff

Type of Contract	Strategic Manager (PT)	Strategic Manager (FT)	Operational Manager (PT)	Operational Manager (FT)	Practitioners (PT)	Practitioners (FT)	Administration (PT)	Administration (FT)	Sessional	Students/trainees	Referral Order Panel Volunteer	Other Volunteer	Total
Permanent	0	1	0	1	3.7	10	0	4	0	0	0	0	19.7
Fixed-term	0	0	0	0	1.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.1
Outsourced	0	0	0	0	1.8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.8
Temporary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Vacant	0	0	0	0	0.25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.25
Seconded Children's Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Probation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Police	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Seconded Health (Substance misuse)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Health (Mental health)	0	0	0	0	0.25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.25
Seconded Health (Physical health)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Health (Speech/language)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other/Unspecified Seconded Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Connexions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27.1</b>
Disabled (self-classified)	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

Ethnicity	Managers Strategic		Managers Operational		Practitioners		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order Panel Volunteer		Other Volunteer		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	0	1	0	1	9	14	1	4	0	0	0	0	2	5	1	2	13	27	
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not known	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>27</b>	
* Welsh Speakers	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	6	

\* Welsh YOTs only

## Appendix 4 – Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service Budget Summary

### Total budget for the Partnership

£1,227,700.00

Partners name	Contribution Amount £
Neath Port Talbot	£715,050.00
Welsh Government	£190,480.00
Police and Crime Commissioner	£35,800.00
YJB	£277,090.00
Probation	£5,000.00
Health	£4,280.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,227,700.00</b>

## Appendix 5: Additional Feedback from young people engaged via group work that has been utilised to drive forward and shape practice.

<b>Views gained in relation to fitness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people stated that drug use is preventing them from reaching their fitness goals or engaging in any physical activity.</li> <li>• They all expressed an interest in engaging with the team in a light fitness programme and learning about healthy lifestyles/nutrition. This resulted in fitness &amp; wellbeing sessions and also nutrition workshops. It also linked in nicely with cooking healthy food. This is now delivered via the Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing Group.</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people shared their spending habits, which generally resulted in it all being spent at once.</li> <li>• Some young people shared that they would spend it on drink/drugs.</li> <li>• A budgeting session led by Citizens Advice was provided in response to this; however, it was not well received and we'll deliver it ourselves going forward.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through discussion it was evident that the young people wanted relationship advice and a session to support this was delivered looking at healthy relationships. This was delivered by the YJS and the young people were very receptive. We'll continue this.</li> </ul>
<b>Substance Misuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people were very open about their drug and alcohol use and were keen to listen to advice in order to cut down. The YJS substance misuse worker delivered a session on this with both groups which was well received.</li> </ul>
<b>Local Issues</b>	<p>Neath Town Centre was discussed and the comments/themes were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fighting</li> <li>• Stop &amp; Search – I just ended up kicking off!</li> <li>• I got beef with people. They hit me and I hit them back.</li> <li>• Other boys mouthing off 'lip'.</li> <li>• Neath Town is the worst. Went for a trim and nearly ended up scrapping.</li> <li>• Drugs? That's just a daily thing!</li> <li>• Walking round Neath with a 'Bally' (face mask) Take good pics for Instagram.</li> </ul> <p>The sharing of these comments supported further discussion around why young people cover their faces, carry knives and resort to violence alongside considering the wider fear and impact it has on the local community. Other themes raised here are consistent with views shared via the consultation exercise and indicate the YJS and multi-agency partners are on the right track with increasing outreach work, supporting young people to feel safer on the streets. Additional, this information points to the need to the YJS to provide educational information around a young person's rights when they are stopped and searched by the police.</p>
<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I enjoyed cooking.</li> <li>• It was nice getting out and meeting people.</li> <li>• Happy I'm here</li> <li>• One young person from the first group attended group 2 as a mentor and supported the young people to engage with staff and set a good example</li> </ul>