

Neath Port Talbot CBC The Director of Social Services Annual Report 2016-2017



Director of Social Services Annual Report 2016-2017

Contents	Page
Introduction	3
Summary of Performance.....	3
How Are People Shaping Our Services.....	7
Promoting and Improving the Well-being of Those Who We Help.....	7
How We Do What We Do.....	23
➤ Our Workforce and How We Support Their Professional Roles.....	23
➤ Our Financial Resources and How We Plan For the Future.....	23
➤ Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability.....	24
Accessing Further Information and Key Documents.....	26

ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

Introduction

This is my annual report as Director of Social Services, and reflects on the financial year of 2016/17.

The annual reports set out Neath Port Talbot's improvement journey in providing services to people in our area, those who access information, advice and assistance, and those individuals and carers in receipt of our care and support.

Additionally, the report demonstrates how Neath Port Talbot (NPT) has promoted well-being and delivered on well-being standards.

The report is aimed at a wide range of audience from our service users and carers and all those whose well-being is affected by NPT's Social Services to the general public, who have an interest in what their Local Authority is doing.

Furthermore, the report will be of particular interest to NPT's Elected Members and others involved in the scrutiny process; Partners, both private and third sector, along with regulators, such as the Wales Audit Office and Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

This report reflects the new template for reporting as prescribed by Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB); in coming years this report will involve full engagement with citizens and partners to provide opportunities to influence and help its production.

Summary of Performance

Key Performance Indicators

All services continued to perform well in statistical terms. The statistics which are regularly presented to the Scrutiny Committee can be found in **Accessing Further Information and Key Documents** at the back of this report.

Responsiveness

Statistics only tell one part of the 'story' about Social Services. Because these are **services to people from people** what matters most is that they meet people's different needs **responsively**. That is to say they pass the key tests: services are modern, efficient, responsive and safe.

We set high standards of customer service in the Directorate. For example:

- Telephone calls and correspondence are responded to immediately.
- We do not use bureaucratic language; we speak to people in a clear, friendly way; explaining things patiently and unambiguously.
- We treat people as we would expect our own relatives to be treated.

For these reasons complaints are at an all-time low. For example:

- I will always see service users who are unhappy with or have concerns about services personally either in my office or if they prefer, at their home. In the past year, no such episode has ever proceeded to the formal complaint stage.
- Where service has been sub-optimal things are always put right promptly; and those concerned are required to learn from the situation.
- It is equally important that colleagues within the Directorate treat one another in a similar manner. Overall this promotes system-wide trust and delivery efficiency.

There have been areas of delivery which require development. For instance:

- During the year we began to re-model Adult Safeguarding to bring it up to the same high levels of Children and Young People Services.
- We had to place greater emphasis upon consistent standards of administering medication. This resulted in eight episodes of remedial action needing to be taken.
- We commissioned an external review of our Commissioning Unit, to ensure that operation and performance were consistent with the original design approved by Members in 2015.

Service Volumes

For the third successive year the number of children taken into care reduced substantially. This means that more families which in the past may have been broken up, now remain together safely.

We have achieved this through a combination of:

- Consistently high standards of professional performance, discipline and procedures.
- Caseloads which are manageable, such that really beneficial work can be undertaken with children, young people and families.
- Much earlier intervention, which pre-empts families reaching crisis point.

Volumes of Service to Adult clients have grown slightly, but the pattern of delivery continued to change. So far instance:

- We delivered many more hours of homecare, but admissions to residential care continued to fall (they have fallen by 50% over the past three years.)
- More people are choosing Direct Payments.
- More services are being delivered locally and/or in communities where people live. Community Meals and Day Services are prime examples.

We expect demand to grow and recognise that demand management and earlier intervention are key to meeting increased demand with fewer resources.

People

These are services to people from people. We continued to place substantial emphasis upon the well-being and performance of our staff.

I would like to pay tribute to the utterly excellent HR services which we receive. They are indispensable. As a Department we continued to pay for additional HR support and head count from within our own budget. This continues to be a truly worthwhile investment.

We pay regular, forensic attention to the following key issues:

- Staff well-being – staff feel safe, well supported and listened to.
- All senior managers, myself included are always accessible to staff; so that we can discuss and resolve any concerns promptly, be they about work, personal or a combination. (“Talk – don’t go off sick.”)
- Maximum attendance at work. Continuity of relationships between service users and staff are essential ingredients of high quality, responsible social services. This must not be disrupted by staff absence.
- We have record low levels of sickness absence, minimal levels of

staff turnover and vacancies and we have extremely few disciplinary or grievance actions outstanding.

- All HR issues are dealt with very promptly.

Training

We continue to invest extensively in training. All training for social work staff is personalised. That is to say each person has an Individual Learning Plan, which meets their own development needs based upon the place they are starting from. ILPs are derived from monthly supervision.

Needless to say, much of the training during this year focused upon the implementation of the Social Services & Wellbeing Act.

The support which we receive from Training colleagues is exemplary.

Finance

2016/17 was again a challenging year financially. The Directorate was required to find efficiencies of £6.7m (since 2014 the Directorate has achieved £28m of savings and +£5m in underspends.)

Through careful planning and financial discipline we delivered the saving together with an under spend of £850k (so we saved over £7m finally.)

Financial discipline in social services is essential in order to:-

- Give us the flexibility to move resources around in response to unpredicted mid-year demands; without overspending.
- To contribute fully (more than) to the Council's Forward Financial Plan.

I would like to extol the excellent support which we receive from the Director of Finance and his colleagues.

By the end of 2016/17 we completed the programme of service transformation which has gone on since 2013/14. This means that future efficiencies, if they are to be made without reducing service volumes and/or headcount, will need to be made by ever more imaginative approaches to the delivery of social care.

Welsh Language

We acknowledge that very little progress has been achieved against **More Than Just Words** given the large scale changes in service delivery has taken priority; the service will seek to match Welsh speaking suitable members of staff with a person/persons who would wish to discuss their

well-being through the medium of Welsh. That said, maintaining its commitment to this level of service is not without difficulty.

How Are People Shaping Our Services?

A 'Citizen Survey' was completed at the end of November 2016, where we asked those children (over the age of 7), adults and carers who we help, to provide us with constructive feedback on the service they receive and whether it makes a positive difference to them.

It was pleasing to note that **76%** of responders confirmed that they had received the right information or advice when they needed it.

This report reflects responses from the survey; we are awaiting feedback from Welsh Government in terms of its production, validation and performance across Wales.

As the survey develops in coming years we will concentrate on areas of improvement and challenges facing the service, enabling clear objectives for service planning with our partners.

Later in the report are examples of participation and engagement.

Priorities for 2017/18

- Strategic Intention of Adult Service – Building Communities;
- Improvements to performance management to ensure data and feedback from service user's helps shape CRT service developments.

Promoting and Improving the Well-being of Those We Help

This section of the report measures both the quantitative and qualitative performance of NPT Social Services against each of the six quality standards, as laid-out within the SSWB, these are:

- (a) Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve
- (b) Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

- (c) Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm
- (d) Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society
- (e) Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships
- (f) Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

Performance against the aforementioned quality standards are incorporated within the report, outlining:

- What we achieved in 2016/17 and what difference did we make?
- What are our priorities for 2017/18?

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to the quality standards can be found within “**Assessing Further Information and Key Documents**” at the back of this report.

Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

Information, Advice and Assistance and Preventative Services

In keeping with the SSWB, NPT aimed to have county-wide processes in place to facilitate the adoption of an information, advice and assistance service. Central to this was the development of a bespoke I.T. system, designed to facilitate intervention and prevention via the early identification of individual’s personal outcomes and the subsequent support arrangements that best suits their requirements.

Processes are now well established as is the I.T. system to facilitate them; with citizens contacting NPT seeking help, being advised of the new online Community Directory, providing access to a variety of universal services throughout the County Borough; www.npt.gov.uk/communitydirectory

All referrals for our Community Resource Team (CRT) are received via the Gateway; our contact officers (1st point of contact) successfully responded to and closed **8,103 calls**. The Gateway’s multi-disciplinary

team (2nd point of contact), which is made up of therapy, social services and third sector staff, responded to **9,740** citizens.

“...my advocate was and still is a very helpful man and I am very happy and glad that I have a person like him to go to....”

“Social Services and Age Concern have been marvellous....”

The CRT works closely with individuals residing at home (in the community) or in hospital. In 2016/17 the CRT supported the discharge from hospital of **539 citizens**, enabling them to return home safely (where appropriate). Further, the CRT also prevented **954 citizens** being admitted to hospital.

As a result of this, the numbers of citizens in the community that we support through Social Services are reducing. This should be seen as a positive and is in line with the principles of both Social Services and SSWB.

There was a continued effort made towards supporting our citizens within the community and remaining independent through a variety of preventative services such as assistive technology, Local Area Co-ordination, Intake Reablement and a specialist carers service.

Local Area Coordination (LAC) is a radical new approach that focuses on changing public and community based services. It is a person-centred preventative strategy that uses co-production to help individuals lead lives with greater control and independence, whilst building community capacity and improving the responsiveness of public services.

Since LAC began, the Coordinators have received **413 requests** and have provided Information, Advice and Assistance to **143 citizens**. Many of whom (**47%**) later returned to be supported on a 1:1 basis instead of accessing social services as a first option.

Where formal care and support is required through eligibility, there is a dedication to ensure that packages are appropriately sized to meet the needs of citizens and encourage independence.

We have also remodelled and modernised our Day Service provision. An example being, the increased opening times of our Complex Needs Day Services from 9am-3pm to 8am-5pm. This has supported working families and led to a greater control in the delivery of care.

Our Housing, Renewal and Adaptation Services (HRAS) works very closely with our Community OT service, citizens and carers to carry out assessments of well-being & need to help maintain a person's independence by installing necessary and appropriate adaptations at their home. This will assist in keeping the person(s) independent and safe in their own home.

Where possible, it was our aim during 2016/17 to provide the necessary help to children and young people without the need to progress to care and support (provided via a statutory service); to this end, Children and Young People Services (CYPS) set-out to further strengthen our Single Point of Contact (SPOC) arrangements as well as enhance our close working relationship with the Team Around the Family (TAF). Over the past year, SPOC have been able to signpost many families, who although not requiring a care and support plan, would benefit from a little extra help.

Access to expert health input at the point of contact is available via a Specialist Liaison Health Visitor for NPT, who is located within our SPOC. The current post-holder has been instrumental in promoting the identification of priority risks and the use of outcome focussed practice to their colleagues in the health service, enabling cases which may previously have led to care and support, instead being managed without the need for escalation to statutory social service involvement.

A joint CYPS and Education management group meeting has been developed during 2016/17. Senior managers from both Services attend the meeting and its primary purpose is to promote more integrated work. Improved integration will have many benefits, such as; greater consistency in thresholds at the point of contact, as well as improved access to specialist services for those children and young people who require them.

Supporting Carers

NPT commissions the NPT Carers Service to deliver Information, Advice and Assistance as well as completing carers assessments in partnership with ABMU Health Board & Social Services. The Carers Service is integrated into the Cimla Health & Social Care Centre and is a registered

charity that supports carers (18+). In other areas of Wales, support for carers may be co-located in various teams, however in NPT the entire service is integrated as well as staff being co-located.

The service delivers IAA by providing a wide breadth of information to carers and their families. The way in which it is delivered is by choice from the carer, this could be information packs, home visits, meeting in the community, outreach and/or telephone services.

Priorities for 2017/18

Greater integration of working between CYPS and Adult Services, which will include:

- A shared “front-door” provision to screen Contacts into the directorate (to include the development of IAA processes and Young Carer provision);
- The development of a pilot ‘Transition Team’ to jointly work complex cases and facilitate their smooth transfer between CYPS and Adult Services.

In addition:

- Developing co-produced and integrated CRT service improvements and design;
- Further roll out of LACs across Neath Port Talbot and a continued focus on co-production and empowerment of local citizens/communities. (CRT)

Working with people and partners to protect and promote people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being

In keeping with the requirements of the SSWB Act, ‘Comprehensive Assessment’ templates and associated I.T. systems have been developed across the Directorate to better enable our Social Work professionals to work with an individual, carer and family, and other relevant individuals to understand their needs, capacity, resources and the outcomes they need to achieve, and then to identify how they can best be supported to achieve them. This change in practice is moving people away from **“what services they need”**, to instead considering **“what matters to them”** in regards to achieving their personal outcomes.

Fundamentally, the changes made to assessment practice and

processes are focussed on maximising people’s control over their day to day lives and helping address difficulties, or problems which are stopping them achieving this in a timely manner.

In terms of the timeliness of completing assessments; of the **1,226** undertaken within CYPS during 2016/17, **97.6%** were undertaken within 42 working days.

The CRT also delivers a programme of assessment and therapy to enable people, as far as possible to regain their skills and independence. In 2016/17, the team worked with **807** people enabling them to remain independent in their homes.

Among the most important of human needs, is the desire for respect and dignity; it is a clear expectation placed upon staff, to ensure this necessity is met, be it from the very first contact that they have with a professional to the point in time when our support ceases.

It is rewarding to note therefore, that when we asked (via the Citizen Survey) individuals whether they had been treated with respect, **91%** of responders stated that they had.

“Everyone is kind and caring”

“I am respected and have my say”

The SSWB Act placed clear expectations upon local authorities, with regards to how we plan and support the care needs of people.

Both CYPS and Adult Services refined their care planning practice and processes in 2016/17. Particular attention has been given to ensuring that our care and support plans are co-produced between professionals and the individual they relate to.

There are several key principles incorporated within our new care and support plans, these include ***being people centred; promoting well-being; outcome based; and involving wider family, community and carers.***

To further embed this new approach to practice, extensive outcome

focussed training has been provided to social work staff.

As a means of quality testing the standard of new outcome focussed plans within CYPS, a sample of **59** child protection and looked after plans were audited during the 4th quarter of 2016/17. The audit demonstrated that good progress has been made around writing and implementing new outcome methodology. The audit also provided the opportunity to quickly evaluate the new outcome plans and ascertain what was working well and what aspects could be improved upon.

As part of the Citizen Survey, we asked individuals whether they were satisfied with the care and support that they received; **83%** stated that they were.

“I am happy with the care I got from you. Thank you”

“NPT carers and family have been very helpful. Couldn’t manage without them!”

We have been fortunate within NPT to have participated over recent years in a Social Service Improvement Agency (SSIA) pilot, where professionals have developed different conversations with people to identify “what matters” to them and what their personal well-being outcomes might be.

The personal outcomes model supports professionals to engage people in a conversation to determine what well-being outcomes people wish to achieve, as a part of care and support planning. The pilot has assisted us in moving towards the embedding of co-production, into everyday social work practice.

For the purpose of the aforementioned pilot, one team from each of CYPS and Adult Services respectively, partook in the exercise. During 2016/17 a bespoke I.T. system to capture personal outcomes and record their direction of travel has been fully developed. In addition, this initiative has been incrementally rolled-out across all CYPS case managing teams, with a similar roll-out planned for Adult Services in the coming year. By the 31st March 2017, **33%** of children and young people with a care and support plan had one or more personal outcomes recorded.

Given the relationship between personal outcomes and outcomes focussed planning, it's of no surprise to note that when we asked Children and Young People (via the Citizen Survey) whether their views about their care and support had been listened to; **75%** stated that they had.

“My Social Worker comes every so often to see if I am okay and she would support me in anything I do”.

Direct Payments

Direct payments are monetary amounts made available by local authorities to individuals, or their representative, to enable them to meet their care and support needs; or in the case of a carer, their support needs. Direct payments are an important mechanism by which people can exercise choice, voice and control to decide how to meet their needs for care and support and achieve their personal outcomes. As such direct payments are an integral part of meeting people's needs through care and support planning, and must not be seen as a separate, secondary, consideration.

Over the past twelve months The Direct Payments Team has established a Pre-Paid Card to assist individuals with the management of their direct payment. The team has also developed a framework of Approved Support providers to ensure individuals have the choice about who supports them to manage their direct payment; this is the first of its kind in Wales. The providers are able to support individuals with administrative tasks to manage a range of functions relating to direct payment i.e. Payroll Service, Managed Account Service.

The number of people with a direct payment has risen from **284** as at 31/3/16 to **351** as at 31/3/17.

Supporting Carers

Following a Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) thematic inspection of CYPS in 2016, there was a recommendation to produce a specific assessment in relation to Young Carers. A pilot of the newly devised Young Carer Assessment Tool has taken place during the second half of 2016/17 in the SPOC. This has proved successful in determining identified Young Carers needs and eligible support requirements at the first point of contact.

Whilst this is still in Pilot stages, there will be an on-going strategic review of current practices, with regards how the assessment of Young Carers is undertaken in order to facilitate the appropriate identification and resulting services required.

As previously mentioned NPT commissions the NPT Carers Service allowing carers access to a range of support options. The Carers Service also provides a free low level sitting service to enable carers to have a “life of their own”. Carers who use this service are able to access medical appointments, leisure activities, shopping, meeting up with other family members and attending various training classes.

“I am so grateful for the sitting service. My husband has Parkinson’s and gets a bit anxious when I leave him. The volunteer that comes into our home keeps him company and I have been able to have my chemotherapy sessions without feeling added stress.”

“The demands of being a carer often means that your own life is put on hold”. (Carer comment)

Commissioning Arrangements

During 2016/17 progress was made with work undertaken alongside the external homecare providers to stabilise the market and improve its capacity to meet packages of care.

The Council introduced a Regional Quality Framework for the care home sector, which has enabled the authority to establish robust standards and expectations for care providers; as well as creating a positive partnership working with Gwalia (part of Pobl Group) to review and agree new contracting arrangements for the care homes.

Following the success of the pilot scheme whereby elected members carried out monitoring visits to residential care homes in Neath Port Talbot Cabinet member gave full approval for visits to continue across all NPT older persons care homes.

Priorities for 2017/18

Greater integration of working between CYPS and Adult Services, which will include:

- Developing a consistent approach to measuring the quality of social work practice throughout the directorate.

In addition:

- To safely reduce the numbers of Looked After Children. Where children can be safely returned to their families, this will happen in a supportive and timely way. Where it is not safe for children to return, permanency plans will be put in place within recommended timescales. Wherever it is possible, the service will ensure that children who cannot return to their families have the opportunity to be cared for within suitable, stable quality placements.
- There has been a growing commitment across health and social care to focus on outcomes important to people using services. Following the successful pilot of the Outcome Based Framework, it is the intention to fully roll-out the collection and use of personal outcomes across Children and Young People Services, utilising the acquired information to support individuals, achieve what matters to them. Outcomes will be used to gather information through support planning review to verify whether people are achieving the outcomes they intended.

Moving from service led to outcomes focussed approaches ensures that organisations look beyond formal service provision and work with individuals and communities to identify supports that can help people receive their desired outcomes. Further work will be undertaken with partners, within their workforce to promote multi-disciplinary outcome focussed practice, to offer consistency in approaches when working with people.

Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

There were several initiatives which CYPS pursued during 2016/17 to protect, promote and ultimately improve the health and well-being of individuals supported by the Service, these include the ***Development of an in-house psychologist provision; a Review of the Western Bay Integrated Family Support Service; the development of a Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy; and preparation to in-source the Family Action Support Team.***

As an example of our commitment to promoting the health and well-being of those we support, it is reassuring to know that **99.5%** of looked after children are registered with a GP.

As previously referenced in this report, the CRT provides a variety of multi-agency specialist services. This includes providing individuals with equipment such as a bed raiser and other assistive technology to maintain their independence and well-being. Further, the Community Occupation Therapy Team also aims to promote health and well-being by supporting people to use special techniques, environmental adaptations and specialist equipment.

During 2016/17, our LACs facilitated **27** community events, connecting over **120** people to local groups, third sector and other local individuals. **33%** of the people connected, have continued to attend community groups and have made new positive friendships.

In NPT we know carers have extensive expertise and carers are keen to share this. Carers come together with a facilitator at the NPT Carers Service and share their “healthy tips” on how they have improved and/or maintained health and well-being. This information will be collated and formed into a book, a resource that carers can share with other carers.

The *Community Mental Health Team* (CMHT) provides an integrated mental health service with health and where possible third sector parties, such as MIND. As such it operates within the legal framework of the SSWB Act, Mental Health Measures Wales & the Mental Health Act.

It links in with the LACs as an early prevention service designed to help those individuals who require additional support.

It facilitates and provides various service user groups to assist with promoting well-being and socialising and links in with benefits agencies job centres and other joint initiatives such as the Community Independence Service team (CIS) to further assist service users to reach their full potential within our community.

Advocacy Arrangements

During 2016/17, our Advocacy provision within CYPS was predominantly limited to looked after children. That said, for those children and young people who did utilise advocacy, it provided them with the mechanism by which their rights, views, wishes and feelings were heard. Work is now underway with our Western Bay partners, to broaden the accessibility of

advocacy to the children and young people that the three local authorities support throughout the region.

Adult services have a service level agreement in place for the provision of a pan-disability advocacy service. It is acknowledged that advocacy is an area where further service development is required which we are currently working on.

Safeguarding People from Abuse, Neglect or Harm

There have been a number of different initiatives pursued by NPT during 2016/17 to assist in providing better safeguards for people, these include ***Managing Risk Training; Instigation of Outcome Focussed Statutory Reviews; Professional Abuse Strategy Meetings (PASM's); Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Unit set-up and training.***

The Family Group Conferencing Service support CYPS in a number of ways, one primary function is to ensure children are either safe in their homes or safe to return home, this is achieved by working with families to focus on solutions and emphasize their strengths and resources. This leads to healthier, improved relationships and a happier family life.

As part of the Citizen Survey, we asked individuals whether they felt safe, **83%** stated that they did.

“At times when walking I feel a little unsteady which is improving since care provided”.

“My foster carer makes sure that I feel safe”

Within Adult Services, following Operation Jasmine, we have developed a quality performance framework for care homes. Our safeguarding team has developed a new operational model in conjunction with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales, Health and our Common Commissioning Unit based on quality of life informed by the Older Peoples Commissioner.

We were visited during January 2017 by CSSIW as part of a nationwide review into Safeguarding; we received positive feedback in general. As a result, we are looking to restructure the team with a review to creating an Integrated Children's, Adults and Educational Safeguarding Unit.

Further, Adult Services are looking to align its current safeguarding and reviewing functions with the standards currently in operation within Children's Services.

We have trained 3 officers and a member of our legal team to fulfil our new duties in relation to Adult Protection and Support Orders (APSO).

We continue to work closely with the Organisation Crime Panel that is a partnership between the Local Authority, The Police and other agencies to share intelligence and disrupt organised crime in the area with a view to protecting local citizens. We continue to participate in the 'Channel Panel' which aims to prevent radicalisation at an early stage.

We are fully engaged with our regional partners through our Western Bay Safeguarding Board and associated sub-groups. Since its inception in 2013, NPT have been the identified lead authority with responsibility for establishing Western Bay Safeguarding Boards (both children and adults) with myself as its standing Chairperson for the Safeguarding Children Board. I strongly believe that to be effective, the Board must always strive towards making a positive impact upon the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults across the region. Examples of this co-working include Adult Practice Reviews and development of Policies.

The Corporate Safeguarding Group (chaired by the Council's Chief Executive) co-ordinates safeguarding monitoring functions across the County Borough.

We regularly instruct advocates from Mental Health Matters Wales to carry out the function of relevant person's representative for DOLS. Additionally, we instruct advocates for people subject to POVA when necessary.

Priorities for 2017/18

Greater integration of working between CYPS and Adult Services, which will include:

- A shared Safeguarding provision.

Encouraging and Supporting People to Learn, Develop and Participate in Society

NPT offers a range of community 'Direct' services for its citizens as described and detailed below; all of which encourage and support people

to learn, develop and participate in society, these include opportunities for **employment, work and training; Community Connecting Team (CCT); the Community Independence Service (CIS); Complex Needs Day Services; and Trem Y Mor respite service.**

During 2016/17, CYPS developed ties with the “Down to Earth” project. The project has worked with a number of our vulnerable and disadvantaged young people to support them via a relationship centred approach, based upon meaningful and practical activities, such as the building of cutting-edge training venues which then become the venues for future participants.

The experiences gained through the project, have provided our young people with an invaluable insight into the world of construction and will hopefully help assist them in determining their future career paths.

As part of the Citizen Survey, we asked Adults and Carers whether they could do the things that were important to them, **53%** stated that they were able to. We also asked Children and Young People whether they could do the things they like to do, **71%** stated that they could.

“I love making my own choices and being independent”. (Young Person’s comment)

Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

As previously stated there are a number of initiatives that were pursued in 2016/17 to ensure people are supported to maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships, including **the development of a Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy.**

As part of the Citizen Survey, we asked Adults and Carers whether they were happy with the support from their family, **82%** stated that they were. We also asked individuals whether they felt they belonged in the area which they lived, **76%** stated that they did.

“I’ve lived in this area all my life and local people visit me”

“I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.”

Priorities for 2017/18

- Further develop our commissioning and delivery of Family Support Services.

Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

Route 16, our “Leaving Care Team” undertake a great deal of work with those young people (aged 16+) who are either currently in care, or have previously been in care. This support takes many forms, such as:

- Supporting Young People to access and sustain engagement and meaningful work:
- Supporting Young People to access financial advice and help with benefits and grants
- Supporting Young People to access living accommodation to meet their needs and to facilitate independent living

Since 2016, the LACs have supported and empowered **40** individuals to manage housing issues, which has led to an increased sense of stability and security. Further, **11** people have been supported to overcome hoarding issues and to either remain within their home of choice or secure a more suitable home for their health needs.

The CIS, as previously mentioned, supports individuals throughout the County Borough in managing and maintaining their homes, tenancies as well as supporting individuals with their personal circumstances. Sessional support consists of 1:1 support at pre-agreed times throughout the week.

Types of activity include; budgeting and debt management, basic cooking, weekly shopping, keeping your home safe and clean, assistance at key medical appointments, signposting to community activities to ease social isolation as well as others.

Our Welfare Rights Unit provides advice and support for the residents of NPT and the surrounding areas; this is provided through a number of channels including a telephone advice line, face-to-face advice surgeries,

home visits and representation at appeal tribunals, as well as advice to the front-line teams within the Council. The Unit also works in partnership with Macmillan providing support for those affected by cancer and their families from 4 hospital bases across Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board. During 2016/17 the Unit was successful in raising **£9,632,851** for the residents of NPT.

We asked children and you people whether they are happy with whom they live with, **91.5%** stated that they were.

“Everyone here is so kind and when I moved here they were so welcoming”

Participation and Engagement

During 2016/17 there have been a number of initiatives undertaking within CYPS, to encourage and support children and young people to participate and engage in decision making, to both assist in determining what matters to them on a micro level, as well as assisting the Service in determining its strategic direction. Some of these participation initiatives included:

- A looked after children youth council has been established to give children and young people a voice.
- A CSE website has commenced construction. The website will be a conduit whereby CSE related information can be shared with parents and carers, as well as children and young people. It is anticipated that the website will be up-and-running during 2017.
- Children and young people have been instrumental in re-designing supportive materials, such as looked after children booklets provided at point of review and child protection leaflets.

Some of the engagements initiatives pursued during 2016/17 include:

- Workshops undertaken with children and young people promoting their rights;
- A looked after children “celebration evening” was arranged to celebrate the achievements and successes of young people in care.

Priorities for 2017/18

- Through further development in participation and engagement, we will enable the full involvement of children and young people in the

decisions and processes that affect them; for example, by better facilitating them to play a more active part in the creation and review of their care and support plans.

How We Do What We Do

Our Workforce and How We Support Their Professional Roles

We continue to be committed to ensuring that we have a stable, experienced and well trained staff group. We will maintain stability by continuing to follow good people management and leadership practices such as timely recruitment, good induction, regular supervision, performance management, maximising attendance, minimising the use of agency workers, succession planning, effective two way communication between staff and managers and partnership working with the Council's recognised Trade Unions.

We will maintain a targeted and systematic approach to achieving continuous improvement in quality and practice and to comply with current legislation. We will continue to promote a workforce culture that is supportive, that rewards success and achievements and is focussed on the outcomes of the families we work with. Capability, disciplinary and grievance issues will be promptly and appropriately dealt with. Our actions will continue to be underpinned by the CYPS Recruitment and Retention Strategy and the NPT People Charter.

Priorities for 2017/18

- Ensuring staff development and well-being remains at the forefront of our CRT service model.

Our Financial Resources and How We Plan For the Future

Monthly reports are produced for senior officers and quarterly reports for Elected Members, these reports monitor expenditure forecasts against the agreed cash limits for the Social Services budget. Regular monitoring and reporting helps to identify trends, highlight cost pressures and savings opportunities.

The monitoring process supports the budget setting for the following year and also supports the Council's forward financial plan (FFP).

The Council's FFP sets out its approach to managing the overall financial position over the next 3 financial years. The plan includes strategic financial projections, an assessment of key risks and our medium term approach to achieving the Council's key financial and service priorities.

The focus and direction of the FFP is heavily influenced by the current financial climate and the Government's significant funding cuts. This has necessitated a focus for increasing income, as well as delivering further savings and reviewing the Council's service priorities.

Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability

We continue to be committed to keeping the service users at the heart of our planning and care management processes and we continue to work with our partners to meet the needs of the local population.

Throughout 2016-17 we received excellent, active and informed support from Elected Members; all of our activities and developments were effectively scrutinised.

During 2016/17, there were a variety of provisions and forums established and/or consolidated within CYPS and Adult Services to support partnership working, particularly in regards to ensuring a seamless transfer of care and support for the people we support, including a **CYPS weekly Resource Panel**, which is made up of multi-agency partners, including representation from Health, Education and the Third-sector; **Access to the Substance Misuse/Hidden Harm Social Work Service**. This Service is provided in partnership with Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board Community Drug and Alcohol Team (CDAT); **Fortnightly Tactical Panels** where Adult Services and Health colleagues work together with senior officers to improve the wellbeing of those adults with support and accommodation needs within the local population.

Other examples of partnership working includes the Housing Renewal and Adaptation Service working with local hospitals to identify which patients cannot be discharged until urgent and necessary adaptations are carried out at their homes. This partnership working enables the HRAS to install any adaptations and allow patients to often be released from hospital weeks before they have been able to via the traditional route. Hence, speeding up their recovery and improving their physical, mental

and emotional well-being.

Governance

Significant service change decisions are undertaken within a corporate programme management framework. The Council's Corporate Director's Group act as the over-arching programme board and review highlight reports, which outline the specific activities. The reports are also submitted to the relevant Council Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Complaints

Complaint activity continues to show a downward trend. This reflects the on-going improvements in front-line services and practice; there also continues to be a stronger emphasis on a speedier resolution at 'local' level. That said evaluation of the information generated from complaints has highlighted a range of actions to be taken to improve services further for citizens. Action plans may be formulated to reflect the actions agreed as part of the resolution process. Monitoring of the action plans is undertaken within the service to ensure that actions are implemented.

Priorities for 2017/18

- Complete the joint health and social services review that is looking at the following themes:
 - Patient flow & capacity management
 - Staff management & clinical supervision arrangements
 - Integrated working between health & social services
 - Multi- disciplinary working
 - Making best use of admin resources
 - Safeguarding and quality assurance
 - Quality assure the above

Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

NPT Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Add link

Corporate Improvement Plan

<https://www.npt.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=14943>

NPT's Annual Report 2015-16

https://www.npt.gov.uk/pdf/Annual_rep_15_16_NEW.pdf

Single Integrated Plan 2013 – 2023

https://www.npt.gov.uk/pdf/SIP_2013_2023.pdf

Western Bay Population Needs Assessment Report

<http://www.westernbaypopulationassessment.org/en/home/>

NPT Public Services Board Well-being Assessment

<http://wellbeingsite.dns-systems.net/index.php/en/home/>

Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2019

<https://www.npt.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=7628>

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2016-17

<https://www.npt.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3300>