

Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) Annual Report 2024/2025 Appendix 1 - Update on Action Plan

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Cymraeg .
This document is also available in Welsh.



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Equality Objective 1 - Education

To ensure children and young people are the best they can be

Action Plan



Priority 1.1 All Children and Young People will have improved levels of attainment by accessing an education that inspires them to learn and develop the skills they need for the future they want.

Action: We will work with the childcare sector and partners to develop a more equitable Early Years offer to ensure our youngest learners transition into education successfully.

Measure: Regular monitoring and evaluation of the number nursery/reception aged children accessing education successfully.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.5

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: Early Years teams continue to strengthen transition processes into childcare and education through close partnership working and termly cluster-based networking meetings, which have improved communication and raised the professional profile of providers.

In response to growing Additional Learning Needs (ALN), multi-professional pre-school ALN playgroups have been established, receiving positive feedback for early support and timely identification. Targeted training for nursery and reception staff has been developed to address emerging social communication, ASD, and speech and language needs, supported by an Early Years Outreach model from Ysgol Maes Y Coed. Multi-agency cluster planning meetings are embedded across school clusters, with 100% of schools reporting them as valuable for preparing ILPs and ALP ahead of transition.

Action: We will work with children, young people and families, including Armed Forces families, to access the help they need from services at the earliest opportunity.

Measure: Regular monitoring and evaluation of early intervention programme outcomes, including Families First and Flying Start.

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.5

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: Around 2000 children accessed at least one element of the programme with 1415 children accessing Flying Start funded childcare. Since April 2023, an additional 483 children have accessed childcare through the Flying Start Expansion programme. 205 children have accessed Flying Start Outreach services, including 45 children who benefitted from Flying Start funded childcare. Across all four elements of the programme, monitoring evidence demonstrates that the support given is having a positive impact upon most children and families in line with programme outcomes. *Continued on next page..*

Progress: *Continued from previous page..* The Families First Programme is delivered effectively in Neath Port Talbot. The Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP) panel coordinates multiagency support for children, young people and families well through a wide range of internal and externally commissioned services. The EIP Panel continues to experience significant demand for services. In 2024/25, a total of 1719 referrals were received, including 1449 referrals for children and young people. This figure has remained stable over the last two years, however, request for support have becoming increasingly complex in nature, particularly around emotional wellbeing and behaviour. As a result, early intervention services are experiencing increasing pressures to meet these needs.

The Children and Families Parenting team provide a strong range of early intervention parenting support. A total of 1702 individuals accessed the service. The service has seen a significant increase in demand for support over the last two years, which has seen an additional 670 parents accessing the service compared to March 2023. The team received 681 EIP panel referrals for targeted parenting support, which has been delivered through group and 1:1 sessions. Parenting workers use ongoing assessments and feedback from parents to plan bespoke support based upon parental need. As a result, families are supported to develop positive approaches to parenting through the promotion of strong relationships within the family home.

Action: We will continue to work with year 11 pupils who require enhanced transition support into a successful post 16 destination.

Measure: The number of year 11 pupils who are Not in Education, Employment or Training or whose status is unknown as shown in the Careers Wales destination data snapshot. The number of young people who state on their Legacy evaluation forms that they are better prepared for the future.

Service Lead: Support Services and Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years / Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;
- Children and Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy 2022/2025

Progress: A total of 266 year 11 pupils who were identified as needing additional support to help with their transition from school to a post 16 destination were supported by the Legacy Youth Workers.

This resulted in NPT's lowest number of young people who didn't have a positive EET destination. With only 1.1% of year 11 leavers becoming NEET (18 young people).

The number of young people who stated that they were better prepared for their future was 225 of the 266 (84.5%) supported.

Action: We will offer accredited opportunities in non-formal settings.

Measure: The number of young people who are awarded accreditations from the Youth Service.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;

Progress: A total of 669 young people gained an accredited outcome from the Youth Service with a total of 835 outcomes being achieved.

Action: We will deliver the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme to young people.

Measure: The number of young people who achieve the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;

Progress: The Youth Service continued to deliver the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme with a total of 291 young people successfully achieving the award. The break down of this per level is:

- 191 achieved the Bronze Award
- 85 achieved the Silver Award
- 15 achieved the Gold Award.

240 (82.5%) of these young people stated that the award has helped them feel better about themselves.

Action: We will provide opportunities for young people to develop their Welsh language skills in non-formal settings.

Measure: The number young people who used the Welsh language in a social or recreational setting (taken from youth service evaluations) The number of young people attending Welsh language provisions.

Service Lead: Support Services and Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.14

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;
- Neath Port Talbot Council Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022/2023

Progress: 598 young people attended and took part in Welsh Language activities provided by the Youth Service in non-formal settings. The Youth Service also provided social, recreational and non-formal educational sessions via its 2 Welsh Language Youth Clubs based in Trebanos and Pontardawe. The Youth Clubs were attended by 102 young people.

Action: We will work with schools to reduce barriers to learning and provide an equitable and inclusive education offer to all pupils, particularly those most vulnerable and from low-income families.

Measure: Improved outcomes for all children and young people.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.1

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: Between September 2023 and October 2024, Inclusion and Youth Services delivered a wide range of impactful support and activities. A total of 598 young people engaged in Welsh language activities in non-formal settings, including 102 who attended Welsh Language Youth Clubs in Trebanos and Pontardawe.

The Inclusion Service supported over 1,800 school staff through professional learning, with 60% of training focused on Behaviour, Emotional and Social Needs (BESN), Communication, and Autism—reflecting the highest areas of need. Most referrals relate to Speech, Language and Communication, Autism, and Wellbeing, aligning with national PLASC data.

62% of training attendees are support staff due to the complexities of releasing teaching staff. The service also provides robust ALN support through school self-evaluation, cluster planning, and legal training for new leaders, which received strong feedback (average ratings of 4.75/5 for relevance and 4.42/5 for improved understanding). *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* Nearly all ALNCo training participants (97.3%) rated sessions as ‘good’ or better. The ‘Myth Busting’ early intervention project, developed with Swansea Council, is nationally recognised for promoting a needs-led approach without waiting for neurodivergent diagnoses. NPT also prioritises Welsh-medium ALN provision, including recruiting Welsh-speaking staff, offering ALNCo training in Welsh, and partnering with Cardiff University to support Welsh-speaking educational psychologists.

Collaboration with Swansea University’s PGCE programme has also strengthened ALN training, with 92% of participants reporting that training met its aims. Additionally, Welsh Government has recognised the work of NPT’s Occupational Therapists as good practice in promoting inclusive education.

Action: We will work with early years services, parents and schools to identify those children with ALN who require specific support to engage in education successfully.

Measure: Regular monitoring and evaluation of the children’s progress.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2, 1.6

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People’s Plan;
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: Since its implementation in February 2021, 756 children have been discussed at Early Years Multi Agency Panel (EYMAP) (an increase in 2024/2025 of 197 compared to 2023/2024) and all have been provided with a level of support. 191 pre-school children have been provided with a Maintained IDP (an increase of 69 compared to 2023/2024 data), evidencing early identification of need. Feedback from parents / carers is positive in terms of the support received and this early intervention model. Early Years ALN officers provide a comprehensive and effective professional learning offer for childcare settings. Bespoke training has assisted childcare settings to better understand and identify ALN and strong support is also provided to the sector through trained Person Centred Practice (PCP) practitioners and PCP Champions. Evaluations illustrated that nearly all found the training to be relevant, stimulating and effective. Furthermore, through effective use of grant funding, an Early Years Outreach model of school to school support from Ysgol Maes Y Coed Special School has been developed to further develop the knowledge, skills and understanding of staff working in schools and pre-school settings, as well as assisting the council in planning future provision required to meet need on transition to school. Early Years multi agency cluster planning meetings, have been embedded across school clusters. The sessions are reported to be worthwhile and allow schools to effectively plan for their ILP and ALP upon the child's transition to school. Questionnaires are sent to either the Head Teacher or ALNCo following the session and 100% attendees reported that the cluster sessions are useful, to help plan and prepare provision ahead of the children starting. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* The EYs EP Circles of Support model emphasises collaboration within school catchment areas. The work has been recognised nationally for innovation and best practice, underscoring its holistic approach to improving outcomes for children and families. The EYs EP team have developed a 'Ready, Steady School' Project to prepare schools to welcome children with diverse needs. Initial evaluations show increased confidence among school staff in meeting learners' needs, enhanced empowerment, and greater community connection. Following its success, this approach is now being piloted across different schools.

Further enhanced transition support includes the Digital Stories Project, based upon empirical research, which empowers individuals and settings through a truly person centred approach to create short videos to enhance the understanding of children's needs on entry into school. Since its launch in September 2024, 84 Digital Stories have been produced and staff across 43 pre-school/school settings have received training. Feedback reveals that staff understanding of children increased by 35% with the addition of an 'I am' Digital Story, and parents have expressed high appreciation for this support. An article detailing this work has been submitted to the 'Societal Impacts' journal.

Action: We will fully Implement the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs Code of Practice 2021 across the Local Authority and in schools within Neath Port Talbot raising standards across our education system.

Measure: The number of pupils who have been successfully moved from the old SEN system to the new ALN system. Performance indicators relating to issuing of new and converted statutory plans.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.6

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: 191 pre-school children have been provided with a LA Maintained IDP (an increase of 69 compared to 2023/2024 data), evidencing early identification of need. To date, there has been no appeal lodged for pre-school children therefore highlighting that the decision making process performs is robust and the plans produced are of high quality. To date, 81% of learners who were identified as being in the mandated cohorts for conversion of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to IDPs over the three year implementation timeline, have been successfully transferred to the ALN system. The Inclusion Service has identified those schools who will benefit from enhanced support in the term ahead, to ensure they adhere to the statutory timescales provided by Welsh Government. The NPT Inclusion Service is delivering training to Swansea University PGCE department by our highly experienced staff. As a result of this successful session, further training in ALN will be provided by Inclusion Service officers to the 2024/2025 cohort of PGCE secondary students and work is being developed in relation to the primary PGCE training. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* Analysis of the Inclusion Service training and cluster data relating to referrals from schools highlights that the main areas of need are predominantly in relation to Speech, Language, Communication, ASD and BESN. Training is targeted towards these areas and through the Plan and Review meetings and analysis of referral and training data, a focus will be upon developing cluster professional learning.

Action: We will ensure that Children Looked After (CLA) receive an equitable education offer and are not disadvantaged as a result of their care status. Learners will be supported to reach their full potential.

Measure: Regular monitoring and evaluation of CLA progress.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2

- Associated Plans :**
- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People’s Plan;
 - Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: 169 looked after learners (NCY 0–11) have been supported, with 129 attending education within the Neath Port Talbot and 40 out of county. Additionally, 146 children looked after by other local authorities reside in NPT, with 87 attending schools within the borough.

Primary school attendance for children looked after (CLA) consistently exceeds that of non-CLA and those eligible for free school meals (FSM), while secondary attendance has recently dipped below non-CLA but still often surpasses FSM levels. Currently, 14 CLA learners (6.3%) have 100% attendance and 133 (60%) exceed 90%. Academic performance remains lower for CLA compared to non-CLA, though progress is tracked individually.

In 2024, English Language GCSE results improved by 3%, while Maths dropped by 7% but remained 1% above 2022 levels. Permanent exclusions fell from 4 to 1, and fixed-term exclusions from 45 to 44, with total exclusion days reduced from 398 to 320.

Of the 169 CLA learners in NPT, 77 (45.6%) have additional learning needs (ALN), mainly in Behaviour, Emotion and Social Development (32), Cognition and Learning (23), and Communication and Interaction (20). Including CLA from other authorities, 98 learners with ALN attend maintained schools in NPT. In 2023/24, 22 in-year admissions were processed (18 from other authorities), with 68% achieving over 80% attendance; so far this academic year, 19 applications have been received, 17 from other authorities and 4 involving ALN.

Action: We will work with partners to ensure the Local Authority (LA) fulfils its statutory duties in delivering an equitable offer of post 16 provision for young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

Measure: The number of young people who successfully transition into post 16 education, employment or training with ALN.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.6

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan;
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: An enhanced transition protocol has been created to help support learners with more complex needs (Multiagency Transition Screening Meeting - MATSM). The Impact/ success has been measured by the Engagement and Progression Coordinator at the end of the Autumn term 2024 and 100% of these learners had successfully transitioned to their post 16 destination (76% to the local FEI and 24% to Work-Based Learning Providers). The council is now in the process of rolling out MATSM, with a view to more secondary schools participating in summer term 2025.

Action: To provide training for teaching in the Curriculum for Wales.

Measure: Through a range of self-evaluation activities (lesson observations, learning walks, data analysis, pupil interviews).

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.11

Associated Plans :

- School Development Service Improvement Plan

Teachers have accessed a wide range of professional learning activities to evolve teaching in line with the principles of Curriculum for Wales. This includes but is not limited to; the teaching and learning programme, in-class coaching to strengthen the teaching of literacy, numeracy, digital and Welsh language skills, the professional enquiry project, workshops focused on developing a shared understanding of progression, subject specific support for secondary schools and bespoke curriculum design support for schools including those participating in the National Support Programme.

As a result, many teachers (70% or more) are developing a shared understanding of progression well. As a result, their teaching is evolving to focus more on developing pupils' values, attitudes and integral skills in addition to knowledge and understanding and skills. Most teachers (90% or more) support pupils' wellbeing successfully, many teachers (70% or more) provide pupils with engaging and purposeful learning experiences. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* Many primary (70% or more) school teachers support the development of pupils' oracy, phonological awareness and reading skills successfully.

Most teachers (90% or more) have effective provision for mathematics, ensuring most pupils make good progress in developing their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

A majority (over 60%) of teachers are strengthening their teaching of mathematics well through the use of the concrete, visual, abstract approach. Where practice is strongest, teachers allow more time for pupils to explain their understanding using manipulatives and visual representations as well as working in the abstract. Pupils are stronger in their use of mathematical vocabulary and are able to explain their thinking.

Many teachers (70% or more) use a variety of assessment for learning strategies to enhance learner progress well, however, too many lessons, particularly at secondary, are focused solely on the acquisition of knowledge, rather than supporting pupils to progress with their knowledge and understanding, subject and cross curricular skills, integral skills and values and attitudes.

Action: To provide leadership pathways at both a local and national level.

Measure: Through evaluations conducted during regular school visits as well as a range of external verifications (e.g. National Professional Qualification for headteachers).

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.9

Associated Plans :

- School Development Service Improvement Plan

Progress: School leaders have had access to a range of local and national pathways of professional learning to strengthen their leadership skills including but not limited to the future leaders programme, coaching and mentoring and National Middle Leaders, National Senior Leaders and the National New Headteacher Programme. (see Manager's Plan for full details).

As a result:

- Many leaders (70% or more) implement strong systems to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Consequently, priorities in the school development plan are appropriate, precise and derive directly from the evidence gathered during the self-evaluation process.
- Many leaders (70% or more) have a strong track record in improving pupil progress and wellbeing successfully.
- Nearly all school leaders establish an effective safeguarding culture within their schools
- Most school leaders (90% or more) have established a clear and coherent vision focused on enabling all learners to realise the four purposes
- Most leaders (90% or more) continue to construct and evolve their school's curriculum successfully, in line with the Curriculum for Wales Framework, and invest in the enquiry and pedagogical skills of their teachers *Continued on next page...*

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- Most leaders (90% or more) use the pupil development grant well to support the wellbeing and progress of vulnerable learners.
- Most leaders (90% or more) ensure the school environment supports learners' and practitioners' wellbeing successfully.

Action: To provide a range of professional learning opportunities for school staff that supports progress for all learners.

Measure: Through self-evaluation activities pupil progress in learning as a result of effective professional learning.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.11

Associated Plans :

- School Development Service Improvement Plan

Progress: Teachers have accessed a wide range of professional learning activities including but not limited to; the teaching and learning programme, in-class coaching to strengthen the teaching of literacy, numeracy, digital and Welsh language skills, the professional enquiry project, workshops focused on developing a shared understanding of progression, subject specific support for secondary schools and bespoke curriculum design support for schools including those participating in the National Support Programme. (see Manager's Plan for full details). Many leaders (70% or more) ensure staff access a beneficial range of professional learning including but not limited to enquiry models, coaching and mentoring and school to school collaboration. Professional learning in most schools links well to the school's strategic priorities and impacts successfully on improving provision and pupil progress.

Action: To ensure parents are involved in pupil learning.

Measure: The number of parents involved in activities over time.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.11

Associated Plans :

- School Development Service Improvement Plan

Progress: School leaders and the Child & Family Support team have undertaken a wide range of professional learning and support focused on but not limited to; enhanced family engagement, strengthening access to community resources and community collaboration, developing poverty sensitive practices, supporting the effective use of PDG (pupil deprivation grant) and educational support for families. School leaders and the Child & Family Support team have undertaken a wide range of professional learning and support focused on but not limited to; enhanced family engagement, *Continued on next page...*

Progress: strengthening access to community resources and community collaboration, developing poverty sensitive practices, supporting the effective use of PDG (pupil deprivation grant) and educational support for families.

As a result:

- The CFS approach and the proliferation of Family Engagement Officers (from 3 in 2022 to 28 in January 2025) is making a significant difference in our schools
- There is a clear vision for Family Engagement Officers. They are clear about their roles and they work with a clarity and sense of purpose with school leaders, Many parents are more involved in their child’s learning and school life. There has been a significant increase in the range of opportunities within the community.
- There are greater levels of alignment across services internally and externally – this makes the process for parent’s sharper, more helpful and they feel as though services are making a difference in their lives.
- The NPT approach to equity has been recognised by Welsh government as an approach that is making a real difference to many pupils and their families’ lives. We make a significant contribution to the national discussions and our aligned approach to school improvement and community focused schools provides a useful way forward for other local authorities.

Priority 1.2 All children and young people will be engaged in their learning and have a greater sense of belonging throughout their educational journey.

Action: We will work with families and communities to encourage engagement in childcare and early education to help more children prepare for a lifetime of learning.

Measure: Early Years and Childcare Development officers will monitor and evaluate the number of children engaged in childcare and early education.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.5

- Associated Plans :**
- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People’s Plan
 - Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan
 - NPT Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

Progress: Around 1415 children accessed part-time Flying Start funded childcare. The council continues to implement the Flying Start expansion of childcare programme successfully. The innovative development of a childcare sector wide engagement and training model has facilitated the on-going rollout of Flying Start funded childcare. As a result of this approach, the number of childcare providers who offer Flying Start funded places has increased by 89% from 28 in March 2023, to 53 as of March 2025. This approach has enabled the council to consistently exceed *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* Welsh Government targets.

Since April 2024, an additional 302 children eligible for childcare via the Flying Start expansion programme have benefitted from high quality Flying Start expansion funded childcare. This has exceeded the original Welsh Government target of 282. Overall, an additional 486 childcare places have been funded through the Flying Start Expansion Programme since April 2023. To further develop positive relationships and collaboration between childcare providers and schools. This includes facilitating cluster based Early Years networking meetings. Most schools and settings attend the termly network meetings and feedback from nearly all participants has been positive, As a result, professionals report that communication between settings and schools is enhanced, which has a positive impact upon the transition process for children and their families. Delivery of the Childcare Offer for Wales effectively supports families to access childcare, through provision of funded childcare for working families. Applications from 1,537 families were approved for the Offer.

Action: We will continue to work with pupils, parents/carers and schools to reduce the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions.

Measure: Number of pupil exclusions by vulnerable group (e.g. ALN / CLA / Forces).

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.8

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress: The number of pupils given either a permanent or fixed exclusion by schools reduced significantly during the 2024/2025 academic year.

Action: We will collect data from schools and support schools to address bullying and harassment in all its forms and work with them to address trends/issues.

Measure: Reports by schools on any issues regarding bullying and harassment.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.7

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress: The Local Authority continues to receive and monitor the number of racial incidents within schools, however, progress to move to a more digital/IT method of data collection to analysis bullying data has been problematic and a more cost effective solution continues to be sought.

Action: We will work with schools and other relevant settings to support pupils who are victims of bullying and work with perpetrators of bullying.

Measure: Feedback from victims and perpetrators on the success of intervention and support from a multiagency approach.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.7, 1.8

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress: Ongoing support continues to be provided to schools to support victims of bullying and any other form of victimisation and discrimination.

Action: We will continue to work with schools and other relevant settings to ensure that their learning environments are safe and nurturing, where there is respect and due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Measure: Education officers will monitor and evaluate the quality of learning environments.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.1

Associated Plans :

- Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: The Early Years Educational Psychology Circles of Support model emphasises collaboration within school catchment areas. The work has been recognised nationally for innovation and best practice, underscoring its holistic approach to improving outcomes for children and families. The Early Years Educational Psychology team have developed a 'Ready, Steady School' Project to prepare schools to welcome children with diverse needs. Initial evaluations show increased confidence among school staff in meeting learners' needs, enhanced empowerment, and greater community connection.

Following its success, this approach is now being piloted across different schools. Further enhanced transition support includes the Digital Stories Project, based upon empirical research, which empowers individuals and settings through a truly person-centred approach to create short videos to enhance the understanding of children's needs on entry into school since its launch in September 2024, 84 Digital Stories have been produced and staff across 43 pre-school/school settings have received training. Feedback reveals that staff understanding of children increased by 35% with the addition of an 'I am' Digital Story, and parents have expressed high appreciation for this support. An article detailing this work has been submitted to the 'Societal Impacts' journal.

Action: We will work with schools, children, young people, families and partners to continue to develop the Community Focused Schools approach.

Measure: Number of parents involved in the participating schools.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.7

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: School leaders and the Community Focused Schools (CFS) team have undertaken a wide range of professional learning and support focused on but not limited to; enhanced family engagement, strengthening access to community resources and community collaboration, developing poverty sensitive practices, supporting the effective use of Pupil Development Grant and educational support for families.

As a result, the proliferation of Family Engagement Officers (from 3 in 2022 to 28 in January 2025) is making a significant difference in our schools. There is a clear vision for Family Engagement Officers. They are clear about their roles and they work with a clarity and sense of purpose with school leaders. This has seen a positive Impact on specific pupils' attendance (e.g. Eastern primary targeted intervention has resulted in 5% improvement across the whole school as well as examples of individuals who have improved from 79% to 91.2%) and behaviour (Zero exclusions in Croeserw primary following the start of CFS approach from 8 pupils/45 days exclusions in the year before this has seen a positive Impact on specific pupils' attendance (e.g. Eastern primary targeted intervention has resulted in 5% improvement across the whole school as well as examples of individuals who have improved from 79% to 91.2%) and behaviour (Zero exclusions in Croeserw primary following the start of CFS approach from 8 pupils/45 days exclusions in the year before. Also, Pupil Support Plans/Reduced timetables went from six to zero). This positive data exists for every school.

Significant increase in the range of opportunities within the community. Greater levels of alignment across services internally and externally – this makes the process for parent's sharper, more helpful and they feel as though services are making a difference in their lives.

The NPT approach to equity has been recognised by Welsh government as an approach that is making a real difference to many pupils and their families' lives. We make a significant contribution to the national discussions and our aligned approach to school improvement and community focused schools provides a useful way forward for other local authorities.

Action: We will work in partnership with schools and local organisations to ensure our children and young people ‘are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society, and the world now and in the past and respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society’.

Measure: Education Support Officers will evaluate the extent to which schools are making progress towards the four purposes of the Curriculum and challenge leaders on the extent that they are realising their vision statement.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.5

Associated Plans :
• The School Development Service Plan

Progress: School leaders have had access to a range of professional learning to strengthen their curriculum design and to ensure it supports pupils to be knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world now and in the past and respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society’. This has included the mandatory requirements of the curriculum for Wales, practical support for leaders to support leaders to evaluate and strengthen their curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Wales, and professional learning focused on strengthening Cynefin within schools’ curriculum design.

Almost all schools have produced a vision statement that reflects their approach to providing a diverse curriculum.

Evidence from Education Standards Officers (ESO) monitoring highlights how many schools have developed a curriculum that supports pupils to be knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world now and in the past and respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society’. This is reinforced by Estyn inspections which have identified particular strengths in this area.

For example:

‘Leaders and staff ensure that the school’s curriculum reflects the nature and context of the school and that learning experiences reflect the cultural, linguistic, and diverse nature of Wales and the wider world.’ (Awel y Mor)

‘The curriculum is based firmly on the local community and its place within Wales and the wider world. The resulting learning activities are broad and provide a suitable depth while developing pupils’ skills, understanding and knowledge across all areas of learning and experience’. (YGG Cwmnedd)

‘The school’s curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to develop skills progressively in a broad range of contexts. There is a strong emphasis on promoting the history and culture of Wales and there are beneficial opportunities for pupils to learn about different identities, cultures and religions. Through this work, pupils gain a strong awareness of diversity’ (Rhos Primary).

Action: We will work with schools and local organisations to ensure teaching of the new curriculum reflects the multi-ethnic nature of Wales.

Measure: Education Support Officers will evaluate the extent to which schools are making progress towards the four purposes of the Curriculum and challenge leaders on the extent that they are realising their vision statement.

Service Lead: Education Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.6

Associated Plans :
• The School Development Service Plan

Progress: School leaders have had access to a range of professional learning to strengthen their curriculum design and to ensure it reflects the multi-ethnic nature of Wales. This has included the mandatory requirements of the curriculum for Wales, practical support for leaders to support leaders to evaluate and strengthen their curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Wales, workshops, professional learning focused on strengthening Cynefin within schools' curriculum design and support for strengthening Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) in the curriculum.

In addition to this schools have had access to professional learning delivered by DARPL (Diversity and Anti-Racism training).

Autumn Support Visits undertaken by Educational Supervision Order (ESO) challenged school leaders on their curriculum design, including:

- Approach/vision for the Curriculum for Wales? How does it support pupils to realise the four purposes? Is it broad and balanced?
- How well is the school evolving their educational processes involved in planning for the Curriculum?
- What pedagogies, experiences and activities are involved? (What is different?) ·How well is the school evolving their educational processes involved in planning for the Curriculum?
- What pedagogies, experiences and activities are involved? (What is different?)

Nearly all schools have produced a vision statement that reflects their approach to providing a diverse curriculum.

Evidence from monitoring highlights how many schools have developed a curriculum that reflects the multi-ethnic nature of Wales. This is reinforced by Estyn inspections which have identified strengths in this area.

For example: *'Pupils are given a range of opportunities to develop their awareness of diversity. For example, activities have been developed in a range of subjects linked to the theme of 'Belonging'. Pupils benefit from learning about the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in assemblies, drop-down days and health and well-being sessions, as well as in lessons'.* (Llangatwg Comprehensive School).

'Staff ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with a range of worthwhile opportunities to learn about their local community, Wales and the wider world. For example, they learn about the diverse nature of society through their work during Black History Month, when they consider ethical issues, such as segregation and equality'. (Bryncoch CiW Primary).

Action: We will provide targeted group support to young carers, LGBTQ+ young people, young people with speech, language and communication needs and electively home educated young people to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences.

Measure: The number of young people attending targeted groups.

The number of young people who state on their evaluation forms that they have improved wellbeing or feel better about themselves.

Service Lead: Support Services and Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years/Adult Social Services and Health

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress: The number of young people attending the Youth Services targeted groups was:

Young Carers = 118 young people

LGBTQ+ Group = 23 young people

SLCN Group = 33 young people

Through targeted group work and one to one case load support from the Families First Youth Workers, the number of young people stating that they have an improvement in their emotional/mental wellbeing was 225 young people which was 92.5% of those asked.

Action: We will offer youth work caseload support via a range of provisions to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of young people.

Measure: Number of young people supported /Number of young people stating that they have improved wellbeing.

Service Lead: Support Services and Transformation

Political Lead: Early Years & Partnerships

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress: Young people were offered support by a range of youth work interventions. Total numbers and improvement data was:

- Families First youth Work supported 243 young people. With 225 (92.5%) stating that their emotional wellbeing had improved.
- Legacy youth work supported 266 young people with 221 (83%) stating that their emotion wellbeing had improved.
- The Youth Services Emotional Health youth workers supported 120 young people with 105 (88%) stating that their emotional wellbeing had improved.
- The At Risk of Youth Homelessness youth workers supported 67 young people with 49 (73%) stating that their emotional wellbeing had improved.

Action: The Youth Service will deliver Relationship Sexuality Education (RSE) to year 7 pupils and to young people via the Relationship Advice Drop-in Service (RADS) in community-based settings.

Measure: Number of people attending RSE sessions in schools and RADS session in the community / Number of young people who state that they are now enabled to make positive life choices.

Service Lead: Support Services and Transformation

Political Lead: Early Years & Partnerships

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.1

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People’s Plan

Progress: A total of 759 young people engaged in Year 7 Relationship Sexuality Education sessions, and a 766 young people attended Year 8 RSE Sessions.

The number of young people who state that they are now enabled to make positive life choices will be added to the 2025/2026 evaluation forms.



Equality Objective 2 - Health & Wellbeing

To promote wellbeing and good mental health within the workplace and tackle mental health stigma and discrimination

Action Plan



Priority 2.1 Our staff will be supported and appropriate services promoted

Action: We will deliver our Mental Health Strategy in partnership with Time to Change Wales

Measure: Sickness Absence Data, Employee Survey Data from the Employee Assistance Programme, Number of employees who undertake Mental Health First Aid

Service Lead: People and Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.4

Associated Plans :
• Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: Mental Health related illness is still the highest reason for sickness absence across the council.
We have 33 employee champions across the council who provide advice and signposting to relevant mental health services - Introducing NPT's Employee Mental Health Champions
Employees were asked questions relating to Mental Health in the Employee Survey:

- 66% think that the council’s policies support employee mental health
- 69% know what mental health resources and services are available to them
- 63% think that their mental health is considered important within their service
- 70% feel able to discuss their mental health challenges with their manager

Case Study:

“I will never forget the day I reached out to the Champion. At the time, I was in a very dark place struggling with my mental health, overwhelmed, and feeling like there was no way forward. The weight of everything had pushed me to the brink, and I genuinely believed there was no way out. The Champion not only listened but truly heard me. They acted swiftly, guiding me towards the right support and making sure I was referred to the crisis team without delay. That moment changed everything. Through their help and the counselling that followed, I was able to regain control of my life, step by step. I will always be grateful to the champion for the role they played in turning my life around. Without his intervention, I don’t know where I would be today”.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP): In the 12 months the EAP has been in operation (January 2024 – January 2025), more employees accessed counselling support via the platform than in the 3 years prior to implementation, via externally purchased counselling services and at a lower cost. Feedback in relation to the EAP: *“I had a response within 30 minutes of my call and then had 6 Counselling Sessions arranged immediately providing me with the support required”.* Continued on next page...

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* “I found the in the moment support extremely helpful on a night I was struggling to cope, and I am still undergoing telephone counselling which has been really helpful”.

“Just to say I think this is a very valuable facility for staff. I have used it to listen to podcasts and read blogs, which are very informative and helpful. Fortunately, I haven’t needed debt advice or anything face to face/on the phone, but it is good to know this is available. Everything is relevant and the resource covers so many topics”.

“As a team leader its useful to have contact numbers or somewhere to direct the team (especially during one-to-one catch up’s) – it’s great that everything is under one app. The system offers a wide range of services, as we know not everyone likes to talk about their issues, so the self-workbooks are great”!

“It's a great way for staff to self-serve and access info without going through their line manager”.

Action: We will develop actions to support neurodivergence in the workplace: this year we will review and implement our Recruitment Policy to consider neurodivergence in recruitment. We will also provide line manager training sessions in relation to Neurodivergence in the workplace.

Measure: We will report the numbers of managers who have attended the training.
Feedback from candidate journey questionnaire.

Service Lead: People and Organisational Development	Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice
Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028: Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.4	Associated Plans : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: A revised recruitment and selection policy was approved at Personnel Committee in September 2024. The review focused on enhancing inclusivity for neurodivergent individuals and reinforcing our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, eliminating unconscious bias throughout. The updated policy now better supports our goals of fostering a diverse and fair workplace, and to contribute to the council being an employer of choice. Interview Date Transparency: Managers are encouraged to include the interview date in the job advert to ensure transparency about the entire recruitment process and help potential applicants plan their time.

Anonymous Application Forms: This is the default option for recruiting managers to facilitate a fair and transparent recruitment process by reducing unconscious bias.

Additional Testing: Managers are encouraged to incorporate additional testing during the interview stage where appropriate, to better assess candidates’ suitability.

Interview Location Guides: Interview location guides have been created and will now be included in the invite to interview letter. These guides provide directions to the three main buildings, describe what they look like, and include parking information to further assist neuro diverse applicants.

Action: We will support the wellbeing of school staff through high quality staff supervision.

Measure: YP Core scores pre and post supervision.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.9

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: The staff supervision service has expanded for 2024/2025 and now serves 41 schools across the council, including primary, secondary and special schools and supporting 153 staff. School staff accessing the SBCS staff supervision service on average reported wellbeing levels were greater than the national average for education and staff and the general population on completion of their supervision sessions. Feedback from the project has been positive and there are plans to expand this service further. The project has been recognised by Welsh Government as good practice and the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing are meeting staff to hear more about this innovative provision and the reported outcomes for staff.

Action: We will continue to support the needs of school staff through a Staff Counselling Service.

Measure: YP Core scores pre and post supervision.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.9

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: This service supported 65 members staff over 412 sessions (an increase of 29 members of staff and 297 sessions when compared with 2023/2024 when the service supported 36 members of staff over 115 sessions). CORE 10 is used to monitor change and a reduction in score indicates improvement.

CORE 10 average pre: 21

CORE 10 average post: 9

Difference: 12

The CORE 10 provides a score out of 40. Scores above 30 are deemed to be indicative of severe emotional distress and scores below 10 are sub clinical. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* This 12 point difference in the pre and post score on the CORE 10 indicates substantial improvement in emotional wellbeing following the counselling intervention. Anxiety continues to be the highest presenting issue across this service. The average wait for counselling during 2024/2025 3.72 (a slight decrease of 0.44 weeks in comparison to 2023/2024 when the waiting time was 4.16 weeks) and the number of DNAs (did not attend) remains low at 10 sessions (2 sessions in 2023/2024 with smaller service delivery).

Priority 2.2 The emotional health and wellbeing needs of Children and Young People will be improved.

Action: We will work closely with schools and partner agencies to ensure that the Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Well-being is embedded across the Authority.

Measure: Number of schools fully implementing the Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation / Educational Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years / Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: - As of 31st March 2025 81%, or 50 maintained schools across Neath Port Talbot Local Authority area were Action Planning.

- As of 31st March 2025 77%, or 40 Primary schools across Neath Port Talbot Local Authority area were Action Planning.
- As of 31st March 2025 100%, or 8 Secondary schools across Neath Port Talbot Local Authority area were Action Planning.
- The top three areas with identified actions for those schools action planning are: Workforce, Understanding the emotional and mental well-being needs of learners and staff and Involvement and Engagement.
- As of 31st March 2025 100%, or 2 Special Schools across Neath Port Talbot Council area were Action Planning.

The top three areas with identified actions for those schools action planning are:

- Leadership and commitment,
- Understanding the emotional; and
- Mental well-being needs of learners and staff and involvement and Engagement.

Action: We will encourage and enable our children and young people to enjoy the green, natural and open spaces in their communities for the benefit of their physical health and emotional wellbeing.

Measure: Local Authority Play Sufficiency Implementation Group to monitor and review the number of open play spaces across the local authority.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation / Educational Development

Political Lead: Education and Early Years / Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.15

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: The council works well with partners to co-ordinate and ensure sufficiency of play provision. Partners and stakeholders work collaboratively as part of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) process to achieve a robust assessment of the quality and quantity of play provision. Ongoing engagement and partnership working is through the authority's Play Sufficiency Implementation Group (PSIG), which leads on delivering the actions within the PSA action plan. Following the last PSA in 2022, actions have been implemented by the PSIG to address gaps, including:

- Improvement in the quality and quantity of play spaces-
- Enhanced access to play provisions for children with diverse needs
- Increased community involvement in play initiatives
- Strengthened training programs for the play workforce

Since September 2024, the PSA lead officer has overseen the 2024/2025 PSA review. A wide range of engagement and evaluation work has taken place with children, young people, families and professionals to evaluate provision in line with Welsh Government criteria. This work is currently ongoing, and a new PSA and Action Plan will be developed and published in 2025/2026, in line with Welsh Government requirements.

Action: We will work with partners to develop a high-quality and diverse range of play, physical activities and recreation opportunities.

Measure: Local Authority Play Sufficiency Implementation Group to monitor and review.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years / Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.15

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan
- Neath Port Talbot Play Sufficiency Assessment

Progress: The Play Sufficiency Implementation Group meets to co-ordinate provision, this includes the opportunities provided by the Youth Service, the PASS team, Community Focussed Schools team and the Playworks Holiday Project. NPT Family (Family Information Service), publicise activities and events via a range of communication methods, including social media, to families.

Holiday provision has improved as a result of partnership working with the Play Sufficiency Development Officer.

1730 children and young people have accessed the Playworks Holiday programme, an increase of 210 participants compared to 2023/2024. As a result, children benefitted from open access play activities, which also provided food with aim of reducing holiday hunger.

Action: We will ensure that all youth workers will have mental health first aid training.

Measure: Number of youth workers who are mental health first aid qualified.

Service Lead: Support Services and Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.4

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: All youth workers received Mental Health First Aid training during the 2024/2025 period.

Action: To ensure that children and young people receive the right support, at the right time, for their emotional wellbeing (‘No Wrong Door’ principle).

Measure: The development of a regional access point for emotional health and wellbeing (current work stream under the Children and Young People’s Partnership Board).

Service Lead: Children and Young People’s Services

Political Lead: Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.4

Associated Plans :

- Children and Young People’s Regional Board

Progress: Work towards this action remains ongoing, it is envisaged that progress will be reflected in the Annual Report 2025/2026.

Action: We will work with partners to develop a high-quality and diverse range of play, physical activities and recreation opportunities.

Measure: Local Authority Play Sufficiency Implementation Group to monitor and review.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years / Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.15

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People’s Plan
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan
- Neath Port Talbot Play Sufficiency Assessment

Progress: The Play Sufficiency Implementation Group meets to co-ordinate provision, this includes the opportunities provided by the Youth Service, the PASS team, Community Focussed Schools team and the Playworks Holiday Project. NPT Family (Family Information Service), publicise activities and events via a range of communication methods, including social media, to families.

Holiday provision has improved as a result of partnership working with the Play Sufficiency Development Officer.

1730 children and young people have accessed the Playworks Holiday programme, an increase of 210 participants compared to 2023/2024. As a result, children benefitted from open access play activities, which also provided food with aim of reducing holiday hunger.

Action: Continued development of early offers of help for emotional health and wellbeing.

Measure: Number of young people who access Early Intervention Prevention services through education and EIP panel.

Service Lead: Children and Young People's Services

Political Lead: Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.1, 1.2

Associated Plans :

- Children and Young People's Regional Board

Progress: Total number of children and young people referred for support whose outcome was EIP was 634.

Note: Data is only available for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st January 2025 due to the migration from Social Services Information System to the new Mosaic system in January 2025.

Action: We will offer children the opportunity to engage in activities in the community.

Measure: Number of children attending the Caesar Programme. No. of children to attend organised activities through Team Around the Family.

Service Lead: Children and Young People's Services

Political Lead: Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.15

Associated Plans :

- Children and Young People's Regional Board

Progress: The data is limited in terms of the Caesar programme and number of organised activities by Team around the Family, it is anticipated these be reflected in the 2025/2026 Annual Report.

Note: Data is only available for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st January 2025 due to the migration from Social Services Information System to the new Mosaic system in January 2025.

Priority 2.3 Our Communities that need support will be able to access appropriate services

Action: We will contribute to the Public Services Board’s work to reduce suspected suicide rates in the county borough.

Measure: Number of suspected suicides reported per year.

Service Lead: Social Services, Health and Housing

Political Lead: Adult Social Services and Health

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.1, 1.2

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.13

Associated Plans :

- Children and Young People’s Regional Board

Progress: The council continues to respond to both suspected suicides and significant suicide attempts through its established Rapid Response meeting. The number of suspected suicides across the borough have decreased from 16 in 2022, to 15 in 2023 and to 13 in 2024. This data should be treated with caution as it reflects suspected suicides, which may not be the final cause of death determined by a coroner. Further, its accuracy relies on reporting post-rapid response meeting, and it is possible but unlikely that cases are missed.

The trends found within this data set - the location of the suspected suicide being primarily a residential address; over seventy percent are male; and the most common method used is hanging or strangulation, are in-line with the national trends as reported through the Public Health Wales (PHW) Annual Report: Deaths by suspected suicide 2023/2024. Whilst the response to suspected suicides and now significant suspected suicides (over 18 years old) is well established across NPT CSC and ASC, there remains no clear governance for Suicide Prevention across the region.

Thus, there are few opportunities to use this data to build a bigger picture to inform suicide prevention work or to work collaboratively to reduce suicides across NPT across 2022/2023 – data is being compiled for 2024 - the Local Authority held 6 and 11 rapid response meetings respectively, in response to significant suicide attempts. This number is believed to be higher for 2024. It is strongly believed that the rapid response to significant suicide attempts is where the council and partner agencies stand the best chance of preventing suicide.

Action: We will honour our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, by supporting members of the Armed Forces Community (veterans, those currently serving and reservists), and their families to help ensure that they are not disadvantaged by their service, when accessing health and wellbeing support and services.

Measure: Number of members of the Armed Forces Community signposted to services by our AFLO. Number of contacts made by AFLO to advocate on behalf of members of the Armed Forces Community.

Service Lead: People and Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice / Armed Forces Champions

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: The Armed Forces Liaison Officer made a total of 140 contacts and/or referrals on behalf of members of the Armed Forces Community, some of which will have required support from more than one organisation.

Equality Objective 3 - Personal Safety

To ensure people and communities are safe, respected and free from violence and abuse

Action Plan



Priority 3.1 People feel safe in their homes

Action: We will increase the reports of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in Neath Port Talbot, through awareness raising and challenging attitudes.

Measure: Increase or decrease in reporting incidents of domestic abuse to SWP (data dependent on SWP).

Service Lead: Housing & Communities

Political Lead: Housing & Community Safety

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.13

Associated Plans :

- NPT Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities

Progress: The Community Safety team delivered a programme of engagement events during 24/25 to help raise awareness within our communities of what constitutes domestic abuse and how to seek help and support if needed.

We recognise that not all victims want to report to the Police, and it is important we continue to offer an array of alternative options like the national helpline, or local specialist support services. Our annual White Ribbon campaign was delivered at NPT Hospital alongside Health Board staff, South Wales Police and Thrive Women's Aid – each year this engagement event allows us to engage with patients, staff and visitors and provides a very worthwhile opportunity to raise awareness.

During 25/26 there will be an increased focus on work within NPTCBC's workforce around White Ribbon, as well as a continued presence within the community. We continue to promote our 'Heads Up' campaign which is targeted at the Hair & Beauty industry, allowing them to signpost customers who may make disclosures during their appointments, and our 'Safe Spaces' campaign which sees local business offer sanctuary for anyone who feels in immediate danger whilst out and about. This is an ongoing rolling programme of work for Community Safety and partners and will continue into 25/26 and beyond.

Action: We will increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.

Measure: Number of children who receive an age appropriate Healthy Relationship lesson.

Service Lead: Housing & Communities

Political Lead: Housing & Community Safety

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.1

Associated Plans : NPT Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities

Progress: 3016 children received an age-appropriate Healthy Relationship lesson or input across the borough. These inputs were either in the school setting, or at Crucial Crew – our flagship Community Safety event for Year 6 pupils before their transition to secondary school. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* The inputs provide young people with vital information on what a healthy relationship should look like, and where to seek help if they have concerns for themselves, a friend, parent or relative. The inputs are delivered in a safe environment and opportunities for any confidential disclosures are provided in a private safe space.

Action: Provide all victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs-led, strength based, gender responsive services across Neath Port Talbot.

Measure: Narrative around developing provision or changes to services.

Service Lead: Housing & Communities

Political Lead: Housing & Community Safety

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.13

Associated Plans : NPT Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities

Progress: Support services continue to adapt to increasing demand and changing needs. There is an ongoing review of specialist service provision across the borough, which included a full public consultation during 2024/2025. This review includes refuge accommodation for victims at highest risk, ensuring it is fit for purpose and accessible. Work continues into 2025/2026. During 2024/2025 Calan DVS opened their brand new STAR Centre in Victoria Gardens Neath – a very modern facility offering a fresh approach to support and counselling for victims of sexual abuse and trauma. This is a fantastic addition to the spectrum of services we have available within the borough.

Priority 3.2 People feel safe in the community

Action: We will provide mandatory training for all staff on Group A of the Violence against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

Measure: Number of staff trained.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.13

Associated Plans : NPT Healthy Relationships for Stronger Communities

Progress: 59% of the workforce is currently compliant.

In January 2025 we launched Thinqi, a new learner management system (online training). This is a one stop shop for employees to access eLearning, view their training record and book training courses. It is easy to access and use. Initial feedback has been very positive, and monitoring will take place throughout 2025 to determine the effectiveness of this new training tool; for example we want to see if this helps increase the number of employees completing mandatory training.

Action: We will provide training on the Prevent duty.

Measure: Number of staff trained.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.4

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: 30% of the workforce is currently compliant.

Action: We will work with members of local equality groups, partners and our communities to encourage the reporting of hate incidents/crime and ensure people get support which is fit for purpose.

Measure: Increase or decrease in the reporting of hate crime (data dependent on SWP).

Service Lead: Housing & Communities

Political Lead: Housing & Community Safety

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 3: Strategic Aim 2.13

Associated Plans : Community Safety Strategic Intent Document 2024/2027

Progress: Our Community Cohesion Programme continued throughout 2024/25 with an array of community engagement events across the borough. These events were delivered in partnership with NPTCBC Community Safety, the NPT BME Association, South Wales Police, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, NPT CVS. Events included; Black History Month, Community Cohesion Cup Rounders Tournament, Hate Crime Awareness Week cinema screenings – all events provide an opportunity for local equalities groups, members of the communities to engage with vital services, learn more about what constitutes a hate crime and how to report / seek support if needed. By empowering local residents, we hope to see an increase in reports through to the appropriate channels.

During 24/25 the Community Safety Team also organised training and awareness days for internal staff and partner agencies to help increase their knowledge of hate crime and community tension related matters, to further help members of our communities who may need help, advice or signposting to appropriate services.

Action: We will develop an action plan in response to our review of risk and harm outside the home (ROTH).

Measure: Number of referrals received in relation to risk and harm outside the home, including persons and places of interest.

Service Lead: Adult Services

Political Lead: Housing and Community Safety

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.1

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.13

Associated Plans :

- Review of ROTH completed, August 2024. Action Plan to be developed by SAFE Strategic Group, October 2024.

Progress: Whilst the operational response to ROTH is established across CSC there remains further work to be undertaken across ASC. Our response to ROTH is now ready to launch subject to the MOSAIC build. The launch of this pathway has been delayed due to prioritising the migration of staff from Oracle to MOSAIC. Work is underway to develop the ROTH pathways in MOSAIC and to ensure data is available to monitor patterns, trends and themes across this critical practice area.

Equality Objective 4 - Employment

To ensure our workforce is more reflective of our community, our policies are fair and equitable and gender pay gaps are reduced

Action Plan



Priority 4.1 Our workforce reflects our diverse communities and is supported by our policies.

Action: We will join the Proud Councils Partnership.

Measure: Confirmation of the partnership. Participation in LGBTQ+ activities.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: A report has been prepared, and we are in the process of arranging for this to be taken to Council for approval in Winter 2025.

Action: We will work with staff to determine the appetite to establish an employee LGBTQ+ network.

Measure: Qualitative feedback and establishment of the network.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: The LGBTQ+ Employee Network was established in May 2024, with the aims of being a safe, confidential environment to network, socialise, question, challenge and receive support and advice. The network's main goal is to turn discussions into tangible actions to improve employee experience and to create cultural change and accountability within the council. The Network has helped co-produce the review of the Gender Reassignment Policy. The network organised a Trans Day of Remembrance event on 20th November 2024 was very well attended.

Action: We will work with staff to determine the appetite to establish an employee Disability network.

Measure: Qualitative feedback and establishment of the network.

Service Lead: HR

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: The Disability network was established in February 2025 and is a safe, confidential environment to network, socialise, question, challenge and receive support and advice. The network's main goal will be to turn discussions into tangible actions to improve employee experience and to create cultural change and accountability within the council.

Action: We will review our gender reassignment policy.

Measure: We will take feedback from our employees to ensure the revised policy is appropriate, supportive and easy to access.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: The guidance has been reviewed to use more inclusive language and to help support managers and employees further with signposting external support networks. Following feedback from the LGBTQ+ Network, the name changed to Trans Equality Guidance as it was felt that this document lends itself more to Guidance for managers and employees.

Action: We will sign up to the Age-friendly Employer Pledge, a nationwide programme for employers who recognise the importance and value of older workers.

Measure: Number of employees in the workforce aged 50 and over. Number of applicants, shortlisted and appointed aged 50 and over. Signing of the pledge.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: Approval was given in February 2025 by Personnel Committee to sign the Age Friendly Employer Pledge. Following this the pledge was signed and the Council made it's commitment to improving work for people in their 50s and 60s.

Links have been made with the over 50s Champion at the Job Centre Plus and the Talent Management Team has given talks to their over 50 clients about careers across the Council. More recently they now attend the JCP to see over 50 clients individually and support them with their applications.

Action: As members of the Carers Wales, Employers for Carers Subscription Membership, we will work towards the 'Carers' Confident Benchmark' and develop our Carers' Policy arrangements.

Measure: We will carry out a survey to identify carers in our workforce and an initial consultation and diagnostic session to enable us to develop an action plan. We have also added functionality in iTrent Employee Self Service for employees to identify themselves as 'Carers' which will be monitored.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans :

- Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: We have added a tick box on iTrent for employees to indicate they are carers and we have run online sessions for our employees facilitated by Employers for Carers to showcase the support on offer from the platform. Since implementing the Carer’s Policy in May 2024, we have seen a reduction in the number of employees leaving the council due to caring responsibilities when compared to previous years. The number of staff who left the council for this reason in 2023/2024 was 21 (5%) this decreased in 2024/2025 to 8 (1%).

Action: We will develop and deliver a programme of Equality and Diversity Training across our workforce which will include an Introduction to Anti Racism, Hate Crime and Modern Slavery Awareness, and Multicultural Awareness.

Measure: Number of staff trained.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: The Corporate Training Programme includes Equalities and Cultural Awareness, Equalities in the Workplace, Unconscious Bias, Active Bystander Training, Anti Racism Wales Training, Mental Health First Aider Level 1, Mental Health in the Workplace, Transgender and Nonbinary awareness, Neurodiversity Awareness aimed at managers, Understanding Autism, Understanding Effective Communication and Autism, Understanding Assessment and Autism, Employers for Carers, Awareness of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace for Managers, How to be an Ally for Diversity and Inclusion and Menopause Awareness. As we embed Thingi, the new training platform we will continue to develop our offer in relation to equality and diversity training. It is anticipated that data pertaining to the number of staff trained will be reflected in the Annual Report for 2025/2026.

Action: We will develop an Anti-Racism Strategy, in partnership with the Council’s Ethnic Employee Network Group, developing a set of evidenced based actions linked to the commitments of the Unison AntiRacism Charter, with the aim of improving equality and diversity amongst the council’s workforce and employment opportunities for residents.

Measure: Number of employees/ applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds. Work in partnership with Ethnic Employee Network Group to deliver an Anti-Racism Policy including clear guidance on dealing with racist incidents. Hold initiatives such as targeted recruitment events for people from ethnic minority backgrounds annually. Provide Anti-Racism Training to our employees.

Service Lead: People and Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-Cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: To develop an Anti Racism Strategy, a workshop with internal and external stakeholders was conducted in January 2025 to identify key stakeholder priorities. The Strategy is scheduled for implementation by Autumn 2025. The council has created important links with Community groups such as the Neath Port Talbot BME Community Association to improve access to council jobs for those from ethnic minority backgrounds; this led to a jointly held BAME Recruitment Fair event. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* The Council has committed to the Unison Anti-Racism Charter and to meeting its objectives, as well as the pledge to Zero Racism Wales; we are proud to use the Zero Racism logo on our recruitment website. It is disappointing to note that the latest published equality data (2023 / 2024) shows a slight decrease in the number of employees from ethnic minority groups, from 114 (1.8%) in 2022 / 2023 to 112 (1.7%) in 2023 / 2024. To put this into context, the proportion of Ethnic Minority residents within the county borough was measured as 3.4% in the last Census in 2021. It is hoped that numbers in our workforce will increase as a result of all of our recruitment activities in 2024 / 2025, and our workforce will properly reflect our communities. Feedback from the Employee Survey shows:

- 85% of respondents agree that in their experience, people from different backgrounds are readily accepted and made to feel welcome in the council
- 83% are comfortable talking about their background and cultural experiences with their colleagues
- 81% agree that people of all cultures and backgrounds are valued and respected in this organisation
- 80% feel accepted for who they are at work, and free to be their authentic self.

Action: Increase the use of Welsh in the workplace.

Measure: Number of attendees taking up Welsh language courses.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 3: Strategic Aim 3.4

Associated Plans :

- Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023/2028
- Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: Mandatory Welsh Language Awareness eLearning was launched in 2024, and by 31st December 2024, had been accessed by 2,407 employees. Work is now underway to develop the eLearning module into a face to face course for frontline workers who cannot access online learning. Embedding Welsh language learning extends beyond training, for example “Welsh Words of the Week” published in ever SWAY. The use of Welsh Language Applications is promoted in induction.

Action: Increase the number of Welsh speaking employees.

Measure: Number of employees attending Welsh language training courses. Number of employees reporting their Welsh language skills.

Service Lead: Learning, Training and Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 3: Strategic Aim 3.4

Associated Plans :

- Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023/2028
- Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: Number of Employees reporting their Welsh language skills:

Level	Number
Fluent or fairly fluent speaker & writer	610
Fluent or fairly fluent welsh speaker	201
Welsh learner	767
Little or no knowledge	3691
Prefer not to say or unknown	176
Not known	1187

Action: We will develop guidance on Intersectionality to acknowledge that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression and to ensure we consider everything and anything that can marginalise people (CFD).

Measure: Number of times Intersectionality guidance is downloaded from Practice Directory / Dip sample of assessments across CSC and ASC to consider how guidance is being used in practice.

Service Lead: Adult Services

Political Lead: Adult Social Services and Health; and Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Draft Intersectionality guidance due October 2024

Progress: Guidance on Intersectionality has been developed and has recently been cascaded across the LA for feedback, this guidance is due to be launched formally in Winter 2025. It is envisaged that statistics regarding the number of downloads will be available for the AR 2025/2026. Working with Intersectionality in Health & Social Care Settings
<https://read.bookcreator.com/JrOjvfuyhQeh7dhLsCwPjm0Ro9F2/OazSwl4uQkaqnyzvYhTr9A>

Action: We will, in the spirit of the Armed Forces Covenant, look to extend our guaranteed interview scheme for Armed Forces veterans to include those currently serving, reservists and their spouses) and ensure this is implemented across the council.

Measure: Number of members of the Armed Forces Community who receive an interview for positions within the council.

Service Lead: People and Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: Work is ongoing to identify the capture of this information, it is anticipated that this will be reported within the 2025/2025 Annual Report.

Action: We will seek to achieve Gold award status for Neath Port Talbot Council in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS).

Measure: Gold award ERS status achieved by 2028.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: Work remains ongoing to meet the Gold Award status. Policies in Education, Health & Housing will need updating to include the 'Service Children', and the Armed Forces Community as these are part of the 'Legal Duty' was brought in for health boards and local authorities in 2022. Within the next six months the following policy areas will be added: Employment, Social Care, Childcare, Welfare Benefits, Pensions, Personal taxation, Immigration, Citizenship, Service Related Compensation and Transport. This will bring UK Government departments & Devolved Governments into scope (in addition to the local bodies). It is anticipated that further progress will be reported in the Annual Report for 2025/2026.

Priority 4.2 We assist and provide support to members of our communities to enter employment

Action: We will provide high quality apprenticeship, traineeship and work experience opportunities within the council's workforce, including opportunities to use the Welsh language in the workplace.

Measure: The number of Apprenticeships / Traineeships / Work experience opportunities / Number of recognised qualifications achieved by those on formal apprenticeship schemes / Number on formal apprenticeship schemes gaining employment in the council.

Service Lead: People and Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 3: Strategic Aim 3.4

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: From April to December 2024 300 people participated in the range of apprenticeship programmes. These figures include people who commenced apprenticeship programmes in 2022 and 2023 as well as the following 'new starts':

- Quarter 1: 17 new apprenticeship starts, 8 employees upskilling using apprenticeship levy funded programmes and 9 newly appointed modern apprentices*.
- Quarter 2: 25 new apprenticeship starts, 22 employees upskilling using apprenticeship levy funded programmes and 3 newly appointed modern apprentices*. (12 Modern Apprenticeships funded via SPF) *Continued on next page...*

Progress: Continued from previous page...

- Quarter 3: 17 new apprenticeship starts, 17 employees upskilling using apprenticeship levy funded programmes.
- Quarter 4: 28 new apprenticeship starts, 8 employees upskilling using apprenticeship levy funded programmes, 6 foundation apprentices and 14 modern apprentices.
- 51 apprentices have gained a qualification.
- 29 were successful in obtaining permanent employment and 6 went into temporary positions within the council.

Feedback from a MA: *“I have now been taken on permanently and full time within the legal safeguarding team for the council, which I am over the moon about. I finally feel secure and have a bright career ahead of me”*

“Without the securing my initial 6 months placement with NPT I wouldn’t be where I am today. I started off with no money, no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no confidence. Now I have qualifications, a permanent role, experience and not far off buying my own home.”

Case Studies

Case Study 1: *Having successfully completed an apprenticeship, gaining qualification and experience in industrial electrical skills the apprentice was successfully appointed to a Supervisory post in NPT Building Services.*

Case Study 2: *Having successfully completed an apprenticeship, gaining a Level 2 Association Accountancy Technician (AAT) qualification within NPT’s Council Tax Team, the individual went on to achieve Level 3 AAT qualification gaining relevant experience around queries, billing and recovery and appointment as a Council Tax Officer.*

Case Study 3: *Having successfully completed an initial apprenticeship NVQ L2 Qualification the opportunity to complete NVQ Level 3 and following workplace opportunities, led to the individual gaining permanent employment as an Assisted Technology Officer within Social Services.*

Case Study 4: *“During my traineeship in NPT a Level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship in the Training Department was advertised, I applied and was successful. Once I completed my Level 2, I had then moved on to Level 3. After I completed my Level 2 and Level 3 diploma, I then completed my Maths GCSE equivalent, which I am so proud of myself for doing as I really struggled with maths in school.*

I am now a Training and Development Support Officer in the Training and Development Team on a full-time permanent contract. I have recently completed my Level 3 Award in Education and Training, this is so I can hopefully develop in the future to become a Training Officer. I am so happy where I am now as I never thought I would ever come this far in my career!”

Action: We will offer opportunities to young people not in employment, education, or training (NEETs) to help them gain experience and skills in order to enter the world of employment.

Measure: Number of NEETs taking up opportunities to gain experience and skills Number of NEETs entering employment.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years / Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Children and Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy 2022/2025

Progress: Number of young people the Horizons Youth Work Team supported to transfer to alternative provision without becoming NEET was 120 Young people with - 76 entering Education or Training, 41 gaining employment and 3 voluntary work.

Action: We will, in the spirit of the Armed Forces Covenant, offer opportunities to young people from the Armed Forces Cadets to help them gain experience and skills in order to enter the world of employment.

Measure: Number of armed forces cadets undertaking work experience with the council.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: Work is ongoing to identify the capture of this information.

Action: We will provide accessible training/skills sessions for young people and adults to upskill/undertake skills training.

Measure: Number of young people and adults who access our training courses. Number of young people and adults who gain employment as a result of additional training.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years / Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: NPT Skills & Training - Jobs Growth Wales + (JGW+) Programme - Delivered 135 YP engaged/started on the programme, of which 44 young people or 32.6% had a recorded disability/difficulty. 94 YP or 79% left the programme into a positive/neutral destination.

Continued on next page...

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* Apprenticeships - NB Apprenticeship contract year (Aug to July) operates differently to financial/reporting year (Apr to Mar).

30 Apprentices started on programme. Final data from 2023/2024 Apps contract year - 80% of apprentices who left the programme achieved their qualifications/apprenticeship programme.

Shared Prosperity Fund – Pathways 2 Progression : The project engaged with 8 schools/units overall and 1 cohort of electively home educated pupils. A total of 280 pupils enrolled/participated (target was 150), of which 213 pupils achieved a qualification. 76% of pupils who enrolled achieved their qualification.

Other Support & Interventions:

Ysgol Bae Baglan – Hairdressing Provision: 35 pupils attended (15 Year 10 & 20 Year 11), and 17 Year 11 pupils achieved their qualification/units towards 80% of the Yr 11 attending achieved the full level 2 qualification by 07/2025.

Ysgol Hendrefelin – Groundworks/Construction Knowledge:

- 7 pupils attended the academic year
- 3 (to date) have completed the Award at 1 intro to construction Industry qualification
- 1 has completed the on-line test and CSCS card

Youth Service: Over 60 different accredited and certified opportunities were offered and delivered to young people by NPT Youth Service, resulting in 669 young people gaining an Accredited Outcome. This includes 291 young people gaining a Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Shared Prosperity Funding – NPT Anchor Project Employability: SPF Employability provide support to individuals with training course, qualifications, up skilling and employability skills in readiness for entering employment or returning to the labour market.

- 103 individuals into employment
- 59 individuals into work experience
- 68 individuals into volunteering position
- 31 individuals sustaining 6 month employment
- 155 individuals completed a course or gained a qualification, some completed multiple qualifications / courses (total quals / courses undertaken 254).
- 238 individuals completed a course of gained a qualification under the Cynydd Programme, some completed multiple qualifications / courses (total quals / courses undertaken 382)

Communities for Work Plus:

- Participants entered employment - 247

Continued on next page...

Progress: *Continued from previous page...*

- 24 years & under entered employment -71
- Completed training/work relevant certificate on leaving - 88
- 24 years & under completed training/work relevant certificate on leaving – 23
- Communities for Work Plus
- Participants entered employment - 247
- 24 years & under entered employment -71
- Completed training/work relevant certificate on leaving - 88
- 24 years & under completed training/work relevant certificate on leaving – 23

Adult Learning

- 10 learners completed CCPLD – Level 2 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development qualification.
- A number of parents completed the ESW Communication Skills qualification and ESW Application of Number qualification at Eastern Primary and a further 5 courses were delivered at the Tirmorfa Centre.
- 41 learners have gained an ESW qualification (since Oct 23).
- A number of parents have completed Behaviour Management courses to support their children at Maesmarchog Primary and other schools and community venues.
- 8 young people aged 15- 16 have undertaken the GCSE English Language qualification with results expected in Aug 25.
- 8 AL staff members completed the L3 Numeracy Practitioners course.
- There are ongoing literacy and numeracy skills provision at Melin Advice Centre and the Tirmorfa Centre, alongside a range of “soft skills” courses which support people who are inactive to gain confidence to return to work.
- 15 learners sat AS/A Levels: 100% success.
- 38 learners sat GCSEs (results pending).

Over 60 different accredited and certified opportunities were offered and delivered to young people by NPT Youth Service, resulting in 669 young people gaining as Accredited Outcome. This number includes 291 young people gaining a Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

TATA Employability Support Team: Team awareness of protected characteristics – all staff recently undertook Equality and Diversity training. Disabled team member supported with updated technology to be able to undertake tasks required for role. Participants with protected characteristics e.g. different ages have been supported with tailored courses such as one to one training.

Priority 4.3 Our Gender Pay Gaps are reduced

Action: We will address the gender pay gap within the council through actions set out in the Gender Equality Action Plan, developed in partnership with Chwarae Teg via the Fair Play Employer Scheme.

Measure: We monitor this through the Gender Pay Gap Annual Report and Annual Equalities in Employment Report.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: Our Gender Pay Gap for 2024 is 3.81%, compared with 3.28 in 2023 and 3.56 in 2022. Overall, our gender pay gap data shows a positive trend in reducing the mean gender pay gap over the years, which is a good sign of progress towards pay equality. However, the increase in the median gender pay gap in 2024 suggests that there may still be underlying issues that need to be addressed to ensure consistent improvement. We will look at the data to identify underlying trends.

Action: We will review the career mentoring scheme 'NPT Ment2Be' for low paid women, giving consideration to feedback from the initial cohort.

Measure: We will demonstrate progress through recruitment data and pay data.

We will also measure qualitative data through feedback from mentors and mentees and the numbers of those taking part in the scheme.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: In 2022, 430 females were appointed from 1146 shortlisted applications. In 2023, 448 females were appointed from 1205 shortlists and in 2024, this number rose to 449 appointments from 1501 shortlists.

We anticipate that utilising the LinkedIn Recruiter platform, implementing anonymised application forms, and offering hybrid and flexible working arrangements will contribute to an increase in these figures in the coming years.

An event held to mark International Women's Day (8th March 2025) saw four Inspirational female employees from across the council speak about their careers and experience. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all.

The Ment2Be Scheme is now in its second year. The programme is be mutually beneficial, with a first-time mentor sharing:

"Becoming a first-time mentor for my colleagues has brought numerous benefits. I've experienced a deep sense of fulfilment from helping
Continued on next page...

Progress: *Continued from previous page... others grow and succeed, which is incredibly rewarding. Mentoring has also enhanced my own skills, such as communication, leadership, an problem-solving, as I've had to articulate my knowledge and provide guidance.*

Additionally, building strong relationships with my mentees has fostered a supportive and collaborative work environment, benefiting both me and my team. Overall, mentoring has been a mutually enriching experience, contributing to both my personal and professional growth”.

Feedback from mentees included:

“My mentor provided invaluable support helping to understand the environment and overcome challenges”.

“Their council experience was insightful, sharing their career journey and practical advice. I gained a broader understanding of council operations and received helpful guidance on learning styles and work preferences”.

Action: We will roll out the implementation of anonymised application forms in our recruitment process.

Measure: We will monitor this via the recruitment data in the Annual Equalities report.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development	Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice
Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes	Associated Plans : Future of Work Strategy 2022/2027

Progress: This has been actioned, and the use of Anonymised Application Forms its default recruitment method in the updated Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Equality Objective 5 - Participation

To ensure services are accessible for all and people and communities are able to better influence decisions that affect them



Priority 5.1 Our services, digital and traditional, are accessible to all

Action: We will continuously review and update our website to improve accessibility.

Measure: We use best practice accessibility tools such as Silktide to monitor our website for accessibility issues and continue to iterate our website to ensure it meets this standard. We are currently ranked by Silktide in the top 20 UK Council websites for accessibility. / Specific corporate reporting metrics include / NPT corporate Website User Satisfaction score / WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) accessibility compliance score against 'AA' standard / NPT website Content score (Quality of content on the website).

Service Lead: Digital Services

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.13

Associated Plans :

- Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy

Progress: Work has continued to ensure we maintain our commitment to developing accessible platforms and published content via our corporate website, which remains ranked in the top 20 UK Council websites for accessibility. Through alignment to our Digital Service Standards, we are supporting all service areas to meet the GOV.UK and Welsh Government service standards in the context of how we provide services to our residents, visitors and businesses. As part of our digital standards, we have a focus on making sure everyone can use the service being provided. This ensures people with different physical, mental health, social, cultural or learning needs can use the service, whether it's for the public or staff. We champion a design and build ethos that promotes and facilitates the Welsh language and treat users who speak it equally with those who prefer English.

Action: We will travel to locations across the county borough to ensure transport barriers and ICT equipment is overcome for those who do not have direct access.

Measure: We use best practice accessibility tools such as Silktide to monitor our website for accessibility issues and continue to iterate our website to ensure it meets this standard. We are currently ranked by Silktide in the top 20 UK Council websites for accessibility. ·Specific corporate reporting metrics include NPT corporate Website User Satisfaction score / WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) accessibility compliance score against 'AA' standard / NPT website Content score (Quality of content on the website).

Service Lead: Support and Transformation Services

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice / Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.13

Associated Plans :

- Adult Learning Delivery Plans

Progress: Between April and July 2025 our Digital Inclusion Officers have travelled to 21 venues across Neath Port Talbot to deliver Digital Sessions and Workshops to as many people as possible. During this period, we have supported 228 individuals. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* We are aiming to develop monthly drop-in sessions, in care homes throughout NPT, for both residents and family members, and also develop a monthly drop-in session for students in the Tir Morfa centre, where a need has been identified. We will continue to work in partnership with other organisations, for example schools, Team Around the Family etc to help identify the digital needs of their communities and offer targeted sessions to support them.

Action: Digital Inclusion Ambassador to complete a mapping exercise regarding current delivery and gaps identified.

Measure: Report will have been completed.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.13

Associated Plans :

- Adult Learning Delivery Plans

Progress: Due to less funding for this year, we have less Digital Inclusion Officers delivery in certain areas (Afan Valleys in particular) has reduced but we are planning to get back into these areas within the next few months. The aim is to develop more Digital Inclusion sessions in schools across the county. Feedback has been positive, including from a 92 year old participant “I have found digital inclusion sessions very helpful and I wouldn’t have got this far without your help”.

Action: We will deliver the Public Participation Strategy Action Plan.

Measure: Progress against actions in Public Participation Plan by 2027.

Service Lead: People and Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.6

Associated Plans : NPT Public Participation Strategy 2023/2028

Progress: Updates under the Public Participation Strategy to ensure services are accessible to all include publishing clear guidance on the democratic process and how to engage with council meetings, continuously improving the Forward Work Programme to support public engagement, and promoting youth involvement in democracy through outreach events. Council meetings are webcast and operate on a bilingual hybrid basis, with translation facilities available. Public feedback is actively used to shape decisions, as demonstrated in the 2025/2026 budget consultation. Staff training has been delivered to enhance understanding of effective participation, including key principles and frameworks. An ‘engaging with our communities’ session was delivered three times (once online, and twice in person) during the year as part of the council’s Internal Leadership Development Programme. There were 44 attendees across the 3 sessions). The session provides an overview of some of the things we need to consider when engaging and consulting with our communities, including the reasons the council might engage or consult; legislation; The Gunning *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* Principles; The National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales and what to consider in terms of making consultation. The council has also expanded digital engagement through the MyNPT resident portal, which streamlines access to services and had 1,746 users by March 2025. Additionally, the council’s website was ranked among the top ten in the UK for accessibility following a major content review and redesign.

Action: We will ensure that the services provided by the council to the Armed Forces Community under the Armed Forces Covenant are accessible online, but also by telephone and email via the Armed Forces Liaison Officer (AFLO), and by signposting to the website and telephone number for the Veteran Gateway.

Measure: Information on relevant webpages and other channels updated. Analytics for relevant webpages Number of emails and calls dealt with by AFLO Analytics for relevant social media posts.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: Total hits for Armed Forces Covenant Webpage:

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 = 313
1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 = 256

Whilst there appears to be a slight decrease in the number of website hits for the Armed Forces Covenant, work is ongoing to identify appropriate mechanisms for capturing the number of contacts made for all methods of contact, it is anticipated that progress will be reported in the Annual Report for 2025/2026.

Action: The Democratic Services Committee will undertake a focussed piece of work on ‘Diversity in Democracy’, via a specific Task and Finish Group.

Measure: The Diversity in Democracy Action Plan will contain SMART measures and will be reported to Council for approval and be monitored by the Democratic Services Committee as per the agreed timescales.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Democratic Services Committee

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Diversity in Democracy Action Plan

Progress: Between 2024 and 2025, the Democratic Services Committee undertook a range of initiatives to promote diversity in democracy. A dedicated Task and Finish Group was established to identify barriers faced by elected members, *Continued on next page...*

Continued on previous page... particularly around harassment and intimidation, and developed an action plan informed by member feedback through workshops and surveys. The Committee supported a diversity and inclusion survey to benchmark experiences across protected characteristics and inform future strategies. Member safety was a key focus, with the development of a safety toolkit, collaboration with South Wales Police, and proposals for a harassment reporting portal. Training was expanded to include mandatory safeguarding and counterterrorism modules, and chair training was made available to all councillors. The Committee also supported electoral registration efforts and preparations for Senedd reforms in 2026, aligning with Local Democracy Week and the Participation Strategy. These efforts were embedded in broader governance frameworks, including the Annual Governance Statement and Corporate Plan Reports, reinforcing the council's commitment to inclusive democratic participation.

Action: We will consider how to communicate more effectively with our various communities e.g. social media and young people, use of QR codes and videos etc. for people who struggle with letters and the written word.

Measure: Social media insights / Young people / Insights on social media to track age of people viewing content / QR codes analytics / Youtube analytics

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Community and Strategic Leadership

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Enabling Programme: Strategic Aim 5.3

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: As part of our commitment to improving external communications under the Strategic Equality Plan, we continue to explore and apply the most appropriate channels to reach our diverse communities. This includes increasing the use of video content to better engage younger audiences, while also maintaining the use of print media for those who are not digitally connected. Campaigns such as Help with the Cost of Living and the Resident Newsletter Sign-Up have demonstrated our flexible approach to communication, ensuring accessibility and relevance across different audience groups. We are actively using social media insights to monitor the effectiveness of our communications, including demographic data to better understand who is engaging with our content. In addition, we are working closely with outreach workers in departments such as Adult Social Services and the Youth Service to utilise their channels. This collaborative approach helps us communicate more effectively with specific audiences, ensuring our messages are both accessible and impactful.

Action: All new builds will be compliant with building regulations (Part M).

Measure: Buildings will be accessible for all with appropriate facilities.

Service Lead: Planning and Public Protection

Political Lead: Strategic Planning, Transport and Connectivity

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.3

Associated Plans : Supplementary Planning Guidance BE1

Progress: All new builds are compliant with Building Regulations (Part M) and are accessible to all and have the appropriate facilities to meet users needs.

Priority 5.2 Our communities will enjoy increased social and community cohesion

Action: Our buildings will continue to be assessed and reasonable adjustments made in improve accessibility.

Measure: Buildings accessible for all.

Service Lead: Property and Regeneration

Political Lead: Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.3

Associated Plans : Corporate Asset Management Plan

Progress: Improvement works have taken place across a number of Authority buildings where any accessibility issues identified have been addressed. Further improvements will take place in 2025/2026 as and when identified and in line with budgets.

Action: We will support local groups, including the BME Community Association and the Neath Port Talbot LGBTQIA+ Group, to develop community activities and events.

Measure: Number of relevant community activities and events.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice / Nature, Tourism and Wellbeing

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Associated Plans : NPT Culture Strategy 2023

Progress: A total of four events were held in conjunction with the BME Community Association (Anti-Racism Allyship Event, Windrush Celebration and Black History 365) and one in partnership with NPT LGBTQ+ Forum “Trans Day of Remembrance”. Each of these events were open to NPT Staff and members of the community and were well attended. Three of these events were held in civic buildings.

Action: We will provide information and a signposting service for those who wish to learn English and/or Welsh.

Measure: The number of hits on the relevant pages of our website.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice / Nature, Tourism and Wellbeing

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 3: Strategic Aim 3.4

Associated Plans : NPT Culture Strategy 2023

Progress: The number of hits on our website under “Learning and Using Welsh” saw a slight decrease in comparison to 2023/2024, equating to just under 2% (10 hits). *Continued on next page...*

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* With the launch of the Dewch i Sgwrsio Campaign at the Urdd Eisteddfod Dur y Mor in May 2025, it is anticipated that the hits will increase and this be reflected within the Annual Report 2025/2026.

Action: We will understand the needs of our ageing community and facilitate the development of a NPT Ageing Well Strategy and strengthening of policies to respond to these needs.

Measure: *High level:* An approved NPT Ageing Well Strategy and Action Plan - An increase in the number of policies locally that recognise and respond to the needs of our communities by ensuring individuals can age well.
Broad: Increase in the number of individuals feeling more informed / empowered. - Reduced sense of loneliness and or social isolation. - Individuals reporting an increased sense of health and wellbeing. - Improved access to public or private transport links. - Improved sense of belonging. - Improved digital access and inclusion.

Service Lead: Adult Services	Political Lead: Adult Social Services and Health
Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028: Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.2	Associated Plans : Living the Life You Want - Adult Social Care Strategy 2023/2026

Progress: Community wellbeing assessments have been conducted and delivered in several areas. A common theme identified from the Ageing Well principles, which requires significant improvement, is transport. Older persons have expressed that current public transport services do not meet their requirements, particularly due to the lack of bus services during evening hours.

To address this issue, a public transport consultation is currently underway with Transport for Wales (TfW) and residents are encouraged to participate.

Some key initiatives throughout 2024/2025 include Transport Confidence Training, Promotion of Community Transport, Digital Inclusion, Early Help Hubs, Social Participation and Contribution and a Community Garden Initiative.

Funding and Support: Maintaining existing funding for these initiatives is crucial to continue supporting our older residents and enhancing their quality of life.

Action: We will develop a rights-based approach to our work, with a focus on children’s rights working with Youth Mayor, Youth Council amongst others.

Measure: The number of young people completing the survey and any actions taken on the issues identified.

Service Lead: Early Years, Inclusion and Participation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.6

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People’s Plan
- Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Strategic Directorate Plan

Progress: The Youth Council will now carry out the Change Starts With You survey on a bi-annual cycle. This has been approved by cabinet and gives the young people more time to develop an action plan and address the issues raised. The top 3 issues raised at the moment from the last survey are Racism, Improve Sexual Health Lessons, Bullying.

Action: We will revise our Consultation and Engagement Strategy and strengthen our existing engagement mechanisms, e.g. the Let’s Keep Talking activities and the NPT Citizens’ Panel, and use responses to ensure that the Council’s policy making, and service development is informed by what matters to people.

Measure: Revised Consultation and Engagement Strategy and toolkit published in 2024/25

Increase in membership of the NPT Citizens’ Panel.

NPT Citizens’ Panel will more closely represent the profile of residents in the county borough in terms of geographical spread and protected characteristics.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.6

Associated Plans : NPT Public Participation Strategy 2023/2027

Progress: Work is ongoing with regards to the Revised Consultation and Engagement Strategy and Toolkit, it is anticipated that progress relating to this action will be reflected in the 2025/2026 Annual Report.

Action: We will work with organisations that support the Armed Forces Community to help reduce isolation and loneliness, which is felt by many when they leave the services or by a member of the family when the serving family member is deployed on active service or training.

Measure: Number of people from the Armed Forces Community referred by the Armed Forces Liaison Officer to relevant organisations for support.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development	Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice
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Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes	Associated Plans : N/A
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Progress: In 2024/2025, the Armed Forces Liaison Officer made a total of 68 referrals to support organisations on behalf of members the Armed Forces Community.

Action: We will work in partnership with relevant groups to address our shared history and explore ways to better express this within our communities.

Measure: Percentage of targets met within the Culture Strategy action plan.

Service Lead: Leisure Tourism Heritage & Culture	Political Lead: Nature, Tourism and Wellbeing
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Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028: Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 3.2	Associated Plans : Culture Strategy 2023
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Progress: As hosts of the Urdd Eisteddfod at Margam Country Park, Neath Port Talbot saw some encouraging participation in Welsh culture and language as a result of our partnership with Urdd include:

- An additional 1676 members from Gorllewin Morgannwg (which includes NPT and Swansea) registered to compete across all competitions, with a total of 3530 individuals competing, a 90% increase on 2024.
- Competition registrations in NPT increased by 105% from 2024 with over 13,000 registrations in the area.
- Total registrations to compete from across Wales stood at 119,593 in 2025 – a 19% increase on 2024.
- Welsh Learners participation in the 2025 Urdd increased to 35% of all competitors from Gorllewin Morgannwg, this figure was 20% in 2024. As part of major investment through UK Government’s Levelling Up Fund at Gnoll Country Park a range of new interpretation is being designed to immerse visitors in the story of the park’s heritage and landscape. This includes complete reinterpretation of the park, new signage and interactive interpretation in addition to a digital reconstruction of the former Gnoll House ruins. *Continued on next page...*

Continued from previous page... which includes a wide range of events taking place across 2025 to celebrate the centenary and an associated marketing campaign. The Shared Prosperity (SPF) funded Heritage, Culture Tourism Event Fund for 2024/2025 closed in March 2025 which resulted in the allocation of £1.9m of funding to public, private and voluntary sector organisations. The funding was allocated on the basis of projects which meet the aims of the NPT Culture Strategy, Destination Management Plan and Heritage Strategy.

Priority 5.3 Decision making

Action: We will develop an equalities training programme for elected members.

Measure: Number of members attending training sessions.

Service Lead: Legal & Democratic Services

Political Lead: Democratic Services Committee

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028 Cross-cutting Themes

Associated Plans : Member Development/ Training Plan

Progress: The council made significant progress in developing and delivering an equalities training programme for elected members. This initiative was embedded within the Governance Improvement Action Plan, which included annual refresher training on the Members’ Code of Conduct and biannual meetings between Group Leaders and the Monitoring Officer to reinforce ethical standards. All 60 elected members received comprehensive induction training covering equalities, social media, gifts and hospitality, and officer/member protocols, with 42 members attending a second refresher session. Equalities training was also integrated into the Diversity in Democracy programme and supported by WLGA’s online Councillor Guide and e-learning modules. To enhance member safety and inclusion, training was expanded to include health and safety, cyber security, and lone working. The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Report confirmed that Code of Conduct training, including social media use, is now part of biannual refresher sessions. The council also implemented annual surveys to assess training needs and submitted reports to the Standards Committee to monitor compliance and identify areas for improvement.

Equality Objective 6 - Living Standards

To work to reduce poverty and support independent living



Priority 6.1 People and communities will benefit from interventions to alleviate poverty

Action: We will utilise LIFT (Low Income Family Tracker) to ensure support is directed to those in most need.

Measure: People are aware of what help is available and how to access it.

Service Lead: People & Organisational Development

Political Lead: Finance, Performance and Social Justice

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.1

Associated Plans : NPT PSB Cost of Living and Poverty Prevention Partnership Action Plan (in development)

Progress: LIFT has been used to identify cohorts of households missing out on benefits they are entitled to. Using the data, we have written directly to these households to encourage them to claim the relevant financial support by engaging with the appropriate council service (e.g., Welfare Rights) or national organisation (e.g., NHS). Pension Credit has been the primary focus of the LIFT campaigns, which in 2024/2025 resulted in approx. £449,544 of annual Pension Credit claimed. LIFT has also been used to pilot campaigns to increase the take-up of the Childcare Offer for Wales and the School Essentials Grant. To complement the LIFT campaigns (sent via letter), the Corporate Communications Team have also utilised social media messaging to promote 'Help with the Cost of Living.'

Action: We will continue to coordinate the Food & Fun provision to help tackle holiday hunger and support those families, children and young people to have a more positive summer holiday.

Measure: Number of schools offering the food and fun provision / Number of young people attending food and fun provisions.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.1

Associated Plans : NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress:

- The number of schools offering the food and fun provision during the 2024/2025 period was 18.
- The number of places available to young people for the food and fun provision consisted of 33 cohorts
- Overall attendance figure totalling 1,125 young people.

Action: The youth service will provide support to 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Measure: Number of young people who enter employment, education or training.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan
- Children and Young People's Participation and Engagement Strategy 2022/2025

Progress: The number of young people who were NEET and supported by the Horizons Team to a positive EET outcomes was 120 Young people with - 76 entering Education or Training, 41 gaining employment and 3 voluntary work.

Action: The youth service will provide support to 15-18 year olds who have been identified as being at risk of becoming homeless.

Measure: Number of young people who receive support. Number of young people who are better prepared for independent living.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans : NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress:

- Number of young people identified at being at risk of youth homelessness and who received support from the Youth Support Team was 67.
- Number of young people who stated that they are better prepared for independent living were supported via the prevention programme. evaluation process shows that 21 young people which equates to 72% of those asked felt better prepared for independent living.
- Number of youth clubs open to young people for 24/25 was 16.
- Number of young people accessing youth clubs during this period was 1,183.

Action: The youth service will provide community-based youth clubs and detached or outreach activities to young people.

Measure: Number of youth clubs open. Number of young people accessing youth clubs. Number of detached and outreach sessions provided.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Education and Early Years Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.15

Associated Plans : NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress: Number of youth clubs open to young people was 16.

The number of young people accessing youth clubs during this period was 1,183. Number of detached and outreach sessions provided.

Action: To support families to purchase essential items.

Measure: Number of successful grant applications.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Children and family Services/ Housing and Community Safety

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 1 & 2: Strategic Aim 1.2, 2.1

Associated Plans : Children and Young People Services Strategic Plan 2023/2026

Progress:

Food Poverty Grant: A total of 41 eligible applications were successful for the Food Poverty Grant which amounted to a total of £60,408.96 revenue and £92,197.26 capital.

24-25 Warm Hubs: Funding for Warm Hubs was allocated and distributed to organisations within NPT to provide a Warm Space/Hub where people can visit to keep warm and feel safe. A total of 33 successful applications were awarded to eligible groups and organisations out of the £79,982 24/25 allocation to NPT.

Skills and Training : NPT Skills & Training successfully applied and delivered support and interventions through the Food Poverty Grant in 24/25. A total of £7500 was awarded and spent and utilised with young people on all NPT Skills & Training programmes. The project supported:

- 80 welfare packs (food/laundry/personal care packages)
- 20 food cards/vouchers were issued to those as emergencies to purchase meals/groceries/food
- 75 breakfast sessions were provided over a 15-week period to learners, providing 455 breakfasts
- 50 learners received cooking equipment such as an air fryer and/or slow cooker to support cooking on a budget/healthy eating at home
- 50 learners attended cooking on a budget/healthy eating sessions to support cooking on a budget/healthy eating at home
- 50 learners attended cooking on a budget/healthy eating sessions

NPT Skills & Training, through their JGW+ funding ring fence 0.25% of their total contract value into a deprivation/well-being fund, for use with JGW+ learners. this amounted to a budget of £1884.90, with NPT Skills & Training spending £1983.83 in total (£98.93 over the funding pot), demonstrating the need for this fund to support learners. The ring-fenced funding was utilised to support 29 learners with Personal/Interview/Placement clothing, to obtain ID photos, to obtain ID documents (to support right to work employment checks) and to obtain a crisis package for food/toiletries/laundry.

Adult Learning: 6 parents have completed a 4-week Cooking with your Child course, Tir Morfa centre (Sandfields West) which included provision for all the ingredients for cooking, helping them to stretch their food budget further. 16 parents and staff at Ysgol Maes Y Coed completed a 6 week Cooking on a Budget course, which included provision for all the ingredients for cooking, helping them to stretch their food budget further. There have been several courses available to parents, such as a 4-week Science course at Pontardawe Library, a 6-week Herb Gardening course at Croeserw Community Centre and a 3-week Story Sacks course at Port Talbot Library.

Progress: *Continued from previous page...*

Parents have also been signposted to the food pantry which provides top ups for families within the community who are struggling with rising cost of living. Digital Inclusion sessions have been held in in local libraries & community venues directly targeted at parents to support them in applying for Schools Essentials Grant

Communities for Work Plus: The Communities for Work Plus programme is designed to help participants overcome personal barriers that may prevent them from entering or sustaining employment. By addressing these challenges, we aim to ease the pressures of poverty and reduce the wider impact of the rising cost of living. Our approach is holistic, recognising that employability support is most effective when individuals are also supported with their wider wellbeing needs.

CFW+ participants supported by food poverty grants throughout NPTCBC: Over 55+ - 25 completed applications

Young people 16 to 25 – 11 completed applications

Participants accessed the food poverty grant - 36

Action: The Working Together Service will support families to improve their home environment.

Measure: Number of families who successfully achieve their outcome.

Service Lead: Children & Young People’s Services

Political Lead: Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Well-being Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2

Associated Plans : Children and Young People’s Regional Board

Progress: The Social Services Information System was migrated to the new Mosaic system in January 2025. As such, data is only available for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st January 2025. Within this time frame, the total number of families who successfully achieved their outcome was 21.

Action: Care experienced young people are not disadvantaged in society.

Measure: Number of care experienced young people in higher education, apprenticeships and/or employment.

Service Lead: Children and Young People’s Services

Political Lead: Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.13

Associated Plans : Children and Young People Services Strategic Plan 2023/2026

Progress: The Social Services Information System was migrated to the new Mosaic system in January 2025. As such, data is only available for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st January 2025. Within this time period, the total number of care experienced young people in higher education, apprenticeships and/or employment was 79.

Priority 6.2 People will benefit from programmes and support to live as independently as possible

Action: Care experienced young people will be prepared to live independently. To support young people to develop independent living skills through groups facilitated by Participation and Engagement officers.

Measure: Number of care experienced young people accessing independent living groups.

Service Lead: Children and Young People's Services

Political Lead: Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.4

Associated Plans : Children and Young People Services Strategic Plan 2023/2026

Progress: Weekly life skills sessions in collaboration with Action for Children delivered to young people receiving services/care experienced. 4 young people accessed these sessions. A second weekly life skills session is facilitated in collaboration with YJEIS (Youth Justice & Early Intervention Service). This project has supported 10 vulnerable children during this period.

Action: Care experienced young people will have suitable accommodation.

Measure: Number of care experienced young people who live independently.

Service Lead: Children and Young People's Services

Political Lead: Children and Family Services

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.4

Associated Plans : Children and Young Peoples Plan

Progress: Neath Port Talbot Council has made positive progress in supporting care experienced young people to access safe, stable, and suitable accommodation, in line with our Housing and Homelessness Strategy. Our approach is rooted in partnership working to ensure that young people leaving care are not only provided with a roof over their heads but are also supported to develop the skills and confidence needed for independent living. This work is closely aligned with the Children and Young Peoples Plan and is underpinned by trauma-informed and psychologically informed principles, as set out in our Housing and Homelessness Strategy. A key area of progress this year has been our project group reviewing potential taster tenancy models or pilots. This initiative could offer care experienced young people the opportunity to trial independent living in a supported environment, helping them to build practical skills such as budgeting, managing a household, and maintaining a tenancy.

Taster tenancies are designed to provide a 'stepping stone' between supported accommodation and full independence, reducing the risk of tenancy breakdown and repeat homelessness. The proposal is that Taster Tenancies will be delivered in close collaboration with housing providers and support workers, ensuring that young people have access to tailored advice and guidance throughout their journey.

Continued on next page...

Progress: *Continued from previous page...* A further milestone this year has been the development of a new young person accommodation scheme in Neath Town Centre, developed in partnership with an RSL. This scheme is designed to provide high-quality, supported accommodation for young people, with a focus on enabling successful transitions to independent living. Working collaboratively with the RSL has ensured that the scheme is shaped by the needs of young people we are supporting. Commissioning Team have been fully involved with the project to ensure the arrangements are in place to provide the support for the unit. This approach strengthens our local offer and demonstrates our commitment to expanding specialist accommodation options for care experienced young people in Neath Port Talbot, as set out in our strategies.

Looking ahead, we are committed to further developing this approach, including exploring opportunities to increase the availability of models such as taster tenancies and more specialist high quality supported accommodation. We will also continue to strengthen links with education, employment, and wellbeing services to ensure holistic support for care experienced young people. This work remains a key priority within our broader ambition to end youth homelessness and ensure that every young person in Neath Port Talbot has a place to call home.

Action: We will support the Regional Partnership Board to develop and continue to provide a sustainable range of services that meet demand, enabling individuals to remain at home maintaining their independence for as long as possible receiving appropriate support at times of need.

Measure: As part of the Local and Regional Partnership Boards we will review performance against agreed objectives to ensure services are effective. As part of the Local and Regional Partnership Boards we will review performance against agreed objectives to ensure services are effective.

Service Lead: Adult Services

Political Lead: Adult Social Services and Health

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.2

Associated Plans : Plan for Adult Social Care 2019- 2022

Progress: We remain committed to supporting individuals maintain their independence and accessing support at their time of need. Work is ongoing with regards to how this information is currently captured, it is envisaged that progress will be reported in future reports.

Action: Adult Services will continue to develop and deliver Safe and Well Volunteering to those aged 18+ who are experiencing, and at risk of chronic social isolation and loneliness.

Measure: No. of Volunteers recruited / No. of people supported by Safe and Well Volunteering / No. of Volunteer Hours Provided / No. of social groups supported by Safe and Well Volunteers.

Service Lead: Adult Service

Political Lead: Adult Social Services and Health

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.5

Associated Plans : Plan for Adult Social Care 2019/2022

Progress: The Safe & Well Service was initially created during the covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Due to the changing nature of support services, the Safe & Well Service ceased in June 2025.

Action: We will continue to develop and deliver a range of assistive technology services to support people aged 18+ to achieve personal outcomes, support progression, and promote a digital first approach where appropriate.

Measure: Number of people utilising assistive technologies to support independence / Number of packages of care enhanced/enabled with technology / Number of people (including staff) better informed of how digital technologies can support independence and safety at home.

Service Lead: Adult Services

Political Lead: Adult Social Services and Health

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.2

Associated Plans :
• Plan for Adult Social Care 2019/2022

Progress: Due to issues re lack of Mosaic reporting functions since Feb 2025 we are limited on what we can report.

Approximately, 2400 individuals used the service with connections to the lifeline and telecare services, with the following breakdown of services provided:

- Category 1 - 77%
- lifeline Mobile – 3%
- Category 2 – 12%
- Category 3 (complex) – 12%

Lifeline Mobile - The Digital Switch programme to upgrade all lifeline units from analogue to digital progressed well and to schedule, with remaining scheduled to be completed by July 2025.

Procurement process completed for Call Monitoring Service provider (Galwgofal won were the successful bidders) to ensure best value and continue to maintain quality, including bilingual call monitoring support for user of the service. *Continued on next page...*

Progress: Continued from previous page...

Reablement project: A temporary lifeline scheme was piloted was launched from 1 Dec 2024. For individuals using the reablement support service. From 1 December 2024 – 31 March 2025:

- 52 referrals
- 45 Temporary lifelines installed
- 29 opted for ongoing lifeline services, 65% of whom opted for the new lifeline mobile which supports falls prevention by enabling confident community/outdoor activities .
- 20 individuals were referred on to Digital Enablement Service.

This had been successfully established as business as usual for reablement with plan to roll this out to Community Wellbeing team as soon as possible. This supports timely discharge, positive risk taking, supporting for individuals(and carers) for staying at home safely for longer, and falls prevention.

SPF Digital Enablement project:

- Supported **404 older and/or disabled adults** (including carers) to get online safely and develop digital skills.
- Received **145 visitors** (individuals, staff and carers) to the Digital Solutions Suite at Cimla where people can experience and explore how mainstream technology can support independent living at home.
- Provided dedicated training on TEC/DE services and equipment, digital exclusion and benefits of smart tech to **35 staff members** across Neath Port Talbot council.

Action: We will provide young people with opportunities to enhance their independent living skills by supporting young parents.

Measure: Number of young parents supported / Number of young parents who state that they now know where to go for help and support.

Service Lead: Adult Services

Political Lead: Education and Early Years/Climate Change and Economic Growth

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.4

- Associated Plans :**
- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People’s Plan
 - Children and Young People’s Participation and Engagement Strategy 2022/2025

Progress: Number of young parents supported by the Youth Support Team was 34. The Youth Service evaluation form no longer ask for the number of young parents who state that they now know where to go for help and support.

Priority 6.3 Transport links are maintained or enhanced

Action: We will support community transport initiatives.

Measure: Annual review and monitoring of new community transport initiatives introduced.

Service Lead: Engineering and Transport

Political Lead: Strategic Planning, Transport and Connectivity

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 4: Strategic Aim 4.5

Associated Plans : Local Transport Plan

Progress: Community transport initiatives received all the funding requested, an increase from £133,407 in 2023/2024 to £196,522. Funding contributed towards, provision of transport coordinators, drivers to continue service delivery, vehicle maintenance costs and electric vehicle charging facilities.

Action: We will work in partnership with regional transport officers, Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to improve local transport and regional connectivity.

Measure: Annual reports presented to Cabinet to monitor progress on Active Travel and the implementation of a Regional Transport Plan and Local Bus Network via the Franchise.

Service Lead: Engineering and Transport

Political Lead: Strategic Planning, Transport and Connectivity

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 4: Strategic Aim 4.5

Associated Plans :

- NPT Local Development Plan 2011/2026
- SWW CJC Corporate Plan 2023/2028
- Local Transport Plan; and Regional Transport Plan 2025/2030

Progress: 2024/2025 was the first year of fully subsidised bus network in the County. Bus services were secured for the short-term, utilising the Bus Network Grant until Franchising is introduced. There were small amendments to the bus network such as providing Saturday services and re-introducing services where they had previously been removed by commercial bus operators. The introduction of bus franchising is now scheduled for September 2027.

Action: We are working in partnership with Welsh Government (WG) and Transport For Wales on the new franchised network which Welsh Government are leading on.

Measure: Quarterly updates to be produced for Welsh Government.

Service Lead: Engineering and Transport

Political Lead: Strategic Planning, Transport and Connectivity

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:

Wellbeing Objective 4: Strategic Aim 4.5

Associated Plans : N/A

Progress: We worked with Transport for Wales on aspirational bus network and a base network utilising existing resources. The base network is currently out for public engagement.

Action: At highway locations where maintenance, structural renewal is a priority, or active travel and safe routes in communities are planned the Council will endeavour to address any local accessibility issues at the same time, such as the need for dropped crossings and ramps.

Measure: Improvements to walking networks / All improvements made in line with Active travel guidance.
Active Travel Delivery Plan quarterly updates to be produced for Welsh Government.

Service Lead: Engineering and Transport

Political Lead: Strategic Planning, Transport and Connectivity

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 2: Strategic Aim 2.11

Associated Plans :

- NPT Local Development Plan 2011/2026
- NPT Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020/2030
- NPT Active Travel Delivery Plan 2025/2030
- Active Travel Plan

Progress: All highways, road safety, active travel and safe routes in communities' schemes were delivered on time with the allocated budgets. These schemes will improve the travelling time and safety of all users. Detailed design was undertaken for the Neath to Cimla Active Travel Route. This included proposals for the installation of dropped kerbs, tactile paving, raised plateaus, and controlled crossing points. Alongside this work a traffic signal controlled junction assisting both drivers and pedestrians on the A4067 Godrergraig / Ystalyfera was installed, alongside a reduction in the speed from national speed limit to 30mph and 40mph along its stretch. This has created a much safer environment at the busy junction, whilst raising pedestrian confidence when crossing, improving the wellbeing of the community over future generations.

NPT has a prioritised programme for delivering dropped kerbs and tactile paving along key active travel routes. In 2024/2025, a total of five active travel routes had new dropped kerbs and tactiles installed.

Action: We will provide transport for young carers to enable them to access the young carers group.

Measure: Number of young people accessing the free transport.

Service Lead: Support Services & Transformation

Political Lead: Early Years & Partnerships / Adult Social Services and Health

Link to Corporate Strategy 2025/2028:
Wellbeing Objective 1: Strategic Aim 1.2

Associated Plans :

- NPT Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan

Progress: The Youth Service has continued to provide free transport for young carers to access the young carers groups.



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Contact Us



07805 771506



policy@npt.gov.uk

