

Prevention & Inclusion Service Area Update Report

Scrutiny Committee People
28th February 2023

1. Introduction

Requirements on Local Authorities to deliver preventative services is embedded in the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014. Section 15 (1) of this legislation refers to *'a Local Authority must provide or arrange for the provision of a range and level of services which it considers will achieve'* (not exhaustive list)

- Contributing towards preventing or delaying the development of peoples needs for care and support
- Reducing the needs for care and support of people with such needs
- Enabling people to live their lives as independently as possible
- Minimising the effect on disabled people of their disabilities
- Promoting the upbringing of children by their families, where that is consistent with the well-being of children
- Contributing towards preventing people from suffering abuse or neglect

Furthermore, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 refers to improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. This legislation helps to address long term challenges such as poverty and health inequalities by detailing expectations on public bodies. The seven well-being goals within this legislation provide a shared vision for Wales for public bodies to work towards. Prevention is firmly identified as one of the five sustainable principles guiding organisations on how to meet their duty under the Act and achieve the well-being goals. The *'Prevention'* principle refers to organisations acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse.

This report will demonstrate how Newport City Council is meeting their responsibilities and duty under these two specific pieces of legislation. It will show how the creation of a new Prevention and Inclusion Service Area has enabled a strengthening and improved co-ordination of preventative services available to support families and individuals in Newport, and what has been achieved in its first year of operation.



2. What is Prevention and Inclusion?

Encouraging people to be more proactive about their wellbeing, health and daily lives brings many benefits. It can help to increase independence, assist with achieving and/or improving the quality of lives, and reduce or delay the need for costly statutory care and support services. The development of preventative approaches and the benefits of this has steadily gained recognition in recent years, particularly against the backdrop of financially stretched Local Authorities who are under increasing pressure and demand to respond to a growing population needs.

With Prevention now steeped in wider legislation it brings a clearer push for a culture shift in care services and what individuals and communities can expect from statutory services. Preventative approaches help to create the right conditions for positive wellbeing and health and can support people to take control of their own lives. There is no single definition for what constitutes preventative activity, however simply put Prevention, as defined in the Care Act Statutory Guidance (2016), is about the care and support system actively promoting independence and wellbeing. This means intervening early to support individuals, helping people develop and retain their skills and confidence, and preventing need or delaying deterioration wherever possible.

Inclusion is often associated with diversity, but inclusion gives voice to different groups made present through diversity. Inclusion is the achievement of an environment or community in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the success of its community or environment.

Inclusion in the workplace means that a diverse pool of individuals is respected and valued, allowing them to reach their full potential while contributing to the overall success of their community, work environment or school for example. So, if diversity is represented as various puzzle pieces, inclusion represents what the puzzle looks like when everything is pieced together. In short, you can work in a diverse environment without working in an inclusive one.

Inclusion is a social justice issue – aiming to eliminate discrimination. The Prevention and Inclusion service area wants to ensure *everyone* in Newport has a voice and can access support when they want it to support them to thrive and achieve. Newport has a richness in its diverse population, and we want to have services and a workforce that can reflect the local community and promote inclusion on every level.



3. Activity in the past 12 months

The new Prevention and Inclusion service area was established in 2022 as part of the senior management and directorate restructure. It allowed for several family support services that sat across the council to be aligned together in the same service area bringing with it multiple benefits. Located within Social Services, Prevention and Inclusion works closely with Adults and Childrens services, with a longer-term aim to improve integration and seamlessness of pathways for individuals accessing support. Since April 2022 there has been a robust and energetic drive to bring the appropriate support services under one service area and develop a clear structure that represents Prevention and Inclusion. This has involved a long and complex process involving Human Resources (HR) and finance, as team by team we worked on the transition into the new service area. Staff have been consulted with and where necessary and appropriate involved trade union support. Teams have also had the opportunity to meet with the Director of Social Services and Head of Prevention and Inclusion as part of a '*welcome to Social Services*' introduction and share their thoughts and concerns. Overall, the transitioning of these teams has been extremely successful and positive. Many individual staff have reported they are happy with the move into Prevention and Inclusion and feel their service now sits in the right place with Social Services. It means an improved joined up approach to how families and individuals are supported, a reduction in duplication and a smarter use of resources. Most importantly it means families and individuals are now being supported by services that are better coordinated and not having to repeat their stories multiple times.

As part of learning and getting to know the new workforce, the Director of Social Services and the Head of Prevention and Inclusion have been out on several visits to playschemes and childcare settings to see directly the work being delivered in local communities. These have afforded direct opportunities to observe the importance of early socialisation and speech and language development of children in both Welsh and English medium settings. With the expansion of Flying Start provision, more visits are planned in the coming months to provide both a supportive message to the workforce and observe the service developments taking place.

The workforce has been exemplary in their responses to the changes that have taken place. There has been a high level of positive energy by all involved, with an eagerness to help shape the new service area whilst continuing to deliver supportive interventions with families and individuals. There has been a real sense of ownership observed with the workforce wanting to get this right. The care

and passion they have for their services has been particularly remarkable to witness and we now have an excellent foundation on which to grow and strengthen inclusive preventative services for all.

With a new management and leadership team in place, the transition of services has provided a natural opportunity to pause, review and stocktake what is Newport City's Council's preventative provision and offer that supports the strategic development of the service area. All services are undergoing a review of varying levels to determine current provision and identify how to develop further in line with having a clear preventative offer. These service reviews will also consider quality of provision, performance, and outcomes. In other words, we want to build and provide services we are confident can make a difference to individuals lives, sustaining independence where we can and create opportunities to achieve.

There is a keenness to streamline and reduce duplication, create clearer pathways for families and individuals to access support and ultimately improve outcomes for individuals. This transformation takes time. Throughout its first year of operation, the Prevention and Inclusion workforce have been consulted with and are assisting with identifying priority areas of need and areas for development. These contributions have directly supported the production of the first *Service Plan* for the service area.

Newport Local Authority directly supports areas of the Prevention and Inclusion services with core revenue and capital budgets, topping up the various grants received from Welsh Government. Most of the funding that supports the service area is grant funding from Welsh Government including specific grants (listed below) for the Adaptations Team to support their delivery of adaptation programmes, and the Youth Support Grant received by the Youth Service. The Welsh Government *Children and Communities Grant* (CCG) programmes seek to address the support needs of the most vulnerable children and adults in our communities through a range of early intervention, prevention, and support mechanisms. It looks to mitigate or remove disadvantage to vulnerable people to enable them to have the same life chances as others and therefore to contribute to a more equal Wales. Children and Communities Grant programmes support local authorities in considering how to deliver the services they provide more strategically through the flexibility of these grants.

Welsh Government have made some changes to what is now included within the CCG programmes going forward from 2023/24. These are:

Childcare and Play
Families First
Flying Start
Out of Court Parenting Support
Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People at risk of offending
St David's Day fund

Newport City Council's delivery of its *Children's and Community Grant* programme is monitored throughout the year. A new robust process has been agreed to hold quarterly Contract and Monitoring meetings, holding providers to account on their delivery of work programmes within Newport. In the spirit of partnership working, these meetings will provide support and advice to providers and teams, identifying any challenges and enable the leadership team to have clearer oversight and tighter management of the budgetary position as we progress through the year.

To support the delivery of the *Childrens and Communities Grant* programme, a governance board has now been established, attended by a range of partners and stakeholders within the council. These

quarterly meetings will allow for a greater degree of transparency of decision making, a collaborative approach to identifying the priorities for Newport in terms of preventative service provision and furthermore assists with promoting a more strategic preventative school of thought across all areas of the Local Authority.

In the past 12 months recommissioning of the Families First programme has been undertaken. This was due to take place prior to the Covid-19 pandemic on the recommendations of Audit yet was naturally delayed. There has been an intense period of activity working through this in line with correct procurement processes, whilst maintaining existing service delivery. As with any recommissioning programme, it creates uncertainty and anxiety amongst the workforce whilst waiting for the outcomes to be announced. Supporting existing providers throughout has been both important and necessary, whilst we work towards the completion of the recommissioning process as swiftly as possible. Positively we are now in a position to report we are almost at the end of the process with the new approved providers expected to go live in their service delivery for Newport from April 1st 2023.

The new provision going forward will include support for mental health and wellbeing, young carers, and groups. These will complement existing internal provision from the services listed below meaning a wide menu of early intervention and preventative support available for residents of Newport. Furthermore, there will be a newly formed in house provision for Children with Additional Needs (CANS). This exciting development will allow for a strengthening of the model already utilised, bring closer networking and collaboration with key stakeholders such as the Disabled Childrens Team (DCT) Serrenu Centre and SPARKLE. It will bring an improved integrated approach to supporting children with additional needs and an opportunity to grow a service that has huge demands placed on it due to the demand.

4. Prevention and Inclusion Teams

4.1 Prevention Team

The Prevention Team recognise that families need different types of support and approaches depending on their circumstances. With an individual assessment of need undertaken, the team provide flexible support packages to meet identified needs with children, young people and their families across Newport. Underpinned by strengths based and relational approaches, the team is fully trained in trauma informed practice. The team have Prevention Workers located within communities across Newport offering support on *parenting, home management, emotional regulation, wishes, feelings and self-esteem, school attendance, healthy relationships, antisocial behaviour and low-level crime*. The team work flexibly providing a service that fits in with a family's needs and commitments.



The Prevention Team aim to improve outcomes for children, young people and families with an emphasis on prevention and early support. This includes working with families to identify family strengths and resources, reduce risk and increase individual and familial resilience with the aim of preventing the need for statutory intervention.

Now embedded within the new Prevention and Inclusion service area alongside other support services, the team are working more seamlessly with other teams avoiding any unnecessary duplication of support. The team has an established track record of working

collaboratively and these have continued following the transition into Prevention and Inclusion. Examples of this include a partnership with Newport MIND, with a Housing Support Officer based within the team and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), supporting the provision of the Early Intervention Project (EIP). This project provides follow up support and contact to individuals who have received a police call out and a Public Protection Notice (PPN) being submitted to the Safeguarding Hub. Without this project, these cases would be closed down and no support offered. Importantly the project offers individuals to speak to someone other than the police and identify if any further support can be provided to avoid any further police call outs and to improve their own lives. The Prevention team has also continued to lead on 'Understanding the Triggers' a pilot project in collaboration with multiple stakeholders in Newport. This project is in response to a local evidence-based report looking at the triggers and common themes that appear to contribute to children being excluded from mainstream education, and thus at higher risk of exploitation and criminality. The aim is to work with children earlier and build relationships, particularly as they prepare to transition to high school within a *trusted adult* and *trauma informed* model. This inspirational work is also underpinned with a system change approach, utilising existing resources differently to achieve better outcomes for children.

A further collaboration with Gwent Psychology Service offers psychology consultations, training, and support to staff in addressing mental health issues in families and with individuals. The team has continued to facilitate and deliver *Family Group Conferencing*, *Mediation* and *Non-Violent Resistance (NVR)* parenting programme.

The *SPACE Wellbeing* panel is the Families First front door for all referrals into a network of early intervention and preventative support services including the Prevention team. This process is in partnership with Health who have a range of therapeutic support services as part of the network and strong links with its Children and Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This is the referral route for GPs to access support for individuals who are presenting in surgeries and may benefit from receiving additional support. All Families First services are available as part of this process. The multiagency panel is made up of representatives from all services who respond to the referrals received, with professionals agreeing which service is best placed to respond to the families request for support, based on information presented. The Prevention team consistently takes a higher number of these referrals from the *SPACE Wellbeing* panel compared to other services, averaging 70% of the total referrals (including the PPN referrals).

So far in 2022/23 a total of 216 involvements have been closed, where pre and post intervention *Distance Travelled* questionnaires were completed by the family. These questionnaires tell us what individuals themselves feel about their own issues and if their situation has altered in any way.

Of the 216

- 189 (90%) families report an overall increase in resilience
- 124 (57%) report that the parents/carers feel more confident in meeting their children’s needs
- 93 (43%) report that the parents/carers feel better able to support their children’s learning and development
- 100 (46%) report improved engagement with school
- 62 (29%) report that their children’s emotional/mental wellbeing has improved

Wider comments from family members highlight many examples of positive working relationships and positive outcomes. In terms of the EIP project, data collected suggests the service continues to deliver successful interventions. The EIP has also contributed to developing and delivering a more robust process for ensuring all PPNs are received by the safeguarding hub and that none are lost.

Activity statistics for the current financial year following transition to Prevention and Inclusion:

- 332 PPNs received
- 308 PPNs followed up with a successful outcome (what matters conversation)
- Of the 308, support is still ongoing for 36 individuals with 272 closed

Of the 272 cases closed outcomes were:

No further support accepted	62	23%
Escalated to statutory services	10	4%
Appropriate support already in place	33	12%
Referred to appropriate support service	126	46%
Support delivered and family reporting an increase in resilience	39	14%
Moved out of area	2	1%

The transition of the Prevention team from Childrens Services to Prevention and Inclusion has presented no difficulties or challenge. Firmly established for over 12 years with a large and stable workforce it has welcomed opportunities to grow and strengthen its delivery of support to families with the merger of the ACES team. This successful joining up of teams has allowed for smarter use of resources, greater co-ordination of support provision and reduction in duplication for families. Furthermore, it has afforded opportunities for workforce development and an improvement of working with families within a professional framework. Continuing demand for the service is

evidenced in the high volume of referrals received by the SPACE Wellbeing panel. In the current year 2022/23 (April – Dec) the SPACE Wellbeing panel has received 1,724 referrals.

There is no doubt the biggest challenge for preventative services is managing and responding to the demand for support. The Covid 19 pandemic has most certainly impacted on this with front line pressure and waiting lists in place because of the volume of referrals received. Partner agencies have also experienced increased waiting lists which has an impact on the Preventions team's ability to make referrals to those services. This is frustrating as professionals acknowledge families are not always able to access support at the time, they most need it. Furthermore, the cost-of-living issues affecting families has added to these front-line pressures, with individuals increasingly presenting with financial hardship and mental health concerns. The reliance on grant funding also creates an air of uncertainty for service continuity and this is a challenge managed annually by all teams involved with grant funding. Managing individual expectations of services, coupled with acknowledging the pressures families are currently facing and responding where possible, add to the overall day to day pressures experienced by the service.

A positive new development that will support the new Prevention and Inclusion service area is the migration of preventative services to the WCCIS system. Whilst a challenge in practice to achieve, this will present several benefits as individual's information will be held in one place allowing for a more joined up approach between social care staff.

4.2 Youth and Play Services

These teams have now been successfully transitioned to the new service area. There is enthusiasm in establishing a citywide Youth Service, led by professional qualified youth workers who excel in their engagement skills and ability to communicate with children and young people, within an approach that works better for them.

The Youth and Play Service deliver services city wide for young people aged 5- 25. A team of professionally qualified youth and play workers are available who provide both learning opportunities, and social & emotional support to children and young people. Their approach centres on the child and young person, promoting and respecting their rights to make decisions.

The focus in the last 12 months has been working towards building a quality youth provision across Newport, ensuring Youth clubs are safely well resourced with a qualified workforce. In its first year with Prevention and Inclusion 9 evening provisions have been firmly established, despite carrying several key vacancies due to staff shortages and recruitment challenges. There is now a workforce development plan in place including supporting and delivering qualifications locally with existing staff and partners to address the longer-term issue of recruitment and retention. 12 individuals have completed Level 2 Youth Work and can assist with evening time provision, with another 12 just commencing their qualifications in January 2023. Included in this are partners from Maindee Primary school. The Youth teams are looking to work in partnership with a range of disciplines and focus on some key areas of the city where there are known concerns in the communities. One priority being Always for example. It is vital the Youth Service can recruit the right professionals with specific skills in engaging with young people in areas of concern. Therefore, this adds to the recruitment challenges.

As part of establishing a city-wide Youth Service provision, in the last 12 months the service have been working towards achieving the Welsh Government Quality Mark in Youth work (QMYW) (bronze/silver/gold). The QMYW is a national award which demonstrates an organisation's excellence. To receive the accreditation, youth work organisations must self-assess against a set of quality standards and pass an external assessment. Already lots of evidence has been gathered towards achieving the bronze quality mark, with an assessment period planned in April 2023 to conclude this work. To achieve a bronze quality mark in such a short space of time will be a significant achievement for the Youth Service and for Newport City Council. There are plans to progress working towards the silver quality mark if the service is successful in April.

The last 12 months has been the first full year of stable delivery following the COVID-19 pandemic. For the Play service this has enabled them to focus on enhancing a robust play offer including the provision of play facilities afterschool such as lego clubs and play clubs. Play for children with disabilities and complex needs previously ran only during the summer holiday break. This is now delivered during all school holiday periods and is fully registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Furthermore, there has been work undertaken to offer more additional needs led provision during term time in line with increased inclusive provision. The Play Sufficiency Assessment, a statutory requirement has also been undertaken by the service and published which scopes play priorities across several themes, including areas such as access to green spaces and cycle paths. The Welsh medium offer of Play responds directly to the Local Authority Welsh Education strategic plan and was also enhanced in the last 12 months. There is now a growing partnership with Welsh medium education and third-party organisations such as Urdd and Mentre Iaith. Continued work on increasing the Welsh medium offer in Play provision is also underway in partnership with Mentre Iaith.

The transition of the Play Service into the Prevention and Inclusion service area has undoubtedly brought greater alignment with other professions such as youth services and family support services. This transition brings enhanced opportunities to upskill the workforce across Youth and Play, encouraging a multi-disciplinary approach across both specialisms. This can be supported with professional qualifications with the workforce and will also help the management team to respond to vacancy and recruitment challenges, contributing to a sustainable and stable workforce in the long term. Additional innovative strategies have been adopted such as links with Clybiau Plant Cymru, securing subsidised places on their internal training for staff which again will support the wider workforce challenges.

A significant review and restructure of the Play Service is already underway, implemented with the recent findings of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA). In addition, the development of an internal *children with disability* strand with support from Play Wales will bring enhanced development opportunities. Play Wales are viewed as experts in the Play area and are familiar with new and emerging research on good practice and positive outcomes with Play interventions. This will help to shape future practice for the service, responding to the stringent and increasing challenges of Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) requirements, and workforce challenges in a more creative way enhancing a city-wide Play offer.

Within 23-24 the School Healthy Enrichment Programme (SHEP) will continue to be implemented during the summer holiday period responding to the challenges of cost of living in partnership with schools. We are also prioritising a more formal workforce strategy across services for children and young people to raise awareness of the exciting opportunities Newport offers and enhance volunteering opportunities



Having only very recently been successful in recruiting to the new management team, the Youth and Play services can now be supported to further progress and develop. Service reviews are taking place throughout to identify how to best take them forward, identifying what needs

to be delivered differently. Work is underway on a strong play offer for holiday times and exploring different approaches and models.

The Youth Service is also involved with providing the Aspire projects (alternative education provision). Provided in partnership with 3 high schools in the city, these have grown in quality year on year, and provide a safe alternative education forum for children who may struggle with mainstream education. Unfortunately, European Social Funding (ESF) previously available to support this arrangement has ended, meaning there is now a significant budget pressure sited with the Youth Service to continue with the provision. Ongoing discussions with key stakeholders are underway, exploring a more sustainable model to maintain these 3 projects.

Activity for the Youth Service (April 22 -January 2023)

- 743 individual young people have accessed the Youth Service
- 359 individual young people have accessed Youth Clubs
- 384 individual young people have project work and 1-2-1 support
- 8514 registered contacts have been made with the Youth Service
- 1,360 anonymous contacts with young people (these are young people that drop in or we meet on the street but are not registered to the service and we have no personal details)

4.3 Early Years Team

On transition to the Prevention and Inclusion service area, the Early Years team have continued to provide its support to families and children without any disruption. The Early Years team provide a range of services for younger aged children 0 – 7yrs and their families, including access to information from the Family Information Service and Childcare Offer team.

An experienced and stable workforce delivers the various programmes under the Early Years banner including Flying Start (FS), Family Information Service (FIS) and the Childcare Offer for Wales to support the 0 – 7 pathways. They have distinct teams and work activity is linked to the specific funding streams. The Early Years team also provide support for the private sector through the commissioned contract with Early Years Wales. The current expansion of the Flying Start provision is in line with Welsh Governments vision to have an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) system in Wales, that is a consistent pathway from 0 -7 years. Flying Start has distinct responsibilities and work activity is linked to its own funding stream with a workforce delivering the FS program. Welsh Government's aim is that all children should have a high-quality stimulating learning and care experience in any

education and care setting they attend, and they are using the expansion of Flying Start to achieve the this.

Early Years also includes the work of Pathfinders (Early Years Transformation Program), where we are aiming to develop an Early Years offer that includes more than just childcare. It encompasses health services including antenatal, midwifery, school nurses and family support. This is a collaborative programme involving pathfinder Public Service Boards across Wales. The programme is testing a more coherent, integrated, and focused approach to early years to ensure that children from all backgrounds have the best start in life. Currently being piloted in Bettws and working with key partners involved with children 0-7yrs, a fortnightly '*What Matters Meeting*' takes place where health partners, childcare settings, schools, family workers, housing officers, and speech and language therapists can discuss families they are working with. Moving from delivering targeted Flying Start parenting support up to the age of 4years to working universally across the city for 0–7-year-olds requires a shift within the workforce and some changes in how it is delivered. Furthermore, developing this work from a pilot area to city wide provision will require working with teams on capacity and caseloads as a priority.

Since transitioning to Prevention and Inclusion the team reports many benefits including closer joint working with key partners bringing a seamlessness to understanding the family's needs better, has reduced the number of contacts for family members with different services and thus having to repeat their personal stories. Additional benefits will be combining the administration personnel for different functions (*e.g., childcare offer, Flying Start, Family Information Service and Early Years Transformation Integration Programme*) into one team offering greater resilience for the future and a smarter use of resources available. As the service moves forward it is expected further benefits will be realised such as access to shared databases, ensuring families are getting appropriate and timely support in a coordinated approach. Undoubtedly the transition will help to strengthen and build resilience within the workforce, with access to a skilled and experienced wider service area with an understanding of working with children, young people and families from deprived areas of Newport. Understanding the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma on children and family members is essential when working within a person centred and strengths-based approach. Teams can work more collaboratively, drawing on the strengths and expertise of other professionals within the Preventions and Inclusion infrastructure with the aim of improving the experience and outcomes for families.



Early Years support is focused on the holistic development of children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs to support well-being and lifelong learning. One of the fundamental aims of this approach is to ensure as many children as possible can access high quality provision in Newport. This

approach helps to provide a *Flying Start* in life to all children and families within the Flying Start areas, supported by health, speech and language practitioners, positive parenting, and early support. The team is focussed on putting the family at the centre of the work undertaken by exploring their own strengths and resources, ensuring that key partners are also available to support the success and growth for the family.

The team recognises the importance of early intervention particularly for children with developmental delay or additional learning needs and will provide support throughout as children enter the educational arena maybe requiring an individual development plan (IDP). Parenting courses available support parents how to be more nurturing and understanding of their child’s needs, and how being a positive parent can affect and improve their relationships with their own children. Evidence shows these programmes help parents to be more confident to manage their child’s behaviour and engage more with their educational development.

Flying Start is the Welsh Government’s targeted Early Years programme for families with children under 4 years of age who live in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. Flying Start aims to make a decisive difference to the life chances of children by mitigating the impact of poverty, which is linked to poor life outcomes in early childhood, including health. The current Phase 2 expansion of this programme is being rolled out across the City with the extension of high-quality childcare to an additional 2,500 more children under the age of 4, with a particular emphasis on strengthening Welsh medium provision.

Phase 2 expansion of Flying Start is beginning to now roll out across Newport City providing:

- Enhanced health visiting
- Parenting support
- Early speech and language support.

Phase One Expansion	Phase 2a / b Expansion planned for 2023 will include further areas linked to lower super output areas determined as most deprived (<i>Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales</i>).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shaftesbury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beechwood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caerleon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lliswerry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stow Hill
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • and another Lower Super Output area in Shaftesbury

The Flying Start childcare offer includes 12.5 hours per week of quality childcare for 40 weeks of the year. These coincide with the school term dates and an additional week at the end of the summer term. The Early Years Support Team advise and provide support to settings when concerns on a child’s

development may be identified. Expanding the Welsh Medium provision is a key priority for Welsh Government and is a key commitment for Newport. There is a continued focus on upskilling practitioners in Welsh to increase the use of Welsh language within childcare settings, with the longer-term goal being to transfer English medium settings to bilingual or Welsh medium settings.

Flying Start Outreach offers an opportunity for those children most in need who reside outside of the Flying Start geographical targeted area, to access the entitlements of the programme and further Families First support. This approach enhances the reach to more children and includes access to early language support currently offered as part of the classic flying start programme. This offer has been removed from the broader more recent expansion of the Flying Start programme. The Outreach provision is an integrated approach to family support services utilising the structures and systems delivered by Health, Families First, Preventions and Flying Start. A regular panel of practitioners meet to assess applications for those children highlighted with high need outside of the geographical targeted area.

The well-established Family Information Service (FIS) in Newport Local Authority is a free impartial information and advice service for all parents/carers of children and young people aged 0-20yrs. The team also offer support and advice to professionals who work with children and young people. Access to information allows parents and carers to make informed choices on the services they want and need and allows them to have some control over what services to access. It provides the earliest of interventions and can also prevent low take up of services such as financial entitlements linked to DWP, Flying Start, Childcare Offer for Wales and early education. They operate a telephone line, email service and website to host local information on services available to families. The FIS also supports the childcare sector in a number of ways including mandatory continuing professional development (CPD) for the workforce and offer of small grants for sustainability. Furthermore, FIS produce the Statutory Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Recently there has been a satisfactory internal audit of FIS and we plan to build on the good practice identified into 2023 including the recommendation to enhance this service into an Early Years Gateway.

The Early Years team remain proactive and engaged in supporting families around language development and inclusion. Home to playgroup transition is available for children with identified additional learning needs in Flying Start areas and can provide practical support on coping strategies within the home. Children can be observed within childcare settings and have access to professional support from educational psychologists, speech language therapists, health visitors GP's, occupational therapists and an ISCAN panel member. Furthermore, they run specialist groups such as *Playing Together* and *Wriggly Woos* to support those children who have identified needs that are greater than speech delay.

Planning for Flying Start childcare is linked to foundation phase so the entry into school for a child is a seamless transition between the two offers with no gaps in provision. Newport has 19 Flying Start Playgroups across the city, including a fulltime Welsh provision in Ringland. Each of the Flying Start settings are supported by Early Years Wales completing the annual quality review (QFA) and all settings complete the Healthy and Sustainable Preschool National Award. The Flying Start Welsh setting has completed the *Safonau Serennog* and are now completing the *Croesy'r Bont* Welsh course from Mudiad Meithrian.

Benefits on providing childcare and support to families is evident. Children attending childcare provisions have the advantage to develop faster than had they not attended. Being part of the Flying Start program encourages families to take up other Flying Start entitlements to support their child's development. The evaluation of year 4 of the Childcare Offer Wales report (September 2020 to August 2021) gathered data from 2,108 online parent survey responses, which indicated that:

- 73% of parents said the Offer made it easier for them to undertake their work
- 53% reported that the Offer has increased their flexibility in the way they worked
- 30% would be working fewer hours had the Offer not been available to them
- 46% said the Offer had given them the potential to increase their earnings

Since this evaluation, the Childcare Offer eligibility criteria have been expanded to include parents/carers in education (enrolled on a further or higher education course which is at least 10 weeks in duration).

The issues affecting the Early Years Team are varied. There remains some ongoing challenge to creating a structure that aligns under one service area with some resources that support Prevention and Inclusion delegated to multiple managers in different service areas. These are taking some working out and will take some time to finalise. Supporting practitioners to now work city wide responding to need rather than static geographical cluster is also a work in progress. This renewed direction of travel will enhance service delivery consistency across all parts of Newport. There have been significant changes to the delivery of the Childcare Offer in the last six months, including the introduction of a new digital service and more recently the introduction of a national helpline. This transition has meant changes to working hours to ensure the helpline is manned during its hours of operation. Workforce challenges have faced the childcare and play sector for several years with the COVID-19 placing additional pressure upon the sector. Recruitment has been difficult with the number of staff leaving the sector in the last 12 months. This has contributed to significant challenges in meeting staffing levels in line with regulations, further challenged with the increasing demand for more targeted support to children linked to increasing evidence of developmental delay since the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.4 Adaptations Team

The adaptations team has been relocated to the new Prevention and Inclusion service area in 2022. The team provide grant funded adaptations to owner occupiers and private tenants who are identified as having a level of care and support need. The adaptations are provided as a preventative measure that will help to avoid escalation of care needs or a move into residential care and importantly enables the individual to remain living independently in their own homes. Installation of such adaptations reduces hospital admissions and pressure on social care.

The grants provided are known as Safety at Home (SAH), Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), Enable Grant and Housing with Care Fund. The team provide support from completing application forms, undertake building surveys and manage contractors through to completion. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in place with Care and Repair to deliver minor adaptations which is endorsed by Welsh Government.

The Adaptations team report many benefits by moving to Prevention and Inclusion and is seen as an extremely positive opportunity. In the last 12 months external capital investment has been sourced with internal revenue to address the issue of the historic backlog of cases accrued as a direct result of the Covid19 pandemic. A plan to address and clear the backlog of cases has been supported immediately, whilst providing further resilience within the team. Working collaboratively alongside other preventative services has afforded more creative discussions and ideas on how the team can develop its preventative offer. Working more closely alongside Adults and Childrens services within social services has assisted greatly with improved communication and service delivery. All are working

towards using the same data systems to further assist and improve communication and information sharing.

Recruitment has been a challenge with a skill shortage of building surveyors, however this is not unique to Newport. Positively the team is very established with an extremely low turnover of staff.

Going forward the team hope to expand its provision by providing accessible car parking bays and deliver the ECOFLEX4 grant as part of its widening preventative offer. The table below provides figures for adaptation works undertaken.

	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Disabled Facility Grants Completed	123	115	135	86	78	102
Small Adaptations (SAH Works)	1058	1179	1133	780	1243	920
Enable (not met under DFG or SAH)	222	Document password protected	297	234	208	279

4.5 Gwent Substance Misuse

The regional substance misuse team now sits in Prevention and Inclusion as part of a wide package of preventative support. One of the strands for the Welsh Government’s strategy for substance misuse ‘*Working Together To Reduce Harm 2008-18*’ is that local agencies involved in tackling and reducing the harms associated with substance misuse should do more to plan treatment services and to pool resources at a regional level where appropriate. Area Planning Boards (APB) were established in 2010 to encourage closer regional working arrangements, strengthen partnership working and strategic leadership in the delivery of the substance misuse strategy. Furthermore, the Area Planning Boards are to enhance and improve the key functions of planning, commissioning, and performance management of substance misuse services locally. The purpose of the APB is to bring together all those parties who have a common interest in delivering and improving efficient and effective substance misuse services in the APB area.

Members of the APB traditionally include representatives from:

- Regional Local Authorities
- Health Board
- Public Health
- Police
- Service User representative
- Probation

- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Youth Justice services
- Voluntary/Private/Independent substance misuse service representative
- Welsh Government (advisory capacity)

The APB itself is not able to commission work, procure services/goods, incur costs or enter into contracts as it does not have the legal status to do so. Members therefore authorise a Lead Authority to undertake these specific areas of work on their behalf.

Newport City Council is the agreed Lead Authority (banker) for the Gwent regional APB arrangements, facilitating and administering the regional Substance Misuse Action Fund (SMAF) capital and revenue grant funding on behalf of the other APB members. This arrangement is supported by a *memorandum of understanding*. A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are elected annually, who will ensure all APB meetings are planned and run effectively in an open and transparent manner, guided by the APB's aims and objectives. Newport is therefore responsible for reporting on the statutory KPI's for substance misuse services on behalf of all members. The APB commissioning team is made up of staff from all regional Local Authorities is managed by a Newport employee.

Integrated substance misuse services are established in Gwent, with Health, Criminal Justice and third sector partners all collaborating to provide an holistic package of support to individuals.

5. Next Steps

We had set aside 2022/23 for phase 1 - the transitional work and developing the new service area from scratch. It is with credit to the workforce involved that this has been largely achieved ahead of schedule allowing us to start moving onto phase 2. The next 12-24 months will build on the progress achieved so far and focus on quality, performance and processes. Reviews of existing provision will help us to identify areas of strengths and strong performance and how we can build on this, as well as areas of challenge/risk. We need to be heading into the new financial year with a clear plan of where our focus will be and where our energies will be best placed. Areas of priority for each team are indicated in the new service plan (presented to Scrutiny Committee - People in November 2022), linking in with the priorities and objectives laid out in the Corporate Plan, specifically Well-being Objective 3 – Preventative and Equitable Community and Social Care (*Newport is a city where equitable, preventative care and support is available for our citizens and communities*).

Furthermore, we will work closely with colleagues in Social Services and across the wider Council to collaborate and further develop an infrastructure and culture where preventative and inclusive support is standard practice. Early examples of these will be integrating the Community Connectors and Adult Carers services within the Preventative and Inclusion service area and collaborating with Housing and Communities on issues that affect families and residents within the city of Newport (ie; cost of living crisis).

Underpinning principles of the Prevention and Inclusion service area will be to have a workforce that is skilled, competent, and supported. We have made a productive start on developing a positive culture amongst the teams where individual and professional development will be both supported and encouraged, participation and contribution to the shaping of services welcomed, and a transparent and open narrative around quality and performance exists.

As the teams are now settling in and stabilising, a structure chart will be made available early in the new financial year to provide a visual presentation of the service area and all it entails. Additionally, data on service performance will be improved and readily available.

A second update on the service area to Scrutiny in a year's time will include both alongside updated narrative on finance arrangements and developments throughout the year.

6. Case Studies

6.1 Adaptations

Miss X is 5 years old and is a twin born at 28 weeks. Miss X has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy (total body), gastroesophageal reflux, recurrent respiratory illness, faltering weight gain and constipation. She also has a gastrostomy fitted due to an increased risk of aspiration due to a late swallow trigger.

The family live in a small cottage where the ground floor has different levels and narrow doorways. Miss X uses a powered wheelchair, but unable to access most of the property independently including her bedroom and bathroom due to varying levels. Access to the property independently is also not possible due to unsuitable ground and doorways.

Miss X is unable to play independently with her able-bodied twin sister who can move around the property freely. A parent must move Miss x to access the same areas as her sister. To provide independence for Miss X, adaptations consisting of wheelchair access to the property, through floor lift, wheelchair accessible bedroom and shower room along with a level ground floor have been provided.

The completed adaptation has provided an open area for family time and interaction, own bedroom with direct shower room, level access to and throughout the property. The adaptation has provided the ability to install future hoisting and space needed for use. Miss X was previously isolated but now has full independence to integrate with family life and attend to personal needs. Her parents have also been relieved of the more intense physical caring responsibilities enabling them to cope more positively day to day.



6.2 Substance Misuse

A is a 16-year-old female involved with the local Youth Justice service. It was difficult to engage her initially with support, and her court orders were increasing throughout her offending. She had previously worked with CAMHS Substance Misuse Complex Team due to a reliance on valium. She was doing well but a relationship breakdown seemed to trigger a breakdown of her situation. Home life was fractious, and she became homeless. She was housed in supported placements due to her substance use, criminal behaviours, and risk factors. These placements broke down, resulting in her moving on 3 occasions.

Initially she would not engage in any purposeful substance use work. In time due to having a past relationship agreed to meet her substance use worker for meetings. It can take weeks for a young person to gain trust to talk, therefore consistency and perseverance are important. A significant decline in her mental health was observed and whilst under the influence stated she was going to take her life. Police were contacted and a search undertaken. Fortunately, she was found and unharmed. She deteriorated further and would be reported missing daily, not contacting anyone. Her substance use increased, and an addiction was apparent. Intelligence shared confirmed she was associating with known offenders and drug running. Due to risks identified she was accommodated out of area. She eventually agreed to see a tier 3 nurse (CAMHS clinical nurse specialist) jointly with her substance use worker.

On a visit A disclosed she was using crack cocaine, cocaine powder, cannabis and alcohol but still wouldn't participate in any purposeful interventions. She was offered drug tests to establish exactly what she was using but kept declining. Further intelligence shared by professionals identified she was being sexually and criminally exploited. A significant deterioration in her physical health and her appearance was noted.

Despite consistent attempts to engage with her and engage in support, she continued to commit crime and was remanded in a Secure Children's Unit. A plan was put in place to work with her whilst on remand. This was viewed as an opportunity to gain meaningful engagement with her as she came to

rely on some key individuals whilst in custody. She produced a harm reduction poster on crack cocaine, outlining the risks to others. This type of work was to encourage her to reflect and think about the harm and consequences of her drug taking behaviour. Whilst she was in custody, she saw the sexual health team and the dentist, and maintained a positive relationship with her substance misuse worker.

She was released from custody with regular contact and ongoing support from her substance use worker. She continues to do well and is engaging. She has not relapsed and making positive plans for her future. She is undertaking work on relapse prevention and triggers and looking into the possibility of going into rehab.

6.3 Early Years

Child A was referred to the Early Years Support team. From triage it was recommended the Wiggly Woos group would be beneficial. Wiggly Woos is a group run by the Early Support Team for children who have been referred to the Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN) and are either awaiting or have had a diagnosis. This could be a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or more complex medical needs.

Each case is supported on an individual basis providing support for the child and their family. Various professionals are invited along to the group to chat with the parents and to meet the children, including Speech and Language (SALT), alternative education providers, SLT, educational psychologist, Sparkle team, physio, and Occupational therapy. Here they can see any children they are supporting outside of the clinic setting, and it also provides a chance for parents to discuss their concerns.

The support offered in these sessions include providing strategies to use at home, making sure that the child has the correct referrals in place, ensuring they have a space in a Flying Start playgroup and then transitioning the family into the playgroup. The family is supported whilst they get used to the new setting, meet the staff and for the additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCO) to be aware of all the child's needs and how they can support appropriately in the setting.

In this case Child A and mum attended this group for several weeks, mum was supported during the session and was provided with some strategies to use at home. She was emotionally supported through the ISCAN referral process and the realisation that her child had additional needs. Staff from Early Years were able to sit on the ISCAN panel and share observations. This approach resulted in an acceptance for services. Child A was accepted via ISCAN for a neuro development paediatrician and SALT.

Child A was then part of a six-week transition process into playgroup, supporting mum and the child. Child A was supported at the Flying Start Early Referral panel to request additional adult support, which was granted. Child A then formed a relationship with their key worker, who the team also supported. A *team around the child* meeting took place to ensure playgroup had all the relevant information needed and allowed Mum to have her valuable input on things that would assist with a smooth transition.

When child A was in playgroup, mum was given the option to continue to attend the Wiggly Woos group, which she did on a regular basis. Mum was supported with her Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in addition to support and reassurance throughout her appointments and accessing services.

Child A and mum have flourished since first known to services. Mum has grown in confidence and felt more comfortable leaving her child in the playgroup having met the keyworker for her child.

Mum developed relationships with other parents and openly discussed having to readjust her expectations for her child. This helped Mum to feel less isolated and reduce her anxiety. Peer support proved to be an important contributory factor in mums' development. Positively, mum has started to get out of the house more with the children now she is more understanding of her child's needs and can manage this better in public. Her anxieties have reduced, and her children are experiencing a wider range of activities and social interactions. Home support strategies have also helped to improve the situation resulting in less stress for Mum. As a result of progress made, Child A has been offered increased sessions in the same playgroup which will provide greater consistency for both the child and family, and will assist with the transition into reception class, specialist education or mainstream education when the time comes.

6.4 Prevention Team

Child S was referred to Families First due to his behaviour becoming increasingly challenging at home. Child S was starting to be physically violent towards his parents and during football training. He would refuse to listen to instructions and would often break his tv, controllers, and other belongings when told to come off the X-box. It was clear upon talking to mum that he was unable to regulate his emotions and did not understand actions and consequences to his behaviour.

Following discussions with the family including Child S, a *Family Plan* was devised collaboratively. The plan included:

- To raise Child S's understanding of how to manage emotions safely and to raise awareness of the impact his choices has on those around him.
- Emotional regulation support.
- Parenting advice throughout planned sessions.

The family requested virtual support for when Child S had finished school as they did not want him to miss any more school due to Covid-19. Ten sessions were completed with him focussing on emotional regulation, actions, and consequences. Child S engaged extremely well in all sessions. Mum also joined every session so that she could reiterate strategies to her son when needed and she was able to see positive changes in Child S's behaviour by the 3rd session.

Mum and Dad implemented new positive parenting strategies which they found helped improve Child S's behaviour. They also attended the Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) programme completing the full course. They both reported how helpful they had found this.

Overall Child S's behaviour improved at home and during football. He has been seen to manage his emotions and feelings in a more appropriate way and is continuing to use strategies we discussed during our sessions. During half term the Prevention Team worker and Child S planned an informal session where they went to the park to play football and enjoy a snack after.

Feedback comments from the family included being 'really happy with the support we have received. We felt listened to about what we felt our needs were. Going over and above our expectations,

meeting our child and supporting him' 'Child S's behaviour has certainly improved due to the support he has received and helped to understand his emotions and actions.

