



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

25TH JANUARY 2021

TROS GYNNAL PLANT (TGP) CYMRU UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Board with an update of progress made by Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP) Cymru.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board:

- 2.1 Acknowledge the work undertaken by TGP Cymru, the content of which is attached at Appendix 1.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is important for Members to note the progress, themes and issues highlighted by the TGP Cymru, in order to work in partnership to ensure the best possible outcomes are reached for those in our care system.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As part of the Board's Terms of reference, TGP Cymru are invited to attend meetings to enable both the TGP Cymru and Children Services to discuss issues that affect service delivery in the community on a strategic level and to work in partnership to provide improved and better outcomes.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There is no consultation required for this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

9.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board links directly to the Council's Corporate Plan priority – 'Rhondda Cynon Taf's Children will receive a great start in life...'

9.2 The work of TGP Cymru links to the Future Generations Well-Being Goal of a more equal Wales, by ensuring that children and young people are supported when decisions are being made about them. This ensures that young people have access to a range of information in order to fulfil their potential.

9.3 In addition to the duty to listen to young people and involve them in decisions, the Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the duties to consider the provision of independent professional advocacy in certain circumstances for:

- Children who are looked after (who should benefit from an active offer of professional independent advocacy) or have previously been looked after
- Children who are subject to an assessment of need or a care and support plan or child protection enquiries

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 TGP Cymru are invited to attend meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board, to provide a broader understanding and contribution into the services available to young people and vulnerable adults.

National Approach to Statutory Advocacy

Local Authority Report - RCT

Collated Quarterly Report

Quarter 3: Oct - Dec 2020

Headline Report

During quarter three we have seen an increase across the board with an 55% increase on young people referred for advocacy , 41% increase on Active Offer referrals and a 65% increase on advocacy issues.

Active Offer

106 children and young people became eligible for the Active Offer of Advocacy in RCT during quarter three, which are made up from:

CLA:	8 x 5-9 year olds	9 x 10-15 year olds	1 x 16 plus
CP:	38 x 5-9 year olds	43 x 10-15 years olds	7 x 16 plus

Some 17 Active Offer referrals were received on behalf of these 106 children and young people, which represents an increase from the 12 received in quarter two. Of the 17 referrals received, 12 were CP and five were CLA, with all referrals being received from social workers. Three young people changed their minds about the Active Offer therefore these meetings did not take place, leaving 14 Active Offer meetings completed in the quarter, with 12 young people accepting the offer and progressing to IBA. All 14 Active Offer meetings were carried out within five working days.

Issue Based Advocacy

Of the 35 young people accessing the issue based service, 24 were first time users. This again shows an increase compared to the 22 referrals received in quarter two. In line with previous quarters, the main source of referral continues to be self-referral with 20 young people accessing the service this way. Social services referrals were the second highest with nine referrals, an increase on last quarter. Quarter three also saw three referrals from IROs, two from foster carers and one from residential care.

Of the 35 referred, 15 young people were CP, 18 were CLA, one was a care leaver and one was open to Care and Support. Seven young people supported lived out of area during this quarter, residing in Bridgend, Merthyr, Neath, Swansea, Llanelli, Ross on Wye and Abermule. The gender split was equal this quarter with 18 males and 17 females. Similar to last quarter, the age category 12-16 years saw the highest number of referrals with 19 , whilst 11 were from the 6-11 age group, two from 17-19 and one from 20-25 age group. We also received two referrals from the 0-5 age category, however both these children turned 6 within the quarter.

During quarter three 38 issues were presented. Similar to previous quarters the largest request being support to attend meetings, with 17 requests made up from:

Core Group x 3	LAC Review x 5	Review CP x 9
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Contact issues were the second highest with seven referrals, with placement issues accounting for four referrals. Both social service issues and emotional/wellbeing had three referrals each, whilst school based issues, complaints and care leaver issues accounted for one referral each.

Of the 35 young people who accessed the service, four were not met within five working days. Two of these required a face to face visit as requested by the young person therefore risk assessments were completed and permission sought, visiting on day 10 and day 11. One young person had moved placement which had not been communicated therefore contact

Headline Report Cont'd

Incorporating carried forward open cases, advocates supported two young people this quarter with complaints. Both complaints were resolved this quarter and regarded young people being dissatisfied with their support from social services.

We have continued to support four residential units across RCT offering monthly contact as standard. Some 41 support calls have been made this quarter to remind residential staff about the service and the support we can offer to young people.

Service Information

During quarter three, advocates undertook some face to face visits, however due to the continued Covid-19 restrictions, the majority of children and young people have been supported via virtual meetings and telephone calls. Advocates have successfully been able to request face to face meetings for children and young people unable to engage virtually or who would otherwise benefit from face to face support. In RCT these visits have been facilitated in local schools.

During quarter three, 21 young people were closed to the service, of whom 10 completed feedback with their advocate. Of these 10:

- 10 stated the advocate had done what they had agreed
- 7 stated they found the service helpful
- 5 felt the service made a difference to their situation
- 7 felt they now know more about their rights
- 7 felt more confident since receiving support
- 7 felt they were included in decisions
- 6 felt their views were considered
- 7 agreed they would use the service again.

Advocates are finding it difficult to obtain feedback, with many young people not engaging once their advocacy issue has been completed. Feedback in this quarter was mainly positive with all young people who responded agreeing their advocate had done what they had agreed and half feeling it had made a difference to their situation.

Please find below a case study of advocacy undertaken during the quarter. The name has been changed to protect the young person's identity.

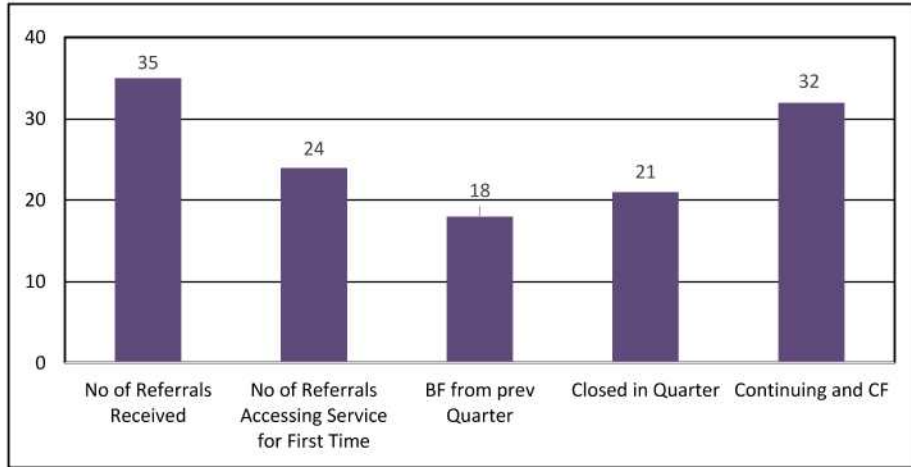
Case Study

Peter aged 17

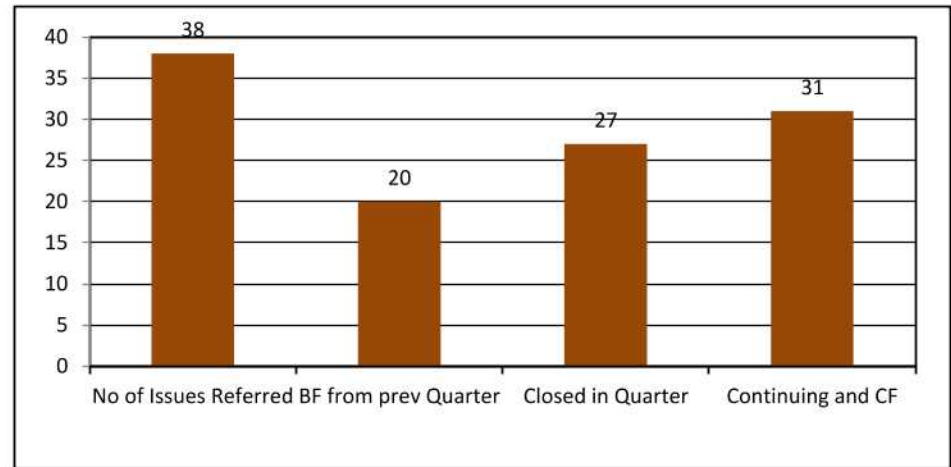
Situation: Peter is currently residing in a local authority unit. Advocacy was requested to ensure views, wishes and feelings regarding contact arrangements were promoted and presented to a variety of professionals and at his CLA Review.

Action: The advocate gained wishes and feeling from Peter over several contacts, and reported these to both his social worker and residential staff. The advocate supported the young person to remotely attend the CLA review, and ensured his wishes and feelings were reported.

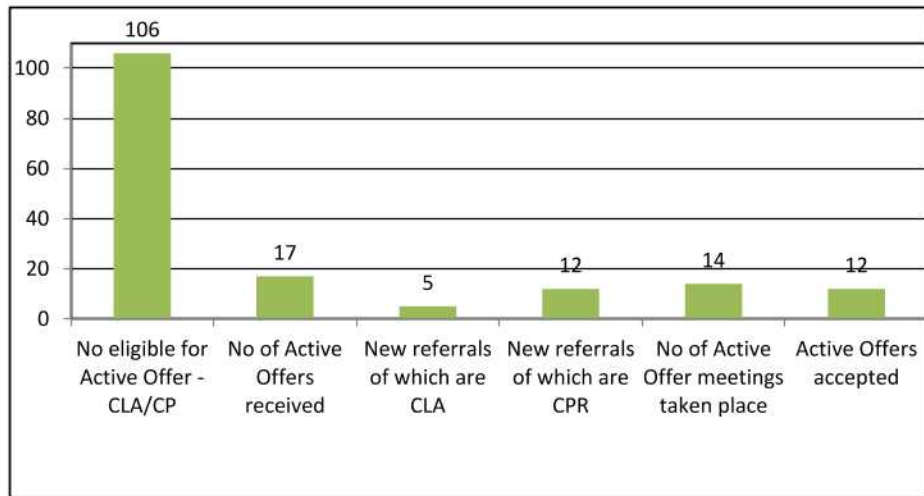
1a. Advocacy Cases - Young People - Issue Based Advocacy



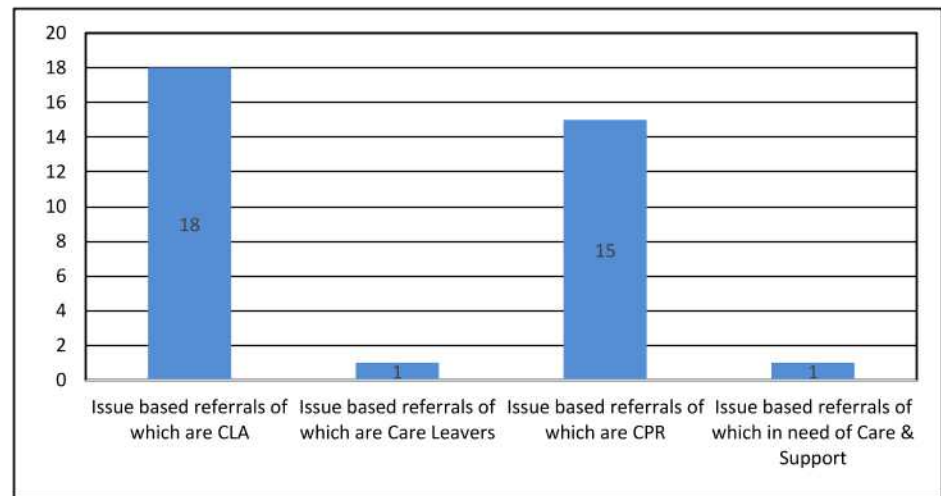
1b. Advocacy Cases - Interventions - Issue Based Advocacy



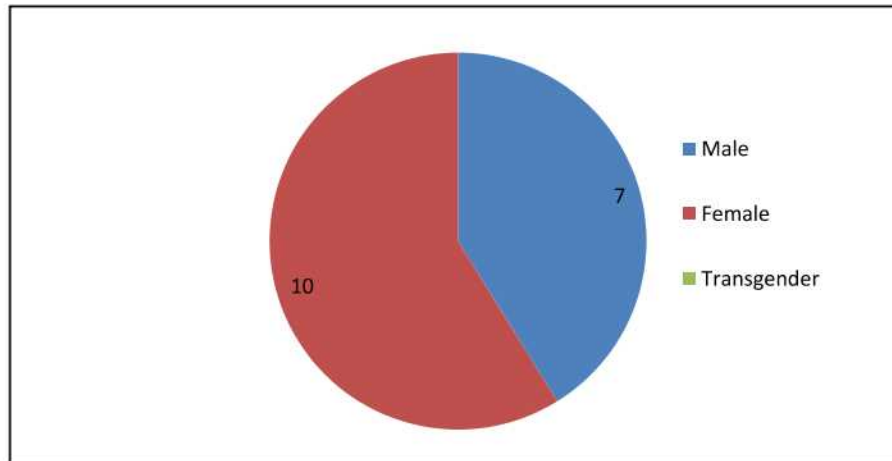
2a. Eligibility Criteria: Active Offer



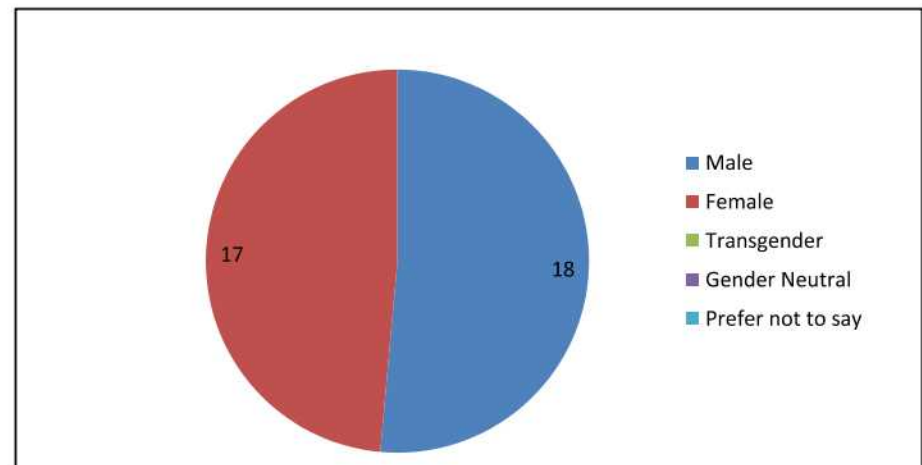
2b. Eligibility Criteria: Issue Based



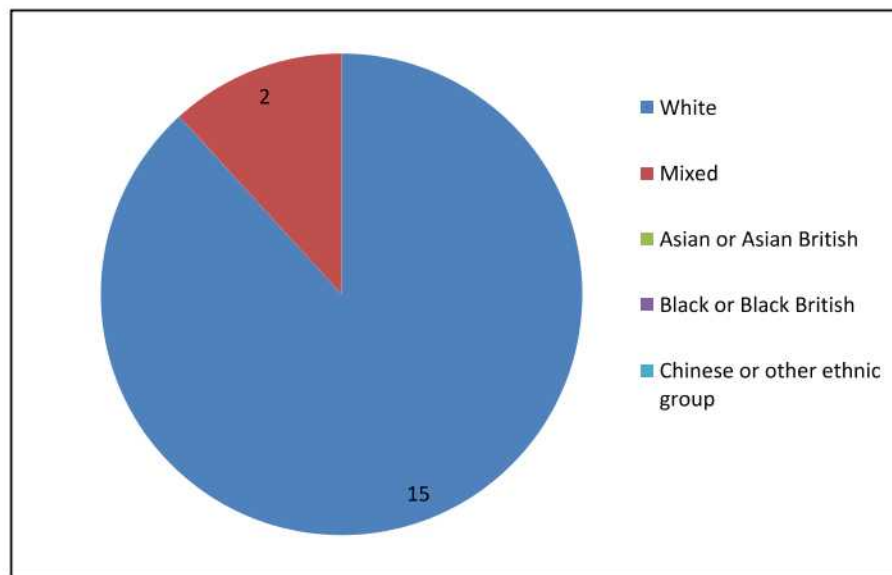
3a. Demographics: Gender - Active Offer



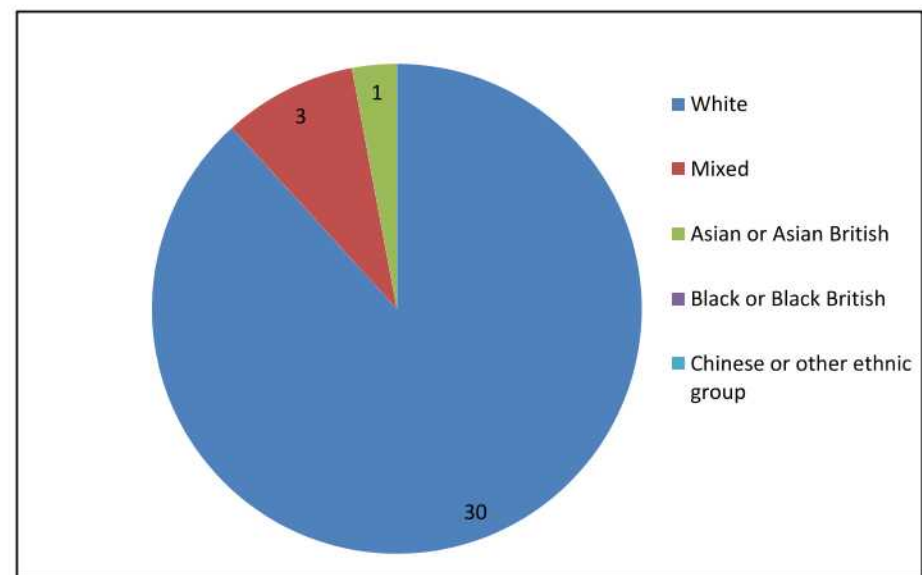
3b. Demographics: Gender - Issue Based



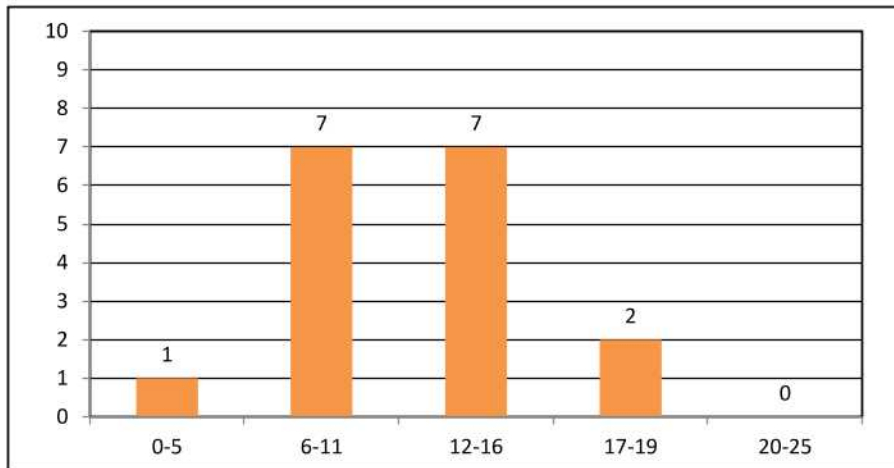
3c. Demographics: Ethnicity - Active Offer



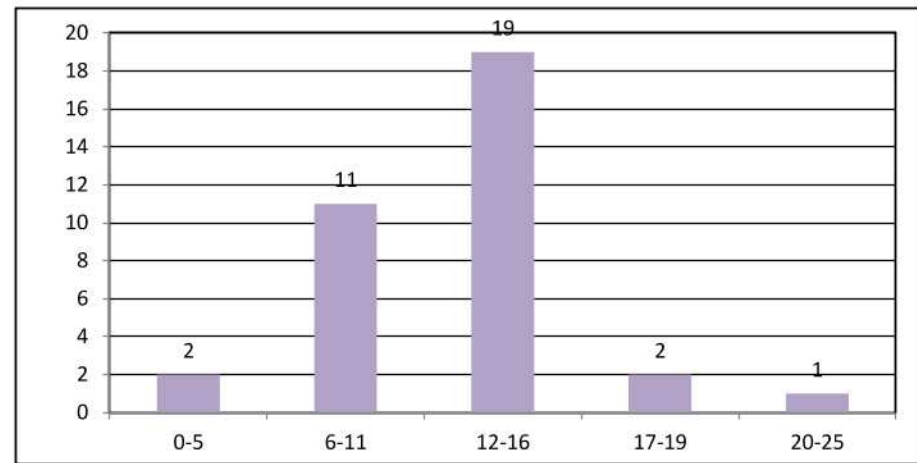
3d. Demographics: Ethnicity - Issue Based



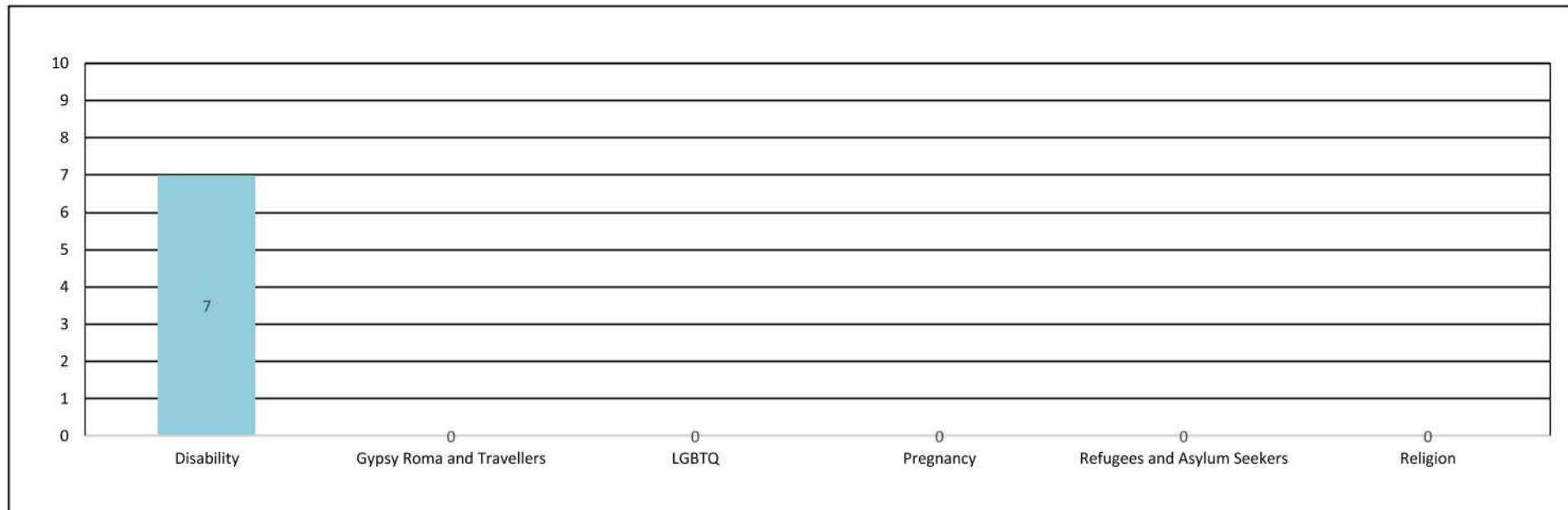
3e. Demographics: Age - Active Offer



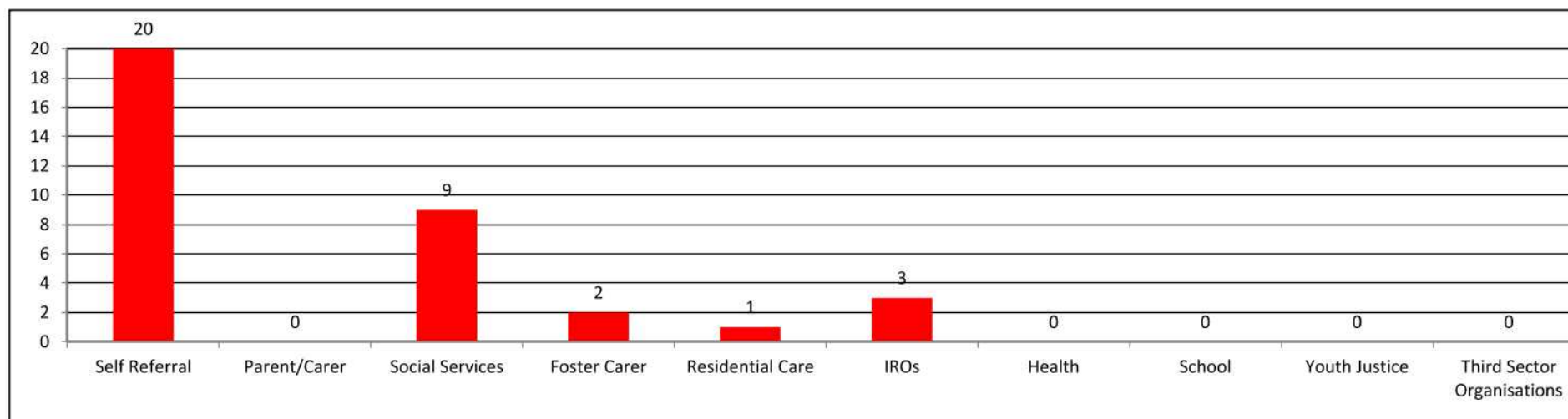
3f. Demographics: Age - Issue Based



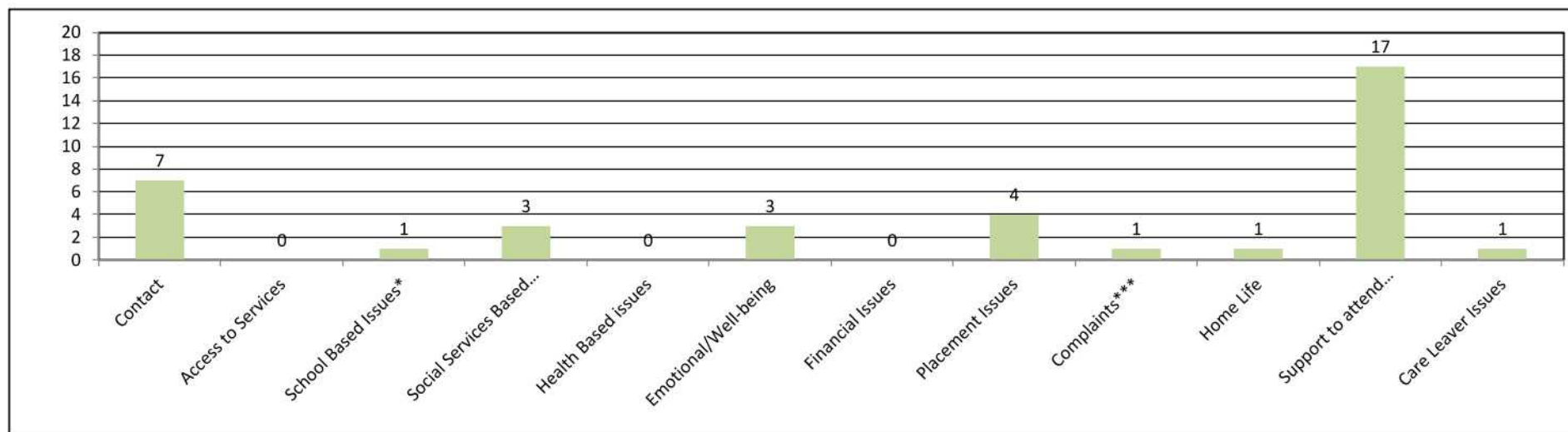
4. Protected Characteristics



5. Referral Source per young person - Issue Based only



6. Issues Presented

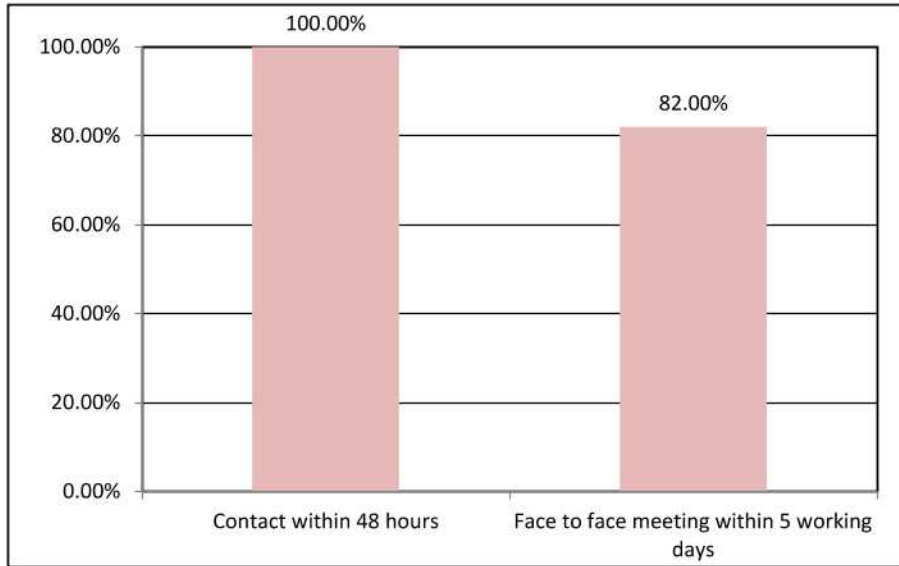


* School based issues including: SEN/ALN, exclusions, bullying, transport.

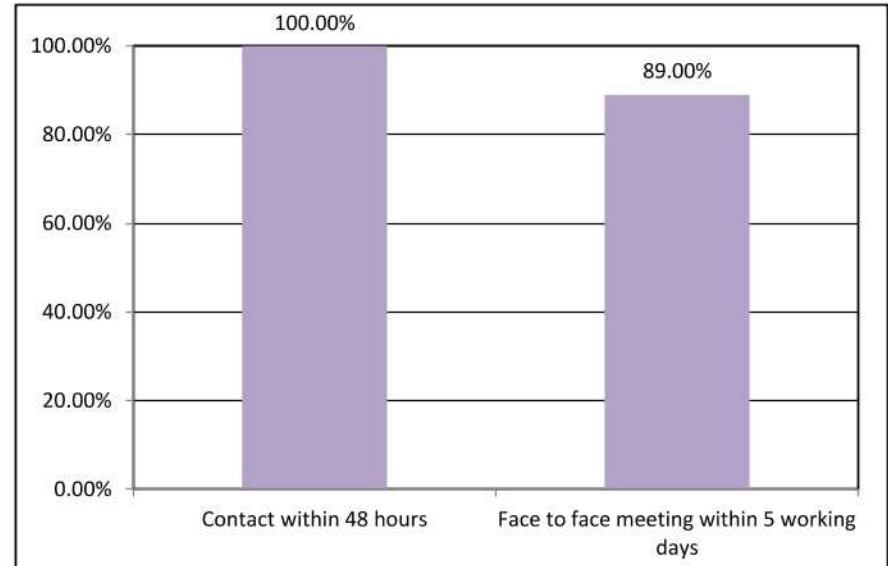
** Social Services based issues including: relationship with worker, care plan, service provided.

*** Complaints refer to any complaints made against statutory services, including Social Service, Police, Health, YJS

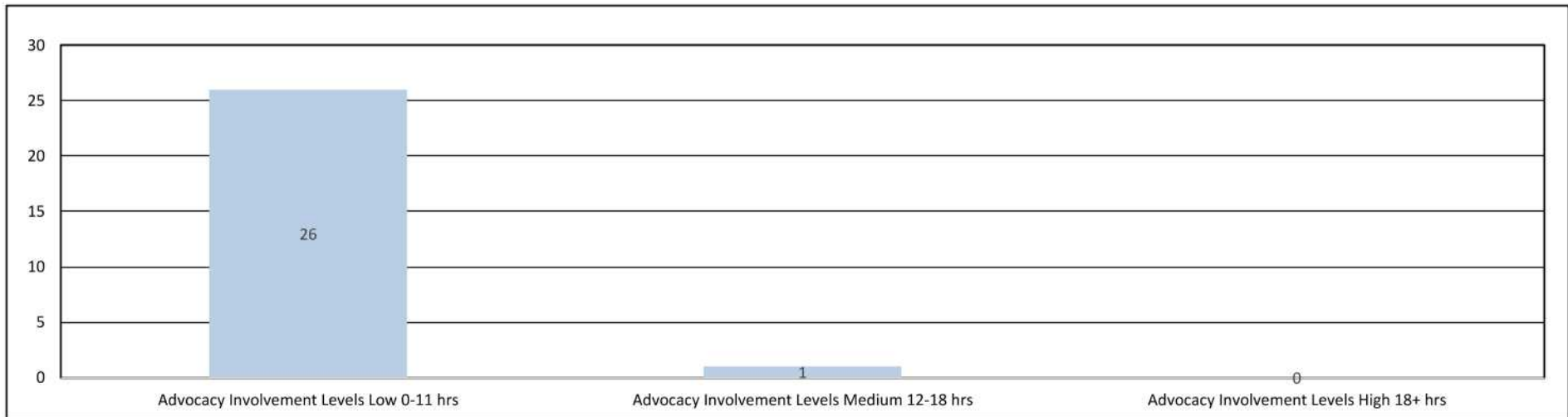
7. Service Performance - Active Offer



Service Performance - Issue Based



8. Level of Advocacy Intervention at point of Issue Closure



9.Outcomes: linked to The National Advocacy Standards & Outcomes Framework

		Comments
Outcome 1	Children and young people find good quality independent advocacy easily available and accessible.	<p>During this quarter, achievements against the target for contact within 5 days for both Active Offer and IBA has reduced slightly. The Active Offer reduction relates to the young people who decided they no longer wanted the service, resulting in no meeting being held. If we exclude these figures, the 100% target is met.</p> <p>Adapting our service to the changing COVID regulations enabled some some face to face visits to be undertaken. These were mainly requested by young people who did not want to access virtual meetings, or where it was felt that face to face contact would be better for the young person (privacy, ability to enage, age). These visits impacted on our five day contact target, as risk assessments had to be undertaken and permissions granted.</p> <p>Advocates have remained flexible throughout the quarter, which includes being available outside of usual working</p>
Outcome 2	Children and young people have their privacy and confidences respected and their wellbeing safeguarded and protected.	<p>Advocates continue to report that it has been difficult to explain GDPR and safeguarding virtually especially to younger children. Advocates also report some challenges maintaining the focus of younger children, especially when there are distractions in the same room.</p> <p>Face to face advocacy was requested where it was felt a young person had no privacy at home and expressing their views would have potentially been difficult. This was supported and quickly arranged, taking place in school settings.</p>
Outcome 3	Children and young people are valued for their diversity, treated with respect and all forms of discrimination against them are challenged.	<p>During this quarter, seven young people were described as having a disability. These were Autism, Global Delay, ASD and ADHD.</p> <p>In previous quarters, RCT has seen a solely white referral demographic. In quarter three, we noticed a slight shift with three young people describing their ethnicity as mixed, one Asian and another young person choosing not to say.</p> <p>Advocates continue to offer the service through the medium of Welsh and English. During this quarter all young people requested the service through the medium of English.</p>

<p>Outcome 4</p>	<p>Children and young people are empowered to take the lead in relation to advocacy services and their rights, wishes and feelings and championed.</p>	<p>During this quarter, two young people have successfully advocated for themselves in meetings, following our support.</p> <p>Feedback from young people has been mainly positive this quarter, as evidenced from a selection of quotes highlighted below.</p> <p>“He told my social worker I wanted to stay living at home with my family.”</p> <p>“I told her everything I wanted people to know how I am feeling about things.”</p> <p>“She has been really helpful and supportive.”</p> <p>“Things are easier now.”</p> <p>“She made lots of calls for me – that was good.”</p> <p>“I got to say what I wanted.”</p>
<p>Outcome 5</p>	<p>Children and young people participate in the design, planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of advocacy services.</p>	<p>TGP Cymru has recently secured funding from WCVA for a six month long participation project which will work with all TGP Cymru services to increase participatory opportunities for children and young people. Young people from across RCT have been asked to participate in a focus groups taking place in Jan / Feb 21, and to date one young person has accepted.</p> <p>We will be striving to further improve young peoples feedback in the coming quarter.</p>