

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015 / 2016**

**COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 21ST MARCH 2016**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF  
COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES**

**Agenda Item No: 5**

**TEAM AROUND THE FAMILY (TAF)  
PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny with information about the ongoing development and impact of Team around the Family (TAF).

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that members review the information contained within the report and identify whether there are any areas that raise specific concerns.

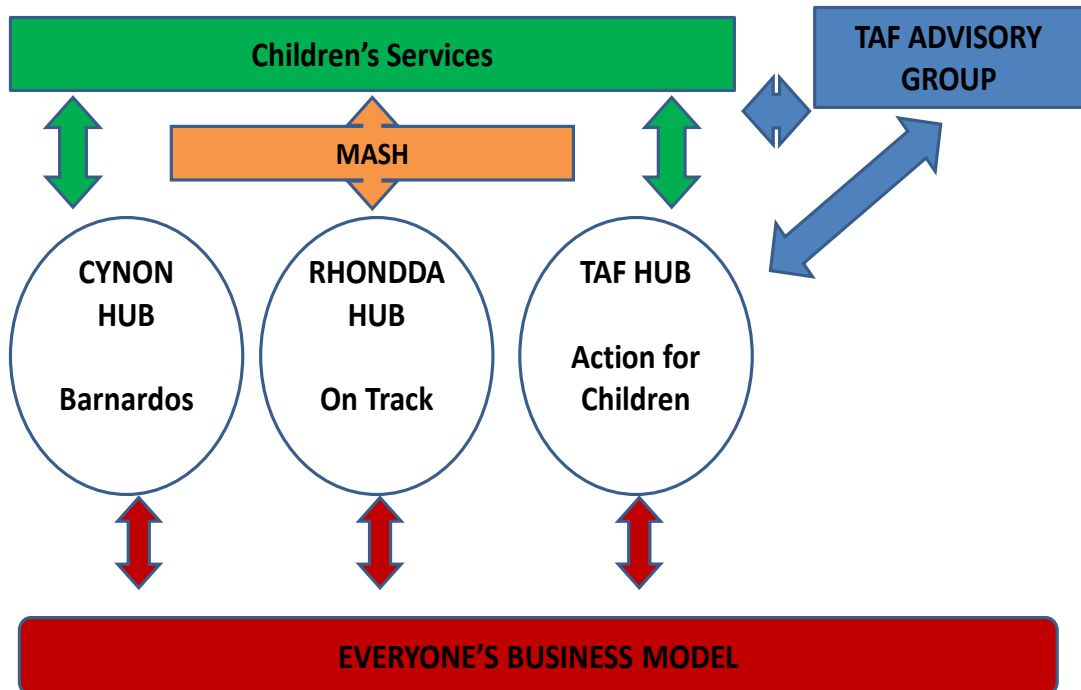
**3. BACKGROUND**

'Team Around the Family' (TAF) is part of the Welsh Government's Families First funded Programme, introduced in 2012. Team around the Family offers a means of ensuring that where families have multiple needs or have issues that are broader than one service can address, that the family receives holistic multi-agency family support, promoting resilience. Support provided ranges from early intervention and prevention up to the threshold of statutory intervention.

TAF offers a means of ensuring families are identified effectively, that their needs are assessed holistically, and that best use is made of all local resources to ensure family and community strengths are harnessed and problems are prevented from escalating and requiring specialist services.

The TAF process has been continually evolving to ensure TAF is operating at optimum capacity for maximum impact for families in RCT. A review undertaken at the end of 2013 showed that there were capacity and skills deficits within some wider services which limited their ability to engage in the full TAF process and in particular the assessment and key working functions.

As per the diagram below three 'TAF Locality hubs' have been established covering Rhondda (On Track) and Taf Ely (Family Intervention Team, FIT) and Cynon (Barnardos). Within the Hubs assessment and key working capacity is concentrated and where skills and / or capacity is not available in wider services then the locality Hub Teams provide these functions. To support local practitioners' the hubs provide a mentoring and support function. That is, within each locality any practitioner identifying a family appropriate for TAF is able to get support from the hub to help them undertake their TAF role effectively. Accountability is built into the hubs and performance management information collated routinely and reported through the TAF Advisory Group.



Information from performance management reporting shows that there was a 67% increase in the number of TAF assessments received (159 to 265) in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14. Performance for 2015/16 is set to exceed last year with a total of 247 assessments completed quarters 1 to 3 with 77 alone in the last quarter.

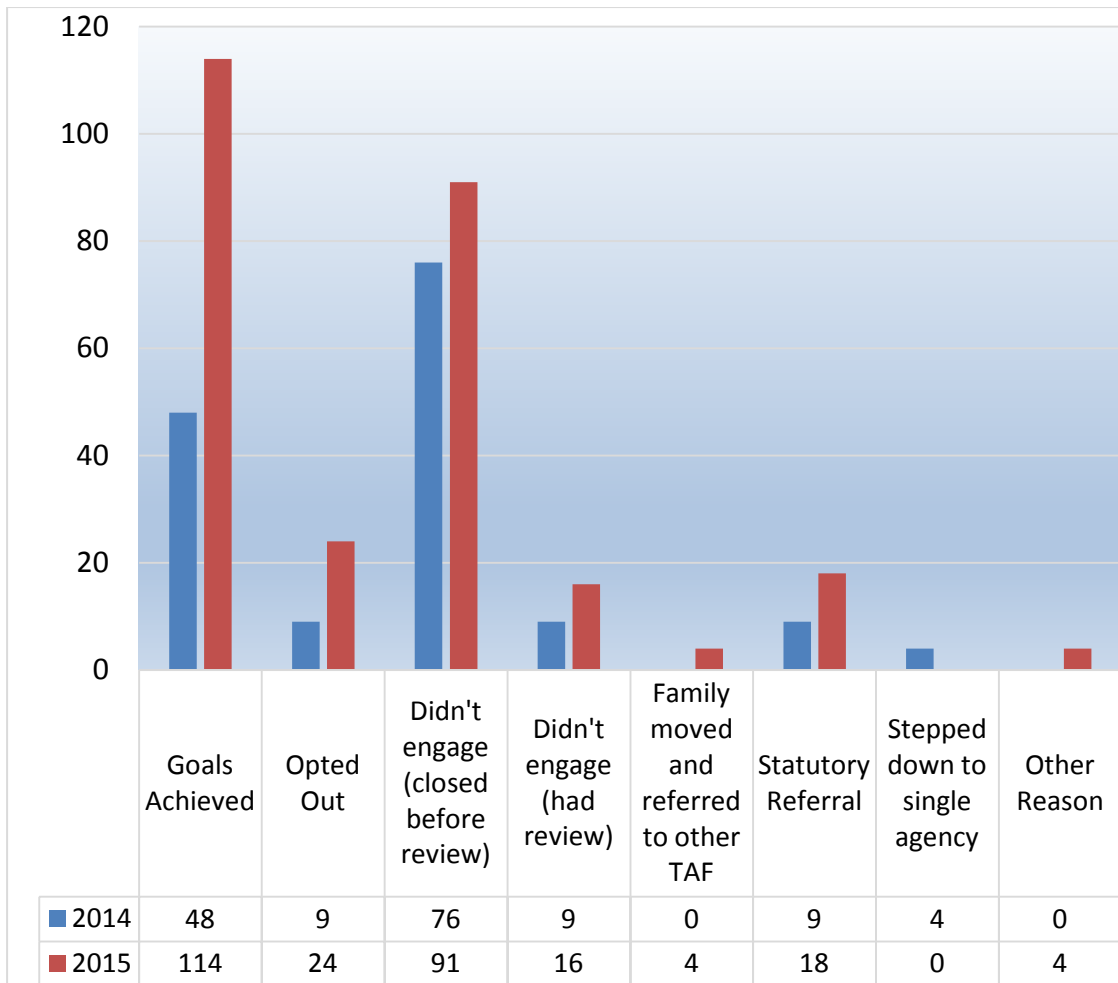
From January 2015 a Pre Assessment number (PAN) was introduced. This enabled us to record and better monitor information on incoming consent forms and ensure the appropriateness of TAF for the Families referred. Within the

new system more time is given to achieving appropriate engagement to ensure TAFs initiated are progressed to a successful outcome for the families.

From the table below it can be seen that in addition to having more completed assessments families are now engaging more effectively with many more completing the whole Taf process from assessment, plan, review and closure.

	2014/15		2015/16 (Apr-Dec)	
	No.	%	No.	%
No. Closed in period	285	-	210	-
Assessment	145	41%	44	21%
Support Plan	37	13%	34	16%
Review	103	36%	132	63%

To complete the picture, the graph below shows the number of families achieving the various closure reasons. There has been a significant increase in the number of families who upon TAF closure had their goals achieved.



**Age of Main Child;**

The information below covers 2015/16 TAF assessments. From the information it can be seen that that the 8 to 12 age group were the highest followed by the 4 to 7.

	Number
Aged 0 to 3	24
Aged 4 to 7	66
Aged 8 to 12	100
Aged 13 to 15	41
Aged 16 to 18	12
Aged 19 to 25	04
Total	247

**Pre-Assessment Organisational Types that Requested Numbers**

The table below provides a breakdown of referral source. Schools generated the highest number of referrals followed by self referrals and Children's Services. The 'commissioned services' include the TAF hubs and other services commissioned through the wider Families First programme that identify multiple needs and effectively 'step up' a single agency support into a TAF.

Organisation	Number
Health (including GPs, HV, CAMHS)	64
Children's Services	150
Commissioned Services	125
Communities First	14
Schools and other Education services	201
Self referral	151
Other (Housing, Employment services, third sector)	19

The implementation of the 'Hub' model has been positive and TAF is going from strength to strength. The shift has meant the need for central co-ordination reduces with funding redirected to direct delivery of TAF support through the locality hubs.

#### **4. TAF FUTURE WORKING TOGETHER EVENTS**

During January 2016 three 'TAF Working Together Events' were held across the Borough in Rhondda, Cynon and Taf Ely. The purpose of the events was to highlight to practitioners the changes to the Team around the Family (TAF) model and introduce the new operational process and documentation. The events were well attended with 238 practitioners from a range of agencies including Schools, Health, Statutory Sector (including MASH) and Voluntary Sector.

In addition to improving the level of knowledge and understanding of the TAF process the day was seen as an opportunity to network with other local practitioners. Positive feedback was received following the events with a general feeling that there is now greater confidence in the revised model. Practitioners feel reassured that if they refer families in to TAF now they will not be left automatically to undertake the assessment and key working role.

## **5. RELATIONSHIP WITH STATUTORY SERVICES**

In accordance with the Internal Audit Plan for the financial year 2015/2016 as agreed by Audit Committee, a review of the key controls within the system was undertaken. Audit testing was carried out on the processes in place for receiving referrals into 'Team Around the Family', both initial referrals and 'stepped down' referrals and the process in place for 'stepping up' referrals to ensure that fundamental controls are present and operating satisfactorily.

The primary purpose of the audit review was to provide management with an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control system. The objectives of the review were to ensure that;

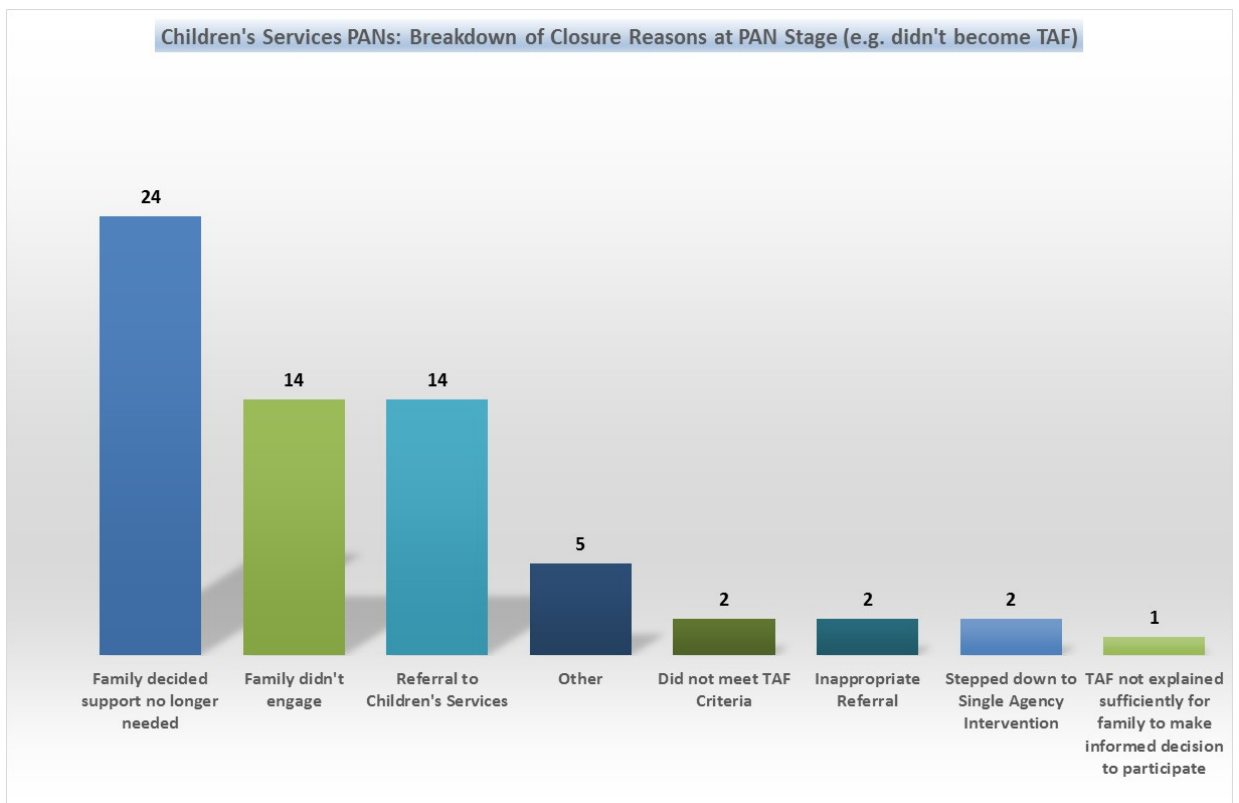
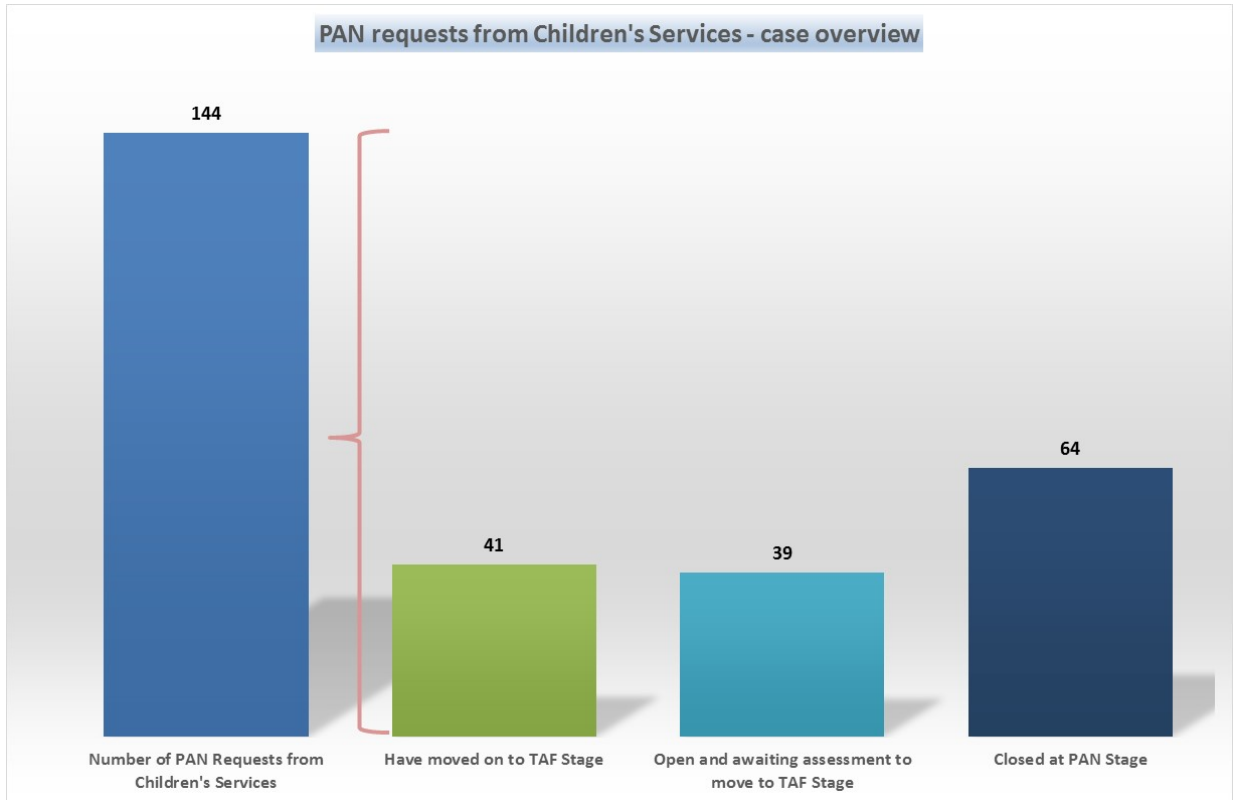
- The processes in place for referrals into 'Team Around the Family' are appropriate and effective (including 'stepped down' referrals).
- The processes in place for 'stepping up' referrals to Specialist Services are also appropriate and effective.

The Audit has highlighted a number of areas for improvement;

1. The need for clarity over thresholds between TAF and Children's Services
2. Defined handover periods and accountability during transition between TAF, MASH and Children's Services.
3. Improvements to be made to the flow of information

An action plan has been developed to address the above areas in line with the findings of the Audit report.

The information below provides an overview of the 'step down' referrals from Children's Services to Team around the Family. From the information it can be seen that a total of 64 of those referred (144) closed at the pre assessment stage i.e did not progress to full TAF. Note that for self referrals over the same period 40 families out of a total of 132 did not progress to full TAF. This tends to suggest greater engagement is being achieved for self referred families compared to those engaged with statutory services. Furthermore the reason for closure at pre assessment stage was a step back up to children's services further highlighting the need to explore options for better handover and engagements between TAF and statutory services.



## 6. **CONCLUSION**

The information above shows how the TAF process has evolved and is now generating better outcomes for vulnerable families. TAF is actively performance managed through the TAF Advisory Board to ensure continued development and effective performance.

Areas of focus for the coming year will be on strengthening the relationship with Statutory services through implementing the recommendations of the Audit report and fostering greater understanding of the role of TAF within a suite of support available to families.

Furthermore the role of TAF in supporting the effective implementation of The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) is recognised. The Act which received Royal Assent on the 1st May 2014, and takes effect from 6th April 2016 has four fundamental principles;

- Putting an individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control over reaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being.
- Supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of this care and support.
- Increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need.
- Strong partnership working between all agencies and organisations.

2016/17 is the final year of the Families First programme. Whilst there is no indication of priorities and strategic direction of the programme beyond 2017 it is likely that TAF remains a priority and has been identified as a vehicle for promoting greater alignment between the anti poverty programmes.



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**  
**AS AMENDED BY**  
**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2016**

**Background Papers:**

**REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**  
**ITEM: TEAM AROUND THE FAMILY – PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY**

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