**SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELL-BEING (WALES) ACT**

**CASE STUDY – March 2017**

**The Williams family**

Bethan is three and lives with her mother Anna, older sister Cerys, aged 13, and baby brother Cai aged 1. Four months ago, Anna approached her heath visitor for help after she left her partner, father of Cai, because of domestic abuse. A team around the family meeting was called. Cai’s father agreed to leave the family home. The support worker from the children’s centre Bethan attends is the lead professional.  The support worker has been supporting Anna with a housing need, and after liaising with the housing service, discovered that the couple are reunited.

Bethan does not attend the children’s centre as frequently as she could, and her mother has not accepted offers of other kinds of support for the family although she has told the support worker in the past that she finds Bethan’s behaviour challenging. Anna’s sister lives nearby and often helps out with looking after the children. Although Bethan appears to be happy and developing well when she attends the children’s centre, the worker thinks that there may be risks to Bethan associated with the couple resuming their relationship. She contacts the referral and assessment team with her concerns.

The referral and assessment team seek information from the other agencies about knowledge of the family. Police knowledges shows a significant history of domestic abuse, relating to both Anna’s current partner, and to the father of Cerys and Bethan. They have also received several reports from neighbours about anti-social behaviour and shouting when both adults appeared to be under the influence of drink.

The health visitor reported that although she hasn’t seen the family recently, (mother does not attend the routine appointments for Cai), she was aware of the previous domestic abuse concerns, and knows that Anna struggled to meet the children’s needs when this was happening before. She was also aware that Anna had recently visited her GP to ask for help as she was feeling depressed and not sleeping.

Cerys’s school reports that she has not been her usual self recently; she has become more withdrawn, appears to be extremely tired and her progress has slowed. She has recently stated to her teacher that she wants to self-harm. The school contacted her mother recently to discuss concern about Cerys progress and Anna told them that she is finding it hard to cope with Cerys’s behaviour. She sometimes shouts and swears at her and refuses to do what she is asked and is staying out late at night. The school reported that Cerys has bragged to her friends about staying out late and hanging out with older teenagers on the estate.

The decision is made that a further assessment is required to determine whether there are current risks to the children.

**Questions**

1. What are the strengths in this family and things that work well?
2. What are the concerns and risks to the individuals in the family?
3. What methods of direct work may you use to assess what matters to each of the children?
4. Thinking about the community in which you work, what supports and services might this family be able to access?