

Public Document Pack

Penallta House,
Tredomen Park,
Ystrad Mynach,
Hengoed CF82 7PG

Ty Penallta,
Parc Tredomen,
Ystrad Mynach,
Hengoed CF82 7PG



www.caerphilly.gov.uk
www.caerffili.gov.uk

For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Sharon Hughes
(Tel: 01443 864281 Email: hughesj@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 16th February 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee** will be held via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 22nd February, 2022 at 5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days.

This meeting will be recorded and made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the recording on the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHARRY'.

Christina HARRY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

Pages

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- | | | |
|---|--|--------|
| 3 | Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 20th January 2022. | 1 - 6 |
| 4 | Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure. | |
| 5 | Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. | 7 - 18 |
| 6 | To receive and consider the following Cabinet Report*: - | |
| | 1. Draft Budget Proposals for 2022/23 (Joint Scrutiny) – 19 th January 2022. | |

**If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for the above Cabinet report to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Sharon Hughes, 01443 864281, by 10.00 a.m. on Monday 21st February 2022.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| 7 | Directorate Performance Assessment Six Month Update 2021/22. | 19 - 34 |
| 8 | Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021. | 35 - 146 |
| 9 | Whole-Authority Revenue Budget Monitoring Report (Month 9). | 147 - 158 |
| 10 | Update on Reserves. | 159 - 172 |

Circulation:

Councillors M.A. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, C.J. Cuss, Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. Forehead, L. Harding, G. Johnston, G. Kirby (Chair), C.P. Mann, B. Miles (Vice Chair), S. Morgan, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, G. Simmonds, J. Taylor and L.G. Whittle

And Appropriate Officers

HOW WE WILL USE YOUR INFORMATION

Those individuals that attend committee meetings to speak/give evidence will be named in the minutes of that meeting, sometimes this will include their place of employment or business and opinions expressed. Minutes of Meetings including details of speakers will be publicly available to all via the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk. except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items.

You have a number of rights in relation to your information, including the rights of access to information we hold about you and the right of complaint if you are unhappy with the way your information is being processed.

For further information on how we process your information and your rights please view the [Full Committee Meetings Privacy Notice](#) on our website or contact Legal Services by email griffd2@caerphilly.gov.uk or telephone 01443 863028.



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 20TH JANUARY 2022 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor G. Kirby – Chair
Councillor B. Miles – Vice Chair

Councillors:

M. Adams, Mrs E. M. Aldworth, C. Cuss, L. Harding, C. P. Mann, S. Morgan, R. Saralis, and L. G. Whittle.

Cabinet Members:

Councilor C. Gordon (Corporate Services) and Councilor Mrs. E. Stenner (Performance, Economy and Enterprise).

Together with:

R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer), R. Williams (Group Accountant, Treasury and Capital), M. Jacques (Scrutiny Officer), M. Harris (Committee Services Support Officer), M. Afzal (Committee Services Officer) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer).

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being recorded and would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here to View](#).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. Forehead, G. Johnston, M. E. Sargent, G. Simmonds and J. Taylor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 9TH NOVEMBER 2021

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th November 2021 be approved as a correct record and by way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 8 for, 0 against and 1 abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 9th November 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Councillor R. Saralis confirmed that he had abstained from voting on the minutes as he had not been present at the last meeting.

4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report which outlined the reports planned for the period January 2022 to February 2022 and included all reports that were identified at the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Tuesday 9th November 2021. Members were asked to consider the Forward Work Programme, alongside the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, prior to publication on the Council's website.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 9 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be published on the Council's website.

6. CABINET REPORTS

There had been no requests for any of the Cabinet reports to be brought forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. 2021/22 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE MONITORING REPORT (PERIOD 7)

The Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise presented the report, which provided details of the projected capital expenditure for the 2021/22 financial year. The report provided details of actual and projected capital expenditure based on information available as of month 7 of the 2021/22 financial year. The Scrutiny Committee were asked to note the contents of the report.

The Scrutiny Committee discussed the report and queries were received on a number of slippage items. A Member sought clarification on the retention of £769k of funding earmarked for the Ty Dyffryn Waste Transfer Station despite the scheme no longer

proceeding. Clarification was also sought on £833k held against the demolition of Pontllanfraith School and £4.635m earmarked to provide a new respite facility for Social Services. Members asked whether these projects would be delivered in the current financial year and the reason for these being earmarked if there was no realistic prospect of them being delivered at this time.

The Officer confirmed that the funding for the Ty Dyffryn Waste Transfer Station had been set aside a number of years ago and that the reason for it not being released from slippage at this present time is due to the intended development of a new Waste Strategy. It is intended to present this new strategy to Members later in the year with it possible that the new strategy may contain some proposals for new capital investment, so therefore the money will be held and carried forward for the time being.

In terms of the demolition of Pontllanfraith School and the proposed new respite facility to be established at the site, the Officer confirmed that the funding is being held to ensure that the projects can be progressed and delivered in due course once the relevant agreements are in place. Another Member queried whether it was justifiable to retain the £769k of funding for a new Waste Strategy and was of the view that this funding should instead be re-allocated towards the delivery of new projects. The Officer confirmed that regular discussions are held with service areas and if this slippage is not utilised for its intended purpose, then the funding can be clawed back into corporate balances for future use elsewhere.

A Member sought clarification on funding allocated to the Caerphilly Basin Strategic Highway. The Officer confirmed that this balance (£477k) is reserved for Section 106 allocations moving forward. One Member also referred to the funding against Corporate Maintenance for Coal Tips, Mines and Spoils and asked if there were any dangerous tips in the county borough and if a list of urgent and safe tips could be provided to all Members. The Officer confirmed that funding would be prioritised to the areas of greatest need in relation to coal tip safety and that he would arrange for the Head of Infrastructure to circulate the requested information to Members following the meeting.

Reference was made to the funding allocated to the Penallta House car park extension and a Member asked whether this extension was still required, given the decreased demand for staff parking over the past two years. The Officer confirmed that the money had been set aside a number of years ago for improvements which have since been completed, and that £110k of the remaining £130k balance would be redirected to the Lawns Project in Rhymney and the remaining £20k returned to corporate balances.

Reference was made to the substantial levels of slippage across the Housing Revenue Account (£16m) and Placeshaping Agenda (£27m) and a Member asked if consideration had been given towards recruiting more staff to accelerate the projects planned within these areas. The Officer confirmed that following the successful completion of the WHQS scheme, the focus is now on the next phase of the Council's plans to build new houses across the borough, and colleagues in Housing Finance will be working with the new Head of Housing to develop a revised business plan for the HRA which will be brought to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration in due course. In terms of Placeshaping, over £30m has been set aside and £4.7m of this funding has been released to date as part of the 21st Century Schools programme. It was emphasised that the Placeshaping Agenda is a medium to long term plan which will evolve over time and that Members will begin to see various projects come on stream in future years which will release the funding at the appropriate time and reduce the level of balances in future years.

A Member asked the Officer to confirm whether new budgets would see a reduced level of funding as a result of the increased levels of slippage. The Officer explained that there is always some degree of slippage across the capital programme due to the lead-in time and the need to secure funding from external bodies such as Welsh Government. Therefore, it is not helpful to view the slippage for a single financial year in isolation as this gives the impression

that some projects are not being delivered. The Officer explained that he is working with colleagues in Finance to present future Capital Expenditure reports in a different way to provide a three-year comprehensive overview and to reassure Members that projects are going to be delivered over a medium to longer term timescale.

Following consideration of the item, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report.

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL STRATEGY, CAPITAL FINANCE PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY FOR 2022/23

The Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise presented the report, which detailed the Council's Annual Strategy for Treasury Management, Capital Finance Prudential Indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2022/23. Members were asked to consider and comment upon the content of the report and appendices prior to its submission to the special meeting of Council on 24th February 2022.

It was noted that in accordance with legislative requirements, Welsh Government guidance and Codes of Practice, the Council is required to approve a Treasury Management Strategy on an annual basis, which sets out its borrowing and investment strategies for the forthcoming year. The Council is also obliged to approve and publish a number of indicators relevant to Capital Finance and Treasury Management, and to prepare an Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement. Further details were contained in the report and its appendices.

The Scrutiny Committee discussed the report, and in relation to internal and external borrowing, a Member asked whether there had been a fundamental change of policy or if the existing strategy of internal borrowing was a continuation of an old policy. The Officer confirmed that there was no fundamental change of policy and explained that as the cost of borrowing is higher than the returns that the Authority can achieve on its investments, it is more financially beneficial at the present time for the Council to undertake a practice of internal borrowing and to use any cash balances available to fund the capital programme instead of borrowing externally. He confirmed that the Authority will continue with the existing policy as long as it is feasible to do so, but once this is no longer feasible, this practice will end and there will be a need to replenish funds through external borrowing.

Clarification was sought in relation to Section 5.2 of the report (Interest Rate Prospects - Long-term) specifically around the impact of inflation and the costs the Council would have to meet as a result of inflation increasing. The Officer confirmed that although there is expected to be an upward trend in interest rates, this is not anticipated to be a sharp increase, with it instead expected that the increase would be moderate over time. The inflation increase was acknowledged but it is expected that will reduce moving forward, however an allowance of 4% non-pay inflation has been factored into the 2022/23 draft budget proposals. It was also explained that if interest rates increase, then the Authority may well see better returns on its investments, although the cost of borrowing would also be higher, and that all these factors would need to be balanced and taken into consideration during these challenging times arising from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit.

With regards to the increase in interest rates, Members asked if there were any alternative ratings agencies that the Authority could turn to acquire information, given that the year-on-year increase predicted by the Bank of England had not materialised. The Officer confirmed that only a limited field of specialist financial agencies are able to provide these ratings and explained that finance staff also regularly consult our Treasury Advisors (Arlingclose) for advice and guidance on a range of issues.

A question was raised on whether the Authority would be able to achieve its predicted returns on investment for this year. The Officer confirmed that the Authority is beginning to see an improved position in terms of investment returns, and that for the 2020/21 financial year returns of around £786k had been achieved. It was noted that investment returns in 2021/22 have further improved with circa £1.1m expected, which compares favourably with the Welsh average.

Reference was made to Section 3.1.6 of the report around the borrowing of £42.0m for the General Fund to support the 2022/23 capital programme and £17.7m for the HRA WHQS and Affordable Homes programme, and a Member asked if borrowing was needed to this extent, given the level of funds held in reserve by the Authority. The Officer explained that although the Authority is currently utilising internal borrowing, there is a need to seek Members' approval to borrow externally in the future when needed.

Having considered and commented upon the content of the report and appendices, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendations be forwarded to Council for approval. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 10 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Council that: -

- (i) the strategy be reviewed quarterly within the Treasury Management monitoring reports presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and any changes recommended be referred to Cabinet, in the first instance, and to Council for a decision. The Authority will also prepare a half-yearly report on Treasury Management activities;
- (ii) the Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management be approved as per Appendix 5 of the report;
- (iii) the Prudential Indicators for Capital Financing be approved as per Appendices 6 and 7 of the report;
- (iv) Members adopt the MRP policy as set out in Appendix 8 of the report;
- (v) the continuation of the 2021/22 investment strategy and the lending to financial institutions and Corporates in accordance with the minimum credit rating criteria disclosed within the report be approved;
- (vi) the Authority borrows £42.0m for the General Fund to support the 2022/23 capital programme and £17.7m for the HRA WHQS and Affordable Homes programme;
- (vii) the Authority continues to adopt the investment grade scale as a minimum credit rating criterion to assess the credit worthiness of suitable counterparties when placing investments;
- (viii) the Authority adopts the monetary and investment duration limits as set in Appendix 3 of the report.

9. CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT 2022/2023

The Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise presented the report, which detailed the Authority's Capital Strategy report for the 2022/23 financial year in accordance with the Prudential Code that was introduced by the Local Government Act 2003. Members

were asked to consider and comment upon the content of the report prior to its presentation to Special Council on 24th February 2022. The report cross-referenced the report by the Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services on Revenue and Capital Budgets [“the budget report”]; and the Treasury Management Annual Strategy, Capital Finance Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Report for 2022/2023.

Members were advised that the Capital Strategy outlines the principles and framework at the very high level that shape the Authority’s capital investment proposals. The principal aim is to deliver an affordable programme of capital consistent with the financial strategy that contributes to the achievement of the Council’s priorities and objectives as set out in the Authority’s Corporate Plan; consider associated risks; recognise financial constraints over the longer-term; and represent value for money.

Members discussed the report, and a query was received regarding the Council’s stance on commercial activities. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Authority has established a group to examine commercial activities and the Council’s investment in commercial properties to ensure they are ethical in nature. In relation to this, a Member asked whether the Authority could explore the sale of wooden logs to its residents for wood burners as a result of tree clearance works, to provide a responsible/ethical means of recycling this natural waste. The Officer confirmed he would pass this query to the relevant department and raised a wider point in relation to revised codes of practice around treasury management and capital investments and highlighted that the rules had been tightened to address concerns arising from some local authorities investing in major retail parks etc. He also explained that local authorities are no longer able to borrow from the PWLB where the investment is purely for yield.

A Member referred to Section 5.7.3 of the report in relation to sustainability of the Capital Strategy, which stated that the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 50 years. The Member asked the Officer to confirm the number of loans the Council had acquired for that length of time and expressed some concern over the level of interest charges that could be accrued. The Officer confirmed that although in principle the loans would not generally be extended over that period of time, the Authority sets aside revenue to fund the underlying need to borrow over that period, which is the purpose of the Minimum Revenue Provision. Officers confirmed that the Authority has not taken out any significant borrowing in recent years and that the Council’s longest loan is due to expire in 2067. The Officers also offered to send Members a list of maturity loan analysis for their information upon request. It was noted that this information is also available in the Council’s Annual Financial Statements.

Following consideration of the item and having provided comments on its content, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee noted the Annual Capital Strategy Report for 2022/23, prior to its presentation to Special Council for approval.

The meeting closed at 18:19.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2022, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND FEBRUARY 2022

**SUBJECT: POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD
WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholder.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee meeting on Thursday 20th January 2022. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period February 2022 to March 2022.

5.2 The forward Work Programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the

council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

5.3 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 31st January 2022. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

5.4 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by the scrutiny committee prior to publication on the council website.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not necessary.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer jacqu@carphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/ Monitoring Officer

Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,
Legal Services
Councillor Gez Kirby, Chair Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair Policy and Resources Scrutiny
Committee

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 2 Cabinet Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 3 Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart

This page is intentionally left blank

Forward Work Programme - Policy & Resources

APPENDIX 1

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
22/02/22 17:30	Whole-Authority Revenue Budget Monitoring Report (Period 9).	To provide details of projected whole-authority revenue budget expenditure for the 2021/22 financial year.	Harris, Stephen R;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
22/02/22 17:30	Update on Reserves.	To present the Scrutiny Committee with details of the usable reserves held by the Authority.	Harris, Stephen R;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
22/02/22 17:30	Annual Report Against the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2021	For Cabinet to consider and approve the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021 prior to publication on the Council's website.	Cullinane, Anwen;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
22/02/22 17:30	Corporate Services Directorate Performance Report – Six Month Update 2021		Edmunds, Richard (Ed);	Cllr. Gordon, Colin J;
22/02/22 17:30	Information Item - Corporate services & Miscellaneous Finance 2021/22 budget monitoring report (period 9)	To inform members of projected revenue expenditure for the Directorate of Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance for the 2021/22 financial year	Roberts, David;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
22/02/22 17:30	Information Item - 2021/22 Capital Expenditure Monitoring Report (Period 9).	To inform the Scrutiny Committee of projected capital expenditure for the 2021/22 financial year.	Williams, Rhiann H.;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
22/02/22 17:30	Information Item - Treasury Management and Capital Financing Prudential Indicators Quarter 3 Monitoring Report.	To present Members with details of Treasury Management activities and capital financing, together with the related Prudential Indicators for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st December 2021.	Williams, Rhiann H.;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
22/02/22 17:30	Information Item - Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027		Cullinane, Anwen;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
05/04/22 17:30	Recruitment & Retention Challenges		Edmunds, Richard (Ed);	Cllr. Gordon, Colin J;

This page is intentionally left blank

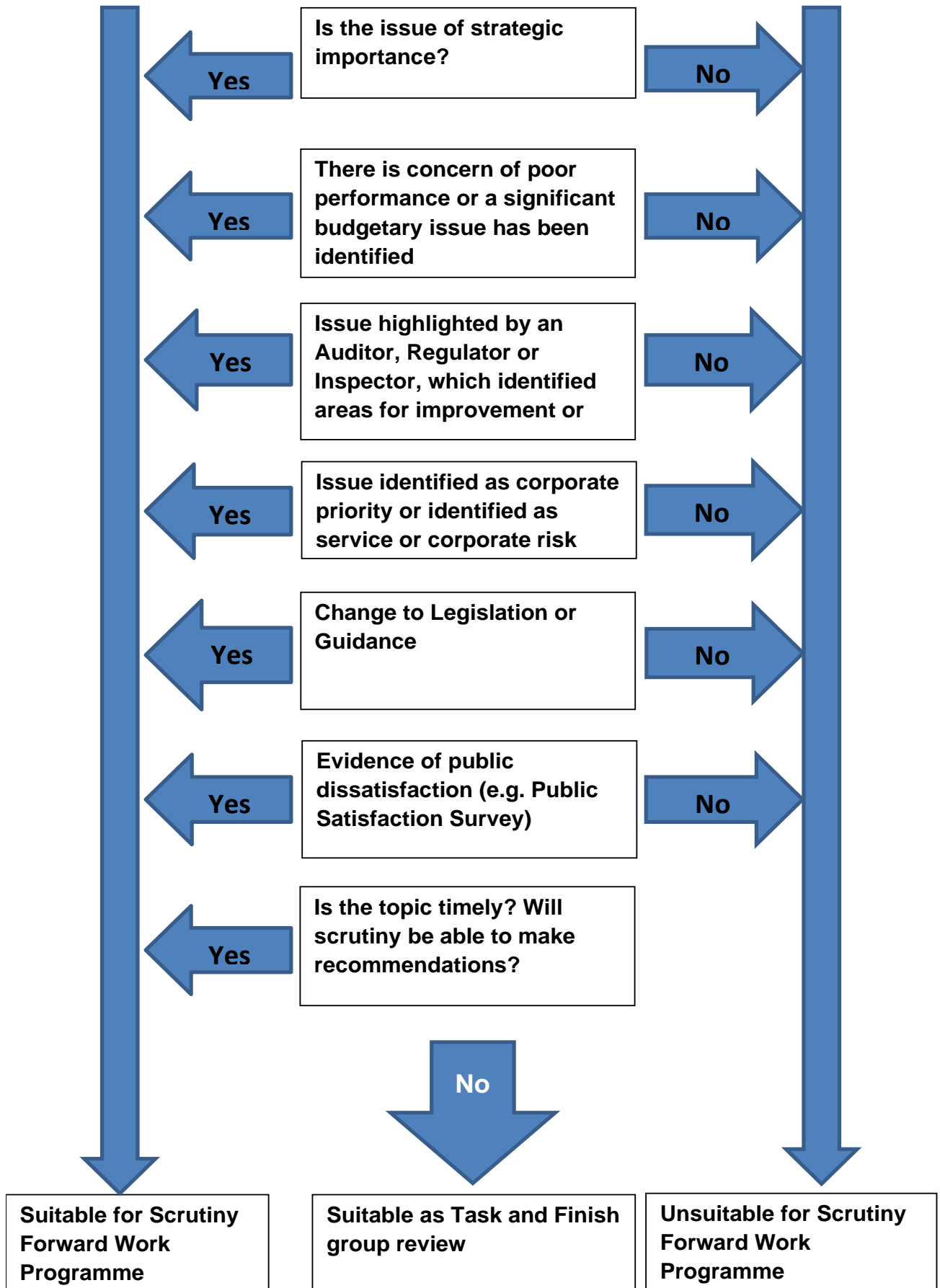
23/02/2022 10:30	Oakdale Housing Development	For Cabinet to agree in principle the development of the site of the former Oakdale Comprehensive School by Caerphilly Homes.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
23/02/2022 10:30	Ty Darren site in Risca	For Cabinet to consider and agree in principle the proposed development of the former Ty Darren site in Risca, by Caerphilly Homes.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
23/02/2022 10:30	Welsh Government Lease Scheme Proposal	To discuss the WG lease scheme proposal in comparison to Caerphilly Keys and to seek a decision on which scheme we take forward for PRS option to assist in the discharge of statutory Homeless Duties.	Denman, Kerry;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
23/02/2022 10:30	Welsh Government Retail, Leisure & Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme 2022/2023.	For Cabinet to endorse the Retail, Leisure & Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme for 2022/2023 only.	Carpenter, John;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
23/02/2022 10:30	Whole-Authority Revenue Budget Monitoring Report (Period 9) March	To provide details of projected whole-authority revenue budget expenditure for the 2021/22 financial year and to propose the ring-fencing of underspends for a range of purposes as detailed in the report.	Harris, Stephen R;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
23/02/2022 10:30	Budget Proposals for 2022/23	To present Cabinet with details of draft budget proposals for the 2022/23 financial year to allow for a period of consultation prior to final decision by Council on the 24th February 2022.	Harris, Stephen R;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;

09/03/2022 10:30	Community Learning and Support Hub at Rhymney Library	To seek Cabinet approval for 'in principle' match funding for an application to the Welsh Government to support the creation of a community learning and support hub at Rhymney Town Library and to note the intention for the Library Service to work with Gwent Police to strengthen community engagement through the use of informal settings at Rhymney Library, Risca Library and Caerphilly Library.	Edmunds, Richard (Ed);	Cllr. Whiting, Ross;
09/03/2022 10:30	Corporate Performance Assessments (CPA's/DPA's))	To provide Cabinet with information and detailed analysis of performance for the period 01/04/21 to 31/12/21 and forms part of the Council's self-assessment activity.	Richards, Sue; Roberts, Ros;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
09/03/2022 10:30	Annual Report Against the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2021	For Cabinet to consider and approve the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021 prior to publication on the Council's website.	Cullinane, Anwen;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
09/03/2022 10:30	Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027	For Cabinet to consider and approve the draft Five Year Promotional Strategy prior to the publication on the Council's website.	Cullinane, Anwen;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
09/03/2022 10:30	Regeneration Project Board - Project Proposals	To consider recommendations from the Regeneration Project Board in respect of the allocation of Development Funds to Strategic Regeneration Proposals that align with the Council's Regeneration Strategy; and the allocation of Licence to Innovate Funding to proposals that align with the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy.	Kyte, Rhian;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;

09/03/2022 10:30	Regeneration Project Board – Land Acquisition Fund (Exempt item)	To consider a request for match-funding from Caerphilly CBC to attract Transforming Towns Funding for strategic acquisitions in Caerphilly town centre to facilitate the delivery of the Caerphilly 2035 Plan.	Kyte, Rhian;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;
23/03/2022 10:30	Gender Pay Gap	For CMT and Cabinet to agree the Gender Pay Gap report which must to be published by 31st March 2022.	Donovan, Lynne;	Cllr. Gordon, Colin J;
23/03/2022 10:30	EAS Business Plan	The EAS is required to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan on an annual basis. This report asks for members to consider the full contents of the draft EAS Business Plan as part of the regional consultation process	Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Whiting, Ross;
23/03/2022 10:30	HRA Business Plan	To update Cabinet on the latest Housing Business Plan position in advance of submitting the plan to Welsh Government by 31/3/22, which is a requirement under the terms of the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) grant. The Housing Business Plan is a 30 year plan and will include rental increase assumptions and forecasted borrowing requirements to enable the HRA to maintain viability while meeting its core objectives.	Allen, Lesley;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
23/03/2022 10:30	Coal Tips Inspection and Maintenance Update.	To provide an update on the current coal tip condition status and inspection regimes that are in place for coal tips located within Caerphilly County Borough.	Lloyd, Marcus;	Cllr. Pritchard, James;
23/03/2022 10:30	PFI Review	To provide Cabinet with an update on the PFI review.	Harris, Stephen R;	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;

<p>23/03/2022 10:30</p>	<p>Housing Support Strategy</p>	<p>The Housing Support Programme Strategy is being developed to outline the strategic direction of the local authority for housing related support services. This single strategic view demonstrates our plan and approach to homelessness prevention and housing support services.</p>	<p>Williams, Jo;</p>	<p>Cllr. Cook, Shayne;</p>
<p>06/04/2022 10:30</p>	<p>21st Century Schools – Band B - Phase 2: Objection Report</p>	<p>For Cabinet to consider the contents of 21st Century Schools objection report and give permission to proceed to the planning application stage, and the submission of the full business case to Welsh Government.</p>	<p>West, Andrea; Richards, Sue;</p>	<p>Cllr. Whiting, Ross;</p>
<p>06/04/2022 10:30</p>	<p>Corporate Complaints - 6 month update</p>	<p>For Cabinet to review the complaints dealt with under the Corporate Complaints policy for the period 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021 together with outcomes and lessons learned.</p>	<p>Lane, Lisa;</p>	<p>Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;</p>

Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



This page is intentionally left blank



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND FEBRUARY 2022

**SUBJECT: DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT SIX MONTH
UPDATE 2021/22**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

--

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Scrutiny with the 6-month Corporate Services Performance Assessment which is part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.
- 1.2 The Performance Assessment (referred to hereafter as the DPA) is the Directorate's self-assessment and forms part of the Council's overall self-assessment activity. It provides information and analysis for 6-month period April – September 2021. Members are invited to discuss, challenge, and scrutinise the range of information in the DPA.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's revised Performance Framework was endorsed by Cabinet in February 2020 and this report introduces one of the key components of the Framework, the Directorate Performance Assessment (DPA). The DPA is a 'self-assessment' of Directorate's progress across a wide range of information types and meets our 'duty as a principal council to keep our performance under review'
- 2.2 DPA's are an opportunity to bring together a range of information and intelligence into one picture to answer the self-assessment questions of 'how well are we performing, how do we know? And what and how can we do better? Appendix 1 is the Corporate Services Performance Assessment 6-month update 2021/22.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members review the attached document (appendix 1) and discuss, challenge, and scrutinise the information contained within.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Scrutiny Members are involved in the 'self-assessment' process by scrutinising the information within the Directorate Performance Assessment. This also supports the principles within the new section (Part 6, Chapter 1) of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act which provides for a new performance and governance regime for principal councils.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Performance Framework has been developed to meet several strategic and operational needs as well as to meet the legislation and further the Council's desire to be a high performing learning organisation focused on meeting the needs of its residents. The framework was piloted in 2019 and endorsed by Cabinet February 2020 and now is reported as a regular part of scrutiny committees. This report introduces and shares the Corporate Services dashboard (the DPA) 6-month update 2021/22.
- 5.2 The spirit of the DPA (appendix 1) is about providing learning. The DPA is less about performance and targets (though they have their place) and is more so to provide a wider picture of performance that will support reflective and challenging conversations and scrutiny that will ultimately lead to learning and further improvement.

5.3 Conclusion

This DPA covers the period April 2021 to September 2021.

During this period the Council has continued its response to the COVID-19 pandemic while bringing many services back on stream and delivering strong progress against the Corporate Reviews and PlaceShaping aspects of the Team Caerphilly Transformation Programme. The sustained pressure on staff to continue to run the organisation at while attempting to change the organisation and respond to the challenges of the pandemic cannot be underestimated and they have begun to take their toll. The pressures are further exacerbated when taking into account sickness absence levels, staff self-isolation and challenges in recruiting to particular roles across Corporate Services. The staff have been beyond exceptional and their collective efforts need to be recognised as significant achievements.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no assumptions thought to be required within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only and on this basis an integrated impact assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications within this report, however the DPA (appendix 1) has a section on resources including relevant budget outturns as part of the overall self-assessment of the directorate.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications within this report, although the DPA (appendix 1) has a section called 'resources' which provides data on a range of workforce aspects.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 Any consultation responses have been included with in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Author: Richard (Ed) Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services

Consultees: Christina HARRY, Chief Executive
Councillor Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise
Councillor Gez Kirby, Chair of P&R Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of P&R Scrutiny Committee
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Liz Lucas, Head of Customer and Digital Services
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities, Welsh Language & Consultation)
Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Directorate Performance Assessment (6-month update 2021/22)

This page is intentionally left blank

Corporate Services Directorate Performance Assessment



2021/22 Six Month Q1 & Q2 Update

Please select a section of your choice:

Directors Summary & Priorities



Performance



Customer Intelligence



Resources



Risks



Well-being Objectives



Conclusion



Page 33

Directors Self Assessment Summary



2021/22 Six Month Q1 & Q2 Update

During the first six months of 2021/22 the Council has continued its response to the COVID-19 pandemic while bringing many services back on stream and delivering strong progress against the Corporate Reviews and PlaceShaping aspects of the Team Caerphilly Transformation Programme. The sustained pressure on staff to continue to run the organisation at while attempting to change the organisation and respond to the challenges of the pandemic cannot be underestimated and they have begun to take their toll. The pressures are further exacerbated when taking in to account sickness absence levels, staff self isolation and challenges in recruiting to particular roles across Corporate Services. The staff have been beyond exceptional and their collective efforts need to be recognised as significant achievements.

The external recognition received shows just how well Caerphilly have done in this regard. Over the course of the first six months of 2021/22 the Council has been shortlisted at the prestigious LGC Awards for Council of the Year. The Chief Executive was highly commended at the MJ Awards having been shortlisted for Chief Executive of the Year. Our Catering Team won the APSE Award for their efforts in feeding some 6000 Free School Meal pupils across Caerphilly and Clir Etheridge was also successful at the LGIU Awards in being recognised as Community Champion of the Year. An incredible effort all around.

Priorities

Title	Completion Date	RAG	Progress - Achievements - Impacts
Strategic Objective 1 - Lead & support the organisation's Team Caerphilly Transformation Programme			
1.1 Lead the delivery of the PlaceShaping Programme		●	A range of PlaceShaping projects have progressed toward completion during the time period and others have been initiated. A six month update report will be received by P&R Scrutiny and Cabinet in November setting out detained progress.
1.2 Lead the Remote Contact Corporate Review		●	New telephony system rolled out to over 200 call agents. Discovery phase of new public website and staff intranet. Digitisation of customer complaints nearing completion
1.3 Lead the Workforce Development Corporate Review		●	Workforce Development Strategy and Well-being Strategy agreed in September. E168k outturn approval for workforce development function, appointments to team in progress.
1.4 Lead the Sustainable Financial Planning Corporate		●	Budget strategy for 22/23 being discussed. Identifying opportunities for greater return on investments. Outcome reporting and linking to the MTFP being improved. Financial Regulations being reviewed. Internal Invoicing process data gathering complete and options to streamline being considered.
1.5 Lead the Information, Insight and Intelligence Corporate		●	Working with external data transformation experts to audit data use and look at options to join up data sets for better use. Digital Solutions Board created to advise on new software to reduce reliance on legacy applications an maximise the benefit of our ES licence.
1.6 Lead the Decision-Making Corporate Review		●	Data gathering on governance in other Councils being analysed. Options paper being prepared to review pros and cons. Training modules for staff and flow charts to assist with understanding to follow.
1.7 Support the Agile Working Corporate Review		●	Data on staffing/locations/equipment being analysed. Categorisation of role and equipment records updated. Analysis of assets base underway. Policy review has identified those that need updating. Trial of docking stations in digital services. Agile workspace ground floor Ty Penallta complete
Strategic Objective 2 - Continue to refine the Council's Governance arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose and compliant with legislative requirements			
2.1 Set a balanced budget for the Council for the 2022/23 financial year		●	Details of the WG 2022/23 Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement will not be announced until the 21st December 2021. Work is currently underway to identify inescapable cost pressures and potential savings and the 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals will be presented to Cabinet on the 19th January 2022. Following a period of consultation the 2022/23 Final Budget Proposals will then be presented to Cabinet on the 23rd February 2022 and Full Council on the 24th February 2022.
2.2 Implement the Programme for Procurement within agreed timescales		●	Implementation of the Programme for Procurement (2018-2023) is ongoing. This together with other Procurement Policies and Procedures were subject to a Wales Audit Review in September 2021 with positive response and feedback received from the Auditor in October 2021. A number of areas were covered during the Audit.
2.3 Develop and embed a Social Value Policy for Caerphilly		●	Social Value Policy agreed by Cabinet in July 2021. Policy and Themes, Outcomes and Measurement Methodology published on Intranet and Council Website. Next steps on approach to embed in the wider Council to be progressed in early 2022.
2.4 Support the implementation of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Draft Bill		●	Awaiting next steps from Welsh Government consultation undertaken and Council responded accordingly and will continue to participate in future consultation sessions.
2.5 Design and embed any changes emerging from Public Procurement Reform		●	Awaiting next steps on the new Procurement Regulations from UK and Welsh Government. Actively monitoring updated information and Procurement Policy Notices together with attending fortnightly meeting with Welsh Government and WLGA representatives.
2.6 Support the implementation of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act		●	Monthly meetings are taking place with the relevant officers. The action plan is updated at the meeting and an update is provided to Formal Corporate Services SMT each month. Any actions that are behind or any emerging risks that have been identified are discussed at the meeting and progress is being made. The action plan is on track and there are no emerging risks at present
2.7 Continue to refine and further embed the Corporate Performance Framework to meet the Self-assessment aspects of the above legislation		●	The year-end DPA's & CPA went to Scrutiny and Cabinet in September/October and have been placed on the Business Improvement portal in the intranet. The process is established. However, some refinement elements still exist to improve the involvement aspect to meet the performance duty A survey has been designed to send to managers to gain more information about the use of the DPA to strengthen the 'involvement' section in how we judge progress
2.8 Deliver the Well-being Assessment and progress the development of a whole Gwent Public Services Board (PSB)		●	The Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) is now in existence and we (CCBC) are carrying out the administration for the regional board with CCBC Leader being the chair. The first meeting was held 1.10.21. Membership and Terms of Ref meet the statutory requirements and meetings are in diary for next 2 years. A PSB development session is planned 7.12.21. and the Caerphilly Local Delivery Group has been formed to support the Board and deliver on plans. The Well-being Assessment work is slow. Regional working has introduced delays. CCBC is picking up slack and appointing a WG funded Policy Officer on behalf of the region to move things forward. Some concerns that the document is not of the quality it would have been if it had been done internally. There is time to pull it back by next May which is the deadline to complete the assessment.
2.9 Manage the improvement work emerging from recommendations or proposals for improvement made by Audit Wales		●	The next Proposals Register update will go to Governance and Audit Committee on 25th January. There are less proposals than usual due to reduced work from the AW due to the pandemic. This part of the reporting process is well established with the proposals being placed in the DPA's so local monitoring can take place. We now need to 'refresh' the mechanism for agreeing what committees the AW outputs are reported to. Our regulator is going on secondment so this maybe a discussion with their replacement at the regular liaison meeting.
Strategic Objective 3 - Develop and refresh employee working practices that support the Team Caerphilly ethos and the emerging organisational culture			
3.1 Develop and Embed a Well-being Framework for Caerphilly		●	Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021 - 24 agreed by Cabinet on 29th September 2021. The action plan within the Strategy now needs to be implemented.

Title	Completion Date	RAG	Progress - Achievements - Impacts
3.2 Undertake a Policy Refresh Programme		●	A number of HR and H&S Policies and Procedures are being reviewed to support the Agile Working Corporate Review. Other HR policies are also being reviewed.
3.3 Develop a Learning and Development function for the organisation		●	The report to Council dated 13 th July 2021 entitled 'Provisional Revenue Budget Outturn for 2020/21, included a proposal to set aside funding of £168k to appoint staff on a one year fixed-term basis to undertake the initial planning and scoping required for delivery of coordinated workforce development function across the Council, which Members agreed. The recruitment for these posts has recently taken place and work is now commencing to scope learning and development across the Council.
Strategic Objective 4 - Support the implementation of modern, fit for purpose approaches to decision-making and local Democracy			
4.1 Implement a Hybrid Remote Meeting approach for the Council	May 22	●	A report will go to the cabinet in December requesting funding that will allow the chamber and meeting rooms to be fitted out with hybrid meeting technology.
4.2 Support the delivery of the Local Government Elections (May 2022)	May 23	●	Preparations will begin in the new year for the holding of the 2022 local government elections. The council is one of a number of pilot areas in Wales where early physical voting will be permitted during the weekend prior to polling day.
Strategic Objective 5 - Continue to develop an IT environment that is secure, drives organisational transformation and enables efficient service delivery			
5.1 Deliver and implement the ICT Strategy and Digital Strategy		●	Progress has been made on securing dedicated resource to further deploy Microsoft 365. A draft project plan has been developed for the roll out of M365 and will be shared as appropriate. Initial priority will be to move email into the Microsoft cloud. Progress has been slow due to difficulty in recruiting into the Cloud team.
5.2 Continue to support an all Wales ICT Procurement for Hwb Programme		●	Established a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) on behalf of all twenty-two Councils in October 2019. The DPS offers an opportunity to develop a national, strategic relationship with Suppliers in order to maximise the current and future investment that schools and Councils make in Wales. The DPS is a "live" market for Suppliers able to demonstrate they fully meet our requirements. The DPS will be continually refreshed to take account of and keep pace with changes in related technologies and associated services. During FY21/22 to date the following has been established/ undertaken: Lot 1, Networking and Associated Equipment (separate mini competitions for individual Councils); Lot 2, End User Devices (new order form) covering Education and Corporate sites; & Lot 3 Teaching and Learning Tools (new order form) and separate mini competition for Headsets & Accessories. The overall spend to date via the DPS is circa £111 million since service commencement via Welsh Government and individual Councils funding with circa £22.5 million of spend during FY21/22 to date. Workshop undertaken with representation from various Councils on 12 October 2021 to discuss lessons learned of the EdTech Service and DPS since implementation. e.g. what went well and what was challenging and to explore future service provision. There was overwhelming support for this to continue and a future workshop to explore opportunities and shape the future provision to be scheduled in early 2022.
5.3 Ensure the Councils Cyber Security Policy remains fit for purpose		●	Cyber Security/Resilience Policies and Procedures under review. Silverthorn Associates commissioned to assist with various work streams in relation to information assurance and risk advice together with reviewing and providing a gap analysis on Cyber Resilience, Data Protection and Information Governance policies and associated procedures. This work will inform the proposed Cyber Strategy, Action Plan and associated Policies and Procedures. The following sessions and exercises have been undertaken during FY21/22: Friday 10 September 2021 – Presentation to Management Network on matters in relation to Cyber Attacks such as Copeland. This is awareness raising, giving a live example of an attack, the impact and what you need to do to prepare and recover from such an attack. Monday 11 October 2021 – SIRO Training Leadership Team. This session highlighted what we need in place as a Council in terms of information risk. Monday 15 November 2021 – Cyber Attack Exercise (who, what when etc.) with relevant Cabinet Member & Leadership Team. This session will be a cyber attack workshop whereby business recovery plans to be considered and subsequently updated. Monday 22 November 2021 – Cyber Attack Exercise Debrief/ Feedback Session (what went well, what didn't, next steps etc.) with relevant Cabinet & Leadership Team. Following the debrief there will be a need to reflect and update all our processes, procedures and plans. Caerphilly CBC Bobs Business Phishing Campaign - The purpose of the exercise that's being undertaken in conjunction with Welsh Government is to educate those that may fall victim to a phishing email by providing them with the relevant information to stay protected. This will also ensure a safer working environment for all staff and keep the organisation more secure from cyber-attacks.
5.4 Ensure the Councils Information Governance arrangements continue to be developed and appropriately applied		●	Currently reviewing Corporate Information Governance arrangements this includes: Review and modernising of processes and procedures including automation; A fit for purpose information governance project team and information governance panel; Leading on collaborative working with neighbouring Councils on Schools Contractual matters in conjunction with Blake Morgan following Brexit; & Development of an Information Governance Strategy and associated Action Plan.
Strategic Objective 6 - Maximise the Council's financial position and Resilience			
6.1 Develop the MTFP and link to the TeamCaerphilly Programme		●	An updated MTFP will be presented to Cabinet/Council in February 2022. This will be based on the three-year period 2022/23 to 2024/25 and will identify the potential budget shortfall for each year. Further work will then be required to identify what financial savings will be delivered through the Transformation Programme to help offset the projected financial gap. It will also be important to capture details of productivity gains and cost avoidance achieved through transformation. The Transformation Team is in the process of developing an approach to ensure that all of this information can be evidenced and recorded. Review IT contracts with aim to consolidate and make use of existing investments in new technologies such as Microsoft 365.
6.2 Finalise the Schools PFI Review		●	Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak the Council was working with Local Partnerships to prepare a business case by the end of March 2020. This work was suspended due to the pandemic but has now recommenced. The draft business case will be completed in December 2021.
6.3 Continue to develop and refine the Council's Investment Strategy		●	£21m has been placed in longer-term investments during the current financial year which is resulting in improved returns. Our overall yield is currently 0.7%, which compares favourably with the 0.25% average return for other Welsh Local Authorities. We are continuing to work with our Treasury Advisors (Arlingclose) to identify further opportunities to improve returns.

Count No's	RAG	Status
0	Black	Not yet started or too early to report any progress (achievements/changes)
0	Red	Started but not progressing well
5	Amber	Started with reasonable progress achieved
23	Green	Going well with good progress
28	Total	

Performance



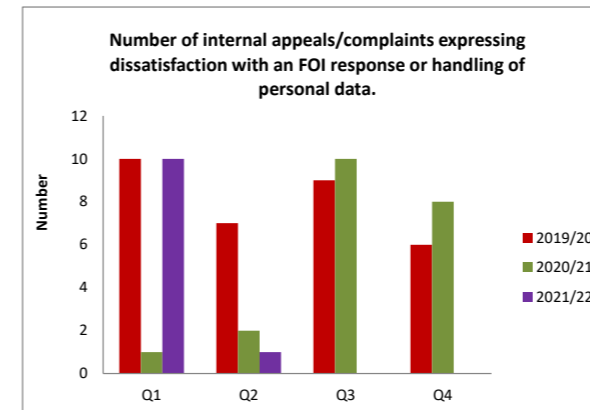
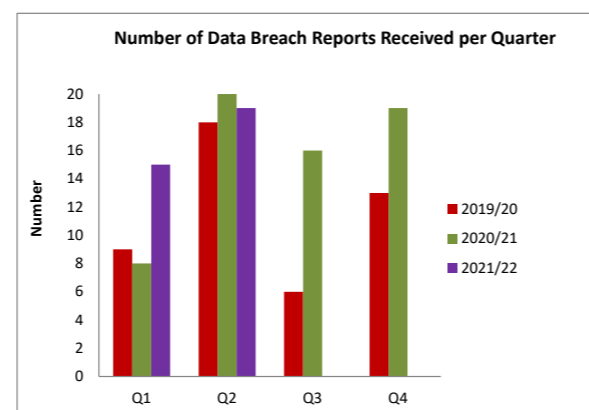
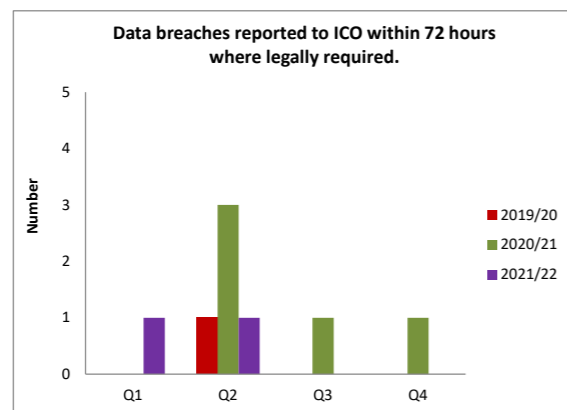
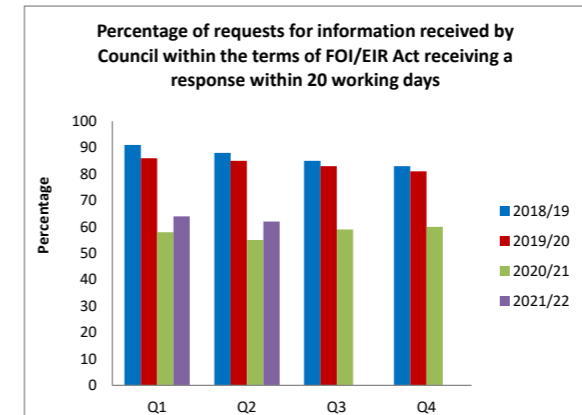
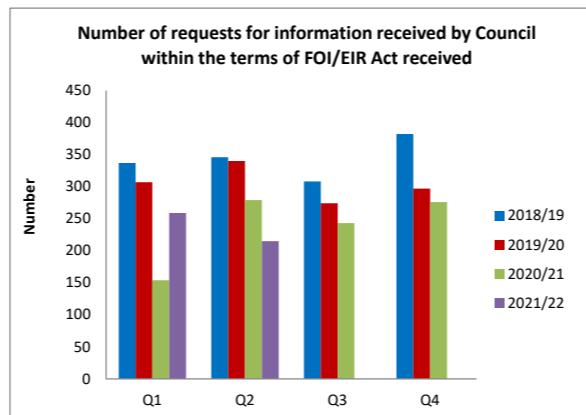
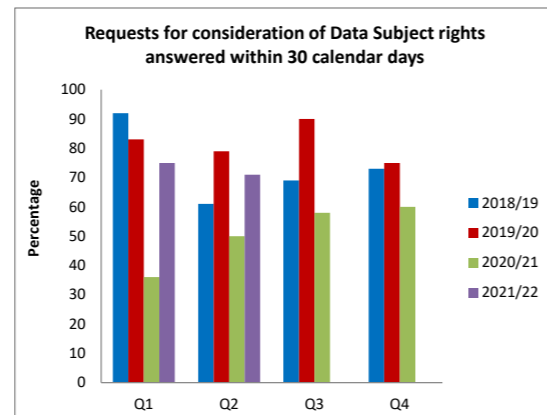
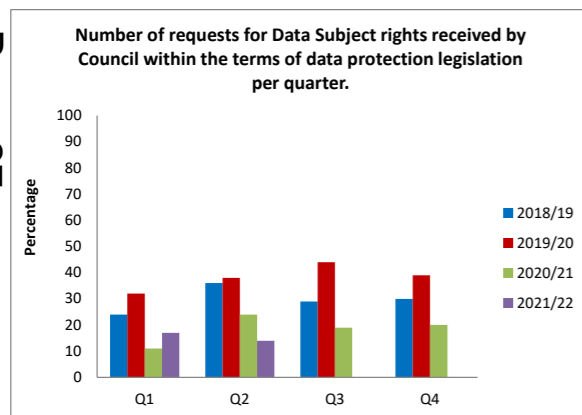
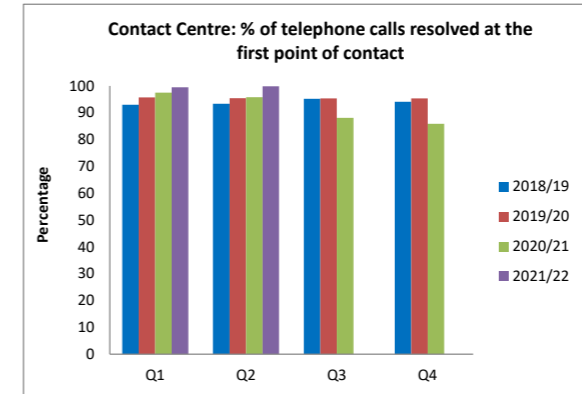
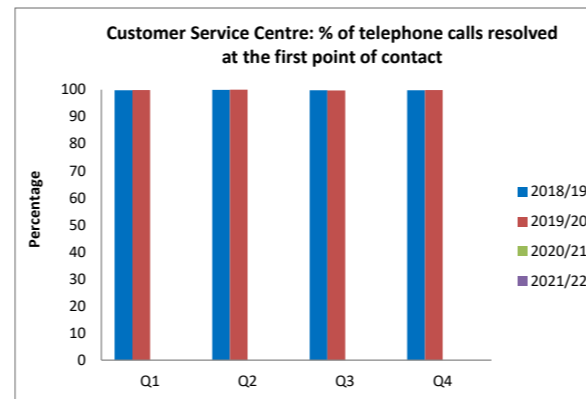
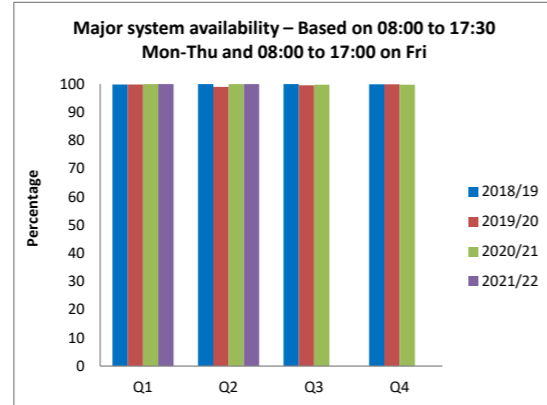
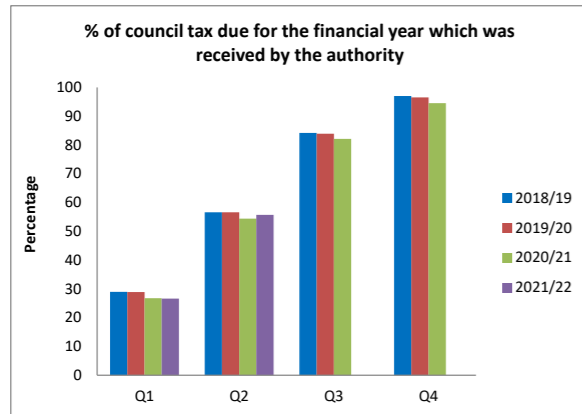
Performance Information	Frequency	Q1 2020/21	Q2 2020/21	Q3 2020/21	Q4 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Target	RAG	Comments/Performance Explained
Budget in year Position (over/underspend)	Annual									See Resources tab for more information.
In year savings targeted vs savings delivered	Annual									See Resources tab for more information.
% Sickness absence: Authority	Monthly	3.54%	3.47%	4.52%	4.38%	4.62%	4.73%	4.00%		
% Sickness absence: Corporate Services	Monthly	2.19%	2.02%	3.52%	3.19%	3.64%	3.02%	4.00%		Note: This figure includes Education. Work is being undertaken to identify why sickness absence has increased across the Authority
PAM/001 Number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee	Yearly				10 days					PAM Indicator Staff (excluding teachers) - 12 days Teachers - 3.7 days
PAM/044 (New) Number of apprentices on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes per 1,000 employees	Yearly				2.65					PAM Indicator. 22 Apprentices in total in 2020/21
% of council tax due for the financial year which was received by the authority	Quarterly	26.8%	54.40%	82.10%	94.50%	28.60%	55.70%	TBC	N/A	Improved performance compared to 202/21 but at the moment it is not possible to forecast when we might return to pre-pandemic collection levels. The number of cases subject to court action is being limited by the court authorities which means it is taking longer to obtain payment in arrears cases. As we are in uncharted territory, we have not set a collection rate target though we should improve on last year's 94.50%.
% of Annual Spend with Caerphilly based suppliers	Annual				21%			25%		Annual Measure
% of Annual Spend with 'City Deal' based Suppliers	Annual				45%			57%		Annual Measure
% of Annual Spend with Suppliers across Wales	Annual				51%			60%		Annual Measure
Major system availability – Based on 08:00 to 17:30 Mon-Thu and 08:00 to 17:00 on Fri	Weekly (YTD)	99.94%	99.98%	99.73%	99.76%	99.94%	99.98%	99.70%		
% of Contact Centre telephone calls resolved at the first point of contact	Quarterly	97.48%	95.76%	88.18%	85.89%	99.49%	99.88%	80.00%		
% of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at the first point of contact	Quarterly	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	80.00%	N/A	
Number of Complaints Received in Corporate Services (and dealt with within statutory timeframes) YTD	Monthly	0	2	0	1	4	2			See Customer tab for more information
Number of requests for Data Subject rights received by Council within the terms of data protection legislation per quarter (whole authority)	Quarterly	11	24	19	20	17	14	N/A		Q1: 17 SARs received, 1 withdrawn. In addition to the 17 SARs that were received, we also received a request for Rectification and we requested further information to help us review the matter but we did not receive a response from the data subject.
Requests for consideration of Data Subject rights answered within 30 calendar days (whole authority)	Quarterly	36%	50%	58%	60%	75%	71%	80.00%		
Number requests for information received by Council within the terms of FOI/EIR Act received per quarter (whole authority)	Quarterly	154	279	243	276	259	215			Q1: 259 requests received, 4 on hold awaiting clarification and 1 withdrawn. Q2: 215 requests rec'd, 3 on hold awaiting clarification.
Percentage of requests for information received by Council within the terms of FOI/EIR Act receiving a response within 20 working days - year to date (whole authority)	Quarterly	58%	55%	59%	60%	64%	62%	80.00%		Q1 : out of the 254 valid requests rec'd, 162 were responded to within legal compliance and 10 are still open. Q2: out of the 212 valid requests rec'd, 127 were responded to within legal compliance and 29 are still open
Number of data breach reports received per quarter (whole authority)	Quarterly	8	20	16	19	15	19			Common themes: wrong e-mail address selected from autocomplete drop down menu, e-mail addresses not entered into bcc field when sending email to multiple recipients, information sent to wrong person. Q1 - Communities: 5, Education & Corporate Services: 8, Social Services & Housing: 2 Q2 - Communities: 6, Education & Corporate Services: 10, Social Services & Housing: 3
Data breaches reported to ICO within 72 hours where legally required (whole authority)	Quarterly	0	3	1	1	1	1			Q1: ICO took no further action, Q2: waiting a response from ICO
Number of internal appeals/complaints expressing dissatisfaction with an FOI response or handling of personal data (whole authority)	Quarterly	1	2	10	8	10	1			FOI - internal appeals: Q1: 5 rec'd and in 3 cases the original decisions were upheld, in 1 case the original decision was partly upheld as we hadn't provided all of the information covered by the request and in 1 case, the original refusal was not upheld as the information was already available on our website. Q2: 1 rec'd and the original decision was upheld. FOI - ICO appeal: Q1: 4 rec'd 1 upheld our original decision, 1 our original decision was upheld but found that we had not responded within 20 working days and 2 cases were complaints about our failure to respond within 2 working days - the ICO upheld the complaint in both cases. We also received 1 DS Rights - ICO review in Q1 where the data subject complained that they were not happy with the way we had dealt with their request and the ICO found that we had met our obligations under data protection legislation.

Performance Explained

The Council's sickness absence challenges are not unique, in fact these challenges exist across all local authorities in Wales. Along with regular illness the Council has had to deal with COVID-19 cases and associated periods of self isolation which have really impacted the Council's overall resilience and have required careful management.

Through the sustained efforts of staff levels of Council Tax collection are heading back toward pre pandemic levels. We are currently being held back by the speed of recovery action within the courts but with the move to online payments and post office cards now cemented it is clear that Council Tax collection levels are heading in the right direction in spite of the early pandemic difficulties.

Data Subject Request and FOI performance has continued on an upward trend and has done so in spite of the loss of the Information Governance Manager and the following restructure within the Team. DSR levels are now amber which is an improvement of around 10-15% on the previous six months. The FOI performance is more modest but continues to head in the right direction.



Customer Intelligence



What is our customer intelligence telling us?

Complaints - Corporate

Quarter 1 - 3 complaints

- Home care charges - Stage 1 that escalated to Stage 2, upheld.
- Having to pay Council Tax after being told that the account was clear - Stage 1, upheld.
- Information Governance Complaint - Stage 2, not upheld.

Quarter 2 - 7 complaints

- Issuing of completion notices by Council Tax - Stage 1, not upheld.
- Housing Benefits payments - Stage 1, not upheld.
- Business Rates - Stage 1 that escalated to Stage 2, not upheld.
- Letter from Electoral Services not bilingual - Stage 1, upheld.
- Council Tax refund on deceased relatives property - Stage 1, upheld
- Council Tax account - Stage1, not upheld.
- Complaint to Customer Services about bulky waste collection - Stage 1 that escalated to Stage 2, not upheld.

Complaints - Informal (Customer Services)

Four complaints received

- Collection of Fridge and Website Information - Customer unhappy that CCBC do not collect white good such as Washing Machine, Fridges, Freezers etc. Customer also advised that website only states Fridge Freezers and not Fridges. Website content is provided by Waste Management and not Customer Services.
- CCBC Bereavement Webpage - Customer advised that section on CCBC Bereavement webpage does not auto generate an email response.
- Waste Management Queue - Customer contacted Switchboard to advise that he wanted garden waste bags, when transferred to the Waste Management line he was placed into a queue as the advisors were on other calls.
- TV Filming Ludlow Street and Claude Road - TV crew, actors and extra's filming in Ludlow Street and Claude Road in the early hours of the morning. Worried about parking, noise and road closures. This complaint was for Communications, a response was provided to the customer advising that CCBC were assured by the production company that all appropriate steps had been taken to minimise disruption to local residents. Along with letter drops and a representative from the TV crew in the area over recent days to engage the community, including the local resident's association, to discuss the planned activity.

Complaints with an equalities and/or Welsh language element

There were 2 complaints in Quarter 2.

Welsh Complaint

Multiple concerns raised:

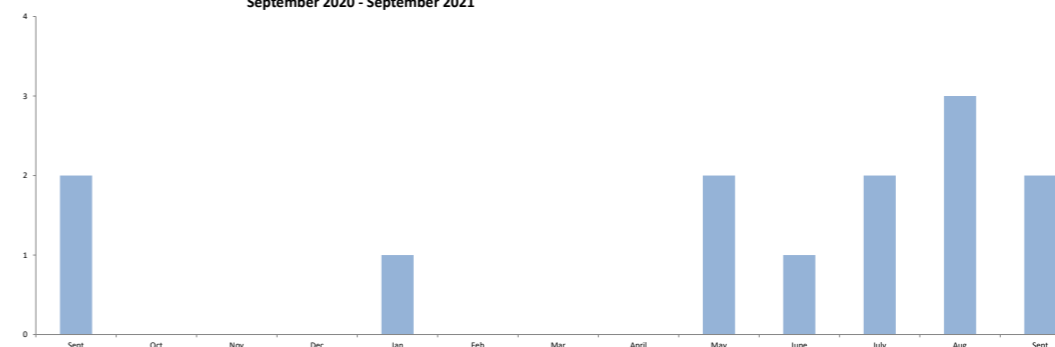
- Electoral Services letter contained English web link in the Welsh text
- Complaints Officer couldn't conduct the call in Welsh and insisted that the complainant submitted the complaint in writing going against what is stipulated in the Complaints Policy
- In future they want to speak to someone in Welsh when they complain
- Complaints page on website only gives an email address as a contact – there is no Tel No. or Textphone No.
- Colin the Chatbot does not work properly

The complainant received a response and all the points raised addressed. Complainant satisfied with the response

Disability Complaint

Complaint in Economy & Environment Directorate

Number of complaints in Corporate Services
September 2020 - September 2021



Satisfaction

Other Points of Note

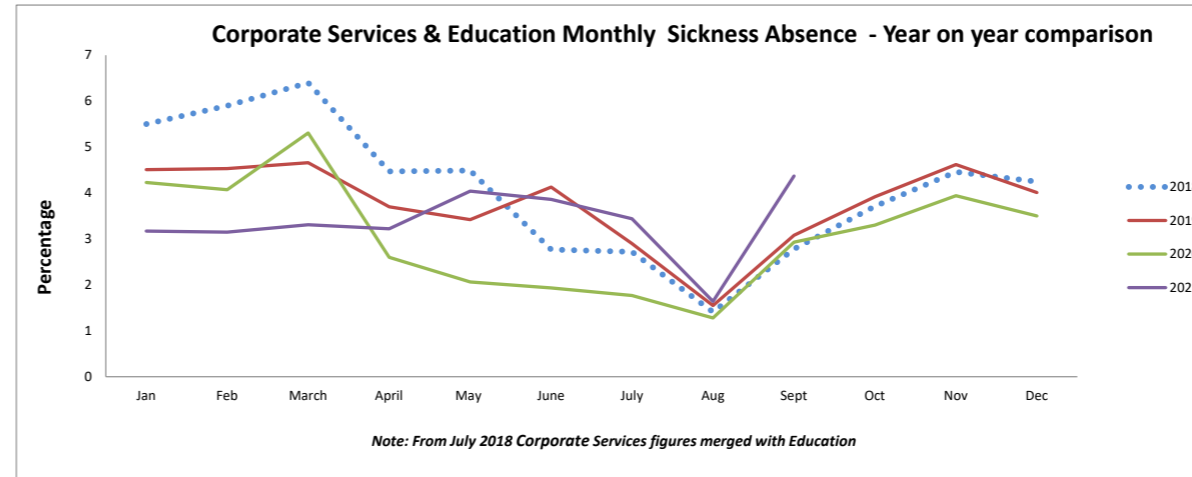
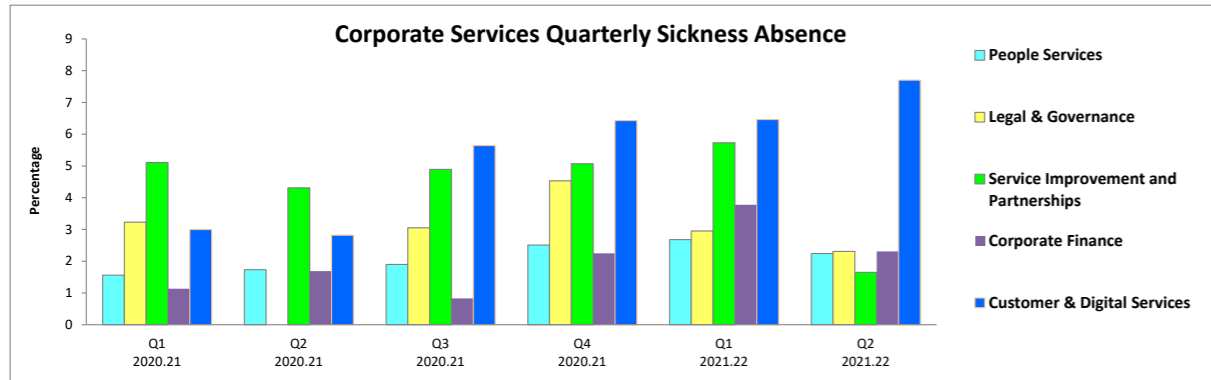
LT – High level of sickness is impacting delivery of services, this is resulting in high levels of support calls and projects progressing slowly. Creation of a dedicated school support team will remove the workload in this area from the existing team. The problems for recruiting is leaving key areas without experience and adding to the workload of others, progress in some areas will be slower until the experience and knowledge is gained by remaining staff or vacancies are filled.

Page 28

Regulator Proposals

Number and reference of action	Name of Report	Regulator Proposal	Action	PREVIOUS UPDATE	Service Officer Responsible	When will be completed by	CURRENT UPDATE - November 2021	Status	Percentage completed
AW Ref 2451A2021-22 Issued June 2021	Financial Sustainability Assessment	P1 The Council should develop and implement a more comprehensive MTFP.	This will be progressed through the 'Sustainable Financial Planning' Corporate Review and updates will be provided in future reports	New	Stephen Harris	Mar-22	An updated MTFP will be presented to Cabinet/Council in February 2022. This will be based on the three-year period 2022/23 to 2024/25 and will identify the potential budget shortfall for each year. Further work will then be required to identify what financial savings will be delivered through the Transformation Programme to help offset the projected financial gap. It will also be important to capture details of productivity gains and cost avoidance achieved through transformation. The Transformation Team is in the process of developing an approach to ensure that all of this information can be evidenced and recorded.	In progress	20%
AW Ref 2451A2021-22 Issued June 2022	Financial Sustainability Assessment	P2 The Council should examine the processes in place for its annual budget setting, and for its in-year budget revisions and outturn reporting. As part of review, given significant underspend the Council has in recent years, it should assess whether the process needs strengthening. Should then identify and implement any actions for improvement	This will be progressed through the 'Sustainable Financial Planning' Corporate Review and updates will be provided in future reports	New	Stephen Harris	Ongoing	Work on the 2022/23 budget is currently underway. Finance Managers have met with Heads of Service to identify service pressures and potential savings and these will now be discussed with Directors. Meetings have been scheduled with CMT and Cabinet throughout December leading up to the Provisional Settlement announcement on the 21st December. The 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals will be presented to Cabinet on the 19th January 2022 and a period of consultation will follow. The Final Budget Proposals will be presented to Cabinet on the 23rd February and then Full Council on the 24th February.	In progress	20%
AW Ref 2451A2021-22 Issued June 2023	Financial Sustainability Assessment	P3 Help address funding gap identified in the MTFP, by developing programme of financial benefits from the Transformation Programme activities. Financial benefits arising are clearly defined and communicated and reported to members.	This will be progressed through the 'Sustainable Financial Planning' Corporate Review and updates will be provided in future reports	New	Stephen Harris	Ongoing	An updated MTFP will be presented to Cabinet/Council in February 2022. This will be based on the three-year period 2022/23 to 2024/25 and will identify the potential budget shortfall for each year. Further work will then be required to identify what financial savings will be delivered through the Transformation Programme to help offset the projected financial gap. It will also be important to capture details of productivity gains and cost avoidance achieved through transformation. The Transformation Team is in the process of developing an approach to ensure that all of this information can be evidenced and recorded.	In progress	20%
344A2016 (Audit year 15/16) Issued May 2016 / reported August 16	Review of arrangements to address external audit, inspection and regulation and proposals for improvement.	P1 As the Council develops its vision and considers the future shape of the organisation, it should identify and plan for the workforce requirements to implement its vision.	Develop Staff Vision and Values to complement Cabinet Commitments. Research and Develop a holistic organisational development plan, that includes age profiling, re-skilling and potential apprenticeships. This would include supporting agile working policy and practise.	The original date for completion was Oct 2017, but due to many factors this changed to April 2019, then 31st Jan 2020. The date of completion for a draft document was then changed to January 2021 and this deadline was met. The Strategy is now out to consultation and is scheduled for Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee as part of that process on 6th July 2021.	Lynne Donovan	Autumn 21	The Workforce Development Strategy 2021 - 24 was agreed by Cabinet on 29th September 2021. The Strategy contains a Workforce Planning Toolkit for Managers to support Managers to consider future workforce planning needs. Meetings have taken place between HR and all Heads of Service to consider recruitment in each service in particular how to prospective applicants can enter the Council's employment.	In progress	75%

Resources - Staff



Q1 Monthly Breakdown	April			May			June		
% Sickness Absence	Short Term	Long Term	Overall %	Short Term	Long Term	Overall %	Short Term	Long Term	Overall %
People Services	0.94	2.61	3.55	0.47	2.34	2.81	0	1.53	1.53
Legal & Governance	0	3.09	3.09	0.13	2.82	2.96	0	2.80	2.80
Service Improvement and Partnerships	1.35	3.46	4.81	1.99	3.99	5.98	1.46	4.81	6.27
Corporate Finance	0.53	2.84	3.37	1.26	3.26	4.51	0.81	2.21	3.01
Customer & Digital Services	1.28	4.49	5.77	1.57	5.15	6.72	0.42	6.36	6.78

Q2 Monthly Breakdown	July			August			Sept		
% Sickness Absence	Short Term	Long Term	Overall %	Short Term	Long Term	Overall %	Short Term	Long Term	Overall %
People Services	0.36	0.38	0.74	1.66	1.02	2.68	1.22	2.11	3.33
Legal & Governance	2.23	2.88	5.11	0.27	0.67	0.93	0.89	0.00	0.89
Service Improvement and Partnerships	0	0	0	0.83	0	0.83	1.49	2.64	4.13
Corporate Finance	0.07	2.54	2.60	0.21	2.03	2.24	1.21	0.91	2.12
Customer & Digital Services	0.92	6.89	7.81	0.59	6.94	7.53	1.54	6.22	7.76

Corporate Services Workforce Information		
	Q1	Q2
Voluntary Leavers	7	11
Other Leavers	0	0
Total Leavers	7	11
External New Entrants	6	15
Number of Agency Workers	3	2
Headcount	1022	483 *
FTE	613.82	433.13 *
55 and over	291	109
% of headcount	28.47%	22.56%

* Catering is now included under Education

Building Cleaning is now included under Economy & Environment

What is our Workforce information telling us?

Sickness levels are high but for the most part the challenge appears to be in relation to officers with long term sickness absence conditions.

The levels of staff employed across Corporate Services have remained fairly steady through Quarter 1 and 2 of 2021/22 in fact, there has been a slight net increase.

The Cleaning function which was previously reported through this DPA has now been relocated within Economy and Environment in accordance with its new line management arrangements. This migration has also contributed to a 6% reduction on the workforce over 55 employed within Corporate Services.

Resources - Finance & Assets



Corporate Services & Miscellaneous Finance	Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Anticipated Outturn	Anticipated Variance	Comments
	£000's	£000's	£000's	Under / (Over)	
Chief Executive	208	208	198	10	
Director Education & Corporate Services	154	154	157	(3)	
Corporate Finance	1,888	1,888	1,683	206	
Customer & Digital Services	7,024	7,024	6,645	380	
Legal & Governance Support	3,225	3,225	3,229	(5)	
People Services	2,979	2,979	2,850	129	
Business Improvement Services	1,540	1,540	1,382	157	
Property Services	4,949	4,949	5,007	(59)	
Housing (Non-HRA)	1,657	1,687	1,626	61	
Miscellaneous Finance	50,973	52,139	51,432	708	
Total Corporate Services & Miscellaneous Finance: -	74,596	75,793	74,209	1,584	

What is our Financial Information telling us?

The figures in the table above are based on information available as at Period 5 of the 2021/22 financial year. A budget monitoring report was presented to the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 9th November outlining the reasons for the projected variations against budget.



What is our Assets Information telling us?

At present, the majority of corporate buildings are closed to the public and services are being largely delivered online. Staff are working in an agile manner with the majority being in the office a couple of days a week and remote a couple of days a week. All of this has created spare capacity within our buildings. It is likely that if the current way of working continues that the Council will require less buildings over the long term although this is a consideration of the Agile Review.

Risks



Ref & Links	Topic (& Service)	Risk, opportunities and Impact	Mitigation Actions (What actions can we take to address the risks or realise the opportunity)	Progress Update (Are the mitigating actions reducing the risk or realising the opportunity?)	Risk Level 2020-21 Q3	Risk Level 2020-21 Q4	Risk Level 2021-22 Q1	Risk Level 2021-22 Q2	Does the risk affect the Well-being of our Communities?	Well-being Risk Level
CorpDIR01 (Linked to CMT01)	Exit from the EU (Brexit)	<p>The decision to leave the EU and the looming deadline to secure an exit deal has created considerable uncertainty.</p> <p>Moving forward it is difficult to determine what impact the exit from the EU will have in the medium to longer-term for Caerphilly CBC and our communities. However, in the short-term possible negative impacts from a no deal scenario include the potential for workforce supply shortages in some areas and the possibility of some disruption to the supply of goods and services.</p>	<p>An internal Brexit Working Group has been established consisting of key staff across all Directorates. There is also cross-party political representation on this Group. The Council has also set aside £1m to meet any short-term financial impacts arising from Brexit.</p>	<p>Following the signing of the withdrawal deal the Council reconfigured its internal arrangements and established a Brexit Strategic Group consisting of key Heads of Service and cross-party political representation. This Group was supported by a Brexit Operational Group which focussed on key issues, actions and mitigation across all service areas. Key risks were identified in respect of potential disruption to the supply chain; potential increases in prices for goods and services; potential impact on the supply of labour, particularly for commissioned services; and potential negative impacts on small businesses in the short to medium-term, along with the potential for a lack of inward investment in the longer-term. This list is not exhaustive and the Brexit Strategic Group met during the last quarter of the 2020/21 financial year to ensure that all potential impacts were considered and monitored. The Group has now been stood down and any service impacts moving forward will be identified and reported through Directorate Management Teams and the Corporate Management Team.</p> <p>In response to the Covid-19 outbreak a Business Support Group was established to monitor the impact of the pandemic on local businesses and to ensure that available grant funding was channelled effectively. This Group will continue to meet but its focus will now turn to providing strategic advice to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet on significant matters arising for businesses in the local economy related to the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.</p>	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Potential impacts are not yet fully understood but they are likely to be felt over the short, medium and longer-term.	Unable to assess currently due to the level of uncertainty.
CorpDIR02 (Linked to CMT02)	MTFP - All	Failure to identify sufficient savings within Corporate Services to support the MTFP.	This is being managed through regular consideration at Corporate Services SMT meetings and Heads of Service and Finance staff liaising to identify savings proposals.	Details of the WG 2022/23 Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement will not be announced until the 21st December 2021. Work is currently underway to identify inescapable cost pressures and potential savings and the 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals will be presented to Cabinet on the 19th January 2022. Following a period of consultation the 2022/23 Final Budget Proposals will then be presented to Cabinet on the 23rd February 2022 and Full Council on the 24th February 2022. At these meetings Cabinet and Council will also be presented with an updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). Moving forward the Council's Transformation Programme will be the key driver in ensuring that financial resilience is maintained and that balanced budgets are delivered year on year.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Yes, we need to explain how it affects the Well being of Future Generations in our Communities	Medium
CorpDIR03	Sickness Absence - People Services/ CCBC	Sickness absence across the Authority remains above the Wales average, leading to reduced productivity and negative image of the Authority.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management information in relation to sickness absence is sent to Heads of Service on a monthly basis. 2. Sickness absence is now also be reported via the revised performance management framework. 3. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services is actively monitoring the situation with the Head of People Services. 4. The Managing Sickness Absence Procedure is being reviewed. 5. An Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021 - 24 has been agreed. 	Sickness absence data is being reviewed to determine the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic and also agile working. Feedback via the staff survey will be critical to understand the position of employees. The Cabinet Member and Chief Executive have asked for a deep dive, with regards to exploring cause and effect of rising sickness absence levels so the right solutions can be put in place. The impact of Covid is being monitored.	High	High	High	High	No	N/A

Ref & Links	Topic (& Service)	Risk, opportunities and Impact	Mitigation Actions (What actions can we take to address the risks or realise the opportunity)	Progress Update (Are the mitigating actions reducing the risk or realising the opportunity?)	Risk Level 2020-21 Q3	Risk Level 2020-21 Q4	Risk Level 2021-22 Q1	Risk Level 2021-22 Q2	Does the risk affect the Well-being of our Communities?	Well-being Risk Level
CorpDIR04a	Information Governance	New ways of working, time pressures and increasing threats could lead to breaches that result in financial and reputational consequences. Opportunity to demonstrate trust and use information well.	Training, DPIAs, contracts/agreements, privacy notices and Info Asset Registers, audits, report in 6mthly Info Risk Returns, audit compliance, continue suspension of surveillance in line with ICO Undertaking	Reducing risk via: modular eLearning launched but poor member uptake to date; awareness raising via intranet stories, CMT updates (inc Corporate Risk Register), IG Stewards and Go Digital; DPIAs/contracts increasingly used; Internal Audit checklist; data breach methodology; Covid19 Risk Log maintained, covering cyber security and IG; communication to all users from Chief Executive issued Dec 2020, cyber security strategy and Information governance strategy under development. Refreshed eLearning, new modules and new Knowledge Tests planned for launch April 22. Member IG / Cyber Security training planned as part of member induction planned for June 22 to mitigate poor member uptake of eLearning. Senior Officer Cyber Security training and awareness underway, inc. presentation to Management Network on cyber attacks (10/09/21), SIRO / Leadership Team training on information risk (11/10/21) and cyber attack exercise and debriefing (15/11/21 & 22/11/21).	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium		Medium
CorpDIR04b	Information Governance	Reduce risks to data and storage costs, facilitate implementation of new technology, and ensure reliable records to fulfil FOI S46 statutory requirement and opportunity to benefit service delivery.	Training, tracking systems, governance rules on IT systems, link with Archives Services, report in 6mthly Info Risk Returns	Reducing risk by: continuing hard copy records for disposal now that limited office access is allowed; owners of records on network drives, stale data and open permissions identified; and proposals for leaver emails/Y drives and free-floating docs on networks agreed; all-user comms started; use of Teams expedited during Covid19 requiring records rules to prevent backlogs accumulating. Exercise underway with volunteer IG Reps to refine and implement workable security markings on documents before launching corporately. Once implemented these will contribute to reducing data breaches.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Yes - protection of privacy (Article 8 HRA), Duty to Document and protection of historic records to evidence public sector activities	Medium
CorpDIR04c	Information Governance	Increasing request volumes, but failure to respond in statutory timescale could lead to monitoring and enforcement, loss of trust and missed opportunity to make better use of Council data to benefit economy (City Deal project).	Training, Publication Scheme and open data; review charges for requests; follow RM procedures to minimise unnecessary data and speed up retrievals.	Reducing risk via: SMT and service area awareness raising including by IG Stewards; covered in new modular Protecting Information eLearning; new approach to cross-directorate requests. ICO has taken a proportionate and pragmatic approach to regulation to date during Covid 19, but since July expects a more 'normal' approach to request handling; there is a large backlog of requests and methods to resolve are under consideration. New FOI/EIR/SAR case software being implemented to improve monitoring and compliance of requests and reduce admin burden.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Potentially	Low
CorpDIR06	Managing fire risks	The management of fire risk has changed following the fire at Grenfell Tower. Whilst legislation hasn't changed, there is a greater expectation from the Regulators with regards to the management of risk. This impacts greatly on resources to undertake risk assessments and also financially to undertake work required.	Council has recently agreed additional funding to support the employment of 2 fixed term Fire Officers within People Services to undertake risk assessments and to ensure we learn from best / changing practice in a timely manner. There is a great deal of partnership working with SWF&RS to achieve this in a timely and proportionate manner, especially whilst adapting to the pandemic restrictions.	Work continues to be undertaken with Heads of Service and Headteachers and will continue to be subject to review. A revised work plan is being produced and resources are being reviewed.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Potentially	Low
CorpDIR09	Funding	Issues around WHQS Funding. Any withdrawal - Digital Services potential 15 People at risk.		There are currently a number of staff across the Customer & Digital Services area (and some other areas in Corporate Services) funded on a short-term basis as part of the WHQS Programme. Unable to recruit into posts because they are not sure when funding will come to an end. This is causing big problems. Currently have a supplier relationship officer role vacant because cannot get approval to advertise. Unable to run service on short term funding.	High	High	High	High		Medium

ICLIP Key

Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them;
Working with others in a **collaborative** way to find shared sustainable solutions;
Looking at the **long term** so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
Taking an **integrated** approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives;
Understanding the root causes of issues to **prevent** them from occurring.

Well-being Objectives



Corporate Services is not directly responsible for a single Well-being Objective, but supports the delivery of all the objectives

Well-being Objective 1 – Improve Education Opportunities for all

Well-being Objective 2 - Enabling Employment

Well-being Objective 3 - Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people’s well-being.

Well-being Objective 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimizes the adverse impacts on the environment.

Well-being Objective 5 – Creating a County Borough that supports a Healthy Lifestyle in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Well-being Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.

Conclusion



Highlights - what is going well

Customer Services: Automation has been embedded into the authority, with more services looking at automation for repetitive high volume tasks. Over 6500 applications for Pupil Development grants processed and payment made without the need for human intervention. This would have required extra resource to be brought in to deal with these requests normally. MiCC rollout of technology, culture shift over the last 12 months with service areas recognising the benefits are sharing the same telephony system. Improves the ability to handle calls, but also makes the authority more resilient. Channel Shift has taken place over the last 18 months with customers no longer needing to come into the offices to access services.

Procurement and Information Governance: Significant progress made across all disciplines within Procurement and Information Services as outlined in the specific sections of the DPA. Cyber Security/ Resilience is high on the agenda with sessions and supporting information organised for Members, Leadership and Management Network. Procurement and Information Governance continue to review and embed policies, processes and procedures in order for the Council to have modern fit for purpose and forward thinking service areas. It is also important to highlight the work undertaken with Schools in relation to the HwB ICT Investment Programme the replacement of the existing network infrastructure is complete. All devices purchased via FY20/21 funding fully distributed to Schools further funding of circa £845k secured via Welsh Government for FY21/22 and utilised to purchase additional devices via the Dynamic Purchasing System. Review of device inventory within Schools currently ongoing to support next steps and future waves of the HwB ICT Investment Programme.

Legal Services

Electoral Services ran successful Welsh Government and Police and Crime Commissioner Elections in May 2021. Services have managed to be maintained mainly via remote working, with officers attending Ty Penallta where necessary. Committee meetings have continued to be held remotely in accordance with the legislation.

Transformation

The 10 Corporate reviews are progressing well with particular areas of note during this six month being, the agreement of a Employee Volunteering Scheme, Workforce Development Strategy, Well Being Strategy and the launch of the Community Empowerment Fund. The policy team have successfully consolidated support, both internal and external to the Council, for asylum dispersal.

Catering

The Catering service has successfully worked with our schools to re-design the catering provision to meet each individual schools needs as a result of COVID. This has meant significant change and adaptation which the team have embraced and delivered at pace. The Free School Meals delivery service has continued during school holidays and for those children self isolating, staffed by a wide range of officers from across the Council. The feedback has been extremely positive since the implementation of this scheme and it is widely valued by our Communities.

Corporate Finance

The audit of the 2020/21 Financial Accounts has been completed and the Auditor General has issued an unqualified audit opinion. Work is underway on the 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals in readiness for the Provisional Financial Settlement announcement on 21 December 2021.

What have we learnt and what needs improving and why?

Customer Services: Our website needs to updating to make this more user friendly

Catering

The announcement from WG around FSM for all, although welcome, will be a significant challenge when taking into account funding, staff recruitment issues, capacity of sites and infrastructure. However officers are working collaboratively across Wales together with WG and WGLA in order to ensure a timely and successful implementation plan can be developed.

FOI Reponse

The improvements in response to the FOI deadlines continues but not at the pace and scale yet required to meet the prepandemic targets. This will be kept under review.

Page 34

Completed Priority Actions from last Quarter	By Whom	By when	Update
To explore the breakdown of FOI to identify which services have greater volumes and delays. This enable better targeting of who may need	EE		Complete - FOI breakdowns are now received by CMT fortnightly
To review methods of undertaking a deep dive (as requested by Cabinet Member and Chief Exec) to better understand and address the growing sickness absence	EE		Work continues in this regard.
To review and gain greater knowledge on cyber security risk	EE		Gap Analysis undertaken and a series of Cyber Security training and awareness raising events have been carried out over the autumn.

Feedback / Recognition / Actions from Corporate Management Team	By Whom	By When	Update
Fantastic effort across the Directorate to achieve such progress against a backdrop of so many challenges			

Priority Actions for next Quarter (What support is needed from Corporate Management Team)	By Whom	By when	Update
The introduction of the changes to the FSM criteria and the decision to fund all primary school pupils to receive free meals needs careful	CX		
Work should continue on the refresh of the Councils website and Intranet site as key platforms for transformation and engagement	Ed		
Further work to be done to understand the sickness picture and reduce levels of sickness wherever possible	Ed		Consider the release of the COVID dashboard to wider staff population



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND FEBRUARY 2022

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee of the progress made during the financial year 2020-2021 against actions in the Council's current Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, and to provide any comment prior to Cabinet approval and publication on the Council's website.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce an annual report on equalities issues under current legislation. The requirements are very detailed as to what relevant information must be included in the annual report (attached in full as an appendix).
- 2.2 The amount of information presented is therefore in order to ensure that the regulatory body involved (the Equality and Human Rights Commission) are provided with full evidence of the Council's compliance and commitment to those statutory duties.
- 2.3 The Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report must be published by the 31 March the following year.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 For Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee to provide any comments on the report prior to Cabinet approval and publication on the Council's website.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The council is required under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties)(Wales) Regulations 2011 to produce an annual report on the steps it has taken to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, and its own equality objectives as set out in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales, an annual report on the Strategic Equality Plan must be published within 12 months after the end of the financial year that is covered by that report.
- 5.2 Appended to this report in Appendix A is the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021.
- 5.3 The report gives an overview of consultation and engagement exercises we undertook during 2020-2021, which was a challenging year due to the pandemic, and required us to find other methods of communicating messages and engaging with people. Key consultations include:
- The Caerphilly Conversation
 - 21st Century Schools Programme
 - Active Travel (Stage 1) Consultation
 - Agile Working (staff survey)
- 5.4 The report highlights the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and how we helped our vulnerable residents via the Buddy Scheme and delivery of key services such as Social Services, Housing, Childcare Hubs, Free School Meals Deliveries, Early Years provision, Distance Learning, the Youth Service and efforts made to protect the local economy.
- 5.5 We developed, approved and published our new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, and a new Integrated Impact Assessment toolkit in light of the new requirement to consider the Socio-economic Duty in strategic decisions, which came into effect from 1 April 2021.
- 5.6 We also celebrated and marked some significant annual calendar dates, such as:
- Mental Health Awareness Week
 - Armed Forces Day
 - Pride Cymru
 - Diwrnod Shwmae
 - Black History Month
 - White Ribbon Day
 - Holocaust Memorial Day
 - International Women's Day
 - Zero Tolerance to Racism
- 5.7 **Conclusion**
The report demonstrates the Council's progress during the financial year 2020-2021 against the actions in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No assumptions have been made in preparing this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment and consultation was undertaken on the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 when being developed, therefore no full assessment has been made on this annual report. The report itself is an assessment of work and progress made by the Council under the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and progress against the actions.

[Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - Equality Impact Assessment](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report as the annual report covers work already undertaken in the previous financial year.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Equalities data is included in the Workforce Development Strategy 2021–2024. In accordance with the action plan contained within the Strategy, work is ongoing to refine and enhance our equalities data with a view to reporting and publishing data to align with March 2022. Following the temporary additional funding for Workforce Development staff, the collation of training data is also a focus in line with the action plan.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The report is based on data gathered across service areas on implementing the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and meeting the equality objectives during 2020-2021.

10.2 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015
Human Rights Act 1998
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Author: Anwen Cullinane
Senior Policy Officer – Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation
cullima@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees:

- Christina HARRY – Chief Executive
- Richard Edmunds – Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services
- Cllr James Pritchard – Deputy Leader and Equalities Champion
- Cllr Eluned Stenner – Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise
- Cllr Gez Kirby – Chair of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
- Cllr Brenda Miles – Deputy Chair of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
- Sue Richards – Head of Education Planning and Strategy
- Robert Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
- Lynne Donovan – Head of People Services
- Kathryn Peters – Service Improvement and Partnerships Manager
- Christopher Hunt – Community Cohesion Coordinator (West Gwent)
- Elizabeth Rees – HR Management Information Officer
- Elizabeth Sharma – Consultation and Engagement Officer
- Emma Bush – Educational Psychologist
- Gareth Jenkins – Assistant Director Children’s Services
- Jade Sallis – Policy Officer
- Jane Roberts-Waite – Strategic Coordination Manager – Housing
- Jo Williams – Assistant Director Adult Services
- Karen Williams – Customer Services Digital Hub Manager
- Lisa Rawlings – Regional Armed Forces Covenant Officer
- Liz Goodwin – ESF Coordinator
- Nick Rutter – Digital Communications Officer
- Paul Jones – Area Adult Education Manager
- Rhian Kyte – Head of Planning and Regeneration
- Ros Roberts – Business Improvement Manager
- Sarah-Jayne Irish – Development and Monitoring Manager
- Sarah Mutch – Early Years and Partnerships Manager

Background Papers:

- Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024
- Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Report to Cabinet on the 9 June 2021 – Welsh Language Standards Annual report 2020-2021
- Various Guidance Documents (*These are available electronically for information on the Intranet Portal and on the Council’s website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities*)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021

Caerphilly County Borough Council Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2020-2021

Published 30.03.2021

**This report is available in Welsh and in other languages or formats
on request**

Contents

Introduction.....	3
About Us.....	4
Context and Legislation	5
How we meet the duty	6
Collection of Council Performance, Data and Information.....	7
Inclusive Engagement and Participation	9
Covid-19 Response and Helping our Vulnerable Residents.....	12
Preparing for the Socio-economic Duty.....	18
Equalities Promotional Work.....	19
Case Studies	21
• Free School Meals Service	
• Covid-19 Buddy Scheme	
• Staff Volunteering Scheme	
Employment Monitoring Data	25
Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024	28
Progress against the Objectives and Actions	
• Equality Objective 1 – Service Planning and Delivery – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services.....	29
• Equality Objective 2 – Education, Skills and Employment – Improve Education Opportunities for All.....	35
• Equality Objective 3 – Community Cohesion – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities	41
• Equality Objective 4 – Inclusive Engagement and Participation – Engage with citizens to encourage participation, to have their voices heard when planning service delivery	46
• Equality Objective 5 – Welsh Language – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements	50
• Equality Objective 6 – Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough	54
• Equality Objective 7 – Reducing the Gender Pay Gap.....	59
Annexes.....	61

Introduction

Caerphilly County Borough Council believes that nobody should be discriminated against or placed at a disadvantage because of their identity or background. We want a county borough where everyone is treated equally and fairly in all aspects of everyday life.

Whilst we strive for all residents and visitors to the county borough to be treated equally, we also recognise that people have different needs. This plan takes these differing needs into account and aims to ensure that there are no barriers which prevent anyone accessing council services.

Christina HARRY, Chief Executive, Caerphilly County Borough Council

As our communities change, diversity is a key issue for us. We believe that it is our duty to tackle discrimination and encourage greater cohesion; creating communities where everyone feels respected and safe from harassment.

We also remain committed to achieving equality within all aspects of our service delivery and in our employment practices, which is even more important during these challenging times and in such a difficult financial climate.

The plan will be monitored each year in order to review the impact of the progress we make and the annual reports will continue to be published. It will also be publicised and promoted widely both internally and externally in order to raise awareness of the work being done.

We hope that you agree that this plan continues to develop the equality and diversity work we have undertaken to date and shows our ongoing commitment to ensuring respect and fairness for everyone in the county borough

Cllr. Philippa Marsden, Leader, Caerphilly County Borough Council

About Us

The Caerphilly county borough covers an area stretching from the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north, to Cardiff and Newport in the south. It is bordered to the north by Merthyr Tydfil, the west by Rhondda Cynon Taff, and to the east by Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen local authorities.

The area lies at the heart of both the South Wales Valleys and the Cardiff Capital Region. The Caerphilly county borough occupies some 108 square miles (28,000 hectares) of the Valleys area of South East Wales. It is a little over 18.6 miles long and nearly 11 miles wide, and is formed by the valleys of three rivers: the Rhymney, Sirhowy and Ebbw. The county borough has 180,000 residents living across a mixture of urban and rural communities. Three quarters of the county borough is used for agriculture and forestry. The Council is the 5th largest local council in Wales and is the largest employer in the area.

The Council employs nearly 8,500 staff with 73% of them living in the county borough. They are employed into a variety of different roles within service areas which make up the following Directorates:

- = Corporate Services and Education
- = Social Services and Housing
- = Economy and Environment

The Directorates are headed by Corporate Directors and together with the Chief Executive make up the Corporate Management Team who oversee the strategic management of the council's business. The Council operates a cabinet style of local government which is led by a Leader and who is supported by 8 Cabinet Members. We have 73 elected Councillors who have a variety of roles including agreeing the Council's policy framework, Council Tax and budget.

Our vision and values are an integral part of our Transformation Strategy Team Caerphilly - Better Together. Its aim is to transform the way in which we have previously delivered services. It will examine how services are prioritised, how they can become more business efficient, explore new opportunities for greater customer focus and digital delivery, consider alternative delivery models and seek commercial opportunities.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL and other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependants or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Respect for diversity is a key issue as our communities change and develop in the 21st century. We must respect what has been before and the achievements up to that point but we must also accept and respect that things have changed and continue to evolve. We must be respectful for every individual who lives or works here, who represents or who visits the county borough.

Context and Legislation

The Strategic Equality Plan 2020- 2024 has been developed to primarily demonstrate the Council's commitment to meeting the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

It highlights links to legislation and regulations covering the Welsh Language Standards and Human Rights issues and how it supports 4 of the 7 aims of Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; A healthier Wales, A more equal Wales, A Wales of cohesive communities and A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. It also outlines how the council will meet its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, to advance equality and inclusion for all protected groups.

Building on our previous equalities work the plan explains to staff, citizens, stakeholders and elected members, how Caerphilly County Borough Council intends to deliver its equalities commitments whilst continuing to be an inclusive organisation that does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

To assist us in writing our Plan, we engaged with our citizens, staff, stakeholders and elected members. We also used a range of equality information which supported us in defining what would be our equality objectives for the next 4 years, and by listening to them we hope that these objectives are both meaningful and achievable for us to deliver.

We looked at what priorities there were to consider both nationally and at a council level, and based them on what evidence we had available to us to support the work. A lot of work has been undertaken over the years into assessing our progress against the Public Sector Equality Duty through service plans and the self-assessment process.

We considered external sources of information such as reports by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Government, policies and priorities, research reports and other relevant statistics available to help us. A number of external reports undertaken by the Equality and Human Rights Commission have supported and influenced the development of our new equality objectives.

The Covid-19 pandemic has created difficulties for every resident, community and business across the county borough. As we continue to deal with the changes this has brought to the way in which we deliver services we are mindful of the implications for people who hold one of the protected characteristics to ensure that they continue to receive services from the council equally and are not disadvantaged because of their personal circumstances. As we look forward to recovery over 2022-2023 and beyond we will continue to ensure equity of provision for all our residents and recipients of our services.

How we meet the duty

The Council's equalities statement makes its commitment clear;

The Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL and other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Respect for diversity is a key issue as our communities change and develop in the 21st century. We must respect what has been before and the achievements up to that point but we must also accept and respect that things have changed and continue to evolve. We must be respectful for every individual who lives or works here, who represents or who visits the county borough.

Council services must reflect these diverse needs and Caerphilly County Borough Council already has a strong background in delivering accessible services in a sensible, measured and cost-effective way. Local government finances are increasingly under challenge and any changes have to take into account the impact on the most vulnerable in society through Equality Impact Assessments, which carry the full authority of the Strategic Equality Plan. As we move into 2021-2022 we have new socio-economic duties that mean we will be changing the way we carry out impact assessments.

Through this Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report, the council has evidenced the monitoring undertaken to review the impact of the progress we have made to meet the actions of the Equality Objectives. Relevant information is collected from internal and external sources including public consultation exercises, Census data, local hate crime data or Equality Impact Assessments. This report once approved, will be publicised and promoted widely both internally and externally in order to raise awareness of the work being done.

Collection of Council Performance, Data and Information

The Council's Performance

In 2018 we set our six Well-being Objectives and incorporated them into our Corporate Plan. Setting objectives is not new, we have been setting Well-being Objectives and Improvement Objectives for a number of years; however this was the first time we have set objectives over a five year planning period.

As circumstances can change over time it is important for us to ensure that our Plan remains fit for purpose. Therefore we undertook a review of our objectives to ensure that they are still relevant and as a result we made minor changes to the Plan as approved by the Council's Cabinet 10 July 2019. To view the updated Plan click [here](#).

Performance against the Corporate Plan is provided in our annual performance report, the building blocks of which are performance information from across the council. Services provide information which is fed up to Directorate and Corporate level through performance assessments. Equalities information is included within the performance assessments, however, over 2021-2023 we will be working to explicitly link our Equalities Objectives to the performance reports.

Collection of Relevant Information

When considering and gathering information to include in the annual report, we used the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 Action Plan as a template. Service areas hold information that could assist the council in identifying how it is meeting the General and Specific Duties, Heads of Service were contacted and asked to provide a progress update for their service area against each of the relevant actions.

We looked at council reports that had been written during the 12 months to gather relevant information to provide the bigger picture of the work undertaken, and which shows equalities at the heart of the decision-making process. Most council reports had a completed Equality Impact Assessment to evidence the equalities considerations of the proposal.

We also used employment monitoring data which is provided via the council's HR system. The employment data provided within this report also includes teachers and school-based employees.

The Strategic Equality Plan Action Plan can be accessed via the council's website: [Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - CCBC](#)

Sources of information

When considering what information should be used it was important that areas of good practice were identified across service areas to demonstrate that a commitment to delivering equality exists throughout the Council. Information used in this report includes:

- The Council's Corporate Plan (2018-2023)
- Service delivery/projects (2020-2021)
- Employment practices
- Consultation and engagement programme
- Equality Impact Assessments (2020-2021)
- Employment monitoring information (2019-2020)
- Monitoring and delivery of the SEP action plan (2020-2021)

Non Collection and Effectiveness of Information

Whilst considerable relevant information has been collected for this report, it is acknowledged that it is sometimes difficult to collect and monitor all information in a council as large as Caerphilly County Borough Council. Services were diverted to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and it was not possible to collect information as we would in a normal year. Longer term it is recognised that improvements can always be made to encourage a consistent approach in information sharing. Our intention is to include equalities reporting explicitly within our main performance assessment processes.

Inclusive Engagement and Participation (Equality Objective 4)

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic the Council has been keen to maintain dialogue with its residents and to seek their views on a number of consultation and engagement exercises. Inclusive Engagement and Participation is one of our chosen Strategic Equality Objectives. Engagement and participation has continued in a meaningful way, across Caerphilly County Borough Council during 2020-2021, both internally with our staff and externally with our communities and partners.

To mitigate for limited opportunities for face to face engagement as a result of Covid-19, the shift towards digital mechanisms has been accelerated with a greater use of social and digital media where appropriate. Whilst we always endeavour to ensure that engagement and consultation is inclusive, additional effort has been made to ensure that those who wish to engage with us are able to do so in a way that best suits their needs and that those “seldom heard”, including those with protected characteristics, those who are economically disadvantaged and those who are digitally excluded are informed of these opportunities e.g. through the use of existing networks and groups using their established methods of engagement. We recognise that digital engagement presents difficulties for some people and we have used these networks and more traditional forms of communication to help us reach as many people as possible.

Work has continued to deliver on the Team Caerphilly ‘Consultation and Engagement’ Framework, ([Consultation-and-Engagement-Framework.aspx \(caerphilly.gov.uk\)](https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/consultation-and-engagement-framework.aspx)) endorsed by the council’s Cabinet in February 2020, which set out an approach for a common understanding to further improve engagement. It sets out the principles and standards for how the council will engage to build ‘*clear, shared expectations that enables a focus on what can be achieved*’.

The principles within the framework are:

- We will empower our residents to have greater influence over the issues that affect them
- We will increase and strengthen the role of communities in how we live, work and visit Caerphilly county borough
- This will help us to understand the needs of our communities, which in turn, will help to ensure the services we deliver meet those needs, and that available resources are used effectively and in line with agreed priorities
- We will support communities to take action, by helping them identify needs and support them in developing community led solutions.

The strategic principles of the Equalities Act 2010 and Wales specific duties and the National Principles of Public Engagement in Wales are embedded throughout the document.

Following the secondment of the Senior Communications Officer into the Transformation Team last year, a business case has been approved to appoint an Engagement Project Officer to further support this area of work. The Transformation Team work closely with the Consultation and Public Engagement Officer who sits within the Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation Team to ensure that there is a joined-up approach across consultation, engagement and communication that reflects the differing needs of individuals as the council continues to transform.

Other activities that have contributed to this objective include:

Getting the council ready for the new socio-economic duty in readiness for the 1st April 2021. A new Integrated Impact Assessment process has been developed that combines a number of former assessments, equality impact assessment and the assessment against the new duty. This includes a strengthening of the relationship with data and consultation.

- Training delivered
 - Integrated Impact Assessment training to senior managers (4 sessions delivered March 2021)
- Planned training programme
 - Effective Consultation and Engagement (4 training sessions scheduled for May 2021)
 - Making information easy to read and understand, Learning Disability Wales (to be delivered May 2021)

Public facing consultation and engagement activities continue to be promoted proactively on the front page of the Council's website, as well as across its digital channels. Further details of current engagement activities (including links to live surveys where appropriate) and the outcomes of recent engagement activities are also recorded on the website. <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/involved/Consultations.aspx>

During 2020-2021, the council carried out a number of key consultation activities both internally and externally including:

- **The Caerphilly Conversation** - provided people living and working across the borough with the opportunity to share their experience of life across the area and identify priorities to help shape the future delivery of services that meet the needs of citizens as we move forward. This consultation exemplifies how the Council uses a variety of approaches to encourage participation, promote consultations and ensure that all sectors of the community are enabled to have their say. A full summary report can be found at <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/involved/Consultations/Join-the-Caerphilly-Conversation>
- **21st Century Schools Programme** - consultations on Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon (<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/involved/Consultations/21st-Century-Schools-consultation>) and Trinity Fields Special School and Resource Centre ([https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/involved/Consultations/21st-Century-Schools-consultation-\(1\)](https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/involved/Consultations/21st-Century-Schools-consultation-(1)))
- **Active Travel Consultation Stage 1 Consultation** - All Local Authorities in Wales must resubmit their Active Travel Network Maps to Welsh Government by 31 December 2021. Consultation will be in three stages and Stage 1 sought feedback on barriers to walking and cycling through the commonplace online tool. Stage 2 sought views on the existing infrastructure within the Borough and what difficulties people experience in walking or cycling and Stage 3 will seek to identify routes for the future <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/involved/Consultations/Active-Travel-INM-Consultation-Stage-1-Consultation>

- Agile working survey to staff who have already experienced working in an agile way, both during the coronavirus restrictions and previously, including whether their protected characteristics had made the change more difficult for them (June 2020).
- Staff survey (delivered early April 2021) to all staff, including those working frontline/non-office based to seek views on strategies that will have a direct impact on staff.

Covid-19 Response and Helping our Vulnerable Residents

The following section highlights a brief snapshot of some of the good practice measures the Council put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic, which demonstrate our compliance and commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The emergence of the Coronavirus across the world posed a significant and unprecedented challenge to our way of life and the way upon which we provide services.

Officers and Councillors have worked relentlessly to meet the needs of our communities in new ways. In a matter of days, the Council repurposed, refocused and reshaped itself in order to respond to the immediate needs of our communities. Our primary purpose has been throughout and remains, “to protect our people and place”.

The Council immediately enacted its Emergency Management Plan and business continuity arrangements to deliver and co-ordinate the response, working across Council services along with our key partners, neighbouring local authorities and Welsh Government. These bodies continue to operate in a dynamic and challenging environment, adapting and responding to a range of risks to service delivery and well-being of our staff and residents.

During the coronavirus pandemic, the education directorate repurposed itself, providing support to all children and young people. A range of officers, including education welfare officers, educational psychologists, youth workers community education teams and school based counsellors, were utilised to support the most vulnerable. Therefore, our assessment on performance focuses on wider than just performance data and tells of how actions taken to support pupils and schools through the pandemic has been effective.

The majority of our 500+ services continued to operate, albeit with reduced staffing levels. Staff have completely changed the way they work – either working directly on the front line; redeployed into newly introduced services or working remotely from home. New services were introduced, such as childcare hubs for key workers, providing grants to businesses and working with volunteers to distribute food and medicines, to highlight just a few.

The following provides further detail regarding the level of service provided in response to the pandemic based upon the overarching principle of “protecting our people and place”

Community Response

Following the initial lockdown, the Council wrote to over 76,620 households. The letter invited those residents who met a strict criteria (over 70 / with a health condition, are shielding/self-isolating and had no alternative support available to them from friends, family, neighbours or local community group) to get in touch to see how the council could assist.

Over 1,550 vulnerable residents responded to the letter and 590 members of council staff came forward to help (350 of those volunteering in their own time). Every vulnerable person was 'matched' with a member of staff and the council's 'Buddy Scheme' was formed. From that point forward the volunteer army provided vital support to those vulnerable residents picking up shopping and supplies, delivering medicines and making regular telephone calls to help prevent isolation during this time.

The feedback from the vulnerable residents on the buddy scheme has been extremely positive and it is clear that this scheme made a significant difference. Volunteering has also been a rewarding role for those supporting the vulnerable with 97.3% of those surveyed stating that they found the scheme either a positive or extremely positive experience. This service was supplemented and supported by the ongoing Meals Direct offer, which continued to serve high quality hot meals.

In seeking to ensure sustainability into the longer term and creating a positive legacy to an unprecedented situation, the team worked with GAVO on a model which would enable community members to provide similar support to vulnerable residents moving forward.

The Registration service re-focussed its work on registering deaths (many Covid-19 related) as marriage ceremonies and birth registrations were suspended. The death registration service operated remotely under some very emotional conditions, but the staff remained extremely professional throughout.

Staff within the Public Protection Service worked tirelessly and remotely to enforce social distancing legislation in business premises as well as playing a key role in developing the contact tracing model and infection control in care homes.

In November 2020, a proposal was approved to develop the existing Buddy Scheme and Community Regeneration Legacy into the Caerphilly Cares Service, which aims to ensure people receive the right support, in the right place, and right time, using a single point of contact through a triage system.

The new Caerphilly Cares Service provides advice, support and signposting through strength-based assessments to internal and external support services, to enable people to become more resilient and live as independently as possible through a community centred model as part of a phased approach to developing an integrated end to end journey through internal and external services for 'at risk' residents.

Social Services

The majority of services remained in place during the pandemic, however we took the decision to close our day centres and one of our respite care facilities. This decision was taken on the basis that the majority of people who would have been attending were on the shielding list and the fact that we needed to redeploy the staff into older people's services to cover sickness absence.

Problems in relation to the spread of Covid-19 in care homes received UK wide coverage. Care homes in Caerphilly county borough have not been immune from these issues with Covid-19 related deaths reported in a number of homes.

The ongoing provision of Children's Services has been complex. Social work contact with children and / or families has often had to be done over the phone or by video link and all but the most essential assessments / reviews were put on hold. In addition care proceeding in the courts were also suspended.

Housing

At the time of the outbreak the authority was well on target towards bringing to a conclusion its Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme in 2020 but obviously all but emergency work was stopped immediately. Welsh Government acknowledged the issue and accepted the need to extend the deadline for the completion of WHQS programme.

All tenants, other than those living in sheltered accommodation received reassurance calls. We began by initially targeting vulnerable tenants to check on their well-being but gradually expanded the service to all households.

The outcome of the calls included providing guidance on how to access financial support, contact details and advice on how tenants can pay their rent with the Rents Team and cashiers calling tenants back if they required additional support, providing information about how to report an emergency repair and advice on the repairs service, referring issues of anti-social behaviour to the relevant officer and advice to contact the Police, providing information on how to make a self-referral for a food parcel and also made arrangements on their behalf, information on how to request a free school meal and providing advice on what council facilities/service remained open.

Childcare Hubs

When Caerphilly's schools closed, six mainstream Childcare Hubs were set up almost immediately with Trinity Fields also established as an extra Additional Learning Needs (ALN) hub. Local authority staff worked through the weekend of 20-22nd March 2020 to assess and process the first 800 applications for childcare from key workers.

The Hubs opened on Tuesday, 24th March with 88 children, releasing 75 key workers with 21 families being supported at Trinity Fields. By June 2020 there were 9 mainstream hubs, 1 ALN hub and 1 hub for the most vulnerable pupils operating. Pupil numbers increased to 362 a day, with provision also being offered through the school holidays, including bank holidays. The hubs were supported every day by 255 volunteer school staff as well as staff across other council services.

Free School Meals (FSM)

Following the announcement that schools would close, the Council was faced with a huge challenge in continuing to meet the needs of over 5,500 FSM pupils within the county borough. While other Local Authorities explored the use of voucher schemes and cash payments, Caerphilly took the stance that they wished to put food directly on to the plates of our FSM pupils.

To make this happen the Council worked in partnership with several local suppliers to set up a cold storage vehicle and a packing and distribution centre at Penallta House. The meals being delivered to FSM pupils incorporated a box of 5 frozen meals, a loaf of bread, 2 pints of milk and a selection of desserts, a weekly fresh vegetable and fruit pack

accompanied with recipe cards to encourage parents/guardians to use the ingredients to cook along with their children. The scheme grew considerably as word spread regarding the high-quality service provided. At its peak the team planned delivery routes for over 60 vehicles to deliver FSM to over 5000 children and young people, with a rise in the FSM take-up from 70% to 91%. The delivery of the FSM meal package would not have been possible without a true “Team Caerphilly” approach with involvement of staff from over 20 areas of the Council.

Although the scheme has been a great success, with extensive positive media coverage, there is no greater endorsement than the extensive and overwhelmingly positive feedback from our community and the customers who actually receive the service. This quote sums up the community feeling:

“Fair play CCBC. Another great delivery of meals and surprised to see the fruit. You really have taken care of things through this pandemic. Every staff member that have dropped things have been so nice and polite. Thank you again so much.”

The service went on to win a national award ‘Best Service Team: Catering Service’ at the APSE Annual Awards Service. As of July 2021, a total of 1.3m meals had been delivered to vulnerable children and young people across the county borough since the start of the pandemic, with 31,215 meals delivered each week.

Early Years

Early Years staff supported more than 400 of the most vulnerable families with children, aged 0-3 years with a weekly e-mailed individual activity plan for child development and family support, followed up by a phone call appointment to check how the development is progressing and whether there are any other family needs or concerns. The parenting programmes moved courses online and were available to everyone in the county borough. Additionally, over 1000 activity packs for children aged 0-3 including a book, were delivered to Flying Start families engaged in the programme but unable to access childcare, parenting or language groups during the pandemic. Health teams were also phoning all parents of new births discharged from hospital to establish any support needs.

The wider early years service facilitated on average, 20 applications per day for either childcare or hub placements for children of critical workers. For those most vulnerable children a co-ordinated approach between Education and Social Services was provided, where places within Childcare Hubs were routinely offered.

Distance Learning

Schools received ongoing guidance from the Education Achievement Service on the implementation of a distance learning strategy that aims to maintain continuity of learning for pupils whilst at home. This support is in line with the Welsh Government strategy and utilises Hwb, a digital platform for teaching and learning, as the main tool for communication and professional learning. Developing practice and research was shared with schools, with the intent of improving and refining current strategies to engage pupils via remote access. Other areas within the education directorate, such as the Music Service and the Healthy Schools Team, provides additional learning opportunities for

pupils. The Youth Forum was a useful tool to gauge feedback on the effectiveness of the distance learning strategy.

The local authority is also implemented a Welsh Government initiative that supports 'digitally excluded' learners that do not have access to appropriate technology or sufficient broadband. This initiative helped pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to have the same learning opportunities as their peers by equipping them with laptops and broadband connections.

The Youth Service

The Youth Service demonstrated flexibility and innovation in providing support for vulnerable young people and their families throughout the pandemic response. In conjunction with colleagues across the council, Youth workers assisted in the distribution of emergency food parcels for those qualifying for free school meals and activity packs designed to motivate young people and provide informal education. They were also helping to reduce the spread of the virus by working in the community with Gwent Police advising young people, face to face, regarding appropriate behaviour.

Over one thousand young people were supported during lockdown by the Youth Service, the majority of whom have one or more vulnerabilities. The service remained on track to meet its post-16 NEETs target, that is, below 2.5% not in employment, education or training. The Youth Service's curriculum was adapted for online delivery. This included the use of technology to communicate with groups of young people on a one-to-one, support-oriented basis.

Protecting the Economy

The pandemic and associated lockdowns had a severe economic impact. As part of the response to this the Welsh Government launched a number of grants which have been made available to support business. Payment of these grants were administered by Local Authorities and Caerphilly Council. Indeed, the Council has made the highest percentage and value of business support grant payments across Gwent and is in the top quartile across Wales.

Staff in the council's Business Enterprise and Renewal Team have been providing advice and support to businesses that are not eligible for the Business Grants and have been sign-posting them to other alternative sources of funding that may be available.

The 2020-21 delivery year has been unprecedented, and the Covid-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges for the economy, with far-reaching consequences for both employers and employees. The first quarter of the year saw an almost total stall in employment across many sectors, followed by a slow and intermittent recovery throughout the remainder of the year, which was impacted by further lockdowns.

Although the Furlough scheme has provided security for many employees, mass redundancy and unemployment has been an inevitable feature of the economic fallout from the pandemic. Internally, the initial onset of the pandemic also saw large sections of the Council's workforce redeployed to priority service areas, for example employment

programme staff were redeployed to support foodbanks and free school meals. This resulted in unavoidable effects on employment support capacity. Unsurprisingly, these major external factors have had a significant impact on the progress of the Objective within the reporting period. However, at an overall level and taking into account the challenges of the pandemic, this objective is judged to be progressing satisfactorily, particularly in relation to employment support.

Summary

Even though we were only able to focus on providing essential services in 2020-2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Welsh Government guidance and a requirement to provide support to vulnerable people, we made sure we continued to work hard, making a difference in the lives of Caerphilly's residents and tenants.

Detailed examples of what went well in 2020-2021 are detailed in the Council's Annual Performance Report 2020-2021. To view the report click [here](#).

Preparing for the Socio-economic Duty

The Socio-economic Duty in Wales, which should have been implemented in April 2020, was delayed until 31 March 2021 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The delay gave us the opportunity to review our current Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) toolkit and develop an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) toolkit to ensure we had an assessment toolkit which was fit for purpose and included the Socio-economic Duty.

The purpose of the duty is to ensure that specified public bodies listed, when making strategic decisions, deciding priorities and setting objectives, consider the Socio-economic Duty. They must also deliver better outcomes for those who experience socio-economic disadvantage. Involving communities in decision-making is key to getting decisions right and making sure they achieve positive outcomes. They must also consider (undertake an assessment) how their decisions might help to reduce inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage.

The Council has a statutory requirement to complete impact assessments under a number of legislative requirements. These requirements are a legal obligation for the Council and failure to meet these duties may result in the Council being exposed to legal challenge for not following due process.

Although there is no reporting requirement associated with the duty, it is for relevant listed bodies to evidence how they are meeting the statutory requirement. Welsh Government encourages relevant public bodies to be able to evidence a clear audit trail for all decisions made under the duty and should fully understand the likely impact of such decisions, in order to pay due regard to reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. Due regard is an established concept in equalities law. It's basically giving weight to a particular issue in proportion to its relevance, and the same principles are expected of us in regards to the Socio-economic Duty.

In reviewing our own existing EIA toolkit and comparing with what other councils in Wales were using, it was evident many had already transitioned to using an IIA toolkit. They not only assessed the impact on equalities and Welsh language, but also other areas, such as Well-being of Future Generations, Sustainable Development Principles, Rights of the Child, Environment Act, Corporate Plan (Well-being Objectives), Risk and Data Protection.

Following numerous discussions and several drafts, the Council implemented the use of an IIA with effect from the 31 March 2021, to coincide with the implementation of the duty. This assessment ensures that all proposals going forward for a decision will evidence and show due regard to five pieces of legislation as well as aligning the proposals with the Well-being Objectives in our Corporate Plan.

The IIA incorporates the requirements of the following legislative requirements into one impact assessment (See **Annexe 1**):

- [Equality Act 2010 \(Statutory Duties\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [Socio-economic Duty 2021](#)
- [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) and the [5 Ways of Working](#)
- [Welsh Language Measure 2011](#) and [Welsh Language Standards](#)
- [the Gunning Principles](#)

Equalities Promotion Work

In 2020-2021 the Council marked a number of awareness days either by raising awareness through press releases and social media posts. The following were celebrated/marked either publicly or internally with staff:

May 2020

[Mental Health Awareness Week](#)

[Foster Care Fortnight](#)

[Goodwill Day](#) (Urdd)

June 2020

[Pride Month](#)

[Carers Week](#)

[Armed Forces Day](#)

July 2020

Anti-social Behaviour Awareness – due to Covid-19 restrictions events were cancelled

August 2020

[Pride Cymru](#)

September 2020

Macmillan Coffee Morning (internal)

October 2020

[Black History Month](#)

[Hate Crime Awareness Week](#)

World Mental Health Day (internal)

Diwrnod Shwmae



November 2020
[White Ribbon Day](#)



December 2020
[Welsh Language Rights Day](#)

January 2021
[Holocaust Memorial Day](#)

February 2021
[LGBTQ+ History Month](#)

March 2021
[St David's Day](#)
[International Women's Day](#)
[Zero Tolerance to Racism](#)
[Commonwealth Day](#)

Case Studies

The following case studies are good practice examples of the local authority delivering services during a pandemic in a way which demonstrates the inclusive culture of the organisation. At what was an extremely challenging time for many vulnerable people, families, communities and businesses it was important that the Council stepped into new support spaces to help protect people and places.

Case Study 1: Free School Meals Service

During the pandemic, Caerphilly County Borough Council worked closely in partnership with local suppliers who helped support the free school meals initiative. Just hours after the school closures were announced on Friday 20 March 2020, Caerphilly Council's Catering Team leaped into action working with staff and suppliers to create a system to ensure that every child in receipt of free school meals would receive 5 healthy and balanced meals every week.

In March 2020, the Catering team were challenged to feed over 6,000 children and young people in the Caerphilly borough area who were eligible for free school meals. Sandwiches were provided for the first fortnight, until the team and local suppliers could organise frozen meal packs to be delivered to eligible households.

Deliveries continued when the children went back to school in September until catering was safely reintroduced and have continued during the 2021 lockdown when schools were closed.

The delivery service operated for the Easter holidays and has also been provided to those pupils who are self-isolating.

Castell Howell Foods, Woosnam Dairies and W R Bishop helped supply fruit, vegetables, desserts, milk, bread and much more to over 5000 children across the county borough.

The team reached a milestone in March 2021 having reached a year of delivering free school meals to pupils across the county borough.



Case Study 2: Covid-19 Buddy Scheme

The Buddy Scheme began on 16 March 2020 with a need to deliver a community response to support the following group to remain self-isolated:

- Over 70 and/or with an underlying vulnerability related to a health condition.*
- With no other support network or close family



That same week 385 staff responded to an initial email asking for volunteers to support this group; to provide support with shopping, prescription pick-up, keeping in touch etc. This initial staff volunteer cohort included school based staff and Elected Members. Volunteers were categorised by postcode area so that they could help as close to their own community as possible.

A dedicated Covid-19 vulnerable telephone line was set up and 76,620 letters were sent out to all households informing that if people met the criteria above they could request support. At the same time 50,000 'Good Neighbour' cards were distributed among the community and to Elected Members, AMs and MPs.

The Corporate Policy Unit managed the system with assistance from across all Council services. Services that had effectively shut down mainstream activity offered staff to the Buddy Scheme as part of the normal working week. Guidance to buddies was developed, updated regularly and issued by email, SMS and through a dedicated web page.

At peak 1,560 Vulnerable People (VP's) were registered on the scheme, and as at 30 June 2020 the figure was 1,157. The Covid-19 telephone line was listed on the Covid-19 web pages and was promoted on social media and in the general advice leaflet that went to all NHS shielded households.

Housing also conducted reassurance calls to all vulnerable Caerphilly Homes tenants, this added a few more referrals. Referrals tended to come from client support bodies e.g. Social Services, Housing, and Supporting People providers. The 'Test, Trace and Protect' process increased referrals slightly, as the government advice at the time was for anyone self-isolating that could not access food or medicine to contact their local authority or the third sector.

Other activity associated with the Covid-19 pandemic included:

Welsh Government Food Parcels

For NHS extremely clinically vulnerable people a weekly home delivered food parcel was made available from Welsh Government, if no other support network existed. 296 people on the NHS shielded list, resident within Caerphilly county borough, requested a weekly food parcel and this system was also administered by the Council, with a daily upload to the Welsh Government system. The shielding period ended on 16 August 2020, and this group of people were encouraged to shop for themselves and use priority online shopping slots available to them.

Pharmacy Deliveries

To alleviate the long wait times for Buddies and communities we offered enhanced DBS checked Council drivers to supplement pharmacy delivery arrangements. 7 local pharmacies took up the offer of support.

Community Response Partners

In the first week a group of partners was convened to share information during this period including: Adult Services, GAVO, Integrated Well-being Networks, 50+ Forum, Parent Network, Families First, Flying Start, Supporting People, Housing, Age Cymru, Emergency Planning etc. Information on community support resources was created and circulated within the group, including businesses offering food delivery services, details of local Covid-19 mutual groups, third sector support services etc. This information was kept up to date and was also shared on the main [Covid-19 web page](#).

Foodbanks

Foodbanks came under pressure as volunteers self-isolated and donations dried up. A temporary system was put in place by the Community Regeneration team to support provision with vouchers, donations and delivery. A triage system was put in place to connect individuals to a local voucher distributor. Foodbank volunteers prepared parcels, with Community Regeneration staff coordinating and delivering them. Stock was replenished and managed from Llancaiach Fawr by securing food donations, and monetary donations from the private sector and community groups. Over 2,000 people received foodbank support.

What happened next

The level of support offered on the buddy scheme by Council staff was not sustainable as services started to resume, however there was still a need within communities, albeit the medium term aim was to encourage personal resilience among Vulnerable People.

It was difficult to anticipate what the balance between demand and resources would look like, however plans had to be put in place for staff returning to normal duties over the weeks and months ahead. This equally applied to other community response type activity e.g. free school meals delivery and foodbank delivery. To estimate and plan for demand needs in the buddy scheme we gathered data in two ways:

- A survey of all buddies to ask them how the role has been for them and whether they have any interest in continuing to volunteer in the role moving forward. 150 responses were received and are summarised as **Annexe 2**
- Reassurance calls were made to all Vulnerable People registered on the scheme to ask how they are and what level of support they think they might need until lockdown eases for this group. See **Annexe 3**.

Step-down proposals

It was agreed by Cabinet that the management of the buddy scheme be transferred to the Council's Community Regeneration team, as soon as was practicable, which allowed:

- Easier identification of vulnerable people in communities
- Better engagement
- Identification of new service needs in communities
- The opportunity to build on and expand the Covid-19 mutual aid groups
- Mobilisation of community assets in empowered co-production
- Support the Resilient Communities strand of the Public Service Board's (PSB) work

Case Study 3: Staff Volunteering Scheme

One of the aims of the **Team Caerphilly: Better Together strategy** is to implement a Corporate Volunteering Scheme. The Buddy Scheme survey (**Annexe 2**) indicated that 95.4% of the 150 staff who responded (out of 590 buddies) would definitely, or likely, want to continue volunteering in a similar capacity in the future. The staff involved have gained a definite sense of pride and worth.

As a precursor for Corporate Volunteering, building on the goodwill evidenced in the responses received from buddies volunteering on the Buddy Scheme, it was proposed that staff are supported to continue in the buddy role by adding a category to the Leave of Absence Policy of up to 2 days per annum in hours, pro rata. The expectation being that this would be matched with an equivalent period of their own time. The results will be evaluated after 6 months by surveying the staff and managers involved with a view to establishing a wider Corporate Volunteering Scheme.

By allowing staff to continue in the Buddy role with, potentially, a little encouragement through paid time off in supporting older and vulnerable people will undoubtedly help combat longer term loneliness and isolation beyond the Covid-19 period as well as provide resilience in the Buddy Scheme. The oft-quoted research is that highly lonely people suffer the health equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and that highly lonely people are twice as likely to develop Alzheimers. Maintaining a buddy-type befriending scheme would be a preventative service at the same time as allowing staff to feel involved in their communities and the Team Caerphilly effort. Corporate Volunteering is also a Public Services Board strand with links to external partners including Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's 'Ffrind i mi' project.

Employment Monitoring Data

The following information is high-level data of what the *iTrent* payroll system holds as at 31st March 2021 regarding the Caerphilly CBC workforce profile, in terms of protected characteristics and language ability of staff.

- Gender, Ethnicity and Disability data is currently shown by Directorate.
- Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation data is currently shown by corporate totals only. Data has improved during the last financial year.
- Language Ability is available by Service Area but the data is provided here as Corporate totals for information.
- Other information has not been presented as the categories are currently showing zero records.

Gender by Directorate	Male	Female	Undisclosed
Communities	867	616	0
Education and Corporate Services	899	4169	0
Social Services and Housing	476	1430	0
Authority Total	2190	6106	0

Ethnicity by Directorate	White	BM E	Undisclosed	Unwilling to declare
Communities	1374	12	93	4
Education and Corporate Services	4214	36	814	4
Social Services and Housing	1806	28	70	2
Authority Total	7241	70	975	10

Disability by Directorate	Disabled	No	Undisclosed	Unwilling to declare
Communities	56	1324	103	0
Education and Corporate Services	73	4145	850	0
Social Services and Housing	58	1755	93	0
Authority Total	176	7078	1042	0

Sexual Orientation (totals)	Numbers
Bisexual	20
Gay	31
Heterosexual	2914
Lesbian	21
Other	25
Undisclosed	5183
Unwilling to Declare	102
Authority Total	8296

Religion or Belief (totals)	Numbers
Buddhist	5
Christian (All Denominations)	1185
Hindu	4
Jewish	1
Sikh	2
Humanist	4
No Religion	1644
Undisclosed	5349
Unwilling to Declare	63
Other	39
Authority Total	8296

Nationality	Numbers
British (Not Channel Islands or IOM)	1060
English	71
Northern Irish	2
Irish	6
Welsh	2167
Scottish	5
Cornish	1
Other	32
Undisclosed	4944
Unwilling to Declare	8
Authority Total	8296

Language Ability (Other than English)	Numbers
Braille	2
BSL (British Sign Language)	44
Dutch	2
French	33
German	11
Greek	2
Hebrew	1
Hindi	2
Italian	2
Makaton Sign Language	1
Malayalam	2
Rumanian	1
Spanish	11
Tamil	1
Turkish	1
Welsh	1825

(No staff total is recorded as some staff speak more than two languages)

Welsh Language Skills**

Total Staff*	8296
Welsh Speakers*	1825
Percentage of Workforce	21.99%

* The **Total Staff** and **Welsh Speakers** do not equal the overall workforce total due to some members of staff having more than one post within the organisation and those posts are within different service areas.

** These totals includes teachers and school-based employees.

Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024

The Strategic Equality Plan was developed to primarily demonstrate the Council's commitment to meeting the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. It highlights links to legislation and regulations covering the Welsh Language Standards and Human Rights issues and how it supports 4 of the 7 aims of Welsh Government's *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*; *A healthier Wales, A more equal Wales, A Wales of cohesive communities* and *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*. It also outlines how the council will meet its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, to advance equality and inclusion for all protected groups.

Our new plan was due to be approved at the end of the 2019-2020 financial year, however the pandemic and the immediate response required by the Council meant that it was not formally agreed until October 2020. 2020-2021 was the first year of delivery against our objectives. We chose 7 Strategic Equality Objectives, and, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, we have been able to show good progress against them. The following summary includes information that we gather to meet the reporting requirements of our 4-year plan. Our chosen objectives are:

Equality Objective 1 – Service Planning and Delivery – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services

Equality Objective 2 – Education, Skills and Employment – Improve education opportunities for all

Equality Objective 3 – Community Cohesion – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities

Equality Objective 4 – Inclusive Engagement and Participation – Engage with citizens to encourage participation, to have their voices heard when planning service delivery

Equality Objective 5 – Welsh Language – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements

Equality Objective 6 – Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough

Equality Objective 7 – Reducing the Gender Pay Gap

Progress against the Objectives and Actions:

Equality Objective 1 – Service Planning and Delivery – Understand and remove the barriers people face when accessing services

This objective focuses on the provision of accessible and inclusive services to the citizens of the county borough. We will achieve this by continuing our engagement with service users to identify and eliminate barriers to services.

Barriers experienced by groups and individuals may include, accessing information in appropriate formats to suit their needs, mental health difficulties, transport, unemployment or accessibility to technology. Service areas should implement plans and strategies collaboratively to successfully address and remove identified barriers.

Education, health & mental health services, housing, social services and transport are areas which we wish to improve upon.

Empowering groups with protected characteristics to be able to access the services they need is a key focus for the Council.

Action 1

Deliver on the principles in the Customer and Digital Strategy - connect technology and knowledge to deliver excellent customer experience and opportunities

Progress

All services and processes are developed and delivered with a customer focus. Covid-19 has meant the development of online forms has become more focused. Forms follow a standardised approach so customers are familiar with the design. All forms are developed for the web (digital by default), then tweaked to be used via telephone and face to face.

Automation has improved the customer experience for Supporting People referrals, Free School Meals and Pupil Development Access Grants, enabling 1000's of service requests to be processed without the need of human intervention. This has allowed staff to be free to deal with responding to Covid-19 and supporting our most vulnerable residents.

Customer Services Standards are embedded and these are used as part of Customer Services coaching.

The Council uses different methods of communicating information to the public. These methods include the Council's website and multiple social media platforms.

	Follower s	Posts	
Twitter	20,345	5,442	(50% are in Welsh)
Instagram	3,560	208	(Bilingual and Welsh)
Facebook	25,984	4,761	(Bilingual and Welsh)
LinkedIn	5,908	366	(Bilingual and Welsh)

Another method the Council uses to convey messages is a free subscription service for Gov Delivery Email Bulletins. By registering for this service residents receive key Council information direct to their email address, with hyperlinks included to take the reader to further information.

Gov Delivery Data for 1 November 2020 to 31 October 2021

Welsh

- 97 email bulletins sent
- Subscribers have increased from 344 to 676 (+99.40%)
- Engagement rate (those who opened and clicked on a link in a bulletin) 47.4%
- Impressions 3,299 (clicks on links)
- 1,277 subscriptions +512 +66.93%

English

- 107 email bulletins sent (10 were internal, for staff only)
- Subscribers have increased from 36,180 to 39,734 (+10.70%)
- Engagement rate (those who opened and clicked on a link in a bulletin) 70.20%
- Impressions 1,400,000 (clicks on links)
- 164,094 subscriptions +20,307 +14.12%

Action 2

Ensure our staff have the necessary skills to deliver digital services – *linked to Staffing, Skills and Development Theme*

Progress

This action has been included in one of the Corporate Reviews currently being undertaken, however due to the pandemic there is no progress to report.

Action 3

Explore and consider adopting the Communication Access Symbol to ensure information is provided using different formats and languages including BSL

Progress

We have a team member who can converse in BSL. Pre-Covid-19 this staff member has supported interpretation at meetings at Penallta House for both Customer Services and other Service areas where sign language was needed. During Covid-19 where a need has been identified the staff member has undertaken meetings that have been required for customer services via Microsoft Teams to enable communication via BSL.

Action 4

Upskill citizens to enable greater use of digital technology to address digital exclusion

Progress

During the 2020-2021 academic year there were 65 enrolments on digital literacy/ICT courses in our adult education service. We were unable to run our Digital Friday's sessions in local libraries as they remained closed due to the pandemic.

A device loan scheme was set up whereby learners and participants can loan laptops, iPads, or Chromebooks whilst on a Caerphilly Adult Community Learning (ACL) programme or engaged with European Social Fund (ESF) provisions. Devices were purchased through Welsh Government funding.

Action 5

Identify service needs of specific user groups; what barriers prevent access; and what actions are required to remove those barriers – use complaints and compliments

Progress

Caerphilly ACL were awarded £50,000 from the Digital Transformation Fund to run a regional piece of research to deep dive into understanding Digital Exclusion. The research looked at the number of people with/without digital devices; the number of people with and without connectivity; and how long it takes to become digitally literate. The region consisted of Caerphilly as lead, Blaenau Gwent (Aneurin Leisure), Monmouthshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Torfaen and the Vale of Glamorgan. The report can be accessed here:

<https://www.caerffili.gov.uk/Dogfennau-Caerffili/Newyddion/Mynd-ir-Afael-ag-Allgau-Digidol> (Welsh)

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/News/AddressingDigitalexclusion> (English)

People Services will continue to review complaints and compliments and look for learning opportunities relating to barriers to our service. HR and Communications will support other service areas as appropriate.

A new authority complaints process is currently being developed. This will standardise the approach to complaints across the authority, and will monitor that complaints are being dealt within timescales. The system will also produce the information we need to learn from complaints and improve our services as an authority.

Complaints officers have been advised that an additional column will be added on our complaints database to identify which complaints and compliments include equalities or Welsh language issues.

Equalities and Welsh language complaints data forms part of the quarterly reporting to the Governance and Audit Committee as part of the Corporate Complaints process where appropriate, and the Senior Policy Officer (Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation) now sits on the corporate Learning from Complaints Group that meets quarterly to discuss specific and cross-cutting complaints.

Corporate complaints are those that are due to failure of process or failure to operate Council policy correctly. These are complaints that could ultimately be forwarded to the Public Services Ombudsman or Welsh Language Commissioner for example. Code of conduct issues around staff behaviour or attitude are dealt with via internal HR processes.

During 2020-2021 we received 5 equalities and Welsh language related complaints and they are broken down as follows:

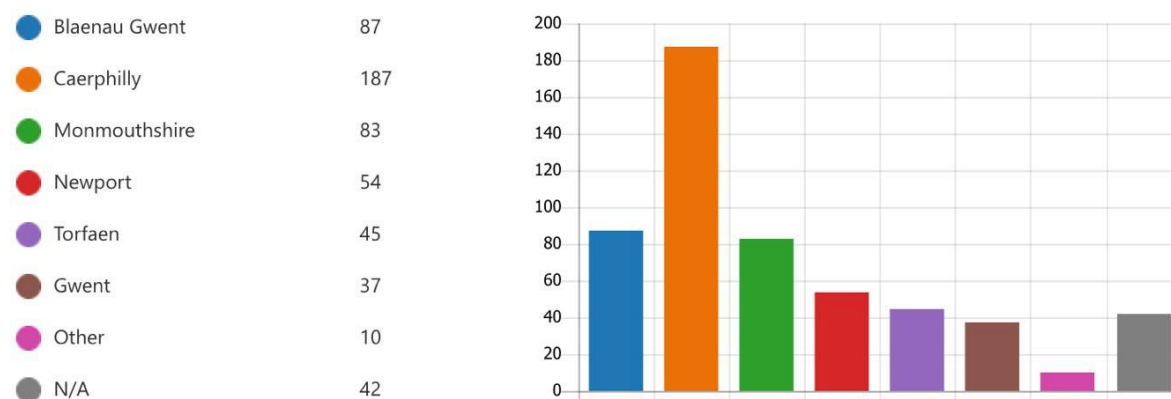
Category	Detail	Outcome
Disability	Disabled parking space	Response sent, shortcomings identified and addressed and apologies conveyed. Audit of process undertaken and report sent to the Ombudsman.
Disability	Vehicles parking on pavements	Response sent and complaint referred to the Police to consider enforcement action
Race	Racial abuse in school	School contacted the parents of the perpetrator to discuss the incidents. School arranged a police liaison officer visit to class to address racial discrimination. Family of victim supported and guided through the discriminatory incidents procedure so that any future incidents are reported and recorded.
Welsh	No response received to Welsh correspondence	Response sent in Welsh apologising for delay
Welsh	Letter from Chief Executive and Leader sent in English only	Explained the Welsh Language Standards to the complainant. Welsh version of the letter was published the following day once translated.

Also recorded were sixteen equalities and Welsh language service requests, and they are broken down as follows:

Category	Detail	Outcome
Equalities	Text on council's Community Cohesion and Hate Crime webpage required updating	Text on webpage was updated and a link to the webpage included in response
Welsh	Letter to staff from Chief Executive was sent in English only	Correspondence to all staff will be bilingual
Welsh	Typing errors in retweeted post	Tweet belonged to a third party who were contacted to correct and update the post
Welsh	Translation on temporary signage incorrect	Contractor signage. Sign corrected. Council designed guidance which was shared with staff and contractors (Annexe 4)
Welsh	Text on temporary signage almost completely in English only	Contractor signage. Sign corrected. Council designed guidance which was shared with staff and contractors (Annexe 4)

Category	Detail	Outcome
Welsh	Clarity required regarding translation on road signage	Copy of internal Translation Guidance sent and staff reminded to check signage with the Translation Team
Welsh	English only social media post during Christmas shutdown	Measures put in place to ensure that there is a translation resource available in future
Welsh	Problem requesting parking permit through the medium of Welsh via website	IT Services notified and the issue resolved

The Armed Forces Covenant is due to come into law for Housing, Health and Education by December 2021. This added layer of legislation means that it is important that staff are trained on the Armed Forces Covenant. To date 187 staff from various roles within the local authority have attended the training. The Integrated Impact Assessment toolkit has been amended to reflect this cohort.



Action 6

Ensure the Council's website and intranet is accessible so that people with disabilities can still engage

Progress

Accessibility Regulations which came into force for public sector bodies on 23 September 2018 means that all public sector web sites and mobile applications will need to meet certain 'accessibility standards' and that all documents that go on the website must be 'accessible'

Work was undertaken to make the current website 97% accessible in line with standards (at the start of the exercise we were only 54%). All new material is not published unless it meets accessibility standards. Committee services are still working through retrospective committee documents published online to ensure they are compliant.

A new website and digital workspace is being developed and when in place will be fully compliant with accessibility standards.

More than legislation, we want our communications to be 'accessible' and inclusive to all our citizens and we want our communications to be understandable and reach all potential audiences. There are easy ways to check our documents and simple ways to make them accessible and to help officers, we have placed a wide range of resources on the Council's Intranet to help our staff do this.

We have set up an Accessibility Working Group with representatives from most service areas, so if officers require any particular help or support they can contact the department representative from that group who can assist.

Action 7

Improve the collection and recording of equalities monitoring information of our citizens across council services

Progress

The equalities monitoring section for public consultation exercises has been updated and standardised and shared with officers.

Action 8

Collect equalities monitoring information for compliments and complaints

Progress

Complaints officers have been advised that an additional column will be added on our complaints database to identify which complaints / compliments include equalities/Welsh language issues.

Action 9

Survey the council's building stock (and schools) in relation to accessibility using the Local Access Group

Progress

No visits done due to Welsh Government Covid-19 guidance and schools being closed to visitors to manage infection risks.

Action 10

Survey polling stations in relation to accessibility using the Local Access Group

Progress

No visits done due to no elections during 2020-2021.

Equality Objective 2 – Education, Skills and Employment – Improve Education Opportunities for All

The primary aim of this objective is to ensure that our communities are well equipped to secure sustainable and well-paid employment as a means of preventing poverty. Through ensuring our citizens are ready to enter the working environment we will prevent long term problems associated with low skills and un-employability.

‘Improve Education opportunities for all’ as detailed in the Council’s Corporate Plan, will be delivered using outcomes identified within the Shared Ambitions 2019-2022 Strategy. This strategy outlines the Council’s commitment to work with schools and the Education Achievement Services (EAS) to improve educational attainment and achievement.

Increasing the number of citizens accessing education, training and employment will positively contribute to creating cohesive and resilient communities that will thrive. The skills agenda is fundamental to the economic development and economic prosperity of the nation, Cardiff Capital Region and Caerphilly County Borough.

Key to this will be focussing our work on reducing the number of young people who are not in employment, education and training, eliminating the economic inactivity gap; identify the skills gaps and shortages in priority sectors, increase the number and quality of apprenticeships and improve people’s perception of apprenticeships as a route into well-paid employment.

Action 1

Improve the skills of citizens by providing opportunities to gain qualifications and support to obtain employment

Progress

The Council’s Employability projects provide all participants with the opportunity to gain work related qualifications and courses. They also provide the opportunity for participants to improve their basic skills.

Fair work principles are embedded in our employability support projects which seek to match people with protected characteristics, carers and adults with responsibility for children with opportunities and working hours that suit them.

Between April 2020 and September 2021, covering the Covid-19 period, the Adult Community Learning (ACL) service delivered the following courses:

Coleg Y Cymoedd Franchise:

- Independent Living Skills (ILS – adults with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)) - (online and support packs / work booklets x 4) – 60 enrolments

Coleg Gwent Franchise (Essential Skills):

- Digital Literacy/ICT (online) - 65 enrolments
- ESOL (online) – 18 enrolments

- Literacy (online and support packs) – 13 enrolments
- Engaging with ACL (online and support packs) – 84 enrolments
- Summer School (face-to-face) – 52 enrolments

A total of 292 enrolments* (*some individuals attended more than one course).

Highfield Qualifications

- Classroom (low number) courses
- 45 courses with 120 learners achieving qualifications in total

Online Portal (LMS) learners

- 8 in total – 319 qualifications achieved, 40 in progress, 98 not started the course.

Through investing in our educational and housing stock, and providing apprenticeships, training opportunities and work placements within our organisation, we will increase the number of local citizens who are skilled and qualified workers and contributing to Community Benefits.

Very little progress was made in regards to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard work during 2020-2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many housing staff were redeployed to assist with the council's Buddy Scheme and Free School Meal deliveries.

256 participants supported into employment (across all CCBC employment programmes)
189 participants supported to gain qualifications.

Training courses and opportunities for gaining qualifications covered a range of subject areas. Work carried out with local employers to develop and deliver successful training pathways (including guaranteed interviews) within specific sectors (Contact Centre and Hospitality) as part of planning for pandemic recovery.

Despite these outcomes, Training figures for the period were lower than expected. Many training providers were not running courses during the earliest lockdown phases; and the limited provision that was available was delivered online, excluding those with lack of digital skills and/or appropriate equipment. In addition, many accredited courses and licences, which are a requirement of specific vocations, were not able to be granted without assessment conducted face to face, which was not an option during the strictest lockdown periods.

Action 2

Develop support for Adult Community Education to deliver digital literacy courses that will support local employability programmes

Progress

Coleg Gwent Franchise (Essential Skills):

- Digital Literacy/ICT (online) - 65 enrolments

Action 3

Aim to reduce the impact of poverty by supporting citizens into improved employment opportunities and conditions

Progress

The CCBC Employability projects support participants to improve their employability skills, confidence, motivation and to manage their expectations in relation to finding sustainable employment. The projects also assist participants to progress in employment by increasing their work related skills and help those who are underemployed to find work more suited to the skills and experience.

Participants on the CCBC Employability Programmes will be invited to attend group information sessions held in partnership with Services and Organisations to apply for jobs in certain sectors that have been affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Participants will meet employers and then be supported to gain qualifications and the skills along with interviews to fill the gaps in these certain sectors.

Participants will be supported by the team of Mentors to reach their goals and reduce barriers to gain qualifications that make them more employable to apply for jobs in their chosen career pathways.

Participants will continue to be referred to the CCBC Employability Programmes and assessed by the assigned Mentor so barriers can be reduced for the participant to gain sustainable employment.

All CCBC Employment programmes will be advertised in different formats for participants to access information so they can self-refer or be referred by a third party for support to upskill or gain sustainable employment.

The suite of employment support programmes available seek to support and empower individual participants to achieve fair work; or in the case of Working Skills for Adults (WSfA) and Nurture, Equip and Thrive (NET), to upskill and improve the employment opportunities for those that are already in work. In particular, the NET programme aims to increase the ownership of generic, transferable skills across the workforce through community-based provision, helping to improve the opportunities for low skilled workers to sustain employment and increase their earning potential.

The vast majority of NET outcomes within CCBC relate to new jobs for individuals, either increasing hours or pay, or both; in addition to contractual improvements such as moving to a more stable contract.

From March 2020, the breakdown of the types of support offered by the NET project (towards achieving fair work) are as follows:

- 36 participants achieved increased wage/hours/responsibility as a result of a new role
- 10 participants had improved contracts including a move to Permanent or Full time hours
- 8 participants were supported to achieve increased wage/hours/responsibility or promotion in their existing role

- 6 participants achieved improved wellbeing due to changes in their employment, including greater flexibility etc.
- 5 participants were supported to gain an additional role to supplement existing employment hours

In addition to NET, the Working Skills for Adults (WSfA) project provides support in terms of upskilling opportunities for participants across the Borough who are in work and have either no qualifications or low-level qualifications, as a route to progression (including progression towards fair work).

Alongside NET and WSfA, which support those already in work to achieve improved (or “fair”) working conditions as outlined above, the Communities for Work (CfW), Communities for Work Plus (CfW+), Bridges into Work (BiW) and Inspire 2 Work (I2W) programmes also support *unemployed* individuals to secure work, through the provision of intensive mentoring to address barriers, source relevant training and improve employability skills such as developing an appropriate CV and interview skills. Whilst the types of work that individuals may secure is varied and wide-ranging, the aim of employment mentors will always be to support participants to access employment that is sustainable and fair – and this will be done at the point of job searching and application (through close working with the Business Liaison team), but also through the provision of ongoing in-work support for a period after commencing work, to support with any issues that may arise in the first weeks, which may include issues related to fair work (such as health and safety concerns, salary or working hour negotiations, accessibility etc.). Often this support may be in the form of empowering the individual to address these issues directly with their employer, but it may also constitute working with the Business Liaison team to contact the employer.

Within the employment teams, we also have specific initiatives or activities to promote awareness, increased knowledge and develop specific support relating to certain barriers, so that individuals experiencing these barriers may be supported to achieve fair work.

Support for customers with disabilities and work limiting health conditions

Employment programmes also continued to provide excellent support for customers with disabilities and work limiting health conditions, despite the fact that the pandemic and subsequent increased risks to health exacerbated barriers for many of these individuals. For example, the Communities for Work Plus programme met Welsh Government targets for supporting those with disabilities, with 20% of all job entries relating to participants with either a disability or work limiting health condition.

Through investing in our educational and housing stock, and providing apprenticeships, training opportunities and work placements within our organisation, we will increase the number of local citizens who are skilled and qualified workers and contributing to Community Benefits.

Very little progress was made in regards to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard work during 2020-2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many housing staff were redeployed to assist with the council’s Buddy Scheme and Free School Meal deliveries.

Action 4

Meet the targets set within the local employability programmes by upskilling and supporting citizens into well-paid work

Progress

All projects are working towards their targets although Covid-19 has had a massive impact on all projects, including staff redeployed to many different service areas. The UK government initiative with Serco has also had an impact on participant engagement numbers.

The Council's Employment Managers continue to hold positive meetings to build positive relationships so no duplication is delivered across all programmes in Caerphilly with other funded Employability Programmes. Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis to discuss, caseloads, targets, any concerns or issues.

Despite the major challenges to employment presented by the pandemic, the Council's employment programmes continued to deliver a high-quality employment support service which supported customers into employment throughout the year. Whilst these challenges did ultimately result in outcomes falling below target across the various employment programmes, it is felt that this can be reasonably explained given the unprecedented circumstances of the reporting period.

In particular, outcomes relating to Economically Inactive participants, those aged 25+ and those from the most deprived communities have been the most negatively impacted. Whilst all customers have experienced increased barriers as a result of the pandemic, these groups in particular have been disproportionately impacted due to factors including childcare/home-schooling considerations and also by shielding due to increased medical vulnerability.

Positive Outcomes for 16-24 age group

The picture in terms of young people (aged 16-24) was far more positive, with delivery generally running according to profile. This is of particular importance given that this age group were determined to have been most at risk with regards to employment prospects as a result of the pandemic.

Despite falling below profile in some areas as outlined above, employment programmes still achieved the following headline outcomes in 2020/21, representing very real successes for those customers who felt able to engage throughout the pandemic. The impact of gaining employment is significant and presents a very clear route of poverty and social exclusion for many customers in deprived communities. For those customers who may have become unemployed as a result of the pandemic and were then supported back into employment, these outcomes may have prevented a long-term reliance on benefits and potential other issues including debt and housing concerns which may arise from longer-term unemployment.

The following figures represent stats from all of the Council's employment programmes (funded by both WG and ESF):

- **Total Participants Supported** **718**
- **Qualifications Gained** **78**
- **Vocational Training** **56**
- **Voluntary Placements** **6**
- **Job Entries** **256**

(Please note: these figures may include some double counting of participants due to customers becoming eligible for different programmes at different stages; however each outcome claimed represents a separate event).

Regular meetings will be held with the Managers and Partnership Manager from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to support participants to the right programme, so they are eligible for the right support and supported into paid work.

Employment Managers will continue to attend the Regional Skills Partnership meetings to work in partnership with other Local Authorities to address needs and paid opportunities across the Cardiff Capital Region.

Action 5

Through investing in our educational and housing stock, and providing apprenticeships, training opportunities and work placements within our organisation, we will increase the number of local citizens who are skilled and qualified workers and contributing to Community Benefits

Progress

Very little progress was made in regards to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard work during 2020-2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many housing staff were redeployed to assist with the council's Buddy Scheme and Free School Meal deliveries.

Action 6

To further develop an inclusive approach to apprenticeships

Progress

Enhancing the provision of apprenticeships, work placements and work experience opportunities is one of the actions within the Workforce Development Strategy 2021 – 24, with a timescale of delivery by the end of 2021-2022. Work is ongoing to achieve this target.

The Council has committed £500k to the appointment of Apprentices in 2021 and work is being undertaken to identify how many business cases can be supported with match funding, to support more apprenticeship opportunities.

Very little progress was made in regards to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard work during 2020-2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many housing staff were redeployed to assist with the council's Buddy Scheme and Free School Meal deliveries.

Equality Objective 3 – Community Cohesion – Promote and facilitate inclusive and cohesive communities

Community cohesion as defined in Welsh Government's **Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2016-17** (latest document) is described as the ability of all communities to function and grow in harmony together rather than in conflict. It aims to build communities where people feel confident, that they belong and are comfortable mixing and interacting with others, particularly with different people and people with different protected characteristics.

Caerphilly adopts the principles that a cohesive community is one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities;
- strong and positive relationships are developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

When we refer to 'communities' we are often describing a geographical neighbourhood, but the term community may also be used to define individuals who share a protected characteristic (for example ethnicity or culture, age group, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, gender) or interests.

Action 1

Raise the profile for discriminatory incidents reporting in schools through further staff training

Progress

Further training sessions were delivered to pastoral leaders' forum and booked onto Primary Head Teachers forums (the latter was postponed as a result of Covid-19 closures and will be rebooked in spring 2022). Advice has been given to 5 primary schools in relation to queries about thresholds for reporting.

Action 2

Evolve the regional integrated approach, to improve the health and well-being of individuals and families subjected to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

Progress

We have VAWDASV (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) training in place, which all employees must undertake Group 1 as a statutory requirement. This is currently available online for staff, further training of Group 2 is available for those in jobs where VAWDASV may be an issue for their client group, who are in a position to 'Ask and Act'. There is availability for further groups then such as Group 6 which is for senior leaders and elected members.

Action 3

Advocate community diversity work with services and partners to celebrate equality of difference by championing commemorative and celebratory dates (i.e. Refugee Awareness Week, Holocaust Memorial Day, Hate Crime Awareness Week)

Progress

Whilst the challenges of lockdown have prevented the usual methods of delivering cohesion activities, it has also provided the Gwent Community Cohesion Team with opportunities to explore engagement via digital means. For instance, our campaigns relating to equality related commemorative dates - Black History Month, Refugee Awareness Week, LGBTQ+ History Month – have focused more than ever on a digital platform and this has allowed us to have a more interactive social media presence.

Additionally, community diversity work throughout this period includes; Awareness campaign conducted on social media and competitions launched throughout West Gwent Schools re Black History Month and Hate Crime Awareness Week.

Hate Crime Awareness Week activities overview – collaboration with Gwent Dragons to promote Hate Crime Awareness Week at their home match during the week. This included match day programme information, loudspeaker announcements, Hate Crime Awareness Week banner picture with players before kick-off. This also included sponsoring match balls, selling Hate Crime Awareness Week t-shirts from a locally hosted competition and presenting winners of this competition with Gwent Dragons merchandise.

The Gwent Community Cohesion Team also purchased and are circulating beer mats to all affiliated rugby clubs across the west Gwent region. The beer mats contain the Gwent Dragons equality logo and the hashtags #RugbyForAll #RugbyAgainstRugby #HateHurtsWales

We have also allocated funding to third sector organisations and supported them to deliver their activities throughout the week, which included supporting Menter Iaith Caerffili with their proposal.

During this time we have also explored other ways of communication and storytelling and are now developing a local podcast that explores themes of ethnic and cultural diversity - allowing a new way to engaging and championing lesser heard voices.

Action 4

Engagement – develop a minority communities citizens panel as a means to improving the engagement with lesser heard voices

Progress

Due to Covid, we have needed to concentrate on engaging with seldom heard groups through existing networks where good relationships have already been established. We have established good relationships with several groups e.g. Caerphilly People First, Caerphilly Parent Network, Menter Iaith Caerffili etc. and will continue to expand these network contacts across a wider range of groups to ensure all those protected

characteristics groups are engaged more effectively. This action will be worked on once the pandemic has allowed group to meet safely face to face.

Action 5

Community cohesion team will work with LEA and partners to develop improved equities practices and anti-discrimination work in schools. (This will include training to staff, raising the profile of discriminatory incident recording, support for schools to develop the inclusion of equalities work in the curriculum through schools workshops and a schools swap project linking a local school to one in a different and contrasting area)

Progress

Community cohesion forum delivered sessions to 4 primary schools prior to Covid-19 closures. Schools swap programme was not possible due to Covid-19 restrictions. 1 primary school has been highlighted in an ESTYN good practice report in relation to their equalities work. 7 Caerphilly schools are involved in the Welsh Government Hate Crime project, which involves training for teachers and workshops for pupils. Gender variance training has been delivered and a draft toolkit is ready for consultation.

A proportion of the Community Cohesion Grant was earmarked to work on preventative approaches, this included supporting the work of anti-racism charities such as Show Racism the Red Card (10k earmarked for this project) as well as undertaking class room anti-discrimination initiatives ourselves.

Prior to lockdown the Gwent Community Cohesion Team liaised with a host of schools across the West Gwent region, delivering anti-discrimination workshops to over 500 pupils. These sessions support schools in promoting equality and awareness and focused on positive messages about diversity, the sessions also helped to inform teachers with regards to what constitutes hate related bullying.

In the lead up to lockdown and in the event of a prolonged period of working from home – we recognised that this presented new challenges, particularly with regards to how we engage children and young people - but this also provided an opportunity to develop resources/lesson packs and off the shelf products, which could support anti-discrimination workshops/school assemblies online. And whilst duties have changed in the short/medium term – i.e. less school focused and less public facing - the Team were given an opportunity to plan (and deliver in a different way) how we mark future commemorative dates which support messages of inclusion. This has resulted in developing a suite of activities (campaign approaches/pop ups/ materials, links to be shared via the local authorities' social media) and these activities have allowed the Gwent Community Cohesion Team the opportunity to roll awareness out across the region on a digital platform.

Action 6

Engage with EU nationals with regards to the EU Settlement Scheme

Progress

We pooled EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) funding with Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Newport and Blaenau Gwent Councils to provide a radio advertisement for the EUSS, which ran until the closing date (30th June 2021). The superintendent registrar helped individuals apply for the scheme within Caerphilly county borough.

The additional capacity of two Regional Community Cohesion Officers has allowed for more operational support to proactively engage minority communities. Throughout this reporting period the Gwent Community Cohesion Team have maintained regular engagement with groups vulnerable to harassment (in relation to Brexit) for example; EU citizens, BAME communities, and other protected characteristic groups - helping to gather intelligence and disseminate information on citizens' rights and to signpost citizens onto advocacy services.

Throughout this period, we have prioritised awareness raising of the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and have worked collaboratively with partners such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (EYST), alongside Police and Registered Social Landlords – in utilising local networks, resident newsletters and social media to increase awareness.

We have also supported (via the Community Cohesion budget) the dissemination of EUSS literature and have made available in multiple EU languages – information which has been distributed across the region to all departments, schools and community buildings.

We have also hosted drop in sessions at libraries to promote the scheme, and we have utilised the EUSS funding (made available by Welsh Government) to purchase online advertisement space, to commission a radio advert (the Capital advert ran until the close of the scheme) and, we have coordinated online seminars for communities and services leads to learn more about how to apply for the EUSS and on EU citizens' rights post the close of the scheme. We also established the 'We are digital' services in all boroughs of West Gwent, meaning local libraries had the ability to assist those making an application.

Action 7

Monitor community tensions – link with Partners and take proactive steps to mitigate tensions from escalating in the community

Progress

The team have been identifying and mitigating community tensions (hate crime, extremism, anxiety, anti-social behaviour) relating to Brexit and Covid, and the additional capacity of two regional Community Cohesion Officers has allowed for more operational support to proactively engage minority communities. Throughout this reporting period the Cohesion Team have maintained regular engagement with groups vulnerable to harassment for example EU citizens, BAME communities, and other protected characteristic groups.

Cohesion Officers are represented at appropriate local forums – where cohesion/ tension monitoring is a standard item on the agenda of community safety partnership meetings, and to date our involvement at these forums has covered migration patterns, hate crime and social media monitoring. This has helped direct the team's efforts to target and mitigate tensions for instance school anti-discrimination workshops, community mediation -with regards to neighbour disputes, where we have worked with Police regarding ongoing community disputes - and establishing counter narrative on social media (linked to commemorative equality related themes/campaigns).

On a weekly basis details of all hate crimes reported into Gwent Police are forwarded to the Cohesion Team, this is monitored and anything of note is discussed at the appropriate forums. Partnership meetings are the main platform for monitoring/ capturing community tensions and partnership relationships are a particular strength. We also monitor social media (open source) platforms and work with communications teams and community safety to mitigate and, where appropriate, target counter narrative. Tensions have largely been Covid related; with anti-Vax rhetoric continuing to cause mistrust in the vaccination programme and far right narrative centred on migration and global resettlement.

Action 8

To continue support for the LA's engagement with the UK Resettlement Scheme

Progress

Throughout this reporting period the Gwent Community Cohesion Team have continued to support Local Authorities with their participation in the Vulnerable Persons/Children Resettlement programmes (now known as the UK Resettlement Scheme). This has ensured Local Authorities have the capacity to meet emerging needs, and more recently this has included the emerging issue of Afghan resettlement. Earlier this year (2021) the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy, which was developed as a consequence of NATO forces withdrawing from Afghanistan, placed anticipation for Local Authorities to play a part in supporting new arrivals. The policy was changed to include all Refugees and Asylum Seekers as we are now running a UK Relocation Scheme (UKRS). In response we were able to mobilise quickly, and as a region we have already resettled 4 families (West Gwent). Caerphilly remains one of the lead authorities in supporting the Welsh efforts and across West Gwent Local Authorities we have pledged to resettle up to 20 families.

As part of the daily support extended to these scheme the Gwent Community Cohesion Team also managed the contracts for ESOL support - which has been procured to ensure all families are in receipt of consistent provision, and the case worker contract delivered by Displaced People In Action (DPIA).

Equality Objective 4 – Inclusive Engagement and Participation – Engage with citizens to encourage participation, to have their voices heard when planning service delivery

The availability of information in various formats is essential in ensuring that all citizens are able to participate in any or all engagement exercises. Whilst advances in technology enable us to provide information in digital formats, there continue to be barriers that prevent citizens from engaging. Transport, mental health, socio-economic status, low literacy and numeracy skills and particular difficulties experienced by hard to reach or seldom heard groups, are some of the barriers that continue to prevent citizens from engaging with the council and wider support services.

This Objective is reflected in one of our Corporate Objectives that looks at how we can 'Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being'. It includes supporting people to help themselves by providing comprehensive advice and guidance including signposting to other services. It's about having meaningful conversations with people to help them identify what matters to them, which will inform services to suit their needs.

Action 1

Support citizens to 'help themselves' by providing comprehensive advice and information, including signposting to other services

Progress

Progress has been made in a number of key areas:

Employability projects sign post service users to many other services including internal partners e.g. Supporting People, Caerphilly Cares, Community Education as well as external partners Job Centre Plus, Careers Wales, MIND, Remploy and many more.

Within Social Services, the **Information, Advice & Assistance Team** provide comprehensive guidance and signpost to alternative and more appropriate services and the **Dewis Cymru** website aims to help people with their well-being and provides information and advice for adults and their carers.

The **Early Years** website is being developed from the family perspective to ensure information is easy to find and linked to wider partner sites to ensure families have the most relevant updated information. Dewis is now being used for **Family Information Service (FIS)** Childcare searches to ensure a comprehensive national database for searching beyond the Caerphilly borough boundaries.

The **Early Years** model has been extended borough wide to ensure families who need support for their child's development and family circumstances are able to do so. This has removed barriers for many vulnerable families who lived outside of Flying Start areas. While funded childcare is not available for all families, there is access to antenatal programmes, family support, early language development, child development and early support for developmental delays.

In South Wales there are currently over 120 organisations supporting members of the **Armed Forces Community (AFC)**. Many of these organisations are third sector or voluntary groups who rely on not only members of the AFC but the general public to volunteer their time to help. While many organisations offer excellent development packages in ensuring their staff/volunteers are suitably trained to support those in need, many groups do not have the resources (funds), capacity or access to training to do this. In 2020 we were successful in receiving £19,440 from the **Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust** to offer those working with and/or members of the Armed Forces Community access to Mental Health First Aid Training and other Mental Health Courses including Your Mental Wellbeing Toolkit and Family Applied Support to Trauma.

Individuals trained in **Mental Health First Aid** can help to assess, listen, give support, encourage support from others, and signpost to other relevant services, when someone is in crisis and needs help. To date over 130 people have been trained on these courses.

Action 2

Have 'meaningful conversations' to help citizens identify what matters to them to inform outcome focussed planning

Progress

One example of where progress has been made is in relation to the **Early Years Integration Transformation Programme**. This has been moving forward in the last year to develop a borough wide early years model antenatal to 7 years. The Early Years Hub now incorporates the Family Information Service team plus wider professionals to support families have the right support at the right time to meet their needs. Frontline staff have trained and are implementing "What Matters" conversations with families to support a strength-based approach with interventions to meet the family's needs and not just give a menu of services to meet wishes. The "What Matters" approach aims to build a relationship with the family to understand root causes and not just superficial symptoms to support the building of family resilience and move away from reliance on services.

Action 3

Identify and support carers

Progress

Social Services provide a dedicated Carers Support Service which covers both adult carers and young carers. Information, advice, support groups, activities and community events are all publicised through electronic newsletters and mail drops.

Action 4

Embed the *Consultation and Engagement Framework* into all consultation exercises undertaken by council services to ensure key stakeholders are consulted with and given time to respond

Progress

The framework was adopted in February 2020. Training on Effective Consultation and Engagement was delivered in April 2021 to the Management Network and other officers involved in public engagement work across the organisation.

Action 5

Identify service needs of specific user groups; what barriers prevent access; and what actions are required to remove those barriers

Progress

The development of the **Early Years** model has been part of a system thinking approach in the last two years. Families and stakeholders have helped us to design the values and principles of the early years system, through sharing their own lived experiences, explaining what they valued from the support they had accessed, and highlighting the aspects which showed less value, duplication or bureaucracy. The family and stakeholder involvement was critical in developing a system based on values and principles and avoiding assumptions which caused unnecessary bureaucracy/paperwork.

All forms part of the assessment process in the employability projects. Communications will continue to support work driven by service areas.

Action 6

Review and update our key stakeholder groups within the county borough that represent protected characteristic groups

Progress

We have undertaken a thorough stakeholder analysis and maintain a stakeholder database that represent protected characteristic groups. This is regularly reviewed and updated. This database is shared with officers undertaking consultation exercises across the service areas. This database has been vitally important during 2020-2021 when, due to Covid restrictions we have needed to make additional efforts to ensure that people are given an opportunity to share their views on proposals and that the responses received are representative of the community.

Action 7

Review and strengthen internal processes for undertaking Integrated Impact Assessments and related consultation

Progress

The Council developed an Integrated Impact Assessment during 2020 to include Socio-economic Duty. See above. We also updated the questions asked around impact on Welsh Language in line with guidance published by the Welsh Language Commissioner relating to the Policy Making Standards.

Action 8

Ensure that activities related to service change and transformation embed the principles of good consultation with communities as part of 'The Caerphilly Conversation'

Progress

Caerphilly Conversation survey was the starting point for a new dialogue with communities. Many people put themselves forwards to assist in a new 'relationship' with the council. However, the intended face to face focus groups were delayed due to COVID.

Equality Objective 5 – Welsh Language – To ensure the Welsh speaking public can access services that comply with the statutory requirements

Welsh language issues are not covered by the **Equality Act 2010** but have a set of standards under the **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**. These are detailed in the regulations approved by Welsh Government as the **Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015**.

Internal working practices continue to evolve to ensure that the principle of language equality is respected in every aspect of service provision. To assist the council in meeting the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and to meet the needs of the Welsh speaking population of the county borough, we work in partnership with organisations such as; Menter Iaith Caerffili, Fforwm Iaith, Welsh medium schools etc. This work is detailed in the county borough's **Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022**.

We must comply with all agreed Welsh Language Standards as detailed in the **Council's Compliance Notice** to ensure that the Welsh-speaking population, whether they be staff, citizens, students or visitors can access the council's services in Welsh.

Our progress is recorded each year in the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report, which is published below for 2020-2021. The council's Cabinet approved publication of the report on 9 June 2021. To view the 2020-2021 report click [here](#).

Action 1

Raise awareness amongst staff that come into contact with children and young people of the need to foster positive attitudes towards the Welsh language

Progress

A presentation on the Welsh Language Standards, the Commissioner's annual audit and Welsh language in general was delivered to the Council's Management Network in December 2020. The session reminded senior officers of the requirement to comply with the Standards, links to other pieces of legislation and practical guidance on how to ensure services are delivered bilingually.

For Children's Services, all children that we work with are encouraged to engage in education and training and in relation to Children Looked After, their carers are clear about the need to promote Welsh language skills in line with the National Curriculum in Wales.

Action 2

Develop bilingual leadership skills amongst young people to help them become community champions of the language within their communities

Progress

No progress to date, delayed due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Action 3

Promote the availability of bilingual services by ensuring Welsh speakers and learners within service areas wear an appropriate lanyards /badges

Progress

We keep a stock of 'laith Gwaith' lanyards and badges for staff to request. They are requested on a regular basis and officers are aware of who to contact to receive them. All our frontline service officers have been given these resources to use.

We celebrated Diwrnod Shwmae on 15 October 2020 with an online campaign to raise awareness of the significance of the event. Service areas with social media accounts were encouraged to use #shwmaesumae and #shwmaecaerffili

On 18 November we celebrated 15 years of the laith Gwaith logo. We posted a number of messages via our social media channels to celebrate and raise awareness of the logo and internally with staff also, with an emphasis on the importance of wearing the badge or lanyard with the logo on it or by displaying a poster in our main reception areas.

For the second year we celebrated Welsh Language Rights Day on 7 December 2020. Again social media presence was key in raising awareness of the event and the rights of Welsh speakers when accessing services.



Action 4

Support the development and promotion of a directory of Welsh medium services available locally

Progress

A directory of Welsh language services was published in 2012. This requires updating and developed into an electronic version to make be more accessible. The directory will be reviewed and updated by working with Caerphilly Welsh Language Forum and Menter Iaith Caerffili.

Early years provision has been mapped and actions to improve Welsh language provision are given priority. Early Years Hub offers a bilingual service to families and has all available registered childcare including Welsh medium available to the public on the Dewis database search engine. Early Years commissions Menter Iaith to support our English medium settings to improve the Welsh offered in the setting as well as support Welsh learners to improve language in Welsh medium settings.

Action 5

Ensure that Welsh medium events and activities are a part of the Council's community events programme

Progress

Most Council run community events were cancelled during 2020-2021 due to Covid restrictions. However, Welsh medium events run by Menter Iaith Caerffili and other Welsh Language Forum partners have been promoted via the Council's social media and website.

A number of events provided by Menter Iaith Caerffili are run in partnership with council services, for example the Welsh medium Walking Group is supported by a Ranger from Countryside Services, and the Summer of Fun grant actively supported Urdd and Menter Iaith to offer summer activities through the medium of Welsh for children and young people.

Action 6

Promote Welsh language as a recognised objective for managers, to enable them to map Welsh language provision across their service area and increase capacity where necessary

Progress

A presentation on the Welsh Language Standards, the Commissioner's annual audit and Welsh language in general was delivered to the Council's Management Network in December 2020. The session reminded senior officers of the requirement to comply with the Standards, links to other pieces of legislation and practical guidance on how to ensure services are delivered bilingually.

Following this, a bespoke session was delivered to Procurement Services to provide an update on the implications of the Standards specifically in relation to procurement and the delivery of procurement services.

The employability programme delivers qualifications through the medium of Welsh should the participants require and internally, the Welsh language will continue to be promoted with staff wherever possible and we will continue to encourage increased capacity.

Action 7

Consider the impact on the Welsh language when planning housing developments, in particular Welsh medium school places, street names etc.

Progress

The majority of historical street names are monolingual. New street names are allocated on a 50/50 basis, however at present the bias is to Welsh street names to rectify the historic imbalance. The gazetteer can hold both English and Welsh addresses and where a street name is bilingual i.e. it has a bilingual street plate, it is held in both languages.

Action 8

Ensure the council's website is fully bilingual and pages are monitored and updated in both languages on a rolling programme basis

Progress

A working group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss any issues or concerns regarding the Council's bilingual website content. The Website is fully bilingual and no information is published without translation. It should be noted that there are very rare occasions where, due to the urgent nature of a communication, the English will be published first whilst awaiting translation, but these situations are infrequent.

Action 9

Ensure the council's Intranet has a Welsh interface and menus in line with Standard 126

Progress

The new Digital Workspace (new intranet) will be fully bilingual – specification has been signed off and about to go to tender.

Action 10

Create a campaign to attract young Welsh speaking citizens into youth work, sport and art activities as leaders

Progress

This is an action in the five Year Welsh Language Strategy. It requires partnership working. No progress to date, delayed due to Covid-19.

Action 11

Work with young people to raise awareness of the Welsh language as a valuable skill for training and employment

Progress

Working with Careers Wales, there were plans to deliver presentations to students in comprehensive schools in the county borough during 2020-2021, but they were cancelled due to Covid-19. Instead we produced a video on careers with the Council and skills required.

Action 12

Hold an annual Welsh language jobs fair to raise awareness of the value of the language to employment in the Welsh public sector and the ability to contact the council in Welsh by telephone, face to face and by written communication

Progress

Plans to deliver presentations to Year 11 students at Y G Cwm Rhymni during 2021-2022. Plans to hold a jobs fair delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Equality Objective 6 – Inclusive, Diverse and Equal Workforce – Create a workforce which reflects and respects the diversity of the communities within the county borough

Creating a workplace which is safe and inclusive promotes a positive working environment where staff feel valued and empowered, enabling them to provide high quality services to our citizens.

We need a greater understanding of the diversity of our workforce. To achieve this, collection of equalities monitoring data is crucial. Data must be captured at the beginning of the employment process and cleansed and updated on a regular basis.

Fairness at work and good job performance go hand in hand. Tackling discrimination helps to attract, motivate and retain staff and enhances an organisation's reputation as an inclusive employer.

Equalities and Welsh language training equips staff with the skills and understanding required to engage with citizens sensitively. Upskilling staff to have an awareness of protected characteristics ensures that citizens with specific needs, receive services that are accessible and compliant.

Action 1

Develop online equalities training which will be mandatory for all staff and elected members

Progress

In October 2020, Caerphilly Council became the first Local Authority in Wales to adopt the Unity Over Division Charter, joining with our Trade Union partners, to build a more inclusive and harmonious workplace. A briefing session for Members has taken place and is also now being rolled out to employees. For example, all Customer Service staff have completed the appropriate level of training required.

During 2020-2021 we delivered Unconscious Bias Training, sourced through Academi Wales. Funded via the Community Cohesion budget, 500 places were shared with Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils. Of the 167 places allocated, 156 officers have taken up the course.

The enhanced provision of equalities training courses for staff and managers is one of the actions identified within the Workforce Development Strategy 2021–2024, with a timescale of Q3 2021-2022. Work is ongoing to achieve this target. The recently created Workforce Development Team will coordinate this work.

Action 2

Implement the National Training Framework on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

- % of workforce who have completed Basic Awareness training (Group 1) / No of staff completed Basic Awareness training (Group 1)
- % of identified staff who have completed Ask and Act training (Group 2)
- % of identified staff who have completed Enhanced Training (Group 3)
- Implement Refresher training when available and appropriate

Progress

Good progress has been made over the last 12 months despite the complications of Covid-19 restrictions. This included a roll out to all schools and local virtual delivery of Group 2 courses. Staff have also been able to access the Group 2 regional courses delivered virtually. Delivery of Group 1 face to face sessions has been halted due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The recently appointed Workforce Development team will now be responsible for coordinating the implementation and reporting of this training.

- 60% of workforce who have completed Basic Awareness training (Group 1) / No of staff completed Basic Awareness training (Group 1)
- 7.75% of identified staff who have completed Ask and Act training (Group 2)
- 15 members of staff identified who have completed Enhanced Training (Group 3)

Action 3

Disability Confident – improve on our current standard

Progress

Upgrading our membership of the Disability Confident Scheme from Employer to Leader is one of the actions within the Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 24, with a timescale of 2022.

Action 4

Ensure compliance with the ***Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties)(Wales) Regulations 2011*** and encourage disclosure:

- the publishing of pay differences by protected characteristic groups,
- the annual publication of our employment data, and
- work linked to improve staff disclosure rates of employment data, either through recruitment or via iTrent Self-Service

Progress

We are currently drafting the Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024, inclusivity and equality lies at the heart of this Strategy. The key priorities and actions contained within the strategy are designed to have a positive impact on each of the protected characteristics, supporting compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) regulations 2011.

The annual Gender Pay Gap Report and associated Statement that was endorsed by Cabinet in March 2021 for the period relating to March 2020.

Some protected characteristic data will be published in the Workforce Development Strategy 2021–2024 and the Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021–2024, which are currently going through the approval process.

Collation of the data to publish and fully meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty in its entirety is underway.

See 'Employment Monitoring Data' on page 25.

Action 5

Re-establish our membership to support Stonewall's Workplace Diversity Champions Index

Progress

Delayed due to Covid-19 however, re-establishing our membership of Stonewall Cymru is one of the actions within the Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021–2024, with a timescale of 2022.

Action 6

Work collaboratively to build the brand 'Proud Councils' to support Pride events

Progress

Caerphilly is an active member of the Proud Councils partnership, which brings together several councils in South Wales in a visible and unified way, to support and promote equality for LGBTQ+ communities.

The purpose of Proud Councils is to improve support offered to LGBTQ+ staff within local authorities in Wales and ensure that local government across Wales is a visible leader in the field of LGBTQ+ rights and actively championing LGBTQ+ inclusion in our communities.

For the first time, 2021 saw Proud Councils uniting to promote LGBTQ+ History Month through producing an interactive calendar of activities that were taking place during the month of February. In addition to informative and interesting short films of inspiring stories and programmes highlighting key moments in LGBTQ+ history, there was also a live webinar with author Norena Shopland and an 'LGBTQ+ Global history' lecture with Coleg y Cymoedd.

Action 7

Ensure appropriate Welsh language training is available to staff, from basic to advanced levels

Progress

Caerphilly CBC has provided conversational Welsh courses for staff and elected members since 2001. The courses range from basic taster courses for beginners to courses which cater for those who are now fluent Welsh speakers. All courses moved to being held online during the initial lockdown, and from September 2020 onwards all courses now run online.

COURSE OFFERED	NUMBER OF COURSES OFFERED	NUMBER OF STAFF ATTENDING
30 Week	40	23
Online 10 Hour Course	24	219
Say Something in Welsh	3	4
Withdrawn	N/A	2

During the pandemic we noticed a significant increase in the number of people completing the 10 hour online courses, especially from the education and social care sector, with staff using their time effectively to enhance their continued professional development. 219 people completed these courses with some completing part 1 and part 2 of the course, giving us a total of **517** of these online courses completed.

Action 8

Provide opportunities for staff to improve their existing Welsh language skills for business use

Progress

There are a number of courses available for staff to improve their Welsh language skills along with the promotion of activities run by Menter Iaith Caerffili and Welsh Language Forum partners of events and activities Welsh speakers and learners of all levels can attend and put their skills to use, regardless of level of standard.

Across the organisation, Welsh language skills are promoted amongst the workforce and staff will continue to be supported and actively encouraged to attend Welsh language learning wherever there is an opportunity or need is identified. For example, all staff in early years are encouraged to take up conversational Welsh courses as well as the opportunity to do Mynediad or Sylfaen. Staff are encouraged to use their Welsh in the workplace especially in childcare and in Canolfan Blant Integredig Parc-y-fFelin.

Within the Customer Services team, there has been a failure to fill a vacant post for a Welsh speaking customer services advisor. Posts are being advertised stipulating that the Welsh language must be learnt as a requirement of the role.

Action 9

Provide opportunities for Welsh speaking staff and learners to use their language skills in the workplace

Progress

In line with the Welsh Language Standards staff are given opportunities to use their Welsh Language skills in the workplace. This could be answering the telephone bilingually, producing bilingual social media posts or drafting bilingual correspondence. Staff are aware that all services the Council provides must be provided bilingually. Staff are supported by the Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation Team who provide advice, support and resources.

COUNCIL TOTAL FOR 2020-2021

Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
8296	1825	21.99

Equality Objective 7 – Reducing the Gender Pay Gap

We are required to look at gender pay differences within the council and identify an objective that will address any identified difference.

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties Wales) Regulations 2011 the Council is required to collect and publish annual employment data across a number of protected characteristics. Information regarding the number of people employed by the council, arranged by, job, pay, contract type and working pattern, should only be broken down in relation to women and men. In addition the Council must publish data on pay differences and their causes, between employees with and without protected characteristics.

As a council we are confident that our gender pay gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work. The gender pay gap is the result of roles in which male and females currently work and the salaries that these roles attract.

Our gender pay gap is reflective of the causes of gender pay gap at a societal level. For example research has identified that, although parents are increasingly flexible, the responsibility of childcare still falls disproportionately upon women. It is a fact within this data that the vast majority of part time posts are held by females and that these are the posts that attract salaries in the lower quartiles. To view the Council's Gender Pay Gap Statement 2020 click [here](#).

Action 1

Review the data relating to the workforce and determine actions required to meet the general duty as laid down in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011

Progress

The annual Gender Pay Gap Report and associated Statement that was endorsed by Cabinet in March 2021 for the period relating to March 2020.

The data provided a trigger for further investigation about the reasons why the gap exists and this will continue to be reviewed. The Council does not pay males and females differently for work deemed to be of equal value. Our gender pay gap is reflective of the causes of gender pay gap at a societal level. The vast majority of posts in the lower quartile of data are part time posts. These are the posts that continue to predominantly attract female applicants. HR will continue to work with service areas to review this position and address the gender pay gap wherever possible in accordance with service needs.

Action 2

Publish employment information as required by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties)(Wales) Regulations 2011

Progress

Some protected characteristic data has been published in the recently agreed Workforce Development Strategy 2021-2024 and the Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024.

Collation of the data to publish and fully meet the requirements of the PSED in its entirety is underway.

See 'Employment Monitoring Data' on page 25

Action 3

Use the *My Time* appraisal process to develop female staff

Progress

The majority of the Social Services workforce is female and the Directorate continue to operate Supervision and Appraisal processes rather than My Time in order to meet Regulatory and Registration requirements.

Embedding the My Time/My Time Extra programme and training managers to deliver effective conversations is one of the actions within the Workforce Development Strategy 2021-2024, with a timescale of Q3 2021-2022. The process is embedded and the training needs now needs to take place.

Within Customer Services all staff have regular 121's and all end of year My Times booked with team members.

Action 4

Raise awareness of job and business opportunities to non-traditional groups (i.e. not stereotyping jobs to gender)

Progress

HR and Communications will continue to support service areas as appropriate.

Action 5

Review and update HR policies regularly to include matters such as flexible working, part-time or job-share options, shared parental leave etc.

Progress

Updating HR policies and procedures is one of the actions within the Workforce Development Strategy 2021-24, with a timescale of Q3 2021-2022. Work is ongoing to achieve this target.

Annexes

Annexe 1 – Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit

Annexe 2 – Buddy Scheme Survey Responses

Annexe 3 – Vulnerable People Survey Responses

Annexe 4 – Guidance - Welsh Language Standards Manual for CCBC Works Signage

CONTACT

If you have any comments or would like to know more please contact:

Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer - Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation

Telephone: 01443 864404 / email: cullima@caerphilly.gov.uk

ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

This report is also available in other languages and formats on request via the contact details above.

This page is intentionally left blank



Caerphilly County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment

This integrated impact assessment (IIA) has been designed to help support the Council in making informed and effective decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Statutory Consultation v Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles

PLEASE NOTE: Section 3 Socio-economic Duty only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions.

See page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

1. Proposal Details

Lead Officer:-

Head of Service:-

Service Area and Department:-

Date:-

What is the proposal to be assessed? *Provide brief details of the proposal and provide a link to any relevant report or documents.*

2. Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

*(The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups). Please note that an individual may have more than one **protected characteristics**.*

2a Age *(people of all ages)*

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?**

- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**

- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?**

2b Disability *(people with disabilities/ long term conditions)*

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?**

- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**

- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?**

2c Gender Reassignment (*anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

2d Marriage or Civil Partnership (*people who are married or in a civil partnership*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

2e Pregnancy and Maternity (*women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

2f Race (*people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

2g Religion or Belief (*people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

2h Sex (*women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

2i Sexual Orientation (*lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?**

 - (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**

 - (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?**
-

3. Socio-economic Duty (*Strategic Decisions Only*)

(The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services)

Please consider these additional vulnerable group and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- People with low literacy/numeracy
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Carers
- Armed Forces Community
- Students
- Single adult households
- People misusing substances
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)
- People involved in the criminal justice system

3a Low Income / Income Poverty *(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)*

- (i) **Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?**
- (ii) **If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**
- (iii) **What evidence has been used to support this view?**

3b Low and/or No Wealth (*enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

3c Material Deprivation (*unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

3d Area Deprivation (*where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

3e Socio-economic Background (*social class i.e. parents education, employment and income*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?

3f Socio-economic Disadvantage (*What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged*)

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?
 - (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?
 - (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?
-

4. Corporate Plan – Council’s Well-being Objectives

(How does your proposal deliver against any/all of the Council’s Well-being Objectives? Which in turn support the national well-being goals for Wales as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Are there any impacts (positive, negative or neutral? If there are negative impacts how have these been mitigated?) Well-being Objectives

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all

Objective 2 - Enabling employment

Objective 3 - Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people’s well-being

Objective 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impact on the environment

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports healthy lifestyle in accordance with the Sustainable Development principle with in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

4a. Links to any other relevant Council Policy *(How does your proposal deliver against any other relevant Council Policy)*

5. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (Also known as the sustainable development principles. The Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)

How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?

Long Term

Prevention

Integration

Collaboration

Involvement

6. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Does the proposal maximise our contribution to the Well-being Goals and how?

A Prosperous Wales

An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work

A Resilient Wales

A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for climate change)

A Healthier Wales

A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood

A More Equal Wales

A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances)

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation

A Globally Responsible Wales

A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being

7. Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards

(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact a proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and ensuring the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language) Policy Making Standards - Good Practice Advice Document

7a. Links with Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy and CCBC's Five Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022 and the Language Profile

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?**

- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**

- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view? *e.g. the WESP, TAN20, LDP, Pupil Level Annual School Census***

7b. Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. *Specifically Standards 88–93*

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?**

- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**

- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view? *e.g. the WESP, TAN20, LDP, Pupil Level Annual School Census***

7c. Opportunities to promote the Welsh language *e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community*

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?**
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?** *e.g. the WESP, TAN20, LDP, Pupil Level Annual School Census*

7d. Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language *e.g. staff, residents and visitors*

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?**
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?** *e.g. the WESP, TAN20, LDP, Pupil Level Annual School Census*

7e. Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language

- (i) Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?**
- (ii) If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?**
- (iii) What evidence has been used to support this view?** *e.g. the WESP, TAN20, LDP, Pupil Level Annual School Census*

- 7f. Having considered the impacts above, how has the proposal been developed so that there are positive effects, or increased positive effects on (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.
-

8. Data and Information

(What data or other evidence has been used to inform the development of the proposal? Evidence may include the outcome of previous consultations, existing databases, pilot projects, review of customer complaints and compliments and or other service user feedback, national and regional data, academic publications and consultants' reports etc.)

Data/evidence *(Please provide link to report if appropriate)*

Key relevant findings

How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?

Were there any gaps identified in the evidence and data used to develop this proposal and how will these gaps be filled? *Details of further consultation can be included in Section 9.*

9. Consultation

*(In some instances, there is a legal requirement to consult. In others, even where there is no legal obligation, there may be a legitimate expectation from people that a consultation will take place. Where it has been determined that consultation is required, **The Gunning Principles** must be adhered to. Consider the **Consultation and Engagement Framework**. Please note that this may need to be updated as the proposal develops and to strengthen the assessment.*

Briefly describe any recent or planned consultations paying particular attention to evidencing the Gunning Principles.

Who was consulted?

When they were consulted did the consultation take place at the formative stage and was adequate time given for consultees to consider and respond?

Was sufficient information provided to consultees to allow them to make an informed decision on the proposal?

What were the key findings?

How have the consultation findings been taken into account?

10. Monitoring and Review

How will the implementation and the impact of the proposal be monitored, including implementation of any amendments?

What are the practical arrangements for monitoring?

How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

When is the proposal due to be reviewed?

Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?

11. Recommendation and Reasoning (delete as applicable)

- **Implement proposal with no amendments**
- **Implement proposal taking account of the mitigating actions outlined**
- **Reject the proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality, poverty and socio-economic disadvantage**

Have you contacted relevant officers for advice and guidance? (delete as applicable)

- **Yes**
 - **No**
-

12.Reason(s) for Recommendations

(Provide below a summary of the Integrated Impact Assessment. This summary should be included in the “Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment” section of the Corporate Report Template. The Integrated Impact Assessment should be published alongside the Report proposal).

13.Version Control

(The IIA should be used in the early stages of the proposal development process. The IIA can be strengthened as time progresses to help shape the proposal. The Version Control section will act as an audit trail to evidence how the IIA has been developed over time) (Add or delete versions as applicable)

➤ Version 1

Author:-

Brief description of the amendments/update:-

Revision Date:-

➤ Version 2

Author:-

Brief description of the amendments/update:-

Revision Date:-

Integrated Impact Assessment Author

Name:-

Job Title:-

Date:-

Head of Service Approval

Name:-

Job Title:-

Signature:-

Date:-

Annexe 2 - Buddy Survey Summary

150 responses out of approx. 590 buddies. 385 original volunteers have been supplemented by staff, either 'offered' by their managers, or formally redeployed into the Buddy role.

74% of respondents signed up as a volunteer

61% supporting with shopping weekly

58% supporting with prescription pick-up

92% supporting with a friendly phone call

68% have a greater sense of pride in the organisation and being a member of Team Caerphilly

50% would definitely like to volunteer in a similar capacity

45% would maybe like to volunteer in a similar capacity

Other support responses (examples):

- picking up hearing aid batteries
- paying bills at Post Office
- help with texting, topping up mobile phone
- weeding the garden
- help accessing e-Library resources
- helping with on-line banking
- walking the dog- putting bins out
- been able to help when he can't get an online shopping slot

How have you made a difference?(examples):

- definitely no ability to shop on-line
- able to buy at supermarket prices rather than corner shop
- my gentleman is blind and would have been unable to social distance easily if out and about
- been able to help with anxiety about their situation
- helped with queries about the Welsh government food parcel
- have a good old chinwag in the garden
- lady has cancer, without a supermarket shop her diet would have been limited
- just being on the other end of phone
- helped with the loneliness- seeing my children once a week has given him a smile
- formed a new friendship
- my lady has no family or friends under 70 who would have been able to help her
- she is 87 and I can't imagine how she would have queued for 50 mins outside a pharmacy
- taken a weight off their shoulders
- helped her keep up her gardening by picking up items she wanted
- has family help with shopping but was embarrassed to ask her grandson to buy personal item
- been able to stay in touch with her son who lives away
- he moved to Wales during COVID due to an emergency relocation and has no family nearby, been able to help with household items and cleaning products for his flat
- she is happy to ask her neighbours for small shops but would be embarrassed to ask for a big weekly shop
- he lives in a very rural area and would find it very hard to get essential supplies, I am happy to help

One positive experience (examples):

- a smile says it all really
- I don't have any close family and know I would need this type of support if older
- a listening ear when they are really low
- it give me a sense of purpose in lockdown
- helping people who would have struggled gives me a great sense of gratification
- it's been a pleasure and a privilege
- community cohesion is greater
- every time I go she is waiting in the window smiling
- feeling like I am helping in a dreadful crisis
- finding out facts about the area I would never have known and my children seeing how positive volunteering can be
- meeting people in my community I would never have met otherwise
- we always have a laugh and it's nice to see them smile
- I work full time and have a little one but this few hours a week helping someone else has been so positive for me
- it is helping me cope with the situation we are all in
- it has taught me that helping people gives you great satisfaction
- their faces lighting up when I arrive with their shopping
- knowing that simply posting a birthday card can mean so much for someone
- picking out birthday cards for her daughters who live away
- seeing their joy when I turned up with flour
- I suffer from lack of confidence and anxiety, being a buddy has really helped my communication and I have benefited so much mentally from helping other people, so much so that I want to look at a career in social care.

Can you tell us why you answered as you did when asked whether you would like to be involved in future (examples):

- it has been difficult balancing work and family and buddy commitments
- I would be only too glad to continue
- I don't think I will be able to continue when I am back in full time work
- as long as I have the time I am happy to help
- always been interested in volunteering but have never done it in the past
- at the start I was a little nervous but am now proud of what I have done
- it depends on my change on workload and returning to family commitments, kids clubs etc
- it just depends on my time
- I am happy to help whenever I can
- I couldn't commit because of children's hectic after school schedule
- as long as I could do it around my work- I would like to stay in touch with them
- I have enjoyed meeting new people
- as we get back to normality it will depend on how much spare time I have
- it's important to give back to the local community, the only thing that stops me is lack of time
- I hope that more good within CCBC will come from this pandemic and stay for future years even when this is all over. Community used to mean lots to people in previous years let's make this a new team and community
- Simply put, if it is needed by the community then it is a valuable thing to be involved in

Annexe 3 - Vulnerable Persons Data Assessment

Calls to every vulnerable person (1500+). 971 responses. Categorised as:

Red: definitely in need of continued support (many on the NHS shielding list**)

Green: no longer needs support

Amber: somewhere in between support and no support

Total figures:

Red: 342 (35%)

Amber: 349 (36%)

Green: 280 (29%)

500 people were not contactable but it would be reasonable to assume that there would be another 150 that could be categorised as Green.

Greens

Subsequent calls to the Buddies to double-check their opinion of whether support can be withdrawn. At the same time, asking the Buddies if they have capacity to take on a replacement vulnerable person, to help with flex in the system as some teams go back to normal roles.

Many of the people who originally called us for help at the start of the lockdown were in need of support because their usual methods of getting food delivered were unavailable - no online delivery slots, or friends and family were themselves self-isolating after displaying Covid-19

symptoms. Many of the Greens have now been able to get online delivery slots, or someone they know is helping them with their shopping. This means our community response has done exactly what we hoped it would do – identified people who were in danger, alone, and within our reach, and supported them to get all the way through the lockdown, until they were either self-sufficient or able to be supported by friends/family.

Reds

Many other people registered will need support for some time. Around half of the people classified as Red are also on the “shielded” list, having medical conditions that make them ‘clinically extremely vulnerable**’ to Covid-19. These are people with organ transplants, severe heart and lung conditions, certain types of cancer, and similar ailments that mean they should stay at home to avoid the virus. It is unlikely it will be safe for these people to return to normality any time soon, perhaps until a working vaccine is widely available, and they are likely to need support of some kind for months. Other people on the Red list fall into two broad sub-categories: those with multiple serious ailments that are not on the shielding list, but on the next lower list of ‘clinically vulnerable*’ ailments (milder heart and lung conditions, diabetes, Parkinson’s, and many others); or people with physical disabilities that prevent them from doing their own shopping.

Ambers

The Amber category includes a wide range of people, mainly those with illnesses in the 'clinically vulnerable' category, people over 70 but otherwise physically well, people displaying symptoms of Covid-19 and needing short-term support while self-isolating, and those with physical or mental health issues that make shopping for themselves difficult. A significant number of people in this category have managed to arrange delivery of shopping but have asked to continue with their Buddy either for prescription collection only, or in case online delivery slots are unavailable – these people may be able to be managed out of the system with the right support.

Next steps

Many vulnerable people are now able to access food through on-line shops or local delivery or are asking their Buddies to top up fresh food items only. A relatively high number now only need help collecting prescriptions either weekly or monthly. Handing over to a model where community volunteers, or engaged community support networks, should help with building personal resilience. Many of the people our call handlers spoke to highlighted the value they placed on the social interaction from their Buddy – this means they may be reluctant for support to be withdrawn even if it is no longer needed, and handing over to phone-based befriending support may play an important part in our step-down. Age Cymru are providing a telephone befriending service.

Feedback

Call handlers routinely reported praise for the Community Response, both for the individual Buddies and the way the system had been organised:

- “Mr S praised and thanked Rhian to the highest saying she’s a genuine diamond.”
- “Gwyneth advised she has been in awe of how CCBC has managed during the pandemic with the buddy system and free school meals.”
- “Stacy doing a wonderful job gathering Gail's shopping and she has asked could we give her five stars.”
- “So grateful to Ann the Buddy and said that CCBC has really come up trumps through this tough time.”
- “Both Mr and Mrs M advised me that they cannot put into words how grateful they are of the support that Tara has given them both. Mrs. M informed me that she loved Tara to bits as she was a kind and considerate young lady”
- “Karla advised that Colin her buddy has been professional, discreet, friendly and appropriate. With so much negativity in the media it has been reassuring to have something positive going on and this service has put her at ease. Really grateful for the service provided.”
- “First class service (member of a myeloma support group and we are one of the only councils delivering this service - Marlene said that her support group members are very envious). Service has been brilliant. Cardiff, RCT etc don't have this.”



**LLAWLYFR SAFONAU'R
GYMRAEG AR GYFER
ARWYDDION GWAITH CBSC**

Mae'r llawlyfr hwn at ddibenion cyfieithu a chydymffurfiaeth â Safonau'r Gymraeg yn unig.

**WELSH LANGUAGE
STANDARDS MANUAL FOR
CCBC WORKS SIGNAGE**

This manual is for the purposes of translation and Welsh Language Standards compliance only.



Cyflwyniad

Mae'r llawlyfr yma wedi cael ei lunio i greu a chefnogi staff y Cyngor a Chontractwyr i gydymffurfio â Safonau'r Gymraeg perthnasol.

Bydd y fersiwn diweddaraf ar gael ar-lein yma: www.caerffili.gov.uk/arwyddion-gwaith

Mae'n ofynnol i'r Cyngor, a'n hisgontractwyr, sicrhau bod pob arwydd sy'n cael ei godi gan, ac ar ran, Cyngor Caerffili yn ddwyieithog. Rhaid i'r Gymraeg gael ei rhoi i'r chwith neu uwchben y Saesneg. Mae Cyngor Caerffili yn cynhyrchu pob arwydd yn ddwyieithog, ac mae'n ofynnol i'n contactwyr ddilyn yr un egwyddor.

Os na fydd arwydd yn cydymffurfio â'r weithdrefn/safonau isod, mi fydd hi'n ofynnol gan Gyngor Caerffili, yn unol â'r deddfwriaeth berthnasol, i'r rhai sy'n gweithio ar ein rhan ailgyhoeddi arwyddion er mwyn sicrhau cydymffurfiaid y Cyngor.

Wrth osod arwydd ar ran y Cyngor, neu wrth wneud hyn yn rhan o wasanaeth rydych chi'n ei ddarparu ar ran Cyngor Caerffili, rhaid dilyn y camau canlynol.

Mae'r lluniau sydd wedi'u cynnwys yma'n enghreifftiau'n unig, ac efallai fyddan nhw ddim yn adlewyrchu gofynion yr offer statudol perthnasol a/neu deddfwriaeth sy'n gofyn am ffontiau, meintiau neu liw penodol. Adolygwch y deddfwriaeth berthnasol i gael gwybodaeth ychwanegol mewn perthynas â'r meysydd cydymffurfio yma.

Os oes gyda chi unrhyw ymholiadau o ran y ddogfen yma, neu os ydych chi eisiau ychwanegu rhagor o enghreifftiau at y ddogfen, cysylltwch â'ch rheolwr contractau neu'r Tîm Cyfieithu trwy e-bostio cymraeg@caerffili.gov.uk

Introduction

This manual has been created to help and support council staff and contractors to comply with the relevant Welsh Language Standards requiring bilingual signage.

The most up-to-date version is available via: www.caerphilly.gov.uk/works-signage

The council, and our subcontractors, are required to ensure all signage erected by, and on behalf of Caerphilly Council, is done so bilingually, with the Welsh version of the text appearing above or to the left of the English version. Caerphilly Council produce all their signage bilingually and require our contractors to follow the same principle.

Where signage does not comply with the below procedure/standards, Caerphilly Council, in line with the relevant legislation, will require those who work on our behalf to re-issue signage to ensure the Council's compliance.

When asked to erect a sign on behalf of the Council, or when this forms part of a service that you provide on behalf of Caerphilly Council, please follow the following steps.

The images herein are for illustration purposes only and may not necessarily reflect the requirements of the relevant statutory instruments and/or legislation requiring certain fonts, sizes and colour. Please review the respective legislation for additional information with regards to these areas of compliance.

If you should have any queries regarding this document, or wish to add further examples to the document, please do not hesitate to contact your contract manager or the Translation Team via e-mail on cymraeg@caerphilly.gov.uk

Ydy'r arwydd sydd angen wedi'i gynnwys yn y llawlyfr hwn?

YDY



Defnyddiwch y testun sydd yn y llawlyfr i greu fersiwn newydd, neu ddefnyddio hen fersiwn yr arwydd cymeradwy.



Cofiwch fod rhaid i'r Gymraeg gael ei darllen yn gyntaf. Os yw'r Saesneg i'w gweld yn gyntaf ar hen arwydd, does dim modd ei ddefnyddio ar ran Cyngor Caerffili.



Gosodwch yr arwydd.

NAC YDY



Anfonwch fersiwn Saesneg at y Rheolwr Contractau/Tîm Cyfeithu i gael cyfieithiad swyddogol (rhaid i'r Cyngor ddarparu cyfieithiad).



Ar ôl derbyn cyfieithiad a'i roi ar broflen yr arwydd, sicrhewch fod y Gymraeg i'w darllen yn gyntaf.



Anfonwch y broflen/llun o'r arwydd yn ôl i'r Tîm Cyfeithu i'w wirio.



Gosodwch yr arwydd ar ôl derbyn cadarnhad bod yr arwydd wedi'i wirio.

3

Does this signage manual include the required sign?

YES



Use the text provided from the manual to create a new version, or use old version of the approved sign from storage.



Remember the Welsh must be positioned to be read first. If an existing sign in stock has the English first, this is not to be used on behalf of Caerphilly Council.



Erect Signage.

NO



Send English version to Contract Manager/ Translation Team for official translation (Council must provide translation).



Receive Translation and set into sign/ design proof, ensuring the Welsh Language is positioned to be read first.



Send design proof/ image of sign for sign-off to the Translation Team.



Erect Signage after sign-off.

Safonau'r Gymraeg Llawlyfr ar gyfer Arwyddion Gwaith CBSC
Welsh Language Standards Manual for CCBC Works Signage

Tudalen / Page 6

Diverted Traffic
Diversion
Follow diversion
No access to HGV's - Follow diversion
One way
Essential work being undertaken - Expect long delays

Tudalen / Page 7

Priority over oncoming vehicles
Single file traffic
No parking beyond this point
No queuing beyond this point
No parking
Temporary road surface

Tudalen / Page 8

Street Name - Closed - Follow diversion
Road closed XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX
This road is closed on XX/XX/XX for 2 days
High street closed
Road ahead closed
Road closed

Tudalen / Page 9

Road closed except cyclists
Footpath closed
Road ahead closed - residents access only
Ramp ahead
Caution grass cutting
Slow - wet tar

Tudalen / Page 10

Adverse camber
3-way control - wait here until green light shows
When red light shows - wait here
When stop sign shows - wait here
Traffic under signal control
Joining traffic not signal controlled

Tudalen / Page 11

Sign under test
Signal under test
Sign not in use
Signals not in use
Traffic sign maintenance
Traffic signal maintenance

Tudalen / Page 12

Traffic control ahead
Works traffic
Works traffic merging 200 yards
Works traffic only
No works traffic
works exit

Tudalen / Page 13

Setting out road works ahead
New road layout ahead
Caution site entrance
Caution site traffic
Work in centre of road
Workforce in road - slow

Tudalen / Page 14

Pedestrians - directional arrow
Pedestrians
No pedestrians
Pedestrians look both ways
Pedestrians look left
Pedestrians look right

Tudalen / Page 15

Pedestrians please use other footway
Pedestrians crossing - when red light shows wait here
Crossing not in use
Temporary footway closure
Cyclists dismount and use footway
Footway closed

Tudalen / Page 16

No give way markings
No road markings at junction
No road markings at level crossing
No road markings for 400 yards
No road markings
No road studs

Tudalen / Page 17

CCTV in constant operation
Danger construction site
Caution site entrance
Caution lorries turning
Caution sudden drop
Danger high voltage

Tudalen / Page 18

No stop markings
No road markings for 2 miles

Welsh language mutation

**Platiau atodol i'w defnyddio ag arwyddion eraill
Supplementary plates for use with other signs**

Tudalen / Page 19

Grass cutting
Tree cutting
Hedge cutting
End
Lighting maintenance
Mobile road works
On hard shoulder
Road sweeping

Tudalen / Page 20

On slip road
Overhead works
Sign maintenance
Sign erection
Gritting
Ice
Salting
Snow ploughing

Tudalen / Page 21

Flood
Surveying
Ditching
Blasting
At level crossing
Weed spraying
Ramp
Reduce speed now

**Arwyddion Iechyd a Diogelwch
Health and Safety Signage**

Tudalen / Page 22

Ear protection must be worn
Eye protection must be worn
Gloves must be worn
High visibility jackets must be worn

Tudalen / Page 23

Safety helmets must be worn
Keep out
Protective footwear must be worn
All visitors to report to site office

TRAFFIG Y
GWYRIAD
DIVERTED
TRAFFIC

GWYRIAD
DIVERSION

DILYNWCH
Y GWYRIAD
FOLLOW
DIVERSION

DIM MYNEDIAD I HGV'S
DILYNWCH Y GWYRIAD
NO ACCESS TO HGV'S
FOLLOW DIVERSION

UNFFORDD
ONE WAY

GWAITH HANFODOL YN
MYND RHAGDDO -
OEDI HIR I'W DDISGWYL
ESSENTIAL WORK BEING
UNDERTAKEN -
EXPECT LONG DELAYS

BLAENORIAETH DROS
GERBYDAU SY'N
DOD ATOCH

PRIORITY OVER
ONCOMING VEHICLES

UN RHES
O DRAFFIG
SINGLE FILE
TRAFFIC

DIM PARCIO TU
HWNT I'R MAN HWN

NO PARKING
BEYOND THIS POINT

DIM CIWIO TU HWNT
I'R MAN HWN

NO QUEUING
BEYOND THIS POINT

DIM PARCIO
NO PARKING

WYNEB
DROS DRO
TEMPORARY
ROAD SURFACE



Manylion treiglo ar dudalen 17 / See page 17 for mutation



FFORDD AR GAU
AC EITHRIO
BEICWYR

ROAD CLOSED
EXCEPT CYCLISTS

LLWYBR
TROED AR GAU

FOOTPATH
CLOSED

FFORDD O'CH BLAEN
AR GAU - MYNEDIAD I
BRESWYLLWYR YN UNIG

ROAD AHEAD CLOSED
- RESIDENTS ACCESS
ONLY

RAMP
O'CH BLAEN

RAMP AHEAD

GOFAL
TORRI GWAIR

CAUTION
GRASS CUTTING

ARAF
TAR GWLYB

SLOW
WET TAR

CAMBR
CROES
ADVERSE
CAMBER

RHEOLAETH 3-FFORDD
- ARHOSWCH YMA NES
BOD Y GOLAU'N WYRDD

3-WAY CONTROL -
WAIT HERE UNTIL
GREEN LIGHT SHOWS

PAN FO'R
GOLAU'N GOCH
ARHOSWCH YMA
WHEN RED LIGHT
SHOWS
WAIT HERE

PAN WELWCH
ARWYDD STOP
ARHOSWCH YMA
WHEN STOP SIGN
SHOWS
WAIT HERE

TRAFFIG DAN
REOLAETH
GOLEUADAU
TRAFFIC UNDER
SIGNAL CONTROL

TRAFFIG YN YMUNO
NAD YW DAN
REOLAETH GOLEUADAU
JOINING TRAFFIC
NOT SIGNAL
CONTROLLED

ARWYDD YN
CAEL EI BROFI
SIGN
UNDER TEST

GOLAU YN
CAEL EI BROFI
SIGNAL
UNDER TEST

ARWYDD
SEGUR
SIGN
NOT IN USE

GOLAU
SEGUR
SIGNALS
NOT IN USE

CYNNAL
ARWYDDION
TRAFFIG
TRAFFIC SIGN
MAINTENANCE

CYNNAL
GOLEUADAU
TRAFFIG
TRAFFIC SIGNAL
MAINTENANCE

RHEOLAETH
TRAFFIG O'CH
BLAEN
TRAFFIC CONTROL
AHEAD

TRAFFIG Y
GWAITH
WORKS
TRAFFIC

TRAFFIG Y GWAITH
YN YMUNO
200 LLATH
WORKS TRAFFIC
MERGING
200 YARDS

TRAFFIG Y
GWAITH
YN UNIG
WORKS TRAFFIC
ONLY

DIM TRAFFIG
Y GWAITH
NO WORKS
TRAFFIC

ALLANFA
WAITH
WORKS EXIT

GOSOD GWAITH
FFORDD O'CH
BLAEN

SETTING OUT ROAD
WORKS AHEAD

TREFN FFYRDD
NEWYDD O'CH
BLAEN

NEW ROAD
LAYOUT AHEAD

GOFAL
MYNEDFA SAFLE

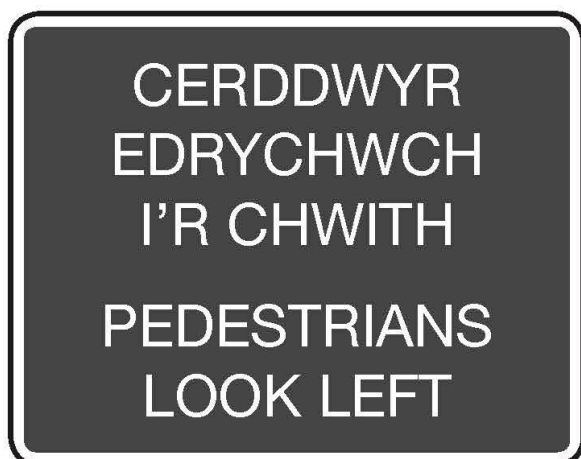
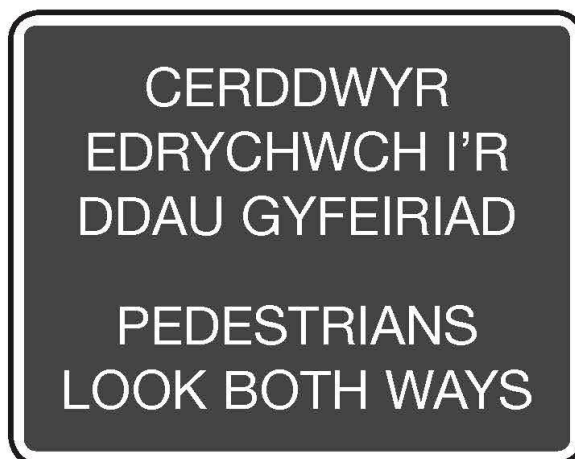
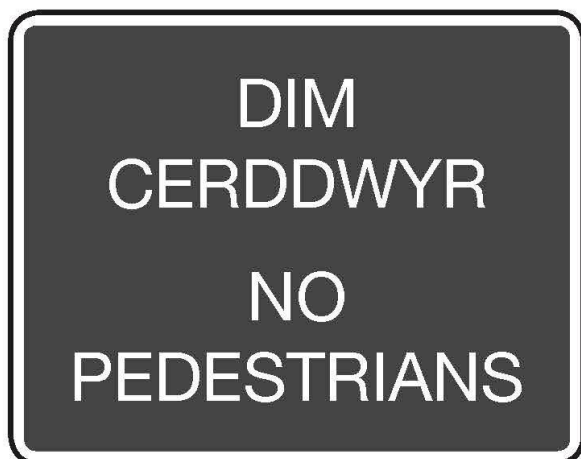
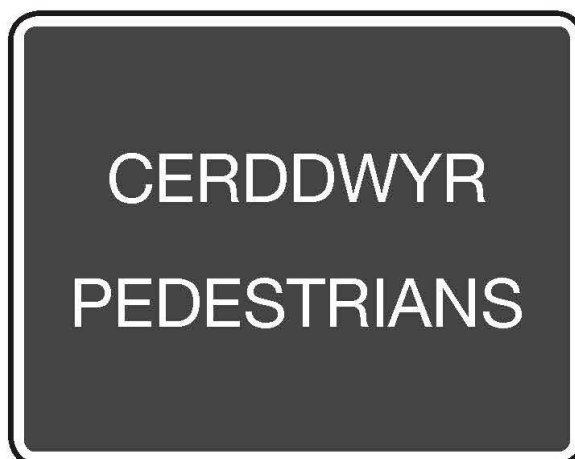
CAUTION
SITE ENTRANCE

GOFAL
TRAFFIG Y SAFLE

CAUTION
SITE TRAFFIC

GWAITH AR
GANOL Y Ffordd
WORK IN CENTRE
OF ROAD

GWEITHLU AR Y
FFORDD
ARAF
WORKFORCE IN ROAD
SLOW



CERDDWYR
DEFNYDDIWCH Y
DROEDFFORDD ARALL

PEDESTRIANS
PLEASE USE OTHER
FOOTWAY

CROESFAN I GERDDWYR -
PAN FO'R GOLAU'N GOCH
ARHOSWCH YMA

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING -
WHEN RED LIGHT SHOWS
WAIT HERE

CROESFAN
SEGUR

CROSSING
NOT IN USE

TROEDFFORDD
AR GAU DROS DRO

TEMPORARY
FOOTWAY CLOSURE

BEICWYR DEWCH
ODDI AR EICH BEIC A
DEFNYDDIO'R
DROEDFFORDD

CYCLISTS DISMOUNT
AND USE FOOTWAY

TROEDFFORDD
AR GAU

FOOTWAY
CLOSED

DIM MARCIAU
ILDIO

NO GIVE WAY
MARKINGS

DIM MARCIAU
FFORDD WRTH Y
GYFFORDD

NO ROAD MARKINGS
AT JUNCTION

DIM MARCIAU Ffordd
WRTH Y GROESFAN
REILFFORDD

NO ROAD MARKINGS
AT LEVEL CROSSING

DIM MARCIAU
FFORDD
AM 400 LLATH

NO ROAD MARKINGS
FOR 400 YARDS

DIM MARCIAU
FFORDD

NO ROAD
MARKINGS

DIM STYDIAU
FFORDD

NO ROAD
STUDS

TELEDU CYLCH
CYFYNG AR WAITH
CCTV IN CONSTANT
OPERATION

PERYGL
SAFLE ADEILADU
DANGER
CONSTRUCTION SITE

GOFAL
MYNEDFA SAFLE
CAUTION
SITE ENTRANCE

GOFAL
LORïAU YN TROI
CAUTION
LORRIES TURNING

GOFAL
DIBYN SERTH
CAUTION
SUDDEN DROP

PERYGL
FOLTEDD UCHEL
DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE

DIM MARCIAU
STOP
NO STOP
MARKINGS

FFORDD AR GAU
XX/XX/XX
AM 2 DDIWRNOD
THIS ROAD IS CLOSED
ON XX/XX/XX
FOR 2 DAYS

DIM MARCIAU
FFORDD
AM 2 FILLTIR
NO ROAD
MARKINGS
FOR 2 MILES

Mutation

Mutation only applies for the number 2.
For all other numbers use DIWRNOD

Mutation

MILLTIR CHANGES TO FILLTIR -
WHEN THE MILAGE CONTAINS A '1' OR A '2'

1 MILE = 1 FILLTIR
1½ MILES = 1½ FILLTIR

FOR DISTANCES 3 MILES AND OVER OR
UNDER 1 MILE THERE IS NO MUTATION

½ MILE = ½ MILLTIR
3 MILES = 3 MILLTIR



**TORRI GWAIR
GRASS CUTTING**



**TORRI COED
TREE CUTTING**



**TORRI PERTHI
HEDGE CUTTING**

**DIWEDD
END**

**CYNNAL GOLEUADAU
LIGHTING
MAINTENANCE**

**GWAITH FFORDD
SYMUDOL
MOBILE ROAD WORKS**

**AR Y LLAIN GALED
ON HARD SHOULDER**

**YSGUBO'R FFORDD
ROAD SWEEPING**



**AR Y SLIPFFORDD
ON SLIP ROAD**

**GWAITH UWCH
EICH PEN
OVERHEAD WORKS**

**CYNNAL ARWYDDION
SIGN MAINTENANCE**

**CODI ARWYDDION
SIGN ERECTION**

**GRAEANU
GRITTING**

**IÂ
ICE**

**TAENU HALEN
SALTING**

**SWCH EIRA
SNOW PLOUGHING**



**LLIF
FLOOD**



**GWAITH FFOSYDD
DITCHING**



**MESUR TIR
SURVEYING**

**FFRWYDRO
BLASTING**

**AR Y GROESFAN
REILFFORDD
AT LEVEL CROSSING**

**CHWISTRELLU
CHWYN
WEED SPRAYING**

RAMP

**ARAFWCH NAWR
REDUCE SPEED NOW**



**RHAID GWISGO OFFER
DIOGELU CLUSTIAU
EAR PROTECTION
MUST BE WORN**



**RHAID GWISGO OFFER
DIOGELU'R LLYGAID
EYE PROTECTION
MUST BE WORN**



**RHAID GWISGO
MENIG
GLOVES
MUST BE WORN**



**RHAID GWISGO
SIACEDI LLACHAR
HIGH VISIBILITY JACKETS
MUST BE WORN**



**RHAID GWISGO
HELMED DDIOGELWCH
SAFETY HELMETS
MUST BE WORN**



**CADWCH ALLAN
KEEP OUT**



**RHAID GWISGO
ESGIDIAU DIOGELU
PROTECTIVE FOOTWEAR
MUST BE WORN**



**POB YMWELYDD I FYND
I'R SWYDDFA
ALL VISITORS TO
REPORT TO SITE OFFICE**

This page is intentionally left blank



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND FEBRUARY 2022

**SUBJECT: WHOLE-AUTHORITY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT
(MONTH 9)**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide details of projected whole-authority revenue budget expenditure for the 2021/22 financial year.
- 1.2 To seek endorsement of proposals for the ringfencing of underspends for a range of specific purposes prior to consideration by Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides details of the 2021/22 projected revenue budget outturn position based on information available as at month 9 of the current financial year. Commentary is also provided throughout the report on the more significant variations against budget.
- 2.2 The report also includes proposals for the ring-fencing of underspends for a range of specific purposes and the Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider these prior to the proposals being presented to Cabinet at its meeting on the 23rd February 2022.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee: -
 - 3.1.1 Notes the content of the report.
 - 3.1.2 Endorses the proposed ring-fencing of underspends totalling £2.535m as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee is aware of the projected revenue budget outturn position for the 2021/22 financial year and also has the opportunity to consider the proposed ring-fencing of underspends prior to Cabinet consideration.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Projected Revenue Budget Outturn for 2021/22 (Month 9)

- 5.1.1 Members will be aware that the Authority continues to incur significant additional costs due to the Covid-19 pandemic and is also losing income in several key areas. The Welsh Government (WG) is continuing to provide financial support to Local Authorities through the Covid-19 Hardship Fund in the current financial year to mitigate additional costs and income losses, and as at month 9 total funding of £13.7m has been received by Caerphilly CBC. WG has confirmed that the Covid-19 Hardship Fund will end on the 31st March 2022.
- 5.1.2 Members will be aware that detailed budget monitoring reports are prepared for Scrutiny Committees throughout the financial year. This report is intended to provide a high-level summary position highlighting some of the key variations against budget. Based on information available as at month 9 the projected 2021/22 net year-end revenue budget underspend is £10.463m. A summary is provided by Directorate in the table below with further details provided in Appendix 1.

	Revised Estimate 2021/22 £000's	Projected Outturn 2021/22 £000's	Projected (Overspend)/ Underspend £000's
Education & Lifelong Learning	149,861	148,523	1,338
Social Services	98,496	91,981	6,515
Economy & Environment	44,078	43,889	189
Corporate Services	23,981	22,667	1,314
Miscellaneous Finance	51,811	50,703	1,108
Totals: -	368,228	357,764	10,463

- 5.1.3 The following paragraphs summarise some of the key issues in the month 9 budget monitoring reports.

Education & Lifelong Learning (Projected Underspend of £1.338m)

- 5.1.4 An underspend of £1.338m is currently forecast for Education & Lifelong Learning. The most significant variances are the following: -

Service Area	Projected (Overspend)/ Underspend £000's
Home to School/College Transport	316
Pension Costs of School Based Staff	173
Psychology Service	83
Advisory Support	76
14 – 19 Initiative (Transport)	48
Early Years Central Team	210
Youth Service	220
Adult Education	76

- 5.1.5 The projected underspend of £316k for Home to School/College Transport includes a number of assumptions in relation to contracts, additional demand, and grant support from WG in relation to additional costs for contractor cleaning and personal protective equipment (PPE)

linked to Covid-19. The current position is consistent with previous projections throughout the year.

- 5.1.6 The projected underspend of £173k for Pension Costs of School Based Staff reflects a positive budget position for schools in the 2020/21 academic year.
- 5.1.7 The projected underspends of £83k in the Psychology Service and £76k in Advisory Support are primarily due to delays in recruitment which have created in-year savings.
- 5.1.8 The projected underspend of £48k in the 14-19 Initiative (Transport) budget is in part due to circumstances linked to restrictions arising from Covid-19.
- 5.1.9 The projected underspend of £210k for the Early Years Central Team is largely due to the success of accessing grant funding to support the cost of a number of posts in the Team in the current financial year.
- 5.1.10 The projected £220k underspend for the Youth Service is due to a range of variances in relation to staffing, premises and resources costs, plus some additional rental income. The most significant one-off variance relates to the finalisation of an insurance claim relating to Cross Keys Youth Centre (following the significant damage and loss of equipment and resources caused by the flooding in February 2020). The final settlement figure was £82k higher than originally estimated. However, there are a couple of areas that are being closely monitored that may have budgetary implications: -
- Vacating Crumlin Institute – The position with the Trustees is not fully resolved as yet. A sum is earmarked in a reserve towards associated costs of vacating the building but the financial position remains unclear.
 - Aberbargoed Youth Centre (The Hanger) – Issues with the roof, which are currently under review.
- 5.1.11 The projected underspend of £76k for Adult Education is largely due to in-year savings, in part linked to Covid-19. Grant funding has also been used to support provision in a number of areas.
- 5.1.12 Members will recall that school balances increased significantly during the 2020/21 financial year to £11.3m (increase of £10m in-year), largely due to significant additional grant funding from WG late in the financial year. It is anticipated that the school balances position will increase further by the end of March 2022, again due to recently notified additional grant funding but also because schools have been unable to action some aspects of planned spend due to circumstances beyond their control. This is particularly the case with regards to any building related works.

Social Services (Projected Underspend of £6.515m)

- 5.1.13 The initial month 9 projected outturn position for Social Services was an underspend of £3.541m. This consisted of a projected overspend of £231k in respect of Children's Services, an underspend of £2.573m for Adult Services, an underspend of £1.042m for Service Strategy & Business Support, and a projected underspend of £157k relating to transport costs.
- 5.1.14 However, on the 11th February 2022 confirmation was received from WG of additional one-off grant funding to address social care cost pressures and winter pressures in the 2021/22 financial year. With less than 7 weeks of the financial year remaining, it is unlikely that any additional services can be commissioned without creating an unaffordable financial commitment for future years. As a result, it is expected that the additional grant funding will increase the anticipated underspend by as much as £2.974m i.e. a total projected underspend of £6.515m. However, the Directorate Senior Management Team will continue to explore ways to optimise this additional funding.

- 5.1.15 The position for Children's services includes potential overspends on placement costs and aftercare support of £2.1m and £245k respectively. However, these overspends have largely been offset by one-off social care recovery grant funding of £1.6m and other non-recurring underspends such as staffing vacancies.
- 5.1.16 The position for Adult Services includes potential overspends on external residential placements, supported living placements and services for children with disabilities of £235k, £912k and £555k respectively. These overspends have been more than offset by one-off social care recovery grant funding of £548k and other non-recurring underspends resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic such as service restrictions and staff shortages.
- 5.1.17 The potential underspend of £1.042m for Service Strategy & Business Support is largely attributable to the funding made available by WG through the Adult Social Care element of the Covid-19 Hardship Fund to support in-house service provision.
- 5.1.18 The potential underspends described above are largely of a non-recurring nature but the overspends reflect the increasing demand for, and complexity of social care provision. This increased demand and complexity, coupled with the inflationary pressures faced across the social care sector underlines the need for additional investment by the Council in 2022/23 despite the significant underspend anticipated in 2021/22.

Economy & Environment (Projected Underspend of £189k)

- 5.1.19 The projected outturn position for the Economy and Environment Directorate is an underspend of £189k.
- 5.1.20 The Regeneration & Planning Division is projecting a net underspend of £654k. The main elements of this are salary savings due to delays in filling vacant posts, and the maximisation of grants in a number of service areas. There are also underspends across services due to lower than budgeted costs in mileage, postage, and printing. Tourism Venues are projecting a £155k underspend, the majority of which is linked to the successful reopening of the Cwmcarn Scenic Drive.
- 5.1.21 A net small underspend of £1.4k is projected for the Infrastructure Division after adjusting for ring-fenced underspends in relation to Home to School/College Transport and Social Services Transport. There are salary savings in the Division due to delays in filling vacancies that are offset by reduced income levels and increased contractor costs.
- 5.1.22 A net overspend of £525k is projected for the Community & Leisure Services Division after allowing for the ring-fencing of a projected underspend on the Cemeteries budget. Waste Management and Cleansing Services are projecting an overspend of £155k, which is due in the main to increased waste treatment costs. This is after adjusting for the redirected use of staff from Cleansing to assist the waste collection rounds. Leisure Centres are currently forecasting a £100k overspend due to reduced income levels although it is hoped that income levels will increase as Covid-19 restrictions lift. Vehicle Maintenance & Fleet Management is projecting a £290k overspend due to a combination of reduced income levels and increased costs associated with the outsourcing of some repair work due to a lack of staff capacity. An underspend of £112k is projected for Parks, Countryside, and Outdoor Facilities, primarily due to a £126k underspend in Cemeteries which is ringfenced for capital purposes. Building Cleaning is projecting a £53k underspend due to increased income levels.
- 5.1.23 The Public Protection Division is projecting a net underspend of £109k. The main areas of underspend are £41k in Environmental Health, £27k in Licensing, £21k for CCTV and £13k for Trading Standards.

Corporate Services (Projected Underspend of £1.314m)

- 5.1.24 The Directorate of Corporate Services is currently projecting a net underspend of £1.314m. Details of the more significant areas of underspend are provided in the following paragraphs.
- 5.1.25 There is an anticipated net underspend of £449k in Corporate Finance, which relates in the main to in-year vacancies (some of which are in the process of being filled) and additional one-off grant income. The level of grant income is much higher than usual due to funding being provided by WG for administering a range of grants on an agency basis. These include the Covid-19 business grants, self-isolation payments and the emergency winter fuel payments scheme.
- 5.1.26 There is a projected net underspend of £207k in Digital Services, consisting of the following: -
- A projected overspend of £221k for IT Services which is due in the main to increased costs for IT contracts, additional leased telephone lines, external consultants, agency staff, and a reduction in income. These overspends have been partially offset by delays in filling vacant posts.
 - A projected net underspend of £209k in Procurement which relates in the main to delays in filling vacant posts.
 - An underspend of £220k for Customer First, due in the main to vacant posts still to be filled and secondments to the Track and Trace Programme.
- 5.1.27 There is a projected net underspend of £164k for People Services, the main elements of which are the following: -
- A net underspend of £89k for Human Resources due in the main to staff being on maternity leave and some temporary reductions in working hours, partially offset by reduced income levels.
 - An underspend of £174k in Health & Safety due in the main to salary savings arising from delays in recruitment. The underspend is partially offset by reduced internal training income due to Covid-19 and there are also small forecast savings on vehicle hire.
 - The Communications Unit is projecting a net overspend of £70k due in the main to reduced levels of internal income arising from Covid-19.
- 5.1.28 There is an anticipated £189k net underspend in Business Improvement Services. This includes the following: -
- A projected underspend of £109k in management costs.
 - An anticipated underspend of £37k in the Policy Team mainly due to a delay in filling a vacant post.
 - A projected underspend of £32k in the Equalities and Welsh Language Team due in the main to some staff not reaching the top of pay scales in the current year.
- 5.1.29 There is a projected underspend of £256k on Housing Services, consisting of an underspend of £200k in General Fund Housing and £56k in Private Housing.
- Miscellaneous Finance (Projected Underspend of £1.108m)
- 5.1.30 There is an overall projected underspend of £1.108m for Miscellaneous Finance.
- 5.1.31 There is a projected net underspend of £478k on Capital Financing budgets which is due to the following: -
- £827k underspend on Debt Charges due to delays in the need to borrow.
 - Investment income being £349k less than the budgeted level, albeit that this is an improvement on the 2020/21 financial year. Investment returns are expected to improve further moving forward due to some funds now being placed in longer-term investments.

5.1.32 Other areas of significant projected underspends in Miscellaneous Finance are: -

- £247k on the Carbon Energy Tax budget.
- £306k on City Deal debt charges due to delays in the need to borrow.
- £272k due to delays in recruitment to Head of Service posts.

5.2 Proposed Ring-Fencing of Underspends

5.2.1 The projected underspend provides an opportunity to ring-fence funds for a range of specific purposes. Finance staff have worked with Directors and Heads of Service to identify a range of priorities for investment totalling £2.535m, the details of which are provided in Appendix 2.

5.2.2 Many of the ring-fencing proposals seek to provide fixed-term additional staffing capacity across a number of areas where staffing reductions have previously occurred to support revenue budget savings requirements. This additional capacity will be essential during the recovery phase from the pandemic and will allow staff to focus on core activities following the significant time that has been dedicated to the Covid-19 response. Some of the proposals will also provide the additional capacity required to deliver some of our key strategic priorities at pace.

5.2.3 If the ring-fencing proposals are approved, then the revised projected outturn position will be an underspend of £7.929m as summarised below: -

	Month 9 Projected Underspend £000's	Month 9 Ring-Fencing Proposals £000's	Net Projected Underspend £000's
Education & Lifelong Learning	1,338	(950)	388
Social Services	6,515	(225)	6,290
Economy & Environment	189	(139)	50
Corporate Services	1,314	(1,221)	93
Miscellaneous Finance	1,108	0	1,108
Totals: -	10,463	(2,535)	7,929

5.2.4 The final 2021/22 revenue budget outturn position will be reported to Cabinet/Council in June 2022. Further proposals for use of the remaining underspend will be considered at that time, aligned to the Council's priorities and requirement to maintain financial resilience moving forward.

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 Despite the ongoing challenges faced by the Council the financial position is being well managed during the current financial year with a projected revenue budget underspend of £10.463m based on information available at month 9. This is much higher than would normally be the case but reflects the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and the significant financial support provided by WG.

5.3.2 The funding from the WG Covid-19 Hardship Fund is of course very welcome but this will end on the 31st March 2022, with Local Authorities being required to meet ongoing financial pressures linked to the pandemic from the funding provided in the Financial Settlement. This presents a significant financial risk and the position will be closely monitored as we move into the new financial year. The 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals Report presented to Cabinet on the 19th January 2022 includes a recommendation to top-up the Council's Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve to £5m to help mitigate any ongoing financial pressures linked to the pandemic.

5.3.3 It is currently anticipated that savings of circa £9.7m will be required for the two-year period

2023/24 to 2024/25. Detailed work will be undertaken in the coming months to further refine the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan and the Transformation Programme and associated Corporate Reviews will be key components in addressing the projected financial gap. A report will be presented to Cabinet in early autumn providing a further updated MTFP alongside detailed proposals in terms of addressing the savings requirement moving forward.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 A wide range of assumptions are made in the preparation of budget monitoring reports based on information available for the relevant reporting period.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Effective financial planning and the management of expenditure within approved budgets are key elements in ensuring that the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 are met.

7.2 A number of the proposals for the ring-fencing of underspends in this report support the delivery of approved key strategies and initiatives that have previously been the subject of detailed reports that would have considered equalities implications, links to well-being objectives etc. These include the following: -

- Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Strategy.
- 21st Century Schools Programme.
- Reduce, Produce, Offset, Buy (Decarbonisation Strategy for Caerphilly CBC)
- ICT Strategy.
- Well-Being & Place Shaping Framework.

7.3 Many of the other proposals for the ring-fencing of underspends are of an operational nature and do not require integrated impact assessments to be completed.

7.4 There are no direct equalities implications to this report in terms of the financial information presented.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 As detailed throughout the report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 1972.

Author: Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer
Tel: 01443 863066 E-mail: harrisr@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Corporate Management Team
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise
(Email: stenne@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
(Email: trantrj@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Andrew Southcombe, Finance Manager, Corporate Finance
(Email: southak@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Dave Roberts, Interim Finance Manager, Corporate Services and Economy & Environment
(Email: roberda@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Jane Southcombe, Finance Manager, Education & Lifelong Learning
(Email: southj@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Mike Jones, Financial Services Manager, Social Services
(Email: jonesmj@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Lesley Allen, Principal Group Accountant, Housing
(Email: allenl@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – 2021/22 Whole-Authority Revenue Budget Monitoring Report (Month 9) - Summary by Directorate/Service Division.

Appendix 2 – Proposed Ring-Fencing of Underspends.

Summary by Directorate/Service Division

Directorate/Service Division	Revised Budget 2021-22	Projected Outturn 2021-22	(Overspend)/ Underspend 2021-22
	£	£	£
Education & Lifelong Learning			
- Schools Related	120,795,230	120,522,266	272,964
- Education	17,313,683	16,881,368	432,315
- Lifelong Learning	3,828,967	3,512,715	316,252
- Home to School/College Transport	7,923,081	7,607,102	315,979
Sub-Total: -	149,860,961	148,523,451	1,337,510
Social Services			
- Children's Services	26,485,445	26,716,209	(230,764)
- Adult Services	68,290,758	65,718,062	2,572,696
- Service Strategy and Business Support	2,155,794	1,114,179	1,041,615
- Social Services Transport	1,564,373	1,407,207	157,166
- Social Care Pressures Grant	0	(2,974,318)	2,974,318
Sub-Total: -	98,496,370	91,981,339	6,515,031
Economy & Environment			
- Regeneration and Planning	2,866,410	2,212,129	654,281
- Infrastructure	11,206,492	11,205,064	1,428
- Community and Leisure Services	22,284,279	22,809,473	(525,194)
- Public Protection	7,543,076	7,434,056	109,020
- Directorate General	177,630	228,611	(50,981)
Sub-Total: -	44,077,887	43,889,333	188,554
Corporate Services			
- Chief Executive/Director	361,722	338,841	22,881
- Corporate Finance	1,888,375	1,438,891	449,484
- Digital Services	7,024,224	6,816,882	207,342
- Legal and Governance	3,224,611	3,173,544	51,067
- People Services	2,978,995	2,814,950	164,045
- Business Improvement Services	1,867,701	1,678,859	188,842
- Corporate Property	4,948,718	4,974,052	(25,334)
- General Fund Housing	1,323,825	1,124,101	199,724
- Private Housing	362,937	306,914	56,023
Sub-Total: -	23,981,108	22,667,033	1,314,075
Miscellaneous Finance	51,811,470	50,703,308	1,108,163
Totals: -	368,227,796	357,764,463	10,463,333

This page is intentionally left blank

Proposed Ring-Fencing of Underspends

Directorate	Service Division	Service Area	Description	£000's
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Vulnerable Learners	Grade 11 Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator to support the EOTAS model. In the longer-term this will be funded from existing budgets once the model is embedded.	60
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	School Improvement/ESTYN	Extension of current fixed-term role to support the Strategic Lead for School Improvement. This will release capacity for the Strategic Lead for Improvement to meet the required time commitment for professional discussions meetings and subsequent support. This additional support has been replicated in other Local Authorities across the region.	79
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Social Inclusion	Part-time fixed-term Safeguarding post for 2 years to address capacity pressures in this service area.	50
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	21st Century Schools	Fixed-term post for 1 year to support the prioritisation of investment in the Education and wider estate.	52
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	21st Century Schools	Apprenticeship for 2 years to support delivery of the 21st Century Schools programme.	26
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Additional Learning Needs.	Contribution to jointly funded fixed-term Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) post for 2 years to lead on taking forward the work of education and social care in relation to the ASD Code that is now in force.	40
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Management Support Services	Additional fixed-term capacity for a period of 2 years in the Finance Team to address workload pressures. These include significant additional grant funding, the need to release capacity at more senior levels of the Team to support Estyn Inspection, strategic planning work, training requirements for schools, updating the scheme for Financing Schools (including a formula review which has commenced), and updating school Financial Regulations and Guidance.	240
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Vulnerable Learners	Extension of current fixed-term School Inclusion role (Deputy Head) for 1 year to continue the developing, tracking and monitoring of EOTAS students.	102
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	School Improvement/ESTYN	Fixed-term post for 1 year to act as the Ed Tech/Data Analytics Lead, working directly to the Strategic Lead for School Improvement.	90
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Social Inclusion	Fixed-term part-time post for 1 year to support Headteachers in dealing with pupil behaviour Issues.	60
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Additional Learning Needs.	Fixed-term Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator post for 1 year to undertake moderation of ALN Registers and pupil Individual Development Plans (IDP's).	70
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Social Inclusion	Fixed-term Inclusions Officer post for 1 year to support capacity pressures in this service area.	45
Education & Lifelong Learning	Education	Additional Learning Needs.	Fixed-term Caerphilly Autistic Spectrum Service (CASS) post for 1 year to support capacity pressures in the Autism Team.	36
Sub-Total: -				950
Social Services	Service Strategy & Business Support	Social Services Finance Team	Additional fixed-term staffing capacity in the Social Services Finance Team for a period of 2 years to address pressures arising from increasing demand for Social Care. This has resulted in an increase in financial assessments, additional payments to providers and more service user financial contributions to collect. Other pressures are also being experienced by the Team linked to an increase in the number and complexity of grants, in particular those related to regional collaborative working arrangements and pooled budgets.	225
Sub-Total: -				225
Economy & Environment	Regeneration & Planning	Tourism	Replacement barrier at Cwmcarn Scenic Drive. The existing entry control barrier is not fit-for-purpose and cannot process more than a single level of payment. This means that the various payments for cars, motor-cycles, buses and for season tickets cannot currently be accommodated.	39
Economy & Environment	Community & Leisure Services	Parks	New Portacabins at Tir Y Berth Depot. for office accommodation (current rented units are no longer fit-for-purpose).	50

Proposed Ring-Fencing of Underspends

Directorate	Service Division	Service Area	Description	£000's
Economy & Environment	Community & Leisure Services	Sport & Leisure	Replacement of damaged seating at the Centre of Sporting Excellence.	50
Sub-Total: -				139
Corporate Services	Corporate Finance	Corporate Accountancy	Grade 8 fixed-term post for 2 years to support the review and development of capital budget planning and monitoring arrangements. There will be additional demands in this area linked to an increase in capital grants and the rollout of the Council's Wellbeing and Place Shaping Framework.	90
Corporate Services	Corporate Finance	Corporate Services and Economy & Environment Finance Team	Grade 9 fixed-term Grants Officer post for 2 years to deal with increasing workloads in respect of grant bids and claims, in particular in Regeneration & Planning e.g. Shared Prosperity Fund etc.	99
Corporate Services	Corporate Finance	Corporate Services and Economy & Environment Finance Team	Extension of existing fixed-term contract for Cashless Catering Officer to March 2024 to ensure successful implementation of system.	60
Corporate Services	Corporate Finance/Digital Services	Corporate Finance/Digital Services	Grade 10 fixed-term IT Business Finance Partner post for 2 years to review and embed processes to ensure robust financial management within Digital Services.	111
Corporate Services	Corporate Finance	All Accountancy Teams.	Match funding for an apprenticeship in Corporate Finance. Training opportunities will be provided to support professional development.	60
Corporate Services	Customer & Digital Services	Digital Services	Additional fixed-term capacity to reduce Help Desk queries.	150
Corporate Services	Legal & Governance Support	Electoral Services	Funding of two apprenticeships for a period of 2 years.	107
Corporate Services	People Services	Human Resources	Funding of two apprenticeships for a period of 2 years.	105
Corporate Services	People Services	Communications	New Social Media Management System.	43
Corporate Services	Business Improvement	Equalities & Welsh Language	Additional funding for anticipated increase in costs for external Welsh translation.	40
Corporate Services	Business Improvement Services	Service Transformation	The 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals Report includes a proposed new Lead Transformation Manager for Decarbonisation post. It is proposed that 2 additional 2 year fixed-term posts (1 Grade 9 and 1 Grade 7) should be established to support the Transformation Manager in consolidating the current work being undertaken across the Council, to maximise grant income, and to progress the decarbonisation strategy at pace, which is a key strategic priority for the Council.	178
Corporate Services	Business Improvement Services	Service Transformation	Grade 9 fixed-term post for one year to support the governance of the Council's Well-being and Place Shaping Framework.	49
Corporate Services	Business Improvement Services	Catering	Grade 5 fixed-term post for 1 year to provide administrative support to facilitate the move from a manual to automated ordering and invoice processing system for the Catering Service.	30
Corporate Services	Business Improvement Services	Catering	Grade 9 fixed-term Project Officer post for 2 years to project manage the rollout of the WG Universal Primary Free School Meals scheme to all schools.	99
Sub-Total: -				1,221
TOTAL: -				2,535



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND FEBRUARY 2022

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON RESERVES

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present the Scrutiny Committee with details of the usable reserves held by the Authority.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The report provides details of the usable reserves held by the Authority. Details are provided of the audited balances as at the 1st April 2021 along with updated balances reflecting in-year adjustments actioned to date for the 2021/22 financial year.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the content of the report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee is provided with details of the usable reserves held by the Authority.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Appendix 1 provides details of the Authority's usable reserves which totalled £180.055m as at the 1st April 2021. Based on an assessment of in-year adjustments actioned to date the current balance on usable reserves is £178.925m. The following paragraphs provide a detailed commentary on the balances held.

5.2 General Fund

5.2.1 The opening balance on the General Fund as at the 1st April 2021 was £21.312m. After adjusting for 2021/22 approved in-year use of General Fund balances the current General Fund balance is £11.047m. This is summarised in the table below: -

	£m	£m
General Fund Opening Balance as at 01/04/21		21.312
In-Year Use of General Fund Balance: -		
Approved use of General Fund balances to support the 2021/22 budget (Special Council 24/02/21)	(1.050)	
Approved establishment of Earmarked Reserves (Council 13/07/21)	(9.215)	
		(10.265)
Current General Fund Balance		11.047

5.2.2 In line with the Council's Reserves Strategy the Section 151 Officer provides advice on the appropriate level of the General Fund Reserve annually as part of the budget setting process and this is subject to approval by Cabinet and Full Council. Typically, the Section 151 Officer has recommended in previous budget reports to Council that the minimum balance on the General Fund Reserve should be circa 3% of the Council's net revenue budget.

5.2.3 At its meeting on the 13th July 2021 Council approved a recommendation from the Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer that the General Fund balance should be maintained at 3% of the 2021/22 net revenue budget i.e. £11.047m.

5.3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

5.3.1 HRA funds must be ring-fenced and cannot be transferred into General Fund balances. The balance on the HRA usable reserves as at the 1st April 2021 was £14.915m. Some of this funding has since been used to complete the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Capital Programme, and the remainder will help fund the Post Asset Management Strategy (PAMS) and new build programme moving forward.

5.4 Capital Reserves

5.4.1 The current balance on capital reserves is £70.608m. These reserves are ring-fenced for the Authority's Capital Programme. £30.231m of this balance relates to funding that has been set aside to support investments in the Council's Wellbeing and Place Shaping Framework, with the balance being earmarked to support a range of other capital projects. Capital balances are currently being reviewed to ensure that the sums are fully committed and where this is not the case proposals will be developed for the funding to be redirected for other capital purposes.

5.5 Corporate Services

5.5.1 The current balance on Corporate Services reserves after updating for in-year adjustments actioned to date is £47.761m. The following table provides details of individual balances and the purpose of the reserves: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
Treher Reserve	0.235	This reserve was previously established for potential works on the former landfill site but there are currently no specific proposals for the use of the reserve. Members will be aware that the 2022/23

		Draft Budget Proposals endorsed by Cabinet on the 19 th January 2022 included a recommendation to top-up the Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve to £5m through re-directing existing uncommitted reserves. The re-direction of the Trehir Reserve forms part of this proposal.
Invest to Save Reserve	0.602	To provide repayable one-off financial support for service initiatives that deliver cashable savings.
Insurance Earmarked Reserve	5.740	Self-insurance facility. The Authority's insurance excess is £250k. All claims below this level are funded through the insurance earmarked reserve.
Risk Management Reserve	0.282	To support risk management initiatives that mitigate insurance claims.
Corporate Property Service Initiatives Reserve	0.109	To fund a fixed-term Asset Management Co-ordinator and to support Corporate building schemes.
Electoral Admin Reserve	0.606	Cumulative balance on funding set aside annually for local elections.
Health & Safety Initiatives	0.263	To meet one-off unavoidable cost pressures in Council establishments.
PC Replacement Reserve	0.359	This reserve funds the ongoing replacement of essential IT hardware and software across the Authority.
Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Equalisation Reserves	9.647	Committed to funding approved PFI Schemes.
Corporate Services - Service Initiatives Reserves	21.533	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care-line (£274k) – Retained underspends on the Care First budget. • Council Tax Reduction Scheme (£1.148m) – Retained underspends on the CTRS budget. • Apprenticeship Scheme (£632k) – Committed to funding apprenticeships across the Council. • Member Services (£314k) – Ring-fenced retained underspends on the Member Services budget. • Voluntary Sector Grants (£137k) – Retained underspends on the Grants to the Voluntary Sector budget. This budget is monitored by Members on the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel. • I.T. Systems (£1.206m) – Various sums set aside to fund system upgrades and new software and hardware investments. • Contingency for one-off cost of MTFP staffing reductions (£381k) - This reserve is currently uncommitted and it is proposed that this will be redirected as part of the proposal in the 2022/23

		<p>Draft Budget Proposals Report to top-up the Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve to £5m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed-Term Posts – Funding set-aside to fund approved fixed-term posts (£497k). • Ty Penallta – Replacement lighting (£16k). This is no longer required and will be released into balances at year-end. • Storm Dennis – Funding for grant payments to residents suffering flood damage to properties (£146k). This is subject to reconciliation and any uncommitted sums will be released into balances at year-end. • Caerphilly Academy Gateway to Employment – Development of a pilot skills and apprenticeship academy from April 2020 for an initial period of one year (£127k). Delays have been experienced due to Covid-19 but the reserve is fully committed moving forward. • Flexible Working – Reserve established to support the roll-out of new flexible ways of working (£500k). • Health & Safety – Balance on previously approved reserve that will be released at year-end (£4k). • Ed Tech (£414k) – Reserve to support delivery of the Ed Tech programme in schools. • Licence to Innovate (£250k) – Funding set aside to support the Licence to Innovate initiative. • Education contributions to ESF Programmes (£322k). • Abavus – Funding set aside for the cost of the Abavus I.T. system (£268k). • Leadership Development (£63k) – Reserve established to support leadership development across the Council. • Funding for fixed-term Policy Officer (£48k). • Balance on reserve established for the cost of a generator in the Data Centre (£11k). • Ty Penallta Café (£5k) – Balance on reserve established for refurbishment. • Targeted Rate Relief (£225k) – Funding ring-fenced for rate relief scheme that is being delivered in the 2021/22 financial year. • Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) Levy (£391k) – Funding set aside to meet
--	--	---

		<p>future liabilities arising from the MMI Scheme of Arrangement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency for cost pressures in Waste Management (£400k). Cabinet has now agreed a proposal for this reserve to be used to undertake a contract management review in Waste Services. • MTFP Savings Delivery Earmarked Reserve (£1.555m). £382k of this funding is required to meet previously approved commitments in the 2021/22 financial year. The balance of £1.173m is currently uncommitted and it is proposed that this will be redirected as part of the proposal in the 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals Report to top-up the Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve to £5m. • Teachers Pensions Funding Allocation 2019/20 (£2.434m). Options for utilising this one-off funding are currently under consideration and will be subject to a further report. • Brexit Earmarked Reserve (£686k). The balance on this reserve is currently uncommitted and it is proposed that this will be redirected as part of the proposal in the 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals Report to top-up the Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve to £5m. • Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve – Funding set aside to meet unfunded additional costs arising from the Covid-19 pandemic (£3.5m). The current uncommitted balance on this reserve is £2.516m. It is proposed to top-up the reserve to £5m to help mitigate some of the ongoing additional costs and income losses arising from the pandemic. • Council Tax Collection Grant (£1.122m) – Funding provided by WG to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on council tax collection rates. • Digital Transformation (£1.981m) – Funding to support delivery of the Council's ICT Strategy and Transformation Programme. • Community Co-ordinators (£227k) – Funding set aside to pilot the introduction of five Community Connectors/Co-ordinators for an initial period of 12 months. • Cleaning and Greening (£1m) – Reserve established to fund a broad
--	--	---

		<p>range of one-off initiatives across the county borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonisation Strategy (£500k) – Funding to support the delivery of the Council’s Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan. 2021/22 Pay Awards (£749k) – Additional funding set aside to meet the anticipated in-year additional costs of pay awards.
Salix Finance	0.217	To support energy saving initiatives.
Interest Equalisation Reserve	8.104	This reserve is not cash backed and is an accounting entry to unwind notional interest payments on a loan provided by Welsh Government.
Retained Underspends Reserves	0.064	Accumulated service underspends.
Total: -	47.761	

5.5.2 Members will note from the above that £64k is held in ‘Retained Underspends Reserves’. Cabinet has previously agreed a policy whereby service areas retain 50% of reported underspends at the financial year-end. Conversely, any service based overspends are carried forward by the service areas responsible for generating the overspends. This approach has worked well as there is full ownership and accountability by budget holders in respect of delivering a balanced budget. At its meeting on the 27th July 2016, Cabinet agreed a Reserves Strategy which included the introduction of a cap on the cumulative amount that can be held by Directorates in service underspend reserves. This will be covered in more detail in section 5.9 of this report.

5.6 Economy & Environment

5.6.1 The current balance on Economy & Environment reserves after updating for in-year adjustments actioned to date is £9.040m. The following table provides details of individual balances and the purpose of the reserves: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
DLO Surplus/Deficit	0.087	Retained cash surplus for Network Contracting Services (NCS) for work arising from the Sirhowy Enterprise Way PFI contract.
Planning - Community Infrastructure Levy	2.953	Revenue generated from the Community Infrastructure Levy.
Planning - Service Initiatives Reserve	0.358	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDP related expenditure (£274k). Funding for fixed-term post (£84k).
Highways – Service Specific Reserve	0.215	Ring-fenced winter maintenance reserve.
Economic Development & Tourism - Service Initiatives Reserve	0.074	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valleys Taskforce Crowdfunding for fixed-term post (£73k). Footfall counters (£1k) – This will be removed at year-end if not utilised.
Area Forum Reserve	0.039	Uncommitted balance which will be removed at year-end if not utilised.

Cemeteries	0.339	Reserve established to fund works in CCBC owned cemeteries.
Community & Leisure Services - Service Initiatives Reserve	0.750	Reserve established for £250k per annum for the next three years for both physical works and traffic management costs in respect of tree felling as a result of Ash Die Back.
Economy & Environment - Service Initiatives Reserve.	3.703	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration Board (£3.335m) - Fund created to develop projects to stimulate economic development in the county borough. The majority of this funding is now committed to specific projects, with a balance of £575k currently being available for new project proposals. • Environmental Projects (£80k) – Balance on reserve of £500k that was established to fund one-off schemes. • Fixed-Term Posts (£184k) – Funding for fixed-term posts in Environmental Health and the Business Enterprise & Renewal Team (BERT). • £25k reserve for the refurbishment of two Refuse Collection Vehicles. • £14k for the replacement of refuse bins and container bins. • £50k for public realm improvements in Rhymney High Street. • £15k for reusable nappy vouchers.
Retained Underspends Reserves	0.039	Accumulated service underspends.
Catering - Service Initiatives Reserve.	0.483	Funding for the rollout of cashless catering in schools.
Total: -	9.040	

5.7 Education & Lifelong Learning

5.7.1 The current balance on Education & Lifelong Learning reserves after updating for in-year adjustments actioned to date is £17.745m. The following table provides details of individual balances and the purpose of the reserves: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
---------	--------------	-------------

Service Initiatives Reserve	3.110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Equalisation Account (£23k). • Voluntary Early Release (VER) costs (£370k) – Required to meet ongoing liabilities in schools. • ESF Bridges into Work – Match-funding contribution (£537k). • ESF Working Skills for Adults 2 - Match-funding contribution (£267k). • ESF Inspire to Work – Match-funding contribution (£22k). • Traffic Calming Islwyn High (£1k). This will be removed at year-end if not utilised. • Budget Pressures - Behaviour & Mental Health (£140k). • Post 16 / Single Sex Review (£49k). • Fixed-Term Health & Safety Officer for schools (£12k). • Leadership development in schools (£159k). • Guest Wi-Fi in schools (£49k). • Core textbooks for years 10 and 11 (£4k). • Schools improvement (£72k). • Funding set aside to support delivery of the Ed Tech Programme (£603k). • Reserve for future replacement of ATP at Blackwood Comprehensive (£50k). • Post-16 Review (£42k) • Fixed-Term Posts – Funding set-aside to fund approved fixed-term posts (£228k). • Drainage at Sue Noakes (£10k). • I.T. Hardware/Software – Various sums set aside to fund new hardware and software requirements (£176k). • Pupil Learning Opportunity (£70k). • Additional Learning Needs Grant carried forward from 2020/21 (£226k).
Schools PFI Earmarked Reserves	1.310	Contingent sum for any unforeseen cost pressures for 2 PFI schools.
Retained Underspends Reserves	0.198	Accumulated service underspends.
School Balances	11.340	Net overall retained underspends ring-fenced to schools.
Local Management of Schools (LMS) Contingency.	1.787	Accumulated underspends on LMS revenue budget. This reserve is maintained to support potential redundancy costs in schools, statutory maintenance costs and other unforeseen unavoidable cost pressures.
Total: -	17.745	

5.8 Social Services & Housing

5.8.1 The current balance on Social Services & Housing reserves after updating for in-year adjustments actioned to date is £7.810m. The following table provides details of individual balances and the purpose of the reserves: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
Community Activities Reserve	0.041	To support trading activities in Day Centres.
Social Services - Service Initiatives Reserve	3.519	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance IT System (£67k) – Reserve established to meet finance related development costs linked to the implementation of the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS). • AMHP training backfill (£40k). • Additional Service Manager capacity (£336k). • Family aid for parents with Learning Disabilities (£180k). • Equipment to enable single-handed Home Care calls (£152k). • Expansion of MyST Intensive Fostering Service (£400k). • Development of the Safeguarding Hub (£120k). • Reserve established to mitigate the potential withdrawal of ICF grant funding (£500k). • Backfill for staff seconded to undertake Social Work qualification (£149k). • Feasibility study in respect of delivering Telecare options (£40k). • Contributions to Buddy Scheme and Caerphilly Cares (£260k). • Operation Jasmine legal support (£30k). • Care Home visiting and Lateral Flow Testing (£184k). • Fixed-Term Posts – Funding set-aside to fund approved fixed-term posts (£584k). • Family Intervention Team Service Level Agreement (£57k). • Funding to tackle a backlog of minor works of adaptation (£100k). • Temporary additional staffing capacity in Beatrice Webb and Ty Clyd (£320k).

Reserves Held for Partnerships	2.301	Reserves held on behalf of partnerships led by Caerphilly CBC: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Resource Centre (£27k). • SE Wales Shared Lives Scheme (£199k). • Youth Offending Service (£948k). • SE Wales Safeguarding Children Board (£540k). • SE Wales Emergency Duty Team (£84k). • Gwent Frailty Programme (£503k).
Retained Underspend Reserves – Social Services	0.959	Accumulated service underspends.
Service Initiatives Reserve - General Fund Housing	0.488	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal fund for the replacement of white goods and internal decoration at Ty Fesen family accommodation (£169k). • Renewal Fund for future building costs at Ty Croeso single persons' accommodation (£172k). • Homelessness prevention (£106k). • Shortfall in Shelter contract payments (£41k).
Retained Underspend Reserves – General Fund Housing	0.361	Accumulated service underspends.
Retained Underspend Reserves – Private Housing	0.123	Accumulated service underspends.
Service Initiatives Reserve – Private Housing	0.017	Unfunded costs associated with the administration of the Improvement Loan Scheme.
Total: -	7.810	

5.9 Cap on Retained Underspend Reserves

5.9.1 As mentioned in paragraph 5.5.2, at its meeting on the 27th July 2016 Cabinet agreed a Reserves Strategy which included the introduction of a cap on the cumulative amount that can be held by Directorates in service underspend reserves. This cap is set at 3% of the net revenue budget for each Directorate and where this is exceeded then proposals must be presented to utilise the excess, or a justification must be made to hold the reserves above the 3% level.

5.9.2 No Directorates have current balances that exceed the 3% cap.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no assumptions within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report is for information only so an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 As detailed throughout the report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Local Government Acts 1998 and 2003.

Author: Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer
Tel: 01443 863066 E-mail: harrisr@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services
(Email: edmunre@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Andrew Southcombe, Finance Manager, Corporate Finance
(Email: southak@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise
(Email: stenne@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Background Papers:

Cabinet (27/07/16) – Reserves Strategy.

Special Council (24/02/21) – Budget Proposals for 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Outlook.

Council (13/07/21) – Provisional Revenue Budget Outturn for 2020/21.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - List of Usable Reserves

This page is intentionally left blank

Directorate / Service Area	Cost Centre	Subjective	Description	Opening Balance 1.4.2021 £	2021-22 In Year Adjustments £	Updated Balance Reflecting in-year adjustments £
1 General Fund						
Corporate	9931	D781	General Fund	-21,311,677	10,265,000	-11,046,677
Total General Fund				-21,311,677	10,265,000	-11,046,677
2 Housing Revenue Account						
Housing Revenue Account			Various	-14,915,317	0	-14,915,317
Total HRA				-14,915,317	0	-14,915,317
3 Capital Reserves						
Useable Capital Receipts			Various	-10,256,307	0	-10,256,307
Capital Grants Unapplied			Various	-17,652,419	0	-17,652,419
Capital Earmarked Reserves			Various	-39,786,793	-2,912,582	-42,699,375
Total Capital Reserves				-67,695,519	-2,912,582	-70,608,101
4 Corporate Services						
Corporate	9931	D861	TREHIR RESERVE	-234,549	0	-234,549
Corporate - Capital	9985	D857	RESERVE - INVEST TO SAVE	-602,174	0	-602,174
Insurance Fund	9987	D911	INSURANCE EARMARKED RESERVE	-5,739,825	0	-5,739,825
Insurance Fund	9987	D935	RISK MANAGEMENT RESERVE	-281,745	0	-281,745
Property Services	9924	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-108,899	0	-108,899
Corporate Services	9926	D948	ELECTORAL ADMIN RESERVES	-606,395	0	-606,395
Corporate Services	9928	D952	HEALTH & SAFETY INITIATIVES	-262,606	0	-262,606
Corporate Services	9928	D953	CORPORATE PC REPLACEMENT RESER	-358,865	0	-358,865
Corporate Services	9928	D828	SEW PFI EQUALISATION RESERVE	-1,687,781	0	-1,687,781
Corporate Services	9928	D850	EDUC PFI EQUALISATION RESERVE	-7,959,187	0	-7,959,187
Corporate	9931	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-9,045,617	-5,499,000	-14,544,617
Corporate Services	9928	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-4,957,761	-2,031,111	-6,988,872
Property - Capital	9979	D944	SALEX FINANCE	-217,467	0	-217,467
Corporate	9931	D962	INTEREST EQUAL EM RESERVE	-8,104,398	0	-8,104,398
Property Services - Building Consultancy	9925	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-54,203	0	-54,203
Corporate Services	9928	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-1,195,775	1,186,215	-9,560
Total Corporate Services				-41,417,248	-6,343,896	-47,761,144
5 Economy & Environment						
Infrastructure	9908	D882	DLO SURPLUS / DEFICIT C/F	-86,632	0	-86,632
Planning	9923	D877	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY	-2,952,685	0	-2,952,685
Planning	9923	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-224,268	-134,000	-358,268
Infrastructure	9932	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-214,917	0	-214,917
Economic Development and Tourism	9927	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-74,516	0	-74,516
Planning	9923	D891	RESERVE - AREA FORUM	-38,797	0	-38,797
Community and Leisure Services	9939	D865	RESERVES - CEMETERIES	-339,105	0	-339,105
Community and Leisure Services	9939	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	8,672	-758,672	-750,000
Communities Directorate	9936	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-2,607,783	-1,095,328	-3,703,111
Communities Directorate	9936	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-622,129	583,146	-38,984
Economic Development and Tourism	9927	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-198	0	-198
Trading Standards	9937	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-482,500	0	-482,500
Total Economy & Environment				-7,634,858	-1,404,854	-9,039,712
6 Education & Lifelong Learning						
Education and Lifelong Learning	9919	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-2,255,859	-854,000	-3,109,859
Education and Lifelong Learning	9919	D949	PFI SCHOOLS EARMARKED RESERVES	-1,310,124	0	-1,310,124
Education and Lifelong Learning	9919	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-1,517,380	1,319,000	-198,380
Schools	9920	D785	RESERVES - DELEGATED SCHOOLS	-11,339,571	0	-11,339,571
Education and Lifelong Learning	9919	D868	RESERVES LMS EARMARKED	-1,786,969	0	-1,786,969
Total Education & Lifelong Learning				-18,209,902	465,000	-17,744,902
7 Social Services & Housing						
Social Services	9922	D859	RESER - SOC SERV COMM ACTIVI	-41,108	0	-41,108
Social Services	9922	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-2,126,483	-1,392,813	-3,519,296
Social Services	9922	D951	RESERVES HELD FOR PARTNERSHIPS	-2,301,197	0	-2,301,197
Social Services	9922	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-3,412,766	2,454,249	-958,517
General Fund Housing	9917	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-488,010	0	-488,010
General Fund Housing	9917	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-361,072	0	-361,072
Private Housing	9918	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	-122,896	0	-122,896
Private Housing	9918	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	-17,425	0	-17,425
Total Social Services & Housing				-8,870,957	1,061,436	-7,809,521
Grand Total: -				-180,055,478	1,130,104	-178,925,374

This page is intentionally left blank