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Date: 29th September 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Cabinet** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Wednesday, 5th October, 2022 at 1.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided on request.

Members of the public or Press may attend in person at Penallta House or may view the meeting live via the following link: <https://civico.net/caerphilly>

This meeting will be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore, the images/audio of those individuals present and/or 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 'Chrissy'.

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

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

A greener place Man gwyrdach



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

To note the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.

- 3 Cabinet Forward Work Programme. 1 - 8

To receive and consider the following reports on which executive decisions are required: -

- 4 Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Trinity Fields School Expansion Update Report. 9 - 16
- 5 Cwm Ifor Solar Farm. 17 - 56
- 6 Update on Agile Working. 57 - 66
- 7 Shaping the Policy on Cash Collection. 67 - 72
- 8 Amendments to Authorisation of Officers Within the Public Protection Division and Approval of Reciprocal Arrangements for Enforcement between Newport City Council and Caerphilly County Borough Council. 73 - 78
- 9 Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership. 79 - 102

Circulation:

Councillors C. Andrews, S. Cook, E. Forehead, N. George, P. Leonard, S. Morgan, C. Morgan, J. Pritchard, J. Simmonds and E. Stenner

And Appropriate Officers

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Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 27th September 2022

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Presenting Officers:	Cabinet Member:
19/10/2022 13:20	Annual Corporate Complaints Report	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the complaints dealt with under the Corporate Complaints policy for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 together with the outcomes and lessons learned.	Robert Tranter, Lisa Lane	Cllr. Nigel George
19/10/2022 13:30	Final Report from the Task and Finish Group on Tackling Potential Mental Health Issues Post-Pandemic	This report seeks to inform Members of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee of the findings of the task and finish group that was established to review how Caerphilly County Borough Council works with partners to tackle any potential mental health issues post-pandemic.	Mark Jacques/Cath Forbes-Thompson	Cllr. Elaine Forehead
02/11/2022 13:00	Caerphilly Homes (Development) Forward Work Programme	To discuss the next set of sites that will be brought forward as part of the Caerphilly Homes development programme and Caerphilly Homes governance arrangements	Nick Taylor-Williams, Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook
02/11/2022 13:10	Low Cost Home Ownership Policy (Decision)	The LCHO (Low Cost Home Ownership) report will document the formulation, implementation and the publication of a new policy which governs the process by which the Council will sell homes to people living and/or working in the borough wanting to access homeownership but cannot afford to do so without some form of public subsidy.	Nick Taylor-Williams, Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 27th September 2022

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Presenting Officers:	Cabinet Member:
16/11/2022 13:00	Street lighting	Review of current street lighting part night lighting policy in view of increasing carbon reduction targets and the declared climate emergency.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Julian Simmonds
16/11/2022 13:10	The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Ecosystem Resilience Duty	To consider and approve a report on the actions taken to help maintain and enhance biodiversity prior to publication in accordance with the biodiversity duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.	Robert Hartshorn, Philip Griffiths	Cllr. Chris Morgan
16/11/2022 13:20	Notice of Motion - Wyllye Bends	For Cabinet to consider the proposals put forward by Cllr. Janine Reed/Cllr. Jan Jones.	Emma Sullivan	Cllr Janine Reed/Cllr Jan Jones
30/11/2022 13:00	Redevelopment of the former Ty Darran Care Home by Caerphilly Homes	For Cabinet to approve the contract, cost plan, procurement, design and environmental credentials of the scheme.	Nick Taylor-Williams, Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook
30/11/2022 13:10	Cyber Security Strategy	To recommend endorsement and implementation of the Strategy	Lucas, Liz, Ian Evans	Cllr. Nigel George
30/11/2022 13:20	Programme for Procurement	To extend the Council's existing Programme for Procurement, which is due to expire in May 2023 for a period of up to 12 months to consider and where applicable incorporate aspects of the UK Procurement Bill and Social Partnership & Public Procurement (Wales) Bill in the Council's new Procurement Strategy (the new Procurement	Liz Lucas, Ian Evans	Cllr. Nigel George

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 27th September 2022

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Presenting Officers:	Cabinet Member:
14/12/2022 13:20	Local Housing Market Assessment	The Delivery Plan sits underneath the Local housing Strategy which was approved in October 2021. It is designed to be a collaborative document that contains a number of key actions designed to take forward the objectives of the strategy.	Nick Taylor-Williams, Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook
14/12/2022 13:30	Updated Welsh Government Prospectus (Decision)	Cabinet are asked to approve the principle of residential development on identified sites (subject to viability) and acquisition policy, the principle of package deals and new governance arrangements to underpin the development programme.	Nick Taylor-Williams, Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook
14/12/2022 13:40	HRA Charges (Rent Increase) (Dec)	Members to agree the level of rent increase for council tenants effective from April 2023	Nick Taylor-Williams, Lesley Allen	Cllr. Shayne Cook
18/01/2023 13:00	Draft Budget Proposals for 2023/24 and Updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	To present Cabinet with details of the draft budget proposals for the 2023/24 financial year and an updated MTFP, to allow for a period of consultation prior to final decision by Council on the 28th February 2023.	Stephen Harris	Cllr Stenner

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CABINET - 5TH OCTOBER 2022

SUBJECT: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMME – TRINITY FIELDS SCHOOL EXPANSION UPDATE REPORT

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet Members on a proposed amendment to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme Band B proposal for the expansion of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre.
- 1.2 The proposal seeks to amend the previously endorsed decision by Cabinet on the 7th April 2021 to expand the school on to the Council owned sports pitch adjacent to the existing school site.
- 1.3 As a key consultee group, the views of Education Scrutiny Committee Members were sought on the amended plans and comments are included in 10.2 of this report.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The decision taken by Cabinet on the 7th April 2021 approved the expansion of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre on to the Council owned sports pitch adjacent to the School and set aside circa £300k to create an alternative pitch and enhance the spectator and changing facilities at the nearby Sue Noake Leisure Centre.
- 2.2 The proposed expansion of the school formed part of the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Strategic Outline Plan and would enable the school to continue to provide first class learning facilities for existing learners as well as creating 80 additional places at the school to manage with future demand.
- 2.3 Over the years the school has established an excellent reputation as a provider of education to our most vulnerable learners, many of whom have a wide range of learning difficulties and physical and medical needs. A 2019 Estyn Inspection awarded the school five 'Excellent' judgements with inspectors making a number of very positive comments about the school, its leadership and its inclusivity.

- 2.4 As the Schools reputation has grown, so too have the number of pupils on roll. The school and the LA are already employing a number of strategies to cope with this additional demand. Without additional capacity there is a risk that vulnerable children will not have their needs met locally and out of county provision would be required. There is also a risk that placements can be directed by Tribunal for children within or outside the locality.
- 2.5 The decision taken by Cabinet in April was taken in the face of significant community opposition to the scheme. The opposition was largely from members of the Rugby Club that are the main user of the sports pitch and a group established to save Green Spaces within Ystrad Mynach. The proposal was placed under further pressure as a result of an untimely series of sewage breaches at the Sue Noake Leisure Centre, close to the location of the proposed new pitch.
- 2.6 The Council recognised that the progression of the scheme to expand Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre relied heavily on Welsh Water resolving the sewage issues at Sue Noake Leisure Centre and so placed the expansion on hold in June 2021 in lieu of remedial action. Work has continued since to resolve those issues and Welsh Water have been very supportive in this regard, undertaking surveys, carrying out desilting works and clean ups on extended sections of the sewer.
- 2.7 That aside, a year has now been lost in this crucial development and the school is facing further demand for places in September. The pressure to provide additional places and facilities at the school has never been more acute and a proposal now needs to progress at pace.
- 2.8 On this basis, a compromise solution that enables the additional places to be provided in the most time efficient manner was sought with Officers revisiting the original expansion proposal, with a view to developing some innovative alternatives that did not involve the loss of the sports pitch. A suggestion was identified that seeks to develop a two storey extension on part of the Schools Car Park, which would create an additional ten classrooms and some additional facilities (see 5.6).
- 2.9 However there are a number of features that have been asked for by learners and would have been available to the wider community that will not be possible should the school be expanded in this manner. These are set out in bold text in table 5.6. This proposal is also likely to require the development of an additional Special School as part of the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Band C proposals although this will of course require approval at a future point.
- 2.10 While the designs continue to be refined, the proposal has received unanimous support from the School and its Governing Body and Welsh Government have also verified that no further consultation for this proposal would be required. Being able to provide the places without losing the sports pitch is also considered likely to be favourably received by the Community.
- 2.11 The Scrutiny Committee was asked to consider the revised proposals to expand Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre and support a recommendation to Cabinet to proceed on this basis. Scrutiny Committee Comments are included in section 10.2 of this report.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Cabinet Members are asked to: -

- a) Consider the information contained in the Report
- b) Approve the recommendation to expand Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre via a two storey extension on part of the School Car Park
- c) To ask officers to investigate a longer term option to create a 2nd Special School in the Borough under Band C of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To provide Members with the opportunity to consider an amended proposal to expand the Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre as part of its Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme
- 4.2 To seek Member approval on the recommendations outlined in 3.1
- 4.3 To assist the Council in discharging its duties in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code 2018.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Alternative Configuration for Build

- 5.2 The Council recognises that there are many routes to realising transformational change and investment in key projects is important in order to meet the strategic vision of the Band B programme.
- 5.3 As referenced in the Summary section above, there are a number of external factors that reduced the chances of the successful delivery of the original scheme in a timely manner. Factors such as community opposition, the sewage breaches associated with the development of a new pitch at Sue Noake and the ever increasing demand for pupils to attend the school, have all contributed to the need for an alternative configuration for the expansion of the school to be developed.
- 5.4 The original proposed location and layout to expand the school onto the adjacent Trinity 1 pitch was planned on a single storey with additional classroom places, a wide range of additional indoor and outdoor facilities for the pupils as well as enhanced community provision (see 5.6).
- 5.5 The potential alternative configuration now proposed is a two storey extension that makes use of part of the existing car park. It should be noted, however, that whilst the alternative configuration for the build will still deliver an expansion of the school, a number of features that were asked for by learners and would have been available to the wider community, will not now be possible.
- 5.6 When comparing the two options, the table below outlines the differences between the two proposals:

Original Option	Alternative Configuration for Build
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new single storey extension onto the adjacent pitch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new two storey extension within the curtilage of the current school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for further expansion on site given size of area and potential for Two-Storey in future or build onto Carpark area • 80 additional places <p>New facilities in Single-Storey extension to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 x classrooms with changing facilities and toilets • Hydro-therapy Pool and changing facilities • Hall • Rebound/Therapy room • Extended seating for Café Oren • 9 x multi-use areas • Family Room • 2 x Sensory Rooms • Spaces for Holistic services – Social Services, Health • 1 x Soft play • Staff Room, offices • Internal Courtyard with Sensory Garden, Play and animal area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further opportunity for expansion on site after this development has been undertaken • 80 additional places <p>New facilities in Two-Storey extension to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 classrooms (although requires reconfiguration of existing school to accommodate 2 of these) • No additional Pool, but upgrade to the existing pool • No additional Hall • No designated Rebound/Therapy room • Limited additional seating for Café Oren • 6 x multi-use areas Usage to be determined by the school • No designated Family Room • • Significant Reduction in space for Holistic services • 1 x Soft play • Staff Room, offices and Training area on first floor • Outdoor area with no sensory garden or animal area • Access to adjacent sports pitch during the day • Lift <p>*Note: Bold indicates differences in Facilities through new configuration</p>
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The school to be given access to the adjacent sports pitch during the school day to compensate for the loss of outdoor facilities as a result of the reconfiguration of the proposed extension.

5.7 A decision will also be sought from Cabinet at a future point on how to treat the previously set aside £300k for an additional pitch and upgrade to facilities at the Sue Noake Leisure Centre. Members will be aware that this funding was set aside to provide a mitigation for the loss of the pitch at Trinity 1. As this pitch will no longer be required to support the expansion of the school Cabinet may be minded to invest this elsewhere.

5.8 The alternative configuration option in this report would not require any further Statutory Consultation as prescribed under the School Organisation Code 2018. However, the proposal has limited potential for further development and a longer term option would therefore need to be investigated to create a 2nd Special School in the Borough under Band C of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme. This would come with an element of risk as any future proposals would require

separate Welsh Government approval, its own consultation process and at present a site for a new build has not been identified.

- 5.9 It is anticipated that the alternative option would be deliverable by September 2024 albeit this builds in very little contingency.

5.10 **Conclusion**

Members are asked to consider the contents of this report and the potential for an alternative reconfiguration of the build to deliver the proposal for the expansion of the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre, and to approve the recommendation to progress to planning and full business case submission based on this alternative way forward.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 That the scheme is deliverable within the allocated budget.
- 6.2 That the scheme will achieve statutory approvals.
- 6.3 That the alternative scheme will be delivered by September 2024.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment and Post consultation Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) for this proposal was undertaken alongside the original Consultation processes forming part of the outline consultation pack which are both published on the Council's website.
- 7.2 The purpose of this further assessment is to take account of any further information that has come to light since the final determination was made and to reflect consideration of environmental factors which has resulted in the alternative option being presented.

Updated IIA (July 2022)

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Welsh Government and Members have previously agreed in principle to earmark a total of £12,588,573 for the Trinity Fields School expansion. The Authority's contribution within this sum is £3,147,143.
- 8.2 Currently market forces are indicating a significant inflationary increase within the construction sector. This is being kept under close review but the current projected costs for the 21st Century Schools Programme will be subject to change. Members will be updated further as matters progress.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 This will be dependent on specific proposals and will be considered as part of the process.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

10.2 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Education Scrutiny Committee – 26th September 2022

Subject: Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme – Trinity Fields School Expansion Update Report

Scrutiny Comments:

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities provided an overview of the current progress in relation to the Sustainable Communities for Learning (formerly 21st Century Schools) proposal for Trinity Fields. Members were advised that due to a number of factors outlined in the report, a proposed amendment to the previously endorsed Cabinet decision of the 7th April 2021 was recommended, that being

- A) To endorse the recommendation to Cabinet to expand Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre via a two storey extension on part of the School Car Park
- B) To ask officers to investigate a longer term option to create a 2nd Special School in the Borough under Band C of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

The Scrutiny Committee referred to the financial implications and asked if the contingency will be adequate when you consider the increasing cost of building materials, which seems to change almost on a daily basis.

Members were advised that there are significant pressures in the building industry at the moment, not just with 21st Century Schools but other capital works coming in well above budget. It was explained that when we get to the tender stage for this project, we would look to submit a further business case to Welsh Government for increased funding should the need arise. Despite initial budget estimates for the proposal being based on the latest Welsh Government cost standards, projects currently in progress are demonstrating that works are coming in, above and beyond the estimate. Members were assured that officers are used to dealing with these instances and have a clear process to follow.

The scrutiny committee noted that the budget set for the original project was for a bigger scheme and asked if it will therefore be sufficient for this smaller scheme despite the increasing costs for materials. Members queried if there actually be a cost saving or is it likely that the increasing costs will exceed the original budget.

Members were advised that the original projections for the project were £12.5 million and if the scheme as originally outlined progressed it would not be achievable at that cost. The revised scheme being recommended today is estimated circa £7 million, although it was highlighted that this figure is expected to come in higher as it is only an outline estimate at this stage, however, despite cost pressures, it is anticipated to be delivered close to the original £12.5 million that Welsh Government have already allocated.

With regard to a new school, we are unable to provide an estimate, but it would be well over the £12.5 million and would come under Band C of the 21st Century Schools programme.

The scrutiny committee commented that we need to consider the demand for this type of education that these children and young adults need and asked if we have any kind of time scale for the Band C programme.

Members were advised that the original indication for Band C was 2026, but Welsh Government have advised local authorities that they're changing it to more of a rolling program. Therefore, when we as an authority are ready, which will include a number of projects already underway, we can bring these to a future meeting.

Scrutiny Members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendations to Cabinet.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 School Organisation Code 2018 (Welsh Government) School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

Author: Andrea West, 21st Century Schools Manager

Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member, Education and Communities
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Jo Rao, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy / Head of Transformation
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion & ALN
Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities, Welsh Language & Consultation)
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer
Huw John, Technical Manager Building Consultancy
Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager

Background Papers:

None

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CABINET – 5TH OCTOBER 2022

SUBJECT: CWM IFOR SOLAR FARM

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval of an Outline Business Case that seeks to develop a Solar Farm at Cwm Ifor in Penyrheol, Caerphilly.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In June 2021 and following a recommendation from the Regeneration Board, Cabinet agreed to set aside a sum of £483,000 to explore the potential development of a 20MW Solar Farm on some privately owned land at Cwm Ifor, near Penyrheol, Caerphilly.

- 2.2 The funding was intended to support:

- the novation of a grid connection and initial investigations
- the development of an Outline Business Case (OBC)
- preparation of a planning application (including all supplementary consultant work and reports)
- informal and formal stakeholder engagement
- the development of the necessary procurement documentation
- options for construction
- specific financial modelling
- production of Full Business Case (FBC) and options appraisal.

- 2.3 The Outline Business Case for the development of the Solar Farm is attached at Appendix 1.

- 2.4 Should Cabinet be minded to approve the attached Business Case, Officers will move to the next stage of the project, specifically the preparation and submission of the planning application and the progression of a lease agreement with the landowner.

- 2.5 These are key stages in the development of the Full Business Case which Cabinet will be asked to consider at a future point.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Approve the outline business case attached at Appendix 1
- b) Agree the submission of the planning application to Planning and Environmental Decisions Wales (PEDW)
- c) Delegate authority to Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member to sign the option agreement and lease with the landowner for the land at the solar farm.
- d) Agree that on approval of the planning application the Council will obtain full costings through a full procurement process to prepare the Full Business Case for consideration by Cabinet

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To secure the necessary support from Cabinet to continue the development of the Cwm Ifor Solar Farm and to move from outline business case to the submission of a planning application and on to the development of a full business case, through a full procurement process.

5. THE REPORT

The Proposal

- 5.1 The Cwm Ifor Solar Farm proposal seeks to develop a 20MW solar farm in Penyrheol, to the north of Caerphilly town centre. The project has the potential to be the largest public authority owned solar farm in Wales.
- 5.2 It is anticipated that the development will cost between £12-16m, have a lifespan of 35 years and an expected Investment Rate of Return (IRR) of 4.52% annually. This would generate between £669,000PA and £892,000PA during the life of the project, with payback in approximately 18 years although with prices of energy rising so much recently, this could reduce significantly.
- 5.3 The financial modelling undertaken to date is based on 6.1 pence per KWh, however at present the rate is around 12.5 pence per KWh and on this basis the modelled returns could potentially be doubled if that rate continues.
- 5.4 It is estimated that approximately 40 'green jobs' will be created as a result during the lifetime of the scheme and that the life-time CO2 savings would be circa 55,300t CO2 or approximately 1,580 tCO2 /year. This would be enough to power approximately 6000 homes.
- 5.5 The project has been classified as a 'Development of National Significance' meaning that Welsh Government will determine any planning application. The Council will, however, be a consultee.
- 5.6 Should the planning application be successful, the solar farm will be a commercially viable product to sell on the open market. At this point, the Council can either proceed to construction itself or decide not to proceed with the development and potentially sell the project on to a commercial entity.
- 5.7 Any revenues would be generated from the solar farm via a Power Purchase

Agreement.

Key Milestones and Works to Date

- 5.8 A Grid connection was secured from Western Power via a novation in April 2020. This connection includes the proposed solar farm site as being last in line for switch off providing additional surety on revenue streams.
- 5.9 Negotiations with the landowner to secure the option agreement and lease on the land have now been concluded and are ready for signing – including retaining CCBC Covenant on the land for the duration.
- 5.10 Initial Land Studies have been completed with no major concerns identified.
- 5.11 A screening request has been submitted to Planning & Environmental Decisions Wales (PEDW) which has identified that the solar farm will require a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in support of the planning application. The EIA scoping exercise has been submitted to PEDW for consideration.
- 5.12 Technical & Planning Consultants have been secured and are progressing well with the development of the EIA & Planning application.
- 5.13 An extensive desk top study of funding sources has been undertaken and the most appropriate sources to fund the solar farm have been identified. These will now be investigated and modelled further to make recommendations on the options as part of the full business case.
- 5.14 Full engagement with ward members has been ongoing throughout the project. There has been some informal consultation undertaken within the communities closest to the solar farm and Community Councils will also be engaged.
- 5.15 The need for a full EIA to accompany the Planning Application may have affected the original timeline of the project with construction work now unlikely to start on site until April 2024. Cumulative impact between the solar farm and other developments needs to be considered as part of the EIA. An updated project timeline is included in Appendix 2 and this remains under review.

Risks to Timeline

- 5.16 Potential implication of delays to construction beyond April 2024 include:
 - Connection offer could be withdrawn from WPD in which case the Council would go to the back of the queue for connection, which will take many years. At present the Council is next in line.
 - The Landowner could look for other options with other energy providers.
 - Support could end with WGES before the end of the project.
 - The Council could miss a potential opportunity to fix its energy prices in 2026 when current contracts end.
 - Missing a fantastic opportunity to reach our decarbonisation targets by 2030 and an opportunity to provide green energy.
 - Could lose decanting location, where materials are transferred from larger vehicles to smaller vehicles to access the site.

Strategic Alignment

- 5.17 The proposal aligns with a number of the Council's strategic aims including:
- The Transformation Strategy states that the Council will endeavour to be more commercial and seek investment opportunities which offer financial benefit and non-financial benefits.
 - The Decarbonisation Strategy sets the aim of the authority being Net Carbon Zero by 2030.
 - The Commercial & Investment Strategy sets out as part of the strategic action plan a commitment to investigate commercial opportunities when presented.
 - The Well Being and Place Shaping Framework and this project is identified as a potential investment under objective WB04.
- 5.18 The project also aligns with the following Welsh Government targets relating to renewable energy:
- Wales to be net zero with respect to carbon emissions by 2050
 - 70% of Wales' electricity consumption to be renewable by 2030
 - 1 GW of electricity generated in Wales to be locally owned by 2030
 - All new renewable energy developments to have an element of local ownership
 - An additional 100 MW+ of public / community sector renewable energy generation to be installed between 2022 and 2026

Next Steps (Subject to OBC Approval)

- 5.19 Planning Application – Technical consultants have been procured to help finalise designs for the solar farm. Planning consultants have been engaged and have prepared documentation for submission to Welsh Government. The planning consultants will also progress the formal consultation and engagement exercises required to ensure that all statutory requirements are adhered to.
- 5.19 Consultation & Engagement – In line with our commitment to the Consultation and Engagement Framework previously agreed by Cabinet, the project will seek to go beyond the statutory consultation requirements. There will also be a separate work stream for consultation and engagement with residents that may experience some disruption during the construction phase of the project, or that have a visual impact after construction.
- 5.20 Finance Options – The next phase of work will include a focus on potential funding options for the development. The Council will look to partners, community options, including community bonds, National Infrastructure Bank and any other funding streams to leverage in funding to help deliver this project. This workstream will also look at the power purchase agreement and the implications of this on the Council's current energy purchasing and carbon accounting.
- 5.21 Procurement – A project team has been set up, that is working closely with internal procurement and will work with external legal and technical advisers to draw up the suite of documents required to obtain costings for the construction, operations and maintenance contracts for the site for inclusion in the full business case.
- 5.22 Community Benefits – There are a range of potential community benefits that this project could support. Full consultation and engagement will take place with residents near to the solar farm to obtain their views on how they would like the community to

benefit. Attached at Appendix 3 is a snapshot of some of the community benefit schemes that have been used on other renewable projects.

Conclusion

- 5.23 This proposal has the potential to develop the largest public authority owned solar farm in Wales and the Outline Business Case indicates the possibility of bringing additional revenue, jobs and community benefits to Caerphilly, as well as making a significant contribution to the Council's decarbonisation targets.
- 5.24 In order to progress from Outline Business Case to Full Business Case for Cabinet consideration, the next steps of the project will require a planning application to be submitted, a lease agreement signed and further works undertaken to refine the financial and resource modelling, associated project timelines, procurement process and an options appraisal.
- 5.25 As well as the potential benefits that this development could provide, the investment made to date would also be largely recoverable should Cabinet ultimately determine not to proceed as the developer.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 This report assumes that the identified project will be developed further and, where applicable and desirable, will be reviewed in detail as part of the full business case for final determination.
- 6.2 All financial information is based on assumptions. Further assumptions are detailed in the outline business case (appendix 1).
- 6.3 The development & construction costs within the initial model are based on WGES standard assumptions for previous similar projects supported by WGES. The model has been updated as more detail has been confirmed.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This proposal and the associated community benefits have the opportunity to make significant positive impacts across a number of key areas as identified within the IAA; collaboration, employment, low carbon, education, long term thinking. The challenge will be as officers develop the full business case to ensure that those benefits are achievable and aligned to the priorities of both the WG, legislation, corporate priorities and the needs and wants of the community.

[Click Here Link For Full Integrated Impact Assessment](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet has previously agreed to allocate a total of £483,000 development funding to the Cwm Ifor Solar Farm project, to take forward the proposal as outlined in the summary above.
- 8.2 A revaluation of the projected cost of project development has taken place and it is expected the expected costs of completing this stage of the project are likely to be in

the region of £391,663 including the costs for full EIA screening. Therefore, no additional funding is required at this stage.

- 8.3 The overall costs of the project are currently estimated to be in the region of £12 – 16 million depending on preferred option and would look to provide 4.52% IRR, based on the current energy price projections.
- 8.4 It is important to note that there are some potential fluctuations in costs. Some project costs have increased since the last outline business case due to a number of factors including Covid, issues in Ukraine and Brexit whilst technology improvements mean that panel sizes and therefore land requirements could reduce costs.
- 8.5 It should also be noted that energy prices have also increased significantly. The current financial modelling is based on 6.1 pence per KWh, however current prices of 12.5 pence per KWh are being achieved. Should prices remain at current levels the predicted income from the project will be double that set out in this outline business case. All financial models and assumptions will be further clarified as part of the full business case and sensitivity testing is continuing.
- 8.6 It is anticipated that this project will be funded via a variety of financial sources and those options and implications will be explored as part of the next phase of work. There are borrowing options available to the Council, as well as looking to the National Infrastructure Bank and Community Bonds. The current financial model assumes Public Works Loan Board borrowing based on our existing terms. Any changes to this will be factored into the updated financial model forming part of the full business case. However, sensitivity testing is being carried out using various funding options. There is currently grant funding available for this project.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 No personnel implications have been identified at this stage of the project.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 Some consultation has already taken place with ward members and the community in order to gain the views initial views in relation to reducing the potential impact for residents and on identifying appropriate community benefits.
- 10.2 Engagement has been positive so far with residents generally pleased with the project, but representations made to date have highlighted the need to ensure, biodiversity is not adversely affected as well as some questions regarding the visual impact and disruption of the project. Work is already underway to demonstrate how we will mitigate against these impacts on the community and how we intend to support local biodiversity.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Governments Act 1998 and 2003

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Appendices:
Appendix 1 Outline Business Case
Appendix 2 Project Timeline
Appendix 3 Example Community Benefits

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**BUSINESS CASE
CWM IFOR SOLAR FARM**

DATE:	JUNE 2022
BUSINESS CASE SPONSOR:	SUE RICHARDS
BUSINESS CASE AUTHOR:	PAUL COOKE / ANNA LEWIS

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council declared a Climate Emergency on 4th June 2019 and has developed a Decarbonisation Strategy and prospectus which outlines a number of commercial opportunities. This project sits well within the aims of these documents and strategic plans. Council also adopted a longer-term Transformation Strategy that seeks to explore potential commercial and investment opportunities and has committed to finding ways of supporting both these strategic aims.

The Cwm Ifor Solar Farm project will develop a 20MW solar farm on privately owned land north of Caerphilly. To date funding totaling £483,000 has been approved in order to progress the project to the position where there is a full business case for consideration. This will include; the preparation of a planning application, including all supplementary consultants work and reports and stakeholder engagement; procurement documentation, consultants and options for construction; and specific financial modelling. This work will mean that in 2023 Cabinet should be aware of all costs and options to be able to make a decision on the future of the project.

The overall costs of the project are currently estimated to be in the region of £12 – 16 million depending on preferred option and would look to provide 4.52% IRR, based on the current energy price projections. It is important to note that there are some potential fluctuations in costs. Some project costs have increased since the last outline business case due to a number of factors including Covid, issues in Ukraine and Brexit whilst technology improvements mean that panel sizes and therefore land requirements will reduce costs. It should also be noted that energy prices have also increased significantly. The current financial modelling is based on 6.1 pence per KWh, however current prices of 12.5 pence per KWh are being achieved. Nearer the time of final business case further modelling will be undertaken with additional energy price data purchased to provide the most accurate and up to date figures for Cabinet to consider. However, should prices remain at current levels the predicted income from the project will be double that set out in this outline business case. Sensitivity testing is ongoing.

The project has various options at this stage all of which will include benefits and the project group will be seeking to confirm the preferred option as the final business case is developed.

2. INTRODUCTION

CCBC declared a climate emergency in June 2019. Significant action is required to tackle the climate emergency. Development of a locally owned solar farm within the county borough will help to support decarbonisation of the local electricity system and demonstrate leadership with respect to tackling carbon emissions and decarbonisation of the energy system.

The Council was approached late Summer 2019 with a commercial opportunity in relation to a solar farm located on privately owned land at Cwm Ifor, Penyrheol. The proposals were to purchase a grid connection option, and further develop business cases exploring the viability and options for the solar farm development. The purchase of the grid connection is the first hurdle in terms of energy generation schemes, and this was secured in April 2020 following approval under delegated decision-making powers. The grid connection is considered a cornerstone to energy development projects without the connection the project would not be viable. We have secured the connection and agreed with Western Power Distribution that the work will be undertaken and connected in 2024.

The project had been considered desirable to private developers but two risks associated with the project had been identified; overage on the land and access; The overage on the land which requires the landowner to pay the original owner, in this case CCBC, a percentage of any profits is actually a positive position for the Council, as it gave us a strong negotiating position with the landowner making the development more attractive to Council. It is difficult to get large transportation vehicles on site however, this barrier will be overcome by using a decanting location, whereby the panels and other materials will be unloaded from the transportation vehicles and loaded onto smaller vehicles.

Welsh Government have set ambitious targets for 70% of electricity in Wales to be generated from renewable sources by 2030 and for 1 GW of locally owned energy to be installed by 2030. This project, which is believed to be twice the size of any other publicly owned solar farm in Wales, will contribute significantly to these targets. With less than 8 years to work towards achieving carbon neutrality this project will deliver a huge step forward towards meeting that aim, and whilst there are currently other projects in motion, they will not have the same impact towards multiple outcomes, nor are they as far along in the development phases.

This outline business case seeks to provide further clarity on the scale, design and outputs of the solar farm so that decisions can be made on the future of the project. The proposal is for a 20MW solar farm and it therefore falls within Welsh Government's definition as a Development of National Significance (DNS) as it is over 10MW and therefore the planning application will be determined by Welsh Government and not the Local Authority.

Negotiations with the landowner to secure the option agreement and lease on the land have now been concluded, and ready for signing.

Project Summary/Expectations

- Cwm Ifor Solar Farm would be located in Penyrheol, Caerphilly.

- Has the potential to be the largest public authority owned solar farm in Wales. For example, Monmouthshire's Solar Farm is 5MW, and Carmarthenshire's is just under 9MW.
- The project has the potential to be a flagship project for Caerphilly, and the region, hence Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) and Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) interest and support for the project.
- Development costs are expected to be between £12-£16m (not including costs of borrowing). The cost of the solar farm is around £600,000 per MW to build. However, there are external factors which will mean that this may fluctuate.
- Life span of the development is 35 years.
- Expected Investment Rate of Return (IRR) – 4.52% (annually between £669,000 and £892,000 during life of project) with payback in year 18.
- Financial modelling is based on 6.1 pence per KWh, however at present it is more like 12.5 pence per KWh so profit could potentially be doubled.
- CCBC currently purchases 28 MW annually at a cost of just over £4 million, this solar farm will be able to produce 20 MW (for a sense of scale). The costs of CCBC purchasing energy is set to change as the energy prices rise.
- Life-time CO2 savings are estimated at 55,300tCO2e are, or approximately 1,580 tCO2e /year which is enough to power approximately 6000 homes. The electricity generated will contribute to decarbonising the electricity grid.
- The project is a Development of National Significance meaning that WG will determine any planning application not CCBC. We will however be a consultee.
- If the planning application is successful, the solar farm will be a commercially viable product to sell on the open market, the Council can either proceed to construction or decide not to proceed with the development ourselves, but to potentially sell on the project.
- Revenues would be generated from the solar farm via a Power Purchase Agreement with Western Power Distribution
- The project coincides with current policies such as the transformation strategy, Commercial & Investment Strategy, Decarbonisation Strategy, Well Being and Place Shaping Framework
- It is estimated that 40 green jobs will be created during lifetime of scheme as well as creating educational opportunities for Primary, Secondary and Higher Education and apprenticeship opportunities
- There will be benefits to the local communities that are located near to the solar farm through a community benefits scheme and there is a potential for residents to invest and become involved in the Solar Farm

Considerations

- Current modelling does not factor in partnership, private investment or borrowing, all of which will be considered as part of the full business case process.
- There are various development options, including to use the energy produced for our own domestic/non-domestic stock, "energy sleeving". This and other

options will be evaluated as part of full business case development including benefits for residents.

- As an energy customer, CCBC currently buys 28,000,000 kWh of electricity from the grid for buildings & street lighting (excluding housing) all of which is purchased from renewable sources under our current contracts.
- Brexit, Ukraine issues and unstable markets particularly in energy and construction mean it is difficult to predict costs.

Key milestones have already been accomplished during this project. These include:

- Grid connection secured from Western Power via a novation in April 2020. This connection includes the proposed solar farm site as being last in line for switch off providing additional surety on revenue streams.
- Heads of Terms negotiated with landowner – including retaining CCBC Covenant on the land for the duration.
- Initial Land Studies completed with no major concerns noted.
- Team Caerphilly in full swing with ongoing involvement in the project team from procurement, finance, legal, planning, regeneration, energy team, communications, policy, county ecologist and landscape architects as well as ward members.
- Partnership working with Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) and Welsh Government continues well, with strong relationships.
- Project currently in scope and with a full project timeline and budget is regularly reviewed alongside risk management.
- Full engagement with ward members has been ongoing throughout the project and Community Councils are now being included as part of consultation.
- There has been some consultation within the communities closest to the solar farm.

Key milestones since the first outline business case include:

- A financial model has been created in house, providing a saving of £10,000.
- Technical & Planning Consultants are now on board and are progressing well with the Planning Application & Environmental Statement.
- A procurement group has been set up to progress with the Construction Contract an Operation & Maintenance contract.
- Approximately 34.4 hectares (85 acres) of land is required for the proposed development. Negotiations with the land owner have taken place and the options agreement is ready to be signed and the lease agreed.
- Discussions have started regarding funding options, including community bonds and the infrastructure bank.
- Grid Connection has been secured for an “All works offer” with Western Power Distribution (WPD)

- Additional surveys and updated report are being worked on by the planning consultants
- The screening and scoping exercises have been completed ready for the planning submission
- The planning consultants in partnership with WGES are preparing, with us, for public consultation.

3. STRATEGIC FIT

The Cwm Ifor Solar Farm proposal fits into a number of strategic aims. You can see below that the project hits a number of targets set out not only by CCBC but by Welsh Government.

Welsh Government have set the following targets relating to renewable energy:

- Wales to be net zero with respect to carbon emissions by 2050
- 70% of Wales' electricity consumption to be renewable by 2030
- 1 GW of electricity generated in Wales to be locally owned by 2030
- All new renewable energy developments to have an element of local ownership
- An additional 100 MW+ of public / community sector renewable energy generation to be installed between 2022 and 2026

The Council's Transformation Strategy sets out that the Council will endeavor to be more commercial and seek investment opportunities which offer financial benefit and non-financial benefits. This project would meet this strategic objective.

Furthermore the communication and engagement plan proposed as part of this project will demonstrate the Council's commitment to working in a more meaningful way with our communities.

On 4th June 2019 the Cabinet declared a Climate Emergency which was subsequently followed by the approval of The Decarbonisation Strategy along with two supporting documents – the Action Plan and the Energy Prospectus by Cabinet on the 25th November 2020. The documents propose a series of interventions under the 4 main headings of Reduce, Produce, Offset and Buy.

On 9th December 2020 the Cabinet agreed the Commercial & Investment Strategy which set out as part of the strategic action plan a commitment to investigate commercial opportunities when presented.

On 24th February 2021 Cabinet agreed to the Well Being and Place Shaping Framework and this project is identified as a potential investment under objective WB04.

Links to strategy

Our Medium-Term Financial Plan Principles 2018-2023

- We will adopt a longer-term approach to financial planning that considers the impact on future generations.
- We will engage with our communities to understand their needs and explore options to deliver some services through collaboration, partnerships, community trusts etc. to ensure that communities remain resilient and sustainable in the longer-term.

Decarbonisation Strategy

Our Strategy is based on 4 pillars of:

- REDUCE - Reducing the amount of energy we use
- PRODUCE - Generating our own 'green' electricity and heat
- OFFSET - Offsetting any carbon emissions
- BUY - Everything we purchase has embedded carbon associated with it and this will need to be considered in the procurement process

Other Strategies

- Regeneration Strategy Foundation for Success 2018-23 - Future Regeneration of the Borough
- Strategic Recovery Framework
- Wellbeing and Placeshaping investment Framework
- Commercialisation Strategy
- Programme for Procurement – using our spend to benefit the community

Wellbeing 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 impacts on the environment
- Objective 5 Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2016
- Objective 6 Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

Future Generations Act

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change to create:

A Prosperous Wales

A Resilient Wales

A More Equal Wales

A Healthier Wales

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language

A Globally Responsible Wales

5 Ways of working

- Involvement
- Long term
- Collaborate
- Integration
- Prevention

The Future Generations Act defines Sustainable Development in Wales as: “The process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.”

4. EXISTING SERVICE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS

As this would be a new site and a new scheme there are no existing service delivery arrangements.

Our current energy purchasing agreement ends in 2026. After that we can enter sleeving arrangements and use the electricity on our own estate. This will secure energy supply and costs for the lifetime of the project.

Recommendations of which department would be most appropriate to manage the ongoing operation and maintenance of the solar farm will form part of the final business case.

CCBC have a number of roof top photo voltaic (PV) installations across the authority of varying sizes. The electricity generated by the PV's is consumed by the buildings they are on, where generation exceeds demands on the larger installations, the excess generation is exported (sold) to the grid.

Local generation through PV's means that there is less electricity required from the national providers, but the national providers will always be required to meet demand at night and when PV generation is less through the winter months.

5. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

The scheme will act as a tangible demonstration of leadership by the Council in tackling the climate emergency.

It will generate income for the authority.

There will be benefits to the local communities that are located near to the solar farm through a community benefits scheme and there is a potential for residents to invest and become involved in the Solar Farm.

Community Benefits will be developed and designed alongside the community. Below is a list of some suggested options and following engagement with the community we will refine and cost up these benefits for the final business case:

- Electric vehicle demo days – information about reducing use of cars – cycle to work/walking days etc.
- Home insulation and heating decarb grant support
- Bio-diversity enhancements & Greening measures – to include improving or maintaining hedgerows at the proposed site.
- Fuel poverty measures – link to local groups supporting those in poverty.
- Investment/Repairs to local community
- Additional planning protection in neighbouring areas
- Employers scheme – funding to help support companies to recruit into green job apprentices
- Education and Youth Opportunities – linking up with local schools/colleges throughout construction and development.
- Community Bond Funding – consider this as a funding scheme and gifting shares/bonds to local groups
- Job creation/apprentices – looking into this as part of procurement processes.

Carbon Reduction – It is hoped that via a sleeving arrangement we will be able to reduce our carbon emissions. However, Welsh Government is currently reviewing the way carbon emissions from energy generation is accounted for.

Employment - Given the economic situation post Covid it is necessary to use investment as an economic stimulus. Using the UK Energy Research Centre report on employment metrics from renewables, it is possible to quantify the jobs resulting from

a 20MW solar farm with a life of 35 years. In total, including direct and indirect jobs (but excluding induced jobs as these are unlikely to be local), then around 40 jobs will be created from this project.

6. PROJECT/INITIATIVE ANALYSIS

To date a total budget of £483,000 has been approved to take the project to full business case.

This comprises of £49,000 approved by Cabinet on the 11th November 2020 for the novation and initial investigations.

A further £434,000 was recommended for approval by the Regeneration board on 30th March 2021 and formally approved by Cabinet on 23rd June 2021

Summary of allocation of £483,000 budget:

<i>(Cost including Environmental Impact Assessment and assuming the use of single access trackers)</i>	
<u>Pre-Construction costs</u>	
WPD Works Pre payments	15,000
Topographic survey (purchase from Next Energy)	4,550
Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey	7,500
Additional ecology (Winter bird surveys and spring bird surveys)	2,058
Agricultural Land Classification report	1,410
WPD Works Pre payments	10,000
Design/ layout/ tech information	8,912
Preliminary ecology appraisal (Phase 1) (undertaken by CCBC Ecologist)	In House

Archaeology/ heritage & Geophysical survey	28,095
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	9,392
Transport Route Assessment	650
Planning consultant: Writing planning submission documents	56,110
DNS Notification (prior to stat. public engagement)	580
Planning application submission	23,100
Application with Inspectorate	38,280
Application with Welsh Ministers	14,700
Discharge of pre commencement planning conditions	5,000
NRW consultation	938
Statutory public engagement	3,500
Land acquisition (main site)	31,750
SuD application	12,950
Purchase of Aurora Power Data	7,500
Legal Support regarding conversion to full works offer	2,000
Procure legal support (costs for EPC legals)	21,994
Habitat Survey - Breeding Birds	2,891
	85,464
WSP EIA (inc Digital, Surveys, ES, Scoping)	
LVIA for EIA	10,940
Additional work for planning design	1,400
Solar Tracker investigation	3,500
Contingency	88,337
Total Pre-construction Costs	480,000

Construction costs

The current construction cost for this project are estimated as £12 - 16 million. The cost of borrowing using PWLB funding via the prudential borrowing framework has been included in the latest financial model and is viable at this stage. There are other funding options also being considered but as yet are untested. These will be assessed and set out in the full business case.

The financial modelling indicates a 4.52% IRR, with a range of yearly “income” from 2023 starting at £669,000 and rising to £892,000 p.a,

Please note the following assumptions for these high-level figures:

- Cost of borrowing
- Energy yield achieved
- Energy pricing
- Development & Construction costs
- Inflation rates
- The timeline of the project

If we purchase the electricity back via a sleeving arrangement this will also give the Council certainty over an element of energy supply and pricing for the duration of the project.

Financial impacts and potential allocation of revenues from the project will be further scoped as part of developing the Final Business Case. Ongoing financial sensitivity testing is continuing.

Attached to the business case is a project management financial model and a development financial model. These have formed the basis of the high-level summary below.

Summary of Construction Costs

Construction Costs	11,825,944
Compound Area Cost	2,000
WPD Works	654,993
Lease Commencement	13,000
Stage 3 PPS Technical Costs	31,800
Additional PM support during construction	47,845

Total Construction Costs	12,575,582
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Timeline

10/06/2022	EIA Scoping Submission
15/07/2022	EIA Direction from PEDW
01/09/2022	Environmental Statement Preparation
01/09/2022	Pre-Application Consultation (ends 13th October)
14/10/2022	PAC Report
18/10/2022	DNS Planning Submission (inc ES)
18/10/2022	SAB Application & Process
10/01/2023	SAB Outcome
18/10/2023	Planning Application Outcome
28/01/2022	Options Agreement & Lease Drafted
14/07/2022	Options Agreement Signed
14/07/2022	Lease Signed Off
01/03/2024	Lease Signed
01/03/2022	Procurement for Construction & O&M Contract Starting – Spec & Route
04/09/2022	Procurement for Legal Support Specification
21/11/2023	Construction Contract Legal Support Tendered
14/12/2023	Construction Contract Legal Support Awarded
01/01/2023	Construction contract Legal Support Implemented
01/01/2024	Construction & O&M Contract Tendered
01/03/2024	Construction & O&M Contract Awarded
01/04/2024	Construction Contract Implemented
11/12/2024	O&M Contract Implemented
01/12/2023	Power Purchase Agreement
01/07/2023	PPA Legal Support
14/08/2023	Power Price Data Set Tendered
11/09/2023	Power Price Data Received
01/04/2023	Agree Funding Opportunities
01/10/2023	Financial Modelling Completed
01/10/2023	Final Business Case Completed
13/11/2023	Approval from CMT
21/11/2023	Approval from Cabinet

Commercial Case (where applicable):

The overall costs of the project are currently estimated to be in the region of £12 – 16m depending on preferred option and would look to provide 4.52% IRR, based on the current energy price projections. It is important to note that there are some potential fluctuations in costs. Some project costs have increased since the last outline business

case due to a number of factors including Covid, issues in Ukraine and Brexit whilst technology improvements mean that panel sizes and therefore land requirements will reduce costs. It should also be noted that energy prices have also increased significantly. The current financial modelling is based on 6.1 pence per KWh, however current prices of 12.5 pence per KWh are being achieved. Nearer the time of final business case further modelling will be undertaken with additional energy price data purchased to provide the most accurate and up to date figures for Cabinet to consider. However, should prices remain at current levels the predicted income from the project could be double that set out in this outline business case sensitivity testing is being carried out to identify revenue based on different scenarios. 4 key areas that need to be considered are construction costs

If we purchase the electricity back via a sleeving arrangement this will also give the Council certainty over an element of energy supply and pricing for the duration of the project.

All the contracts required will be awarded with full compliance to legislation and using frameworks where possible.

The largest spend is in relation to the EPC contract and for this there are several options we could utilise. The current preference is to utilise a partnership agreement which links to the overall objectives of the Decarbonisation Strategy, Commercial Strategy and Transformation Strategy in creating a collaborative partnership to help us deliver multiple renewable energy schemes across the County Borough. In creating a partnership model we are also avoiding repeated procurement exercises, managing multiple contracts and utilising the experience and project management skills that would come with a partnership arrangement. This is how we will most likely proceed for future renewable energy projects. This will be examined further and will form part of the full business case.

Cultural Impact:

This project will support and reinforce the organisations values and approach in relation to the following:

- Carbon reduction commitment
- Enabling employment
- Improved ways of working as this will be a new scale of project for officers to engage with and learn from
- Developing proud & trusted staff
- Commercial mind, social heart ethos which underpins Team Caerphilly transformation strategy.
- Commitment to long term thinking, collaboration and integration as part of our Well Being Future Generations duties.

- Contribute to Welsh Government Energy Targets for 1 GW of locally owned renewable electricity capacity by 2030, and 70% of electricity consumption in Wales to be from renewable sources by 2030
- Improving biodiversity by integrating biodiversity enhancement measures on land currently used for agriculture

The scale of this project will demonstrate Team Caerphilly's commitment to trying new ways of working, investing with the commercial mind social heart ethos and demonstrating a new way of engaging our communities in a way few other projects would be able to do so.

Capability:

Generally across Wales there is a lack of expertise within local authorities on this type of large scale renewable energy projects, however we have good experience in managing large scale projects via our Regeneration, Transformation and Policy teams and some focused experience on solar panels as a result of work done on roof top panels. Our property services team is capable of supporting the land transactions and associated legal documentation with support from legal.

We are supported extensively by Welsh Government Energy service who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in the solar development market, particularly with local authorities.

Where we do not have experience, we have built into the business case the requirement to purchase this specialist knowledge;

- Procurement of an Energy Performance Contract provider including legal and technical support for that procurement exercise
- High voltage technical support
- Planning consultant
- Operations & Maintenance contractor
- Landscape designs & associated reports

During the course of developing this project which has now been incorporated into the Council's Place Shaping Agenda there has been a lot of excitement and commitment to a solar farm of this scale within our County Borough. We are expecting this to continue going forward as the project has the ability to achieve so many of our ambitions as a council in relation to climate change, commercialisation and community benefits.

Sustainability:

As a public body Caerphilly County Borough Council has a duty, set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to adhere to the Sustainable

Development Principle, which stipulates that “We must act in a manner in which we ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In order to evidence how this has been applied we must use integrated, preventative and collaborative approaches that take account of the long-term and involve our communities.

These five ways of working have informed our approach to this proposed development.

Key sustainability issues

Climate Change

Climate change is one of the key sustainability issues facing mankind, with emissions of greenhouse gases, and in particular carbon dioxide (CO₂) being the primary causes. Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) declared a Climate Emergency on 4th June 2019 which included a target to become net carbon zero by 2030.

CCBC’s Decarbonisation Strategy was approved by its Cabinet on the 25th November 2020. Producing our own renewable energy is a key component of the Strategy and the Cwm Ifor development will provide the single largest contribution to this. The generation of renewable energy will reduce the requirement for it to be generated from fossil fuels which release carbon during the process. Oil, coal or gas which are the traditional fossil fuels are also finite resources so the generation of energy from the sun will help to reduce the depletion of these materials.

The development will save 55,300 tCO₂e over its 35-year life. Based on current WGES estimation method (updated following National Grid Future Energy Scenarios update):

Throughout the consultation, development and management of the project opportunities will be identified to engage with local residents to highlight climate change issues and to enable them to become involved in practical action to tackle climate change

Biodiversity

Biodiversity across the UK including in Caerphilly County Borough is in decline. This development will seek to protect and enhance the biodiversity on the site. The site currently comprises a number of small fields which are grazed with sheep. The field boundaries are defined by a combination of scrub hedge, small trees, dry stone walls and stock proof fencing. Sheep grazing is generally not good for overall biodiversity and most of the areas of ecological interest on the site are currently in the field boundaries. Field boundaries will be left intact as part of the scheme and there are potential opportunities for enhancement with additional hedging, wood piles for reptiles and potentially space for beehives or insect hotels as recommended by the Council Ecologist.

An area of semi-improved grassland with areas of hard and soft rush has been identified and solar panels will not be located in this area.

A 35-year Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) will be produced for the site incorporating the recommendations from the Ecological Appraisal. Although panels will cover the majority of the existing improved pasture, the whole of the area will remain as pasture, and the aim will be to improve the biodiversity through the implementation on the BMP.

Air quality

There will be some negative impacts on air quality during the construction phase of the work, primarily from vehicles taking the solar panels and material to site. Overall, however the development will have a significant positive effect on air quality as outlined in the section on climate change. For example, the use of renewable energy for electric vehicles as opposed to petrol or diesel vehicles will have a significant impact on air quality. This will be particularly relevant to the town of Caerphilly which has an air quality management zone due to the poor air quality in one area of the town.

Community engagement

A key element of the “5 ways of working” set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is the involvement of communities in decisions or programmes that affect them. It is intended to engage with, and involve local residents and stakeholders throughout the consultation, construction and management phases of the project. Opportunities will be identified to actively involve local communities particularly in practical projects and educational work linked to climate change and biodiversity.

Community benefits

This project offers the opportunity to provide significant benefits to the local community. The project will seek to maximise opportunities for local employment and training. The community will be consulted to identify how any community benefit funding will be targeted or spent. There is potential for the community to invest in the project through community bonds.

Equality:

A full Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed for the outline business case and whilst many of the known outcomes are still variables, we will continue to address these as part of the final business case development.

Health:

A full Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed for the outline business case and whilst many of the known outcomes are still variables, we will continue to address these as part of the final business case development.

Technology:

Solar farms use simple and proven technology, providing a source of safe, locally produced renewable energy for many years after construction.

Solar farms are an effective and efficient way of creating the electricity we all use. They have low visual impact on the surrounding landscape, create almost no noise and generate no pollution or emissions during operation.

A solar farm is a large number of solar panels mounted on racks with legs typically driven into the ground or ballasted using concrete. The panels face the sun and electricity produced is connected directly to the existing electricity infrastructure. We are currently exploring new technology and there is potential to use solar trackers.

Solar panels are semi-conductors and produce DC (direct current) electricity. Inverters turn the DC electricity into AC (alternating current) electricity and transformers increase the voltage to allow the electricity produced to be connected to the grid.

A protective fence is usually constructed around the solar farm with infra-red CCTV cameras, to ensure public safety and security. Indigenous hedgerow can be planted to ensure the site is screened and blends with the natural landscape.

Solar farms can help rejuvenate land and provide a place for nature and wildlife. The land around the panels can be maintained as grassland and supplemented with wildflowers suitable for Wales such as clover and snowdrops, which help to encourage populations of bees and ground-nesting birds. Winter bird seed mix can also be planted to help support bird populations.

Hedging around the protective fence can be restored and enhanced, providing better habitats for wildlife than intensively farmed land. The ground beneath the panels can be used to graze small breeds of sheep or managed entirely as hay meadow and wildflowers.

Solar farms are a relatively straight forward non-invasive construction that can be completely reversed at the end of its working life.

The metal racks supporting the panels are dismantled and recycled when the scheme is decommissioned. Only a few small structures are needed on-site to house electrical equipment, and these are easily taken away at the end of the solar farm's working life.

Solar farms are a quick and simple form of construction typically taking around 12-26 weeks to complete, depending on their size. During construction there will be additional traffic to the site. However, once completed there are very few visits to the site as the solar farm is monitored remotely and only requires light vehicles for maintenance.

Project Assumptions:

- Financial assumptions are included in the Financial Viability section.
- We have assumed the Climate Emergency will remain a key priority for the Council.
- We have assumed that the construction costs will rise by approximately £2m but do not know by how much until the procurement process is completed.
- We are assuming that the energy prices will remain high but have modelled for lower costs so that we cover worst case scenario.
- We would like to see markets stabilise but we have assumed it will not. The issues in Ukraine, Brexit and Covid have all had an impact on markets.
- We are assuming that we have considered all risks that are outlined in the Risk Assessment section and have mitigated those risks.
- We are assuming we are in a position to build in 2024.
- We are assuming that the Planning Application & Environmental Statement & SAB application will be approved and have mitigated as best we can to ensure that it is.
- We are assuming we can keep to the timeline.
- We are assuming we can acquire the money and resources needed for the project.

Project Constraints:

The project is constrained by the following:

- Planning
- Timescales
- Consents being granted (in a timely manner)

7. OPTIONS ANALYSIS

Number	Option	Anticipated costs	Carbon reductions	Community Benefits	Employment Benefits	Maximum return on investment benefits
1	Do nothing – maintain status quo	£0	x	x	x	x
2	Cease the project & look for suitable large scale alternatives to help meet carbon reduction commitments. This would include selling the grid connection	£?	?	x	x	x
3	Build the Solar Farm then sell on open market	£14 million	x	x	✓	✓
4	Partner with a developer	50/50 split or similar	✓	?	✓	x
5	Continue with the project through to FBC as proposed	£14 million	✓	✓	✓	✓

No Project (Status Quo)	Reasons For Not Selecting Alternative
The Do Nothing option – cease work on this project and do not look for an alternative.	This would not further any of our strategic benefits or outcomes or deliver any benefits for the communities, or financial returns for the Council.
Alternative Option 2	Reasons For Not Selecting Alternative
Cease Project entirely and look for another suitable large scale project to help meet carbon commitments. This would include selling the grid offer.	There are several other projects which are at the early stages and the Regeneration Energy team have a work programme of renewables but none with the same outputs and outcomes as the solar farm.
Alternative Option 3	Reasons For Not Selecting Alternative
Build the solar farm and then sell on the open market as an investment opportunity.	This would only deliver financial returns and none of the potential community benefits.
Alternative Option 4	Reasons For Not Selecting Alternative

Partner with a developer to help build and develop the site for a share in the outcomes	We would de-risk the financial element of the project but also minimize our returns both financially and for the communities.
Alternative Option 5	Reasons For Not Selecting Alternative
Continue with the project as is through to final business case	

8. JUSTIFICATION

The Cwm Ifor Solar Farm is a financially viable project that will not only help CCBC achieve its net zero carbon targets but will also bring in an income to support future decarbonisation projects and ongoing services

The project has the potential to deliver against a number of key strategic plans the Council has adopted including making a significant impact towards delivery of the Council's decarbonisation objectives.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

Topic	Risk & Impact	Mitigation
Project construction may not be started until 2025	<p>Risk of delay to the project resulting in higher costs associated with project lag.</p> <p>Cost of materials may increase or come down in price with a delay to the build. This is hard to predict as markets are very volatile at present</p>	<p>Formal consultation will start at the earliest opportunity. Progress will be made in advance to plan for the consultation.</p> <p>Specification will be drawn up in advance so that the procurement process can run smoothly</p>
Planning Application outcome could fail or be delayed	Project will not be able to go ahead or sold that could result in a financial loss that is unrecoverable	<p>Contact is being made at an early stage with WG and other statutory consultees Planning consultants selected for the process advise local councils in Wales on Planning Applications advice so are well equipped to deal with the process Reports are being updated in advance</p>
Cost of project could dramatically increase	Project may become no longer viable due to increased costs of project, incurring a loss of the initial funding	<p>Procurement process will take into account cheapest cost Financial modelling is being undertaken throughout the project initiation Power price data sets will be purchased to make the most accurate forecasting</p>

Electricity market could slump leading to low levels of income	Project may not make the intended profit and lose money	Power Price data sets will be purchased to forecast energy projection income over the 35-year period of the project
A suitable contractor for construction and ongoing maintenance may not be found within budget (esp if newer technology is used)	Project could cost substantially more than expected and become over budget or not be able to proceed if a contractor cannot be found	Procurement process will specify what is needed Procurement process will start early
SAB application could fail	Concerns could be raised if flooding is considered a risk, and process could become more costly due to mitigations that could be required	Contact is being made at an early stage with the SAB Team Planning consultants selected for the process advise local councils in Wales on SAB advice so are well equipped to deal with SAB applications
Project may become politically or publicly sensitive	Public perception of the Council and the Solar farm could be impacted	Members are being kept up to date as project continues Residents are being consulted through the project Communities will benefit from the solar farm
Decanting location could be lost	Could delay the project as planning consent will be for the chosen location	Regular contact with Waste Management is being undertaken to keep a check on their position

10. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE PLAN

Phase 2

- Compilation of a planning application, EIA, SAB and planning submission
- Responding to queries during the planning determination periods (DNS process)
- Preparation of procurement of Engineering Procurement, Construction contractor (EPC) to install the solar farm
- Preparation of procurement of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) contractor for the first two years of operation (will need to be the same entity as the EPC contractor to avoid disputes and ensure that performance clauses are fully enforceable during the defects/acceptance period)

During this period, CCBC will prepare for the procurement process, including establishing the procurement team, developing tender documentation and selecting advisors.

Consultation & Engagement – The project will seek to go beyond the statutory planning requirements as part of our commitment to the Consultation and Engagement Framework previously agreed by Cabinet. There will also be a separate work stream on consultation and engagement for those residents that may experience some disruption during the construction phase of the project.

Once planning permission has been obtained, the outline business case will be reviewed to ensure nothing has changed that might affect the validity of the project.

A high level option assessment of funding has already been undertaken. During the next stage a detailed finance options appraisal will be undertaken focusing on potential funding streams for the development. This will include consideration community options, including community bonds, the National Infrastructure bank, UK Government and any other funding streams to leverage in funding to help deliver this project. This workstream will also look at the power purchase agreement and the implications of this on the Council’s current energy purchasing and carbon accounting.

Community Benefits – there are a range of potential community benefits that this project could support and some potential options are set out in section 5. The focus of the consultation and engagement exercise will be to identify which are the preferred options from the community and then build these into the project plan including any financial commitments, one off or revenue, and the impact of those on the financial modelling of the scheme.

Phase 3

This will include the completion of the procurement phase. The aim is to obtain quotations for a contractor to design and build the facility and undertake the early years' operation, ensuring it performs to specification. The procurement will follow a rigorous evaluation process and select the best solution from a number of tenderers.

The outline business case will be revised using the preferred bidder's tendered values and the actual Power Purchase Agreement price to produce a final business case.

At this stage the final business case with a full options evaluation will be presented to Cabinet for a decision on the project.

11. PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL STANDARDS

The following project arrangements have been in place during the development of the outline business case and will continue through to full business case and beyond.

The project is on the Regeneration Board governance process and so has been approved by the Regeneration Assessment panel that is held, as it was successful the project was referred to the Regeneration Board for consideration. All projects approved by the Regeneration Board are then added to the forward work plan for Cabinet approval and call in process. This has also been completed and it now coming back to the new Cabinet for further approvals.

Project Leads: Paul Cooke, Transformation Manager, Decarbonisation & Anna Lewis, Transformation Project Officer

Team Members include: Principal Planner, Regeneration Manager, Energy Manager, Senior Planning Officer, Senior Procurement Officer, Senior Policy Officer, Legal Officer, Chief Accountant for Housing as financial support, Group accountant for Treasury and Capital, Senior Communications officer for Team Caerphilly.

During the production of the outline business case the following governance arrangements have been in place:

- A Project Group to review project progress on a regular basis.
- The Project Leads and the appointed officer from the Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) meet on a monthly basis (or as required). The Project Leads, Decarbonisation Manager and WGES will meet on a bi-monthly basis (or as required) as the Project Group.
- The project budget (for procurement, planning and grid connection) has been secured using a Project Brief with the approval of the Regeneration Board. Cabinet approval for the project to continue has been undertaken and will be reaffirmed.

- In terms of securing sufficient project team resource, WGES will provide close support to the Project Leads during the development phase. Other key support in relation to Legal, Planning and Technical support has been procured.
- Engagement with Council Members and Cabinet lead has been on a monthly basis (or as required) during the development of the outline business case and will continue through to final business case.
- The final business case with costings and detailed proposals will be presented to Cabinet for approval prior to proceeding further with the agreed option.

12. RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet to approve:

- the outline business case,
- the project to proceed with the planning application,
- the initiation of the consultation processes
- signing of the option agreement and lease that sits behind the proposed Solar Farm development

A further report including the full business case and funding proposals will be brought back to cabinet.

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APPENDIX 2

Date	Action	Jan-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24			
05/02/22	Screening request submission																																						
23/03/22	Screening request outcome																																						
13/05/22	Cumulative Appraisal																																						
14/06/22	EIA Scoping Submission																																						
09/08/22	EIA Direction From PEDW																																						
01/09/22	ES Preparation																																						
30/11/22	Pre Application Consultation (starting mid Oct)																																						
05/12/22	PAC Report																																						
09/12/22	DNS Planning Submission Inc ES																																						
18/10/22	Sab Application & Process																																						
10/01/23	Sab Outcome																																						
18/10/23	Planning Application Outcome																																						
01/09/22	Informal Consultation																																						
28/01/22	Options Agreement & Lease Drafted																																						
14/07/22	Options Agreement Signed Off & Signed																																						
01/04/22	Lease Signed Off																																						
01/03/24	Lease Signed																																						
01/03/22	Procurement For Construction Contract - Starting Spec																																						
01/12/24	Construction Contract Tendered																																						
01/03/24	Construction Contract Awarded																																						
01/04/24	Construction Contract Implemented																																						
11/01/23	Procurement For Maintenance Contract - Spec																																						
01/12/24	O&M Contract Tendered																																						
01/03/24	O&M Contract Awarded																																						
11/12/24	O&M Contract Implemented																																						
04/09/22	Procurement For Legal Support - Spec																																						
01/11/23	Construction Contract Legal Support Tendered																																						
14/12/23	Construction Contract Legal Support Awarded																																						
01/01/23	Construction contract Legl Support Implemented																																						
01/12/23	PPA																																						
01/07/23	PPA Legal Support																																						
14/08/23	Power Price Data Set Tendered																																						
11/09/23	Power Price Data Received																																						
01/10/23	Financial Modelling																																						
01/04/23	Agree Funding Opportunities																																						
01/10/23	Final Business Case Completed																																						
13/11/23	Approval From CMT																																						
21/11/23	Approval From Cabinet																																						
30/11/23	Approval From Full Council																																						
18/09/22	Permissions To Use Land For Decanting																																						

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Appendix 3 – Example Community Benefits

These are some of the potential Community Benefits that could be made available as part of the Solar Farm Development. Note – this is not an exhaustive list and progression will be subject to community consultation.

- Electric vehicle demonstration days – information about reducing use of cars – cycle to work/walking days etc.
- Home insulation and heating decarbonisation grant support.
- Bio-diversity enhancements & greening measures – to include improving or maintaining hedgerows at the proposed site.
- Fuel poverty measures – link to local groups supporting those in poverty.
- Investment/Repairs to local community.
- Additional planning protection in neighbouring areas.
- Employers' scheme – funding to help support companies to recruit into green job apprentices.
- Education and Youth Opportunities – linking up with local schools/colleges throughout construction and development.
- Community Bond Funding – consider this as a funding scheme and gifting shares/bonds to local groups.
- Job creation/apprentices – looking into this as part of procurement processes.

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CABINET – 5TH OCTOBER 2022

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON AGILE WORKING

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the progress that has been made in respect of embedding Agile Working principles across the organisation and to outline the steps necessary to formalise these practices.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 During the pandemic, the Council's back office, or administrative staff, were asked to begin working remote from the office almost overnight. It was these agile practices that secured the Council's ability to deliver key services to the public even when our communities were 'locked down'. Contact Centre staff were able to seamlessly receive and manage customer enquiries from home; Revenues and Benefits staff were able to process multiple grant payments, and officers involved in the emerging requirements of the pandemic response could instantaneously switch between meetings with multiple responders.
- 2.2 While the democratic process was initially suspended at the very beginning of the pandemic, the rollout of equipment and Microsoft Teams, enabled the Council to reinstate its decision-making processes with elected members then fully able to participate in decision-making initially from their homes.
- 2.3 These practices have continued during the last 24 months or so with agile (or flexible) working practices now very much the de facto way of working for many back office staff and legislation being introduced that makes hybrid meeting capabilities a requirement of Council businesses. across the Council. During that timeframe customers have also become accustomed to accessing Council services that are being supported by staff who are working from a wide range of locations.
- 2.4 These new ways of working have already enabled the council to:
 - reduce levels of unproductive time that officers previously spent travelling to and from work and to and from meetings across the Borough and across Wales
 - reduce its CO2 emissions in terms of business travel and staff journeys

- see our employees find a better balance between their home and work lives
 - see staff with specific caring responsibilities find a way to wrap their jobs around those responsibilities avoiding the need for either aspect to suffer unnecessarily
 - increased service resilience by introducing a way of working that would buck the elements (snow days, red weather warnings etc)
 - embed a range of more efficient mechanisms for dealing with customer engagement
 - reduce the number of administrative buildings that it has in operation
- 2.5 During this period, the Council has amassed significant learning about what will be required if it is to formally adopt agile working practices within its operating model, something that it has not done at this point.
- 2.6 The most recent staff surveys which included specific questions on Agile demonstrated a shift in staff preference towards these modern methods or working with circa 80% of staff either preferring to 'mostly' work from home or split themselves equally between work and home.
- 2.7 The relaxation of restrictions on staff accessing Council's buildings during the autumn last year has seen a modest increase in the numbers attending those buildings on a daily basis. The attendance at Ty Penallta, for example, peaked at around 22% and demonstrates a clearly link to the fact that many administrative jobs can be delivered from a range of locations, if suitable tools and connectivity are available.
- 2.8 A future capacity planning exercise carried out through the Spring of 2022 asked Heads of Service to work with staff to establish staff working patterns and capacity requirements for buildings against the needs of our citizens. This exercise once again confirmed that the surplus capacity being experienced at the majority of buildings would likely continue moving forward.
- 2.9 This additional capacity provides a range of opportunities for the Council in the coming years in terms of its overall requirements for premises, its operating expenditure, overall service resilience, its position as an employer of choice, its carbon footprint and the way in which its staff are equipped to support service delivery.
- 2.10 This report gives Cabinet a position statement on the Council's current approach to Agile working, sets out some of the potential benefits that a formalised approach to agile working will provide, seeks to focus the work of the Agile Corporate Review Team on the development of an Agile Hub at Ty Penallta, and in doing so, provide all necessary foundations for a broader rollout across all Council buildings.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet:
- 1) Note the progress of the Agile Working Corporate Review to date
 - 2) Note the strategic intent and proposed Outcomes for the Agile Working Corporate Review
 - 3) Comment on the intention to develop Ty Penallta as an Agile Working Hub
 - 4) Note the progress against the workstreams to support this development

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To support the development of an Agile Hub at Ty Penallta and the development of all of the necessary policies and practices to formally embed agile principles as a core principle of Council service delivery.

5. THE REPORT

Progress to Date

- 5.1 Since its inception, the Agile Corporate Review Project Team has been developing and beginning to embed all of the policies, processes, equipment and management development required to support modern methods of working. The Team and the workforce have proven over the last two years or so that this has become a way of working that is now very much the norm for staff in certain roles and can be successfully applied to the Council's operating model without determined to our customers.
- 5.2 Through the introduction of Hybrid Meeting Technology, Members have also been able to make choices about whether they participate in meetings in person or join from remote locations. Again, this promotes choice, is in keeping with the new legislation and provides flexibility while not removing any aspect of the democratic role.
- 5.3 These new ways of working have already enabled the council to:
- reduce levels of unproductive time that officers previously spent travelling to and from work and to and from meetings across the Borough and across Wales
 - reduce its CO2 emissions in terms of business travel and staff journeys
 - see our employees find a better balance between their home and work lives
 - see staff with specific caring responsibilities find a way to wrap their jobs around those responsibilities avoiding the need for either aspect to suffer unnecessarily
 - increased service resilience by introducing a way of working that would buck the elements (snow days, red weather warnings etc)
 - embed a range of more efficient mechanisms for dealing with customer engagement
 - reduce the number of administrative buildings that it has in operation
- 5.4 Staff that are able to take advantage of agile working, to a large extent now have the IT equipment and connectivity they require to fulfil their role from multiple locations. Elements of the Council's infrastructure has been upgraded to support these new ways of working. The Council has a set of draft policies to formally support agile working which are ready for consultation over the Autumn.
- 5.5 A categorisation exercise was carried out with Heads of Service that has helped establish the roles that have the potential to be undertaken from home, as a mix of home or office based or purely as office based. The work also looked at the degree to which roles might be time bound. This work has helped establish working patterns over the last twelve months or so with the mix of home and office forming the predominant pattern for back office staff.

5.6 Cabinet agreed to make £500k of funding available to equip officers with the mobile devices and / or furniture required to support new ways of working. The majority of service areas have, to date, equipped their staff from local budgets so this funding remains available to be allocated to provide the equipment and furniture that will be in place across the Council's Agile hubs.

5.7 The Council has invested in the creation of an Agile Working space on the ground floor at Ty Penallta and adapted its glass restaurant provision, now known as "The Hive" to ensure that it better supports agile approaches.

5.8 The Council has framed its strategic intent in respect of next steps as follows:

Our aim: "To formalise the working practices and patterns that have successfully supported service delivery and individual needs throughout the pandemic, and to plan and implement any changes that may be required to ensure these mixed or hybrid methods of service delivery remain successful over the long term."

5.9 The Council has proposed a number of outcomes that will provide a framework upon which the success of the Project can be judged, and to which future decisions can be aligned.

FW 01	Work becomes something that people do, not somewhere they go
FW 02	Officers and Members have the equipment, skills and desire to work in an agile way
FW 03	Employees are trusted to get their job done flexibly
FW 04	An appropriate mix of home / remote and office-based working is defined and supported
FW 05	Staff productivity, work / life balance and wellbeing is improved
FW 06	Council's Carbon footprint is reduced
FW 07	Organisational sickness levels are reduced
FW 08	Administrative buildings are repurposed to provide an appropriate mix of fixed desks / hot desks, touch down points, quiet space and meeting space
FW 09	The monitoring regimes and administrative burdens associated with managing 'flexi time' are reduced

5.10 The Council has undertaken a future capacity planning exercise on a wide range of its buildings based on discussion between Heads of Service and their staff. The findings of the exercise have only been triangulated for Ty Penallta at this point, but the early results appear to confirm that there is significant desk capacity available across the whole estate which could now be repurposed. This clearly presents opportunities for the Council to migrate staff out of outlying buildings into a base at one of its emerging Agile Hubs, reducing costs (such as rent, heating and lighting) and maximising the number of individuals operating out of the available space.

5.11 The future capacity planning exercise was designed to take into consideration current and future working patterns for all staff based at our administrative buildings. The triangulated results for Ty Penallta are as follows:

	Current Desk Capacity	Future Desk Requirements	Surplus Capacity
Ty Penallta	964	452	512 (53.2%)

- 5.12 Scoping work has also been undertaken with an external contractor to explore the potential to reconfigure one wing of one floor at Ty Penallta as an agile working space. The initial designs, coupled with projected costs and the added bonus of providing collaborative space, team space, touch down facilities and a more social space from which to work, may also prove beneficial and something the Council would wish to progress.

Developing an Agile Hub @Ty Penallta

- 5.13 With the building previously hosting nearly 1000 desks and with a future requirement of around 46% of those desks to service those 1000 staff, it may well be possible for several hundred additional staff to be based here. As well as freeing up outlying buildings, this also provides the opportunity for the Council to bring together groups of staff and teams that have never previously been able to work together.
- 5.14 With this in mind, the Agile Corporate Review Team is seeking to focus its work on creating Ty Penallta as the Council first Agile Working Hub. The principles of this work are set out below:
- As an Agile Hub, Ty Penallta will provide a mix of opportunities for Council staff who wish to use the building as part of their modern working practices (it is likely to provide a mix of fixed desks, hot desks, touch down spaces, quiet spaces, collaborative spaces and meeting rooms)
 - Over time it is expected that the daily occupancy at Ty Penallta rises and is as close to the maximum (964) as possible
 - Each service (or Team) located at Ty Penallta will be allocated a 'zone' on either floor 2, 3 or 4 with a specified number of desks (see capacity exercise in Appendix 1) for use by team members.
 - Each zone will have a clear desk policy in place and will provide fixed and remote working desks that can be used by multiple staff.
 - One wing on floor one will be developed as a truly flexible workspace to support modern working methods, greater collaboration and opportunities for staff who are visiting or in between meetings to have access to a well equipped, modern work space
 - All desks within the zones across the Agile Hub, be they for fixed use or remote working use, will have the requisite equipment in situ to support the work of those officers who choose to use them (including any specific DDA provisions).
 - All staff will have access to the necessary equipment and furniture they require to undertake their role in accordance with the role category agreed with their line manager and Head of Service
 - The Council will have an agreed Agile Working Policy in place along with a series of supporting Policies that enable these new ways of working
 - The Council will transition to a modern and progressive manner of delivering Mail that enables delivery to remote / agile as well as location dependent workers

- Where necessary, a small number of lockers will be made available to staff close to their respective zone that would enable personal effects to be temporarily secured
- All staff will be informed and regularly updated of the plans and timescales for creating an Agile Hub at Ty Penallta and will also be made aware of all of the agile locations that could be utilised across the Borough
- The Council will link its asset management plans to its emerging Agile approaches and is able to reduce the use of costly and expensive buildings over time in accordance with a pre-agreed plan
- Paper files and associated physical storage reduces over time in accordance with Information Governance and Records Management protocols
- Systems that support the booking and allocation of rooms, quiet spaces and other resources will be developed and implemented over time
- As the use of the building increases, consideration will also be given to wrap around facilities that could better support a modern workplace and potentially a wider public service offer
- Once the Hub at Ty Penallta is fully functioning, the approaches will be rolled out to other key administrative buildings

Workstreams and Projects

5.15 The following workstreams and projects are currently in train in respect of the development of Ty Penallta as an Agile Hub. Each project has a lead head of Service and is underpinned by a Project Plan. The Transformation Team are providing project support. The estimated completion dates are also included, albeit some of these are likely to be amended as the programme progresses and detail is firmed up:

#	Project Description	Estimated Completion
1	To develop, consult and gain approval for an Agile Working Policy and a suite of related Policies to support modern methods of working. (HR & Health and Safety)	January 2023
2	To develop a communication and engagement programme for staff, Members and Trade Unions that provides an insight into the project and keeps key stakeholders informed	September 2022 (and ongoing)
3	Define and create the specifications for the IT and Voice Equipment that will be provided to each specific Agile role category	September 2022
4	Define and create the specification for furniture that will be provided to each specific Agile role category	September 2022
5	Review the IT Infrastructure at Ty Penallta and then, if necessary upgrade it to ensure it is fit to support a well used Agile Hub	October 2022 and thereafter
6	Design and develop a Digital Mail Room facility to enable physical mail to be distributed electronically to staff where possible	January 2023
7	Develop and publicise an electronic inventory of existing	October 2022

	Agile Workspaces (those Council buildings and facilities that support touch down working for Council staff)	
8	Develop and implement a Room / Resource Booking System and associated management arrangements that will enable staff to book meeting rooms and quiet space across Agile Workspaces [linked to 7]	January 2023
9	Develop a Procurement Ready specification for a Flexible Workspace on one wing of Floor 1 [linked to 10]	October 2022
10	Carry out the procurements to enable the delivery of a Flexible Workspace on one wing of one floor of Ty Penallta [linked to 9 and 16] as well as the provision of the specified IT equipment and furniture [linked to 3, 4 and 16]	November 2023
11	Develop a plan for preparing each floor at Ty Penallta to support modern methods of working, to include a general building clean up, standardised desk layouts, removal of broken and damaged equipment and cabinets, development of a clear desk policy	November 2022
12	Using the capacity planning exercise and working with Heads of Service, propose some designs as to how the floors at Ty Penallta could be configured into a number of sufficiently sized zones to house the existing 452 required desks (above and beyond the proposed flexible working space on floor 1)	October 2022
13	Identify the Council buildings that house council staff and whether they are leased or owned and propose which might be suitable for disposal, with staff moving back to the spare capacity at Ty Penallta [linked to 12].	October 2022
14	Ensure Information Governance and Retention policies are in place, communicated and are appropriately applied across the disposal of any paper records and digitisation associated with the creation of the Agile Hub	January 2023
15	Identify a list of critical customer services as a means of ensuring those services are physically represented by staff at Ty Penallta in order to service face to face enquiries from customers.	October 2022
16	Ensure the finances and budgets required associated with developing an Agile Hub and equipping staff are in place	Ongoing
17	Ensure the back-office telephony arrangements are enhanced to support remote customer management and provide first class customer service	December 2022
18	Continue to enhance and refine the processes, management arrangements and training programmes that will ensure remote working remains a success	December 2022

5.16 Conclusion

Significant progress has been achieved through the Council's swift move to Agile working and the period that has followed but in order to formalise arrangements, maximise the use of key administrative buildings and reduce the costs associated with the Council's property portfolio, work will now centre on the creation of the Council's first Agile Hub.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 It is assumed that any costs associated with the equipping staff or remodelling agile hubs will be funded from the reserve set aside by Cabinet for IT Equipment and Furniture
- 6.2 It is assumed that the development of Agile Hubs will bring about cost savings associated with the release of surplus buildings and facilities.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 No IIA is required as this report is a report to update Cabinet on progress.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There will need to be financial investment in order to formalise agile working but is expected that the £500k already set aside should be appropriate to support the provision of equipment, furniture and building remodelling.
- 8.2 A national position is currently being sought on the potential provision of a Home Working allowance for staff. This has become more pressing with the cost-of-living increases. Should a national position be achieved, there will likely need to be additional investment secured to support its payment.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The need to review and refine policies in order to formally embed agile working will have a number of personnel implications and the support of the Trade Unions will be sought in overcoming any obstacles that emerge through consultation and engagement.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The report was presented to Policy and Resources Committee on September 27th 2022 and the comments from the Committee are detailed within paragraphs 10.2 – 10.8.
- 10.2 Following an introduction from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, the UNISON Branch Secretary offered her comments for Committee consideration. The union representative outlined that UNISON was supportive of agile working but had concerns over the outcome of pieces of work referred to in the report which had not been shared with the Trade Unions. Members heard that these were: a future capacity planning exercise, a categorisation exercise, scoping work on initial designs to reconfigure Penallta House and the assumed cost savings associated with the release of surplus buildings and facilities. The Branch Secretary advised that she would like the outcomes shared with Trade Unions and Scrutiny Members.
- 10.3 One Member queried what would happen to surplus office furniture in Council buildings. The Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services advised that a flexible working space was planned for floor one at Penallta House and this would involve recycling furniture to create this new working environment. The Member also

raised the issue of costs associated with working from home such as the use of additional heating and asked if there would be any compensation for staff. The Head of People Services advised Members that discussions at a national level were taking place on issues such as a Home Working Allowance and mileage payments and that Members would be advised of the outcome.

- 10.4 One Member asked about the impact of the proposals on the carbon footprint and queried why sickness levels were still high after two years of agile working. The Member also asked if the proposed Hubs could also be used by outside organisations as a way of attracting additional revenue. The Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services outlined the reduction in commuting miles which was having a positive impact on the carbon footprint, highlighted factors outside the Council's control such as Covid-19 which had an impact on sickness levels and welcomed the opportunity to attract additional revenue which would be kept under review.
- 10.5 One Member highlighted the frustration of not being able to speak to an officer when their landline had been diverted due to working from home. The Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services advised that back-office telephony was a challenge that was being addressed by an ongoing project referred to in the report.
- 10.6 One Member highlighted the social benefits of working in an office and interacting with colleagues as opposed to working alone from home and expressed his concerns. The Head of People Services advised that management arrangements were the same whether an employee worked in the office or at home. Members heard about "My Time" one-to-one conversations between managers and staff, how office working was still an option and also how the most recent staff survey showed satisfaction with the support they received. The Chair asked the UNISON Branch Secretary for her opinion. The Branch Secretary advised that Member Surveys had shown that the vast majority welcomed the flexibility of working from home. However, a significant number preferred a hybrid system of both working from home on some days and the workplace on others.
- 10.7 One Member highlighted the importance of ensuring that the workplace environment was attractive for those members of staff who preferred to work in the office. The Member believed it was important for such people to have their own desk as opposed to a shared alternative. The Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services advised that zones would be established for existing teams. These zones would have a mixture of both fixed and hot desks.
- 10.8 The contents of the report were duly noted as per the recommendations. It was also noted that no negative comments were received on the intention to develop Ty Penallta as an Agile Working Hub.

Author: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services

Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Sean Morgan, Leader
Nigel George, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services and Housing
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director Economy and Environment

Steve Harris, Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Liz Lucas, Head of Customer and Digital Services
Marcus Lloyd, Head of Infrastructure
Mark Faulkner, Facilities Manager
Cllr Gary Johnson, Chair of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee
Trade Unions – GMB, UNISON, Unite



CABINET – 5TH OCTOBER 2022

SUBJECT: SHAPING THE POLICY ON CASH COLLECTION

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the payment methods currently utilised by our residents and to seek Cabinet approval of recommendations in respect of the future policy on cash payments.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on income levels for the Council for a range of reasons. These included the temporary closure of income generating services, the closure of Customer Services Offices, and the economic impact of the pandemic on our residents and businesses.
- 2.2 The Welsh Government (WG) funded much of the income lost as a consequence of the pandemic through the Covid-19 Hardship Fund, with funding totalling £6.087m being received for the 2020/21 financial year and £2.237m for 2021/22. The Hardship Fund ceased on 31 March 2022 with Local Authorities now having to manage any ongoing income losses through their own revenue budgets.
- 2.3 Another consequence of the pandemic was the impact on the various methods available to our residents to make payments to the Council. This “channel shift” resulted in a significant move away from cash payments with a range of alternative payment methods being utilised.
- 2.4 This report updates Cabinet on the current position regarding the range of payment methods utilised by our residents and makes recommendations in respect of the future policy on cash payments.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to: -
- 3.1.1 Agree that due to the move to alternative payment methods experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic, cash payments will not be re-introduced in Customer Services Offices.
- 3.1.2 Note that cash payments will continue to be accepted in Schools, Tourism Venues, Leisure Centres, Libraries and Social Services establishments, and that opportunities to move to alternative payment mechanisms will be fully explored wherever possible.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure that the significant changes in the payment methods being utilised by our residents are fully embedded in the longer-term.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 During the 2019/20 financial year (i.e. pre-pandemic) cash payments totalled circa £10.24m, with the most significant categories of cash payments being Council Tax (£2.41m), Housing Rents (£2.79m), Schools (£2.81m), and Leisure Centres and Tourism Venues (£0.962m).
- 5.2 The temporary closure of the Council's Customer Services Offices due to the pandemic removed the facilities for our residents to pay with cash. Data for the latest full financial year, i.e. 2021/22, shows that cash payments have now reduced to £1.93m, which is a reduction of 81.2% when compared to 2019/20. This demonstrates the significant "channel shift" that has arisen from residents utilising a range of alternative payment methods. The table below shows the most significant increases in payment method types when comparing 2021/22 transactions with 2019/20: -

Payment Method	Increase (%)
Bank Payments	22.32
CCBC Internet Payments	66.58
CCBC Automated Telephone Line	69.06
Telephone Payment via Advisor	24.74
Post Office Cards	44.27

- 5.3 It is proposed that this change to alternative payment methods should be maintained and encouraged in the longer-term as the receipting and processing of cash payments is resource intensive and expensive. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that cash is the preferred method of payment for a cohort of our residents. However, cash payments can be done in different ways at no cost to the payee, for example the use of Post Office payment cards, which also has the added benefit of increasing footfall in our town centres. There are currently 4,146 active Post Office payment card accounts compared to 2,652 in 2019/20.
- 5.4 From 04 October 2021, the Customer Services Office in Ty Penallta was reopened for 5 days a week on an appointment only basis. Under this arrangement payments would only be accepted as part of a service request, for example paying for a bulky collection or a van and trailer permit, and any such payments would be processed by card with no cash payments being taken.
- 5.5 During the period 04 October 2021 to 01 July 2022 there only five appointments made at Ty Penallta, so with effect from 04 July 2022 it was decided to reduce the service to one day per week but to also offer services at other sites as shown in the following table: -

Office	Day	Time
Bargoed	Monday	09:30 – 15:30
Caerphilly	Tuesday	09:30 – 16:00
Ty Penallta	Wednesday	09:30 – 16:30
Blackwood	Thursday	09:30 – 16:00
Risca	Friday	09:30 – 15:30

- 5.6 In terms of payments, these are still only accepted as part of a service request and will be processed by card with no cash payments being taken.
- 5.7 Since 04 July 2022 there have been a total of eleven appointments across all sites. There have been instances of members of the public presenting without appointments, but these have been limited in number and have not been specifically for Customer Services, with

customers being sign-posted to the other relevant service areas by Library and Customer Services staff. Furthermore, there have been no requests for payments as people are paying by the other methods highlighted earlier in this report.

- 5.8 The footfall at the Customer Services Offices is being kept under review and if there is an increase in demand then the opening hours will be subject to further review. Currently, staff are travelling to the Offices to call handle or deal with online requests as it is these channels where demand is being experienced.
- 5.9 As mentioned in paragraph 5.2 cash payments during the 2021/22 financial year totalled £1.93m, which is a reduction of 81.2% when compared to 2019/20. The majority of these cash payments related to Schools (£1.521m), Tourism Venues (£0.276m) and Leisure Centres (£0.071m), with the residual small sums relating to Libraries and Social Services establishments.
- 5.10 A large proportion of the cash income for schools relates to charges for the provision of school meals. However, with the rollout of cashless catering having now been completed across all schools, and the advent of Universal Free School Meals there will be a further and more significant reduction in cash payments in this area. Furthermore, there are plans to extend the cashless system to other areas such as payments for school trips, uniforms etc.
- 5.11 Cash payments continue to be accepted in Tourism Venues, Leisure Centres, Libraries and Social Services establishments but this will be subject to review and where opportunities arise to move to cashless approaches they will be fully considered.

Conclusion

- 5.12 Covid-19 impacted on income levels for the Council and there has been a significant “channel shift” in the types of payment methods being utilised by our residents. This has resulted in a large reduction in the level of cash payments.
- 5.13 Customer Services Offices have reopened on a limited appointment only basis with payments only being accepted by card for service requests. The footfall has been very low since the reopening.
- 5.14 It is recommended to Cabinet that due to the move to alternative payment methods experienced during the pandemic that cash payments will not be re-introduced in Customer Services Offices.
- 5.15 Cash payments are still accepted in Schools, Tourism Venues, Leisure Centres, Libraries and Social Services establishments but opportunities to move to alternative payment mechanisms will be fully explored wherever possible.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no assumptions within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 There has been a significant reduction in cash payments arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, largely due to the temporary closure of Customer Services Offices. This has resulted in large increases in other payment methods being used by our residents which are now fully embedded.
- 7.2 No negative impacts have been identified from the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) on the proposal to continue to not accept cash payments in Customer Services Offices. The IIA is available through the following link: -

[Link to Integrated Impact Assessment](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 As set out throughout the report the Council offers a range of alternative types of payment methods to our residents, all of which are funded through the core revenue budget.
- 8.2 During the 2019/20 financial year costs of £31k were incurred for the cash collection service provided by G4S. In 2021/22 this reduced to £6k.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The proposals in this report were considered by the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 27 September 2022.
- 10.2 Some concerns were raised during the meeting regarding those on lower incomes and their preference to pay using cash. The Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer explained to Members that cash payments can still be made at no cost to the payee through the use of Post Office payment cards. He also explained that there has been an increase of 44.27% in Post Office payment card transactions compared to pre-pandemic levels and that there are now 4,146 active accounts compared to 2,652 in 2019/20.
- 10.3 A Member queried how cash payments could be made in in Schools, Tourism Venues, Leisure Centres, Libraries and Social Services establishments; and yet not in Customer Services Offices as it should be a personal choice for individuals. The Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services reiterated that cash payments could still be made at post offices and also highlighted the additional costs involved with accepting such payments in Customer Services Offices. It was also explained that the level of cash payments in schools will now reduce significantly due to the rollout of cashless catering and the introduction of Universal Free School Meals.
- 10.4 Having noted the content of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations to Cabinet be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 8 for, 0 against and 2 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.
- 10.5 All other consultation responses are reflected within the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government Acts 1998 and 2003.

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Consultees: Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance & Performance
Cllr Nigel George, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Property
Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee
Christina Harry, Chief Executive
Dave Street, Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing
Richard (Ed) Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Liz Lucas, Head of Customer & Digital Services
Karen Williams, Customer Services Digital Hub Manager

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CABINET - 5TH OCTOBER 2022

SUBJECT: AMENDMENTS TO AUTHORISATION OF OFFICERS WITHIN THE PUBLIC PROTECTION DIVISION AND APPROVAL OF RECIPROCAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR ENFORCEMENT BETWEEN NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL AND CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL.

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of new legislation for regulatory services and to seek authorisation for officers of the Public Protection Division.
- 1.2 To seek approval for the Council's Monitoring Officer to make the necessary changes to the Constitution to reflect the implementation / need for authorisation under the legislation detailed in this report.
- 1.3 To seek Cabinet approval of reciprocal arrangements for the enforcement of the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 as amended in relation to Local Authority owned buildings within Caerphilly and Newport City Council areas.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Officers within the Public Protection Division require additional authorisation under the following Acts of Parliament in order to enforce the legislation and carry out their duties:
 - Offensive Weapons Act 2019
 - Medicine & Medical Devices Act 2021
 - Energy Act 2011
 - Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022
- 2.2 The Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 require that local Weights and Measures authorities transfer enforcement duties for local authority owned or controlled buildings to another local Weights and Measures authority. This report seeks approval of reciprocal arrangements for this purpose

between Newport City Council and Caerphilly County Borough Council Weights & Measures Authorities.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services be authorised under legislation detailed in this report so that relevant officers within the division can utilise delegated powers to carry out their duties.
- 3.2 That the Council's Monitoring Officer makes the necessary amendments to the Constitution.
- 3.3 That Members approve the establishment of reciprocal transfer agreements for enforcement of the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 as amended between Caerphilly and Newport City Council's Weights and Measures authorities.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In order to comply with statutory requirements and to ensure proper and effective enforcement of the legislation.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 AUTHORISATION OF OFFICERS

As a result of the introduction of new legislation and following a review of existing authorisations it is considered that the Council's Constitution should be amended to include the following legislation

5.2 Offensive Weapons Act 2019

The Act was implemented on the 6th of April 2022 and includes new legislative measures to control the sale of knives and corrosive products, and introduces new offences relating to their possession and use. The Act creates a new criminal offence of selling a corrosive product to a person under the age of 18. It also provides defences that can apply to the offence of selling bladed articles to under 18s, in the case of the remote sales. Enforcement provisions in the legislation give responsibility to Weights & Measures authorities. Officers within Trading Standards therefore require authorisation under the Act in order to carry out underage test purchase exercises of these products and to take formal action for any non-compliances.

5.3 Medicine & Medical Devices Act 2021

The Medicines and Medical Devices Act 2021 has been substantially brought into effect from 24 May 2021 and enforcement falls to local weights and measures authorities for provisions in Part 4 Chapter 3. The latter enable the issue of a number of enforcement notices to persons responsible for the marketing and supply of non-compliant Medical Devices.

5.4 Energy Act 2011

The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 are made under this Act. The Regulations establish a minimum level of energy efficiency for domestic and non-domestic, privately rented property and are designed to tackle the least energy efficient i.e. those with an Energy Performance Certificate rating (EPC) of F or G. It requires landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their properties to E and above. Where landlords fail to comply, officers authorised under the legislation have the authority to serve Penalty Notices. Domestic properties are dealt with by Private Sector Housing which was the subject of a separate report to Cabinet on 13th July 2022. Officers within Public Protection will deal with non-domestic rental properties alongside their existing role in monitoring estate agents and compliance with the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012.

- 5.5 Civil penalty notices are already included in the Public Protection Enforcement Policy which will be updated to include the sanctions available for this purpose. The 2015 Regulations were amended in 2016 and introduced a phased implementation from April 2018 to April 2023. From April 2018 landlords of non-domestic private rented properties (including public sector landlords) may not grant a tenancy to new or existing tenants if their property has an EPC rating of band F or G and from 1 April 2023, landlords must not continue letting such a property.

5.6 Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022

The Act puts an end to ground rents for most new long residential leasehold properties in England and Wales. Royal Assent was granted on 8 February 2022 and the Act came into force on 30 June 2022. The Act will make home ownership fairer and more transparent for millions of future leaseholders. The Act means that any ground rent demanded as part of a new regulated residential long lease where a premium is paid may not exceed more than one peppercorn per year. Most new leaseholders will not be faced with financial demands for ground rent. The Act also bans landlords from charging administration fees for collecting a peppercorn rent. If a landlord charges ground rent in contravention of the Act, they are liable to receive a monetary penalty between £500 and £30,000.

- 5.7 Enforcement is the duty of the local weights and measures authority in Wales. Where the enforcement authority has sufficient evidence of a breach of the act, it may impose a financial penalty on a landlord. The amount of the financial penalty that may be issued is subject to the discretion of the enforcement authority, within the limits of a minimum of £500 and a maximum of £30,000. As per 5.5 above the Public Protection Enforcement Policy which will be updated to include the sanctions available for this purpose.

- 5.8 Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, Responsibility for Functions be amended to include the above changes and the addition of the words "as amended" to the list of authorised legislation. This will ensure authorisations are kept up to date with changes to the authorised Acts of Parliament.

5.9 Reciprocal arrangements for the enforcement of the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012.

These regulations are enforced by Trading Standards and also require that local Weights and Measures authorities transfer enforcement duties for local authority owned or controlled buildings to another local Weights and Measures authority. The authority is also required to inform the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUCH) of these arrangements in an annual return. Previously the authorities in Greater Gwent had agreed informal reciprocal arrangements which are now required to be formalised. Discussions have taken place with Newport Trading Standards and it is therefore proposed that a reciprocal agreement is made between CCBC and Newport Weights and Measures Authorities for enforcement responsibilities within their own local authority areas.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Authorisation under the Act and associated regulations is required in order for officers to carry out their duties.
- 6.2 Reciprocal arrangements for the enforcement of Energy Performance requirements in local authority premises is a legal requirement.

7. ASSUMPTIONS

- 7.1 No assumptions have been made within this report.

8. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has not been carried out as this Report relates to governance and delegated powers.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no significant financial implications associated with this report,

10. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

11. CONSULTATIONS

- 11.1 The report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in the report.

12. STATUTORY POWER

- 12.1 Offences Weapons Act 2019, Medicine & Medical Devices Act 2021, Energy Act 2011. Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (as amended.) Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022. This is a Cabinet Function.

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Consultees: Councillor Philippa Leonard, Cabinet Member for Planning & Public Protection
Councillor A. Hussey, Vice Chair of Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Committee
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Background Papers:

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CABINET – 5TH OCTOBER 2022

SUBJECT: SAFER CAERPHILLY COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet in relation to the work of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet endorsement of the updated Terms of Reference of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.
- 1.3 To approve the Cabinet member with responsibility for community safety, currently the Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection, as the voting representative for Caerphilly Council on the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Responsible authorities, including the Council, are required to work together as a Community Safety Partnership to address crime and disorder, the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and to reduce reoffending.
- 2.2 Partners have a strong track record of working together within the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership. Partnership arrangements in Gwent have changed with the establishment of the Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) and the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership has reviewed its terms of reference.
- 2.3 This report updates Cabinet on the activities of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership. It also seeks endorsement of the Partnership's updated terms of reference and approval for appropriate Cabinet Member representation on the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet note the work of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.
- 3.2 That Cabinet endorse the updated Terms of Reference of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.
- 3.3 That Cabinet approve the Cabinet member with responsibility for community safety, currently the Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection, as the voting representative for Caerphilly Council on the Safer Caerphilly Partnership.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To appraise Cabinet of the activities of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.
- 4.2 To confirm the Council's representation on the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 (and amending legislation) places a duty on specified responsible authorities to formulate and implement:
 - A strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder;
 - A strategy for combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and
 - A strategy for the reduction of reoffending.

Other legislation requires a strategy group to be established who must:

- Prepare strategic assessments; and
- Prepare and implement a partnership plan, for the area on behalf of the responsible authorities

- 5.2 The responsible authorities are:

- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Gwent Police
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
- National Probation Service
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

A Community Safety Partnership forum has operated in the county borough since the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In addition to the responsible authorities listed above, membership includes other agencies such

as the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO), and representation from the Regional Substance Misuse Team and the Gwent Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Team. From a Caerphilly Council perspective membership includes Public Protection, Youth Services, and Youth Offending Services, with input from other services when necessary. The Chair of the CSP is Chief Inspector Amanda Thomas, Gwent Police and the Vice Chair is Robert Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services, Caerphilly Council. Councillor Philippa Leonard, Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection is a Member as community safety is within her portfolio. Councillor Colin Elsbury is a member as the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority representative.

- 5.3 In practical terms the community safety partnership is concerned with:
- Crime & Disorder
 - Reducing offending and re offending
 - Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)
 - Substance misuse
 - Domestic abuse violence against women and girls
 - Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR)
 - Organised crime

There are also links to Modern slavery, Counter terrorism, and Community Cohesion.

- 5.4 The Safer Caerphilly Well Being Delivery Plan outlines the current priorities for the CSP. This work is co-ordinated by the Council's Community Safety Team who work closely with partners to ensure the statutory duties for the partnership are met and resources deployed effectively to address identified priorities. Arrangements in the county borough are supported by the Safer Caerphilly Hub which is a Multi-agency office in Penallta House established in 2018. This arrangement supports information sharing between partners and facilitates the partnership tasking process.
- 5.5 The CSP has an intelligence led approach with an annual Strategic Assessment produced to analyse crime and disorder data. In addition, monthly crime and anti-social behaviour statistics are produced by Gwent Police and shared with partners. Fortnightly meetings of the Safer Caerphilly Tasking Process are held with community safety partners to identify priority locations, subjects and victims of concern and effectively deploy partnership resources. A Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) agreement is in place for all of the Community Safety Hubs across Gwent to share information. Partners commit resources appropriately and Community Safety Wardens, Positive Futures, Youth Outreach and Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) tasked to identified priority areas.
- 5.6 Partnership arrangements are in place to address anti-social behaviour and the 4 Strike Anti-Social Behaviour Process aims to reduce an individual's unacceptable behaviour whilst also offering supportive interventions. The early intervention and prevention work has been extremely effective with over a 90% reduction in offending behaviour between strike 1 and strike 4 of the process.

A range of tools and powers are considered for each case which can include Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Civil Injunctions, Community Protection Notices, Closure Orders and Criminal Behaviour Orders. During 2021-2022 a total of 14 multi-agency strike meetings were held to discuss 93 cases. Of these, 6 individuals continued to offend and the community safety partnership applied for and obtained Civil Injunctions at court.

- 5.7 The Community Safety Partnership has introduced various initiatives that aim to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour:
- Projects with the Fire Service to prevent deliberate fire setting such as Operation Arid, Project Bernie and Operation Bang which addresses anti-social behaviour over Halloween and Bonfire Night.
 - Joint Operations and Dispersal Orders conducted between Community Safety Wardens, Gwent Police & Partners.
 - Weekly Youth Service Outreach and Positive Futures sessions held to target hotspot areas and engage youths on the cusp of offending.
 - Youth Offending Service projects to prevent escalating offending behaviour which can include family support and mentoring.
 - Public Space Protection Orders have been implemented covering over 300 locations across the county borough, all aiming to prevent anti-social behaviour.
- 5.8 Caerphilly County Borough Council employ a dedicated team of Community Safety Wardens who act as the eyes and ears of the community. In February 2022 the Council agreed to increase the team from 6 to 10 (full time equivalent) Community Safety Wardens. The Wardens carry out daily patrols to tackle anti-social behaviour in hotspot areas and also have use of a mobile CCTV van which is utilised to target specific priority areas identified via the partnership tasking process. The Wardens can issue fixed penalty notices for offences including littering, dog fouling, smoking and breach of a PSPO and are accredited with Police powers. During 2021-2022 the team spoke to 4782 individuals regarding incidents of anti-social behaviour, issued 74 warnings, confiscated 98 items of alcohol and referred 426 environmental issues to other departments.
- 5.9 In addition to the fortnightly Tasking meetings that analyse the local crime and disorder priorities a multi-agency Organised Crime Group has been developed for Caerphilly to assist investigations and intelligence gathering. Community Safety Partners support Gwent Police in dealing with their most prolific/high profile offenders. The partners share intelligence and look to use their tools and powers to address offending. In 2021 partners worked together to obtain a court order against an individual who was part of an organised crime gang. The case is now used to demonstrate best practice and an example of good partnership working.
- 5.10 The Community Safety Partnership oversees the Prevent and Channel Counter Terrorism statutory duties for Caerphilly. The Community Safety Team works with partners to implement a regional Prevent Delivery Plan, co-ordinates the referral process and Prevent staff training. A Caerphilly Channel Panel has also

been developed and meets monthly to manage and support individuals identified as being at risk of radicalisation.

- 5.11 An initiative called 'After Dark' has been developed to address issues surrounding the night-time economy such as substance misuse and crime and disorder. The partnership project focuses on safety around the night-time economy particularly around sports events and the Christmas period. Work includes visits to licensed premises by Gwent Police and Local Authority licensing officers, media campaigns to promote safety, regular patrols by Street Pastors, Community Safety Wardens and Police, engagement with licensees, local businesses and residents. Incidents that occur at or just outside of licensed premises are discussed on daily management meetings and action is quickly taken with those premises.
- 5.12 The Community Safety Partnership has a statutory duty to conduct a Domestic Homicide Review whenever a domestic homicide occurs in Caerphilly County Borough. There are currently two on-going reviews that are being managed by the Community Safety Partnership.
- 5.13 In July 2014 Safer Caerphilly established its own social media presence on Twitter using the handle @SaferCaerphilly. The account is used to promote the work carried out by Safer Caerphilly partners to reduce levels of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, and partnership events. The account currently has 1,230 follows. Media campaigns have been developed to address issues highlighted as crime and disorder priorities. The Partnership have created various newsletters, leaflets and posters to promote its work, advertise campaigns and to update residents on key community safety developments. Community engagement events are held in hot spot priority areas to seek the views of residents, identify issues and work together with partners to address concerns.
- 5.14 The Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership receives external grant funding from the Welsh Government and the Police & Crime Commissioner to address anti-social behaviour and crime prevention. This funding allows the partnership to fund the following projects that provide early interventions and prevent offending:
- Gwent Early Intervention, Prevention and Diversion Project - Run by Positive Futures in Caerphilly the project offers young people engaging opportunities to become involved in sporting activities which help them to develop life skills and achieve their potential. By providing quality sport, the programme acts as a positive alternative to anti-social behaviour, creating safer and more inclusive communities as a result. The Positive Futures staff work in targeted hot spot locations identified via the tasking process to support young people from entering the criminal justice system.
 - Targeted Youth Outreach - The Targeted Youth Outreach Project run by Caerphilly Youth Services works to reduce and prevent first time entrants, involvement in anti-social behaviour and offending behaviour.

The project focuses on sessions delivered via detached, one to one and centre based activities. The young people engaged in the project are identified via the partnership multi-agency processes such as the ASB Strike 4 process and tasking.

5.15 Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) are funded to run the following projects:

- REACH (Reach, Engage And Change Happens) Prevention Project - The Reach project has been developed to provide a multi-agency response to children aged 8-17 at risk of offending or displaying anti-social behaviour. The REACH project ensures that children and their families receive access to prevention support as well as substance misuse support, family support, mental health access and support, Speech and Language Therapist support and access to community activities.
- Youth Respect Programme - This project works with children aged 10-18 identified as at risk of offending or re-offending related to domestic abuse. This project looks to provide complementary, specialist targeted prevention, intervention and support services to child perpetrators of domestic abuse; where a child is showing early indications of, or are already exhibiting abusive, aggressive and controlling behaviours in family or intimate relationships.
- Family Support Project - This project provides support for all children and their families involved with the YOS. During every intervention voluntary family support is considered and offered to help maintain/increase the stability of living accommodation for children, whilst building on relationships within the home.
- Restorative Approaches for Children Looked After Project - This is a Gwent Wide Project established following the identification of a need to provide support for those caring for Children Looked After (CLA) placed with foster carers, in residential homes/units, in supported accommodation, with extended relatives or placed at home with parents/carers. The project aims to reduce the number of CLA entering the Youth Justice System, as well as reducing the re-offending rates of those CLA already in the Youth Justice System.

5.16 With the introduction of the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) in 2016 the work of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was brought within the Safer Communities theme of the Caerphilly PSB's Well-being Plan and the Safer Caerphilly CSP transitioned to a Safer Caerphilly Working Group reporting to the Caerphilly PSB. The establishment of the single Gwent Public Services Board in 2021 covering the 5 local authority areas provides an opportunity to review the community safety partnership arrangements for the county borough. Indeed, the Gwent PSB has established a working group to conduct its own review of community safety in the region. Additionally, the Government has recently published its Police and Crime Commissioner Review

(Part 2) update and as one of the recommendations, the Government confirmed it would be holding a full review of Community Safety Partnerships.

5.17 In May 2022, the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership held a development workshop. With over 40 attendees including representatives across partners and external observers, the workshop identified strong partnership working and information sharing as some of the key strengths of the CSP. Notes from the workshop are included at Appendix 2. Three key areas for improvement were identified:

1. The uncertainty created by short-term community safety funding arrangements for posts and projects.
2. Partnership analyst capacity which would enhance early intervention and prevention work.
3. An early intervention coordinator post to develop projects throughout the county borough.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 As can be seen from the above the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership is in good health. Some areas for improvement as detailed above have been identified and these will now be considered by the CSP. With the establishment of the Gwent Public Services Board, and to strengthen local arrangements further, at its 16th February 2022 meeting the CSP agreed to updated Terms of Reference at Appendix 1 which Cabinet are asked to endorse. The updated terms of reference set out that the Safer Caerphilly CSP will report to the Gwent PSB, but that the statutory responsibilities placed on the CSP for the Caerphilly County Borough area are absorbed within the delivery arrangements for the Safer Caerphilly CSP. Further, from a Caerphilly Council perspective, Cabinet are asked to appoint the Cabinet member with responsibility for community safety, currently the Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection, as the voting representative for Caerphilly Council on the safer Caerphilly Partnership.

7. ASSUMPTIONS

7.1 There are no assumptions within this report.

8. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has not been carried out as this Report relates to governance of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

10. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

11. CONSULTATIONS

11.1 The consultees listed below have been consulted on this report and their views have been incorporated into the report accordingly.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Crime & Disorder Act 1998

Author: Robert Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services

Consultees: Christina Harray, Chief Executive
Councillor Philippa Leonard, Cabinet Member for Planning & Public Protection
Councillor D.T Davies, Chair of Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Adrian Hussey, Vice Chair of Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Colin Elsbury, South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director, Economy & Environment
Chief Inspector Amanda Thomas, Chair of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership
Jacqui Morgan, Trading Standards, Licensing & Registrars Manager
Ceri Edwards, Environmental Health Manager
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Steve, Harris, Head of Financial Services & Section 151 Officer
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Natalie Kenny, Community Safety Officer
Paul O'Neil, Senior Youth Service Manager, Community Education
Michaela Rogers, Youth Offending Service Manager
Jared Lougher, Sport and Leisure Development Manager
Kath Peters, Corporate Policy Manager
Jo Williams, Assistant Director, Adult Services
Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director, Children Services
Nicola Barrett, Service Manager, Safeguarding & Review

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Safer Caerphilly CSP Workshop 4th May 2022 Notes

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SAFER CAERPHILLY COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY GROUP**TERMS OF REFERENCE****1. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The statutory Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership will act through the Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group under the Gwent Public Services Board. The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) remains a statutory partnership under Section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, however Welsh Government guidance, 'Shared Purpose, Shared Delivery' suggests that, for Wales, planning is achieved in a holistic way across partnership sectors. For the Caerphilly County Borough area the statutory responsibilities placed on the CSP are absorbed within the delivery arrangements for Safer Caerphilly. The Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group will deliver the actions and responsibilities of a statutory community safety partnership as set out under Sections 5 and 6 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by Sections 97 and 98 of the Police Reform Act 2002, Section 1 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, Sections 21 & 22 of the Police and Justice Act 2006). The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the Substance Misuse (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and the Crime and Disorder (Prescribed Information) Regulations 2007.

2. PARTNERS

The statutory partners consist of (alphabetical order):

Responsible Authorities

- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Gwent Police
- National Probation Service
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Associate members (by organisation)

- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Youth Offending Service
- Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisation (GAVO)
- Area Planning Board Representative
- VAWDASV Representative
- A number of other groups or organisations may be involved, including:
 - Registered Social Landlords
 - Business Representatives
 - Youth Representative
 - Education Representative

3. VISION

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) takes pride in Caerphilly County Borough as a high quality and safe place in which to live and work and visit. The CSP will work with the Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) to ensure that the quality of life of residents increases and that crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour are substantially

reduced, thereby supporting people to have a positive impact within their community.

AIMS

The aims of the Partnership are:

- (a) To understand the nature of the crime and disorder issues facing Caerphilly County Borough and to prioritise these issues through the production of periodic needs assessments in accordance with the Crime & Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) (Wales) Regulations 2007.
- (b) To reduce crime and disorder, in particular in the priority areas identified through needs assessment and partnership data, through the development and actions of the Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group.
- (c) To provide a single focus and forum for community safety and consult with and involve the widest possible range of organisations and individuals in the community.
- (d) To work as a Partnership in promoting community safety and ensuring that the resources of the member organisations are used to greatest effect, in community safety delivery.
- (e) To maximise and manage funding that is received by the Partnership and ensure that they are managed effectively, efficiently and with propriety.

5. PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

The Partnership will be based on the following principles:

1. The legal requirement for Caerphilly County Borough Council, Gwent Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, Wales Probation Service and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to devise an assessment and Delivery Plan in co-operation with other partners, and in accordance with the relevant Regulations.
2. An effective partnership is stronger than the sum of its parts. The CSP will carry out its work within the wider context of the Well Being Plan and the Public Services Board. The CSP should have regard to all separate partners' strategic plans e.g., the Police and Crime Plan.
3. Each partner organisation will seek to build any relevant objectives and targets from assessments and the Safer Caerphilly Delivery Plans
4. An acknowledgement of the need for systematic and continuing research on the crime and disorder patterns of each area, to enable the CSP to be intelligence led.
5. A recognition of the need for widespread and detailed consultation with the community. Sustained reduction of crime and fear of crime can only be assisted when local communities are empowered to develop their own community safety networks, organically linked with borough-wide structures and services. This process is essential to delivery against plans.
6. An emphasis on targeting localities where crime and the fear of crime are known to be acute. Partnership working should have some flexibility and scope to respond quickly to changing needs and demands of neighbourhoods and communities.
7. An emphasis on early intervention in order to prevent criminality and in promoting quality of life. We will seek to achieve this by enhancing community safety in all parts of the borough.

8. The need to be outward looking with a commitment to learn from the best practice of others.
9. The need to work closely with the Youth Offending Service dedicated to preventing offending by children and young people.

6. SAFER CAERPHILLY DELIVERY GROUP - ROLE

The Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group will provide the Strategic Lead for the CSP by taking the role of the Strategy Group as required by the Regulations. In particular, it will ensure that the Well Being plan delivery aims are determined, delivered and reviewed. It will ensure that the statutory partners set out how they will contribute to the priorities identified in the community safety strand of the Well Being plan.

The Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group will agree the use of Partnership funds to address the issues identified in the strategic assessments and in the Well Being plan. The Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group will monitor progress against the Plan, the overall performance of the Partnership and will seek to remove blockages that prevent progress against the Partnership aims.

The Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group will ensure that links exist with other Strategic Partnerships such as the Gwent Safer Communities Group to encourage efficient joint working and to prevent the duplication of tasks.

With the agreement of the Partnership other Officers and Organisations advising or supporting the Partnership may be invited to participate in discussion.

Only the Responsible Authorities will have a vote. However, it is anticipated that voting situations will be rare, as most issues will be decided consensually. The Chair shall have a casting vote. Any meeting with less than 3 voting members present (regardless of the number of advisers) will be deemed to be inquorate.

Other organisations that are not listed as Associate Members may also have associate membership with the consent of the Partnership. The active involvement of all partners is essential to achieving the aims of the Partnership.

7. SAFER CAERPHILLY DELIVERY GROUP - MEMBERSHIP

Representation of the Responsible Authorities (above) shall be in compliance with Section 3 of the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation Strategy) (Wales) Regulations 2007, namely one or more senior persons from each Authority. In the case of the Caerphilly County Borough Council, the member will be the elected member with responsibility for Community Safety.

Whilst senior is not defined, the person should be in a position to make strategic decisions and commit resources and ideally be a person of a similar seniority to that suggested within the Home Office Guidance (page 20) for each Authority. The Responsible Authority representatives must notify the CSP when they no longer hold the position for the Responsible Authority.

8. SAFER CAERPHILLY DELIVERY GROUP - CHAIRING

The Chair of the Partnership, including the Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group will be agreed by the Group. This will be reviewed every two years.

9. SAFER CAERPHILLY DELIVERY GROUP- LOCATION OF MEETINGS

These shall be held at the Ty Penallta offices of Caerphilly County Borough Council and will be open to the public, except when matters of confidentiality or sensitivity have been notified in advance.

Minutes and papers shall be made available to the public, unless specifically excluded for reasons of confidentiality.

10. SAFER CAERPHILLY DELIVERY GROUP– MEETING FREQUENCY

To encourage strategic working, the Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group should meet as regularly as required to achieve the aims of the Partnership. The meetings will therefore be scheduled quarterly however additional meetings may be required to discuss specific issues, particularly during periods of strategy formulation and review. Meeting timings should facilitate the role of the Group.

11. SAFER CAERPHILLY DELIVERY GROUP - MEETINGS SUPPORT

Caerphilly County Borough Council will provide secretarial support and be responsible for administering the meetings, and the compilation and circulation of minutes and agendas.

The minutes of every Partnership meeting shall be provided to each Partnership Organisation in a timely manner and be available when requested by staff, Members or stakeholders.

Agenda and papers will be sent out at least 5 working days before and be circulated within 10 working days following the date of any meeting. Principle support to the Partnership shall be provided through the Caerphilly County Borough Council Community Safety Officer who shall act as the central point of contact for convening meetings and preparing agendas.

12. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

It is understood that each partner organisation will, through its own procedures, make explicit commitments to support relevant parts of the strategic and action plans approved by the partnership.

If the Partnership as a separate entity seeks to hold resources collectively, clear decision-making processes will be drawn up to establish how those joint resources are to be used.

13. IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS

The Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group may set up Strategic Delivery Groups/Action Teams, which will be directly accountable to the Partnership. The Chair of each Group will be responsible for ensuring that strategies and targets set out in the plans are met and that any issues are reported back promptly to the Partnership. Groups will include any person who may contribute to the related stream of activity, whether or not they are members of the Partnership.

The Chair of each Group will bring together the key players to assist in the delivery of the action plans.

These Teams will produce reports to the Partnership including recommendations about any areas of poor performance, and additional resources required to deliver targets or priorities or any other relevant matter. The Chair of the Implementation Teams will be responsible for presenting the report to the Partnership.

14. KEY OUTCOMES

Key outcomes for the Partnership will include:

1. Sustained reductions in crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.
 2. Reductions in the misuse of substances and improved access to treatment for users of drugs and alcohol.
 3. Neighbourhoods and Communities being and feeling safer.
 4. Improved mainstreaming of crime and substance misuse issues with key partners and stakeholders.
 5. Effective targeting and deployment of budgets and other resources.
- 15.** The Partnership will agree by a majority of the responsible authorities to any changes to these Terms of Reference.

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APPENDIX 2 - Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership – development workshop – 4th May 2022

Scene setting question:

In one or two words, what does being a member of the Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership mean to you?



Question One: As a partnership, what do we do well currently?

Group 1:

- Caerphilly has better safeguarding arrangements than other areas (from VAWDASV)
- Strong partnership working
- Well established relationships with stability across the partnership
- Established processes (such as the four strike process)
- We receive positive feedback from our communities when they see results – we are good at closing the loop
- We are a small team but punch above our weight in terms of outputs and outcomes
- We offer good value for money and deliver an excellent service for the level of resource we have
- We have got better at engaging with our communities, increasing transparency and got better at explaining complex processes to our residents
- The early intervention work funded for the YOS and the Youth Service has seen significant drop offs between the levels of the strike process

Group 2:

- Meetings are going well, well attended, and good interaction taking place.
- Decent structure for information sharing.
- Good partnership working – support from partners when requests are brought forward.
- Good strong enforcement, positive and proactive with good outcomes.

- Bringing information together is getting better, police bring a lot of information to the meetings which is useful, and feel other partners are also doing the same.
- Definite sense of working together well – people know where to go and who to go to and natural default of who else can I work with.
- Formal meetings work well with regular format but there is also ongoing informal work around this.
- Relationships with the partners are getting stronger.
- Able to intervene at early stages with families, early preventative work looking at wellbeing not just safeguarding.
- In theory, the coordinator post should ensure synergy and inspire participation driving tasking, info sharing and performance.
- Planned structures ensure participation on an organizational level and doesn't depend on personal relationships to make things work.
- NCN – making progress with partnerships and relationships.

Group 3:

- Effective well-established partnerships
- Experience staff
- Processes are adapted and work well
- Group/Partnership problem solving
- Communication – Everyone knows each other and what they do
- Cadro really good
- Information Sharing/Working closely
- Pooling information & Resources
- Accessibility – Hub tasking – Advice – Various disciplines
- Seamless for the resident
- Use of powers 115s
- Dealing with the here and now as well as long term

Group 4:

- Manage vulnerability and risk well – Manage ASB/ early intervention and get positive results
- In reference to Strike 3- collaborative working well, organised process – everyone knows what they are doing. Honest discussions – busy now. See benefits of early actions e.g. cyclical issues – issues in parks/ supermarkets etc. Need to offer support in parenting skills – works well – info there – agencies know system and good relations and welcome new members.
- ASB- Nice balance with diversion and positive futures – link is better and supportive arm.
- Morphed cohort change – confident – well embedded. Links and partners share information. Adapt and reinforce Probation Services – well managed. Good strides – positive work – the volunteering and unpaid work also makes a difference – shine and provides an additional service.
- Partnership/ Collaborative working – work with everyone in the Sports teams – well connected and familiar. In respect of role outside of work (Governor) meet young people in this arena and there is good information sharing. The meetings are beneficial, use resources and people in the right places, challenge. Use sport as a tool. Engage and move forward. So communications, collaboration and information sharing are very well done.
- Previously involved in delivery groups and would engage locally – hear of pressure and good practice. Good representation on Area Planning Board. Good links. Partnership and collaboration are excellent. Wider work with Housing – understanding the hotspots and

applying targeted intervention. Building presence on Town Centres. Strong representation at ABB.

- Partnership work is strong, share information well – dealt with number of issues, the group challenges and holds to account. Process well embedded. Know what is expected. All positive.
- Meetings are structured in the right way. Issues can be escalated quickly or not, depending on the required approach. Structure in place and experienced officers in post – know each other with significant knowledge and experience. Always room for improvement.

Question two:

We have talked about where we are currently doing well but where in your opinion are there gaps in current provision? And what does the future look like for us as a partnership?

Group 1:

Gaps:

- Currently there is no shared, central storage system for data. Having one would be hugely beneficial and support more efficient service delivery
- Funding is on the basis of year-on-year approval – it is therefore difficult to put longer term plans in place
- Ways of working as a result of Covid – can no longer just pop to see a colleague and get the information needed. Things have been slightly slower as a result.
- Tasking meetings are currently very police-centred. Timely updates are required at meetings from other partners and should be more partnership, less police.
- Lack of statistical support – there used to be support in place that would provide stats to inform the tasking meetings

Future:

- Legislative duties are changing – such as Prevent, child smacking ban etc – and these are additional duties that don't come with any more resource
- Accountability for outcomes and for securing – especially post-election. Possibility of further scrutiny.

Group 2:

Gaps:

- Relationship between CSP across others borough, there are issues across borders that could be worked on together not just within the individual borough.
- There are links in some areas across the region – some boards that are Gwent some are local, sometimes need to look at impact at community level to look at prevention as well as the wider regional view.
- Broadly around prevention, need to be stronger in getting ahead of the game and using intelligence to anticipate where the issues may be.
- Respond when people have entered a service system but need to be even more preventative when possible.
- Need better analysis and intelligence – sometimes the analysis assessment is missing a step before which would increase preventative approaches.
- Need to look at an assessment of vulnerability – who are they, what are their makers.
- Need to centralise and utilise the coordinator to bring partners issues together.
- Need to look at prioritising and links to funding

Future:

- Positive future definite improvement in relationships and improved structure.
- A lot of partners around the table.
- Positive as this is on the agenda at all levels, reviews are important, and resources are linked to decision makers being interested in this.
- Chief Constable and Chief Executive interested in this, and this is expanded to being linked to outside areas such as PSB boards etc.

Group 3:

Gaps:

- Funding unpredictable
- Getting back to how things were before Covid
- Be clear on what we want to achieve/purpose/scope – Drugs/Cyber
- Understanding of strategic analysis – through hiring a data analyst
- Do we have the right tools & tactics & Interventions
- Legislation planning

Future:

- Building upon what you want to get from the public
- Behaviour change campaigns
- Social media
- Predicting future demands
- Looking at the impacts of future legislations eg no evictions
- Keeping children out of police custody

Group 4:

Gaps:

- In relation to Strike 3, Young people come from dysfunctional families, therefore a lot of support is needed. If we put the support in however and the parents are not on board it can be difficult, and families may not engage. More support lead now – could miss something in supporting the parents. Boundaries, young people will push. Therefore, more focus on parenting support. Resources are an issue, if not in the statutory services arena.
- Agree. No enforcement at school or parents then there is not a lot of control. Boundaries are imperative. If enforcement not in place, not wanted then cannot be supported.
- Wider issue than Community Safety – early intervention. Youth Offending Service Strike Process – offered parenting programme and family support but after the fact which is often too late, needs to be implemented earlier. Preventative not reactive!
- Hub Partnership Taskforce (this may need to be checked) wary this is Police lead. Welcome nominations from other agencies.
- Example is Fly Tipping issues, person is often know for other matters- therefore the information and knowledge sharing plays a key part and creates opportunities
- In respect of a Personal role as a Governor, see a number of exclusions in this role, there are hot spots. Speak to the parents, know the path but where is the link between Education, Police and ASB, there is a massive void. Cause Police and Community Safety issues – there is an opportunity to address this, bridge the gap.
- Unit to bridge the gap – YOS discuss next gen Officer and Police School Officers – School Police made aware of the issues, can monitor in school. JL to be included in meetings.

- Intervention – APB child and Young People Services changes – improve joint working – offer to make truly holistic – welcome further conversation and opportunity for Regional Board to collect data and find out what information is important to the Partnerships to help with concerns. Have the information, we need to know what you need to know.
- Discussed drugs, cannabis use – parents often open to it. Some local data would be beneficial on this, looking at trends/ hotspots etc. – could be correlation. Could we look at the data offered and include in Community Safety Board.
- GDAS, Family support services and engage with children and young people and Adult Services – cross over to support whole family.

Future:

- Gap – Resources and capacity – more statutory duties and responsibilities and no funding available, more often the funding is reduced – more early intervention and prevention work needed
- More statutory duties – serious violence – who will pick this up?? Ideally more staff to run properly
- Agree, demand is higher, resources are lower!
- Increased demands, more legislation changes around engagement and safeguarding
- Covid has introduced a new way of working, need to do pre-Covid engagement and build up trust. People want to see the ‘Bobby on the beat’, need to rebuild confidence. Funding is an issue here too
- Resources!! Budget cuts, need the right people in the right places with limited resources. Challenging, less money and increased demand, worry that we are going to be spread too thin!
- Co-location needed, pool resources

Question three:

With current resources how do we bridge any gaps? As a group, if we could invest in one thing to bridge that gap what in your opinion would it be?

Group 1:

Bridge the gaps:

- CSP social media channels – proactively promote the outcomes we achieve for our communities as a partnership
- More generally relating to comms, be more proactive in sharing good news (example of a fortnightly newsletter was given)
- An all-Wales strategic group for community safety was proposed. It was thought this could be a good opportunity to share good practice, any collaborative opportunities etc
- Build on local partnerships with the community – embracing the use of volunteers where possible
- Pool our resource and resurrect the analytics provision for the CSP

Invest in one thing:

- Staff, staff, staff!
- Central database/data coordinator – this would help with info sharing, and would save time

Group 2:

Bridge the gaps:

- Reviews should help to clarify and strengthen the role.
- Need to be forward thinking in using staff, work in partnership to share staffing.
- Working with partners understanding individual goals and aims but working together to address everyone's needs by sharing staffing, resources etc. (examples included Youth Service working with Barod, Police, Positive Futures)
- Establishing joint priorities and measuring performance and tracking this centrally.
- Need to be more intelligence lead – look at how we use data and evidence and using it for collaborative drives.
- There is a lot of data and commissioning and need to look at how it can be used across the board so not duplicating because of set projects and funding.
- Focus on what people want, look at lived experiences – focus on participation work.
- Need to look at Comms being used, need to be on local social media to highlight crime prevention work and have a presence and need to look at how we are seen on platforms, so we have a positive presence.

Invest in one thing:

- Need to develop good data and intelligence analysis.
- This feeds into prevention and performance.
- Data needs to be collaborative and look at all partners to enable prevention and performance.

Group 3:

Bridge the gaps:

- Hire a data analyst
- Renew a funding regime / Longevity of funding – Currently grants, temporary contracts
- Joint ownership of priorities
- More funding
- 3rd sector organisations

Invest in one thing:

- Shared Resourcing - Operationally
- Long Term investment in CS Staff to ensure retention.
- Better utilisation of social media
- Better / coordinated analysis of data and intelligence. A central data point with one analyst for all?

Group 4:

Bridging the gaps:

- No more money or resources – predictive profiling could be the answer to determine patterns, cause, effect and pool resources appropriately, but to do this would need more data analysis, ideally 1 member of staff.
- Work smarter with what we have, there are benefits to meeting online but there is a disconnect with communities. Need to be more targeted in the work we do. Don't see any patterns, more often it is a WhatsApp group message to a group to congregate etc.
- Issue with the rail network, gangs of young people hopping on and off trains. Groups can be intimidating to approach, whilst they are not all bad, it can be intimidating for staff. Need a resource to coordinate activity of police and partners.

- Agree, need both posts, Data Analyst and an Early Intervention Coordinator who can coordinate the cases, bridge gaps, someone at a Strategic level, maybe also an Early Intervention Officer, target resources.
- Bring resources together – all good things in Covid such as online meetings etc. can be utilised and balanced out. Adding an analyst always works, there is a benefit. We have limited resources, so let's pool them, co-location, there are spaces in our premises to do this, have capacity for extra staff. Need to better utilise resources and space, work smarter together
- Clear Strategic Priorities- we are all busy, but are we working smartly? Need a clear strategy, stronger collaboration, harness our strengths and resources to drive a clear strategy and priorities. Need a resource to do this. Need to focus priorities, if we can't make a difference, why are we doing it?
- Priorities, OPCC and Gwent Police set priorities. Resource Early Intervention Officer to coordinate activities – still have meetings and the resource will nicely bring things together.
- Working smarter – what can we do for you, we need lots of resources in services – 2-way conversation help and support – Coordinator can be interface – resources to offer and engage – pool to make more effective.
- Do we need to co-locate?? Be at the heart of the community, co-located and more accessible to the community! There is space in the estates

Invest in one thing:

- Would like a full time Early Intervention Coordinator, holistic approach, post to enhance communications, act as a Strategic Lead.
- Also want a Data Analyst.

Closing question:

Of the priorities you have discussed this afternoon, if you could pick only one to take priority over the others, what would it be?

Sustainability of funding more generally

50%

Data analysis to allow quick access to info sharing across organisations

29%

Strategic/early intervention coordinator - increased resource

21%

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