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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Julie Lloyd
(Tel: 01443 864246 Email: lloydj4@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 24th January 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 30th January, 2024 at 5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days. 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 speaking will be publicly available to all via the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

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

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

Pages

1 To receive apologies for absence.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



2 Declarations of Interest.

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 this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes:-

- 3 Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 28th November 2023. 1 - 6
- 4 Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.
- 5 Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. 7 - 20
- 6 To receive and consider the following Cabinet reports*:-
1. Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme – Consultation Report: Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary School Proposal – 13th December 2023;
 2. School Organisation Code 2018 – Consultation Report: Proposal for the Closure of Cwm Glas Infant School – 13th December 2023;
 3. Caerphilly Cares Support Package for Families Eligible for Free School Meals – 17th January 2024;
 4. Development of a New Children's Home – 17th January 2024.

**If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above Cabinet reports to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Julie Lloyd 01443 864246, by 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 29th January 2024.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

- 7 Update on the Progress and Evaluation of Caerphilly Cares and Employee Volunteering Scheme. 21 - 46
- 8 Key Stage 4 Outcomes 2023. 47 - 62
- 9 Healthy Schools on Vaping. 63 - 66

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, D. Cushing, Mrs P. Cook, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, C.J. Gordon, T. Heron, A. Leonard, B. Miles (Vice Chair), T. Parry (Chair), J.E. Roberts, J. Simmonds, S. Skivens, J. Winslade and K. Woodland

Co-opted Members:

Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative (with voting rights on educational matters) Mr M. Western

Parent Governor Representatives (with voting rights on educational matters) Tracy Millington (Parent Governor Representative) and Mr G. James (Parent Governor Representative)

Outside Body Representatives (without voting rights)
Mrs P. Ireland (NEU) and Mrs K. Cole (NEU)

Caerphilly Governors Association (without voting rights)
Mr D Davies

Users and Carers - Vacant

And Appropriate Officers

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

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Agenda Item 3



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2023 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor T. Parry – Chair
Councillor B. Miles - Vice Chair

Councillors:

E.M. Aldworth, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, P. Cook, D. Cushing, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, C. Gordon, T. Heron, J. Roberts, J. Simmonds, S. Skivens, J. Winslade, and K. Woodland.

Cabinet Members:

Councillor C. Andrews (Education and Communities), E. Forehead. (Social Care), and J. Pritchard (Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change).

Together with:

Officers: D. Street (Deputy Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), K. Cole (Chief Education Officer), A. West (Sustainable Communities for Learning Manager), G. Jenkins (Interim Director of Social Services), J. Williams (Assistant Director – Adult Services), S. Mutch (Early Years Manager), M. Jacques (Scrutiny Officer), and J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer).

Also in attendance:

Co-opted Member: Mrs P. Ireland (NEU).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C. Bishop and A. Leonard, and Mr M. Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative), Mrs T. Millington (Parent Governor Representative), Mr G. James (Parent Governor Representative), Mrs K. Cole (NEU), and Mr D. Davies (Caerphilly Governors Association).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that Councillor D. Cushing declared a personal interest on Agenda Item No. 9, Annual Report of the Director of Social Services and Housing for 2022/23 in that a close family member receives social care. As this was a personal interest only there was no requirement for her to leave the meeting and she could take full part in the debate.

3. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 17TH OCTOBER 2023.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 17th October 2023 be approved as a correct record and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 17th October 2023 (minute nos. 1 – 9) be approved as a correct record.

4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE.

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

5. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report that informed the Committee of its Forward Work Programme planned for the period November 2023 to March 2024.

Members were advised a request had been received from WAVE Trust regarding their 70/30 campaign which seeks to reduce Child Abuse, Neglect and Adverse Childhood Experiences, and they would like the Scrutiny Committee to consider implementation of the aims and objectives of WAVE Trust, where possible.

A Member clarified that the Amalgamation Report due for the next meeting in January 2024 was not in relation to the Aber Valley ward. Members were advised that the report referred to by the member was still in discussions and would be listed at a future meeting of the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee. Following further discussions on this matter, the Member was advised to contact the Sustainable Communities for Learning Manager direct, following the meeting.

Members requested the font size of appendix 1 be enlarged for future agenda packs, and it was also noted that some of the Cabinet Members' names should be corrected before the FWP is published.

Members discussed the WAVE Trust and proposed to defer the request from the WAVE Trust to a future meeting until further information is available, and it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of a roll call this was unanimously agreed.

A Member also requested an additional item be added to the FWP in relation to a briefing from EAS. Members were advised that a Members Seminar may be more beneficial for all Members to be included.

Following consideration of the report, and subject to the proposed additional items, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme as appended to the meeting papers, subject to the proposed additional agenda items, be published on the Council's website.

6. CABINET REPORTS

It was confirmed that there had been no requests for any of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda to be brought forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING BAND B PROGRAMME- CONSULTATION REPORT: YSGOL Y LAWNT AND UPPER RHYMNEY PRIMARY SCHOOL PROPOSAL.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities introduced the report which updated Members in relation to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme which proposed to create a sustainable school building with shared facilities, to accommodate Ysgol Y Lawnt, Upper Rhymney Primary School and Community use. Members were informed that the two schools will continue to provide both Welsh and English Medium Primary Education and remain as separate entities, situated within the new dual-purpose building.

Members were also advised that the proposal went to formal consultation between the 28th September 2023 and the 9th November 2023, and that to discharge the Council's duty under the School Organisation Code 2018, there is now a requirement for Cabinet Members to give due regard to the Consultation Report and determine whether or not it is appropriate to move to the next stage of the process.

A Member queried the value of the buildings when closed, and whether this would go towards the new school building. Members were advised that the schools had not yet been valued, and will be declared surplus to educational requirements. The future of the buildings will be determined following that declaration.

During the ensuing discussion Members received information on consultation response rates and a minor error was highlighted in the categories of respondents as percentages table in the appendices. Officers provided assurances that the final report would be amended.

A Member queried whether the low level of responses was typical and noted only one response was made through the medium of Welsh. Members were advised that this could be viewed as positive, given that people who usually respond are against the proposals. Members were assured that a full consultation had taken place.

A Member requested whether a breakdown of parents' responses indicating which school their child attended, could be made available. Members were advised that this information was available and would be circulated following the meeting.

A Member sought clarification on the relevant costings of the proposal, and whether there had been any changes, and if a contingency had been built in. Members were advised that until this had undergone market testing, the figures were based on information provided by Welsh Government.

The Chair requested that a visit be arranged to the new Cwm Gwyddon school, and Members were advised that this could be arranged in the New Year and availability for dates would be checked.

Following consideration of the consultation report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation, (and in noting, there were 14 For, 0 Against, and 1 Abstention), this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee:

1. Endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to proceed to Statutory Notice in relation to the proposal for Ysgol Y Lawnt and Upper Rhymney Primary School.

8. SCHOOL ORGANISATION CODE 2018 – CONSULTATION REPORT: PROPOSAL FOR THE CLOSURE OF CWM GLAS INFANT SCHOOL.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Communities introduced the report which updated Members in relation to the proposal to close Cwm Glas Infants School by July 2024.

Members were informed that due to the falling rolls at the school which are projected to decrease further in future years, a meeting was arranged by the Head Teacher and the Governing Body with Local Authority representatives including the Chief Education Officer, to discuss the future viability of the school. The conclusion of this meeting agreed the school could no longer maintain a balanced budget and an appropriate staffing level; therefore, the Head Teacher and Governing Body of the School decided to pursue closure of Cwm Glas Infants School with effect from July 2024.

Members were advised that the proposal went to formal consultation between the 28th September 2023 and the 9th November 2023, and to discharge the Council's duty under the School Organisation Code 2018, there is now a requirement for Cabinet Members to give due regard to the content of the Consultation Report and determine whether or not it is appropriate to move to the next stage in the process.

A Member sought clarification on the responses received and noted that a high percentage of those responses were against the proposals, however the report stated that evidence shows there is a positive level of support. Members were advised that where a proposal includes the closure of a school there would normally be a higher level of responses opposing the closure.

During the ensuing discussion Members received information on consultation response rates, the level of support for the proposal, and a minor error was highlighted in the categories of respondents as percentages table in the appendices. Officers provided assurances that the final report would be amended.

A Member queried the number of pupils currently at the school and Members were advised that there are 33 pupils at the school, which is due to reduce to 24 in September 2024.

The Co-opted Member representing NEU wished to note their thanks for the assistance being provided to the staff currently working at the school.

A Member noted that the proposal to close the school would mean that those children affected could attend another school less than a mile away.

Following consideration of the consultation report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 15 For, 0 Against, and 1 Abstention), this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee:

1. Endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, via vote, to proceed to Statutory Notice in relation to the proposal to close Cwm Glas Infant School by July 2024.

9. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING FOR 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member for Social Care introduced the report which informed Members of the key messages that have been identified in the preparation of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services and Housing for 2022/23. Members were asked to note the contents of the Director's Report prior to its submission to Council on the 29th of November 2023 for its publication.

The former Director of Social Services and Housing also gave an introduction into the details included in the report and wished to note his thanks to all staff working in social care.

A Member also noted thanks to social care staff, and queried whether NHS carers were paid more than those employed by the local authority. Members were advised that it was difficult to compare the different roles but that NHS employees were in general, paid more.

A Member sought clarification on the number of people waiting for care and care packages, and how these are prioritised to determine who receives the care. Members were advised that these figures had improved since the 2022/23 annual report was produced.

The Chair clarified that Dewis is embedded and available on the internet. Members were advised that there is a dedicated Dewis Officer working within the IAA team.

The Chair wished to note the compliments and thanks to all staff in social care. Another Member wished to commend the work of social workers.

The Chair sought clarification on the 50% of care leavers entering into higher education or training and queried the other 50%. Members were advised that contact is kept with all care leavers and the statutory responsibility of the local authority ends at 21, but this can go up to 25 years of age if they are in education or training.

A Member suggested that some Members could meet with foster carers if possible. Members were advised that there is a regular support group for foster carers that Members could be invited to in the future.

A Member thanked Officers for the report and sought clarification on the timescales for house adaptations that allowed residents to return home from hospitals. Members were advised that these minor and major adaptations are undertaken by Housing and the information required could be obtained for Members following the meeting.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the content of the report.

The meeting closed at 6.50 pm.

Approved as a correct record, subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on the 30th of January 2024.

CHAIR

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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 30TH JANUARY 2024

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

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

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the Committee Meeting on Tuesday 28th November 2023. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period January 2024 until March 2024.
- 5.2 The forward Work Programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the

cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. The Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

- 5.3 The Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 8th January 2024. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

5.4 **Conclusion**

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

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

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

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

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

Consultees: Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate

Services

Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer

Gareth Jenkins, Interim Director of Social Services

Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,
Legal Services

Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny
Committee

Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services
Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work
Programme

Appendix 2 Cabinet Forward Work Programme

Appendix 3 Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart

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Forward Work Programme - Education and Social Services

Appendix 1

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
30/01/24 17:30	Caerphilly Cares/ Employee volunteering scheme update and initial 6 months review		McMahon, Tina;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
30/01/24 17:30	Key Stage 4 Outcomes - Summer 2023		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
30/01/24 17:30	Healthy schools on Vaping		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
30/01/24 17:30	Information Item - Budget Monitoring Period 7		Southcombe, Jane;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
30/01/24 17:30	Information Item - Social Services Budget Monitoring Report (Month 7)		Jones, Mike;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
12/03/24 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Ysgol Y Lawnt / Upper Rhymney Primary	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet to proceed to the Planning Application Stage and submission of a Full Business Case to Welsh Government	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/03/24 17:30	Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme - Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Scrutiny Members to consider the Objection Report and endorse the recommendation to Cabinet to proceed to closing the school	West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/03/24 17:30	Winter Pressures		Williams, Jo;	Cllr. Forehead, Elaine;
12/03/24 17:30	Welsh Education Scrutiny Plan (WESP) Action Plan		Mutch, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/03/24 17:30	Information Item - Budget Monitoring (Period 9)		Southcombe, Jane;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
12/03/24 17:30	Information Item - Final Assessment Report for 2022/2023's Welsh Public Libraries Standards	To update Scrutiny on the details contained in the Final Assessment Report for 2022/2023's Welsh Public Libraries Standards	Pugh, Karen;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
23/04/24 17:30	Schools Causing Concern		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
23/04/24 17:30	School Inspection Update		Cole, Keri;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
23/04/24 17:30	Safeguarding	Critical areas of work undertaken Impact of the work Next steps	Ellis, Sarah;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;
23/04/24 17:30	Federation of a Schools Governing Body proposal		West, Andrea;	Cllr. Andrews, Carol;

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Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
21/02/2024 13:00 p.m.	Support for pupils unable to attend school (formerly “Tuition” report).	To seek Cabinet approval for proposals for revising the model of support for pupils accessing tuition.	Keri Cole	Cllr Carol Andrews
21/02/2024	Community Benefits Guidance - for projects and developments with the potential for significant community impact	Setting out the council’s advice on how community benefits contributions from projects and developments within the county borough might be agreed and distributed.	Sue Richards/Heather Delonnette	Cllr Chris Morgan
21/02/2024	Nant Cylla watercourse, Ystrad Mynach	To provide Cabinet with an update in relation to erosion of the Nant Cylla watercourse and to request authorisation for a spend of £270k for detailed design of a stabilisation scheme and a £100k contingency fund for temporary stabilisation works should these be required whilst the full scheme is being developed and procured.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Philippa Leonard
21/02/2024	Caerphilly Station footbridge review	To consider the options available regarding the future provision and alternative options of a pedestrian rail crossing at Caerphilly Railway Station.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Philippa Leonard
21/02/2024	Decarbonisation annual report	To provide an update on the work undertaken across the authority to deliver the aims of the Decarbonisation Strategy.	Paul Cooke/Ben Winstanley	Cllr Chris Morgan
21/02/2024	Former Pontllanfraith School Demolition	For Cabinet to approve the use of additional funds required to address	Ben Winstanley	Cllr Nigel George

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
		abnormal ground conditions identified at the site.		
21/02/2024	Private Wire Arrangement from Bryn Group to Tredomen Campus – EXEMPT ITEM	Subject to Public Interest Test	Ben Winstanley/ Paul Cooke/ Anna Lewis	Cllr Elaine Forehead
27/02/2024 10:00 a.m.	Budget Proposals for 2024/25	To seek Cabinet endorsement of the 2024/25 budget proposals prior to final determination by Council on 27th February 2024.	Stephen Harris	Cllr Eluned Stenner
06/03/2024 13:00 p.m.	Allocation Criteria for Artificial Sports Pitches and the Ystrad Mynach Centre for Sporting Excellence	To seek Cabinet approval for amendments to the criteria for the allocation of bookings at Caerphilly Council managed artificial sports pitches (3G and ATP) and the Ystrad Mynach Centre for Sporting Excellence and to approve the delegation of future amendments to the allocation criteria to the relevant Director or Head of Service in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.	Jared Lougher/ Rob Hartshorn	Cllr James Pritchard
06/03/2024	Food Standards Agency Audit of Caerphilly Food Hygiene and Food Standards Service Planning and Delivery	For Cabinet to consider the Food Standards Agency audit findings and Action Plan and any recommendations from the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr Carol Andrews

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
06/03/2024	Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028	For Cabinet to consider and approve the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028, prior to being considered at Full Council (18/04/2023) for approval and publication on the Council's website.	Anwen Cullinane/Kath Peters	Cllr James Pritchard/Cllr Philippa Leonard
06/03/2024	Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2022-2023	For Cabinet to consider and approve the content of the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2022-2023, for publication on the Council's website.	Anwen Cullinane/Kath Peters	Cllr Nigel George
06/03/2024	Council Self-Assessment year-end Report 2022-2023	The Council's Self-Assessment 22/23 is the Council's public position on how it has assessed and judged itself in its effectiveness of its organisational systems and processes, with any planned improvement needs. This includes the year-end performance of the last year of the 5 year set of (2018-23) Well-being Objectives.	Ros Roberts/Sue Richards	Cllr Nigel George
03/04/2024 13:00 p.m.	HRA Business Plan 2024	To seek Cabinet approval of the Housing Business Plan position in advance of submitting the plan to Welsh Government	Lesley Allen	Cllr James Pritchard
03/04/2024	Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy	To seek Cabinet approval for a revised Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy, which will detail the key priorities for the service and how they are proposed to be addressed.	Claire Davies/Mark Jennings/ Nick Taylor-Williams	Cllr James Pritchard/ Cllr Nigel George

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 24th January 2024

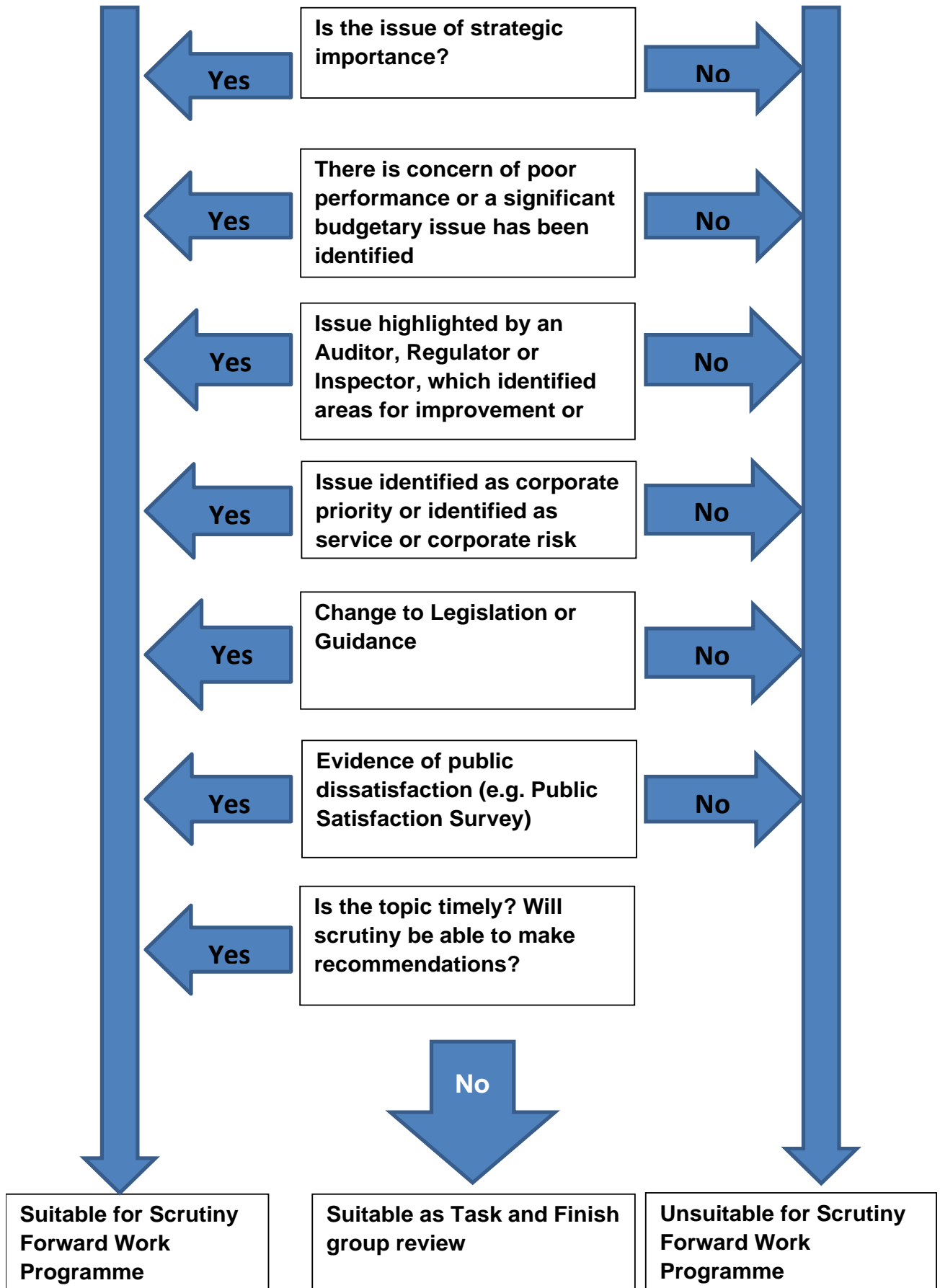
Appendix 2

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
03/04/2024	Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Ysgol Y Lawnt / Upper Rhymney Primary	For Cabinet to consider the Objection Report and approve commencement of the Planning application process and Full Business Case submission to Welsh Government.	Sue Richards/ Andrea West	Cllr Eluned Stenner
03/04/2024	Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Cabinet to consider the Objection Report and provide a final determination on the proposal to close Cwm Glas Infants School with effect from September 2024.	Sue Richards/ Andrea West	Cllr Chris Morgan
03/04/2024	Additional Support Delegation - Education	To seek Cabinet agreement to proceed with the delegation of additional support to schools.	Keri Cole/ Sarah Ellis	Cllr Philippa Leonard
03/04/2024	Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	To provide Cabinet with a statutory update to the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in accordance with Welsh Government National Strategy.	Mark Goodger/Marcus Lloyd	Cllr Eluned Stenner
03/04/2024	Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre	To advise on the outcome of a public consultation on a proposal for Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre to remain permanently closed, with sporting facilities at the adjacent Centre for Vulnerable Learners being made available for community use outside of school hours upon opening in Spring 2025. To present the views of Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee. To seek a decision on the	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr Eluned Stenner

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
		future of Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre.		

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Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30TH JANUARY 2024

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION OF
CAERPHILLY CARES AND EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING
SCHEME**

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on progress, key successes, and challenges of the Caerphilly Cares Service and Employee Volunteering Scheme.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Local Government has an important role in building confident and connected communities as part of its efforts to improve resilience, wellbeing and reduce inequalities. Community life, social connections and having a voice in local decisions are all factors that underpin well-being and resilience; however, inequalities persist, and many people experience the effects of disadvantage, social exclusion or lack social support. Community-centred approaches directly address the marginalisation and powerlessness caused by entrenched inequalities.
- 2.2 Caerphilly Cares is about that changing relationship with residents and communities, promoting independence and increasing people's control over their own lives. It's about working 'with' residents and communities, rather than delivering 'to' them as passive recipients. Providing support at the earliest point to reduce the need for statutory intervention and helping people to help themselves.. Providing residents with a single support gateway, designed primarily to fill gaps in services and alleviate pressures on statutory provision.
- 2.3 This approach to delivering services is about mobilising assets within communities. Assets such as skills, knowledge, and social networks, are the building blocks and should not be ignored. A sole focus on community needs and deficits limits the options available and sometimes increases stigma by labelling people with problems. Community engagement and outreach is a vital component of behaviour change interventions and the support from peers who share similar life experiences can be a powerful tool for improving well-being and resilience.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the content of this report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Early intervention, resilient and empowered communities is more important now than it's ever been. People's wages and welfare payments are not keeping pace with rising living costs, in particular, the costs of energy, fuel, housing, and food. Alongside this the Council has unprecedented savings to make, which means services cannot and will not look the same as they do now.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Caerphilly Cares has continuously evolved since its inception as the Council's initial response to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

5.2 In the period from 1st April 2022 to 31st August 2023, the team received 6973 calls and 2128 emails asking for support. The team has made referrals to appropriate partners and services to provide relevant support. Examples of the help provided is categorised below:

• Calls	6,973
• Emails	2,128
• Winter Fuel Payments	744
• Fuel Vouchers	797
• Food Bank Vouchers	1,648
• CAB referrals	257

5.3 There are several key themes identified through caseloads to date, the most common ones being:

- Financial Insecurity
- Debt
- Mental Health (all tiers)
- Bereavement
- Physical Mobility
- Drug and Alcohol Dependencies
- Ongoing Health Struggles
- Digitally Excluded
- Cost of Living
- Isolation
- Domestic Abuse

5.4 The team has supported various provisions, charities, and individuals both internally and externally and continues to forge relationships with partner organisations. Collaboration and partnership working with Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Citizen's Advice, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) local foodbanks and Benardos through to local support groups continues to grow rapidly.

5.5 As Caerphilly Cares has evolved and developed since the pandemic, the needs of Caerphilly Borough residents have also changed. The close ties with Housing and

Social Services have strengthened and improved. Regular communication to evaluate the process mapping has been completed with various teams to help further shape and develop Caerphilly Cares as a service area that can directly respond to identified need.

- 5.6 SPOCs (special points of contact) have been created within the team to improve relationships across departments such as Housing, Social Services (IAA in particular) and Job Centre Plus (JCP), where co-location working has proved an invaluable learning tool for staff in understanding the complexities of the issues faced by our residents. This has also bettered our response times and overall customer service standards as a result by providing a seamless gateway to appropriate support.
- 5.7 Since transferring over from Social Services in July 2022, the Community Connector team has supported over 900 individuals with 1-1 support. Of the 900, 300+ individuals have accessed community groups and 250 have been supported to attend groups. Over 200 people are now 'signed off' from support with no intervention needed. To achieve the teams' outcomes and measures, the Caerphilly Cares Gateway is the primary path into the service, which ensures people are receiving the right support with no duplication across other programmes.
- 5.8 To date, the team has supported individuals to complete carers assessments, occupational therapy assessments, referrals to Rehabilitation Officer Visual Impairment Sensory Team, the Mental Health Team and to other partner services to help address the needs of each individual. Individuals who have received support have re-engaged with their communities, gained new relationships, friendships and have built confidence and resilience to overcome the barriers that have stopped them from doing this independently. Alongside this, they have also received support to maximise their income and have had appropriate aids in their home to help retain their independence.
- 5.9 Whilst the initial response to the Cost-of-Living crisis focused mainly on crisis-level support due to the urgent pressures and rising energy bills, the focus now is on longer term responses. Within the context of ongoing economic challenges, it may reasonably be assumed that the crisis is likely to be ongoing for some time; therefore, there are also a range of potential initiatives either in development, or at the initial stages of consideration, which are outlined below.
- 5.10 Engagement has been a key activity because it is recognised that in many cases there is already a range of support available; however, many hard-to-reach residents are either not aware of this support or face barriers to accessing it.
- 5.11 Between September and December 2022, an initial series of cost-of-living roadshows were held, supported by staff from across various Council departments, to engage with residents and promote the wide range of support available. Further engagement was also conducted via staff attendance at public events, including CCBC Christmas markets, jobcentre events and events organised by partners including Groundwork and Members of Parliament/Senedd Members. In total, cost-of-living support was promoted at over 40 specific sessions, with direct support, referrals or signposting given to over 150 citizens.
- 5.12 In 2023, engagement has continued via attendance at the full programme of CCBC public events (8 events to date), alongside smaller but more targeted community outreach, including cost-of-living sessions in schools, libraries, welcome spaces and with groups such as the Parent Network, to engage those residents who may be harder to reach.

- 5.13 Two special cost-of-living editions of Newline have since been produced by the Communications team and circulated in October/November and March/April respectively, to ensure that information was made available to all residents, including those who may not access the website due to reasons including digital exclusion.
- 5.14 In addition to this generalised cost-of-living promotion, frontline teams are also working in partnership to promote specific campaigns relevant to support residents and maximise their income through promotion of their entitlements, such as Pension Credit, where intelligence from DWP suggests that this benefit in particular is under-claimed. A large-scale cost-of-living event is also being planned for November 2023, to promote key messages and opportunities for support as we move into the winter.
- 5.15 From April 2022 to August 2023 the income maximisation team funded by the Caerphilly Cares / Cost of Living budgets and based within the Housing Rents team has generated an additional £4.6m for residents.
- 5.16 The team has visited CCBC owned sheltered housing schemes to offer residents the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss any concerns and to access one to one support and advice relevant to cost-of-living. As part of this work, the team have assisted numerous residents with claiming their £200 winter fuel payments and completed over 30 Pension Credit checks. In addition, residents have also received advice on energy and water bills, with staff contacting providers on their behalf when needed, as well as exploring other benefit entitlements that they may have been unaware of.
- 5.17 The team also contacted significant numbers of residents via telephone and home visits to fill out their winter fuel applications, with contact in many of these cases also leading to additional benefit claims. They also attended local Jobcentres and have worked in partnership with the Ukraine Resettlement Team.
- 5.18 In addition to the above, work has been carried out throughout the year to raise awareness across all departments of the range of support that is available for residents. This is aimed particularly at those staff that may not traditionally consider themselves as working in a supportive role, but who may nevertheless encounter members of the public within their day-to-day work (as well as friends and family) who may be struggling.
- 5.19 A Cost-of-living Hardship Grant has been established in response to identified need across CCBC frontline support services, for those in need of urgent financial support but are not eligible for or have exhausted existing grant schemes, in particular those that might be working but are experiencing In-Work poverty. The grant has been operational since April 2023 and provides either direct financial assistance (up to £700) or equivalent white goods (if that is the specific need). The primary eligibility factor for the grant is professional judgement (via referral from an officer providing support), to give flexibility to support those who may not have been approved for other grants based purely on traditional criteria such as employment/benefit status etc. Eligibility criteria as follows:
- Individuals are not able to apply themselves – applications can only be made on their behalf by a member of staff from a team/organisation that has been permitted access to the fund. This ensures an element of professional decision making as the first stage of the process, with the intention that the staff member will have had conversations to give an understanding of the applicant's circumstances

- Individual must have exhausted other commonly available funds (most notably DAF). If DAF has not yet been applied for (and is a relevant option) then they will be asked to apply for this first.
 - Income and Expenditure Summary – mandatory for all applications.
 - 2 most recent bank statements – mandatory for all applications.
 - The process above is constantly under review and overseen by staff from Caerphilly Cares, Housing and Supporting People; to ensure appropriate checks are in place to avoid abuse of the scheme, whilst also trying to prevent applications being unnecessarily onerous for those requiring urgent hardship support. The use of the Charis portal for the white good option of the grant ensures that the white good will be allocated and delivered direct.
- 5.20 Since commencement, there has been 230 successful applications to the Fund, totalling payments of £152,500 to residents. This has also included applications for white goods totalling £2,753 in value. Applications appear to be evenly spread across the Borough in terms of the location of beneficiaries and reasons for applications include energy costs, housing/rent costs, food costs, debt repayment, transport, other utility costs, clothing, furnishing costs (including carpet) where people in crisis have had to move accommodation within a short timescale.
- 5.21 A Community Support Fund (CSF) has been established to enable community groups to access funding to deliver projects relevant to the cost-of-living. Initially this took the form of a network of Welcoming Spaces (also known as Warm Hubs) across the county borough, to provide local people with a warm and welcoming space to spend time, meet new people, try new things, and access services and advice. The Welcoming Spaces have been funded primarily via the CSF, with an additional £62k provided via the Welsh Government Warm Spaces funding during the Autumn/Winter 22/23 period. Through Spring/Summer 2023, the Welcoming Space network evolved to deliver alternative activities relevant to the changing needs of the cost-of-living crisis, for example projects linked to food provision; however, we expect a return to a focus on providing warm spaces as we approach another Autumn/Winter period. To achieve sustainability within our communities, the Community Development team are consulted on each application to ensure the maximum potential can be reached alongside the most appropriate support.
- 5.22 To date 60+ Welcoming Spaces projects have been approved across the borough, totalling £250,000 of investment in community provision. The Welcoming Spaces now cover a vast geographical area, with much of the County Borough in good proximity to a Welcoming Space.
- 5.23 As Welcoming Spaces are confirmed, they are being added to an overall directory/map which is available via the CCBC website/Cost-of-living landing page. This directory has also been shared with specific internal and external partners who will be able to support isolated and/or vulnerable customers to access these spaces within their community. Where appropriate, teams across the Council that provide support relevant to cost-of-living issues can use welcoming spaces as an opportunity to engage with attendees and provide advice or further support from these venues.
- 5.24 In addition to the approval of funding for community organisations, the funding has also been used to establish Welcoming Spaces in Council venues, most notably within the CCBC Libraries network. Whilst libraries have always been open

community spaces, via the Welcoming Spaces funding they are now also able to offer hot drinks across all 18 locations. Since commencement in November, approximately 38,000 hot drinks have been given out, however the most significant positive outcomes of this initiative have been those relating to customer engagement. Library staff have reported that while accessing free hot drinks, customers are having more in-depth conversations with library staff, which gives the opportunity for customer consultation and identification of need, with greater potential for appropriate referrals to then be made to offer support.

- 5.25 As a response to rising fuel costs and periods of cold weather over the winter months, a supply of warm packs was purchased. Approximately 550 packs were distributed during the 22/23 Autumn/Winter period, with each pack including items designed to “heat the human not the home”, such as a hat, scarf, gloves, blanket, hot water bottle, thermal mug, hand warmers and a home thermometer. A small quantity of enhanced packs also included thermal underlayers and bodywarmers for those at most risk, including rough sleepers. Warm packs were distributed via front line Council staff responsible for supporting vulnerable residents (such as Emergency Housing, Floating Support and Community Connectors), as well as a range of direct partners including Cornerstone, Platform and POBL. Packs were also distributed to venues within the Welcoming Spaces network, including CCBC Libraries, to enable staff and volunteers to provide immediate support to anyone attending and disclosing a need.
- 5.26 In advance of the 2023/24 Winter period, a procurement exercise has been completed to secure a contract for regular and sufficient supply of packs for those in need. This will enable services to distribute an even greater number of packs over the coming season, with the intention of extending their reach to vulnerable residents. Packs are distributed with the understanding that they should only ever be a short term and immediate measure to address the risk of cold for the most vulnerable; and that wherever possible the allocation of a pack should be accompanied by a referral to Caerphilly Cares to address wider concerns.
- 5.27 Work has been ongoing to combat the issue of fuel poverty across the County Borough, via a dual approach of direct financial assistance to address the immediate need of people to heat their homes; and the provision of energy efficiency advice as a long-term preventative approach to manage future fuel poverty. Council teams including Housing (Rents) and Caerphilly Cares have worked in partnership with Citizens’ Advice and supportive community organisations, to distribute fuel vouchers to residents on prepayment meters in need of immediate support with their energy bills. 788 vouchers were issued in 2022/23, with a further 230 vouchers having been issued this year since April 2023.
- 5.28 To ensure the fuel vouchers were not simply a one-off unsustainable measure, a large number of CCBC staff, including the Cost-of-living team based within Housing (Rents) and Private Sector Housing teams, have also conducted energy advice visits, whereby delivering these in partnership with financial assistance and support from Citizens’ Advice has enabled us to reach a far greater number of residents. In the last year this partnership has supported over 500 residents, providing them with fuel vouchers, key energy efficiency advice and low energy lightbulbs, alongside over 160 energy advice visits by the Private Sector Housing team. This work has prevented vulnerable families from disconnection and provided key energy advice tips and support. The partnership was also able to secure £144,000 from Discretionary Fund underspends to ensure that the project can continue throughout the upcoming Winter.

- 5.29 In addition to the work outlined above, funds have also been allocated under the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) to develop a Cost-of-Living Energy Project, to enable continuation (and expansion) of work to improve properties rated D, E, F and G (low) in terms of energy efficiency. An Energy Crisis Grant has been developed to allow significant improvements to be made to these properties up to the value of £5,000 (dependent on eligibility according to specified criteria), including the installation of new boilers and windows where required, to improve Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings and combat the risk of fuel poverty in the long term. The grant has been operational since April 2023 and is still in its infancy, however 3 grants have already been fully awarded with works completed, with a further 5 awaiting install and an additional 19 applications being processed.
- 5.30 This central grant element of the project is also supported by additional work to support residents to improve energy efficiency, including aforementioned energy advice visits and the distribution of low energy lightbulbs. The lightbulbs have been funded via the SPF Cost-of-living Energy project and have also been installed in 48 newly let CCBC properties, alongside wraparound financial health checks and energy advice for all new tenants. This process will be ongoing for all void CCBC lets.
- 5.31 As can be seen above, the range of work to address energy efficiency is rapidly expanding and is due to be supported by further community-based work e.g., development of energy champions network to raise awareness of energy saving messages, communication of key energy saving campaigns to residents, work with schools etc.
- 5.32 Feedback from partners identified small numbers of residents are unable to engage effectively with support services (such as Citizens' Advice and the Jobcentre) due to the lack of a phone to enable even simple contact such as arranging appointments and providing feedback no support applications etc. In response, a stock of basic mobile phones was purchased for provision to vulnerable customers. Phones have been allocated via referral from professionals (including CCBC staff and relevant partners) and complement existing schemes which allow for provision of sim cards/credit top up.
- 5.33 As a result of increasingly high demand for Citizens' Advice services it has been identified that there is need for greater capacity in terms of specialist debt and welfare benefit advice. In recognition of their established expertise in this field an agreement was made with Citizens' Advice to fund an additional Specialist Welfare Benefits Adviser and Debt Adviser. The staff members were recently recruited and will soon commence delivery as part of the existing Let's Talk Money project, which is already run in partnership with Families First, Supporting People and Citizens' Advice Service.
- 5.34 Specific support has also been developed in partnership with Supporting People, to utilise the cost-of-living budget to provide hot meals for homeless people within the Borough, in recognition of the knock-on impact of the cost-of-living crisis in terms of the general public feeling less able to afford the more informal support that rough sleepers will often rely on. CCBC's Supporting People team has worked with Cornerstone to develop a simple process for instant provision of hot meals to homeless people. The first 3 months of this provision proved extremely successful, leading to the engagement of many service users who had previously been reluctant to engage. Given this success, approval has now been given to extend this project to include those most vulnerable in Temporary Accommodation (homeless awaiting accommodation).

- 5.35 There are now 23 established food organisations such as Fare Share members, Food Co-ops, Food Banks, and Food pantries within the county borough. The need for Food Bank support has increased in the URV area by 95% over the past several months.
- 5.36 The team has been successful in setting up the Caerphilly Food Network to coordinate all food poverty & insecurity initiatives across the borough. The steering group which is made up of private sector, third sector and food organisations throughout Caerphilly take a lead on developing the network to work cohesively, avoid duplication and share best practice.
- 5.37 As part of the Food Network funding has been obtained to enable 4 local community groups to employ local food development officers, who can learn and share best practice across community organisations. For example, Community Volunteers Wales (formerly Risca CV19) has developed a very successful food pantry model, St. Gladwys in Bargoed a thriving Fairshare and luncheon club scheme.
- 5.38 The team is also working collaboratively with the Rural Development Programme Team on the Food 4 Growth initiative targeted at food producers, growers & manufacturers as well as decreasing food waste.
- 5.39 The Community Cooking Champions project, supported by Morrisons has proved to be a great success. The project provides an 8-week cooking course to learners who attend one day a week and learn how to cook nutritional and healthy meals. When they complete the course, they receive a slow cooker. Participants are referred into the project by residents who have engaged with Caerphilly Cares and other partner support services such as Multiply who provide follow up courses with interested participants. We in turn encourage the participants to volunteer in community settings to establish sustainability.
- 5.40 The team has also developed an excellent working relationship with Coleg Y Cymoedd jointly delivering Community Cooking Classes for specific groups including Young Carers aged 12 to 16 years and Mums & Dads who are sole parents. As well as setting up a social supermarket in URV and supporting a thriving Food Pantri on the Risca High Street. *(Case study included in Appendices)*
- 5.41 The installation of the first outdoor Community Fridge in Graig Y Rhacca is nearing completion. The fridge is stocked with close to sell by date from Local supermarkets and is aimed at tackling the need for fresh food on an estate where there is only one shop open part time.

5.2 Volunteering

- 5.2.1 During the last year, the team has successfully merged the previous 'Buddy Scheme' with the social services Volunteer Service. With the service being on hold since the inception of the pandemic, the majority of the first 6 months (to March 2023) was spent completing preparatory work to ensure the service could restart safely. This included contacting all registered volunteers, completing DBS checks, contacting everyone on waiting lists to assess needs and suitability, and merging 4 databases (Social Services database, Caerphilly Cares database, Buddy scheme database and any waiting lists) into one central database.
- 5.2.2 The CCBC Employee Volunteering Scheme (EVS) was agreed in early 2020 but officially launched in October 2021 due to the pandemic. The EVS enables staff to give their time to support our communities either as a part day/day release from their

role with permission of their manager or as part of a long-term opportunity, which is done in their own time and entitles them to claim up to an additional 2 days leave of absence as a thank you.

- 5.2.3 Recruiting volunteers is becoming increasingly more difficult, an issue shared across the voluntary sector and one which GAVO is acutely aware. To increase recruitment, the team has attended events and activities arranged with CCBC colleagues & external partners (e.g., Which Way Now? Event, Play in the Park, Carers group), implemented a timetable of pop up sessions in the majority of libraries across the borough, organised stands in a variety of supermarket foyers and pop up sessions in Caerphilly town centre (Castle Court shopping precinct).
- 5.2.4 To further encourage new recruits and thank existing volunteers, the team have set up a monthly prize draw for the volunteers. Prizes currently include a £15 Love to Shop voucher and a month's free use of a CCBC leisure centre of their choice (this started 1st of June 2023). Prizes have also been sought from links made with community champions based in the major supermarkets in the borough, providing additional incentives for volunteers at no cost to the service.
- 5.2.5 A new referral form and an updated set of criteria have been devised, making the process of receiving referrals smoother by providing more detailed information to ensure referrals are appropriate and matches are easier.
- 5.2.6 The scheme was developed using Volunteering Wales system to record and report on volunteer engagement. This system, used by CVCs on a Wales wide basis and is contract managed by the WCVA, has been under development as part of a new tender for the majority of the year. This has led to delays in being able to promote the EVS as widely as the team would have liked, however following the soft launch of system in July the council has been set up as a 'large' (umbrella) organisation and any opportunities linked to CCBC will be monitored by Caerphilly Cares going forward. This will allow us to better understand numbers of volunteers across the organisation and simplify the process of registering to volunteer with CCBC.
- 5.2.7 Caerphilly Cares was successful in securing a second round of funding (October 22 – October 23) from the WCVA Strategic Volunteering Grant, building on the work achieved in the first, short term round which ended in June 2022. The focus of the grant is on the development of the EVS and encouraging our private sector contractors to engage in volunteering. To this end, initial discussions have been held with Procurement to explore how we can maximise social value obligations of our suppliers.
- 5.2.8 The Volunteer Network was established at the start of 2023 to ensure that the volunteer experience is the universal across all departments and that all teams are following the same policies when advertising, recruiting and supporting volunteers. It provides a vehicle for sharing information about the volunteering projects that are available, shared training opportunities (for members and the volunteers), best practice sharing and shared promotion of projects.
- 5.2.9 The team has been working with GAVO and HR to draft a Volunteer Policy for the authority. The policy scope will include all departments that host/manage volunteers, standardising procedures, expectations of both the volunteer and the organisation and ensuring that volunteers have a positive, worthwhile experience with CCBC regardless of where their placement is held.

5.2.10 A new volunteering landing page has been developed on the corporate website. <https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/volunteering>. The new pages provide a one-stop-shop for members of the public wanting to volunteer with us in a clear, approachable, and user-friendly format. The pages went live on the website at the end of August and were officially launched at the end of October.). Videos of both the Caerphilly Cares Employee Volunteering Scheme and the Caerphilly Cares Be-Friending Service can be seen in the following links:-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5hyGNk8GUw>
<https://youtu.be/49qt5cvVdhw>

Snapshot of volunteering workstream data up to end of August 2023:

Measure	Total	Breakdown
Volunteers registered with Befriending Service	51	41 community volunteers, 9 CCBC employees (EVS)
People receiving support from a volunteer	78	41 linked to social groups, 37 receiving 1:1 support
EVS volunteers registered (CCBC)	54	54 individuals some of which will have undertaken more than 1 opportunity
Volunteering opportunities held (EVS)	6	FSM deliveries, tree planting (x2), painting at TARRAGAN Bargoed, GYR community association relocation, Cooking Champions course
Volunteer Network meetings held	3	January, April, July (next date planned for October) 2023
Departments with volunteer opportunities	7	Caerphilly Cares, Youth Offending, Leisure, Sports Development, Youth Service, Countryside, Tourism

5.3 Partnerships and Collaboration

- 5.3.1 At the forefront of delivery has been a commitment to collaboration, in many cases utilising existing resources and services to adapt and tailor delivery in innovative ways, across departments. This has been supported by the formation of internal working groups at both a Strategic and Operational level.
- 5.3.2 Key partnerships have been developed across the Council and with partner organisation as outlined above. These include; Catering, Libraries, Housing, Leisure, Supporting People, Department of Work and Pensions, Citizen's Advice, The Parent Network, Coleg y Cymoedd, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations, as well as numerous community-based organisations (This list is not exhaustive).
- 5.3.3 Many of the responses and initiatives established have been developed because of these partnerships; and indeed, would not have been possible without the support of these teams in both identifying needs and then assisting in the delivery of services. In particular, the development of the Cost-of-living Hardship Fund has been a direct product of effective partnership work between Caerphilly Cares, Housing (Rents), Customer Services and Supporting People. These teams continue to work in close partnership to administer and manage the fund as it evolves alongside the changing nature of the cost-of-living crisis. On a wider basis, the network of partners (both internal and external) utilising the fund continues to grow and initial feedback from partners has been extremely positive, demonstrating that it is working to support the needs of residents in crisis.

- 5.3.4 In terms of external partnerships, this report outlines key collaborative work with the Citizen's Advice Service as an essential partner. Work is also ongoing to develop stronger links with local Housing Associations specifically in relation to the cost-of-living crisis, which has led to them signing up as partners for the Hardship Fund as well as referring people for support on a more general basis.
- 5.3.5 Work with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABuHB) has resulted in the use of the Caerphilly Cares Gateway by GPs to increase Social Prescribing and through their Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCN's) they have agreed to contribute £193,408 per calendar year to support the expansion of the Wellbeing Community Connector Service by 4 full time members of staff to add capacity to the already established service.
- 5.3.6 Numerous activities have been supported by community organisation, without whom the fundamental principles of Caerphilly Cares would not be achievable.

'The Parish Trust has been privileged to work alongside Caerphilly Cares in our collective mission to support the people of Caerphilly. The team have played an instrumental role in enabling us to network, collaborate, source funding, and bring together innovative ideas to benefit our local community. Through our collaboration with Caerphilly Cares, we have witnessed tangible benefits that have had a profound impact on our organisation's ability to serve our community effectively. The assistance and guidance provided by Caerphilly Cares have not only enhanced our outreach but have also helped us to streamline our efforts, ultimately maximising our impact. In working with Caerphilly Cares, we have experienced a genuine commitment to empowering local charities and community organisations. The guidance and resources offered have been invaluable, making it easier for us to navigate the challenging landscape of community support. The connections forged through Caerphilly Cares have opened doors to potential funding opportunities, resource sharing, and a wealth of collaborative initiatives that benefit the people of Caerphilly.' Rev. Dean Aaron Roberts (CARE Trethomas)

Further testimonials in support of collaboration are included in the Appendices.

5.4 Key Achievements

- 5.4.1 Staff training and development has been a crucial part of the successful delivery of Caerphilly Cares. A genuine passion for providing the best customer experience has been key. As the team gained new staff members it was crucial to instil the same caring ethos into the team and build on the team culture that has been created.
- 5.4.2 Sharing this ethos and culture has been a key priority, through several focussed initiatives to help and improve the customer/resident experience across the Council and our delivery partners.
- 5.4.3 A 'What Matters' briefing session has been developed for staff to support their conversations with vulnerable people to ensure that the discussions are person centred with 'how can you help yourself' being the starting point. Alongside the Connect 5 train the trainer course, which is a Public Health Wales brief intervention course for mental wellbeing. Both have been delivered to Caerphilly Cares staff and included in the programme of training to volunteers and to those requesting such support Council wide. These initiatives are being rolled out and have been widely valued, with some overwhelmingly positive feedback collected. Many stating they had learned so much and that everyone in the Council should have these sessions, especially operational staff.

Money Invested in Communities and Economy

Total amount of grant invested into the community = **£1.4m**

Total amount of Income Maximisation to Residents = **£8.9m**

- Over 1,000 fuel vouchers issued to residents.
- Food Network established amongst 25 established organisations (Foodbanks, Fare Share, Pantries, private sector etc.)
- 1,200 Foodbank referrals made.
- Over 60 Community groups supported.
- 60 Welcoming Spaces established, supporting over 3,000 residents across 1,000 community-based sessions.
- 51 Volunteers providing 1-2-1 support to vulnerable residents.
- Over 950 residents assisted by Community Connectors in reducing Loneliness & Isolation
- 540 Warm Packs given to the most vulnerable in our communities.

5.5 Challenges

5.5.1 There have also been some notable challenges, namely:

5.5.2 There generally remains limited understanding of the Employee Volunteering Scheme amongst both staff and managers, which may be attributed in part to poor visibility on the previous Intranet pages. Further promotion amongst teams is needed. Discussions have taken place with the Transformation Team to explore the possibility of future volunteering opportunities being advertised on the new Engagement HQ system. Further to this, the team are working with Communications to develop a short film to promote the scheme, which will be posted online but can also be used as part of presentations at team meetings.

5.5.3 There are several services providing information, advice, assistance, and support across the Council with varied levels and types of engagement. The challenge moving forward is to rationalise touch points and streamline provision with the customer experience at the forefront. Adopting a person-centred approach and a 'what matters' approach is key to ensuring the starting point is what people can do for themselves.

5.5.4 Whilst the partnership with GAVO has been overall positive, with some excellent examples of collaboration. For example, Caerphilly Cares funding for volunteer training and joint work on changing the National Volunteer platform. There have also been some challenges regarding potential duplication of provision. This has partly been down to communication issues and misunderstandings. Several positive meetings have now taken place and a clear way forward identified.

5.5.5 Development and delivery of SPF projects with late notice of funding and lack of clarity from UK Gov in relation to guidance, monitoring requirements and evidence has led to challenges and barriers in rolling out successful projects. Balancing these delays and barriers with the processes and needs of departments such as Housing has proved difficult at times; and short notice requests for information (outcomes, evidence, and finance) can prove challenging when having to collate information from a range of partners without well-defined timescales.

- 5.5.6 There is a need to develop appropriate targeting to ensure that initiatives support those most in need. It can be difficult to establish parameters/eligibility for this when balancing a limited resource with a desire to help residents. We have still not developed a consistent solution for this, although currently tend to allocate resources based on staff referral and professional judgement.
- 5.5.7 Waiting lists for external partners e.g., Supporting people providers (due to the demand).
- 5.5.8 Insufficient bespoke provision in communities for the needs of the individuals i.e., Memory and Sensory Loss Services, Learning Disabilities.

5.6 Conclusion

Caerphilly Cares is not a 'service' that operates in isolation, it reflects the ethos of the Transformation Strategy # Team Caerphilly Better Together that influences how we engage with our residents and how our services respond.

The current cost of living crisis means more people are unable to afford the essentials, which has significant and wide-ranging negative impacts on mental and physical health. These can have long-term consequences for the people affected and the systems and services that are needed to support them. People living in the poorest parts of Wales already die more than six years earlier than those in the least deprived areas, and the cost-of-living crisis will accelerate what were already increasing differences in health between those with more and less money.

The current crisis is not just a temporary economic squeeze: it is a long-term public service issue affecting the whole population, which means communities will become even more reliant on public services and as a result, building social resilience and self-reliance in citizens is even more important than ever.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 The gap between the most deprived and the most affluent has widened and continues to widen, and with the increase in living costs, fuel costs, National Insurance, and inflation this is likely to be exacerbated. This highlights the need to take an in depth look on how we intend to support our communities moving forward in the context of significant budget challenges to respond to and mitigate the anticipated growing demand for support.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Total forecasted staffing related costs for Caerphilly Cares in 2024/25:

Forecasted Caerphilly Cares Salary Costs = **£1.8m (inc. £117k allocation to Housing Rents team)**

Total Forecasted Grant Funding (Income) = **£700k**

Total Forecasted Staffing Cost to CCBC = £1.1m

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

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

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 None.

Author: Tina McMahon, Caerphilly Cares Manager

Consultees: Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Richard (Ed) Edmunds, Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
Cllr Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Steven Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Nick Taylor - Williams, Head of Housing
Sandra Issacs, Rents Manager

Background Papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Testimonials and Case Studies

Appendix 1 – Testimonials and Case studies

Testimonials

1) Partner Statement – Citizens' Advice

Ceri Morgan, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent CAB:

“Citizens Advice Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent's Warmer Wales 2 energy advice project has provided essential energy advice during the cost of living crisis. Working in partnership with Caerphilly Cares and Housing, we have developed the project to offer fuel vouchers to vulnerable individuals experiencing severe hardship and unable to heat their homes. Working together we have jointly promoted the benefits of the project, increased the number of people accessing advice and provided key support to communities across Caerphilly Borough. Working with Caerphilly Cares and Housing has not only allowed us to meet the needs of more people but has helped us to deliver a successful energy product more effectively than we could have done working alone.”

2) Partner statement – The Parish Trust

Rev. Dean Aaron Roberts:

“The Parish Trust has been privileged to work alongside Caerphilly Cares in our collective mission to support the people of Caerphilly. The team have played an instrumental role in enabling us to network, collaborate, source funding, and bring together innovative ideas to benefit our local community. Through our collaboration with Caerphilly Cares, we have witnessed tangible benefits that have had a profound impact on our organisation's ability to serve our community effectively. The assistance and guidance provided by Caerphilly Cares have not only enhanced our outreach but have also helped us to streamline our efforts, ultimately maximising our impact. In working with Caerphilly Cares, we have experienced a genuine commitment to empowering local charities and community organisations. The guidance and resources offered have been invaluable, making it easier for us to navigate the challenging landscape of community support. The connections forged through Caerphilly Cares have opened doors to potential funding opportunities, resource sharing, and a wealth of collaborative initiatives that benefit the people of Caerphilly.”

3) Rhiannon Jones

Business Manager, Maximus

“We have had a customer in today where his life has literally been turned around by the collaborate support that we (collectively) have put in place. The customer was referred to us by JCP as part of the Work and Health Programme Contract.

The customer was suffering with severe mental health which was due to recent loss of his wife and spiralling financial situation.

The impact upon his health was clear to see, wasn't sleeping, eating and trying to bury his head in the sand as escapism.

The customer was distressed and could see no way out from his issues, mainly being the debt for his council tax and rent within CCBC.

Following on from this, the customer has tried numerous times to try and engage with the local authority and various departments however he wasn't getting anywhere and felt he was being given the run around, facing penalties which was obviously adding to his already concerning Mental Health.

Customer attended his appointment with Kelly, where she was able to support him by being signposted for a referral, via the Caerphilly Cares contact number, where he was then referred to the support he needed from the offset, assigned a key worker and a fully manageable plan was quickly put in place.

The customer's life was quickly turned around within a short space of time where he seriously cannot thank everyone enough!! He is so grateful!

I feel I needed to share this as a way of communication how well the Single point of contact has supported us to ensure this customers wellbeing has been supported. Despite given the 'run around 'and him trying to get things together himself, this single point gateway has literally been a lifesaver. The ease of the access to service has provided a huge level of support for both the customer and ourself in his own progression. The customer is now looking at a more positive future, in working towards obtaining his Bus licence and a FT job.

Without this service we wouldn't have been able to ensure not only his wellbeing, his confidence and his progression! The Caerphilly Cares service has supported our customer in such a short space of time, which has certainly helping preventing his further decline in his Mental Health!

Thanks again from all the team in the Work and Health Programme Contract in Caerphilly!!!"

4) Dai Morgan Employer & Partnership Manager, DWP

'I've spoken with all the Work Coach Team Leaders in the Caerphilly Borough, they & their teams can't speak highly enough of the support being delivered by Caerphilly Cares. It's easy to access & is a 'catch all' support service for our claimants.

In addition, during our Multi agency meeting last week, several of the partners who work across multiple LA's commented on how refreshing it was to see such a collaborative approach to partnership working & support from the local authority to those most vulnerable in our communities.'

5) Haylee Williams
Operations Supervisor, Catering CCBC.

"I would just like to thank you and your team for all your help with one of our meals direct clients, I am pleased to hear that he is still engaging with your team and receiving support when he allows your team to do so. I think Kirsty and Mark would agree that the client was a very private man who very much only allows what he wants to allow. Hearing the updates from your team is positive and by working together the impact that this has made to this gentleman has been brilliant!!!

I recently sat on an emergency planning meeting and have promoted your service, I thought that if there was ever an emergency within the borough what better team to support, the skills and knowledge of your team could play a vital role in ensuring residents needs are met.

Yesterday I answered a free school meal call from a resident who had not received her voucher, she had very little food left and had £6.00 in her bank account by me having a chat with her and providing Caerphilly Cares contact number she was able to have a chat with one of your team. I later received a call from the resident who was in tears that your team was able to help provide her with a food bank voucher. This was a case that pulled on the heart strings, and I am pleased that I was able to sign post and your team were able to help! People are really feeling the pressure of the cost of living out in our communities.

The partnership between service areas have really grown and I look forward to working with the Caerphilly Cares team in the future."

6) Marcia Lewis
Principal Officer, Catering CCBC

"I just wanted to write to you formally to thank you, and all your team for the support you have given my service area over the last few years.

I think it's fair to say that the Covid pandemic strengthened our partnership when Caerphilly Cares supported our service area in helping us coordinate the huge amount calls, we were receiving from members of the community in relation to their FSM deliveries. We had very short notice to set up the FSM delivery service and the Caerphilly Cares team become a vital link in helping us as the catering team in managing the level of calls and expectations of some of our most vulnerable clients within the local community.

During this time, the Caerphilly Cares team played a far wider role as they were able to form strong bonds with many of our customers and were able not only to offer advice on the FSM delivery service but assist our customers with financial support around managing debt, advising on benefits, and maximising income. The team also offered additional advice on tackling food poverty through referrals to Foodbanks, grants for community groups, offering supporting to individuals to access employment support programmes, early intervention with mental health support and

building on partnerships with community groups. All this was achieved with one contact point for our customers which was a great benefit to them.

Over the last few months, the partnership has developed further in the support Caerphilly Cares have offered our Meals Direct customers by assisting our service area to tackling isolation and loneliness and meeting with individual clients to offer advice and support that we are not able to provide.

I believe that the partnership we have developed has enabled the authority to work at its best by linking across departments to meet our clients needs. Caerphilly Cares has become an extension of the Catering team and has assisted us on so many levels to meet our clients needs and raise the profile of the authority of the service they provide to their local community in the most trying times that hit the nation. This formed the foundation that we continue to work in partnership with you today.

I would like to thank you once again for all your support and commitment to our service area and the residents of Caerphilly.”

**7) Steven Evans-Jones
URV Foodbank Operations Manager**

Extract from a press release

“Chair of Rhymney Valley Foodbank, The Reverend Canon Mark Owen said “The Foodbank seen an unprecedented number of people needing our critical life-line service last winter with an increase of 94%” We stand with Trussell Trust to end Foodbanks in the UK but we need your help to achieve this. We are aware the cold, winter months, can be crippling for individuals and families. Please support us however small, to ensure nobody goes hungry over the next few months and beyond. We are very grateful to the continued financial support from Caerphilly County Borough Council. The Caerphilly Cares' directorate provide direct support to food aid agencies across the county borough through their Food Network”

“Again, thank you for all you do for Foodbanks across the county borough.”

**8) Amanda Jones
CEO, Parent Network**

“The project has been a vital referral project for our service users.

The cost-of-living crises has hit our local communities hard, Caerphilly cares service can offer support with complex issues along with short waiting lists, it really is a life line when communities have hit crises point.

Our project has lent on the Caerphilly cares team with a number of referrals and access to grants.”

Success Scenarios and Case Studies

Cost of Living Team/Housing Rents Success Scenarios:

Case 1

Mrs W self referred into the Caerphilly cares team. She had extensive medical problems and had applied for PIP several times but each time was unsuccessful. A member of the team arranged to meet Mrs W in a library which Mrs W felt more comfortable with and she was put at ease. The officer successfully assisted Mrs W to appeal the decision made by DWP, resulting in a £8,000 backdated payment and she was also awarded an additional weekly income of £171. Mrs W couldn't stop thanking the officer for all their support as it had made life changing difference to Mrs W's quality of life.

Case 2

Mr A, an older person from Ynysddu contacted the team as he was struggling with everyday costs. He didn't know where to turn, his family were assisting him with his care needs but he didn't think he was entitled to any further support. One of the team members arranged to visit Mr A at his home as he rarely went out. Mr A was assisted in making a successful claim for Attendance Allowance increasing his annual income by nearly £9,000. Mr B was overjoyed as this would help to pay his winter fuel bills and he wouldn't have to worry about putting the heating on.

Case 3

Mr B from Blackwood worked full time but struggled with health problems. Mr P did not believe he could claim PIP as he worked full time. A team member arranged to contact the resident around their work commitments. After several discussions, a PIP claim was submitted which successfully resulted in an increase in Mr B's annual income by £5,000 per year. This gave Mr B a much better quality of life as his additional income supported to keep Mr B in work.

Case 4

Mr and Mrs C from Cwmcarn contacted their local MP as they were really struggling to cope with the cost of living and increases in their bills. The team was asked to visit to check if Mr C was claiming everything he was entitled to. Mr and Mrs C believed that they would not be eligible to any further benefit support including pension credits. The team worked with Mr and Mrs C to claim various benefits, and helped the couple navigate the complex options that they were entitled to. This resulted in an increase in their annual income by £10,000. Mr and Mrs C said they would never have claimed if it wasn't for the team and that it has made a massive difference to the quality of their lives.

Case 5

After a referral from housing, there was an urgent need to support a resident who had their gas capped as they had no money on their meter. An engineer was unable

to complete an annual the safety service so referred the resident for support. The team completed a hardship grant to clear the debt on the account, and then referred to CAB for some emergency energy vouchers, they also arranged for the gas metre to be uncapped. Next the client was referred for some energy advice and the team is currently working with the customer to maximise their income as they are not claiming all they are entitled to.

Case 6

Mr Y didn't know where to turn as he needed furniture and could not afford to buy any. The team supported them to apply for a hardship grant. Low income and increased cost of living pressures resulted in him really struggling on a daily basis. An income and expenditure assessment showed that they were indeed in crisis and needed some support. The client was so pleased when they had the grant which made a big impact on their home life.

1) Wellbeing Community Connector Case Study

Aim: Help the person engage with the community to reduce social isolation and reduce the pressures on her role as a carer which was impacting on her health and well-being.

Outcomes:

- The person is now living independently due to aids and adaptations put in her home. This with the aim to reduce the risk of falls and accidents.
- The person has made contact with other people who have responsibilities as carers and doesn't feel that she is alone anymore.
- After the advice and intervention received, the person felt empowered and decided not to engage with adult social services teams as she felt better prepared to look after her husband, who experiences dementia.

The story:

Caerphilly cares received a referral from Cwm Rhymni Surgery to engage with patient EC. The surgery staff explained that EC attended an appointment and seemed rather down due to the pressures she was feeling as a carer for her husband, who had Alzheimer's.

The team arranged a home visit to discuss her current well-being and see how EC could be supported.

EC explained that due to the diagnosis of her husband BC's Alzheimers she had been finding it difficult to cope at home and she started clashing with BC because of the intensive situation spending all their time together. BC couldn't be left alone at home either, so EC didn't have any personal time. She explained that she just wished to spend an hour or two a week for herself. EC explained that this situation has started affecting her mood and she was feeling quite low with herself.

During the conversation, EC mentioned as well that she has always been very active and that with BC they always used to go for walks but as their health reduced, they both have stopped. EC explained that she was struggling at home as well, her kitchen has a low level to access it and as there were no aids or adaptations, she was concerned on having a falls. EC also mentioned that on her back garden, the access to it didn't have any grab rails so she struggle to access her garden. Also, her bathroom area was a difficult place as she struggled accessing the toilet as it was too low for her.

EC continued to explain that she wished to find a local place where she could go with BC so they both see other people as well as some personal time. EC explained as well that her and her husband are keen artists so they would like to find a place where they could go to practice their art. BC mentioned that she would also like help from social services to get a worker to come and sit with BC while she is away for an hour or so every week.

Working together the following action plan was made and delivered successfully.

- Referral made to IAA for an OT assessment for EC. This led to adaptations around the problem areas in her house. This will help to prevent any falls and accidents that EC could have.
- Referral made to IAA in order for EC's husband to receive support from the Older People's Team.
- A referral was made to the Carers team in order for her to receive support on her role as a carer for her husband.
- Information about a Dementia coffee morning group at Deri Community Centre given, also information for the art class that happens on Wednesdays at the Winding House in New Tredegar.

With all the above, the outcomes were very positive for EC. She has now received support from the OT team. EC feels more secure and safe and can access the different areas around her house safely which has enabled both of them to benefit from an improved quality of life.

EC has started attending the Dementia support group and BC has engaged nicely with the group. This has made a different to the couple as they are now able to meet other people who are on a similar position than her.

EC has recently joined the art class and informed the team that her son will be visiting a bit more often, so she hopes BC will be going to the art class with him. This will enable EC to have some respite and be able to do her own things.

EC also declined to receive support from IAA for the intervention from the Older People's Team as she explained that now she is engaging in wellbeing activities, she feels much better prepared to take on her role as a carer for her husband.

All of the above work has made a difference to the person's wellbeing and now she is able to carry on doing things independently.

2) Wellbeing Community Connector Case study

Aim: To reduce social isolation and to gain larger circle of friends.

Outcomes:

- Became more independent.
- Gained more confidence leaving the house.
- Rekindled old friendships and made new ones.
- Reporting improvement in their overall wellbeing.

The story

Initial meeting took place with client A in their home surroundings which eased all anxiousness. It became apparent that client A had previously been a very busy person and wanted this back in their life. There has been several personal health and personal circumstances which have resulted in client A feeling with quite low mood most days, then in turn causing isolation.

The team spoke about the strengths of Client A, and all the positives in client A's life presently. Discussing these has been very good for the client to speak out loud and hear. Client A expressing they are ready to leave the house more, being mobile, also willing to catch public transport or a taxi is very good and encouraging too.

Client A and the Wellbeing connector started to look at where to go to engage with new people and begin new friendships Client A chose what groups and venues he would like to visit this being high with priorities due to a visual impairment and the use of a guide dog too. We explored accessible taxi options, and used previous firms that he had used before, and old relationships were able to start again.

With the referral made, Client A and the team member began to visit sessions, firstly it took time to build confidence and feel at ease within the new groups (The Guide dog being a great ice breaker) and surroundings. As each week passed these groups became a great place for Client A and with confidence growing and the overcoming of personal barriers Client A was rightfully proud, also very thankful for the work from the Caerphilly Cares team.

Client A was very sure the involvement from the Wellbeing Connector had been a good experience and believing the work/support carried out had been gratefully appreciated.

3) Penallta Reuse Shop Case Study

Partners: CCBC Waste Management, Caerphilly Cares, Waste Savers, Penallta Reuse Shop

Aim: To work in partnership to promote the shop and it's volunteering opportunities to staff and their family and friends as well as the public at open day coffee mornings

Outcomes:

- Four volunteers signed up and had their inductions with Waste Savers
- One CCBC staff member signed up as part of the Employee Volunteer Scheme
- Relationship built between Caerphilly Cares and Reuse Shop with potential development of team building day in the future as part of the Employee Volunteer Scheme
- Increased awareness amongst CCBC staff of the shop and the volunteering opportunities available

The story:

The shop was set up in October 2022 and is the first of its kind in Caerphilly Borough. The purpose of the shop is to provide an opportunity for good condition items that were destined for the Household Waste Recycling Centre to be repurposed and reused. These items can then be accessed and reused by people for a great price.

The shop was set up in partnership with Waste Savers charity and all profits raised through the shop will be split equally between Waste Savers and CCBC's Mayor's charity.

It has been a huge success and as a result there were occasions when the shop had to ask the public not to donate on certain days to give them time to catch up. Whilst the shop has a small number of paid staff, they require the help of volunteers to support the shop with duties such as donations, stock replenishing and general customer service to keep it going and to help avoid non donation days.

A meeting was set up between the shop, CCBC Waste Management Department and Caerphilly Cares Volunteer Support staff to look into a way of promoting the volunteering opportunities available to staff through the Employee Volunteer Scheme and to also spread the word wider to their friends and family.

Two open day coffee mornings were agreed with social media promotion by the shop and a communications e-mail to staff to let them know about the need for volunteers. One to be held during the week and the other on a Sunday to give people the chance to attend.

At the first open day, a member of staff from Waste Management was asked to pop over by her manager to help and to have a presence from the team. Upon arrival Colette jokingly said, 'I'm not here to volunteer, I do have a day off a week and I'm keeping that!' However, after helping by sorting through and replenishing stock for a couple of hours she then came back to us and said, 'Well I know I said I wasn't here to volunteer, but I have actually really enjoyed myself and would like to offer a couple of hours on my day off'. Colette has now signed up as a Caerphilly Cares member on the Volunteering Wales platform and has had her induction so is ready to start.



As a result of the open days, 3 members of the public also signed up and have had their inductions and will start their roles as soon as their safety boots arrive.

Caerphilly Cares will continue to work in partnership with the shop to promote volunteer opportunities to staff and public as well as having a plan to offer one off team building days for staff to attend the shop when donations have been particularly high to organise and sort through them with a view to the shop not having to have days where they can't accept donations to further avoid good condition items going to landfill.

4) The Pantry/Café Upper Rhymney Valley



Partners: RDP, Facilities CCBC, St Davids Community Centre, Caerphilly Food Network. Caerphilly Cares, parent Network.

Aim: To provide a low cost social supermarket which also doubles as a café in the community centre on the high street in Rhymney.

Outcomes:

- Four part time members of staff to be employed for the café/Pantry
- 2 new projects established to address food poverty and Insecurity.
- Providing a non judgemental space to offer help and advice through Caerphilly Cares Officers.
- To provide low cost food to those struggling with Food Poverty.

The story:

The community Centre is situated on the High Street in Rhymney and is a community venue that provides space for Meithrin / Flying start runs all year term time. It also hosts Keep Fit, Kettle Bells and Beatfit exercise classes.

The parent Network also run play groups from there.

It is the hub of the community which has very few if any community venues for large activities such as carol concerts, music festivals throughout the year. The centre keeps its costs low so that local people can come together to share activities and build a sense of community in Rhymney.

Through multi funding from Rural Development Food for Growth grant, Sustainable Food Network funding from WG and in kind donations of café furniture from facilities and in partnership with Alun Ford and Kevin Lodge the project shortly begin.

The proposal is to provide a multi-functional café and Pantry in the kitchen and lounge area of the Hall at the end of the building.

The grant has paid for changes to the kitchen, the replacement of an internal door and decoration of the kitchen/Café and replacement of carpeted area with vinyl floor.

The café will offer Tea/Coffee Bacon rolls and the like at an affordable price and would be open to all, the entrance to the café would be replaced with its own door accessed from the path as you approach the café.

Advertising would be in the form of banners attached to the fence on the main pavement and with window signage viewable from the pavement.

The café is leased to the Parent Network who are a Social Enterprise and registered at companies' house, staff would be employed via the Parent Network and they would be responsible for Food Hygiene ratings and other statutory obligations including employer liability.

The Pantry element of this is to provide a low-cost food service to the residents, shelving at one end of the room which will stock the food which is for sale but will be covered during café hours with moveable panels.

The pantry Concept is charging a small membership fee of £5.00 which is valid for 6 months, this will entitle you to shop in the pantry for £4.00 a basket.

Each basket would contain.

3 Fruit and veg

2 Chilled items/2 Frozen Items

2 Bread Items

4 Cupboard Staples/1 personal product.

Members can choose the products they select from above once a week.

The contents of the basket will total between £16.00 to £20.00 in value.

Food will come from Fare Share membership and also donations.

The opening hours will allow those working to access the service too, probably between 4 till 6pm.

The Rhymney High Street contains 2 or 3 fast food restaurants, charity shops and a couple of corner shops offering very small amounts of vegetables. Access to the nearest supermarket requires a bus trip to Bargoed.

The access to fresh fruit and vegetables and alongside cookery lessons will enable residents to eat healthier and more costs effectively utilising seasonal, local food.

The café and pantry will encourage enable a healthier lifestyle and access to services in a non-judgemental place.



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30TH JANUARY 2024

SUBJECT: KEY STAGE 4 OUTCOMES 2023

**REPORT BY: DEBBIE HARTEVELD, MANAGING DIRECTOR, EAS.
TO BE DELIVERED BY EDWARD PRYCE,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – POLICY AND STRATEGY**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides members with final outcome data for Secondary schools within the Local Authority for 2022-2023 (Summer 2023).

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This year, for the first time since 2019, the Welsh Government are producing Key Stage 4 (KS4) All Wales Core Data Sets (AWCDS) at individual school level. Each of the last four years used essentially different methods for determining grades, so none are directly comparable. In 2023 national outcomes are lower than 2022, 2021 and 2020, but not as low as 2019. Provisional outcomes were available to schools, LAs and consortia in Provisional form in mid-November 2023 (via Data Exchange Wales (DEWi)). These then contribute to a school level checking process, so any errors could be addressed, before final versions were published on 20 December 2023. This report uses the final versions of outcome data for Caerphilly schools but anonymised, as at the time of writing the data has not been published by Welsh Government.
- 2.2 Please note that this data has been used in provisional form by both LA and EAS colleagues, to prioritise support at individual school level, from the start of Autumn Term 2023

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to scrutinise the contents of the report and ask questions and offer views about overall school outcomes.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility for monitoring educational outcomes

within its schools.

5. THE REPORT

Background and Context

- 5.1 This year, for the first time since 2019, the Welsh Government are producing Key Stage 4 All Wales Core Data Sets (AWCDS) at individual school level. Each of the last four years used essentially different methods for determining grades, so none are directly comparable. In 2023 national outcomes are lower than 2022, 2021 and 2020, but not as low as 2019.
- 5.2 Provisional outcomes were available to schools, LAs and consortia in Provisional form in mid-November 2023 (via Data Exchange Wales (DEWi)). These were then used to contribute to a school level checking process, so any errors could be addressed, before final versions were published on 20 December 2023. This report uses the final versions. Please note however that Welsh Government intention was to publish this data to their 'MyLocalSchool' site in early January. At the time this report was written this had been delayed.
- 5.3 Please note that whilst this final set of data has just become available, both LA and EAS colleagues have used provisional data and data provided by the school, from the start of Autumn Term 2023, to prioritise support at individual school level. This information is used to support school's own self-evaluation activity through LA led professional discussions.

Welsh Government published measures for 2023

- 5.4 These include the following points-based measures:
- The Capped 9 measure
 - Literacy measure (best of Language / Literature)
 - Numeracy measure (best of mathematics / numeracy)
 - Science measure (best of science)
 - Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure
- 5.5 In addition to the above 'points based' measures the percentage of learners achieving 5 or more A*-A and percentage of learners achieving No Qualifications are also included.
- 5.6 As well as comparisons of All Pupils, comparisons are also made Male / Female and FSM / non-FSM for each of the indicators, but only Capped 9 comparisons are included in this report at LA level.
- 5.7 In terms of analysis the two main comparisons are the Welsh Government line of modelled outcomes, and a comparison with a 'family' of similar schools.

Families

- 5.8 Schools face different challenges based on their context. The AWCDS contains comparative outcomes against similar schools – known as 'Families'. Families (of 9-10 schools) have been created by grouping on size and linguistic delivery and then ordering schools according to the values of an index of 'challenge', calculated as follows. Please note that a three-year average of data from PLASC 2021-2023 is used.

- 50% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- 30% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who live in an area classed as in the 20% most deprived parts of Wales using the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age subject to an Individual Development Plan (IDP) or with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- 10% x the proportion of pupils of statutory school age who are either new to the English language (or Welsh where relevant), at an early acquisition stage or developing competence.

5.9 Please note that there are three schools in Caerphilly that host specialist LA provision in the form of a Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB). These are often learners from outside the school's usual catchment areas, who have complex needs, that would not be met by entering them into qualifications that contributed towards these measures. Schools with such provision are placed in the same families as schools without such provision.

5.10 For 2023 there are 6 Welsh medium families, numbered from 1 (the most disadvantaged) to 5 (the least disadvantaged). There are 15 English medium families numbered from 7 (the most disadvantaged) to 21 (the least disadvantaged).

Families with Caerphilly Schools (2023)

Moved to a MORE disadvantaged Family (2 Schools)
Moved to a LESS disadvantaged Family (7 Schools)
6 Welsh Medium families (1-6)
14 English Medium families (7-21)

School Name	Family	Position
Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni	002	1
Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun		2
Ysgol Tryfan		3
Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern		4
Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni		5
YSGOL MORGAN LLWYD		6
Ysgol Dyffryn Aman		7
Ysgol Gyfun Y Strade		8
Ysgol Bro Pedr		9
Ysgol Calon Cymru		10
Ferndale Community School	008	1
Idris Davies School 3 to 18		2
St Joseph's RC School and 6th Form Centre		3
Lliswerry High School		4
Maesteg Comprehensive School		5
Pencoedtre High School		6
PEN-Y-DRE HIGH SCHOOL		7
Ysgol Bae Baglan		8

PENTREHAFOD SCHOOL		9
Cathays High School		10
The John Frost School	009	1
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School		2
Coedcae School		3
Newport High School		4
Abersychan Comprehensive		5
HEOLDDU COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL		6
Rhyl High School		7
Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic School		8
Bishop Vaughan School		9
Aberdare Community School		10
St Teilo's C-in-W High School		010
Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School	2	
Cefn Hengoed	3	
Abertillery Learning Community	4	
St Julian's School	5	
Bedwas High School	6	
Cwmbran High School	7	
Ysgol Nantgwyn	8	
Brynmawr Foundation School	9	
BISHOP GORE SCHOOL	10	
St Cenydd School	011	1
Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi		2
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community		3
MORRISTON COMPREHENSIVE		4
Hawthorn High School		5
BIRCHGROVE		6
Tonyrefail Community School		7
Tredegarr Comprehensive School		8
Ysgol Cwm Brombil		9
Rhosnesni High School		10
Grango	013	1
Milford Haven School		2
St Joseph's RC High School		3
Treorchy Comprehensive School		4
Ysgol Clywedog		5
Blackwood Comprehensive School		6
Lewis Girls' Comprehensive School		7
St. David's High School		8
St John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive School		9
Flint High School		10
Ysgol Bryn Elian	014	1
Bryngwyn School		2

St Martin's School		3
Ysgol Bryn Alyn		4
Lewis School Pengam		5
Cyfarthfa High School		6
Croesyceiliog School		7
Llanishen High School		8
Newbridge School		9
Ysgol Maesydderwen		10
Whitmore High School	016	1
St. Albans R.C. High School		2
Islwyn High School		3
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School		4
Dwr Y Felin Comprehensive School		5
St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School		6
Ysgol John Bright		7
Brynteg School		8
St John Baptist CIW High School		9
Whitchurch High School		10
Prestatyn High School	017	1
Eirias High School		2
Queen Elizabeth High School		3
Afon Taf High School		4
Risca Community Comprehensive		5
King Henry VIII Comprehensive		6
Elfed High School		7
Pontarddulais Comprehensive School		8
St Joseph's Catholic and Anglican High		9
PENCOED COMPREHENSIVE		10

- 5.11 The 1 Caerphilly Welsh medium secondary school is in family 2, the second most socio-economically disadvantaged Welsh medium family. The 11 English medium secondary schools are in families, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17. These are 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 10th and 11th most disadvantaged families, of the 15 English medium families.

Outcomes - Capped 9 – all pupils – compared with the family average

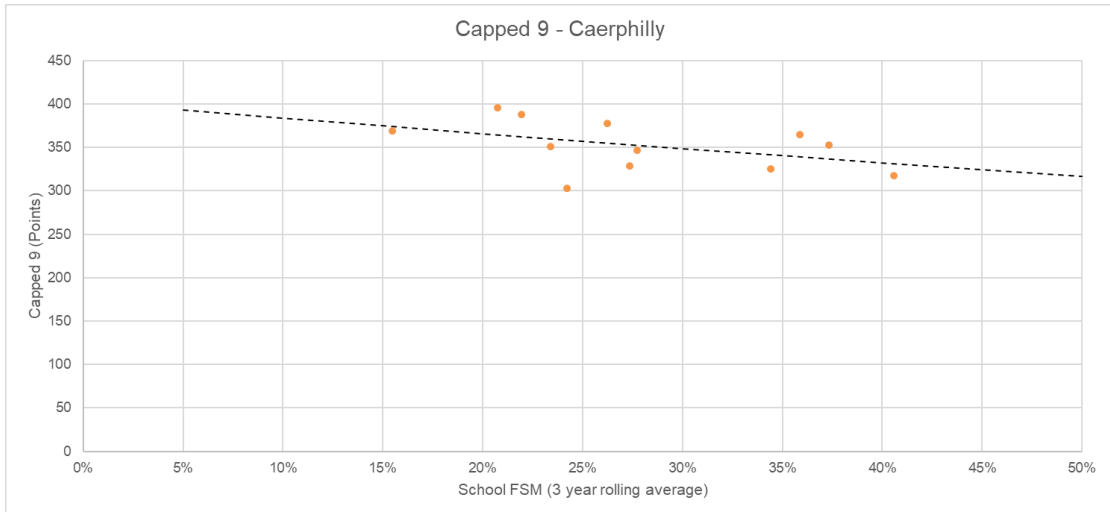
- 5.12 The table below shows the Capped 9 performance of all learners in each school compared with their individual family of schools. Six schools are above their family, and six below.

School Name	Capped 9	Family Capped 9	Capped 9 - School-Family difference
Caerphilly School	395.7	372.6	23.2
Caerphilly School	387.5	372.6	14.9
Caerphilly School	364.3	353.4	10.9
Caerphilly School	368.9	358.6	10.3
Caerphilly School	377.2	372.6	4.6
Caerphilly School	352.3	349.1	3.2
Caerphilly School	347.0	349.3	-2.3
Caerphilly School	317.3	331.5	-14.2
Caerphilly School	328.7	349.3	-20.6
Caerphilly School	351.0	376.0	-25.0
Caerphilly School	325.3	353.8	-28.5
Caerphilly School	303.1	362.4	-59.3

- 5.13 For all GCSE subjects the points difference between every grade is 6 points. So, for example a B is worth 6 more points than a C.
- 5.14 This means that for the Capped 9, a difference of 54 points indicates that on average, every learner in a school is performing above or below the family by a whole GCSE grade in every subject. (6 points x 9 subjects=54 points).
- 5.15 This means that for the best performing Caerphilly secondary school (adjusted for socio-economic disadvantage) every learner on average achieved approximately half a GCSE grade higher than the family average. For the lowest performing school (adjusted for socio-economic disadvantage), it is slightly over one grade lower on average for every learner.
- 5.16 Please note that the indicative bars on the right for this table and all below are adjusted to the minimum (negative) and maximum (positive) values for each table individually and automatically. Therefore, for example a bar '47.6 points' long will not be consistent across each chart.

Capped 9 – all pupils – compared with WG ‘Modelled Outcome’ line

- 5.17 The chart below does not compare with the family, but rather the Welsh Government ‘Modelled outcome’. Each dot represents a Caerphilly secondary school, ordered by % FSM learners.



5.18 Five schools are above the modelled outcome line and two below, 7 are below, but of these 3 are very close to the modelled outcome line.

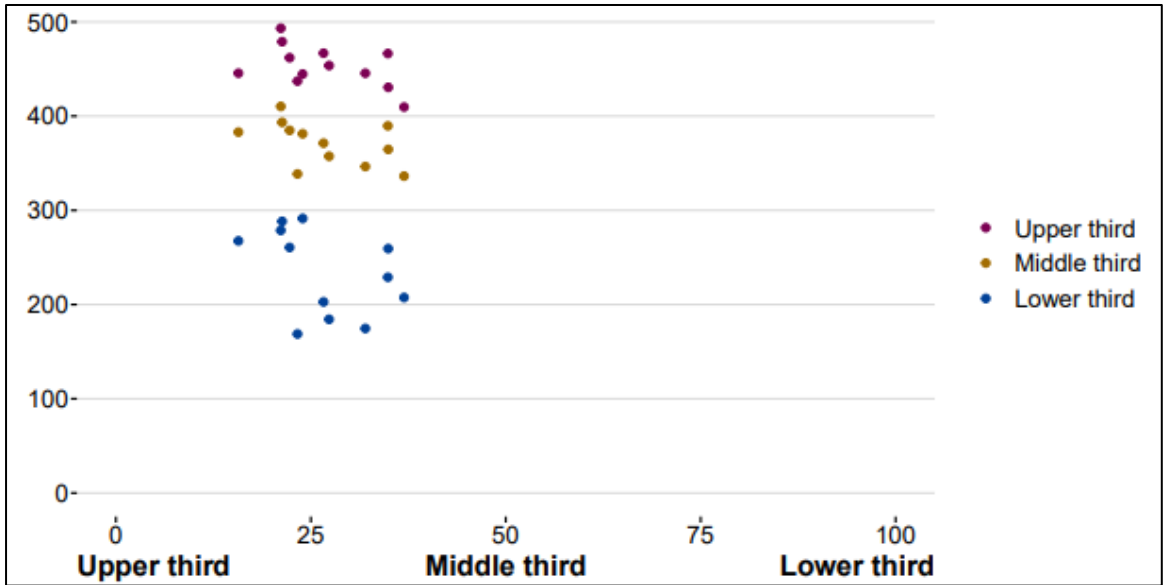
Capped 9 – Comparison by ‘Thirds’ with WG ‘Modelled Outcome’ line

5.19 The chart below groups learners in each individual school into ‘thirds’. For example, if 120 learners in a cohort, they would be split into three groups of 40 by their Capped 9 scores. Three averages would then be calculated for each of these groups. The table below gives the average of each third.

School Name	Upper Third			Middle Third			Lower Third		
	Achiev	Modell	+/-	Achiev	Modell	+/-	Achiev	Modell	+/-
Caerphilly School	493	455	38	410	380	30	279	254	25
Caerphilly School	466	437	29	390	363	26	229	225	4
Caerphilly School	479	455	24	393	380	13	288	254	35
Caerphilly School	467	448	19	371	373	-2	203	242	-39
Caerphilly School	462	454	8	385	379	6	261	252	9
Caerphilly School	454	447	7	357	373	-15	184	241	-56
Caerphilly School	446	441	5	346	367	-20	175	231	-56
Caerphilly School	431	437	-6	365	363	2	259	225	35
Caerphilly School	445	452	-7	381	377	4	291	248	43
Caerphilly School	437	453	-15	339	378	-39	169	249	-80
Caerphilly School	446	463	-17	383	387	-4	268	267	1
Caerphilly School	410	434	-25	336	361	-25	207	221	-13

5.20 Please note the above table has been ordered by the highest performing third. For this third, seven schools are above expectation, and five below. For the middle third six schools are above and six below. For the lowest third again, six are above and six below. There are however 3 schools where outcomes are significantly lower than the model for the lowest performing, with learners in those three schools the equivalent of approximately a grade lower for each of the 9 qualifications that the model

5.21 The same data is represented as a scatter chart based on FSM eligibility. This shows the relatively low level of variance for Caerphilly schools in the outcomes for each school in the upper and middle thirds, but the high level of variability in the lowest third.



Literacy Measure – compared with the Family average

5.22 To put all these charts in perspective a difference of +/- 6 points is the equivalent of a GCSE grade difference for every learner. +/- 3 points would therefore be a half a grade difference.

School Name	Literacy Measure	Literacy Measure - Family	Literacy Measure - Difference
Caerphilly School	39.6	37.6	2.0
Caerphilly School	42.9	41.0	1.9
Caerphilly School	40.4	38.9	1.5
Caerphilly School	42.5	41.1	1.4
Caerphilly School	41.8	41.0	0.8
Caerphilly School	37.9	38.3	-0.4
Caerphilly School	37.7	38.9	-1.1
Caerphilly School	36.9	38.2	-1.3
Caerphilly School	38.0	41.0	-3.0
Caerphilly School	36.7	40.1	-3.4
Caerphilly School	38.2	41.7	-3.5
Caerphilly School	31.3	36.0	-4.8

5.23 Five schools are above the family average for the literacy measure, with seven schools below, with four of these being below by more than half a GCSE grade per learner.

5.24 The table below gives the individual contribution of each of the GCSEs that contribute to this measure. They are in the same order as the table above. Welsh language has not been included as this would identify the school.

School Name	English Language	English Literature

Caerphilly School	35.7	37.7
Caerphilly School	39.6	42.5
Caerphilly School	38.9	37.8
Caerphilly School	40.6	39.1
Caerphilly School	38.7	44.6
Caerphilly School	35.6	37.3
Caerphilly School	34.9	36.1
Caerphilly School	34.7	37.0
Caerphilly School	35.8	36.2
Caerphilly School	34.6	38.4
Caerphilly School	36.2	41.9
Caerphilly School	29.7	29.2

5.25 Nine schools have a higher contribution made by literature rather than language.

Numeracy Measure – compared with the Family average

School Name	Numeracy Measure	Numeracy Measure - Family	Numeracy Measure - Difference
Caerphilly School	38.4	35.4	3.0
Caerphilly School	33.5	30.8	2.7
Caerphilly School	37.9	35.4	2.5
Caerphilly School	36.1	34.7	1.4
Caerphilly School	34.6	33.7	0.9
Caerphilly School	31.4	31.1	0.4
Caerphilly School	32.2	32.4	-0.2
Caerphilly School	32.7	33.7	-1.0
Caerphilly School	33.9	35.4	-1.4
Caerphilly School	26.6	28.4	-1.9
Caerphilly School	32.6	36.9	-4.2
Caerphilly School	29.7	36.3	-6.6

5.26 For the numeracy measure six schools are above the family average (with three by approximately half a grade per learner). Six schools are below the family average, with one of these by more than half a grade per learner, and one by slightly over a whole grade per learner.

5.27 The differences between the individual numeracy GCSE and mathematics GCSE are relatively small for each school, except for the 11th school in this list, where numeracy is more than half a grade higher per learner than mathematics.

School Name	Numeracy	Mathematics
Caerphilly School	38.4	37.6
Caerphilly School	33.5	34.0
Caerphilly School	37.9	37.4
Caerphilly School	36.1	37.2

Caerphilly School	34.6	35.0
Caerphilly School	31.4	31.5
Caerphilly School	32.2	28.6
Caerphilly School	32.7	32.7
Caerphilly School	33.9	35.9
Caerphilly School	26.6	26.8
Caerphilly School	32.6	35.7
Caerphilly School	29.7	30.4

Science Measure – compared with the Family average

School Name	Science Measure	Science Measure - Family	Science Measure - Difference
Caerphilly School	38.9	36.0	2.9
Caerphilly School	38.3	35.9	2.5
Caerphilly School	39.2	36.7	2.5
Caerphilly School	38.6	36.7	1.9
Caerphilly School	34.9	33.7	1.2
Caerphilly School	35.8	35.1	0.7
Caerphilly School	37.7	38.2	-0.5
Caerphilly School	37.0	40.3	-3.4
Caerphilly School	32.9	36.7	-3.8
Caerphilly School	31.9	35.9	-4.0
Caerphilly School	33.5	38.3	-4.8
Caerphilly School	24.6	30.2	-5.6

5.28 Six schools are above the family and six below. It is science which has the greatest variance between schools. There are three schools approximately half a GCSE grade per learner above the family, and five below.

Welsh Baccalaureate Measure – compared with the Family average

5.29 It is this measure which has the greatest variance across Wales, with some family averages particularly low.

School Name	Welsh Bacc. Measure	Welsh Bacc. Measure - Family	Welsh Bacc. Measure - Difference
Caerphilly School	39.0	27.1	11.9
Caerphilly School	44.4	32.7	11.7
Caerphilly School	40.5	32.7	7.8
Caerphilly School	38.3	30.6	7.7
Caerphilly School	37.8	30.6	7.2
Caerphilly School	41.5	35.2	6.3
Caerphilly School	34.1	29.9	4.2
Caerphilly School	30.7	27.4	3.2
Caerphilly School	35.4	36.1	-0.7
Caerphilly School	32.2	37.8	-5.6
Caerphilly School	0.0	25.5	-25.5
Caerphilly School	0.0	32.7	-32.7

5.30 Two schools in Caerphilly did not enter learners in this area. For the remaining schools, nearly all others are above the family averages.

No Qualifications – compared with the Family average

5.31 Please note the reversed colour coding on the bars to indicate that a negative difference from the family is positive.

School Name	No Qualifications (%)	No Qualificaitons (%) Family	No Qualificaitons (%) Difference
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.9	-0.9
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.4	-0.4
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.3	-0.3
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.1	-0.1
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.1	-0.1
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.1	-0.1
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.1	-0.1
Caerphilly School	0.0	0.0	0.0
Caerphilly School	0.8	0.4	0.4
Caerphilly School	1.1	0.1	1.0
Caerphilly School	3.7	0.6	3.1
Caerphilly School	5.5	0.8	4.7

5.32 There are 8 schools that have no learners leaving without a qualification. Four schools have higher proportions of learners leaving without a qualification than their family averages, three significantly so.

5+ A*-A – compared with the Family average

School Name	5+ A*-A (%)	5+ A*-A (%) Family	5+ A*-A (%) Difference
Caerphilly School	31.5	20.5	11.1
Caerphilly School	23.8	17.3	6.5
Caerphilly School	25.8	20.5	5.3
Caerphilly School	16.1	13.5	2.6
Caerphilly School	18.1	17.3	0.8
Caerphilly School	12.7	15.0	-2.2
Caerphilly School	16.2	19.0	-2.8
Caerphilly School	9.2	12.4	-3.3
Caerphilly School	19.5	24.8	-5.3
Caerphilly School	13.6	20.5	-6.9
Caerphilly School	3.1	10.6	-7.4
Caerphilly School	12.7	21.2	-8.5

- 5.33 Seven schools 5+ A*-A percentage are below their family averages with five above. One school's rate is significantly higher than that of the family, however there are four schools with rates significantly lower. This will be linked to the relative performance of the Upper Third of learners on the capped 9 for these schools.

Local Authority Aggregate Data

Key measures – Compared with Wales

- 5.34 Please note that these measures are not contextualised but compare with the Wales average.

Table 1.1c - Qualifications outcomes

Title	2023 - Caerphilly	2023 - Wales
Capped 9 points score (interim)	346.1	358.1
WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator – points score	31.5	31.6
Literacy indicator – points score	38.4	39.7
Numeracy indicator – points score	35.4	37.1
Science indicator – points score	34.7	36.9
No qualifications - % of pupils	1.8	1.4
5+ A*-A or equivalent	17.1	20.3

- 5.35 For nearly all measures the Caerphilly is below the Wales average, however this is to be expected given the socio-economic context of learners in Caerphilly schools.

Key measures – Compared with 'Modelled' by FSM

- 5.36 Modelled expectations for each indicator are slightly below expectation as indicated by Free School Meals, except for the Skills Challenge Certificate Indicator. Please note that each table number is from the original data pack, not this report.

Title	2023 - Capped 9 points score (interim)	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Caerphilly	353.6	358.9	-5.3

- 5.37 The Capped 9 score above is 5.3 points below the modelled expectation. This is the equivalent of approximately 1/10th of a GCSE grade per learner.

Table 4.2 - KS4 WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator - points score - LA Average			
Title	2023 - WBacc Skills Challenge Certificate indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Caerphilly	32.4	28.9	3.4

- 5.38 The Skills Challenge Certificate score is above expectation, by the equivalent of half a GCSE grade per learner.

Table 4.3 - KS4 Literacy indicator - points score - LA Average			
Title	2023 - Literacy indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Caerphilly	39.1	39.4	-0.3

- 5.39 The literacy score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of approximately 1/20th of a GCSE grade per learner.

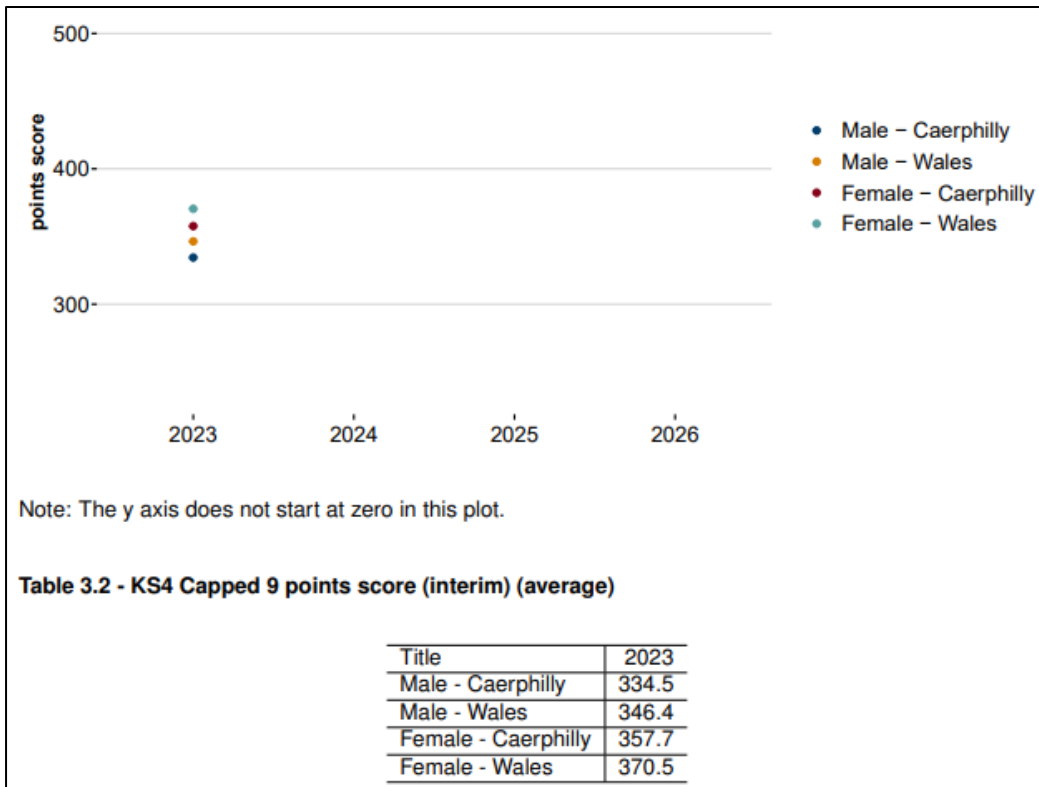
Table 4.4 - KS4 Numeracy indicator - points score - LA Average			
Title	2023 - Numeracy indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Caerphilly	36.1	36.5	-0.4

- 5.40 The numeracy score is slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/15th of a GCSE grade per learner.

Table 4.5 - KS4 Science indicator - points score - LA Average			
Title	2023 - Science indicator – points score	2023 - Modelled score	2023 - Difference
Caerphilly	35.6	36.1	-0.5

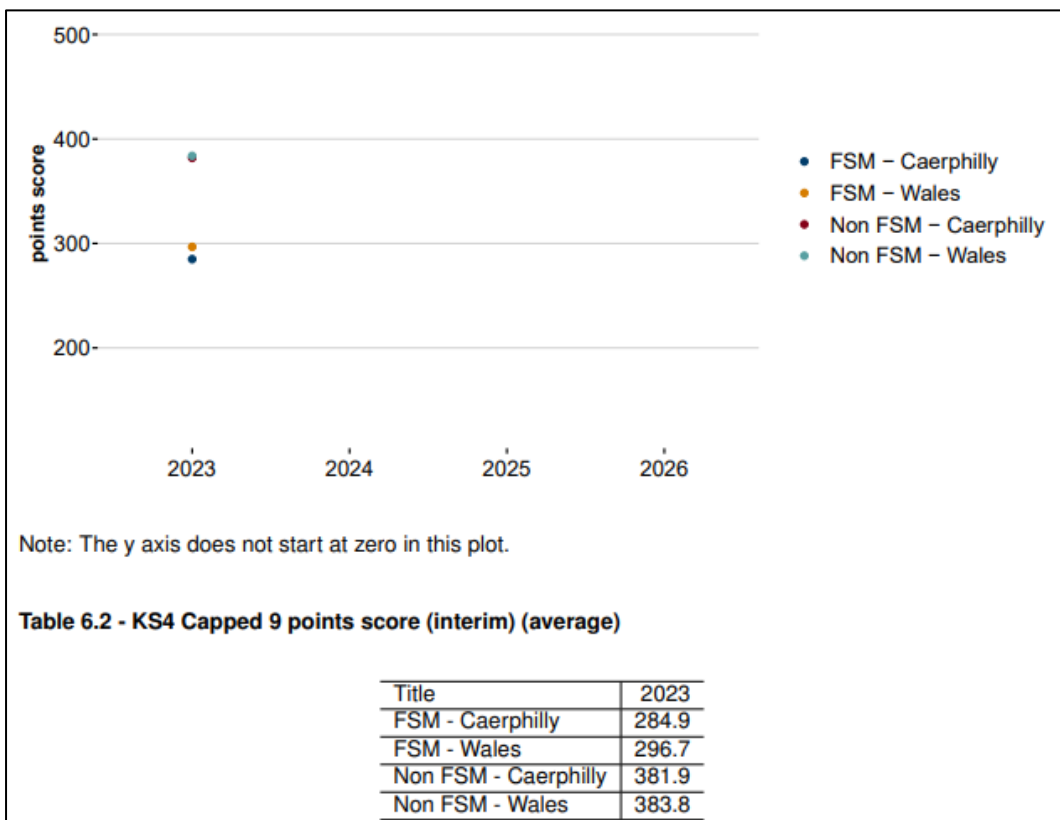
- 5.41 The science score is very slightly below expectation, the equivalent of 1/12th of a GCSE grade per learner.

Capped 9 – Males and Females



5.42 Both males and females in Caerphilly perform less well than their peers in Wales. The difference between the two groups of learners is approximately the same.

Capped 9 FSM – non-FSM



5.43 Non-FSM learners in Caerphilly perform as well as their peers across Wales. FSM learners however perform less well than their peers across Wales.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1. There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report is for information only, therefore no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific financial implications

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 All responses from the consultations have been incorporated in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, Children's Act 2004, Standards and Framework Act 1998

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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30TH JANUARY 2024

SUBJECT: HEALTHY SCHOOLS ON VAPING

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Consider national and local concerns around vaping amongst young people. Identify how the Local Authority continues to support schools to address these concerns.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In 2021/22, just under 125,000 11 to 16 year olds across Wales took part in the School Health Research Network survey. Data indicated that 1 in 5 young people in Gwent are reported to have tried an electronic cigarette, more commonly known as vaping.

In a commitment to reduce the increasing number of young people vaping across Caerphilly, the healthy schools team work in partnership with Public Health Wales and other external providers. Schools receive comprehensive and age-appropriate guidance to educate pupils of the adverse effects of vaping. This will, in turn, encourage informed choices around the use of vapes.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Education Scrutiny Committee to consider the contents of the report and endorse the support offered to schools.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Education scrutiny to understand the national and local issues linked to the increased use of vapes among young pupils. Recognise the range of support that can be offered to schools.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1. The 'School Health Research Network' (SHRN) aims to provide robust data about the health and wellbeing of young people to stakeholders at a local, regional, and national level. SHRN publishes a Student Health and Wellbeing Survey every two years. Pupils (academic years 7 to 11) are asked questions on a range of health behaviours such as substance use, diet and physical activity.

The most recently published survey in April 2023 was based on responses from pupils from September to December 2021. Schools receive individual reports which can be used as an evidence base to plan priorities for improvement. The healthy schools team use Local Authority level data to inform our support for schools.

The School Health Research Network survey reported the following:

- Most children and young people don't vape. However, the use of vaping devices among children and young people in Wales has been on the rise in recent years.
- 1 in 5 secondary aged learners (20%) from Year 7 to 11 have tried vapes.
- 5% of secondary aged learners reported use of vapes regularly (defined as at least weekly).
- Year 11 learners were more likely to use a vaping device at least weekly (14%) compared with Year 7 learners (1%).
- Secondary aged learners from less affluent families were the most likely to have tried vapes and to use them regularly.
- A higher proportion of year 7 to 11 girls (7%) reported vaping at least weekly compared with boys (4%).

Vaping devices are battery-powered devices that heat a liquid to produce an aerosol that is inhaled. The liquid usually contains nicotine, although some vapes are available without nicotine.

Vapes are available in a range of nicotine concentrations, are either rechargeable or disposable, and come in a variety of flavours.

Whether a device contains nicotine or not is an important distinction in law. Vapes without nicotine can be sold to anyone at any age. However, it is not always possible to distinguish between vaping devices that contain nicotine and those that do not.

In response to the above, the Aneurin Bevan Gwent Public Health Team produced local guidance to support young people to make informed choices in regards to their health and wellbeing. ([Health Wellbeing Vaping Schools guidance E \(final\).pdf](#)). This document was sent to all schools in Caerphilly during the Summer Term 2023, and provides information to school staff under the following headings:

- Why is there concern around vaping?
- Actions for schools/signposting services
- Advice for parents/carers
- Laws around e-cigarettes –It is illegal in England and Wales for retailers to sell vapes, e-cigarettes or e-liquids to anyone under 18
- What are e-cigarettes
- The effects on the environment – 1,000,000 single use vapes are thrown away every week
- Useful contacts

The healthy schools team commissioned an external specialist, recommended by Public Health Wales, to provide training for school staff. Forty-eight delegates attended including staff from primary schools, secondary schools and the school nursing service. Survey results were extremely positive, with 100% of delegates saying that they would recommend the training to their colleagues, and that the knowledge learnt would help inform future practice. This activity is due to be repeated before the end of the academic year with the intention that all schools take up the offer of free training.

In September 2023 the Vaping Incident Response Group (IRG) at Public Health Wales also produced a guidance document for schools. Feedback on the information was positive. Further guidance is due over the coming months as best practice evidence to address this issue becomes more readily available.

The 'health and well-being curriculum project' team in Public Health Wales hosted a Vaping Resources Development Workshop where specialists worked alongside representatives from primary, secondary and special schools to collaborate and co-construct vaping resource ideas for schools. These resources are due to be distributed to schools in the spring term.

Other projects continue to be planned by Public Health Wales, ASH Wales or the JustB Smoking Cessation project. The intention is to provide schools and educational settings with practical hands-on advice and resources that can be utilised effectively in the classroom. The Local Authority Healthy Schools team will continue to work with national partners and ensure any additional support or resources are disseminated or shared with schools. Responses from a recent survey indicated that Caerphilly schools value the support from the healthy schools team and see the officers as the main source for advice and information.

5.2. Response to a regional incident

Public Health Wales issued a vaping safeguarding alert to all Gwent schools via Directors of Education. This followed a regional incident involving five young people in Gwent who became unwell after using a vape which is thought to have contained an illicit drug or toxin. The Local Authority safeguarding team worked with schools to raise awareness and provide advice.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Reducing the number of pupils using vapes is an increasing priority for schools. Officers across the Local Authority, working with external partners, continue to provide advice and support based on the latest research and best practice. The healthy schools team will continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of the support, making adjustments where appropriate.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No related assumptions have been felt to be necessary in relation to this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Integrated Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 No financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 No personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 All responses from the consultations have been incorporated in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 This is to identify the enabling statutory power(s) for the decision under consideration. It should also state whether the power(s) are the responsibility of full Council or Cabinet and if it has been delegated to officers. If you have any queries on powers, please consult the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal Services.

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