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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Andrea Jones
(Tel: 01443 864420 Email: jonesa23@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 25th October 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 31st October, 2023 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 recording on the Council's website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

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

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.

Pages

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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 Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee held on 19th September 2023. 1 - 6
- 4 Consideration of any matter referred to this committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.
- 5 Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. 7 - 20
- 6 To receive and consider the following Cabinet reports*:-
1. Development and Governance Strategy – Housing – 20th September 2023;
 2. Winter Service Plan Update – 20th September 2023;
 3. Corporate Performance Assessment – 20th September 2023;
 4. Public Protection Enforcement Annual Report for 2022/23 – 20th September 2023;
 5. Redevelopment of the Former Oakdale Comprehensive School Site by Caerphilly Homes – 18th October 2023;
 6. Caerphilly Homes – Ty Darran Redevelopment – 18th October 2023;
 7. Cwmcarn Forest Drive Collaboration with Natural Resources Wales – Review Of Agreement And Next Steps – 18th October 2023;
 8. B4251 Ynysddu to Wyllie Safety Review 18th October 2023;
 9. Recycling Contamination Process – 18th October 2023;
 10. Ness Tar and Former Wenddu Brickworks Sites, Caerphilly – Delivery Options Report – 18th October 2023.

**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 Andrea Jones, 01443 864420, by 10.00am on Monday 30th October 2023.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

- 7 Sport and Active Recreation Strategy (SARS) Implementation. 21 - 58
- 8 Waste Management Review Report from Audit Wales. 59 - 80

Circulation:

Councillors C. Bishop, M. Chacon-Dawson, R. Chapman, D. Cushing, C.J. Cuss, D.T. Davies, T. Heron, A. Hussey, M.P. James, D. Ingram-Jones, A. McConnell, B. Owen, L. Phipps, H. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, J. Rao, A. Whitcombe (Chair) and S. Williams (Vice Chair)

And Appropriate Officers

HOW WE WILL USE YOUR INFORMATION

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Agenda Item 3



HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD IN PENALLTA HOUSE
AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor A. Whitcombe – Chair
Councillor S. Williams – Vice Chair

Councillors:

C. Bishop, M. Chacon-Dawson, R. Chapman, D. T. Davies, T. Heron, A. Hussey, M. James,
D. Ingram-Jones, A. McConnell, L. Phipps, H. Pritchard, J. A Pritchard, J. Rao

Cabinet Members:

Councillor S. Cook (Housing)

Together with:

N. Taylor-Williams (Head of Housing), J. Roberts-Waite (Head of Strategy and
Development), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager), A. Jones (Committee Services
Officer)

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded and would be made available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to View](#) Members were advised that voting on decisions would be taken via Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Cushing, C. Cuss and B. Owen

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

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

4. HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Cath Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager) presented the report, which outlined details of the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the period September 2023 to March 2024.

A Member requested that a report be added to the forward work programme on the Building Regulations 2025 and the construction methods that will be used for homes for the future for Caerphilly Homes. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Manager would liaise with the Member and Officers and arrange for this item to be added to the forward work programme.

Members were asked to consider the FWP alongside the Cabinet work programme and suggest any changes prior to publication on the Council's website.

It was moved and seconded that the report recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 15 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Forward Work Programme as appended to the meeting papers be published on the Council's website.

5. 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.

6. REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER OAKDALE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SITE BY CAERPHILLY HOMES

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the report, which sought the Scrutiny Committee's recommendation to Cabinet to approve the signing of the Delivery Agreement with Wilmott Dixon to enable the construction of the first Caerphilly Homes mixed tenure development to start in Autumn 2023.

Members were also asked to recommend the approval of the inclusion of a later living scheme within the Oakdale development which is designed specifically to replace the sheltered housing scheme (scheduled for decommissioning) at Ty Melin and to recommend the signing of a Pre-Construction Delivery Agreement (PSCA) to further progress the design and development of the newly proposed later living element of the scheme.

The report also sought the Scrutiny Committee's recommendation that Cabinet approve the signing of a PCSA to undertake the investigatory site investigation works and design development of the Ty Melin site which will be brought forward for inclusion in the Caerphilly Homes development programme. It is proposed that due to the proximity and relationship of the existing Ty Melin site to the former Oakdale School site, the development of the site to be added to the Oakdale development programme in order to ensure the continuity of the scheme through a 2.5-3-year development programme.

The Head of Strategy and Development confirmed that this was the third time that the report had been brought to the committee and provided a full update on progress made to date. Members were advised that the Oakdale Comprehensive site was vacated in 2016 and cleared following the demolition in 2019. Following the demolition, a dedicated Strategy and Development Team began the process of exploring the potential viability of the site for residential redevelopment. Members were advised that a decision was made by Cabinet on the 9th September 2020 to sign a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) with Wilmott Dixon to undertake detailed site investigations.

Wilmott Dixon were procured through the Scape framework as the development partner. They undertook an initial feasibility study at the start of the development as part of the Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA). Detailed site investigations have been carried out and works continue to date. The Officer confirmed that outline planning was approved in March 2022.

Members were informed that the site originally fell within the general fund portfolio and was appropriated to the HRA (Housing Revenue Account) in March 2022. Officers highlighted the challenges associated with the site including the need to retain several trees and provide ecological enhancements that worked with the contours and the topography of the site in terms of the layout.

It was noted that the proposed mixed tenure development comprises of 99 homes and is the first site the Council development of this kind. The Caerphilly Homes Occupational Therapist has been engaged in the scheme and two accessible bungalows will be provided within the development, to meet the specific needs of two families who are currently on the Common Housing Register.

Members were advised that in 2018 approval was given to consider remodelling the Ty Melin Sheltered housing scheme in Croespenmaen. However, it had become apparent that the costs to remodel the scheme to ensure compliance with the WHQS23 would be unachievable. As a result, the Project Team (including Caerphilly Homes, Architects - Holder Mathias, Engineers - Cambria and Wilmott Dixon) were asked in April 2023 whether it could be possible to incorporate a new, low carbon, contemporary sheltered housing scheme within parameters of the former Oakdale Comprehensive School site. This was a challenge, but partners confirmed that it would be possible to develop a 33 apartments (maximum) Later Living Scheme where the current MUGA site is located.

The Scrutiny Committee were pleased to note that conversations have taken pace with Ward Members and the Occupants of Ty Melin to discuss the proposals and to seek their views, which had been quite positive, and all were excited about the development. The Officer confirmed that further engagement with prospective occupants would take place as part of the design and development stages of the project.

The Officer explained the Social Value Plan and how the Council would work with Willmott Dixon and the supply chain to maximise the amount of reinvestment or social return on investment within Caerphilly would be produced. The Plan would cover aspects such as employment, education, community, and environmental targets., The Officer referenced a specific workstream for veterans, to engage ex-armed forces personnel directly in the project to provide them with training and skills to obtain secure employment and a home.

Members noted that the contract value for the redevelopment of the former Oakdale Comprehensive School site is estimated to be circa £38m. The exact figure will be confirmed by the time the final report is presented to Cabinet on the 18th October 2023.

The Officer confirmed that Caerphilly Homes would be working closely with Wilmott Dixon on a sales and marketing strategy, A show home will be erected on site, there will be marketing and branding literature to showcase this development to anyone interested in both the affordable offer and the market sales homes. The Scrutiny Committee noted that subject to approval it was hoped that works would commence before Christmas 2023 with the site's completion by October 2025.

Occupants of Ty Melin will be moved into the new building as soon as the Later Living scheme is available, and assistance would be provided throughout the moving process.

A presentation showing the design of the site was shown to the Scrutiny Committee touching on Ty Darran and Oakdale Comprehensive School. The Head of Strategy and Development went through each slide of the presentation and confirmed that a copy of the presentation can be circulated to Members of the Committee.

The Chair thanked the Officer for the presentation and Member questions were welcomed.

Clarification was sought on the MUGA equipment on site and Members were advised that Officers are discussing this with Islwyn High School. The intention is to keep the existing MUGA at Oakdale site until the new MUGA is available, which is estimated at 5-6 months. The Scrutiny Committee asked about the increased distance from Oakdale to Islwyn High and were advised that there is another MUGA on the Persimmon site nearby.

The Scrutiny Committee asked for the reasons why the Ty Melin and other sites were not re-developed as part of the WHQS programme. Members were advised that there were several factors including the configuration and building materials used at these sites. This would have meant extensive costs to bring them up to WHQS standards and were therefore deemed prohibitive. In addition, the apartments at these sites are very small and not fit for purpose, making them very difficult to let.

Members queried the plans for the new build which shows one-bedroom apartments and suggested that two bedroomed apartments would be required for couples or people who have carers. It was confirmed that although most apartments are one bedroomed there are also two bedroomed apartments planned.

The Scrutiny Committee sought further detail on the plans to include training within the Employment Programme and asked if training on new technology will be included. Members were assured that the intention was to provide as many learning opportunities as possible including new technologies around heat pumps, for example, and other modern methods of construction.

Members asked if the land being used (which is owned by CCBC) is reflected in the sale prices for the new homes, as compared with homes sold by private developers who must pay for the land. In addition, it was asked if there is a way to limit sales to local people. The Scrutiny Committee was advised that the land had to be paid for by Caerphilly Homes based on a valuation by the District Valuer. The land must be appropriated to the HRA from the General Fund at market value, even though it isn't necessarily a 'cash' transaction. Members were advised that it is not possible to limit sales to local people.

The Scrutiny Committee asked how many apartments are utilised at Ty Melin at present compared to the 33 that will be available at the new site. Members were advised that

there are 16 occupiers at Ty Melin, some are couples. This development will increase the number of apartments available and there is an identified need for Later Living accommodation in the area.

Members asked if the Later Living accommodation will be prioritised for development ahead of the other builds and were advised that the Later Living accommodation cannot proceed until the new MUGA is completed, but this was part of continuing discussions with Willmott Dixon.

The Armed Forces Champion stated that she was pleased to hear of the intention to provide opportunities to ex-service personnel. Members were advised that discussions have been held with the Armed Forces Covenant Officer and the charity Alabare.

Members were pleased to see the plans to use sustainable materials and modern methods of construction on the site and were informed that this was an important factor of the development.

Members congratulated Officers on an excellent presentation and gave their support for the proposals.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved, and by way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 15 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED that: -

1. Cabinet approve the inclusion of the Later Living element of the scheme which will result in the residents of Ty Melin, Croespenmaen relocating into the new accommodation on the former Oakdale Comprehensive School site and the existing Ty Melin site being redeveloped post 2025.
2. Cabinet approve the signing of the Delivery Agreement with Willmott Dixon which will allow the development to start on site in October 2023.
3. Cabinet approve the signing of a PCSA with Willmott Dixon to undertake the design work necessary to include the Later Living Scheme into the wider site and also approve the signing of a separate PCSA to undertake the site investigatory and design work necessary to bring forward the Ty Melin site into the Caerphilly Homes development programme
4. The proposal to develop a Social Value Plan which will relate to all developments undertaken by Willmott Dixon in the county borough. Under the SCAPE Framework arrangement 20% of the contract value will be attributed to the delivery of social value including an extensive construction related employment programme be endorsed.

7. CAERPHILLY HOMES – TY DARRAN REDEVELOPMENT

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the report, which sought the Scrutiny Committees' recommendation to Cabinet to approve the signing of the Delivery Agreement with Willmott Dixon to progress the scheme through to construction and completion by Autumn 2025.

Members are asked to recommend Cabinet endorse the creation of a Social Value Plan which will encompass the Ty Darran, former Oakdale Comprehensive School, and Ty Melin development schemes.

The Head of Strategy and Development confirmed that her earlier presentation had encompassed both developments and would now highlight key areas of interest.

Members were advised that a feasibility study was commissioned in 2015 and Cabinet determined that the St Mary's Castle Court and Waunfawr House Sheltered Housing Schemes would be removed from the WHQS programme and remodelled post 2020. Further investigations determined that the cost of upgrading the schemes would be prohibitive, subsequently the development of a new 45 unit Later Living scheme at the site of the former care home at Ty Darren, Risca.

The Officer confirmed that the objective was to provide something unique within the borough, providing flexible housing solutions that would for example enable people working to work from home, provide enough space for those who require carers or the opportunity to have grandchildren stay over. Each apartment will be wheelchair accessible and have access to their own outdoor space with internal and external communal areas allowing interaction and socialisation with other residents.

Members asked if the land at Ty Melin and the other Sheltered Housing Schemes at St Marys, Castle Court etc, will be re-used for other Caerphilly Homes schemes. The Scrutiny Committee were assured that Castle Court is already being explored and the other areas will be considered.

Members stated that most of their questions related to both Oakdale and Ty Darren and were pleased to see the plans and gave their support for the proposals.

Following consideration of the report and having noted its comments, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendations be forwarded to Cabinet for approval, and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 14 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED that: -

1. Cabinet notes the content of the report and approve the signing of the Delivery Agreement (DA) with Willmott Dixon to deliver a new, low energy, flagship Later Living Scheme by Spring 2025.
2. Cabinet endorses the formulation of a Social Value Plan which will encompass the Ty Darran former Oakdale Comprehensive School and Ty Melin development schemes with Wilmott Dixon.

The meeting closed at 18:36 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2023, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR



HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 31ST OCTOBER 2023

**SUBJECT: HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the Housing and Environment 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 Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the Committee meeting on Tuesday 19th September 2023. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period October 2023 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 Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 9th October 2023. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

5.4 **Conclusion**

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

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

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

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

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

Consultees: Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment

Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director – Children’s Services
Nick Taylor-Williams – Head of Housing
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,
Legal Services
Councillor Andrew Whitcombe, Chair of Housing and Environment
Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Shane Williams, Vice Chair of Housing and Environment
Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Housing and Environment 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 - Housing and Environment - Appendix 1

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
31/10/23 17:30	Review of Sport & Active Recreation Strategy Implementation		Hartshorn, Rob;	Cllr. Morgan, Chris
31/10/23 17:30	Caerphilly Waste Report	For Audit Wales to present their report to Members.	Roberts, Ros;	Cllr. Morgan, Chris
31/10/23 17:30	Information Item - HRA Budget Monitoring Report Period 3		Allen, Lesley	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
31/10/23 17:30	Information Item - HRA Outturn Report		Taylor-Williams, Nick;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
21/11/23 17:30	Housing Offices Rationalisation Report		Taylor-Williams, Nick;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
21/11/23 17:30	Housing Revenue Account Charges – 2024/2025 (Rent increase report)		Allen, Lesley	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
12/12/23 17:30	Grass Cutting Regimes – 2024 Season		Williams, Mark S;	Cllr. Morgan, Chris
12/12/23 17:30	Decarbonisation Annual Report and Carbon Baselines		Cooke, Paul;	Cllr. Pritchard, Jamie;
12/12/23 17:30	Caerphilly Leisure and well being hub UPDATE		Williams, Mark S;	Cllr. Morgan, Chris
12/12/23 17:30	Consultation on the future of Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre		Hartshorn, Rob;	Cllr. Morgan, Chris
12/12/23 17:30	Information Item - HRA Budget Monitoring Report Period 5		Allen, Lesley	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
13/02/24 17:30	LHMA (Local Housing Market Assessment) and the Welsh Government Prospectus	To discuss and approve the LHMA and the Prospectus. Welsh Government requires all Local Authorities to undertake a Local Housing Market Assessment and a Prospectus. The documents set out the requirement for housing within the county borough and is utilised to inform the LDP, the allocation of Social Housing Grant and the Council's own Caerphilly Homes development programme.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
13/02/24 17:30	Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy		Davies, Claire;	Cllr Cook, Shayne;
13/02/24 17:30	Caerphilly Homes Tenant Satisfaction Survey	To report the outcome of the Caerphilly Homes Tenant Satisfaction Survey (Autumn 2023) to Scrutiny prior to submission to Welsh Government by the March 2024 deadline.	Taylor-Williams, Nick;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
13/02/24 17:30	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.	Lougher, Jared;	Cllr. Morgan, Chris
13/02/24 17:30	Information Item - HRA Budget Monitoring Report Period 7		Allen, Lesley	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
26/03/24 17:30	Caerphilly Homes Presentation		Taylor-Williams, Nick;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
26/03/24 17:30	Residential Parking Permit Inquiry – Final Report		Jacques, Mark;	Cllr. Morgan, Chris
26/03/24 17:30	Information Item - HRA Budget Monitoring Report Period 9		Allen, Lesley	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;

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Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 25th October 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
15/11/2023 13:00 p.m.	Annual Report for Corporate Complaints 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023	To review and assess the effectiveness of complaints handling in respect of the annual data for 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 under the Corporate Complaints Policy.	Lisa Lane	Cllr Nigel George
15/11/2023	Revised Town Centre Management Model	For Cabinet to consider the outcomes of the trial of an alternative town centre management model and determine the preferred way forward.	Rhian Kyte/Jo Hillier Raikes	Cllr James Pritchard
15/11/2023	Corporate Plan (including Well-Being Objectives) 2023 to 2028	To consider the Councils Corporate Plan and Well-being Objectives 2023 to 2028.	Christina Harray	Leader/Cllr Eluned Stenner
15/11/2023	Write-off debts over £20,000 – Business Rate Arrears for LTD Companies	Cabinet is asked to determine the business rate debts detailed within the report be written-off on the grounds that they are irrecoverable.	John Carpenter	Cllr Eluned Stenner
15/11/2023	Mobilising Team Caerphilly Programme – Proposed Governance Arrangements	To update Cabinet on the proposed governance arrangements, narrative and decision-making principles that will support the MTC Programme.	Liz Lucas/Sue Richards/ Kath Peters	Cllr Eluned Stenner
15/11/2023	Review of Sport and Recreation Strategy Implementation	To update Cabinet on progress with delivery of the 10 year	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr Chris Morgan

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 25th October 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
		Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.		
15/11/2023	Future of Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre	To seek Cabinet approval to commence formal consultation on the future of Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr Chris Morgan
15/11/2023	Replacement Artificial Training Pitch at Risca Leisure Centre/ Comprehensive School	To provide Cabinet with options for the replacement of the artificial pitch at Risca Leisure Centre / Comprehensive School and to recommend a way forward.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr Chris Morgan
13/12/2023 13:00 p.m.	Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Proposal – Ysgol Y Lawnt / Upper Rhymney Primary	For Cabinet to consider the Consultation Report and approve the publication of a Statutory Notice.	Sue Richards/Andrea West	Cllr Carol Andrews
13/12/2023	Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Cabinet to consider the Consultation Report and approve the publication of a Statutory Notice.	Sue Richards/Andrea West	Cllr Carol Andrews
13/12/2023	HRA Budget Outturn Report 2023	For Cabinet to consider the HRA Budget Outturn Report for 2022/2023.	Lesley Allen	Cllr Shayne Cook
13/12/2023	Housing Offices Rationalisation Report	As part of a review of how we provide housing services to our customers and communities, and following a comprehensive customer consultation exercise,	Fiona Wilkins/Julie Reynolds/Nick Taylor-Williams	Cllr Shayne Cook

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 25th October 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
		<p>we are seeking approval to permanently close all existing Housing Offices, replacing them with a centralised Housing Office in Penallta House. This will facilitate service modernisation and improvements by reducing the need for customers to travel to a housing office to receive services, making housing officers more available to our customers through working agilely within our communities, thereby increasing opportunities for access and engagement and building better relationships with our customers.</p>		
13/12/2023	Greater Blackwood Masterplan	<p>For Members to consider the Draft Greater Blackwood Masterplan. The report will seek the views of members prior to its presentation to Cabinet, where Cabinet will be asked to endorse the Draft Masterplan as the basis for a public consultation exercise.</p>	Rhian Kyte	Cllr James Pritchard

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 25th October 2023

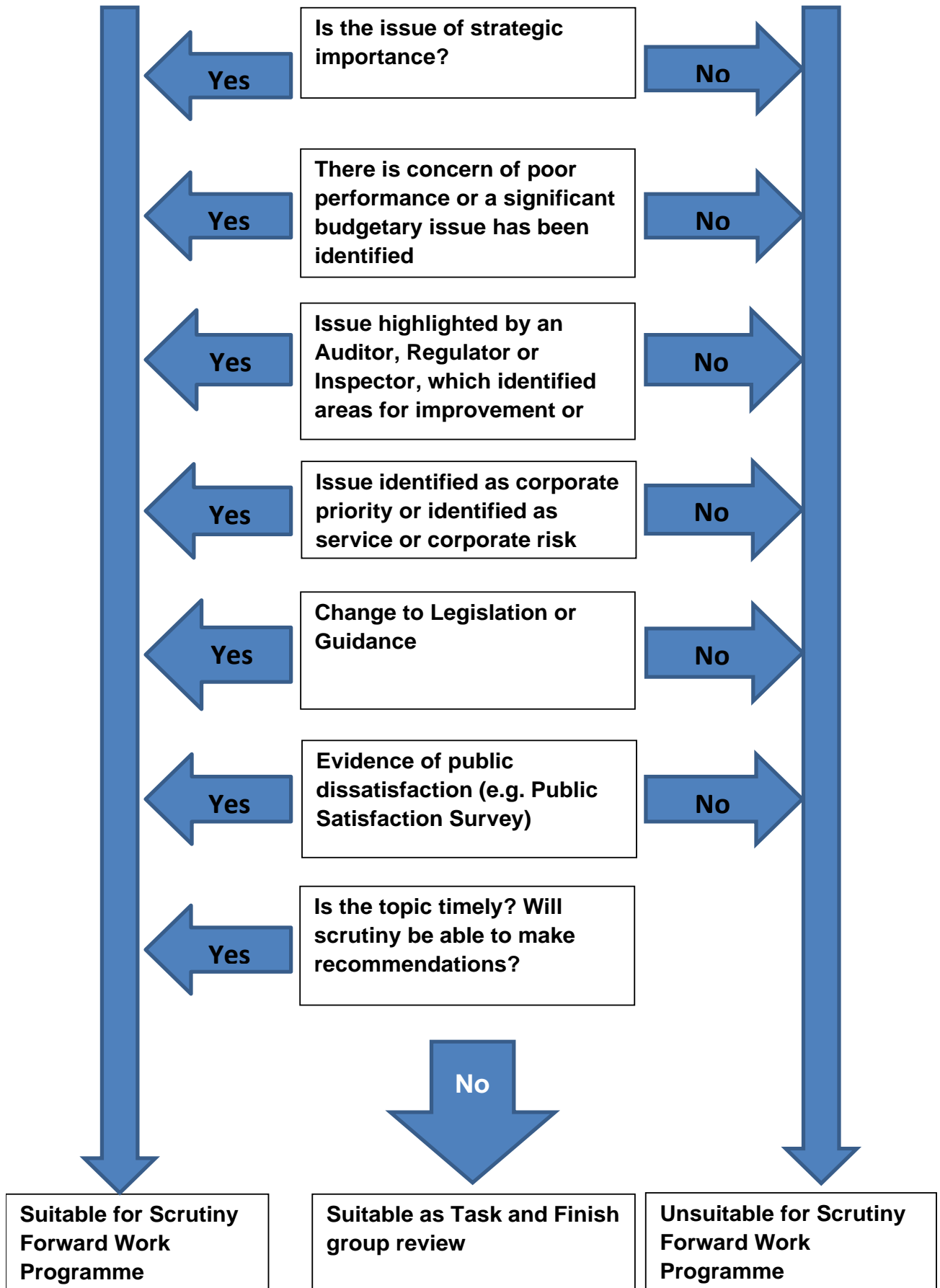
Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
13/12/2023	Consultation on Proposals to Implement Council Tax Premiums on Long-term Empty Properties and Second Homes	To seek Cabinet approval to undertake a consultation process on the implementation of premiums	Sean O'Donnell	Cllr. Eluned Stenner
13/12/2023	Cwm lfor Solar Farm final business case	Consideration of updated financial information and options for Cwm lfor Solar Farm to inform whether to proceed with granting additional funding for the grid connection followed by progression of the final business case.	Anna Lewis/Paul Cooke/Sue Richards	Cllr James Pritchard
17/01/2024 13:00 p.m.	Caerphilly Cares Support Package for families eligible for free school meals	Welsh Government withdrawal of free school meals for eligible families during the school holidays.	Tina McMahon	Cllr Carol Andrews
17/01/2024	Draft Waste Strategy	To approve the draft waste strategy for public consultation.	Marcus Lloyd/Hayley Jones	Cllr Chris Morgan
17/01/2024	Charging for Domiciliary care	For Cabinet to consider the proposed increases in the hourly rate chargeable for domiciliary care provision.	Mike Jones	Cllr E. Forehead
17/01/2024	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

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 25th October 2023

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author	Cabinet Member:
17/01/2024	Draft Budget Proposals for 2024/25	To present Cabinet with details of the draft budget proposals for the 2024/25 financial year to allow for a period of consultation prior to a final decision by Council on 27 February 2024.	Christina Harray/ Stephen Harris	Cllr Eluned Stenner

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Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



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HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 31ST OCTOBER 2023

**SUBJECT: SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION STRATEGY (SARS)
IMPLEMENTATION**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND
ENVIRONMENT**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the substantial activity undertaken to implement the Council's Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2029 and to seek the Committee's views on progress to date. The Committee's comments will be included in a report to Cabinet on progress to date.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's 10 year Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019 – 2029 was approved by Cabinet on the 14th November 2018. The definition of Sport and Active Recreation in relation to this Strategy is based on the range of sport and physical activity opportunities provided by Caerphilly County Borough Council in conjunction with our key partners. As the mid-point of the life of Strategy approaches this report provides an update on the significant delivery and implementation of the Strategy together with a look forward to future proposals and Members' views are sought on the implementation of the Strategy for inclusion in a report to Cabinet on progress to date.
- 2.2 The United Kingdom is reported to spend the smallest proportion of expenditure on recreation and sport out of 15 similar European countries. However, since the implementation of the Strategy in January 2019 there has been almost £3 million of investment in Caerphilly Council's sport and leisure facilities including 5 new dual use 3G football and rugby pitches, an athletics hub, a hockey hub, and the refurbishment and redevelopment of fitness suites in 2 leisure centres. These targeted investments recognise the importance of providing residents with high quality, fit for purpose, aspirational facilities to support high levels of engagement. As such, the leisure facility provision in Caerphilly County Borough Council and the ongoing investment is the envy of many other areas in Wales and there are exciting plans for further significant investment in the future.
- 2.3 Our vision for sport and active recreation is to encourage healthy lifestyles and support our residents to be more active, more often. This report presents a wide range of

interventions and activity including inspiring future generations of children and young people, supporting local sports clubs and sporting success, providing specialist interventions such as exercise referral, engaging volunteers, helping to keep older people active, maximising the use of all our community amenities and the local environment, encouraging people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, working with our schools and maximising community access to school based facilities, and investment in strategic facilities. The aim for the remainder of the Strategy is to build upon the achievements to date.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee are asked provide their comments on the progress of the implementation of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019 – 2029 as detailed in Appendix 1 for inclusion in a report being presented to Cabinet.
- 3.2 Scrutiny committee members recognise the current budget pressures being experienced by the service and understand that steps will need to be taken to overcome these pressures. The SARS is a key component of addressing this issue.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To provide an update to Members and facilitate Member scrutiny of progress and input into the implementation of the remaining period of the 10 year Strategy.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 In 2016 a Wales Audit Office review concluded that the Council needed to develop and agree a holistic vision and strategy for its sports and leisure services. Following extensive public consultation Cabinet endorsed the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019 -2029 on the 14th November 2018 and it was formally implemented on 1st January 2019. In April 2020 Audit Wales returned to assess progress with the 2016 recommendation and recognised that with the Strategy the Council had taken effective action to develop and agree a holistic vision and strategy for its sports and leisure services with further important steps required to deliver those strategic ambitions. This report sets out progress against those steps and provides updates against the actions within the strategy.
- 5.2 The Strategy provides an ambitious and holistic vision and future purpose for the delivery of sport and active recreation across the county borough, establishing key principles which inform future direction and action including three key outcomes:
 - Better Health;
 - Healthier and Prosperous Communities;
 - Securing a more efficient and financially sustainable future offer.

The Strategy also sets out the following purpose, principles and priorities to further inform this approach, namely:

- to encourage healthy lifestyles and support our residents to be ‘more active more often’

- by encouraging a collective responsibility and approach to provide and promote appropriate opportunities across a range of organisations
 - to promote positive messages about health and physical activity
 - to improve standards of performance and celebrate local success in sport
- 5.3 Reflecting the above the attached Implementation Plan at Appendix 1 encompasses a wide ranging programme of activity including direct delivery, working with and supporting partners, facilitating, and delivery by others. Noting the significant progress that is presented it should also be noted that a little more than one year after introducing the Strategy the world was engulfed in the coronavirus pandemic. The cessation of sport and leisure provision due to the pandemic resulted in the staff being redeployed to support the continued delivery of key and essential services and the use of leisure centres in Newbridge and then Pontllanfraith as Mass Vaccination Centres.
- 5.4 Services adapted dynamically in the face of the pandemic including the development of a dedicated free to access You Tube channel providing a range of Group Exercise classes that would traditionally be available in leisure centres. Through this approach clients of our National Exercise Referral Scheme were provided with continuity of their care virtually. The Sport and Leisure service has now developed a significant digital presence to support regular communication and engagement with existing and new users across a range of platforms. The service utilises all available social media platforms and has developed a service specific 'Leisure Lifestyle' app with over 43,000 downloads.
- 5.5 As can be seen from Appendix 1 the Council is involved in the delivery of multiple interventions with the support of partners including Public Health Wales, Welsh Government, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Aneurin Bevan Health Board, and Sport Wales. These interventions in conjunction with partners include:
- National Exercise Referral Scheme
 - Sport Caerphilly
 - Positive Futures
 - Good Boost
 - Green Prescriptions
 - Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
 - Free Swim Initiative
 - 60 Plus Active Leisure Scheme
- 5.6 In 2022/23 there were 57,700 visitors to Sport Caerphilly activities and 1752 attendees at the Positive Futures Outreach programme. In the same year there were 764 referrals into the National Exercise Referral Scheme with 60% of clients who attended the first exercise session completing the full 16 week programme. Sport Caerphilly have supported numerous clubs across the county in accessing just under £250,000 of funding through the Be Active Wales Fund during 2022/23. This continues to be a priority area with a target of £275,000 in 2023/24. Participants in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme have increased from 113 pre-Covid in 2018-2019 to 169 in 2023-2024 with an additional 80 having been offered a place but are yet to take it up which would see numbers rise to 249.
- 5.7 The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy recognises that high levels of physical activity are enjoyed in a wide range of environments stretching from the countryside to highways, paths and bridle ways used for walking, cycling and jogging. Our natural resources provide significant opportunities to increase activity levels. In November 2020, the Council formally adopted a Green Infrastructure Strategy. A number of key

developments and improvements have also taken place to help shape the outdoor environment and improve the scope and access for residents to participate in active recreation. For example, works to install a new jogger's path at the Showfield in Blackwood were completed in 2022 at a cost of £80K, which was funded by Parks Services and the Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme. The relocation of Caerphilly Adventures to Cwmcarn Fforest Drive has been beneficial to both and has been backed up by additional investment in water sports facilities, E-bikes, and an orienteering course.

- 5.8 Our Healthy Walks programme is proving as popular as pre pandemic levels and the Volunteer Training Progression Plan continues to grow with more volunteers getting involved in leading walks. As part of the Caerphilly Landscape Partnership, all healthy walking routes have now been reviewed and graded and walking guides have been updated. The Caerphilly Challenge Series is organised by Countryside Services, in conjunction with Caerphilly Adventure Group and the Ramblers Associations as well as Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and continues to go from strength to strength. In May 2023 480 walkers, a record number of entries, completed the challenging routes of up to 22 miles across the stunning countryside of Caerphilly County Borough. Green Prescriptions are a form of social prescribing, a way for health and social care practitioners to connect with the people they are supporting with a range of non-clinical sources of support in the community. Working in conjunction with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), Parks Services have been instrumental in developing an offering in the north of the county borough at Rhymney Park. This initiative allows participants to undertake community-based activities such as litter picks in conjunction with Keep Wales Tidy.
- 5.9 In terms of more formal outdoor facilities the Council continues to maintain 120 grass sports pitches, 20 outdoor bowling greens, several tennis courts and cricket squares. In August of this year a circa £100,000 investment to bring a football pitch back into use at The Ynys, Fleur de Lys was completed. In addition, a £755,000 Welsh Government grant funded the opening of the Oakdale Athletics Hub at Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School in March 2022. The facility includes a 300m 6 lane running track and off field events including high jump, long jump, shot put, javelin and discus.
- 5.10 Since the implementation of the Strategy outdoor and other facility investment has taken place including:
- £390,000 to provide a new hockey hub at Sue Noake Leisure Centre, Ystrad Mynach and a 3G pitch at Idris Davies School.
 - £315,000 replacement of the outdated Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) and supporting infrastructure, including fencing, lighting and changing rooms at Bedwas Leisure centre with a modern, dual use rugby and football 3G pitch.
 - An investment of £295,000 to replace the outdated Artificial Turf Pitches (ATP) at St. Cenydd Community School, Lewis School Pengam and Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni with 3 new dual use 3G football and rugby pitches.
 - A £73,000 project to provide the Cruyff Court (Aaron Ramsey) at Trinity Fields School providing a safe place where children and young people can interact with each other socially and develop healthier lifestyles.
- 5.11 Following the implementation of the Strategy there has also been targeted investment in our indoor facilities and, for first time since direct debit memberships commenced in 2007, in excess of 6000 membership payments were collected in September 2023. Investments include:

- £875,000 at Newbridge Leisure Centre redeveloping the Fitness Suite, a new Dance and Group Cycling Studio, new pool play equipment and a changing room refurbishment.
- A £100,000 refurbishment of the Fitness Suite at Heolddu Leisure Centre

The service has also taken time to ensure that the customer voice and views are sought and implemented. The Net Promotor Score model is utilised which provides customers with an opportunity to provide real time feedback based upon their experience of the services they receive. At present Sport & Leisure has a score of 57% (benchmark 41%) which ranks the service in the top 25% of similar services across the United Kingdom

- 5.12 As can be seen implementation of the Strategy contributes to and is influenced by the Council's broader Place Shaping plans. There has been continued investment in leisure facilities and in terms of our leisure centres there has been a focus on our 4 strategic sites at Caerphilly, Risca, Newbridge, and Heolddu in accordance with the Strategy. Caerphilly Leisure Centre is due to be replaced by a new £33.6 million Leisure and Wellbeing Hub in 2026 supported by £20m of UK Government Levelling up Funding. This investment will provide a high quality, aspirational facility aimed at encouraging our residents to engage in active recreation as part of daily life and as such supports aspirations of generational change. Whilst the 3G pitch at Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre is in use the indoor facilities are currently closed, the building having been used as a Covid-19 Mass Vaccination Centre by the Health Board since September 2021 until June of this year. Its future will be considered in the context of the wider leisure facilities including the Centre for Vulnerable Learners being built on the adjacent site and due to open next year.
- 5.13 Following discussions with three Secondary Schools to maximise the use of their community assets Sport & Leisure Services will manage facilities at Islwyn High, Blackwood and Ysgol y Gwindy ensuring a consistent delivery model and availability. Further discussions are scheduled to take place subject to the completion of the PFI process at Lewis School Pengam and Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni. This builds upon the aspiration within the Strategy to create more sustainable facilities by managing and promoting community use within the Sport and Leisure facility portfolio and closer alignment to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

CONCLUSION

- 5.14 The Council has worked hard to ensure that the principles, vision and ambitions set out in the Strategy are the focus for day to day operation and longer term policy and development planning, fully embracing the scope, opportunities and challenges this represents. The Strategy remains relevant, even more so, given the impacts on physical and mental health and well-being of the pandemic, the cost of living crisis, financial pressures of the Council overall, the Health Service, and the sport and leisure service budget position. The implementation of the Strategy encompasses a range of activity which supports the emerging Corporate Plan and in particular Well-being Objective 3 - Enabling our Communities to be Inclusive as well as the Council's broader Placeshaping plans.
- 5.15 There is a wide evidence base of the positive impacts of engaging with and leading a healthy lifestyle in areas such as personal health, educational attainment, mental health, regeneration, community cohesion and social wellbeing. The adoption and implementation of the Strategy has provided a robust policy platform upon which further efforts in support of these aims can be achieved.

- 5.16 Positive progress has been made against the backdrop of a global pandemic. In a recent report published by the Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA) the United Kingdom was highlighted as spending the smallest proportion of general government expenditure on recreation and sport out of 15 similar European countries. The leisure facility provision in Caerphilly county borough council and the ongoing investment is the envy of many other areas in Wales. This review of the implementation of the Strategy reflects considerable ongoing investment in Caerphilly county borough. Many more challenges lay ahead, however it is clear that the approach being adopted by the Council and with its various partners and stakeholders is resulting in tangible improvements for the residents of the county borough. The aim for the remainder of the Strategy is to build upon the achievements to date.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 As this report provides an update on the progress and implementation of the existing Sport and Active Recreation Strategy an Integrated Impact Assessment has not been completed.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Like all other Local Authorities, Caerphilly CBC continues to face significant financial challenges. Due to the unprecedented levels of inflation experienced during the 2022/23 financial year (Consumer Prices Index (CPI) peaking at 11.1%), the current economic outlook, and a range of temporary budgetary measures that were approved as part of the Council's 2023/24 budget, our updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) shows a savings requirement of £48.335m for the two-year period 2024/25 to 2025/26.
- 8.2 More specifically, the Council's Leisure Centre budgets are under pressure with an overspend of £482k being reported against the 2022/23 budget of £2.424m, and with a projected overspend of £452k currently projected for the 2023/24 financial year. These overspends are largely driven by increased energy costs which makes a focus on more modern buildings all the more important.
- 8.3 Given the scale of the challenge that the Council faces, a financial strategy that seeks to continuously salami slice our services and deplete our reserves is not a sustainable or an appropriate approach. The Council will therefore require new approaches to service delivery to ensure that the projected savings requirement of £48.335m for 2024/25 and 2025/26 can be achieved. The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy sets out a clear vision that supports new ways of working that will ensure that high quality, fit for purpose and affordable facilities are available to support high levels of engagement across the county borough.

8.4 There are no direct financial implications arising from this progress update report. The costs of various projects and investments are reflected in the report and the Implementation Plan at Appendix 1, each of which will be subject to appropriate decision making processes.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications directly associated with this report. Staff are at the heart of the sport and leisure services that the Council provides and their passion and commitment is regularly recognised by service users.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The views of the listed consultees have been reflected within this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

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

Councillor Chris Morgan, Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces
Councillor Andrew Whitcombe, Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Shane Williams, Vice Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee
Christina Harray, Chief Executive
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
David Roberts, Interim Finance Manager
Michael Headington, Green Spaces and Transport Services Manager
Jeff Reynolds, Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager
Jared Lougher, Sport and Leisure Development Manager
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Andrea West, Sustainable Communities for Learning – Manager
Philip Griffiths, Green Space Strategy and Cemeteries Manager
Jonathan Davies, Parks and Countryside Operations Manager
Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer
Sean Spooner, Sport and Leisure Services Area Team Leader
Sian Jones, Sport and Leisure Services Area Team Leader
Matthew Taylor, Sport and Leisure Services Area Team Leader
Natalie Thomas, Sport Caerphilly Team Leader
Niall Sheridan, Caerphilly Adventures Team Leader

Craig James, National Exercise Referral Team Leader
Kevin Lodge, Community Centre Services Manager
Andrea Goss, Business Support Team Leader

Appendix 1 – Sport and Active Recreation Strategy Progress and Implementation Plan.

Background Papers:

‘Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2029’ – report to Cabinet, 14th November 2018

‘Sport and Active Recreation Strategy - Progress Update’ – report to Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, 14th September 2021

Making the UK the most active nation in Europe - Sport and Recreation Alliance

#TeamCaerphilly
BETTER TOGETHER

Sport and Active Recreation Strategy Implementation Plan



Key

Black	Not yet started or too early to report any progress (achievements/changes)
Red	Started but not progressing well
Amber	Started with reasonable progress achieved
Green	Going well with good progress
Blue	Completed

Our First Key Outcome: Better Health

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>National Exercise Referral (NERS) Outreach Interventions</p> <p>The National Exercise Referral Scheme is a Welsh Government funded scheme delivered by Caerphilly Council. The Scheme aims to standardise exercise referral opportunities across all Local Authorities and Local Health Boards. The Scheme is an evidenced based health intervention that incorporates physical activity and behavioural change, it supports clients to make and maintain healthier lifestyle choices which will improve their health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The aim of the Scheme is to reduce the inequalities in ill health by providing access to tailored and supervised physical activity. The target population is aged 16+ who are not used to being regularly physically active and are at risk of or currently experiencing a long term or chronic health condition. The Scheme is designed to provide opportunities to exercise that are fun, rewarding and that can be incorporated into everyday life.</p> <p>Referrals are received from a wide range of health professionals including: GPs, Consultants, Physiotherapists, Dieticians, Practice nurse specialists. Chronic condition pathways included Cardiac Rehabilitation, Pulmonary Rehabilitation, Diabetes and Obesity program, Falls Stroke and Neurological Disorders pathway. Additional referral categories included were the primary prevention of cardiovascular and cardiopulmonary disorders, low back pain, mental health, and cancer rehabilitation</p> <p>In 2020 NERS was suspended by Public Health Wales due to Covid-19, however services were quickly moved online and clients were provided with continuity of their care virtually. 451clients took the opportunity to participate in NERS activities virtually. A total of 274 you tube video classes were produced covering a wide range of options. These include aerobic exercise for fitness, chair based class for falls prevention, low impact and low intensity to general circuits, yoga and Pilates, create your own home gym classes, low back pain, and food wise for health.</p>	<p>2007 onwards.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>School Improvement Team Sport Caerphilly are working with the School Improvement team to address wellbeing in the new curriculum. With a lack of readily available resources for the new curriculum around wellbeing, Sport Caerphilly are supporting Education in writing a wellbeing strategy for primary and secondary schools. This will promote lifelong participation, support in areas of deprivation in the borough and funding has been accessed to support the mentoring and upskilling of teaching staff in physical literacy to assist in providing a positive experience of sport and physical activity.</p>	<p>April 2023</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Healthy Walks

As part of Healthy walks programme, our timetable of walks are back in place and proving as popular as pre pandemic levels, with The Pengam Strollers, Penallta Strollers, Bedwas Strollers, Islwyn Ramblers, Caerphilly Ramblers and Caerphilly Adventure Group all back leading weekly walks.

The Caerphilly Challenge Series continues to go from strength to strength. The Council’s Countryside and Landscape Service, in conjunction with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Caerphilly Adventure Group, Caerphilly Ramblers, Islwyn Ramblers and other partners, host this annual event for walkers and runners of all abilities. In May 2023 480 walkers, a record number of entries, showed their mettle by completing the challenging routes of up to 22 miles across the stunning countryside of Caerphilly County Borough.

Our Volunteer Training Progression Plan continues to grow with more volunteers getting involved in leading walks. To date training has taken place in healthy walks leading, Hill and Moorland leading, Mountain leading, national navigation awards and outdoor first aid.

The Caerphilly Landscape Partnership has continued community engagement activities through close partnership working with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB). This has followed direct engagement and promotion of the project and its aim of encouraging members to enjoy the landscape on their doorstep, and to experience the health and well-being benefits of walking. The Rhacca Ramblers has continued following completion of the project in Graig-y-Rhacca. Following outdoor emergency first aid and walk leader training the community volunteers continue to independently lead the weekly walk without ABUHB staff. Unfortunately, no volunteers could be recruited to enable walks to continue in Lansbury Park.

As part of the Caerphilly Landscape Partnership, all healthy walking routes have now been reviewed and graded according to level of work needed to bring up to standard. All walking guides have been updated and are due to be added to the green spaces website. A plan of physical works has been created which includes waymarking on route. A new brand has been created that will be rolled out and promoted over the next year.

Programme is on-going & set to continue.

Ongoing

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Positive Futures</p> <p>A combination of funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Sport Wales is allocated to Sport Caerphilly is to deliver a Positive Futures programme that aims to encompass the mentoring of young people through a 1-1 process and provides an alternative Education pathway for those that have been excluded.</p> <p>Aside to day referral work, there is an outreach programme which is project based through activities such as skateboarding, rugby and various other sports. They address community safety and risk-taking behaviour through regular scheduled evening sports and activity sessions are delivered in areas of significant poverty, deprivation, and high crime levels. Delivery takes place within local leisure centres, community centres, Multi Use Games Area, streets or a patch of grass for young people to voluntarily attend, free of charge, in their local targeted area.</p> <p>Open access provision allows staff to fulfil a contextual safeguarding role for vulnerable young people due to their presence in the community where young people live and see what is happening in the young person’s life; what they are eating and drinking, who they are hanging around with, where they go after the session. This information is vital to feedback to partners. Reactive responses to anti-social behaviour concerns identified via Gwent Police and or/and Safer Caerphilly are key to the work that is undertaken.</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Good Boost</p> <p>The Council has engaged with colleagues at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to roll out the Good Boost programme which aims to support residents who have been identified with Multi musculoskeletal issues through a range of activities that can either be delivered in a taught / class environment or individually through the use of a specially designed tablet. The approach provides residents with a flexible platform to manage their condition and maximises the facilities that are available through the leisure centre platform. Tablets have been delivered to identified sites and appropriate training will be delivered across the coming months. This will be supported by an appropriate communication plan.</p>	<p>October 2023</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Green Prescriptions</p> <p>This is a form of social prescribing, a way for health and social care practitioners to connect with the people they are supporting with a range of non-clinical sources of support in the community. Working in conjunction with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), Parks Services have been instrumental in developing an offering in the north of the county borough at Rhymney Park. This initiative allows participants to undertake community-based activities such as litter picks in conjunction with Keep Wales Tidy. The group meet every Friday and other local events / activities are organised which include wildflower plug planting (involving the local primary school), ongoing use of the community garden at the rear of the bowls pavilion. Participants can also meet on a social level utilising the bowls pavilion for refreshments. Investment has already been made and an outdoor gym has been installed at the park to encourage physical activity.</p>	<p>Initial works are completed but the programme is set to continue.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Green Flag Award</p> <p>There are 34 urban and 6 country parks across the county borough. Three of our urban parks have successfully achieved Green Flag status (Morgan Jones Park, Caerphilly, Ystrad Mynach Park and Waunfawr Park, Crosskeys). Two of our Country Parks also hold this prestigious accolade (Parc Cwm Darran and Parc Penallta). The Council's headquarters at Ty Penallta is also designated as achieving Green Flag Status, which is one of the very first workspaces in the UK to achieve this. More information in relation to activities and events can be found at www.greenspacescaerphilly.co.uk</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Ynys Hywel Covid Memorial Woodland</p> <p>During 2021, the Council were approached by Welsh Government to nominate suitable sites within their jurisdiction to develop a COVID memorial garden, the authority put forward Ynys Hywel Farm which is a holding of 120 acres. The farm, which is council owned, is primarily grazing land situated on the Valley side to the west of Cwmfelinfach. It is located within the Sirhowy Valley Country Park and is accessed via a country lane that serves several properties and leads to Mynydd y Grug. The farm holding had been developed to demonstrate traditional Welsh hill farming and has a complex of buildings including a barn, education room, office and storage areas.</p> <p>Subsequently plans were approved to approved by WG to utilise the site for tree planting which will not only be a focus for those who lost loved ones during the global pandemic but also as part of the wider carbon off setting objectives.</p> <p>The works took place in early 2022 and amounted to approximately 4 ha of which 1 ha was planted by community groups and volunteers during the second week of March 2022. The larger area was planted by the Council at a cost of some £64,000.</p> <p>Subsequently Welsh Government funding of £499, 000 has been provided for a project running through to 2028 to develop and manage the Covid Memorial Woodland. Additional tree planting is being supplement with the provision of stone dust footpaths, new timber entrance gates, drystone walling and timber benches. Ynys Hywel is one of three Memorial Woodlands memorial woodlands is intended to be a symbol of Wales’ resilience during the pandemic, and one of regeneration and renewal as the new woodlands grow. It is hoped they will be places of quiet reflection for families and friends to remember lost loved ones.</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Outdoor Facilities</p> <p>There are over 800 km of Public Rights of Way across the borough for our communities to access and enjoy, 120 grass sports pitches, 20 outdoor bowling greens, several tennis courts and cricket squares. There are 80+ allotments across the borough for our communities to utilise and enjoy physical activity whilst cultivating fruit and vegetables.</p> <p>Works to install a new jogger's path at the Showfield in Blackwood were completed in 2022 at a cost of £80K, which was funded by Parks Services and the Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme. Users can now safely walk, run or jog around the perimeter of the Showfield whatever the weather. The path measures a total circumference of 1.2 km and is accessible for wheelchair uses and pushchairs.</p> <p>Play is key to a child's development; we currently provide over 177 play areas across the borough ranging from fixed equipped playgrounds, Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs), skate parks, youth shelters, kick walls and a splash pad. For something a little different we also have a linear assault course, the 'Ogilvie Olympics' at Parc Cwm Darran.</p>		
<p>The Ynys, Fleur de Lys</p> <p>The grass football pitch at The Ynys has not been usable for a number of years. A project to bring the pitch back into use has been completed involving the addition of many tons of topsoil, drainage works, and grass seeding to provide a completely new playing surface. This has been supplemented with 5 metre highball fencing behind each of the new goals and some recommissioning works to the pavilion at a total project cost of circa £100.000.</p>	<p>August 2023</p>	

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Tennis Courts As part of a borough wide collaborative investment in tennis facilities between the Council and Tennis Wales, we have improved facilities at Blackwood Showfield, Morgan Jones Park, Pontymister, Rhymney, Ynysddu and Ystrad Mynach Park. The investment includes court re-surfacing, anti-slip court and line painting (green courts/ blue surrounds / white lines), new posts and nets for all courts, fencing repairs and installation of an e-gate entrance system. The e-gate system will allow booking courts via an app. CCBC Parks Operations and Sports & Leisure Development are very excited to be working in partnership with Tennis Wales improving Tennis Facilities within Caerphilly County Borough.</p>	<p>October 2023</p>	
<p>Cwmcarn Fforest Drive Having closed in 2015 to allow for the felling of 150,000 trees affected by the disease Phytophthora Ramorum, Cwmcarn Fforest Drive reopened in 2021 following significant investment from Natural Resources Wales and Caerphilly Council. Visitors can enjoy the spectacular Cwmcarn Forest and breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. Children can burn off some energy in three adventure playgrounds, sensory tunnels, and a woodland sculpture trail or follow the several all-ability trails along the route.</p> <p>Caerphilly Adventures relocated to Cwmcarn Fforest Drive in June 2018 and several additional enhancements have followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Changing rooms have been developed for water sports users ➤ E-Bike storage facility has been installed in Caerphilly Adventures area. ➤ Water sports storage container has been installed offering easy access to the Lake with funding from Welsh Government play sufficiency capital investment. ➤ An orienteering course has been established. 	<p>2018</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Duke Of Edinburgh Award (DofE) Caerphilly Council has been offering DofE to schools for more than 30 years and holds a Duke of Edinburgh’s Award direct licence to deliver and support DofE across all education and youth provision in the local authority. Caerphilly Adventures currently has the delegated responsibility for the day-to-day management of the programme, employing a Development Officer working alongside a School Improvement Officer to re-engage and support schools and young people across Caerphilly. The Council Authority is continuing to work in partnership with DofE Wales to increase opportunities for young people in Caerphilly to take part in and achieve a DofE Award. DofE is the perfect way to help young people build life-long belief in themselves, supporting them to take on their own challenges, follow their passions, and discover talents they never knew they had. The services provides an annual update with Education and did this in February 2023.</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Free Swim Initiative Welsh Government Free Swimming Grant is used to support our Aquatic Development Pathway and Education Curriculum by funding top up lessons during holiday periods in the 6 swimming pools. We also use this funding to support GAVO in offering Free lessons to those who would not traditionally access swimming lessons. As part of a Free Swim Review in the Summer 2023 we have also started to work with Families First to target primary schools in deprived wards and offer Free swimming lessons and parent/child sessions to children that would not have the opportunity other than school to take part in swimming lessons.</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Action and Progress	Implementation Date	Status
<p>60 Plus Active Leisure</p> <p>Within the Healthy Weight Healthy Wales (HWHW) Action Plan 2020-2022 Sport Wales have been given responsibility by Welsh Government to oversee annual investment into a national leisure offer for over 60s to encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices. This is intended to ensure a targeted approach to reduce health inequalities and reduce social isolation. CCBC have £37,355 per year for this programme. The scheme aims to enable the 60 Plus population in Wales to live longer, better and happier lives by improving their physical activity levels, confidence, strength and balance.</p> <p>The following investment priorities are identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted provision of physical activity opportunities to contribute to the reduction of Health Inequalities amongst the local 60 Plus Population that are currently inactive or the least active. • Integration alongside other initiatives such as exercise referral, Free Swimming Initiative (FSI), social prescribing, and other local 60 Plus provision to provide a menu of opportunities for this population <p>CCBC have invested the funding in providing 60 plus outdoor e-bike activities. This gives people the opportunity to know a bit more about their bike, with a bike maintenance session and then taken on lead rides across the great outdoors.</p>	<p>April 2022</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Our Second Key Outcome - Healthier and Prosperous Communities

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Community Asset Transfer (CAT)</p> <p>In May 2019, the Council formally adopted a set of guiding principles in relation to the transfer of playing fields and or pavilions to sporting organisations. In the current financial climate, it is acknowledged that the Council has limited financial resources to improve playing fields and changing room provision. Whilst our ethos is to get more people, more active, more often, the adoption of a set of guiding principles will allow officers to work closely with sports clubs to reach their aspirations, obtain grant funding to improve facilitates (which we as a Council cannot access) and subsequently protect our assets for future generations. This also aligns with the principles set out within the Council’s adopted Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.</p> <p>5 projects are currently with the legal team for completion. 1 project is awaiting allocation within Property Services. 3 projects are preparing paperwork to progress to the next stage. A further 10 projects have been mooted and the interested parties are considering them.</p>	<p>On-going and set to continue as applications from clubs are received.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Be Active Wales Fund</p> <p>With the introduction of the Be Active Wales Fund during Covid19 this has been a catalyst in making sporting community clubs and organisations within in Caerphilly CBC to become stronger, sustainable and stop them from closing during such challenging times. The Be Active Wales Fund offers grants from £300 to £50,000 for projects in Wales that intend to do at least reduce inequality, create long-term sustainability or/and introduce new or diverse ways of operating their clubs. Clubs have accessed the funding to upskill volunteers, purchase equipment, deliver physical activity /sport in new ways, use technology to support further and engage more people and support communities that are in deprivation.</p> <p>Sport Caerphilly have supported numerous clubs across CCBC in accessing just under £250,000 of funding through the BAWF during 2022/23. This continues to be a priority area for us especially during the cost-of-living crisis with a target of £275,000 in 2023/24.</p>	<p>March 2024</p>	<p>Progressing well</p>

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Oakdale Athletics Hub</p> <p>A flood lit synthetic running track area will on the school fields located at Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School – 300m x 6 lane plus a 6 lane sprint straight. The facility includes provision for off field events e.g. high jump, long jump, shot put, javelin and discus. These new sports facilities provide an opportunity for 90 schools and the community to use an athletics track supporting the increase in demand for this type of sporting provision as well as the drive to increase participation to include women and girls through targeted interventions and partnership working with the Authority’s Sports Development team, Sport Caerphilly, Disability Sport Wales and a number of our key partners.</p> <p>The total cost of the project was £755,000 and funded from Welsh Government’s Community Learning centre capital grants programme. The site is open to local schools through the school day and then the community for public open sessions, and the local Athletics club, Rhymney Valley Athletics Club and the wider community in the evening.</p> <p><i>Link to Launch Press release 4th March 2022-</i> https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/news/news-bulletin/march-2022/the-leader-is-thrilled-to-open-the-new-community-a</p> <p>The facility supports the development of Athletics Clubs across the county borough, the delivery of primary and secondary PE lessons, along with offering a safe place for individuals to visit and train throughout the year. A further investment has recently been made to provide a classroom/meeting room facility that encourages a range of education and developmental programmes, along with enhancing the environment on a day to day basis.</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>Completed</p>

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Penallta Parkrun</p> <p>Taking place within Parc Penallta, Parkrun is a free, community event where you can walk, jog, run, volunteer, or spectate. The Parkrun is 5k and takes place every Saturday morning and the junior Parkrun is 2k, dedicated to 4–14-year-olds and their families, every Sunday morning. CCBC and Sport Caerphilly assist Parkrun in getting this community event up and running for its launch on 27th June 2015. This event has flourished since its launch and has as of 10th August 2023 had 55,294 finishers. Parkrun is positive, welcoming, and inclusive, there is no time limit, and no one finishes last. Everyone is welcome.</p>	<p>June 2015</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Caerphilly 10K</p> <p>Now a regular feature in the sporting calendar the Bryn Meadows Caerphilly 10K is set to return in 2024 on Sunday 12 May along with the Bryn Meadows Caerphilly 2k. With 2,500 runners of all abilities expected to descend on Caerphilly from across the country to enjoy the event, we are looking to the 2024 event to be bigger and better to support the health and wellbeing of our residents.</p>	<p>May 2024</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Let's Go Girls</p> <p>Sport Caerphilly's <i>Let's Go Girls</i> campaign aims to get more women, more active, more often. By doing so, it will increase confidence to allow them to be the best version of themselves physically, mentally and socially while allowing physical activity to be the 'norm' in everyday life. We work with a number of community clubs and partners to provide various opportunities to allow females to find the best place to support them in their journeys.</p> <p>Current provision is heavily focussed on young girls in secondary schools (years 8/9) which has been a great success. A new programme addressing pre/post-natal exercise with mums has been launched and received well. There is scope to deliver this further 23/24 and target further areas of deprivation in the Borough.</p>	<p>March 2024</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>Families First Targeted Youth and Family Engagement Project Welsh Government Funded project working in partnership with the Youth Service delivering Outdoor Experiences for vulnerable families.</p> <p><u>Families First- TYFE Provision</u></p> <p>Caerphilly Adventures receive funding from Families First to provide outdoor activities for families referred to the Targeted Youth and Family Engagement Project and Young Parents. The projects aim to promote family cohesion, confidence through a wide range of activities. Caerphilly Adventures has been working in partnership with Families First since 2019. In that time, they have worked with approximately 184 families.</p> <p><u>Family Engagement</u></p> <p>Family Engagement supports families with children and young people adversely affected by poor relationships. Group sessions focus on improving relationships through building trust, supporting personal development and well-being and skills development. Group sessions bring relevant family members together to support specific needs, to introduce families to new activities and experiences and to provide information and advice to families on a range of topics, along with introductions to new services where needed.</p> <p><u>Young Parents Project</u></p> <p>The Young Parents Project supports new and expectant young parents up to the age of 25 who would benefit from meeting other young parents their own age, making new friends and receiving support for a variety of challenges. Young Parents can receive information and advice, participate in a range of activities that will build confidence, help develop new skills and experience learning with their babies and children.</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Workforce / Volunteer Development</p> <p>Caerphilly Adventure Group is continuing to train and develop volunteers to help run its walking and water-sports programmes.</p> <p>Sport Caerphilly deliver a volunteering and coaching pathway which provides young people the opportunity to develop their skills to lead / coach in sporting settings such as schools, community clubs and events. With COVID19 putting our coaching and volunteering pathway on hold it has taken some time to rebuild. The programme is now in a good place and is going from strength to strength and we have recruited a further 10 coaches who will enhance opportunities we can deliver. This pathway continues to grow and allow community clubs to increase membership and participation through school clubs links.</p> <p>As Caerphilly Sport and Leisure Services emerged from the Covid lockdown, it was clear that every swimming pool we managed, like many in the UK, had lost a number of swimming teacher staff members and that we would have to approach our future swimming teacher recruitment slightly differently. We explored the potential of using volunteers within our communities and train them up as the future generation of Swimming Teachers. The first cohort of Aquatic Volunteers were recruited in April 2021 and 9 volunteers aged from 14 year to 66 years were deployed at our swimming pools. These volunteers received the following training prior to their deployment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBS checks • Adult and Child Safeguarding training • Health and Safety training • CCBC corporate training • A site-specific induction training sessions. <p>In July 2021 they were then deployed at sites with a swimming teacher mentor, to assist them through the first 12 weeks of volunteering. After 6 months of volunteering with hours being logged, they were then able to attend the ASA Level1 Swimming Teachers Course, with 6 of our Aquatic volunteers now trained up and actively teaching as part of our Learn to Swim Programme.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Coach of the Future</p> <p>This programme is an opportunity to support and develop the best young coaches, in addition, to gaining valuable experiences and life skills – not just in coaching. The focus of the programme is on key aspects of personal development such as confidence, organisation, teamwork, problem solving, self-belief, leadership, and communication. The pupils who undertake the programme will complete and achieve Community Sport Leadership Qualification via Sport Leaders.</p> <p>During the academic year of 2021/22, 24 pupils completed the course, with 26 during 2022/23 and 21 selected for 2023/2024.</p>	<p>July 2023</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Elite Caerphilly</p> <p>The Elite Caerphilly Scheme has been established to assist the development and potential success of sports people. The scheme aims to reduce the financial burden of training costs for talented athletes, many of whom aspire to participate and represent both Wales and/or Great Britain in their respective sports on the international stage.</p> <p>Aspiring athletes who live in Caerphilly County Borough can apply to receive free access to train at sporting facilities operated by CCBC sport and leisure services. This funding aims to support talented people across our county to fulfil their potential and realise their sporting aspirations.</p> <p>Eligible applicants are those competing within Olympic, Paralympic, Deaflympic and Special Olympic official sporting disciplines at a regional level or above. Confirmation of athlete’s clarification and level will be sought from relevant sport governing bodies to ensure CCBC sport and leisure services are supporting pathways appropriately within each respective sport.</p> <p>The number of people engaged in the programme are:</p> <p>2020- 33 (Covid Lockdown) March 2020 2021- 4 (Covid Lockdown) March 2021 2022- 35 2023- 23</p>	<p>2019/2020</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Caerphilly Leisure & Wellbeing Hub

The Council have been successful in securing £20m funding as part of Round 2 UK Government Levelling up Fund (LUF). Together with £13.6 million of approved match funding from the Council the £33.6 million project will see the development of an accessible and affordable leisure and wellbeing offer that is attractive to residents (memberships and access to a range of free and low-cost services), sports clubs, community groups and a range of public sector partners (schools, GP referrals and social prescribing, youth services, skills providers, Council’s Employability Team, third sector organisations etc.) The new Leisure & Wellbeing Hub will replace Caerphilly Leisure Centre which was built in 1962 and will include:

- A six-lane community swimming pool with pool pod access, learner pool, leisure pool with flumes and interactive water features;
- Wellness spa;
- Children’s adventure soft play
- Tag Active Arena
- 4 court sports hall
- 2 squash courts
- 100-station fitness suite
- Multi-purpose community room
- Future studio/group exercise studio, cycling studio, wellbeing suite and consultation room.
- Changing rooms, in addition to a reception area and café providing community space.

There will also be a multi-agency health and wellbeing offer that complements the leisure offer, with the intention to support residents to become more physically and economically active. Providing a base for public and community partners to deliver programmes, including the Local Health Board and third sector organisations (delivery of wellbeing programmes (e.g. smoking cessation and National Exercise Referral Schemes)). Affordable multi-purpose community spaces will be available to third sector organisations, community groups, sports clubs and private residents (for local sport competitions, community events and birthday parties etc.).

January 2026

In progress

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>The facility will provide gateways to employment, through the delivery of skills training, events and support and the creation of meaningful employment, apprenticeship and volunteering opportunities</p> <p>The Wellbeing Suite will support people aged 55+, including those with long term health conditions, and those rehabilitating by providing a social and non-intimidating environment with state-of-the-art equipment.</p> <p>The Leisure & Wellbeing Hub will be 660 metres, an 8 minute walk, from the town centre's Transport Interchange Hub and situated within the active travel corridor, promoting accessibility and inclusion, increased footfall in and around the town centre and Basin and will actively contribute to the objectives</p> <p>Current timelines indicate that the facility will be open for full customer use from January 2026.</p>		
<p>Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club</p> <p>Since the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 Islwyn Indoor Bowls club (IIBC) was not able to deliver full provision, i.e. Bowls and Hospitality. All activities were closed during periods of lockdown and the Club lost all their paid staff. When Welsh Government Covid restrictions were lifted indoor activities were one of the last activities to start back and by this time the IIBC committee made up of club volunteers were running the operational duties of opening and closing the club and keeping the bowls section going.</p> <p>Approval was given for Officers to procure a commercial operator and implement an appropriate commercial agreement on behalf of the Council, so it can act as the catalyst for investment at IIBC to fulfil the potential of the facility within the community and reduce the risk to the Council.</p> <p>A cabinet report was approved on 25th January 2023 and officers have developed a process to go to the market in July- August 2023, in preparation for a commercial operator to commence in September/ October 2023.</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	<p>In progress</p>

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Tots Sessions</p> <p>Sport Caerphilly provides tots sessions in a variety of sports such as hockey, netball, football and athletics. The aim of the community sessions is to develop the physical literacy skills of children aged between 3- 6 years across various leisure centres in the borough. The sessions are well attended and have coaches and volunteers supporting its delivery. Coaches and Volunteers are also upskilled to increase and develop their knowledge to provide high quality and informative sessions to children and parents. This programme is a huge success, and it is our plan to develop it further across more sites in the Borough. This year we have run the following sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newbridge LC – Football Tots – Tuesdays – 5pm-6pm • Newbridge LC – Netball Tots – Thursdays – 5pm-6pm • Newbridge LC – Athletics Tots – Thursdays – 5pm-6pm (Summer Term) • Caerphilly LC – Football Tots – Thursdays – 5pm-6pm • Sue Noake LC – Hockey Tots – Tuesdays – 6pm-7pm • Sue Noake LC – Netball Tots – Tuesdays – 5pm-6pm <p>Numbers attending, across all sessions average 17 per session</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Working collaboratively</p> <p>We work collaboratively with partners and other deliverers where there is an identified need and/or others can deliver more effectively and efficiently. Sport & Leisure have engaged with a number of providers across a number of levels to deliver programmes that support the aims and ambitions of ‘more people, more active, more often’. Work will continue in this area to either support local providers or work in a more directly focused manner to deliver where Sport & Leisure does not have capacity or expertise. For example, programmes have been delivered in partnership with organisations such as Forces Fitness, Cwac Cwac and the Urdd.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Communication & Digital First</p> <p>The service has developed a significant digital presence to support regular communication and engagement with existing and new users across a range of platforms</p> <p>The service utilises all available social media platforms, has developed a service specific app (with circa 43k+ downloads), has a dedicated website that offers access to all part of the service area, utilises the Gov Delivery platform (with circa 10k+ users registered), along with engaging with customer experience and communication platform Net Promotor Score.</p> <p>The service will continue to explore further developments in this space, including at a local / site level to enhance the customer experience, improve efficiencies and ensuring we remain at the forefront of health, fitness and wellbeing solutions</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Carbon Reduction</p> <p>The service has recognised the importance of acknowledging, recognising and contributing towards the Councils ambition in relation to carbon reduction and the climate emergency. Steps have been taken to replace 3G pitch floodlights, internal facility lighting, the use of inverters and pool covers to support carbon reduction and increased energy efficiency. An energy design and advice note is also being prepared in relation to the Caerphilly Leisure & Wellbeing Hub to ensure that the facility maximises all available funding and technology is support of a low carbon, energy efficient building.</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Our Third Key Outcome: securing a more efficient and financially sustainable future offer

Action:	Implementation Date	Status
<p>Facility Investment</p> <p>The Sport & Active Recreation Strategy established a position that investments would be focused in strategically beneficial areas that would provide high quality, aspirational facilities that will support the ambition of increased level of engagement in an active lifestyle. Investments must meet the requirements established within the Strategy and are financially viable from both a capital and revenue perspective. The service will also pay close attention to maximising external funding opportunities from a variety of sources that will allow for investment opportunities to be maximised. Strong progress has been made in this area with a number of investments detailed above that have significantly improved the service offer. These include:</p>		
<p>Newbridge Leisure Centre</p> <p>£300k investment in redeveloping the Fitness Suite with a supporting Dance and Group Cycling Studio to add for purpose, contemporary offer that accurately reflects the ambition set out the strategy.</p>	2021	Complete
<p>Newbridge Leisure Centre</p> <p>£50k pool play equipment that significantly enhanced the offer and experience available to children and young families in support of utilising the safe and fun use of water as part of engagement in active recreation</p>	2021	Complete
<p>Newbridge Leisure Centre</p> <p>£25k changing room refurbishment that provides a dedicated, contemporary in facility changing provision that enhances the offer to Fitness Suite users along with providing an additional layer of safeguarding to support the joint use offer.</p>	2023	Complete
<p>Newbridge Leisure Centre</p> <p>3G pitch replacement</p>	2023	At tender process

<p>Sue Noake Leisure Centre</p> <p>An investment of £390,000 through Sport Wales and CCBC funded replacement surfaces at Idris Davies School and Sue Noake Hockey Hub that provides a significantly improved facility to support both curriculum delivery and community use provision. The project developed the county borough's first Hockey Hub.</p>	2021	Complete
<p>Bedwas Leisure Centre</p> <p>£315,000 replacement of the outdated Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) and supporting infrastructure, including fencing, lighting and changing rooms at Bedwas LC to a modern, fit for purpose dual use rugby and football 3G pitch.</p>	2022	Complete
<p>Lewis School, Pengam 3G</p> <p>An investment of approximately £90,000 funded through retained underspend reserves was initiated to replace the outdated Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) at Lewis School Pengam with a new dual use 3G football and rugby pitch. The upgraded facility will support both improved access for curriculum delivery and community access, supporting development opportunities across a broad range.</p>	2021	Complete
<p>Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni</p> <p>An investment of approximately £90,000 funded through retained underspend reserves was initiated to replace the outdated Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni with a new dual use 3G football and rugby pitch. The upgraded facility will support both improved access for curriculum delivery and community access, supporting development opportunities across a broad range.</p>	2021	Complete
<p>Idris Davies 3-18 Community School</p> <p>An investment of £390,000 through Sport Wales and CCBC at Idris Davies School and Sue Noake Hockey Hub funded replacement of the outdated Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) with a new dual use 3G pitch that provides a significantly improved facility to support both curriculum delivery and community use provision.</p>	2021	Complete
<p>St. Cenydd Community School</p> <p>Using Welsh Government's Place for Sport fund allocated to Sport Wales a new dual use 3G pitch has been installed to replace the previous Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP). At a cost of £110,000 the upgraded 3G pitch provides a facility for pupils, leisure centre users and the wider community to use to play and train all</p>	2020	Complete

year around. The multi-use pitch can be used in all weather and is utilised by a number of different sports including football and rugby.		
<p>Heolddu Leisure Centre</p> <p>A £100,000 refurbishment of the Fitness Suite has provided a range of new cardio equipment including rowers, air bikes and SkiErg ski machines as well as new resistance machines and free weights. The new facilities will benefit students at Heolddu Comprehensive School, the local community and new and existing Leisure lifestyle members.</p>	June 2023	Complete
<p>Heolddu Leisure Centre</p> <p>Heolddu Leisure Centre offers a 25 metre swimming pool, Health Suite, Fitness Suite, Squash Court, 3G pitch and dedicated Group Cycling Studio. Heolddu Leisure Centre is circa 50 years old is co-located with Heolddu Comprehensive School and that options for its future will be considered in connection with the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.</p>	2028/29	
<p>Cruyff Court Aaron Ramsey, Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre</p> <p>The facility has been built in partnership with Caerphilly County Borough Council and the Aaron Ramsey Foundation with the help of funds raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery at a total cost of £73,000. The Cruyff Court Aaron Ramsey at Trinity Fields School is dedicated to children with additional learning needs which was one of Johan Cruyff's initial motivations as he sought to connect sports and children. The Cruyff Court provides a safe place where children and young people can interact with each other socially and develop healthier lifestyles.</p>	June 2023	Complete
<p>Nelson Handball Court</p> <p>Nelson Handball court had a resurfacing and repainting programme of works in July/ August 2023. This works was to upgrade this landmark and is recorded as the only full-size handball court on mainland Britain. The investment was £15,445.</p>	August 2023	Complete
<p>Risca Leisure Centre ATP</p> <p>The artificial turf pitch (ATP) at Risca Leisure Centre is coming to the end of its useful life. Site investigation works are being undertaken to inform options for replacement.</p>	March 2024	
Abercarn Primary School Mini 3G	2023	At Procurement stage

<p>To replace the current schools mini-ATP with a modern 3G surface and floodlights, that will allow this facility to be opened up outside of school hours to support community sport and clubs.</p>		
<p>Centre for Vulnerable Learners, Pontllanfraith Under the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme the Council is planning to build a Centre for Vulnerable Learners on the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School site. The new facility will accommodate between 80 - 120 pupils and be equipped with high quality learning opportunities, indoor and outdoor sporting provision and will enable community use of the facilities outside school hours.</p> <p>Sporting facilities will include a 4 court sports hall, with associated changing facilities, and a 3G pitch (size 40 x 30 metres i.e. not full size).</p>	<p>January 2025</p>	
<p>Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre As a result of the Covid 19 pandemic and the immunisation programme that followed, Pontllanfraith LC has acted as the county borough's Mass Vaccination Centre (MVC) from September 2021 until June 2023. The 3G pitch has maintained a full programme of community use, however the users of the indoor space have relocated to alternative facilities.</p> <p>The council is committed to repurposing elements of the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School site with the development of a new Centre for Vulnerable Learners (CVL) and respite centre. The new CVL will include a 4-court sports hall and a multipurpose 3G pitch, albeit not full size. As a result of these and wider developments there is requirement for the council to adopt a position on the future of the site as part of the broader place shaping ambition.</p>	<p>2024</p>	<p>Demolition of former comprehensive school in progress</p>
<p>Community Focussed Schools Sport & Leisure have initiated discussions with three Secondary Schools to maximise the use of their community assets. Sport facilities at Islwyn High, Blackwood and Ysgol y Gwindy will be managed by the service ensuring a consistent delivery model and availability. Further discussions are scheduled to take place at the completion of the PFI process at Lewis School Pengam and Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni.</p> <p>The position builds upon the aspiration within the Strategy to create more sustainable facilities by managing and promoting community use by managing within the Sport and Leisure facility portfolio.</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	

Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy

In November 2020, the Council formally adopted a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy. The scope of the strategy was broad in its outlook and includes elements of GI such as: -

- Parks and Gardens (urban and country and formal gardens)
- Amenity greenspace (informal recreation, housing green spaces, domestic gardens, village green, urban commons etc.)
- Natural and semi natural green spaces (woodland, scrub, grassland, heath, derelict land etc.)
- Green corridors (rivers, canals including their banks, road and rail corridors, hedgerows, public rights of way)
- Other features such as allotments, farms, community gardens churchyards, green roofs, recreation grounds etc.

The strategy was developed in conjunction with key partners / stakeholders to generate widespread support and understanding and the full role and function of green spaces across the county borough. It identifies and prioritises GI within the borough as well as on a regional and national context. It identifies clear and practicable mechanism for delivery and clearly measured targets and outcomes and provides the foundation and supporting document for the future preparation and submission of grant bids to relevant funding bodies. A five-year rolling delivery and action plan sets both local and regional delivery priorities.

An update report was received & noted by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on 25th October 2022. An all-members Seminar was held in October 2022 to raise awareness of our Bio-Diversity Duty, the Gwent wide 'Nature isn't Neat' campaign and our grass cutting regimes going forward.

Regional working through the Gwent Green Grid Project has continued both on the ground and in policy terms with the preparation of both a Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy and Strategic Access Plan. Developments within country parks have included both revised land management and recreation provision. Emphasis has been placed on biodiversity and decarbonisation/landscape improvements with a range of nesting and hibernation infrastructure being put in place and the second phase of the Covid Memorial Woodland being planted.

2020

In Progress

<p>Additional grant funding from the National Lottery for pan Gwent GI improvements was secured and preparatory planning commenced to secure funding for capital GI improvements, bio-diversity support and Local Places for Nature until 2025.</p>		
<p>Community Centres</p> <p>There are currently 35 Community Centres as part of the CCBC supported network. Each facility plays a key role in the delivery of sport and active recreation at a local level. The vast majority of programmes are delivered in a low cost, encouraging environment delivered by local groups and organisations. There are also examples of high-level activity being delivered in some Community Centres, particularly in martial arts.</p> <p>In accordance with the Welsh Government 'Facilities for Future Generations' framework, Community Centres are classified as providing local, door step options for those who either prefer this environment or have difficulty accessing a larger facility. Significant improvements have been made by both CCBC and the local Community Centre management committees to improve and enhance both the fabric and structure of the facility, offering a more engaging and inclusive environment.</p> <p>Sport & Leisure Service will continue to support both ongoing facility investment where appropriate and required, along with providing advice and guidance to those delivery partners active within local communities.</p> <p>The service has committed to a formal review of the Community Centre Service to establish a long - term vision that aim to ensure that there a sustainable and appropriate delivery model that is needs lead and supports local communities.</p>	<p>2024</p>	
<p>Armed Forces</p> <p>Sport & Leisure have continued to provide Free Swimming to all Armed Forces personnel in receipt of a Defence Card and this is offered across all 6 swimming pools</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>Refugee Support</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

<p>Sport & Leisure have provided support through the provision of free memberships to those individuals and families who have become refugees in Caerphilly as a result of major issues in their home countries. There has been a steady take up of the offer and positive feedback from those families that have engaged in the scheme</p>		
<p>Gwent Drug & Alcohol Service (GDAS) In partnership with GDAS, the service has provided free supported access to those residents that are engaged in programme of self / supported help to utilise the benefits associated with engaging in active, healthy lifestyles</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	





HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY – 31ST OCTOBER 2023

SUBJECT: WASTE MANAGEMENT REVIEW REPORT FROM AUDIT WALES

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Audit Wales Waste Management Review Report which was issued in July 2023 for noting and review by the Scrutiny Committee. The report will be presented by Audit Wales.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Audit Wales carried out a review of the Council's approach to recycling waste including its performance against key indicators and its plans to drive improvement in its performance. The audit did not examine in detail all of the waste management services provided by the Council
- 2.2 Audit Wales notes that the Council waste management performance had deteriorated in recent years with the percentage of waste reused, recycled and composted lower when compared to other councils in Wales. The Audit Wales review focused on the extent to which the Council understood the reasons for the decline in its recycling performance and its plans to address this.
- 2.3 The high-level summary from the review was that "Overall we found that the Council understands why its performance has declined but has been slow to address this; and whilst the Council is developing a draft strategy there remains significant risks to its successful implementation". The Report is attached as appendix A
- 2.4 Audit Wales made 2 recommendations for improvement as noted in section 5.3 below

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny review and note the report as presented by Audit Wales.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Scrutiny are updated on an external view of the recycling performance and have context for the developing Waste Strategy.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Audit Wales provided a project brief in October 2022 and the work included provision of a range of documents and a series of interviews with relevant officers.

- 5.2 A draft outcome report was provided to the Council in April 2023 and management comments on its content were returned to Audit Wales.

- 5.2 The final Report was then issued in July 2023 and concluded **“Overall, we found that the Council understands why its performance has declined but has been slow to address this; and whilst the Council is developing a draft strategy there remain significant risks to its successful implementation. It will also be important for the Council to act quickly to make the changes it considers necessary if it is to meet its statutory recycling targets and avoid the risk of financial penalties”**.

- 5.3 As such, Audit Wales made 2 recommendations for improvement which were:

R1 Value for Money and Well-being measures - The Council should set out how it will monitor and evaluate the value for money of its waste strategy once finalised and the strategy's contribution to the Council's Well-being Objectives.

R2 Longer-term strategy - The Council should develop and agree a fully costed and resourced longer term waste strategy capable of meeting both current statutory targets and in readiness for the potential increase in statutory targets in the future.

- 5.4 Considerable work has been undertaken to address the recommendations already, and this work is ongoing with further decision making milestones planned as follows:

- CMT 18/09/23 – to discuss progress with the waste strategy
- CMT 19/10/23 – to discuss progress with the waste strategy
- PDM 08/11/23 – to update cabinet members informally on progress with the consultation draft of the strategy
- Joint Scrutiny 14th December 2023 – to update all members on the draft strategy in advance of cabinet approval of the draft strategy to be consulted on.
- Cabinet 10/01/24 – to seek approval of the consultation on the draft of the strategy and to seek authorisation to commence public consultation

- 5.5 Once the strategy and implementation timeline is finally agreed (summer 2024) a performance management framework will be developed and included in the Corporate and Directorate Performance Assessments. This will include reporting against key national performance indicators as well as cost benchmarking with other Welsh Local Authorities using the benchmarking scheme employed by the County Surveyors Society, WLGA and Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP). In addition, compliance with Welsh Government recycling targets is featured as one of the key measures within the Caerphilly County Borough Corporate Plan 2023-2028, Well being objective 5 (Enabling Our Environment to be Greener) and will be the subject of annual progress reporting in accordance with the plan.

5.6 In addition the recommendations and actions to address them as noted in 5.3 and 5.4 will be monitored by Governance and Audit committee twice a year.

5.7 **Conclusion**

Audit Wales will present their Waste Management Review to the Scrutiny Committee and provide fuller details of their findings as noted in Appendix A. The recommendations made have been accepted and considerable action is underway to address the recommendations. In addition to monitoring of the progress at different organisational levels, there will also be monitoring as part of our standard tracking process which is reported to Governance and Audit twice a year.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions have been made in this covering report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 This report is for information and has no decision-making requests, so the Council full Integrated Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied. An integrated impact assessment would be part of the overall Waste Strategy.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications within this report, though there will be financial implications associated with our developing Waste Strategy.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no personnel implications within this report.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 The report includes the views of the listed consultees.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Report was undertaken to help discharge the Auditor General's duties under section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act), and section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

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Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director, Economy and Environment

Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director, Education and Corporate Services
Councillor Chris Morgan, Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green
Spaces
Councillor Andrew Whitcombe, Chair of Environment and Housing Scrutiny
Committee
Councillor Shayne Williams, Vice Chair of Environment and Housing Scrutiny
Committee
Councillor Tudor Davies, Chair of Cross party member working group on
waste
Councillor Adrian Hussey, Vice Chair of Cross party member working group
on waste
Marcus Lloyd, Head of Infrastructure
Hayley Jones, Waste Strategy and Operations Manager
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Background:

Appendices:

Appendix - A Waste Management Review July 2023

Waste Management Review – Caerphilly County Borough Council

Audit year: 2022-23

Date issued: July 2023

Document reference: 3688A2023

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

Contents

Report summary	4
What we looked at – the scope of this audit	5
Why we undertook this audit	5
What we found	6
The Council understands why its performance has declined but has been slow to address this; and whilst the Council is developing a draft strategy there remain significant risks to its successful implementation	6
The Council has developed a medium-term draft strategy to meet statutory recycling targets but there are significant risks to its successful implementation	8
The Council has costed elements of its draft waste strategy over the short term but is not yet in a position to fully cost its longer-term approach	10
The Council has not determined how it will assess and monitor the value for money of the waste strategy or its contribution to the Council's broader strategic objectives	11
The Council is seeking to learn lessons to improve its recycling performance	11
Recommendations	12
Appendices	
Appendix 1: key questions and what we looked for	13

Report summary

- 1 The Council waste performance has deteriorated in recent years both in terms of the actual percentage of waste reused, recycled and composted and also relative to other councils in Wales.
- 2 The Council has failed to meet its statutory recycling target for three years in a row up to and including 2021-22, and at the time of writing was also projected to miss the target again for 2022-23. The Welsh Government can levy financial penalties for non-compliance with the targets, but to date it has not applied these to the Council.
- 3 We reviewed the extent to which the Council understands the reasons for the decline in its recycling performance and its plans to address this.
- 4 Overall, we found that the Council understands why its performance has declined but has been slow to address this; and whilst the Council is developing a draft strategy there remain significant risks to its successful implementation.
- 5 It will also be important for the Council to act quickly to make the changes it considers necessary if it is to meet its statutory recycling targets and avoid the risk of financial penalties.

What we looked at – the scope of this audit

- 6 We focused on the Council's approach to recycling waste including its performance against key indicators and its plans to drive improvement in its performance. This audit did not examine in detail all of the waste management services provided by the Council.
- 7 Our findings are based on document reviews and interviews with a selection of officers and executive members. We undertook these interviews during February and March 2023. We also analysed recycling performance data produced by Stats Wales over a number of years (see **Exhibit 1**). The evidence we have used to inform our findings is limited to these sources.
- 8 We set out to answer the question: **Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and have robust plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets?**
- 9 We did this by exploring the following questions:
 - Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and how it might change over time?
 - Does the Council have a clear vision of what it wants to achieve for its recycling performance?
 - Is the Council working effectively with the right people and partners?
 - Has the Council resourced delivery of the plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets so it can deliver long-term/preventative benefits?

- Is the Council monitoring and reviewing progress?
- Is the Council learning lessons from how it works to deliver against its recycling targets?

Why we undertook this audit

- 10 This audit was undertaken to help fulfil the Auditor General’s duties under section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 11 We sought to help:
- provide assurance that the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources and is acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle; and
 - provide insight into how the Council could strengthen its arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources; and its application of the sustainable development principle.

Exhibit 1: key fact

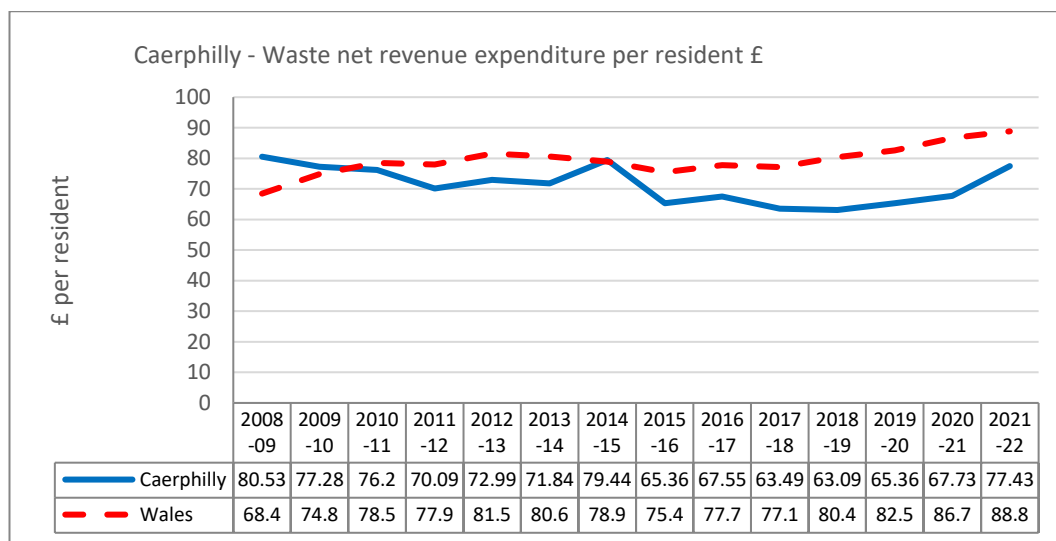
Key Fact

The Council’s net revenue expenditure on waste services for 2021-22 was c. £14 million in total, which was approximately £77 per resident¹.

¹ Revenue outturn data, Stats Wales

Exhibit 2: the Council’s net revenue expenditure on waste per resident compared with other councils

The following exhibit shows the amount of revenue expenditure the Council spent per resident each year from 2008-09 to 2021-22 compared with the other 21 councils in Wales.



What we found

The Council understands why its performance has declined but is only recently beginning to take action to address this

- 12 The Council understands why its performance has declined but is only recently beginning to take action to address this. Welsh Government has set long-term targets for recycling and re-use of municipal waste. The Welsh Government can levy financial penalties for non-compliance. The statutory target for 2019-20 onwards was 64% and the target for 2024-25 rises to 70%. The Council has failed to meet the target for 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 and is projected to miss the target again for 2022-23.
- 13 Between 2017-18 and 2021-22 the Council’s relative performance has declined from the fourth highest in Wales, and well above the Welsh average, to the second lowest in Wales and well below the Welsh average, reflecting a significant decline in performance.

Exhibit 3: the Council’s performance of waste reused/recycled/composted: annual performance²

The following exhibit shows the Council’s performance and how this compares with the other 21 principal councils in Wales.

	Caerphilly County Borough Council annual performance (%)	National Ranking compared the other 21 principal councils in Wales	Wales average (%)
2017-18	66.7	4th	62.7
2018-19	65.1	6th	62.8
2019-20	62.5	20th	65.1
2020-21	61.9	21st	65.4
2021-22	59.7	21st	65.2

- 14 The Council draws on a wide range of evidence sources to understand the current factors affecting its recycling performance. These include analysis of waste data flows, data analysis provided by WRAP Cymru, contract performance and benchmarking its approach with other councils. This has enabled the Council to identify several reasons for its relatively poor performance including:
- a relatively high level of residual waste created within the county borough.
 - low participation in recycling amongst residents resulting in a high amount of food waste within its residual waste stream. Approximately 25% of residual waste is food waste.
 - its waste collection and enforcement arrangements have not kept pace with developments in neighbouring authorities.
 - proof of residency checks at household waste recycling centres (HWRC) has reduced the overall amount of waste deposited at these sites but also reduced the amount of recycling deposited.
- 15 The Council is seeking to understand the root causes of low participation rates of residents in recycling. It has commissioned external support to help it better understand the behavioural barriers to recycling amongst residents. This includes a series of public engagement sessions and use of data mapping to develop recommendations to inform the Council’s draft waste strategy.
- 16 Despite having a good understanding of the reasons for its declining performance, the Council has been slow to address them. We recognise that responding to the pandemic inevitably took priority during some of this period, however, the Council missed its statutory recycling targets for the last three years and is projected to miss them for a fourth year in succession. In missing the targets, the Council has

² [Annual reuse/recycling/composting rates by local authority \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales)

risked incurring financial penalties from the Welsh Government of £200 per tonne. To date the penalties have not been levied. However, based on the Council's recycling performance, had the Welsh Government decided to levy the penalties, for example, the cost to the Council would have been £1.2 million for 2021-22. The Council's relatively low recycling rates also potentially impact upon the Council's broader strategic priorities, for example, the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019.

- 17 The Council's performance framework consists of the following components: Corporate Performance Assessments (CPAs), Director Performance Assessment (DPA) Service Planning, and My Time Extra. CPAs are reported to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet; and the DPA is monitored and reviewed at Director Management Teams on a quarterly basis.
- 18 The Economy and Environment DPA, where recycling data is contained, was shared with the relevant scrutiny committee up to February 2022. Despite the relatively poor recycling performance and missing of statutory targets over several years, there is no evidence of effective challenge or performance monitoring by the relevant scrutiny committee in recent years. Consequently, the Executive has not been transparently held to account for the Council's performance in this area

The Council has developed a medium-term draft strategy to meet statutory recycling targets but there are significant risks to its successful implementation

- 19 The Council has recently developed an overarching draft strategy designed to meet its statutory targets for the next five years up to 2027. It focuses on meeting the forthcoming 70% statutory recycling target during that period. The draft strategy has been developed at pace to meet its recycling targets and avoid the risk of financial penalties, and therefore it is not yet supported by fully resourced implementation/action plans.
- 20 If the Council is to improve its overall recycling performance at the pace and scale required to meet statutory targets, it will be important to ensure there is elected member endorsement of proposals, and that the Council acts quickly to make the changes to its waste services it considers necessary.
- 21 The draft strategy sets out the Council's commitment to applying the sustainable development principle to its approach to recycling and waste management and references the seven national well-being goals.
- 22 The Council has not yet considered the impact of the draft strategy on neighbouring authorities, although we have been told it intends to. This increases the risk of the Council not acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle, through considering if and how its actions might impact on the well-being objectives of other councils.

- 23 In 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. As part of these efforts, a Decarbonisation Strategy was adopted to support the Council to reduce its carbon emission. However, the Council has been slow to address the issues in relation to waste and recycling that impact on the priorities of the Decarbonisation Strategy. However, we recognise that the pandemic would have impacted on the Council's progress.
- 24 The waste department has worked with other departments in developing the strategy, for example, to understand projected population and housing growth. It is also considering ways to use resources differently across departments to deliver the strategy in ways that could deliver multiple benefits or make more effective use of resources with the potential to deliver multiple benefits. The identification and implementation of opportunities and initiatives to deliver multiple benefits are in keeping with application of the sustainable development principle. It also has the potential to improve the value for money secured from the Council's resources.
- 25 The Council has not yet determined its longer-term strategy. It recognises that its draft strategy is unlikely to be sufficient for the longer term, as the statutory targets are likely to increase. There remains a risk that the Council, in now needing to act quickly and prioritise short-term progress towards meeting recycling targets, is not able to balance its focus on the short term with longer-term considerations.
- 26 Following similar initiatives introduced by other councils, in October 2022, the Council opened its first Reuse Shop. This new drop-off facility has been successful in reuse and resale of more than 13,000 items. As well as generating income levels of approximately £1,000 a week, it has also reduced the amount of waste to be disposed. This should help the Council to meet its statutory targets whilst also providing a wider benefit to local communities.
- 27 The Council has not involved key stakeholders in the development of its draft strategy. As the draft strategy was developed urgently, the Council did not undertake significant involvement activity in developing it. It is therefore too early to assess how well the Council has involved stakeholders in the development of proposals. However, the Council intends to implement a whole population communications and engagement campaign for specific changes to waste services following consideration of the draft strategy by councillors. As the Council's recycling performance is reliant in part on the support and behaviours of residents, communication and engagement activity is likely to be key to the Council meeting its statutory targets.
- 28 The Council has not yet developed an Equalities Impact Assessment for all of the proposals in the draft strategy, but intends for these to accompany the proposals in the draft strategy when it goes through the political process. Assessing the impact of proposals on groups who share protected characteristics will be important for the Council to discharge its responsibilities under equalities legislation, but also to understand the impact of proposals on service users.

Partnership working

- 29 The Council has a track record of working with partners in the delivery of its waste services. For example:
- through Prosiect Gwyrdd, a consortium to dispose of residual waste collected from the kerbside.
 - working with The Furniture Revival (Rhymney) which is about partnership working to improve the circular economy is working well in terms of throughput and re-use of waste.
 - Working with Waste savers to run the Reuse Shop (see **paragraph 26** above).
- 30 The Council intends to explore more partnership working opportunities in implementing its draft waste strategy, such as potential collaborative working on recycling markets and disposal of difficult to recycle materials. But as the draft strategy has not yet been approved, the Council cannot finalise with whom and how it might collaborate to improve the value for money of its services. As all councils are dealing with similar issues in relation to waste and recycling, there are likely to be further opportunities to explore collaborative approaches to improve performance and secure value for money in the use of the Council's resources.

The Council has costed elements of its draft waste strategy over the short term but is not yet in a position to fully cost its longer-term approach

- 31 The Council has costed the short-term proposals in its draft strategy and has considered the resources it may need to meet statutory targets over the longer term. For example, the Council is aware that longer-term proposals may require significant investment in infrastructure, including the potential need for a new waste transfer station and investment in its fleet infrastructure. However, at this stage the longer-term proposals have not been costed as the Council is yet to finalise its longer-term strategy. To enable the Council to take informed decisions on the longer-term aspects of the strategy, it will be important that options are fully costed before decisions are taken.
- 32 The Council recognises that it needs to allocate resources to have deliver the strategy. The Council's current Medium Term Financial Plan does not specifically explain if and how funding will be prioritised to deliver the waste strategy in 2023-24, due to the strategy being in draft when the MTFP was produced. However, the Council is confident that resources will be allocated to deliver the proposals in the strategy. The Council also expects to realise efficiency savings from the implementation of some of the proposals in the strategy.

The Council has not determined how it will assess and monitor the value for money of the waste strategy or its contribution to the Council's broader strategic objectives

- 33 The draft strategy contains measures against its short and medium-term objectives to meet statutory recycling targets over the next five years. The draft strategy does not set out longer-term measures to meet the more challenging statutory targets that the Council anticipates will be introduced in the future. This means that the Council is well placed to monitor its performance over the short and medium term but is not able to communicate and measure progress against longer-term objectives. We are aware that the Council is developing its new Corporate Plan, which provides an opportunity for the Council to reflect on this.
- 34 The Council's latest Annual Self-Assessment report for 2021-22 identifies the need to improve the amount of food waste that is recycled, but the assessment does not contain an evaluation of the relatively poor recycling performance or mention that the Council has not met statutory targets for several years. The absence of this information reduces the ability of councillors and other stakeholders to understand the Council's performance in context and the risks associated with it. It also potentially reduces the usefulness of the self-assessment report to support learning and accountability.
- 35 The Council has not yet considered how to monitor and evaluate the value for money of the proposals in its draft strategy nor monitor the contribution of the strategy to the Council's broader strategic objectives. Without this information, the Council risks being unable to assure itself that its arrangements are securing value for money and that its approach is maximising opportunities to support the delivery of its wellbeing objectives.

The Council is seeking to learn lessons to improve its recycling performance

- 36 The Council is able to demonstrate that it is seeking to learn lessons to improve its performance. For example, it is taking steps to improve its contract management arrangements and is taking action to improve the performance of one of its key recycling contracts. The Council also compares the cost and performance of its waste service, including commercial recycling through its membership of a benchmarking club. Officers have used their knowledge of other councils' approaches to inform the draft waste strategy and the Council is also taking steps to understand the reasons why its food waste recycling rates are comparatively low.

- 37 It will be important for the Council to continue to review the effectiveness of its approach and take timely action to intervene, if it is to both improve and maintain its performance in line with statutory recycling targets.

Recommendations

Exhibit 4: recommendations

Value for Money and Well-being measures

- R1 The Council should set out how it will monitor and evaluate the value for money of its waste strategy once finalised and the strategy's contribution to the Council's Well-being Objectives.

Longer-term strategy

- R2 The Council should develop and agree a fully costed and resourced longer-term waste strategy capable of meeting both current statutory targets and in readiness for the potential increase in statutory targets in the future.

Appendix 1

Key questions and what we looked for

Exhibit 5: key questions and what we looked for

The table below sets out the question we sought to answer in carrying out this audit, along with the audit criteria we used to arrive at our findings.

Level 1	Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and have robust plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets?	
Level 2	Level 3	Audit Criteria (The Council has taken into account relevant recommendations and advice of the Future Generations Commissioner where appropriate)
1. Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and how it might change over time?	1.1 Is there is a thorough understanding of the 'as is' (ie current need/demand/performance/costs/issues to be addressed) and the reasons why/underlying causes?	<p>The Council has drawn on a range of information to develop a thorough understanding of the 'as is' and how it is likely to change.</p> <p>The Council benchmarks its costs, performance and processes from a value for money perspective.</p> <p>The Council has used its evidence base to identify actions that are likely to be most effective and why, including how they could address the root causes of problems, and informs decisions that seek to balance the need to meet short and longer-term objectives.</p>
	1.2 Is there is a thorough understanding of the long-term factors that will impact recycling performance and the challenges and opportunities that may result (eg risks and opportunities)?	
2. Does the Council have a clear vision of what it wants to achieve for its Recycling performance?	2.1 Is the Council planning over an appropriate timescale?	<p>The Council has considered what long term means in this context and set an appropriate timescale (eg ten years, 25 years or longer). It has considered how action can deliver the best impact over that timeframe, has set out measures that reflect short and long-term impacts, with milestones that reflect progress as appropriate.</p> <p>It has set out how the plans will be resourced over the longer term as far as is practical.</p>

Level 1	Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and have robust plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets?	
Level 2	Level 3	Audit Criteria (The Council has taken into account relevant recommendations and advice of the Future Generations Commissioner where appropriate)
	<p>2.2 Has the Council thought about the wider impacts it could have, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How it could contribute to each of the seven national well-being goals? • How delivery will impact on the other things it is trying to achieve (ie its well-being objectives and wider priorities)? • How delivery will impact on other what other public bodies are trying to achieve (ie their well-being objectives)? 	<p>The Council has considered the contribution to and links between social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being/the seven national wellbeing goals (including how this might help it deliver system-wide, preventative benefits).</p> <p>Staff have sought to integrate their work with that of their colleagues from across the organisation and partner organisations and have proactively shared information, are open and transparent with their colleagues and partners.</p> <p>The Council understands what colleagues and partners do and how their work relates, and integration is evident in key strategies/documents, including joined-up objectives/priorities and performance measures.</p>
	<p>2.3 In developing its plans, does the Council give due regard for its duties under the Equalities Act 2010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equalities duties • Socio-economic 	<p>The Council has considered the potential impact of its plans on groups who share protected characteristics and modified its plans if appropriate as a result.</p> <p>There is evidence that the Council has considered its plans can improve inequality of outcome for people who suffer socio-economic disadvantage and modified its plans if appropriate as a result.</p>
3. Is the Council working effectively with the right people and partners?	3.1 Has the Council identified who it needs to involve in designing and delivering plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets?	The Council has a good understanding of who will be directly and indirectly affected and who it needs to involve, and seeks a full diversity of views, including from non-traditional sources and from those they may have previously failed to reach.

Level 1	Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and have robust plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets?	
Level 2	Level 3	Audit Criteria (The Council has taken into account relevant recommendations and advice of the Future Generations Commissioner where appropriate)
	3.2 Is the Council effectively involving the full diversity of the population?	The Council has provided genuine opportunities for people to influence design and delivery from an early stage. It has built mature and trusting relationships, sharing information in an honest, open and transparent way and providing feedback on how it has been used. It has used the results of involvement to shape planning/delivery and draws on good practice.
	3.3 Is the Council working with the right partners?	The Council has identified the partners it needs to work with to deliver its vision and objectives and has a clear understanding of how it could work with others and the key challenges they face. There is a focus on place and better outcomes.
	3.4 Is the Council effectively collaborating with the right partners?	The Council has mature and trusting relationships with its partners, because, for example: it invests time and capacity in partnership working; it is sharing or pooling financial or non-financial resources and has developed shared ways of working.

Level 1	Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and have robust plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets?	
Level 2	Level 3	Audit Criteria (The Council has taken into account relevant recommendations and advice of the Future Generations Commissioner where appropriate)
4. Has the Council resourced delivery of the plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets so it can deliver long-term/preventative benefits?	4.1 Does the Council understand long-term resource implications?	The Council understands the benefits of investing in long-term, preventative approaches and the cost (both financial and in terms of outcomes) of not doing so. It has thought about the resources it will need to deliver planned outcomes over the medium and longer term (whole-life costs) and how it could manage risks/meet those costs, and seeks to minimise waste/negative impact on resources throughout delivery.
	4.2 Does the Council allocate resources to deliver better outcomes over the long term?	The Council has considered the resources it will need to deliver sustainable, longer-term outcomes and how it might manage any risks. It has taken action (including preventative action) that is likely to contribute to better outcomes and/or use of resources over the longer term is promoted and supported. It considers how funding can be deployed to support the delivery of objectives in an integrated way.
5. Is the Council monitoring and reviewing progress?	5.1 Is the Council monitoring and reviewing progress towards, short, medium and longer-term objectives?	The Council has set out measures that reflect short and long-term impacts, with milestones that reflect progress as appropriate. These measures reflect: the delivery of outcomes relating to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being, assessment of financial costs and performance.

Level 1	Does the Council understand the reasons for its recycling performance and have robust plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets?	
Level 2	Level 3	Audit Criteria (The Council has taken into account relevant recommendations and advice of the Future Generations Commissioner where appropriate)
6. Is the Council learning lessons from how it works to deliver against its recycling targets?	6.1 Is the Council seeking to learn lessons from its own performance to improve its arrangements?	The Council makes use of performance, budget and other relevant information to make improvements to its arrangements.
	6.2 Is the Council seeking to learn lessons and improve its approach to involvement?	The Council reviews the effectiveness of its involvement activity, and is learning lessons (from success and failure) and improving its involvement.
	6.3 Is the Council seeking to learn lessons and improve its approach to collaboration?	The Council reviews the effectiveness of its collaborative activity and is learning lessons (from success and failure) and improving its collaboration.



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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.