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Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Democratic Services



THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

5th December 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

A meeting of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be held in Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale on Thursday, 12th December, 2019 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris
Managing Director

AGENDA

Pages

1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION

You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

2. APOLOGIES

We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh or English. / Croesawn ohebiaith trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg.

Municipal Offices
Civic Centre
Ebbw Vale
NP23 6XB

Swyddfeydd Bwrdeisiol
Canolfan Dinesig
Glyn Ebwy
NP23 6XB

a better place to live and work
lle gwell i fyw a gweithio

To receive.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

To consider any declarations of interest and dispensations received.

4. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive.

5. **ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** 9 - 40

To consider and if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th October, 2019.

6. **PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE** 41 - 62

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd October, 2019.

7. **PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE** 63 - 76

To confirm the minutes of the Planning, Regulatory & General Licensing Committee held on 7th November, 2019.

8. **STATUTORY LICENSING COMMITTEE** 77 - 78

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th November, 2019.

9. **PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE (GENERAL LICENSING MATTERS)** 79 - 84

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th November, 2019.

10. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** 85 - 98

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th November, 2019.

11. **SPECIAL DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE** 99 - 102

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st July,
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2019.

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| 12. | <u>JOINT EDUCATION & LEARNING AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SAFEGUARDING)</u> | 103 - 110 |
| | To confirm the Minutes of the Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) held on 15 th July, 2019. | |
| 13. | <u>SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u> | 111 - 118 |
| | To confirm the Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 2 nd September, 2019. | |
| 14. | <u>CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u> | 119 - 126 |
| | To confirm the Minutes of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee held on 4 th September, 2019. | |
| 15. | <u>AUDIT COMMITTEE</u> | 127 - 134 |
| | To confirm the minutes of the Audit Committee held on 10 th September, 2019. | |
| 16. | <u>EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u> | 135 - 142 |
| | To confirm the Minutes of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 11 th September, 2019. | |
| 17. | <u>COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u> | 143 - 150 |
| | To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 12 th September, 2019. | |
| 18. | <u>JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (BUDGET MONITORING)</u> | 151 - 160 |
| | To confirm the minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Committee (Budget Monitoring) held on 16 th September, 2019. | |
| 19. | <u>REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u> | 161 - 170 |
| | To confirm the minutes of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 23 rd September, 2019. | |
| 20. | <u>SPECIAL CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u> | 171 - 178 |

To confirm the Minutes of the Special Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee held on 26th September, 2019.

21. SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 179 - 186

To confirm the Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 17th October, 2019.

22. EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 187 - 192

To confirm the Minutes of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 25th October, 2019.

23. SPECIAL EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 193 - 200

To confirm the Minutes of the Special Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 6th November, 2019.

24. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

To receive questions, if any, from Members.

25. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive questions, if any, from the public.

26. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW REPORT - 1ST APRIL 2019 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2019 201 - 222

To consider the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

27. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT 1ST APRIL 2018 TO 31ST MARCH 2019 223 - 240

To consider the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

28. COUNCIL TAX - REMOVAL OF EMPTY PROPERTY DISCOUNT ALLOWANCE FOR PRESCRIBED CLASS C DWELLINGS 241 - 246

To consider the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

29. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY & BRIDGING THE GAP 247 - 310

To consider the joint Officers' report.

30. **CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL
PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2018/19 Q4** 311 - 376

To consider the joint report of the Managing Director and Head of Regeneration.

31. **DEMOCRATIC ARRANGEMENTS AND SCRUTINY
PROGRESS REPORT** 377 - 388

To consider the report of the Service Manager Performance and Democratic.

32. **TIME OFF FOR RESERVISTS POLICY** 389 - 402

To consider the report of the Head of Organisational Development.

33. **REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
PREFERRED STRATEGY** 403 - 500

To consider the report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services.

34. **MEMBERSHIPS REPORT** 501 - 502

To consider the attached report.

35. **EXEMPT ITEMS(S)**

To receive and consider the following report(s) which in the opinion of the proper officer is/are an exempt item(s) taking into account consideration of the public interest test and that the press and public should be excluded from the meeting (the reason for the decision for the exemption is available on a schedule maintained by the proper officer).

36. **FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE WASTE
TRANSFER STATION AND HOUSEHOLD WASTE
RECYCLING CENTRE** 503 - 680

To consider the report of the Managing Director.

37. **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER PROCESS,
SELECTION OF APPROVED USER** 681 - 692

To consider the report of the Corporate Director of

38. APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE - 15TH OCTOBER, 2019 693 - 694

To receive report of the Appointments Committee held on 15th October, 2019.

39. SHORTLISTING - JNC OFFICERS 695 - 696

To receive report of meeting held on 21st October, 2019.

40. APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE - 8TH NOVEMBER, 2019 697 - 698

To receive report of the Appointments Committee held on 8th November, 2019.

41. APPEAL COMMITTEE - 12TH NOVEMBER, 2019 699 - 700

To receive the report of the Appeal Committee held on 12th November, 2019.

To: Councillor M. Moore (Chair)
Councillor J. Holt (Deputy Chair)
Councillor P. Baldwin
Councillor D. Bevan
Councillor G. Collier
Councillor J. Collins
Councillor M. Cook
Councillor M. Cross
Councillor N. Daniels
Councillor D. Davies
Councillor G. A. Davies
Councillor G. L. Davies
Councillor M. Day
Councillor P. Edwards
Councillor L. Elias
Councillor D. Hancock
Councillor K. Hayden
Councillor S. Healy
Councillor J. Hill
Councillor W. Hodgins
Councillor M. Holland
Councillor J. Mason
Councillor H. McCarthy
Councillor C. Meredith
Councillor J. Millard

Councillor J. C. Morgan
Councillor J. P. Morgan
Councillor L. Parsons
Councillor G. Paulsen
Councillor K. Pritchard
Councillor K. Rowson
Councillor T. Sharrem
Councillor T. Smith
Councillor B. Summers
Councillor B. Thomas
Councillor G. Thomas
Councillor S. Thomas
Councillor H. Trollope
Councillor J. Wilkins
Councillor D. Wilkshire
Councillor B. Willis
Councillor L. Winnett

All other Members (for information)
Manager Director
Chief Officers

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO:	<u>THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</u>
SUBJECT:	<u>ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL –</u> <u>10TH OCTOBER, 2019</u>
REPORT OF:	<u>DEMOCRATIC OFFICER</u>

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. MOORE (THE CHAIR,
PRESIDING)

Councillors D. Bevan
G. Collier
J. Collins
M. Cook
M. Cross
N. Daniels
D. Davies
M. Day
P. Edwards
K. Hayden
S. Healy
J. Hill
J. Mason
H. McCarthy, B.A. (Hons)
C. Meredith
J. Millard
J. C. Morgan
J. P. Morgan
L. Parsons
G. Paulsen
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Sharrem
T. Smith
B. Summers
B. Thomas
S. Thomas
H. Trollope
J. Wilkins

D. Wilkshire
B. Willis
L. Winnett

AND: Managing Director
Corporate Director of Education
Corporate Director of Social Services
Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services
Chief Officer Resources
Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance
Service Manager – Development & Estates
Team Manager – Building Control and Development Plans
Team Leader Estates/Valuation
Policy Officer

<u>No.</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
2.	<u>APOLOGIES</u> Apologies for absence were received from:- Councillors P. Baldwin, G. A. Davies, G. L. Davies, L. Elias, D. Hancock, W. Hodgins, M. Holland, J. Holt. G. Thomas.	
3.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u> The following declaration of interest was reported:- Councillor J. C. Morgan Item No. 27: Capital Programme 2019/2020 – 2025/2026	

<p>4.</p>	<p><u>CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></p> <p><u>Congratulations</u></p> <p>Congratulations were expressed to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Abertillery Learning Community pupil (Secondary Campus) Jack Minchin-Hayes who had represented Wales in the Commonwealth Games in Walsall. Jack had won a bronze medal in the under 42kg Judo Category. <p>RESOLVED that a letter of congratulations be sent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Emily Hoskins a young resident from Abertillery who had courageously and bravely spoken out about her individual battle with an eating disorder on BBC Wales News and BBC Wales Live on 2nd October, 2019 and explained how she was campaigning to improve facilities across Wales for others battling with eating disorders. <p>RESOLVED that a letter be sent to Emily commending her on her courage and bravery and to express support for her campaign.</p>	
<p>5 – 22.</p>	<p><u>MINUTE BOOK – MAY – SEPTEMBER 2019</u></p> <p>The Minute Book for the period May – September 2019 was submitted for consideration, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Item No. 17 – Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee – 26th June, 2019</u></p> <p>It was reported that Councillor Jonathan Millard had been in attendance at the above-named meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the minutes be approved and confirmed as a true record of proceedings.</p>	

23.	<p><u>MEMBERS QUESTIONS</u></p> <p>There were no questions submitted by Members.</p>	
24.	<p><u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u></p> <p>There were no questions submitted by members of the public.</p>	
25.	<p><u>MOTION – ABERFAN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the following Motion:-</p> <p>That Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council invites its schools to observe a minute's silence on the morning of October 21 annually, in remembrance of the 144 children, teachers and others killed on that date at Aberfan in 1966, as well as the countless thousands who had died in the coal industry in this country and many other parts of Wales.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken the Motion was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p>	
26.	<p><u>PROPOSED COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Democratic Officer.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council advised that the annual Council Forward Work Programme had been presented for approval. It was noted that as with any work programme this was a fluid document with flexibility to allow for regular review. The Leader concluded by proposing that the document be endorsed.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, i.e. that the Council Forward Work Programme 2019/20 be approved.</p>	

27. CAPITAL PROGRAMME – 2019/2020 – 2025/26

The report of the Chief Officer Resources was submitted for consideration.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Chief Officer Resources spoke in detail to the report which had been presented to Members to consider options to allocate £9.9m of capital funding to the capital programme for the period to 2025/26 based on a review of current available resources and an assumption of capital funding from Wales Government for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

Councillor J. P. Morgan joined the meeting at this juncture.

As a significant amount of capital projects had been identified (27 in total) for this period, a prioritisation mechanism (using the two staged approach outlined in paragraph 2.8 of the report) had been used as a means of ensuring that the highest priority projects could proceed. Appendix 3 attached to the report provide a summary of all the potential projects together with their associated scores and rank based on this two stage process.

The Chief Officer Resources continued by pointing out that allocating all of the identified funding to the Capital Programme came with significant risks and should alternative higher priority projects be identified in the future or agreed schemes exceeded the approved budget, the Council would need to identify alternative funding sources e.g. use of reserves, revenue funding, reprioritising projects. Therefore, to mitigate this risk it was proposed that a contingency be retained and not all of the available resources be allocated at this point in time.

The three options were, thereupon, outlined and the officer highlighted that Option 3 was the preferred option which included a combination of paring down the schemes in period 1 (2019/20 to 2023/24 which was the most oversubscribed) by 20% to allow the funding to meet the requirements of an optimum number of schemes and allocating to the highest scoring projects in periods 2 and 3, leaving funding remaining in each period for allocation at a future date.

It was noted that Welsh Government had recently announced a number of enhanced capital grants for 2019 to 2021. The Council would receive £410,000 in 2019/2020 for the Public Highways Refurbishment Grant and a capital grant totalling £444,465 to support Economic Stimulus within local authorities.

The Chief Officer Resources concluded by advising that through the maximisation of these and other capital grants, there was the potential to further review the re-allocation of capital resources in this timeframe.

Members were then given the opportunity to raise questions/comment on the report.

Household Waste Recycling Centre – Roseheyworth Industrial Estate – The Leader of the Labour Group referred to this particular capital project and pointed out that in 2016 a number of Members had requested that a Working Group be established to test the veracity of this approach and had undertaken a piece of work in relation to this proposal.

He noted that a bid had been submitted to Welsh Government in the sum of £2.5 million for 2019/2020 and enquired as to the status of that bid i.e. had the Council been notified whether or not it had been successful.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that a bid had been submitted and he, the Managing Director and Service Manager had met the Deputy Minister and Senior Civil Servants prior to the August Recess. He had felt that this had been a very positive meeting and the questions that had been posed by Welsh Government gave some degree of optimism. He concluded by stating that he was mindful that any funding would be required to be spent within the current financial year and it was, therefore, anticipated that a response in respect of the bid would be received during October 2019.

The Leader of the Labour Group continued by pointing out, however, that the funding had yet to be awarded at this stage and the concerning detail in the report was that the Authority would also be expected to contribute an element of its own funding to the scheme. In addition, should the bid be approved, Welsh Government would be looking at the authority to ensure its

<p>recycling rates were increasing.</p> <p>However, he was dumbfounded that the report had indicated that one HWRC Site would be open 3 days per week and the other would be open 4 days per week and said that he was unable to comprehend how this approach could increase recycling rates. The following report Item No. 28 Assessment of Performance 2018/19 had highlighted that the previous year the Authority had exceeded the Welsh Government's recycling target.</p> <p>The Leader of the Labour Group concluded by stating as there was no evidence contained within the document that the funding bid would be successful and the recycling rate would increase (especially based on the 3 and 4 day approach) he was unable to support this capital project.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council advised the project had been prioritised as part of the Council process and should the capital bid be successful, further reports would be submitted to Council to test the best options for utilisation of the new plant and current plant and this report would include and detail the operational arrangements.</p> <p>The Leader of the Labour Group referred to the prioritisation mechanism that had been used as a means of ensuring that the highest priority capital projects could proceed and said that this scheme had surely been prioritised politically as he doubted officers would have brought forward a project that would retain the status quo in terms of operational days and could potentially result in a decrease in the recycling rate.</p> <p>Proposed Amendment:</p> <p>The Leader of the Labour Group said that he would support the project based on the following amendment i.e. <i>if the bid for Welsh Government funding was approved and a report was produced that delineated the Council's approach going forward.</i> He added that if a service was provided to the public then it should be wholly available and not only on specific days.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council advised that the action (as outlined by the Leader of the Labour Group) would take place when and if the bid was successful. It was noted that the Service Manager had presented a very strong and powerful argument which had</p>
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been supported by the Managing Director to the Deputy Minister and Senior Civil Services as to how essential a second Household Waste Recycling Centre was for Blaenau Gwent. He pointed out that whilst the report referenced the current recycling target rate of 64% this would be increasing to 70% in the near future and therefore, there was a need for other methods to be used to achieve this rate. If the ambition of Welsh Government was 0% waste in the future the likes of a second site HWRC would be absolutely essential to fulfil this requirement. The Leader of the Council concluded by pointing out that the project had been given political priority based on the views and comments received from the public, however, the report had been produced by the professionals.

The Leader of the Labour Group said that the recycling rate for Blaenau Gwent was currently increasing and Members wanted absolute proof to the highest degree that the rate would continue to increase.

A Member reported that a number of years ago she had taken the lead to re-open the recycling facility in the Ebbw Fach Valley and had asked the former Leadership to establish a Working Group in order to progress the scheme. The Member said that whilst she did not necessarily agree with the proposed location (she had suggested an alternative site) this was a much needed facility as there was a tremendous amount of fly tipping and hot spots within this area.

However, she expressed her concern regarding the proposed operational arrangements for the site and said that the second recycling facility should be open 7 days a week. Residents had also commented that this facility would be required 7 days per week – it was noted that previously when the former site was closed rubbish was fly-tipped outside the site.

Point of Order - The Leader of the Council at this juncture raised a point of order. He said that the report was not requesting Members to vote on the operational arrangements (i.e. hours/days) it was validating the justification for the second Household Recycling Waste Centre. If the bid was successful and this would only be successful if the Minister felt that this facility was essential for Blaenau Gwent to continue its upward trajectory to achieve the recycling target, a report would be

<p>submitted to Council in respect of the actual minutiae of the proposal.</p> <p>The Leader of the Labour Group stated that the information that the Member had alluded to did form part of the document and, therefore, this point of order should be ruled out.</p> <p>The Member said that the Leader should not have raised a point of order when the information raised was valid as the report clearly indicated that one HRWC would be open 3 days and the other HWRC 4 days per week. Therefore, Members would be voting on the information contained within the report.</p> <p>Revenue Implication - Another Member said that he felt that the 3 and 4 day opening arrangements would cause some confusion and enquired with regard to the revenue implications for this scheme if it progressed.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council advised that the revenue implications would be mapped out if the bid was successful and this information would then be presented to Council for consideration. He continued by pointing out that work in respect of the proposal had commenced in 2016 under the previous Leadership who he acknowledged had been good enough to include him and the now Deputy Leader as part of the discussions. However, if work on this scheme had commenced in 2016 and a potential bid submitted it would have been incumbent on relevant officers including officers within the Environment and Resources Directorate to plan for any revenue implications that would occur going forward.</p> <p>Review of Play Provision – a Member referred to the possibility to bid for funding under the New Play Initiative being launched by the Welsh Government. He advised that a considerable amount of anti-social behaviour was being experienced in the one small play area in the Sirhowy Ward and this had been exacerbated by a recent new development on the former Rhoslan School site.</p> <p>He continued by stating that Members were aware from the press regarding the growing issue of obesity in young children and said that there was a need to improve play provision to allow children to become more active. The Member, thereupon, formally requested that a feasibility study be undertaken in the Sirhowy</p>
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area with a view to improving the play facilities currently available.

CCTV Review – a Member (who was also an appointed representative on Gwent Police and Crime Panel) advised that she had been approached at the last Panel meeting regarding the current position for Blaenau Gwent regarding CCTV. She pointed out that other authorities had their CCTV hosted at Police Headquarters and a response was now required from Blaenau Gwent.

The Leader of the Council pointed out that the Council was debating the capital programme as opposed to CCTV and operational issues.

The Managing Director clarified that the PCC had not offered funding to enable Blaenau Gwent to use the system referred to. Officers from Gwent Police were working on a business case to bring this forward but this information had yet to be received.

In reply to a request to contact the PCC due to conflicting information being received, the Chair advised that officers would pursue this matter.

Cemeteries Investment Programme – a Member welcomed the capital investment of £360,000 for cemeteries as this was much needed to improve the areas across Blaenau Gwent. However, he pointed out that as £360,000 would not be sufficient to deal with all the required maintenance within cemeteries he requested that any further windfall monies received from Gwent Crematorium also be utilised as part of the cemeteries investment programme.

The Leader of the Council said that this project had also received political input as cemeteries within the scoring matrix had not ranked within the top 12 projects. He acknowledged that further work was required to address the poor condition of the cemeteries. However, with regard to any future reimbursement from Gwent Crematorium a policy had been agreed by Council that any windfall monies would be vired into the general reserves in the first instance.

The Leader continued by stating that he had sympathy with the

Member and clarified that there was a political commitment to restore cemeteries to dignified areas.

Proposed Amendment – The Leader of the Labour Group said unfortunately he did not believe that recycling rates would improve with the plants only operating 3 and 4 days and proposed that Option 3 be endorsed with the following amendment i.e. **that there be no reduction in operating days at the planned Household Waste Recycling Centre at Roseheyworth Industrial Estate or current at New Vale site and that a robust business case be presented to Council.**

This amendment was seconded.

The Leader of the Council proposed Option 3 be endorsed as outlined in the report and gave an assurance that if the HWRC bid was successful any issues around revenue and operating practices would come back to Council for the fullest discussion.

A recorded vote was required and, thereupon, taken in respect of:-

In Favour of the Amendment (HWRC at Roseheyworth Industrial Estate that there be no reduction in operating days at the planned or current site and that a robust business case be presented to Council):-

Councillors D. Bevan, M. Cross, K. Hayden, H. McCarthy, J. C. Morgan, T. Sharrem, T. Smith, S. Thomas, H. Trollope, D. Wilkshire, B. Willis, L. Winnett.

In Favour of Option 3 (Preferred Option) – Councillors G. Collier, J. Collins, M. Cook, N. Daniels, D. Davies, M. Day, P. Edwards, S. Healy, J. Hill, J. Mason , C. Meredith, M. Moore, J. P. Morgan, L. Parsons, G. Paulsen, K. Rowson, B. Summers, B. Thomas, J. Wilkins.

The proposed amendment was, therefore, not carried.

Councillor J. Millard abstained from voting.

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 3 be endorsed, namely:-

	<p>A combination of paring down the schemes in period 1 (2019/22 to 2023/24) which was the most oversubscribed) by 20% to allow the funding to meet the requirements of an optimum number of schemes and allocating to the highest scoring projects in periods 2 and 3, leaving funding remaining in each period for allocation at a future date.</p> <p>The following exceptions to the 20% paring down were proposed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Equipment Project – there was an SLA in place for a contracted amount. • HWRC – the bid represented 20% of the estimated cost and assumed 80% Welsh Government Capital Grant Funding. • Cemeteries Project - £210,000 proposed by Executive over 3 years. • Disabled Facility Grants – pared down by £150,000 based on current demand levels. <p>The revised Capital Programme to 2025/2026 be approved.</p>	
28.	<p><u>ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 2018/2019</u></p> <p>Members considered the report of the Service Manager – Performance & Democratic.</p> <p>The Assessment of Performance fulfilled the statutory obligations placed on the Council as part of the requirements of the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 and was required to be published by 31st October each year. This report was subject to external audit by the Wales audit Office.</p> <p>Councillor J. Millard left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Appendix 1 of the report detailed and highlighted the key activities and progress made against each of the Council’s Well-Being Objectives.</p>	

Education - The Leader of the Labour Group acknowledged the importance of the document and that it was aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan. However, he expressed his concern that the information contained therein should be a more detailed and an accurate reflection. By way of an explanation he pointed out that whilst the GCSE results in secondary schools had been recorded as improving he had received conflicting information that Estyn was currently inspecting one of the schools due to its performance and that results had declined in other schools.

The Corporate Director of Education explained that education was currently undergoing national reform and as part of this process the reporting measures were also changing. At the time of the compilation of the document, the reporting measure was 'Level 2+' and performance at GCSE level during the summer of 2019 had increased from 41.1% to 44.5%. Moving forward the national reporting measure would be 'CAT 9'.

The Leader of the Labour Group again expressed his concern regarding the conflicting information being received i.e. the information within the Self-Assessment advised that good progress was being made but Estyn was inspecting a school due to its performance. Therefore, he stated that the Self-Assessment did not provide an accurate picture.

The Corporate Director of Education reiterated that performance had increased from 41.1% to 44.5% for the Level 2+ national performance measure for summer 2018. This performance related to 5 GCSE's including English and Maths.

National Public Accountability Measures – 21st in Wales for Clearing Fly Tipping – a Member pointed out that Blaenau Gwent was now 21st in Wales in relation to this measure and asked for an explanation why the average timescale for Blaenau Gwent clearing reported fly tipping was almost three times higher than the Welsh average. He pointed out that under the previous administration Blaenau Gwent had been the best performing authority.

The Executive Member – Environment acknowledged that these statistics needed to improve but measures were being introduced to address this issue which included a capital bid for a new

<p>Household Waste Recycling Centre and enforcement action would be taken to prosecute individuals for fly tipping offences.</p> <p>In reply to a further question, the Executive Member – Environment said that measures and actions would be put in place shortly to improve performance and to improve Blaenau Gwent’s position nationally in terms of this measure.</p> <p>A Member pointed out that the Scrutiny Committee whose remit this was had been cancelled and said that this issue should have been considered at that Committee and a Working Group established to examine the issue. The Executive Member – Environment confirmed that any report would be submitted to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for due consideration.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services clarified that Blaenau Gwent had been the best performing authority for one year. However, Welsh Government was currently looking at how this statistical data was compared across all authorities as this 5 day measure was being reported differently by authorities. In order to improve performance the authority was looking at best practice nationally and Welsh Government would be advising on the reporting measure going forward.</p> <p>22nd in Wales for the Percentage of Food Establishments that were Broadly compliant with Food Hygiene Standards – A Member expressed his concern that Blaenau Gwent was the worst performing authority in respect of this measure and asked whether this was due to under resourcing in this area. He continued by referring to the wording ‘broadly compliant’ and requested an assurance that food outlets in Blaenau Gwent were safe to purchase food from and safe to eat in as there was a need to reassure members of the public.</p> <p>The Executive Member – Environment confirmed that the position was not satisfactory and advised that a detailed review was currently being undertaken to improve performance.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services on a point of clarification advised that this scoring indicator was a measure attributed and relevant to the establishment/person serving the food and was not a measure for the Council in terms</p>

<p>of compliance with legislation.</p> <p>Therefore, it was not a question of Council performance or resource nor was it because the Council was not inspecting the premises – this measure solely related to the establishments complying with the regulations. The Council was very much adhering to Environmental Health legislation to ensure that food was safe to purchase and eat.</p> <p>Councillor L. Parsons left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Another Member referred to food takeaways and outlets and pointed out that if there was a sufficient number of Environmental Health Officers repeat visits could be undertaken and appropriate action taken if the businesses were not complying with the regulations.</p> <p>Councillor L. Parsons returned to the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Schools Attendance Data/Attainment Levels - in reply to a question regarding school attendance data, the Corporate Director of Education advised that attendance data was only made public at certain times during the year i.e. May and October. In respect of 2017/18 attendance data Blaenau Gwent had been placed second in its family of local authorities (Neath Port Talbot, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly and Rhondda Cynon Taff) for primary and third for secondary schools. With regard to Unauthorised Absence, Blaenau Gwent had been placed second in the family for primary and first for secondary schools and in relation to persistent absentees Blaenau Gwent was joint first in the family for primary 1.7% and for secondary 4.1% - this was below the 4.6% all Wales average for secondary schools.</p> <p>The Member referred to some significant changes that had taken place in secondary schools during in 2018 and pointed out at that time there was a considerable gap between the top performing and lower performing schools. In order to address this issue a considerable amount of resources had been provided to some schools to close this performance gap and asked whether these changes had improved performance levels.</p> <p>The Corporate Director of Education advised that education had undergone national reform and for 2019 a new set of reporting</p>	
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	<p>measures called CAT 9 which was a point based measure awarded to each school. The Corporate Director advised that a report for the South East Wales Consortium Region would be shortly submitted to Scrutiny (25th October) and then to Executive which gave details of the new CAT 9 reporting measure. For this academic year all schools had made progress in terms of performance. It was noted that the current Level 2+ was not a reportable national measure.</p> <p>The Member said he was concerned and wanted an assurance that the performance gap between the best and worst performing schools had diminished. The Chair said that this issue would be discussed at the next meeting of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Internal and External Regulations - The Leader of the Labour Group referred to Page 456 of the document and acknowledged some of the headline points that had been reported. However, he expressed his concern that the Wales Audit Office had conducted work in respect of the Leisure Service Review but some of this work and findings had not been provided to Members.</p> <p>He concluded by stating that he felt that aspects of this Self-Assessment was 'too positive' and some aspects not overly accurate and said that next year's assessment of performance should be more measured.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the Assessment of Performance for 2018/2019 be approved and published before 31st October, 2019.</p>	
29.	<p><u>PREPARATIONS FOR EXITING THE EU</u></p> <p>The joint Officers' report was submitted for consideration.</p> <p>The Managing Director commenced by stating that this was a very topical subject at present and this report provided Members with an update on the preparatory work undertaken at the Council to prepare for the UK's exit from the EU.</p>	

It was noted that the report had also been considered at the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee detailing the issues and consequences of exiting the EU and in addition, a Member Briefing had taken place on 16th October that provided the opportunity to Members to explore the issues further. It was noted that a Member Briefing had also taken place in January 2019 when the proposed exit date at that time had been 31st March, 2019.

Whilst the date and way the UK exited the EU was still extremely uncertain a Brexit specific impact assessment had been undertaken and work was continuing to ensure that the Council and community were able to deal with consequence of a departure.

Preparedness work would now continue aligned to the exit date of 31st October, 2019. The Council was also working in partnership and as part of the all Wales Network. Work was also continuing in conjunction with Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association to ensure that preparations were joined up across both national and local government.

It was noted that Welsh Government had published an action plan for a no deal Brexit. Blaenau Gwent had undertaken a high level impact assessment which identified how these risks would impact on the community and the work undertaken to mitigate those risks. High levels risks included the loss of EU funding and disruption to supply chains. There would also be an impact on the workforce of local businesses and suppliers. Therefore, there would be a need to continually monitor these issues within the community.

Councillor J. C. Morgan left the meeting at this juncture.

Exiting the EU had also been identified as a risk in the corporate risk register. Members would recall that a discussion at a recent budget monitoring meeting whereby it was highlighted that there could also be a potential risk to the Council's own budget. Officers were also working with the Local Resilience Forum to address any potential civil contingencies issues and officers were part of the Operation Yellow Hammer arrangements. To ensure all reasonable actions were taken so that the Council was prepared as it possibly could these arrangements were being

<p>ramped up in readiness for 31st October.</p> <p>The Managing Director said she appreciated that the situation remained extremely uncertain – even if the exit took place on 31st October any impact would not be expected overnight – this would become evident over the coming weeks and months ahead. This was a good example of all Council services working jointly in order to try and mitigate the pending situation ahead. The Managing Director concluded by stating that as the situation developed communication would continue with Members and information would be provided to the public on issues as they emerged.</p> <p>Councillor S. Thomas left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>A Member commended the report but expressed his concern that he was aware from information received that there was also a possibility of food shortages that could impact on the Council e.g. school meals and there could also be an issue in terms of the continuity of medical supplies.</p> <p>Councillor S. Thomas returned to the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>The Member continued by stating that fiscal studies were also indicating the possibility of £100bn UK deficit which could trigger austerity and deprivation which could adversely impact Blaenau Gwent, its residents and Social Services.</p> <p>Councillor J. C. Morgan returned to the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>The Managing Director in reply to a question in relation to Operation Yellow Hammer confirmed that the risks had been identified as part of the detail of the report. The Managing Director advised that with regard to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food supplies - Welsh Government was continuing to work closely with suppliers but there were no expected issues being highlighted at present. - Arrangements for fuel was being dealt with through civil contingencies and an assurance had been received that fuel could be managed at an all Wales level. - Social Services were working closely with colleagues in Health - the continuity of medical supplies was a key issue 	
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	<p>that had been highlighted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Budget - quarterly budget monitoring reports would highlight any potential risks as they may impact in the future and these risks would have to be taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. <p>The Policy Officer advised that the U.K. Government had also published a Readiness Report which contained important preparation steps for local authorities, businesses and third sector organisations.</p> <p>Community Cohesion - A Member referred to community cohesion and said that tremendous work had been undertaken in terms of the Resettlement Programme. There was a need for officers to be mindful of this programme to ensure that it was not impacted by Brexit.</p> <p>The Member continued by stating that he was mindful that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a considerable amount of European nationals worked for the NHS and GP's; - there may be an influx of British nationals returning from the EU to the U.K. and Blaenau Gwent in particular and there was a need to liaise with registered social landlords who may have vacant properties available to accommodate this influx of people; and - the majority of insulin was sourced and came from Europe and this could potentially result in an insulin shortage. <p>The Policy Officer advised that the Welsh Local Government Association was currently communicating with Welsh and U.K. Government to gain a better understanding of the number of U.K. nationals residing in Europe.</p> <p>The Corporate Director of Social Services reported that the issue of medical supplies was a problem faced by the whole of the U.K. and Social Services were working with colleagues in Health who had stockpiled medication for a 6 month period. It was noted that 95% medications were able to be stockpiled but there was 5% of medications (which included insulin) that were unable to be sourced in sufficient quantities. G.P's were trying to mitigate and address this issue by recommending a change in medication for some patients but work was continually on-going within Health to</p>
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	<p>address this issue.</p> <p>A Member said that the supply of antibiotics was also a worrying concern.</p> <p>Councillor J. P. Morgan left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Another Member commended the excellent report and said that under the circumstances was confident that Blaenau Gwent was as prepared as it could be. He requested that the Managing Director pass on these comments to the officers concerned.</p> <p>Councillor P. Edwards left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the preparatory work underway to prepare for the UK's exit from the EU be noted.</p> <p>Councillor J. P. Morgan returned to the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
30.	<p><u>AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION</u></p> <p>Councillor J. P. Morgan re-joined the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance.</p> <p>It was noted that the proposed amendments were of a consequence of changes arising out the Annual Meeting of the Council and also to reflect current operational practice and changes in legislative requirements.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the suggested amendments be approved and incorporated into the existing Constitution.</p>	

31. RENEWAL OF PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS FOR DOG CONTROL OFFENCES – RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Members considered the report of the Service Manager – Public Protection.

The Executive Member – Environment spoke in detail to the report which informed Council of the findings of the public consultation on the proposed new Public Space Protection Order for Dog Control Offences and to seek approval for the new Order to commence on 1st November, 2019.

A Member said that she wholly supported the new Orders but also advised that it was important that the Orders be enforced. She explained that in recent weeks a number of rugby matches in Blaina had been cancelled due to the amount of dog fouling on the pitches. Dog fouling was a serious health matter which could result in sight loss.

Councillor P. Edwards returned to the meeting at this juncture.

The Member continued by acknowledging that she knew it was not an easy task to catch perpetrators but parks were being severely affected by this issue and enforcement action had declined over recent years. She requested an assurance that increased patrols would take place in this area.

The Executive Member – Environment confirmed that the situation in Blaina was atrocious and the overall position was not acceptable and stated that if the Orders were approved they would be enforceable. Currently a review of the whole enforcement service was being undertaken to provide further resilience to address these kinds of issues. Once this review had been completed a report would be presented to Members for consideration.

A Member said that he also supported the Orders and said that this should be a fluid document rather than a document that was renewed every 3 years. He pointed out that a number of CAT transfers of grounds had taken place over recent months and these organisations may have ideas on how to address these

	<p>issues.</p> <p>Councillor S. Healy left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Another Member said that health and safety was of paramount importance to young children who should be able to play in areas in a safe manner. Enforcement and prosecutions needed to increase and publicised accordingly. There also needed to be sufficient public notices erected advising of the Public Space Protection Orders for Dog Control Offences.</p> <p>Councillor S. Healy returned to the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>The Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services pointed out that in addition to enforcement action it was also the responsibility of the owners to look after their dogs. Whilst it was difficult to catch the perpetrators, they were prosecuted if caught. However, if Members were able to raise awareness of issues within certain areas officer resources could be deployed to those particular areas accordingly. It was noted that the Council currently had four Enforcement Officers that were deployed throughout the County Borough but further resilience was being sought as part of the review process.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the new Public Space Protection Order for Dog Controls be approved for commencement on 1st November, 2019.</p>	
32.	<p><u>BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE FORWARD PLAN 2019-2022</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Community Services.</p> <p>The Executive Member – Environment spoke in detail to the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>The Chair said that the issue of energy in particular the street lighting should be addressed as part of this Plan.</p>	

	<p>The Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services said that this was a very topical report especially in light of reports regarding climate change. This Plan was a very important part of dealing with climate change within Blaenau Gwent and whilst the issue of energy had not been specifically included within the Plan, this could be addressed in other areas of Council work and cross referenced in the Plan moving forward.</p> <p>Another Member referred to a recent award received for a housing estate that had been developed ecologically and commended these types of projects.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 2 be endorsed, namely that the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan 2019/2022 be approved.</p> <p>Councillor J. Millard returned to the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
33.	<p><u>APPLICATION TO ACQUIRE LAND AT BEDWELLY PARK</u></p> <p>Members considered the report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community Services.</p> <p>Councillor J. Millard left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>The Executive Member – Environment spoke to the report which had been submitted to obtain the approval of Council (acting as Trustees of Bedwellty House and Park Charity) to transfer a parcel of land to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board for use as part of the proposed Tredegar Health and Well Being Centre.</p> <p>The Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services advised that this was a statutory process and if agreed the consent of the Charity Commission to the disposal of the land would need to be obtained. It was noted that extensive consultation had taken place regarding the proposal and the use of land would be for a green plaza - there would be no loss of amenity space for the community if this proposal was approved.</p>	

	<p>The Leader of the Labour Group said that whilst he would have preferred an option of a lease, he commended Option 1.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the Council as Charitable Trustees agree the principle of the disposal of the area of land either on a freehold or long leasehold basis to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board for inclusion within the development of its proposed Health and Well-Being Centre on terms to be agreed subject to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Successfully obtaining the consent of the Charity Commission to the disposal, which must be obtained prior to a transfer being effected. (ii) Considering implications (if any) concerning the restrictive covenant contained in the 1910 transfer of land to Tredegar UDC. (iii) Advertising the proposed transfer under s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 and taking account of any representations made. (iv) Advertising the disposal in line with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 as detailed in paragraph 5.3.3 of the report. (v) Taking the appropriate advice of an RICS qualified surveyor on the method and transfer of the transfer. (vi) As detailed in paragraph 5.1.1 of the report any capital receipt be ring fenced for use by the Charity and not pooled for use with the Council's General Fund. 	
34.	<p><u>STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN – CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION AREA</u></p> <p>The joint Officers' report was submitted for consideration.</p> <p>The Executive Member – Regeneration & Economic</p>	

<p>Development spoke briefly to the report and explained that the development of a Strategic Development Plan for the Cardiff Capital Region area was a key project. In order to progress the preparation of the Plan regionally it was proposed that a Strategic Planning Panel be established which would consist of at least one member from each authority. Blaenau Gwent had been allocated one Member on the panel and one vote as per the weighted voting allocation.</p> <p>It was noted that the establishment of a Panel would not detract from the remit of the Planning Committees in each borough.</p> <p>The cost of setting up and running the Panel for the first 5 years was £3m pro rata across each authority and this for Blaenau Gwent would be £136,590 staggered over 5 years would equate to £25,318 per annum.</p> <p>The Executive Member expressed his appreciation to the Team Manager – Building Control and Development Plans and her team for the tremendous amount of work undertaken on the Local Development Plan. It was proposed that Councillor Mandy Moore in her capacity as Vice-Chair of Planning Committee be appointed as the Blaenau Gwent representative on the Strategic Planning Panel.</p> <p>The Leader of the Labour Group said that he keen to promote and was supportive of this concept. He continued by referring to the appointment to the Strategic Planning Panel and said this representative would be given delegated responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the Council and said he felt that an Executive Member should have been appointed to this role. He concluded by seeking the rationale for the appointment and clarity in terms of the remuneration level.</p> <p>The Executive Member – Regeneration & Economic Development clarified that the Leader determined the appointments made to the Panel and that the Member had been nominated in her capacity as Vice-Chair of Planning Committee as the SDP was the remit of this portfolio. Whilst he was unable to clarify the appointments to the Panel made by other local authorities in terms of remuneration there would be no direct responsibility payments – only travel expenses would be reimbursed.</p>
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<p>The Leader of the Council reported that it had taken some time and had been an arduous process to reach this position and there had been many discussions along the way and commended the tremendous amount of work undertaken by officers.</p> <p>He confirmed that the appointment arrangements were not out of keeping with what the other authorities were suggesting and quite rightly there was a strong move for gender balance on committee and he was personally pleased that this request could be supported. There was also a strong argument to broaden individual experience and succession planning. He confirmed that the report remained silent on anything but travelling expenses.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that a Strategic Development Plan be prepared for the Cardiff Capital Region and it be agreed that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Vale of Glamorgan as the Responsible Authority for the purposes of preparing the Strategic Development Plan for Cardiff Capital Region. - The Responsible Authority be authorised to submit the Proposal for SDP for the Cardiff Capital Region to the Minister on behalf of the 10 Local Planning Authorities in the region. - The strategic planning area as being comprised of the 10 local planning authority areas within the Cardiff Capital Region as shown on the map attached at appendix A to the report. - The relevant officers engage with the Welsh Government in drafting the Strategic Development Plan Regulations to deliver the governance arrangements for the SDP and Strategic Planning Panel (SPP) as outlined in the report. - The setting up of an Interim SPP be agreed prior to the formal establishment of the SPP. The nominated Member
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	<p>for this Council was Councillor Mandy Moore (Vice-Chair of Planning Committee) on the Interim Strategic Panel. The Councillor had delegated authority to take initial decision on the preparation of the SDP (with a vote weighted in accordance with the table at Recommendation 4(i)) and thereafter on the Strategic Planning Panel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the event that Member was no longer to sit on the Interim Strategic Planning Panel, delegated authority be granted to the Leader of the council to nominated a new Member to represent to Council on the Interim Strategic Planning Panel and Strategic Planning Panel. - That a Regional SDP officer team be established to progress the preparation of the SDP to be appointed by representatives of the Interim Strategic Planning Panel, with appropriate human resource support from the Responsible Authority. 	
35.	<p><u>FEEDBACK/INFORMATION FROM OUTSIDE BODIES: SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report produced by Councillor Julie Holt, the Council's appointed representative on the South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority.</p> <p>A Member said that he was very pleased that feedback was being received from those Members appointed to outside bodies and that he had championed for this for a considerable amount of time.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	

36.	<p><u>FEEDBACK/INFORMATION FROM OUTSIDE BODIES: BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report produced by Councillor John Hill, the Council's appointed representative on the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.</p> <p>A Member referred to issues being experienced with off road motorbikes in the Tredegar area (on the boundary with the National Park) and asked if this issue had been raised at the Park Authority Meetings. Councillor Hill advised that this issue may have been reported directly to officers at the National Park and undertook to investigate the matter.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>
37.	<p><u>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the meeting held on 5th July, 2019.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>
38.	<p><u>MEMBERSHIP REPORT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to:-</p> <p><u>GAVO – Local Committee</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that Councillor John Mason replace Councillor Keri Rowson on the GAVO Local Committee.</p>

	<p><u>Advisory Panel for Local Authority School Governors</u></p> <p>The following recommendations were made by the Panel on 1st October, 2019 to appoint:-</p> <p>Natasha Tepielow – <i>Blaen-y-Cwm Primary School</i> Stephanie Hopkins – <i>Brynmawr Foundation School</i> Natalie Marshall – <i>Cwm Primary School</i> Councillor Jonathan Millard – <i>Ebbw Fawr Learning Community</i> Councillor David Davies – <i>Willowtown Primary School</i></p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the above appointments be endorsed.</p>	
40.	<p><u>CASE REVIEWS: COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER PROCESS, SELECTION OF APPROVED USERS</u></p> <p>Councillor J. C. Morgan declared an interest in this item but remained in the meeting whilst it was under discussion.</p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services.</p> <p>The Service Manager Development & Estates highlighted the robust review process that had been undertaken on a case by case basis and gave details of the three individual cases and the preferred options contained therein.</p> <p>A Member referred to Appeal No. 2 and pointed out that there were historic differences between the two clubs and felt that by</p>	

	<p>not allowing the appeal would not heal these differences and he proposed that Option 2 be endorsed and the appeal be allowed and the case referred pack to the Selection Panel to reassess the case.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report which related to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) be accepted and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appeal 1: – upon a vote being taken it was unanimously resolved that Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the appeal be dismissed and the original decision to award the CAT to the organisation named in the report be upheld. - Appeal 2: – upon a vote being taken it was resolved that Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the appeal be dismissed and the original decision to award the CAT to the organisation named in the report be upheld. <p>Councillor H. McCarthy requested that his name be recorded against this decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appeal 3: – upon a vote being taken it was unanimously resolved that Option 2 be endorsed, namely that the appeal be allowed and the case referred back to the Selection Panel to reassess the case in light of further evidence and information emanating from the appeal process. 	
41.	<p><u>SHORTLISTING – JNC OFFICERS</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12 & 13 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p>	

	<p>Consideration was given to the report of the meeting held on 25th September, 2019.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report which related to staffing matters be accepted and the decision contained therein be noted.</p>	
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL
LICENSING COMMITTEE – 3RD OCTOBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B. SUMMERS (CHAIR)

Councillors D. Bevan
G. L. Davies
D. Hancock
W. Hodgins
M. Moore
J. P. Morgan
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Smith
G. Thomas
D. Wilkshire
B. Willis
L. C. Winnett

WITH: Service Manager – Development & Estates
Team Manager – Development Management
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance
Team Leader – Development Management
Team Leader – Highways & Development
Planning Officer
Press & Communications Officer

AND: Public Speaker
Mr. Robert Hathaway (Agent) – Application No.
C/2018/0323 – Land Adjoining Sunny Rise, Merthyr
Road, Tredegar

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> An apology for absence was received from:- Councillor B. Thomas	
No. 3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u> The following declaration was reported:- Councillor L. Winnett Item No. 10: Planning Applications Report Application No. C/2019/0090 Star Fields, Mountain Road, Ebbw Vale The reason for this declaration was because Councillor Winnett was heavily involved in campaigning on animal welfare issues, in particular large scale dog breeding and had initiated the motion at Council in respect of Lucy's Law.	
-----	<u>ORDER OF AGENDA</u> It was agreed that Item No. 10 – Planning Applications Report would be considered at this juncture.	
No. 10	<u>PLANNING REPORT</u> Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager Development Management. The Service Manager – Development & Estates/Team Manager - Development Management explained the following planning applications to Members with the aid of slides:-	

Application No. C/2019/0090 – Star Fields, Mountain Road, Ebbw Vale - Retention of Stable (Building 4) Outbuilding and Containers for Storage Purposes and Change of Use of Stable (Building 1) to Dog Breeding Kennels

Councillor L. Winnett declared an interest in this item but following advice received from the Monitoring Officer was permitted to remain in the meeting and speak on the item. However, prior to a decision on the application being made Councillor Winnett was advised that she would be required to leave the meeting.

The Service Manager advised Members of late correspondence that had been received since the preparation of the report.

The Service Manager continued by providing details of the background to the application which had been presented to the previous Committee and subsequently refused. Following scrutiny of the minutes of the previous meeting, this report, therefore, captured the reason for refusal based on Members concerns raised at that meeting. It was noted that the reason for refusal did not cite land use planning issues.

The officer continued by stating that it was his duty as principal advisor to the Committee to highlight to Members that it was unlikely in light of an appeal that this reason would stand up and Members may be required to defend the decision with evidence.

The views of Members of the Committee were, thereupon, sought:-

- A Member referred to the proposal which had been refused at the previous Committee and said that the reason for rejection was not adequate. He stated that the buildings (some large in size) were located within a Special Landscape Area designated within the Local Development Plan, therefore, based on this information these buildings should not be located on that site.

The Service Manager advised that the Local Development Plan designated large areas of landscape and there was a rigorous appraisal that was undertaken as part of the process before any areas received designated status – there were also a variety of reasons that for which land could be designated. The officer explained that this designation would not necessarily prevent areas being developed but would be subject to a higher test in terms of acceptability. In respect of this application, the view of officers was that the proposal would not prejudice the Special Landscape Area.

- The Member expressed his concern that the fundamental fact was that buildings on site had been constructed without planning permission and the Committee was not in a position to condone buildings being on site and the use of those buildings contrary to the Local Development Plan. He pointed out that the authority had used its enforcement powers on many occasions for lesser breaches.

The Service Manager pointed out that it was a question of considering acceptability of uses and the fact that this was a retrospective application should not affect decision making. The other site referred to by the Member had been a ‘green wedge’ site and a Special Landscape Area was materially different and, therefore a comparison could not be made.

In reply to a question, the Team Leader – Highways & Development confirmed that the road which led up to the property was an adopted highway but from the gate onwards was private property.

- Another Member expressed his concern regarding the issues raised on Page 143 of the report and pointed out that bullet points 9 & 10 should not have been included in the report. In particular, the reference made to the ‘former council member’ was not relevant to the case.

The Service Manager advised that the content of the correspondence received had been brought out in bullet point form to summarise the information. As an officer he

had a duty to present and not censor the information submitted to the Committee.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Winnett pointed out that the registered dog charity had sought advice and had submitted the following reasons for refusal:-

1. The buildings and containers on this site represent a significant intrusion on the wider landscape, were clearly visible and out of character with the landscape of this part of a Special Landscape Area and lie in close proximity to the Eastern Valley slopes of Ebbw Vale.
2. The utilitarian nature of the buildings detract from the attractiveness of this largely unspoilt valley area and the setting of the urban area of Ebbw Vale.
3. The tipping of material and subsequent re-profiling of land adjacent to the application site associated with the use of the site for stabling and dog breeding was unacceptable in a Special Landscape Area.
4. The proposed development would result in loss of amenity to nearby residents by way of the sound of people and vehicles going to and from the site which was likely to disturb neighbours at times when they could expect to enjoy the comfort of their surroundings.
5. The proposal would lead to an unacceptable level of light pollution in this Special Landscape Area.
6. The development of such a large puppy farm where over 100 dogs and puppies could be in occupation at any one time was not of a scale and design which respected the character of the surrounding area.
7. The proposed puppy farm would require supervision 24 hrs a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. This proposal, however, did not involve the provision of any residential accommodation for staff which would in any case

be unacceptable in this part of the Special Landscape Area.

8. The charity understood that the intention was to breed the puppies on this site and then sell from a residential dwelling elsewhere in the district which would lead to a large number of unnecessary vehicular movements and impact on residential amenities at that location.

Councillor Winnett pointed out that the visual impact the proposal was already having on the area was huge. She had received many complaints from the residents living in the valley opposite and the re-profiling of the land was out of keeping with this beautiful area. Lucy's Law overarched all departments and this valuable law should be cited as one of the reasons for refusal.

Councillor Winnett continued by stating that since the application had been submitted she had been inundated with concerns. The animal welfare issue was huge and Members had to be the voice of the voiceless. Councillor Winnett concluded by requesting that the Committee refuse the application.

Councillor Winnett left the meeting at this juncture.

A Member asked for clarity on the statement made i.e. whether the applicant was currently practising without a licence. The Service Manager advised that the legal status of whether a licence had been granted was not contained in the report because this was not the remit of the Committee and was irrelevant to planning considerations.

The Vice-Chair proposed that the reason for refusal be supplemented with the wording that the proposal was located within a 'Special Landscape Area' as this would add weight to reason. Another Member stated that the building was unsuitable for housing a large number of dogs and given the size and magnitude of the building located within a Special Landscape Area should also be added to the reason for refusal.

The Service Manager clarified that Members objected to the principle of the development based on the fact that it was located within a Special Landscape Area.

Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that planning permission be **REFUSED**. Authority was delegated to the Service Manager Development & Estates to word a reason for refusal based on Members concerns over the scale and impact of the building in this sensitive location in a Special Landscape Area.

An adjournment of the meeting took place from 9.55 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. to allow the gallery to clear.

Application No. C/2018/0323 – Land Adjoining Sunny Rise, Merthyr Road, Tredegar, NP22 3AE – Detached Dwelling, Vehicular Access and Parking

The Team Manager – Development Management gave details of the above application and explained that Members would recall that this application had been included on the agenda for the June 2019 Committee however, had been subsequently withdrawn at the request of the agent in order that further information could be submitted in an attempt to overcome the reason for refusal based on ecology grounds.

The development site formed part of a Woodland Tree Preservation Order and the applicant had, subsequently, submitted a Preliminary Ecological Assessment in order to address the ecological reason for refusal. It was noted that the applicant had not been requested to submit an ecological survey as officers did not want him to incur an unnecessary expense.

It had taken some time for an ecological assessment to be undertaken as further surveys needed to be carried out in respect of reptiles which had subsequently confirmed that no reptiles were found on site and the ecologist had confirmed that she was satisfied in this regard. However, the Council's ecologist had raised concerns that the loss of habitat and the buffering it provided would reduce the ecological resistance of this

woodland block in terms of its extent and connectivity value.

It was noted that the site lies adjacent to two relatively new properties which had received approval in 2000. The Woodland TPO had been designated in 2006 and at the time of the TPO designation a line of trees had provided significant barrier to the industrial estate and the existing houses along Merthyr Road.

At this juncture, the Team Manager with the aid of slides gave details of the elevated area on the site which would require a significant amount of excavation and the removal of trees. Whilst the quality of the trees had been debated, the Team Manager pointed out that it was not value of trees lost from part of the woodland area, it was the principle of allowing a development within a protected woodland area and if approved, would set a precedent for any future applications received.

The officer recommendation was that planning permission should be refused as the site formed part of a woodland protected by a Tree Preservation Order which provided a screen and buffer between Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate to the north and the residential properties on Merthyr Road.

Members were advised that the following late correspondence had been received since the preparation of the report and was summarised in the late correspondence sheet distributed at the meeting.

Agent – Mr. Robert Hathaway

At the invitation of the Chair, Robert Hathaway, the Agent representing the applicant was invited to address the Committee in respect of the planning application.

Mr. Hathaway commenced by advising that the proposed house lies within the settlement boundary and was located in an accessible area. Other houses have been built next door in recent years. Therefore, in planning policy terms the proposed new dwelling was acceptable.

The planning officer had no problem with the scale, mass or external design of the dwelling and was happy that the house would not overshadow or over dominate nor would overlook the next door property.

Access was also safe and off street parking was also provided and the highways officer had no comment.

The only reason that the planning officer gave for seeking to refuse the planning application was that the development would harm the woodland trees. Members would have seen in the late representations the views of the applicant's arboriculturalist and ecologist in relation to the officer's report.

However, the house itself would not involve the felling of any trees. Three trees are proposed to be removed as part of the development but these need to be felled for structural and physiological reasons. Members would note that the officers did not object to the expert advice provided by James Pinder of Tree Care Consulting on the need for the trees to be removed in health terms. Members may also be aware that the TPO guidance says that TPOs should not be used to hinder beneficial management work. So irrespective of the house the trees were in very poor health and need to be removed and replanted.

The case officer's report did not really bring out the tree planting proposals that replace the felled trees. The proposal would see the woodland edge enhanced with appropriate local trees including pine. This would enhance not reduce the buffer between the house and the woodland and also help the woodland screen between Merthyr Road and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate. It was his opinion that the case officer was totally incorrect to say that the development would reduce the screening of the industrial estate. There was no woodland or standing stems between the houses opposite the site and the industrial estate. All that one saw was ground devoid of any trees and screening. New planting would therefore improve the visual screen.

Councillors should also note that none of the neighbours living opposite the site have complained about tree loss.

The applicant had paid for expensive ecological reports on the site. The site had no potential to support roosting bats. The wider woodland and local area had the potential to be used by bats. But this was the case for all but the most urban of habitats. The ecologist concluded that the very small scale habitat loss would have no adverse impact on bats. The risk implications for bats were, therefore, minimal.

Accordingly there were no strong and defensible grounds to refuse the application as there was no overall detrimental impact on either trees or ecology. Indeed the development would lead to the planting of substantially more trees to enhance the woodland edge and improve screening.

Mr. Hathaway concluded by recommending that the application was approved.

The views of Members of the Committee were, thereupon sought:-

- A Member said that he supported the application in its entirety - a new development was to be welcomed. He pointed out that the applicant had worked with the authority to try to address the concerns raised and would enhance the site with further tree planting – this was welcomed by the residents of Merthyr Road as there was no barrier between the site the industrial estate at present.

However, if the Committee was minded to agree with the officer recommendation, the Member requested that a site visit be made to assess the proposal in relation to the site/woodland area.

- The Vice-Chair expressed her concern that if planning permission was granted this would set a precedent for potentially further applications for a dwelling next door and this in turn could possibly remove even more of the woodland area.
- A Member suggested that a condition could be imposed indicating that no further development

should take place on the site. He concluded by stating that as the species of trees were of a low grade he supported the view of the local Member and supported the application.

The Service Manager clarified that this particular application was limited to a specific plot of land but if this proposal was approved there was nothing that could prevent further applications being received for further development in the area.

A Member said that if further applications were received, each application would have to be considered on its merits.

- The outlook for residents living opposite the site would be far better if the development took place as currently their outlook was a wind turbine located on the industrial estate.
- Another Member pointed out that if the application was approved the applicant would spend his own money to implement a tree planting programme.

The Team Manager, thereupon, responded to the following questions and clarified the points below:-

- It was fully acknowledged that some of the trees were not good specimens and the applicant had indicated that additional planting would take place on site. However, it was the principle of constructing a new dwelling in a protected woodland area combined with the potential effect of the dwelling would have on an established woodland area that officers were opposed to as this could set a precedent for the future.

It was noted that there were 3 trees that had been identified that would require to be felled (one specimen had already been removed). Whilst these trees were not necessarily good specimens, it was the effect and impact that the building and excavation works would have on the remaining protected woodland area that officers were opposed to.

- A significant amount of excavation works would have to be undertaken to construct the dwelling which could potentially be harmful to the trees.
- It was confirmed that the applicant was the land owner of the application site and the remainder of the woodland.
- Comparisons should not be made with previous applications as at that time the Woodland TPO had not been designated. For clarification however, it was reported that with regard to the properties that had been previously built adjacent to the site, these had only required a few small trees along frontage to be removed and this loss had been minimal.
- It was acknowledged that the applicant had worked with officers in order to address the issues raised. However, the applicant had decided to commission the ecological study in order to address ecological concerns that had been raised as part of the planning process.
- The Service Manager advised that there were two types of TPO i.e. an individual TPO and a group TPO. With a group or woodland TPO, the value was derived from the value of the group of trees as a whole.

Another Member advised that there were massive problems with overgrown trees throughout the borough this year and said that a tree management system needed to be introduced.

The Vice-Chair reiterated her concern regarding the proposal and the setting of a precedent and said that there was no guarantee that additional trees would not be felled as part of the development.

A Member proposed that the application be approved. This proposal was seconded. Another Member proposed that the application be refused – there was no seconder for this proposal.

Upon a vote being taken it was

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that planning permission be **GRANTED.**

Members requested that the votes be recorded as follows:-

For Approval – 12 Members

Against – 1 Member – Councillor Mandy Moore requested that her name be recorded against the decision.

Abstention – 1 Member – Chair of the Committee

The Service Manager advised that a report would be presented to the next Committee outlining the conditions for the grant of planning permission.

Application No. C/2019/0099 – Land Adjacent to Bethany Baptist Chapel, Six Bells, Road, Six Bells, Abertillery – Expansion of Six Bells School Car Park including Alterations to Adjacent Footpath and Associated Landscaping Works

The Team Manager presented the above application which included works to expand the car park of the Six Bells School together with alterations to the adjacent footpath and associated landscaping works.

The officer advised that the report contained two illustrations which gave an approximate indication (marked in red) of the area of the proposed car park extension. She apologised however that the red line boundary on the aerial photograph in the printed reports had been wrongly represented due to an electronic transfer issue and that this had caused some confusion to third parties which had been picked up in recent press articles. She emphasised however that this photograph had only been included for indicative purposes to give a flavour of the scale of the works and the error had since been corrected on the slide presented at Committee and copies of a corrected version had also been sent to the press.

The current application related to land situated

immediately to the east of the existing car park area and the proposal would involve minor amendments to the layout of the approved car park and the provision of an additional 13 car parking spaces.

There had been no particular issues raised as part of the consultation exercise. However, some concerns had been raised by the Team Manager Green Infrastructure which related to the loss of trees and the fact that providing additional car parking conflicted with other policies e.g. encouraging children to walk to school and the Future Generations Act relating to sustainability.

A significant amount of excavation work would be required as the footpath would be required to be realigned. As part of these works it was noted that there would a loss of some self-seeded trees.

Both Network Rail and Welsh Water had raised no objections to the proposals as part of the consultation process.

At this juncture it was noted that late correspondence had been received from the Council's Destination Management officer supporting the application but noted some temporary negative impacts during the construction stage of the school.

The Team Manager Green Infrastructure had raised significant concerns from a landscape and aboricultural perspective to the proposal to extend the recently constructed car park into existing established native woodland and the manner in which the works might affect remaining trees or impact on the footpath network in the area. Whilst the Team Manager – Development Management said that it was regrettable that a potential extension would be required to the car park now the school had recently become operational, an assessment would be made over the next few months to ascertain if the current level of car parking provision met the needs of the school.

In referring to correspondence received from local businesses and organisations she advised that most of their concerns related to general and technical issues

relating to the newly constructed car park and that these had been previously covered in detail as part of the original planning application process for the new school. It was noted that should planning permission be granted the decision whether to implement the scheme would be a matter for the Council as the applicant to determine.

The Team Manager concluded by advising that should permission be granted a full list of conditions would be prepared.

The views of the Members of the Committee were, thereupon sought:-

- A Member pointed out that if the funding had been received earlier these works could have formed part of the original school development. He concluded by stating that he looked forward to the extension to the car park and supported the officer's recommendation for approval.
 - Another Member enquired if permission was granted, whether an analysis could be undertaken to assess whether there was a need for additional car parking provision at the site. The Team Leader Highways & Development said he was currently working with Education colleagues and the school to produce a working travel plan. Road Safety Officers were also visiting the school. It was noted that the Highway Authority had raised no objections to the proposals.
 - Concern was expressed regarding the considerable amount of congestion outside of schools and a Member said it would be beneficial to increase the car parking provision at the site. This would allow vehicles to park off the highway and provide a safer environment for the children.
 - Another Member pointed out that most people had issues with car parking issues and she could not see how this proposal could be justified.
 - The Chair said that if approved, the construction
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	<p>works would not be carried out until next summer holidays assuming that between now and July 2020.</p> <p>The Team Leader Highways & Development confirmed that an analysis would be undertaken and the situation would be monitored and assessments undertaken to ascertain how the existing car parking was being utilised. It was noted that travel movements in any new school fluctuated.</p> <p>➤ Another Member said that the additional car parking would also alleviate the pressure on businesses located in the vicinity of the school and said he supported the application.</p> <p>Councillor W. Hodgins left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>➤ Another Member said that the additional car parking was much needed since the school had opened as problems had been experienced with parking/congestion and issues were being experienced in respect of the approach road from A467. This additional parking would also alleviate the pressure for visitors visiting the Guardian.</p> <p>Councillor W. Hodgins returned to the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>The Service Manager advised that in planning terms the proposal was acceptable and if permission was issue it would be the Council in its capacity as the applicant which would decide if the proposal was implemented.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that planning permission be <u>GRANTED</u>, subject to the conditions outlined in the report of the Team Manager Development Management.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INFORMATION</u></p> <p><u>QUARTER 1 – APRIL TO JUNE 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service</p>	

	<p>Manager Development & Estates.</p> <p>The Service Manager outlined the Council's current performance as follows:-</p> <p>Figure 1 – the Council was ranked 1st in terms of its performance for determining applications in time. This equated to 100% of the total applications, compared to the Welsh average of 85%.</p> <p>Figure 2 – on average it took 67 days from registration to decision for the Council to determine an application, whilst the Welsh average was 79 days.</p> <p>Figure 3 – 0% of Planning Committee decisions had been made contrary to the officer recommendation. The Welsh average was 10%.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Quarter 1 Performance Information contained therein be noted.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE</u> <u>DECISION: 30MW SOLAR PARK AT WAUNTYSSWG FARM, ABERTYSSWG, RHYMNEY, TREDEGAR</u></p> <p>The report of the Team Leader Development Management was submitted for consideration.</p> <p>The Team Leader Development Management provided an overview of the report and explained that at the previous Committee Meeting Members had expressed disappointment at the Welsh Minister's decision to grant planning permission for the above development, contrary to the advice of the Planning Inspector who had recommended that planning permission be refused on the basis that the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on the local landscape, would cause harm to the views of users of the public rights of way in the area and would have a significant adverse impact on the setting of the Cholera Cemetery Scheduled Ancient Monument.</p> <p>Members had, therefore, requested that a letter be</p>	

prepared for the Welsh Minister setting out the views of Members. This draft letter had been attached at Appendix 1 to the report for endorsement.

A Member expressed his appreciation to the Team Leader for an extremely well drafted and comprehensive response for the Minister.

In reply to a comment made, the Team Leader explained that the Minister had sought advice from Welsh Government officers prior to determining the application.

Another Member said that this matter had been debated and scrutinised by relevant stakeholders i.e. this Committee, the Town Council and local Members and expressed his concern that Welsh Government had overturned local democracy and that this could happen again in the future.

The Team Leader explained that the Welsh Government had introduced a separate process to deal with applications of national significance and from a local perspective all the authority could do was contribute to the consideration of these developments through a local impact report. It was the Welsh Government that ultimately took the final decision in respect of developments of this nature. If there were similar developments of this nature in future the same process would be followed.

Members, thereupon, requested that the following points be included in the correspondence to the Welsh Minister:-

- An invitation be extended to the Minister to visit Blaenau Gwent to view the proposed site that the development would have an adverse impact on.
- The correspondence also be signed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee in addition to the officer.

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing amendments, that the report be accepted and the draft letter for the Minister for Housing and Local Government be endorsed and forwarded to the Minister on behalf of the Committee.

No. 6	<p><u>APPEALS, CONSULTATIONS AND DNS UPDATE OCTOBER 2019</u></p> <p>Members considered the report of the Service Manager Development & Estates.</p> <p>The Service Managing spoke briefly to the report outlining the status of each appeal and it was,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>PLANNING APPEAL UPDATE: 37 BENNETT STREET, BLAINA</u></p> <p>The report of the Planning Compliance Officer was submitted.</p> <p>Members were advised that the applicant had appealed against the period of compliance (4 months) which, had been issued on the enforcement notice. However, the appeal had been dismissed and the applicant would now have 4 months from the date of the Inspector's decision notice (13th September, 2019) to comply with the enforcement notice.</p> <p>A Member asked how the authority could expect the applicant to comply with the notice as there were on-going legal proceedings and asked whether the compliance with the enforcement notice should be held in abeyance until these proceedings had concluded. It was noted that the neighbouring property would not allow the applicant onto his property to undertake the remedial work.</p> <p>The Service Manager advised that the authority had an obligation to the neighbouring property as the building was overbearing on next door property. Three options had been provided to the applicant to comply with the enforcement notice and the Planning Inspector had acknowledged the point that it would be technically possible to achieve the works without erecting scaffolding on the adjacent ground belonging to the neighbour.</p>	

	<p>The Service Manager confirmed that a further report would be submitted to Committee with a recommended course of action at the conclusion of the notice period (mid-January 2020).</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the appeal decision be noted, namely that the appeal was dismissed.</p>	
No. 8	<p><u>PLANNING APPEAL UPDATE: TIR PENTWYS, HAFODRYNYS, PONTYPOOL, TORFAEN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Team Leader Development Management.</p> <p>The Team Manager – Development Management spoke briefly to the report and highlighted the background to the case which had been on-going since 2003. It was noted that the application site fell entirely in Torfaen and Torfaen C.B.C. had refused planning permission for the development.</p> <p>Subsequently, an appeal was lodged and this had also been dismissed by the Planning Inspector.</p> <p>Councillor D. Wilkshire left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the appeal decision be noted, namely that the appeal was dismissed.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>LIST OF APPLICATIONS DECIDED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS BETWEEN 22nd AUGUST AND 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Senior Business Support Officer.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p>	

	<p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the list of applications decided under delegated powers between 22nd August and 18th September, 2019 be noted.</p> <p>Councillor D. Wilkshire joined the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
11.	<p><u>ANY AREAS FOR MEMBER TRAINING/BRIEFINGS</u></p> <p>Planning Compliance – Conservation Areas</p> <p>A Member requested that a training session be held in relation to the above topic in particular covering areas around signage and shutters.</p> <p>The Service Manager reported the following:-</p> <p>Visit to Neighbouring Planning Authority:</p> <p>The visit to a neighbouring planning authority was still in the process of being arranged.</p> <p>Houses of Multiple Occupation:</p> <p>A training event in respect of HMO's i.e. House of Multiple Occupation would be held during in January 2020.</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p>	
12.	<p><u>ENFORCEMENT CLOSED CASES BETWEEN 20TH AUGUST AND 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2019</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).</p>	

	<p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Development & Estates.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken it was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report which related to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority) be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	
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BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL
LICENSING COMMITTEE – 7TH NOVEMBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B. SUMMERS (CHAIR)

Councillors D. Bevan
G. L. Davies
D. Hancock
W. Hodgins
J. P. Morgan
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Thomas
G. Thomas
D. Wilkshire
B. Willis
L. C. Winnett

WITH: Service Manager – Development & Estates
Team Manager – Development Management
Team Manager – Built Environment
Team Leader – Development Management
Solicitor Commercial Services
Team Leader Estates/Valuation

AND: Public Speakers
Terry Morgan (Agent) and Councillor G. Collier (Ward Member) – Application No. C/2019/0225 – 5 Surgery Road, Cwmcelyn Road, Blaina

Rhian Lees, RPS Group – Application No. C/2019/0237 – Tredegar Health Centre & Tredegar General Hospital

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received for Councillors M. Moore and G. Thomas.</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>APPEALS, CONSULTATIONS AND DNS UPDATE OCTOBER 2019</u></p> <p>The report of the Service Manager Development & Estates was submitted.</p> <p>The Service Manager Development & Estates referred to the Development of National Significance in respect of the proposed solar farm at Wauntysswg Farm, Abertysswg (Application CON/2006/0001). The Planning Committee had objected to the proposal on the grounds that the scale of the development would have a harmful effect on the local landscape. CADW had also objected and the Planning Inspector agreed with these arguments and recommended to the Welsh Ministers that the application be refused. However, the application was approved by the Minister for Housing and Local Government.</p> <p>The Officer confirmed that he had written to the Minister, on behalf of the Committee with an invitation to visit the site. A letter had been received declining the invitation, and the Officer read the contents of the letter and circulated to copy to Members.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern and felt that the Minister's decision diminished the role of the Planning Committee</p>	

	<p>and Officers. He referred to Planning Policy Wales, and said he hoped the guidelines of that Policy would allow Local Authorities to retain an element of control over the siting of solar farms.</p> <p>The Officer said the Authority's response to the Draft National Development Framework would be submitted to Welsh Government next week. One fundamental change was that the Authority was now in an agreed area for renewable energy, and as a result would likely see an influx of applications for wind turbines and solar farms in the future.</p> <p>A brief discussion ensued when the Officer confirmed that Members' concerns would be built into the Authority's response on the Draft National Development Framework, and an Executive Member Briefing held last week also reflected the concerns raised.</p> <p>In response to a question raised, the Team Leader Development Management said due to the scale of the proposed solar park it was classed as a Development of National Significance and was therefore subject to a different regime than the standard planning process. However, a Section 73 application had now been received to vary the time granted from 30 to 40 years from the development being constructed and operational, thus extending the original proposal by 10 years. This application would come before Planning Committee for consideration in due course.</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>PLANNING APPEAL UPDATE: 23 PANTYFFOREST, EBBW VALE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Planning Officer.</p> <p>The Service Manager Development & Estates spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein. He confirmed that the Inspector concluded that the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse visual impact on the townscape, contrary to the adopted Local</p>	

	<p>Development Plan (LDP) Policy DM1(2)b, and that the proposal conflicted with Policy DM2. The Inspector therefore dismissed the appeal.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the appeal decision be noted.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>LIST OF APPLICATIONS DECIDED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS 22ND AUGUST AND 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Senior Business Support Officer, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>C/2019/0194 Bridge Street Offices, Bridge Street, Ebbw Vale</u></p> <p>Following a request from a Member for an update on the development of the site, the Team Leader Development Management confirmed that permission was granted in 2018 and work had commenced on site and a number of conditions have been discharged. However, there was a delay due to the discharge of conditions relating to a retaining wall and parking area, as the details approved were not implemented. The Officer confirmed that discussions were ongoing to resolve these issues.</p> <p><u>C/2019/0152 22 Marine Street, Cwm, Ebbw Vale</u></p> <p>In response to a question raised by a Member, the Team Manager Development Management said the garage was partly built when the original application was submitted and had since been completed. The LPA refused the application on the grounds of the detrimental impact on the neighbouring occupiers, and Officers were now in correspondence with the applicant regarding options moving forward.</p> <p><u>C/2019/0200 Former District Council Office, High Street, Blaina</u></p> <p>A Member sought clarification that this was not a HMO, and the Officer confirmed that this application was for different types of self-contained flats with parking provision and new access arrangements.</p>	

	<p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the list of applications decided under delegated powers between 22nd August and 18th September, 2019 be noted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>PLANNING REPORT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager Development Management.</p> <p>The Service Manager Development & Estates explained the following planning applications to Members with the aid of slides:-</p> <p><u>Application No. C/2019/0050 – Land at Waun-y-Pound Road and College Road, Ebbw Vale – Residential Development of 277 Units including Associated Works</u></p> <p>The Service Manager Development & Estates presented the application. He briefly explained the layout and access arrangements. He confirmed that drainage would be subject to a further planning application to be discharged by the LPA as outlined in Recommendation 2.</p> <p>A Member said he welcomed the development but expressed concern that the Section 106 Agreement was limited to Glyncoed and Willowtown Primary Schools. He said all four Primary Schools in the area should be included, namely Rhos-y-fedwen and Beaufort Hill, as children from the development may attend those schools.</p> <p>The Officer said this issue was discussed with the Education Department, and their reason for the two schools mentioned was that they were the designated catchment area schools for the site, and they anticipate children from the development would in the main attend those schools. However, they did acknowledge that there was potential for an impact on Rhos-y-Fedwen and investment could come via the Council's Capital Programme. They are currently investigating this.</p> <p>In relation to the Section 106 Agreement, a Member asked whether there was scope for the developer to renegotiate the agreed sum in the event of the impact on Education not being realised.</p>	

In response the Officer confirmed that a payment schedule had been agreed with the developer, and which was acceptable to the Education Department to allow for mitigation when residents from the site begin to impact on education services. If circumstances changed, it would be open for a request to vary the s106 to be submitted but this would need to be supported with evidence if the Council were to agree to any change.

Another Member expressed concern that the Education Department had referred to the 'catchment' area, when the current Blaenau Gwent admissions process allowed parents to apply to send their children to any school.

The Officer undertook to raise the issue with the Education Department.

A brief discussion ensued when a Member said she was disappointed that there were no bungalows proposed for the site as they were in high demand throughout the Borough.

Another Member also referred to the provision of 20% affordable housing units, and asked whether there would be provision for rentable properties.

In response the Officer explained that details in relation to tenure would be subject to further discussion.

The Chair expressed concern regarding access to the site off Waun-y-Pound road, and the Team Manager Built Environment confirmed that a dedicated right turn waiting lane was considered appropriate for a development of this size and the applicant had redesigned the access to accommodate this. Some improvements to Waun-y-Pound road were also required and these would be delivered by planning condition.

RESOLVED that the developer be required to enter into a S106 obligation regarding a contribution to the Education Department to mitigate for the impact of the development on local primary schools.

FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that

planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions outlined in the report of the Team Manager Development Management.

Application No. C/2018/0323 – Land Adjoining Sunny Rise, Merthyr Road, Tredegar, NP22 3AE – Detached Dwelling, Vehicular Access and Parking

The Service Manager Development & Estates presented the application which was recommended for approval, contrary to Officer recommendation, at Planning Committee on 3rd October, 2019. However, based on the Committee resolution to approve the application the Officer advised that approval should be subject to the conditions highlighted in the report.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions outlined in the report of the Team Manager Development Management.

Application No. C/2019/0225 – 5 Surgery Road, Cwmcelyn Road, Blaina, Abertillery, NP13 3DD – Proposed Two Storey Extension on Side Elevation and Single Storey Extension at Rear of Dwelling

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Public Speaking Policy for the Planning Committee, when the Solicitor explained that the policy stated that Ward Members, when attending to address the Committee, must do so prior to the public speaker.

Councillor G. Collier addressed the Committee, and referred to the original plans for the proposed extension which provided a two-storey side extension, and redesign of the property to create a double fronted dwelling. Councillor Collier expressed concern that these plans were considered to be excessive and visually unacceptable and unlikely to be recommended for approval. Therefore, a planning application was then submitted with amended plans, which meant that the extension would be set back from the original dwelling and also a drop in the roof height to the extension. He said, in his opinion this would have a detrimental impact on the overall appearance of the dwelling.

He also expressed concern that the original plans proposed an extension of 4m, and this was also considered excessive. The application now proposed a 3.4m extension. However, he said the extension would cause no issues to neighbouring properties, and on the basis of this he asked the Committee to grant planning permission.

At the invitation of the Chair, Mr. Terry Morgan the agent acting on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Committee. He said the proposed extension was set back from the original dwelling and the roof was also dropped down, in line with the SPG. He said there were no issues of 'over-looking' with neighbouring properties, and by extending the side element of the properties, there would be no over bearing impact on the neighbours, as also recommended by the SPG.

He said the property benefitted from a large side garden and therefore there would be no significant reduction in amenity space. All materials and finishes to be used would reflect the character of the property and contribute to the quality of the area. The proposal to convert this small house to a modest family home was reasonable and would be an improvement to the local area and also compliant with the SPG. He therefore asked the Committee to consider the application and hopefully come to a favourable decision.

A Member said she fully supported the application as the proposed development would be in keeping with the existing varied styles of housing on Surgery Road. However, she also felt that the appearance of the development would be improved if the front of the extension and the roof were in line with the existing dwelling. She concluded that she fully supported the application and proposed that planning permission be granted.

Another Member supported the proposal, and also agreed that the extension should be in line with the existing dwelling.

The Service Manager Development & Estates pointed out that if Members decided to grant the application, it would

be against all principles of good design and guidance contained within the Householder SPG. He also confirmed that any alterations to the plans etc. would be subject to a further application.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED**.

Application No. C/2019/0160 – Tredegar Health Centre & Tredegar General Hospital, Park Row, Tredegar, NP22 3NG – Application for Conservation Area consent for Partial Demolition of Former Tredegar General Hospital Building and Full Demolition of Tredegar Health Centre

The Team Leader – Development Management presented the application to Members and highlighted points contained therein. In particular, he drew attention to the fact that the former general hospital is recognised as a building that makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and as such, there is a presumption in favour of retaining the building. The objections raised by the Victorian and Twentieth Century Societies to the demolition of the hospital's earlier pre-war extensions were also highlighted, along with their concerns over the design approach and scale of the proposed replacement building.

He stated that the proposed partial demolition of the general hospital had been assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings and, on balance, the proposal is considered to be justified and the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas would be preserved subject to the approval of appropriate details at reserved matters stage. The necessity of imposing a condition that prevents the demolition works being undertaken before all reserved matters for the proposed health and wellbeing centre are approved and a contract is in place for the redevelopment works was also highlighted.

He also indicated that a number of bat species had been found within the buildings and the proposed bat mitigation measures had been confirmed as being acceptable. The mitigation measures could be adequately secured via condition to prevent any harm to the bat species.

A Member said he welcomed the development, and had attended the public consultations undertaken by the Aneurin Bevan UHB. The Developers have been sympathetic to the history of the site and listened to the people of Tredegar.

RESOLVED that planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the conditions outlined in the report of the Team Manager Development Management.

Application No. C/2019/0237 – Tredegar General Hospital, Tredegar Health Centre and Bedwellty Park, Park Row, Tredegar, NP22 3NG – Outline Application for Demolition of Tredegar Health Centre, Partial Demolition of Tredegar General Hospital and Erection of a New Class D1 Health and Wellbeing Centre including Revised Access, Car Parking, Landscaping and Ancillary Works (All Matters Aside from Access Reserved)

The Team Leader – Development Management presented the application to Members and highlighted points contained therein. In particular, he clarified that only the principle of development and access were being considered as part of this outline application with all other matters relating to layout, scale, appearance and landscaping reserved for future consideration.

He gave an overview of the design approach to the proposed health and wellbeing centre and drew attention to the proposed vehicular accesses into the site, which are considered to be acceptable subject to appropriate visibility splays. The Team Manager Built Environment's concerns over the indicative number of proposed car parking spaces were also highlighted and he indicated that this matter could be considered in further detail at reserved matters stage.

At the invitation of the Chair, Rhian Lees of the RPS Group, acting on behalf of the Aneurin Bevan UHB and Keir Construction, addressed the Committee.

She said the applications before Members today proposed the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and the erection of a state of the art health and wellbeing centre.

The proposal was part of a wider Welsh Government strategy to improve access to health and social care services and bring them closer to people's homes. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board was delighted to be part of this step change in healthcare provision and welcomed the opportunity it presented to bring this redundant healthcare site back into beneficial use, particularly given its historical context.

As a design team they are acutely aware of, and sensitive to, the pride in which Tredegar holds its association with the formation of the NHS. Whilst retaining and repurposing the existing buildings would have been the first choice for the project, clinical needs and the cost of bringing them up to a 'fit for purpose' state have meant this has not been possible.

The application to redevelop the site was submitted in outline at this stage to provide comfort that the proposed scheme will respect its context within two conservation areas and its proximity to Bedwellty Park and Gardens. The scheme architects, IBI have produced a detailed design that will hopefully set aside any concerns you may have about how the building will sit in the streetscene. The proposed design does retain part of the original 1904 hospital building and it is hoped this will form the entrance to the centre and become a living museum to Tredegar and the NHS.

The Health Board and the wider team have been engaging with the local community since the Spring and we are aware of some of the issues concerning residents including parking, disruption through the construction phase and the impact on wildlife.

With regard to parking, 70 spaces are currently proposed and these will be for both staff and visitors. Many staff will be part time, or only using the centre as an occasional base and the Health Board is confident the number of spaces proposed is sufficient. Notwithstanding, parking will be considered in greater detail at reserved matters stage through the approval of the layout of the site.

During the construction phase, Kier will be using the car park of Tredegar Rugby Club as their site compound, to

	<p>include contractor parking and this will significantly lessen the impact on local residents.</p> <p>With regard to wildlife, you may be aware that the existing hospital buildings are home to a number of bat species. Prior to demolition, suitable mitigation will be in place to ensure no impact on them. The necessary licences will also be sought from Natural Resources Wales before any work takes place.</p> <p>Overall she said she was really pleased to note the positive Officer recommendations for both applications, and since first engaging with Officers in the Planning Department in January, they have given pragmatic, concise and clear advice on the best way through the process, and we very much appreciate the open and positive stance taken. I hope you can support the recommendations and approve the applications.</p> <p>A brief discussion ensued when the Team Leader Highways & Development clarified points raised by a Member regarding parking arrangements at the site.</p> <p>Members supported the application, and it was</p> <p>RESOLVED that planning permission be <u>GRANTED</u>, subject to the conditions outlined in the report of the Team Manager Development Management.</p>	
8.	<p><u>ANY AREAS FOR MEMBER TRAINING/BRIEFINGS</u></p> <p>The Service Manager Development & Estates reported that due to the forthcoming election, it was intended to convene the Member visit to a neighbouring Planning Authority, and the HMO training event in 2020. It was also likely that the January 2020 meeting would be cancelled.</p>	
9.	<p><u>EXEMPT ITEM(S)</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst the following item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in</p>	

	Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).	
10.	<p><u>ENFORCEMENT CLOSED CASES BETWEEN 24TH SEPTEMBER AND 25TH OCTOBER, 2019</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Development & Estates.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report which related to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority) be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO:	<u>THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</u>
SUBJECT:	<u>STATUTORY LICENSING COMMITTEE – 12TH NOVEMBER, 2019</u>
REPORT OF:	<u>DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER</u>

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. MOORE (IN THE CHAIR)

Councillors D. Bevan
G. L. Davies
D. Hancock
W. Hodgins
J. P. Morgan
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Smith
D. Wilkshire
B. Willis

WITH: L. Griffin – Team Manager – Licensing & Commercial
H. Jones – Senior Licensing Officer
M. Woodland – Solicitor

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> Apologies for absence were received from:- Councillors B. Summers, B. Thomas and L. Winnett.	

No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR QUARTER 2 – 2019/2020</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager – Licensing and Commercial.</p> <p>The Team Manager – Licensing and Commercial presented the report which provided an update on the work of the Licensing Team for Quarter 2 in respect of statutory licensing matters.</p> <p>The Team Manager referred to the Operational Report and advised that 80 applications had been received this quarter which included 5 new premises licence, 1 new club premises certificate and 40 temporary event notices. Appendix 2 contained Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 data for comparison purposes with previous trends.</p> <p>In terms of the Management Report, the Team Manager informed Members that the Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy was due to be reviewed and would be the subject of a separate report to be presented to Committee in due course. Appendix 1 outlined the proposed policy review timetable. It was noted that the consultation period would take place during February/March 2020.</p> <p>The Team Manager advised that Gambling Fees were also due to be reviewed during Quarter 3 and 4 2019/20 with a view to any proposed changes being implemented from the 1st April, 2020.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and that the Committee note the activity report for this quarter (Option 2).</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO:	<u>THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</u>
SUBJECT:	<u>PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE (GENERAL LICENSING MATTERS) – 12TH NOVEMBER, 2019</u>
REPORT OF:	<u>DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER</u>

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. MOORE (IN THE CHAIR)

Councillors D. Bevan
G. L. Davies
D. Hancock
W. Hodgins
J. P. Morgan
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Thomas
B. Willis

WITH: L. Griffin – Team Manager – Licensing & Commercial
H. Jones – Senior Licensing Officer
M. Woodland – Solicitor

AND: Damien Tarrant – The Applicant
Graham Tarrant – Applicant's Parent

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u>	

	<p>Apologies for absence were received from:-</p> <p>Councillors B. Summers, D. Wilkshire and L. Winnett</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR QUARTER 2 – 2019/2020</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager – Licensing and Commercial.</p> <p>The Team Manager presented the report which provided an update on the work of the Licensing Team for Quarter 2.</p> <p>The Team Manager referred to the Operational Report and gave an overview of the information contained therein, and advised that one meeting had been held with the local Taxi Association during Quarter 2 to discuss issues affecting local trade and these meetings would continue during the remaining quarters of 2019/20.</p> <p>With regard to the Management Report the Team Manager advised that work in respect of Charitable Collections and Sex Establishments would commence in Quarter 4 of 2019/20. All licence fees relevant to general licensing matters would be reviewed during Quarter 3 and 4 of 2019/20 with proposed changes being implemented from 1st April 2020.</p> <p>A Member commented that a request had been made at the last meeting for an update on collaboration and arrangements going forward as the previous Team Manager Licensing had returned to her post at Torfaen Council. The Team Manager said that the Service Manager Public Protection could provide an update on collaboration and arrangements going forward at the next meeting.</p>	

	RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and that the information contained therein be noted (Option 2).	
No. 5	<p><u>EXEMPT ITEM(S)</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst the following item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12 & 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>SCHEDULE OF APPLICATIONS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCES</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest, in maintaining the exemption, outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it was likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12 & 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p><u>New Licence Application</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made accordingly.</p> <p>The Senior Licensing Officer reported that the meeting had been convened for a new application for a Hackney Carriage and Private Licence. The Officer provided Members with information in relation to the applicant and offences committed and said it was the Committee's duty to decide whether the applicant be granted a licence for full period of 36 months or any other period the Committee saw fit or to refuse the application.</p> <p>The Chair introduced the Applicant and invited him to explain the circumstances of the offence.</p>	

The Applicant commenced by advising that unfortunately due to some confusion his insurance policy had been cancelled however, in interim period between him taking out a further policy he had been sanctioned by the Police. It was noted that the applicant had held a driving licence for 11 years and had no other convictions and informed Members that he had applied for a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence to provide a better lifestyle for this family.

A discussion ensued when Members sought clarification from the Applicant regarding the offence.

At this juncture, the Solicitor read out references which had been received in support of the applicant.

The Applicant left the meeting whilst Members considered the application.

Following consideration by Members the Applicant was invited to re-join the meeting and at the request of the Chair the Solicitor read out the decision of the Committee as follows:-

The application before the Committee today was made by the Applicant for a Hackney Carriage Drivers' Licence. The applicant informed Members that he had not previously held a Hackney Carriage Drivers' Licence. The Committee note from the record of offence placed before them today that the applicant has a single motoring conviction. The applicant offered explanation to the Committee by way of mitigation as to his actions concerning the commission of the offence. The applicant informed the Committee that should he be granted a licence today, he would be employed with a local taxi firm in Ebbw Vale.

The Committee considered the evidence placed before them today, and when reaching their decision have also considered the previous conviction together with the representations offered to us by the licensing officers present, and the Applicant.

	<p>The Committee were of the opinion that the Applicant was a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage Drivers' Licence and the committee grant the application. The Applicant was advised that should he commit any further offences during licence period, that he could be brought back before the Committee and the licence could be revoked.</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the Hackney Carriage and Private Licence be granted.</p>	
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**
SUBJECT: **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 13TH NOVEMBER, 2019**
REPORT OF: **LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

PRESENT: **Leader of the Council/**
Executive Member Corporate Services
 Councillor N.J. Daniels

Deputy Leader of the Council/
Executive Member – Environment
 Councillor G. Collier

Executive Member – Social Services
 Councillor J. Mason

Executive Member – Education
 Councillor J. Collins

WITH: Chief Officer Resources
 Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services
 Corporate Director Education
 Corporate Director Social Services
 Chief Officer Commercial
 Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance
 Head of Community Services
 Service Manager – Community Services
 Communications, Marketing and Customer Access Manager

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>The following apologies for absence were received:-</p> <p>Councillor D. Davies Managing Director</p> <p><u>WELCOME</u></p> <p>The Leader welcomed Councillor Wilkins, Chair of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee to the meeting. The Leader advised that the Chair had been invited to feedback the comments/ recommendations made at the Community Services Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Waste Management and Recycling Strategy 2018-2025 and the Strategic Business Case – Development Of A Second Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Reports.</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
	<u>MINUTES</u>	
No. 4	<p><u>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Executive Committee held on 26th September, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>DECISION ITEMS</u>	
	<u>GENERAL MATTERS</u>	
No. 5	<u>CONFERENCES/COURSES</u> Consideration was given to attendance at the following:- <u>CLAW AGM & Conference – 14th November, 2019</u> RESOLVED that approval be granted for Councillor G. Collier, Deputy Leader/Executive Member – Environment and Clive Rogers, Head of Community Services to attend. <u>Army Presentation Evening – 21st November, 2019</u> RESOLVED that approval be granted for Councillor B. Thomas, Armed Forces Champion to attend.	
	<u>DECISION ITEMS – CORPORATE SERVICES MATTERS</u>	
No. 6	<u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 18TH DECEMBER, 2019</u> Consideration was given to the report of the Leader/Executive Member for Corporate Services. The Executive Member for Social Services advised that the Assisted Transport – Charging Policy report would need to be deferred to the January meeting. RESOLVED accordingly. FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the forward work programme for 18 th December, 2019 be noted.	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 7	<p><u>GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>Members were further advised of the following additional grants that had been submitted for approval since the preparation of the report:-</p> <p><u>ABERTILLERY</u></p> <p><u>Abertillery Ward- Councillor N. Daniels</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £24</p> <p><u>Abertillery Ward- Councillor J. Holt</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £24</p> <p><u>Abertillery Ward- Councillor M. Cook</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £24</p> <p><u>Cwmtillery Ward- Councillor T. Sharrem</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £24</p> <p><u>Cwmtillery Ward- Councillor J. Wilkins</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £24</p> <p><u>Cwmtillery Ward- Councillor M. Day</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £24</p> <p><u>Llanhilleth Ward- Councillor H. McCarthy</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £24</p> <p><u>Llanhilleth Ward- Councillor J. Collins & N. Parsons</u></p> <p>1. Remembrance Parade £48</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>Six Bells Ward – Councillor D. Hancock</u> 1. Remembrance Parade £24 <u>Six Bells Ward – Councillor M. Holland</u> 1. Remembrance Parade £24 <u>BRYNMAWR</u> <u>Brynmawr Ward- Councillor J. Hill</u> 1. Remembrance Parade £62 2. Brynmawr Musical Theatre Company £100 <u>Brynmawr Ward- Councillor L. Elias</u> 1. Remembrance Parade £62 2. Brynmawr Musical Theatre Company £100 3. Ebbw Vale Mini Rugby £50 <u>Brynmawr Ward- Councillor W. Hodgins</u> 1. Remembrance Parade £62	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>EBBW VALE</u>	
	<u>Badminton Ward – Councillor G. Paulsen</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£95
	<u>Badminton Ward – Councillor C. Meredith</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£95
	<u>Beaufort Ward – Councillor G. Thomas & S. Healy</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£232.50
	<u>Ebbw Vale North – Councillor D. Davies, P. Edwards & R. Summers</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£285
	2. Blaenau Gwent Otters	£100
	<u>Ebbw Vale South – Councillor J. Millard & K. Pritchard</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£190
	<u>Rassau Ward – Councillor G. Davies</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£116.25
	<u>Rassau Ward – Councillor D. Wilkshire</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£116.25
	<u>NANTYGLO & BLAINA</u>	
	<u>Nantyglo Ward – Councillor P. Baldwin</u>	
	1. Remembrance Parade	£110.50

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<p><u>Nantyglo Ward – Councillor J. Mason & K. Rowson</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remembrance Parade £221 2. Nantyglo OAP £200 3. Winchestown OAP £200 4. St Annes Church £200 5. Wesleyan Chapel £200 6. Hermons Cemetary Trust £200 7. Nantyglo RFC £200 8. Coed y Garn School £200 9. Ysgol Cymraeg Bro Helyg £200 10. 275 Squadron Nantyglo & Blaina ATC £100 11. Nantyglo & Blaina Scouts £100 12. Falcon Martial Arts £100 13. PHAB £100 14. BGFM £100 15. Nantyglo Football Club £100 16. Nantyglo Community Shop £100 17. Hooks & Pins £100 18. Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council Xmas Lights £100 19. Blaenau Gwent Rhythm & Ukes £100 20. Nantyglo & Blaina Mayors Appeal £100 <p><u>Blaina Ward – Councillor J. P. Morgan</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remembrance Parade £110.50 2. Jacks Appeal ABUHB £285 <p><u>Blaina Ward – Councillor L. Winnett</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remembrance Parade £110.50 2. Jacks Appeal ABUHB £285 <p><u>Blaina Ward – Councillor G. Collier</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remembrance Parade £110.50 <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the grants contained therein be approved.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 8	<p><u>CHARTER OF COMMON AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS AND BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the joint Officers' report.</p> <p>The Leader noted the Charter of Common Agreement between Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and each of the four Community and Town Councils which had been agreed with all Town and Community Councils. The Leader advised that the Charter would provide a more strategic and relevant approach between Town Councils and the Borough Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the new Charter of Common Agreement between BGCBC and the four CTCs be approved. This Charter was approved by the CTCs and endorsed by QLC members in September 2019.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>TIME OFF FOR RESERVISTS POLICY</u></p> <p>The report of the Head of Organisational Development was submitted for consideration.</p> <p>The Leader noted the report which was self-explanatory in seeking endorsement for a new policy for the Authority for time off for Reservists. The Leader advised that providing support for reservists was an important element of the Silver Award which had been granted pending approval of the Policy.</p> <p>The Leader added that Blaenau Gwent was a lead organisation in delivering on the Armed Forces Covenant and wished to mention Councillor Brian Thomas the Armed Forces Champion who represented Blaenau Gwent very well at all related events</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely the Time Off for Reservists Policy be supported and endorsed.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 10	<p><u>THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES 2018/19</u></p> <p>Members considered the report of the Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely the information contained therein be noted and the report be referred to the Audit Committee for assurance that the process for the monitoring of complaints was robust and the performance information provided reflected these practices.</p>	
	<p><u>DECISION ITEMS – ENVIRONMENT MATTERS</u></p>	
No. 11	<p><u>WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING STRATEGY 2018 – 2025</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager, Neighbourhood Services.</p> <p>The Head of Community Services spoke to the report which provided the Executive with the draft Waste Management and Recycling Strategy. The Officer advised that the Strategy had been developed in two parts with the Strategy outlined the vision, context, objectives and methods of delivery and the Action Plan detailed the actions and timelines which reflected the objectives and delivery requirements.</p> <p>The Head of Community Services advised that the Strategy set out the long term vision for waste management and recycling services. The Strategy went beyond meeting Welsh Government targets it identified a single integrated strategy which set out how Blaenau Gwent would achieve its vision, work with others, engage with residents and place the Well-Being and Future Generation goals and ways of working at the heart of all that it does. The vision for waste and recycling was further outlined as noted in the report.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<p>The Head of Community Services advised that the Scrutiny Committee supported the draft policy with the recommendation that any future service changes return to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration prior to implementation.</p> <p>The Head of Community Services noted the financial implications and the potential impact on both revenue and capital funding requirements associated with the development and implementation of the strategy. The Officer advised that these related matters would be brought forward in determining service changes moving forward.</p> <p>At this juncture the Leader invited the Chair of the Community Services Scrutiny to provide the observations of the Scrutiny Committee. The Chair advised that the draft strategy had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee and reiterated the recommendation made in terms of any future service changes be considered by the Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation.</p> <p>The Chair of the Community Services Committee also advised that there had been a request for officers to investigate ways in which pet waste could be collected.</p> <p>The Leader advised that he sat in the public gallery of the Scrutiny Committee and it had been a very good meeting and had been Chaired well by Councillor Wilkins who had kept Members on track really well. The Leader noted the issues raised in relation to pet waste and advised that this was an issue reflected at Streetscene Engagement Sessions. It was noted the Council run a successful hygiene collection therefore the same process could be explored for pet waste.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader/Executive Member for Environment supported the Policy which would help tackle recycling rates to avoid the Authority paying fines incurred. The Deputy Leader felt that the monies used for any potential fines are better spent on other services.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<p>The Deputy Leader further concurred with the suggestion to investigate pet waste collections which he felt was not an impossible task as a similar collection to hygiene waste could be introduced.</p> <p>The Executive Members concurred with the investigations to address pet waste and it was thereupon agreed that it be added to the recommendation that a report be drafted for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee and Executive accordingly. The Leader added that there would be a cost implication, however in this instance it would be a cost worth being considered.</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p> <p>FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the draft Waste Management and Recycling Strategy be approved. Also, a report be drafted in to develop a pet waste collection service and it be presented to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee and Executive Committee for consideration.</p>	
No. 12	<p><u>THE STRATEGIC BUSINESS CASE – DEVELOPMENT OF A SECOND HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE (HWRC)</u></p> <p>The report of the Head of Community Services was submitted for consideration.</p> <p>The Service Manager – Neighbourhood Services spoke to the report and outlined the main points contained therein. The Service Manager noted the support provided by WRAP to develop the Strategic Business Case which formed part of the bid to Welsh Government. The Council’s Leadership had met with the Deputy Minister in July to outline the business case and confirm the Council’s commitment to meet the 64% and 70% recycling targets.</p> <p>It had now been confirmed by Welsh Government that the Council had been successful in obtaining the full award of capital funding for £2.8m and noted the estimated costs of the new HWRC which included the installation of traffic lights on A467 which was welcomed by Members due to the number of accidents on the junction to Roseheyworth Business Park.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<p>The Service Manager referred to the options and advised that the Scrutiny Committee raised concerns around the continued fly tipping incidents if there was a reduction in the number of days the facility would be open. Therefore a recommendation had been agreed for a report to be presented to the January meeting to give consideration to the revenue costs of the facility being open 5, 6 and 7 days a week.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services advised that in order to increase future recycling streams as we move beyond the 70% target, a wider range of services could be offered at the second Household Waste and Recycling Centre in the future and the proposed facility would allow provide the Council with future capacity to deal with these new opportunities and these would be brought forward at the appropriate time. The Service Manager added that there had been discussions around a re-use facility for bric-a-brac and small furniture as the Council does not perform well at the moment in this area. There were a number of opportunities to be explored as the site grew including an education centre and interest had been received from the Hospice of the Valleys to work together in this area.</p> <p>The Chair of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee advised that the report had been welcomed by Scrutiny and noted that concerns had been raised in relation to the revenue costs on the opening hours therefore it was requested a report be presented to the next Scrutiny Committee for consideration as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader felt that the second HWRC would address the flytipping issues in the Ebbw Fach area and address Welsh Government targets. The Deputy Leader extended thanks to WRAP for their support and to Welsh Government for awarding the grant to develop the facility.</p> <p>The Executive Members supported the development of the second HWRC which was the vision for the Borough and concurred that it would tackle the issues of flytipping in the Ebbw Fach Valley. The new site would also assist in the Authority meeting Welsh Government targets.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<p>The Leader welcomed the full award of the grant from Welsh Government which reflected the confidence Welsh Government had in Blaenau Gwent in relation to waste and recycling. The Leader felt that recent meetings with the Minister had been very positive and it had been pleasing to be recognised for the work which had been undertaken.</p> <p>The Leader also wished to thank the Service Manager – Neighbourhood Services for the excellent presentation given to the Deputy Minister and her advisors and the Leader was sure the Managing Director would concur that it was an excellent presentation.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely the Strategic Business Case for the development of a second Household Waste Recycling Centre be approved.</p>	
	<p><u>DECISION ITEMS – SOCIAL SERVICES MATTERS</u></p>	
No. 13	<p><u>WELSH GOVERNMENT CHILDCARE OFFER – BLAENAU GWENT AND TORFAEN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Children’s Services.</p> <p>The Executive Member for Social Services noted the report and highlighted the progress made in delivering Welsh Government’s Childcare Offer Programme. It was added that there was a recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee for the Executive Member to write to Welsh Government to express their concerns around the cap in numbers of Flying Start placements for Blaenau Gwent as there are many more communities which would benefit from Flying Start Schemes.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 2, namely the recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee as identified be approved.</p>	

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>MONITORING ITEMS – EDUCATION</u>	
No. 14	<p><u>2019 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE FOR: END OF FOUNDATION PHASE, KEY STAGE 2, KEY STAGE 3, KEY STAGE 4 (PROVISIONAL ONLY)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education.</p> <p>The Executive Member for Education provided an overview of the report and advised that this was a positive report for the Authority. The Corporate Director Education concurred with the comments and advised that Blaenau Gwent was performing in line with other authorities in South East Wales region. The Corporate Director added that this was due to the dedication of head teachers, teachers and support staff.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1, namely to accept the content and format of the report, noting feedback from Scrutiny, which sets out the requirement to continue to develop content and format in line with the changes in the interim Key Stage 4 measures over the coming years.</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO:	<u>THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</u>
SUBJECT:	<u>SPECIAL DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 1ST JULY, 2019</u>
REPORT OF:	<u>DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER</u>

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. CROSS (CHAIR)

Councillors M. Cook
 N. Daniels
 G. A. Davies
 P. Edwards
 K. Hayden
 M. Holland
 H. McCarthy, B.A. (Hons)
 J. Millard
 K. Pritchard

ALSO: **Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs**

Councillors J. Hill
 S. Thomas
 H. Trollope
 J. Wilkins

AND: Head of Governance & Partnerships (Statutory Head of Democratic Services)
 Organisational Development Manager – Payroll/Health & Safety

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
2.	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received for:-</p> <p>Councillors M. Day, W. Hodgins and J.C. Morgan</p>	
3.	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
4.	<p><u>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March, 2019.</p> <p>A Member pointed out that there were actions arising from the meeting but no action sheet on the agenda.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Minutes be received as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
5.	<p><u>STATEMENT OF PAYMENTS MADE TO MEMBERS 2018/2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Organisational Development.</p> <p>The Organisational Development Manager presented the report which identified the reporting requirements for the publication of the annual schedule of payments to Members for 2018/19 in order to comply with Part 8 and Schedules 2 and 3 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and</p>	

	<p>the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Regulations. The full schedule of payments was attached at Appendix 1. The Officer pointed out that some of the payments in relation to other public bodies had yet to be received, but hopefully these would be received in time for the report to be submitted to Council.</p> <p>The Chair requested that the Appendix be printed in a larger font in the future.</p> <p>Councillor J. Millard pointed out that his travel allowance was for the 2017/18 financial year, but was paid during the 2018/19 financial year.</p> <p>A Member asked whether the public were given details of the nature of the travel allowance, and in response the Officer confirmed that all original claims were retained and could be viewed by the public if requested.</p> <p>A discussion ensued regarding the publication of details of travel allowance claims, when it was agreed that a qualifying statement be issued on the Statement of Payments Made to Members stating that all travel allowance claims have been checked and verified.</p> <p>AGREED accordingly.</p> <p>A discussion ensued regarding the number of meetings called of outside bodies, when the Chair said feedback on attendance of these meetings would be beneficial.</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED to recommend to Council that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the Statement of Payments Made to Members during 2018/2019 be published in compliance with relevant legislation.</p>	
6.	<p><u>SCHEDULE OF MEMBERS REMUNERATION 2019/2020</u></p> <p>The report of the Head of Organisational Development was submitted for consideration.</p> <p>The Head of Organisational Development presented the</p>	

	<p>Schedule of Members Remuneration for 2019/20 which the Council was required to produce annually to comply with Part 8 and schedules 2 and 3 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, and the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) regulations. The report outlined the information included in the Schedule (attached at Appendix 1), including the arrangements for payment of salaries, allowances and fees to all Members and co-opted Members.</p> <p>A discussion ensued regarding publication of the Schedule, and the Officer said whilst social media was a valued measure of communication, the Schedule continued to be published in the press to ensure as wide a circulation as possible to include those who did not access the internet.</p> <p>In response to a comment made by a Member, the Officer undertook to amend the format of Schedule 1.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, to recommend to Council that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the Schedule of Members Remuneration 2019/2020 be published.</p>	
7.	<p><u>TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the time of future Democratic Services Committee meetings.</p> <p>Following a discussion it was agreed that future meetings continue to be held at 10.00 a.m.</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: JOINT EDUCATION & LEARNING AND
SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(SAFEGUARDING) – 15TH JULY, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR H. TROLLOPE (CHAIR)

Councillors: M. Cook
G. A. Davies
P. Edwards
L. Elias
K. Hayden
J. Millard
J. C. Morgan
K. Pritchard
T. Smith

Co-Opted Member

A. Williams

WITH: Corporate Director of Social Services
Head of Education Transformation
Head of Adults Services
Service Manager, Children's Services
Safeguarding in Education Manager – Children Services
Adults Safeguarding Manager
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer – Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Holt, C. Meredith, G. Paulsen, S. Thomas and B. Summers.</p> <p>Co-opted Member – T. Baxter</p>	
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interests or dispensations reported.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>JOINT EDUCATION & LEARNING AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SAFEGUARDING)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) Meeting held on 28th January, 2019.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>PROPOSED SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019-20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) which was presented for Members approval of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Forward Work Programme for 2019/20.</p> <p>The Chair spoke to the report and informed Members that the Forward Work Programme was a fluid document and items could be added if necessary.</p> <p>Members requested that the following items be considered for the FWP:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusions in schools and linking in with CAMHS • Healthy eating in schools 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Member briefing session be arranged on Operation Encompass. <p>The Head of Education Transformation advised Members that in relation to exclusions in schools, it was agreed that commentary would continue to be included in future Education and Social Services Safeguarding Performance reports. A Healthy Schools monitoring report that covers the healthy eating agenda in schools would be presented to a future Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee and could be included as an information item for the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee. A dedicated briefing session on Operation Encompass would be arranged.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 1 the Forward Work Programme 2019/20 for the Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) be approved.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATION – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2018</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Social Services and Corporate Director of Education which was presented to provide Members with safeguarding performance information and analysis from across the Local Authority.</p> <p><u>Social Services</u></p> <p>The Service Manager, Children's Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained in the Social Services information. The Officer reported an amendment to the period of safeguarding information from the Social Services Directorate. The period referred to in the report should read 1st April 2018 – 30th September 2019.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding timescales for initial child protection conferences, the Service Manager, Children's Services clarified the timescales to</p>	

<p>hold initial child protection conferences. A statutory discussion meeting would be held within 24 hours of the referral, with 42 days to complete the assessment. Once the outcome of enquiries was determined then an initial child protection conference must be held within 15 days. Information regarding timescales for holding child protection conferences would be included in future performance reporting.</p> <p><u>Referrals to Social Services</u></p> <p>A Member enquired what groups were included in the category 'Other Agency'. The Service Manager, Children's Services clarified that 151 referrals had been made by 'Other Agency' which included the voluntary sector, libraries, youth provision and other varied sources in the community.</p> <p>The number of referrals from social landlords was low, a mandatory Corporate Policy was in place for housing colleagues, however, refresher training was needed on the categories of abuse to upskill landlords knowledge. Referrals could be made by telephone to the Duty Team.</p> <p>In relation to the thresholds for intervention, the Service Manager, Children's Services said that the numbers of referrals from the start of the year to the end of year had reduced by 210. This evidenced the confidence in the threshold applied to referrals and the levels of intervention provided.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding the impact on the budget for independent foster carers. The Service Manager, Children's Services said that it was more expensive for the Authority to use independent foster carers and external placements. It was hoped that costly external placements could be re-established back to in-house provision to reduce cost pressures. The Director of Social Services commented that 2/3rd of Children Looked After were placed with in-house foster carers and the numbers of Children Looked After had reduced by 22 over the last 12 months.</p> <p>Blaenau Gwent had a small pool of foster carers and a raft of recruitment campaigns had been undertaken to</p>	<p>Service Manager, Children's Services</p>
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<p>increase the number of foster carers, i.e. radio broadcasts, leaflet drops and word of mouth. A Member felt that it would be beneficial to hold awareness raising events at supermarkets and street markets to help recruit new foster carers. The Service Manager, Children's Services said that this suggestion would be passed onto the respective team.</p> <p><u>Education Information</u></p> <p>The Safeguarding in Education Manager spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained in the Education Information.</p> <p><u>Operation Encompass</u></p> <p>A Member enquired regarding Operation Encompass. The Service Manager, Children's Services explained that this was a new police initiative its purpose was to address limitations in the early sharing of information between police and schools. It aimed to ensure that appropriate school staff are made aware of any domestic abuse incidents a young person may have witnessed at the earliest possible stage to offer relevant and tailored support.</p> <p><u>Exclusions</u></p> <p>A Member referred to exclusions and those pupils who move between schools and requested information on the reasons for such transfers. The Head of Education Transformation said transfer information was produced as part of the Admissions report. This information could be prepared, which would include information on the reasons why pupils transferred between schools for Members information.</p> <p>The Chair commented on the readability of the performance data graphs as they were not printed in colour.</p> <p><u>Elective Home Education</u></p> <p>In response to a Member's query regarding curriculum changes and the number of Elective Home Educated</p>	<p>Head of Education Transformation</p>
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(EHE) pupils, the Corporate Director of Social Services said that it was difficult to predict if future numbers would increase. Safeguarding for home educated pupils was challenging as only one home visit per year was allowed by current national legislation. A letter requesting a review of the current policy had been forwarded to the Welsh Government but no announcement to revise the policy had yet been made.

In relation to the number of referrals per child, the Service Manager, Children's Services said that there was no set number but the IAA would look at the history and circumstances around the referral. The IAA could now provide feedback to the referrer. It was noted that the referrer could appeal against the decision.

Persistent Absenteeism

In relation to Persistent Absenteeism the Safeguarding in Education Manager said that the number of Persistent Absenteeism remained higher than last year except for pupils in yearly years, however, the numbers of Persistent Absenteeism in all phases had decreased since February 2019. The statistical information gathered included authorised and unauthorised absences including illness, medical appointments, exclusions and holidays taken during term time. Members felt that medical appointments and bereavements should be classified as authorised.

A Member enquired if there was a link to fines and children moving between schools to avoid fines for poor attendance and enquired if this would affect Key Stage 4 figures. The Head of Education Transformation said that the transfer of pupils at KS4 was monitored closely, particularly to minimise any impact on learner examination preparations.

The Committee AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 2 be endorsed, namely that the information provided and comments to improve the current monitoring processes be made.

<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>ADULTS ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2018-19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Adults Service Manager for Development, Commissioning and Safeguarding and Sarah Jones, Adults Safeguarding Manager which was presented to provide Members with the Safeguarding Performance information relating to Adults Services from 1st April 2018 to the 31st March 2019.</p> <p>The Service Manager spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the sources of referrals and the number of criminal prosecutions, the Head of Adult Services said that referrals were received from a variety of sources including a low number from the Leisure Trust, but the majority of referrals were submitted from commissioned and in-house provider agencies with referrals made by staff working with the local Authority noted as the second highest source of referrer. With regard to the number of prosecutions, the Officer would undertake to check how many of the 6 criminal investigations had led to a prosecution and report back to the Scrutiny Committee in due course. This information would also be included in future Adult Performance reports.</p> <p>In relation to referrals under the financial abuse category, it was confirmed that the Local Safeguarding Team work in collaboration with the Police and Trading Standards when investigating concerns reported. With regard to digital 'scams', the Safeguarding Lead confirmed that mechanisms were in place to ensure vulnerable people had access to digital inclusion support.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the information contained within the Adults Annual Safeguarding Report 2018/19 was considered and noted and the report be presented for consideration at Executive and Council.</p>	<p>Head of Adult Services</p>
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<p>No. 8</p>	<p><u>EDUCATION DIRECTORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education which was presented to provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the Education Directorate Safeguarding Policy following its annual review.</p> <p>The Safeguarding in Education Manager spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed; namely to accept the draft policy as presented in Appendix 1.</p>	
<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the commencement times of future Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) Meetings.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that future Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) meetings be held on a Monday at 10.00 a.m.</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: **SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY**
COMMITTEE – 2ND SEPTEMBER, 2019

REPORT OF: **DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S.C. THOMAS (CHAIR)

Councillors: D. Bevan
G.A. Davies
L. Elias
J. Holt
J. Millard
M. Moore
T. Sharrem

AND: Corporate Director of Social Services
Head of Children's Services
Head of Adult Services
Service Manager for Provider Services
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

WITH: David Wilson, Wales Audit Office

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: K. Rowson, P. Edwards, K. Hayden G. Paulsen and T. Smith.	

No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 3rd July, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>EXECUTIVE DECISIONS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Executive Decision Sheet.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Executive Decision Sheet be accepted.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>WALES AUDIT OFFICE: WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS – ENSURING PREVENTATIVE SERVICES TARGET THE MOST VULNERABLE FAMILIES IN BLAENAU GWENT WHO DO NOT MEET THE CRITERIA FOR A CARE AND SUPPORT PLAN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Children’s Services which presented Members with the Wales Audit Office: Well-Being of Future Generations – ensuring preventative services target the most vulnerable families in Blaenau Gwent who do not meet the criteria for a care and support plan.</p> <p>The representative from the Wales Audit Office spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein and concluded that the Council had acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in setting the step ‘Flying Start, Families First, Early Years Childcare and Play ensuring preventative services target the most vulnerable families in Blaenau Gwent who do not meet the criteria for a care and support plan’ but there were opportunities to further embed the five ways of working.</p>	

	<p>The Head of Children's Services was pleased with the outcome of the report and informed Members that Appendix 2 outlined the areas for improvement.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the WAO review and actions to implement the proposals for improvement be accepted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>ANNUAL CIW INSPECTIONS WITH PROVIDER SERVICES 2018/19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Social Services which was presented to summarise the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspections undertaken across Provider Services during the period April 18 – March 19 and update Members on the actions taken following the inspections.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>The Service Manager Provider Services commented that three of Blaenau Gwent's four regulated services had been inspected by CIW and the Supported Living inspection was due shortly;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augusta House • Home Care Services • Cwrt Mytton <p><u>Augusta House</u></p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding collaboration, the Service Manager said that collaboration was on-going with the Health Board, Augusta House was purpose built for people with complex needs and three bedrooms were fully equipped with overhead ceiling track hoists. The Service Manager explained that the Authority had recently secured Welsh Government funding which had enabled further improvements to be made to the disabled facilities at the service.</p> <p><u>Home Care</u></p>	

A Member enquired regarding the home care service, the Service Manager said that there had been a reduction in the in-house Home Care service following a decision made by Council to reduce in-house home care. This had reduced the number of people the service supported in the community and these had been picked up by the private sector.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Adult Services said that the new bungalows built at Llys Glyncoed Extra Care Facility were operated by Link Housing Association, separate from the Council.

Cwrt Mytton

A Member enquired regarding social activities at Cwrt Mytton, the Service Manager said that there was no dedicated staff member to co-ordinate social activities and as the home supported adults who had a diagnosis of dementia social activities had to be carried out 'in the moment'. A staff member had been seconded who had previously worked as a Community Connector and a pilot project was underway to develop a social activities programme at Cwrt Mytton.

A Member raised concerns regarding the non-compliance notice. The Service Manager said that this issue had been rectified and the follow up inspection in May 2019 had reported that the non-compliance from the previous inspection had been met.

In relation to training the Service Manager said that although staff may not have been compliant with refresher training they were regularly competency assessed regarding manual handling, food hygiene and health & safety etc., however, it was challenging for Managers to schedule refresher training given the number of staff and the numerous refresher training courses required within the timescales.

A Member commented that he hoped to see that Cwrt Mytton would be maintained and decorated to a high standard. The Service Manager said that an improvement plan had been carried out with Technical Services and this was progressing well, he invited Members to visit the

	<p>facility to meet the team and residents.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding agency staff, the Service Manager confirmed that all agency staff were in receipt of mandatory training.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the inspection reports by CIW and actions taken by the Department to mitigate any non-compliance of regulations be accepted.</p>	
No. 8	<p><u>REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN FROM THE INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES REPORT BY THE CARE INSPECTORATE WALES 2018</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Children's Services which was presented to provide Members with an update on progress on the action plan developed as a result of the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection report on Children's Social Services in Blaenau Gwent which took place in 2018.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services spoke to the report and highlighted the positive practice within the service area and the recommendations to improve service delivery.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely to continue to endorse the action plan and progress which had been made.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>CARE INSPECTORATE WALES LOCAL AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE REVIEW</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Social Services which was presented to provide Members with the published Local Authority Performance Review annual letter from the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) which was published on the 28th June 2019.</p> <p>The Director of Social Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p>	

	<p>In response to a Member's question regarding mental health partners involvement, the Director of Social Services said that the Mental Health Triage Project was a pilot project working across Gwent, whereby an Approved Mental Health Social Worker was placed within the police control room to give immediate advice and support to assist people presenting with mental health needs at the earliest opportunity. The focus was on early identification and intervention to prevent needs escalating to arrest or taken to a place of safety. A Member asked about the Directorates experience with CAMHS. The Director explained about the Iceberg Project and how this was trying to support all those children with mental health needs who are not eligible for specialist mental health services such as CAMHS. Transformation funding had been used to develop these early intervention and preventative services.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services commented that the InReach Project was working with schools to upskill school staff to identify and deal with mental health issues at a lower level.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely to accept the report and CIW letter as provided.</p>	
No. 10	<p><u>SUPPORTING CHANGE TEAM INTERNAL AND INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Children's Services which was presented to outline the case to establish the Supporting Change Team on a permanent basis following two positive evaluations of the work undertaken by this team.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein. The independent external evaluation had been commissioned to provide Scrutiny with additional assurances of the effectiveness of establishing the Supporting Change Team on a permanent basis. One of the recommendations was that funding be made permanent or long-term to ensure</p>	

	<p>the continuation of the programme. The internal evaluation evidenced that the work of the Supporting Change Team was preventing children coming into care and was achieving actual savings and cost avoidance for the department.</p> <p>Members commented that the programme provided a better avenue of care for children and had a positive impact on the budget and congratulated everyone involved in the programme.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the information and recommendations contained within the report and external evaluation report on the Supporting Change Team be accepted.</p> <p>Councillor Gareth L. Davies left the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
No. 11	<p><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 17TH OCTOBER 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee which presented the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 17th October 2019.</p> <p>Members requested an additional item be added to the FWP regarding the new Welsh Government legislation being introduced where parents are banned from physically punishing children and the implications on the service and its budget. The Director of Social Services said there would be implications for teachers, social services and children around safeguarding. He informed Members that an item could be scheduled into the Work Programme at a later date as this proposed legislation was currently out to consultation.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services commented that there could be cost implications for the Council in relation to this issue as policies and procedures would need to be in place.</p>	

	<p>The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 17th October, 2019 be approved.</p>	
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S. HEALY (CHAIR)

Councillors: G. Paulsen
M. Cook
M. Cross
P. Edwards
H. McCarthy
C. Meredith
L. Parsons
J. Wilkins

**Leader of the Council/Executive Member –
Corporate Services**
Councillor N. Daniels

AND: Corporate Director of Social Services
Corporate Director of Education
Chief Officer – Commercial
Chief Officer - Resources
Head of Community Services
Service Manager Policy & Partnerships
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

WITH: David Wilson, Wales Audit Office
Kath Bevan Seamore)
Mike Doverman) SRS Representatives
Cath Bernard)

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: G.L. Davies, J. Hill, M. Moore and D. Wilkshire.</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 24th June, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>SPECIAL CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Special Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 10th July, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>EXECUTIVE DECISION SHEET</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Executive Decision Sheet.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Executive Decision Sheet be accepted.</p>	

No. 7

**WALES AUDIT OFFICE REVIEW SERVICE USER
PERSPECTIVE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Governance & Partnerships which presented the findings of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) review Service User Perspective: Community Engagement and the management response to the proposals for improvement.

The representative from the Wales Audit Office spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.

The Executive Member – Corporate Services commented that the findings of the WAO review were an accurate assessment of where the Council was in relation to community engagement and reflected the commitment to continued development and learning to do things better. The Council would continue to work with the WAO and others to capture their views to help improve community engagement through areas such as street scene.

The WAO representative said that the Council had undertaken a vast amount of consultation but needed to ensure they reached the right people on the right subject. Many staff members worked for the Local Authority and in relation to these the focus needed to be on service change.

A Member pointed out that in relation to engagement between pupils and teachers there was a project currently in place in some schools called Seasaw that addressed this issue. The WAO representative said that this had been included in the presentation as an example as young people had their own views on how to engage with others.

The Executive Member – Corporate Services commented that he and the Executive Member for Education had learned a lot from meetings with schools and the Council would look to broaden how it engaged with young people especially at secondary level in light of discussions on reducing the voting age.

A Member commented that the WAO review had been challenging but fair. Community engagement to offer valid

explanations of why services were changing was challenging and the Council needed to improve on this.

A Member enquired regarding public feedback. The WAO representative said that there had been some negative feedback as local people were not always able to take part in engagement in a way that was effective and impactful. The Service Manager Policy & Partnerships said that the Engagement Strategy was based around 6 key features, one of these features was around gathering public feedback and take users views into account. He advised that if members of the public had difficulty attending daytime meetings such as the Citizen's Panel, they could engage through emails, telephone calls etc.

A Member pointed out that some Members held surgeries in the community and a two way dialogue was already taking place. The WAO representative said that good practice needed to be captured and shared. The Service Manager Policy & Partnerships said that through its Action Plan briefing session had been arranged whereby community groups could identify key individuals that could open doors for the Council to engagement with difficult to reach groups.

A Member commented that communication could take place through a number of avenues e.g. social media; facebook etc.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely:

- (i) That the WAO review Service User Perspective: Community Engagement findings and the management response and the report and appendices be accepted as provided prior to it being submitted to the Executive Committee.
- (ii) Following approval by the Executive Committee the report would be presented to Audit Committee for assurance; and
- (iii) Receive a mid-term review of progress on the Corporate Engagement Strategy as part of the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

No. 8

PROGRESS REPORT CONTRACTS OVER £500K

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Community Services which was presented to provide Members with updated information on the progress of capital projects over £500,000 in cost, undertaken within the Authority and, where appropriate, seek the necessary Executive Committee approval required under the Contract Procedural Rules to additional expenditure incurred on a particular project.

The Head of Community Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.

A Member enquired about the potential for future Highway Improvement works if any residual funds remained. The Head of Community Services said when outturn costs and current commitment were finalised from this year's programme and with the likelihood of further capital funding from Welsh Government for 20/21 he was optimistic that a further programme of works could be developed for 1920/21.

In relation to the sewer diversion contract, Welsh Government funding had been received and elements of this would be used to backfill and the remainder reallocated accordingly.

A Member commented that in relation to highway resurfacing it would appear that some Wards had a larger proportion of highways than others. The Head of Community Services said that it had been challenging to ensure that all Wards had some works carried out whilst balancing the need to ensure the poorest condition roads were given priority. He also said that nearly all Wards did in fact have resurfacing work undertaken proportionately with the length of highways located within those Wards.

Another Member commented that the highway matrix was fair and worked well.

A Member enquired regarding the additional options to be considered for Tredegar bypass. The Head of Community Services said that only one company dealt with the micro surface asphalt required and it had been prudent to

	<p>continue with the contract and specification, however, the works would not be carried out until next year.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the information included within the report be accepted.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT 1ST APRIL 2018 TO 31ST MARCH 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources which was presented to give Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Treasury Management activities carried out by the Authority during the 2018/19 financial year.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the treasury management activity undertaken during the 2018/19 financial year be accepted prior to its submission to full Council.</p>	
No. 10	<p><u>SHARED RESOURCE SERVICE PARTNERSHIP WORKING – HALF YEARLY MONITORING</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Commercial which was presented for Members to scrutinise the performance of IT services provided to the Council from the Shared Resource Service (SRS), for the period February 2019 to July 2019.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Commercial spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein including that Blaenau Gwent had become the fourth partner to join the collaboration partnership in 2016. A new role of Partner Relationship Manager had been created in SRS to work closely with and across the Council.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding the Strategic Board and the fee of £2.3m. The Chief Officer Commercial said that the</p>	

<p>Board was made up of elected Members and partner organisations and the £2.3m was the annual fee payable to the SRS for the provision of IT services across the Council.</p> <p>A Member referred to the Memorandum of Understanding which binds the Council to the SRS partnership and raised concern regarding SRS support to Members. The Chief Officer Commercial said that a meeting between Members and SRS colleagues would be arranged to address any issues of support and concerns.</p> <p>The Chair requested that a Members briefing session be arranged with SRS colleagues.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED this course of action.</p> <p>Another Member raised concerns regarding how often passwords needed changing. The Chief Officer Commercial said that this was one of the biggest issues affecting Members and the Assistant Director of Operations would address this issue at the meeting with Members.</p> <p>A Member referred to the contract and enquired if schools had to absorb the costs. The Chief Officer Commercial confirmed that schools did absorb the costs as representatives from SRS provided technical support to schools. IT was a vital part of business and needed continual investment.</p> <p>In relation to access to information the SRS representative said that from April 2020 Office 365 would be rolled out across Blaenau Gwent and would enable Members to have better access to their emails and attachments. A Member enquired why Office 365 was being rolled out in Blaenau Gwent last. The Chief Officer Commercial clarified that conditions had to be created to run Office 365 i.e. some equipment needed to be replaced and Windows 10 operating system needed to be installed. There were a number of older devices that needed to be replaced and a review of equipment would be completed in January 2020. All devices should be operating successfully in the next financial year.</p>	<p>Chief Officer Commercial I</p>
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	<p>A Member commented on the number of requests for password re-setting, the SRS representative said that the self service tool would be looked at as a priority.</p> <p>A Member commented on the mention of low sickness levels within the service. The SRS representative confirmed that sickness absence figures would be provided in future reports.</p> <p>A Member referred to collaboration, the Chief Officer Commercial said that Blaenau Gwent was an equal partner within the SRS service but with different requirements to other local authorities. The SRS managed supplier relationships and identified opportunities to collaborate within the Council and externally for improved resilience across the service.</p> <p>In relation to the new role of Partner Relationship Manager, the Chief Officer Commercial said that the role was created for realignment of resources and to strengthen the position across the core projects and offer increased transparency of work that was being delivered.</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that comments in respect of the report and appendices be noted.</p>	
No. 11	<p><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 16TH OCTOBER, 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee which presented the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 16th October 2019.</p> <p>Members requested a progress report on CCTV be presented to a future meeting.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 16th October, 2019 be approved.</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

SUBJECT: AUDIT COMMITTEE – 10TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: Mr. Peter Williams (CHAIR)

Councillors S. Healy
 G. Collier
 M. Cross
 L. Elias
 D. Hancock
 J. Hill
 J. Holt
 L. Parsons
 B. Summers
 S. Thomas
 H. Trollope
 J. Wilkins
 L. Winnett

WITH: Chief Officer Resources
 Chief Accountant Corporate Services
 Head of Children's Services
 Communications, Marketing and Customer Access Manager
 Data Protection & Governance Officer
 Solicitor

AND: **Wales Audit Office**
 Mike Jones
 Neal Hollis

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>An apology for absence was received for Councillor K. Rowson.</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>The following declarations of interest were reported:</p> <p>Councillor J. Hill - <i><u>Item No. 6 – Update on the External Audit of Financial Statements 2018-19 – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</u></i></p> <p>Councillors S. Thomas, G. Collier, H. Trollope and the Communications, Marketing and Customer Access Manager - <i><u>Item No. 11 – Performance Coaching Review – Managing Director</u></i></p>	
No. 4	<p><u>AUDIT COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Audit Committee held on 23rd July, 2019 were submitted for accuracy points.</p> <p>A Member referred to page 3 of the minutes and whilst he was unable to attend the meeting, he referred to the previous discussions and reiterated the point that the service reviews had not been reported through the Scrutiny process. In relation to the Officer response that they were reported within the quarterly Revenue Budget Report, he said this report would not have included the amount of detail necessary for proper scrutiny to be undertaken. He said the Leader of the Council admitted that the reports had not gone through the Scrutiny process, but had gone through the Council Forward Work Programme. He reminded Members that very recently WAO had criticised the</p>	

	<p>Authority's scrutiny function, particularly around the review of leisure services.</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET</u></p> <p>It was noted that there were no actions arising from the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 23rd July, 2019.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>UPDATE ON THE EXTERNAL AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2018/19 – BLAENAU GWENT BOROUGH COUNCIL</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Wales Audit Office report.</p> <p>The WAO representative presented the report and highlighted points contained therein. He referred to the non-material uncorrected misstatements and confirmed that these would not impact on the Council's usable reserves. He also pointed out that should Members not agree to correct the misstatements, WAO would ask that a reason be provided. A number of corrected misstatements had also been identified and these were detailed at Appendix 1.</p> <p>He commended Blaenau Gwent on being able to produce the accounts for audit by 31st May, 2019. However, WAO would be making detailed recommendations for improvements in order for the Council to meet its future statutory deadlines, and a further report would follow.</p> <p>In response to questions raised by a Member the Chief Accountant Corporate Services explained that the Council had always accounted for the Ebbw Vale Multi Storey Car Park as an Operating Lease, and WAO's view was that this should be accounted as a Finance Lease. However, the Council was proposing to not make this adjustment until implementation of the new Accounting Standards. In relation to the Senior Officers' Remuneration, the Officer confirmed that this had no financial impact.</p>	

	<p>The WAO Representative confirmed that all the corrected misstatements have been amended.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern regarding the misstatements identified. He said during the budget setting process Members based their conclusions on the updated position during the financial year, and the accuracy of this information was paramount for Members. He asked how many misstatements had been identified over the last 4-5 years and the value of these.</p> <p>In response the Chief Accountant Corporate Services said this varied year on year and depended on what WAO identified. He said there was always scope for error, and pointed out that 'sign-off' of the Accounts meant that they provided a true and fair view of the Authority's financial statements. However, he recognised Members' concerns, but assured that all the adjustments had been corrected, and there was no impact on the Authority's usable reserves, it was more a case of 'moving things about', and the misstatements and reclassifications had no impact on the bottom-line budget.</p> <p>The WAO Representative reported that since the preparation of the report, the Police confirmed that they would be taking no further action in terms of the issues raised by the Whistleblower. In terms of next steps he confirmed that WAO would be considered how that information would be reported, and working with the Team to get the outstanding accounts signed-off.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained be noted.</p>	
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2018/19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>The Chief Accountant Corporate Services presented the report and highlighted points contained.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern regarding the Understatement of Depreciation of the Highways Network Asset and said whilst it</p>	

was considered not to be material in terms of the budget for the financial year, it would have implications moving forward.

A brief discussion ensued when the Chief Officer Resources explained that the prudential borrowing for the highways works was based on 20 years.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Chief Accountant Corporate Services confirmed that work would be undertaken around the valuation of assets

When considering the Options for Recommendation within the report, a Member proposed Options 2 and 5, and this proposal was seconded.

Another Member proposed that Options 1 & 3 be approved (the preferred Options as outlined in the report), and this proposal was seconded.

Upon a vote being taken it was:

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Audit Committee approve the following:

Agree with the Officer recommendation not to amend the following misstatements identified by the Wales Audit Office on the basis that these would not have a material impact on the accounting statements (Option 1)

- Pension Liabilities related to the McCloud Judgement;
- Classification of the Ebbw Vale Multi-Storey Car Park Lease; and
- Understatement of Depreciation

And

Further to the certification (or absence of certification) of these Accounts by the Chief Officer Resources and on consideration of the report and the External Auditor's report, the Accounts be approved by the Audit Committee under the delegated authority of the Council (Option 3).

	<p><u>RECORDED VOTE</u></p> <p>Councillors S. Thomas, H. Trollope, L. Winnett, M. Cross, L. Elias & D. Hancock requested that their names be Recorded in support of Options 2 & 5.</p>	
No. 8	<p><u>REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (RIPA) 2000</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance.</p> <p>The Solicitor presented the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>A brief discussion ensued when the Solicitor and Officers clarified points raised by Members.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Audit Committee accept the information in the report which is given as assurance that appropriate oversight and monitoring is taking place (Option 1).</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>WALES AUDIT OFFICE: WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS REVIEW</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Children's Services.</p> <p>The Officer presented the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>In response to comments made by a Member, the Head of Children's Services confirmed that transformation funding was coming through for development of specific elements of the wellbeing programme, and part of that work was the development of services for children presenting with emotional and mental health problems, and reports on the progress of this initiative would be submitted to the Social Services Scrutiny Committee in due course.</p> <p>In response to a further question the Officer confirmed that a</p>	

	<p>new performance framework for measuring wellbeing would be in place by 2020. However, in relation to flying start, statistics were published on an annual basis comparing all 22 LA's in Wales, and the Officer confirmed that Blaenau Gwent performed very well and were in the top quartile.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	
No. 10	<p><u>WALES AUDIT OFFICE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE FOR THE AUDIT OF BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S 2019-20 IMPROVEMENT PLAN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Governance and Partnerships.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources presented the report.</p> <p>RESOVLED that the report be accepted and the Audit Committee note the compliance certificate dated July 2019.</p>	
No. 11	<p><u>PERFORMANCE COACHING REVIEW – MANAGING DIRECTOR</u></p> <p>Councillors S. Thomas, G. Collier, H. Trollope and the Communications, Marketing and Customer Access Manager declared an interest in this matter and left the meeting while the item was being considered.</p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Organisational Development.</p>	

	RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.	
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 11TH SEPTEMBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR H. TROLLOPE (CHAIR)

Councillors: J. Millard
M. Cook
G.A. Davies
L. Elias
W. Hodgins
J. Holt
J.C. Morgan
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Summers
S. Thomas

Co-opted Member

A. Williams

AND: Corporate Director of Education
Head of Education Transformation
Service Manager Inclusion
Strategic Education Improvement Manager
Senior Educational Welfare Officer
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Bevan and C. Meredith.</p> <p><u>Co-opted Member</u> T. Baxter</p>	
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 26th June, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>Councillor Lyn Elias reported that his name had been spelt incorrectly.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 26TH JUNE, 2019</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 26th June, 2019 was submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Item 6 – Proposed Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2019/20</u></p> <p>A Member requested that the additional items to be included in the Forward Work Programme be itemised on the Action Sheet and on the Forward Work Programme in future.</p> <p>The Chair requested that a list of acronyms be included within reports.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.</p>	<p>Director of Education</p>

No. 6	<p><u>EXECUTIVE DECISIONS FOR THE EDUCATION AND LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Executive Decision Sheet. The Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor clarified that the decision sheet was included on the agenda for greater transparency between Scrutiny and the Executive and would be included on all future Scrutiny Committees.</p> <p>A Member commented that the Summary of Inspection Outcomes for Educational Establishments was a statutory item and felt that it needed to be reported into Executive Committee. The Director of Education advised Members that it was for the Executive Committee to decide what would be included in their Forward Work Programme.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Decision Sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>HOME TO SCHOOL AND POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY 2019/20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Education Transformation Manager which was presented to seek Members views in relation to the review of Blaenau Gwent Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy for the 2020/21 academic session.</p> <p>The Head of Education Transformation spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein and included that the implementation date for the Policy was September 2020.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding the new legislation in relation to pupils with Additional Learning Needs. The Head of Education Transformation said that the ALN Panel would determine the needs of the individuals and ensure access to appropriate education provision and transport.</p> <p>In relation to additional travel costs incurred due to changes in the curriculum, the Head of Education Transformation said that the Policy covered Home to School transport and that schools would fund additional costs if pupils needed to travel for curriculum related needs within the schools.</p>	

In response to a Member's question regarding the Home to School budget, the Head of Education Transformation said that the Transport Team were constantly reviewing arrangements to help reduce cost pressures. The current forecast adverse variance of £38,000 related to special schools.

In relation to the Welsh Government guidelines, the Head of Education Transformation said that the Council was more generous in respect of home to school transport entitlement than the Welsh Government statutory limits. The Welsh Government statutory requirement was three miles for secondary learners.

A Member enquired if the £50 per term travel grant was in line with inflation. The Head of Education Transformation said that this amount did not cover the full cost of travel. Stage Coach charged £1 per journey which the learner had to contribute. This charge had been introduced in the 2013/14 academic year and had remained at £1 per journey over a number of years.

In relation to travel routes the Head of Education Transformation informed Members that Stage Coach had made a commitment to the Council to keep bus routes to the Learning Zone available and that although the Council had no direct influence over bus routes they had listened to the views that came from the Post 16 statutory consultation exercise.

A Member enquired if travel to Breakfast and After School clubs was the responsibility of parents/carers. The Head of Education Transformation said that if a pupil attended breakfast club or after school club then it would be the responsibility of the parent/carer to transport their children to and from activities outside of the normal school day. This point would be made more explicit when the Policy was published.

The Committee AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy 2020/21 (Appendix 1) be recommended to the Executive Committee for approval.

No. 8

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME) 2019

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education which was presented to inform Members of the Children Missing Education (CME) data and the processes in place.

The Senior Educational Welfare Officer spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein. The Director of Education clarified the definition of Children Missing Education (CME) was children moving and their families not leaving a forwarding address. The Senior Educational Welfare Officer was responsible for identifying, locating and engaging children who were CME and currently none were outstanding.

A Member enquired regarding the non-attendance at school for a period of 20 days. The Director of Education said that this was the maximum period allowed and the Authority did not wait for 20 days. Schools would be using their first day response procedures to ensure telephone calls and visits were undertaken before the period of 20 consecutive days was highlighted by the school.

A Member felt that it was important that schools should receive transfer information before the transfer took place so that the school would be aware of any issues. The Senior Educational Welfare Officer confirmed that Common Transfer Files (CTF) were sent to the receiving schools when transfers took place and could be imported to their data system.

The Chair enquired regarding the timeline to ensure that the CTF was in place. The Senior Educational Welfare Officer explained that after 20 days the CTF would be uploaded as Children Missing Education and once the child had been located this would then be updated.

The Service Manager Inclusion commented that the Common Transfer File was just one set of information and if there were any pupil concerns then further information could be requested and confirmed that robust mechanisms were in place.

The Head of Education Transformation clarified that the

	<p>CTF process was part of the guidelines. The Admissions Team worked closely with schools to ensure that information was shared in a timely manner.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding families that emigrate, the Senior Educational Welfare Officer said that normally in those cases a forwarding address had been received.</p> <p>A Member enquired if there was an All Wales database for Missing Children. The Senior Educational Welfare Officer said there was no database, however, they worked closely with other authorities and had contact details for each authority through their All Wales meetings and were aware of those children who were CME. The Authority had a statutory duty under the Local Government Act to effectively meet its obligations.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the time lapse for pupils who leave temporarily and then return to the Borough, the Senior Educational Welfare Officer said that the Admissions Team had 15 days to process the application.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2, namely that the detail contained within the report and the work undertaken to date be acknowledged.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>EDUCATION DIRECTORATE SELF EVALUATION POLICY – REVISION 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Strategic Education Improvement Manager which presented the revised draft self-evaluation policy, protocol and practice for Local Government Education Services (LGES).</p> <p>The Strategic Education Improvement Manager spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>In response to a Member's enquiry regarding SER, the Director of Education said there had been a subtle shift in the cyclical process to make the information more</p>	

	<p>accessible for stakeholders to ensure its continued effectiveness. All local authorities needed to demonstrate the cyclical process and ongoing improvement. The SER was an important process and a key document to continued and sustainable improvements and enabled the Directorate to remain focused on those areas that required improvements. She advised that following the conclusion of the October Scrutiny meeting Members would see how the performance data was used by schools and Headteachers to ensure that children and young people made good progress.</p> <p>A Member enquired if an external review of the SER should be undertaken. The Director of Education said that Estyn looked at the SER every term and over 80 impact and evaluation reports had been undertaken by Officers and captured in the SER. At the end of the process in addition to the full SER document, Members received one of the three summary SER's developed. She advised that Estyn were clear that the self evaluation was accurate and with the way in which Regulators shared information.</p> <p>A Member asked what information could be shared to show that we are moving forward. The Director of Education said that discussions had been held regionally to agree a regional version on how performance information could be presented to Scrutiny. This report would be presented to the October meeting.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the Summary SER for children, parents and wider consultees. The Director of Education said that this took place with key messages that parents could clearly understand but the information for teachers was more technical.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the report be accepted as provided.</p>	
No. 10	<p><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 23RD OCTOBER 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee which</p>	

	<p>presented the Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 23rd October, 2019.</p> <p>A Member requested that an evaluation report on the Education Achievement Service (EAS) be prepared for a future meeting to look at value for money and to include Service Level Agreements and budget issues. The Director of Education said that the Authority's contribution had been reduced year on year against increasing improvements. An Independent Review was currently being undertaken and would be reported to Scrutiny Committee in due course.</p> <p>Members were advised that the next meeting of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee had been moved to the 25th October, 2019 at 10.30 a.m. and would be held in Tredegar Comprehensive School. The Director of Education advised that following the conclusion of the Scrutiny Committee meeting the Headteacher would inform Members on how the Provisional School Performance information in the report was used by schools.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 25th October, 2019 be approved.</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY SERVICE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
12TH SEPTEMBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR J. WILKINS (CHAIR)

Councillors M.J. Cook
L. Elias
S. Healy
W. Hodgins
J. Holt
G. Paulsen
B. Summers
L.C. Winnett

AND: Managing Director
Corporate Director Community Services &
Regeneration
Chief Officer Commercial
Service Manager Community Services
Service Manager Public Protection
Specialist Environmental Health Officer
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance
Scrutiny Officer

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> Apologies for absence were received for Councillors C. Meredith, H. McCarthy, P. Baldwin, J.P. Morgan.	

No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>Councillor W. Hodgins declared an interest in Item No. 10 – Service Review.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 27th June, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>Councillor B. Summers reported that his attendance had been omitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 18TH MARCH, 2019</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 27th June, 2019 was submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Waste & Recycling Performance</u> – In response to a question raised by a Member, the Service Manager Community Services confirmed that organisations of CAT facilities had been informed that they were able to request a green waste collection.</p> <p><u>Civil Parking Enforcement: Parking Enforcement Policy</u> – In response to concerns raised by a Member, the Service Manager Public Protection confirmed that the information provided on the Council's website was up to date and explained the procedures for dealing with abandoned vehicles. However, he undertook to provide Members with an update-to-date copy of the Policy.</p> <p>A Member asked whether reports on progress and actions would be submitted to Scrutiny, and the Corporate Director confirmed that monitoring reports would be received.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.</p>	<p>Dave Thompson</p>

<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>EXECUTIVE DECISIONS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Executive Decision Sheet in respect of recommendations made by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 27th June, 2019.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Executive Decision Sheet be noted.</p>	
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>WALES AUDIT OFFICE (WAO) REVIEW – PHASE 1 OF LEISURE SERVICE REVIEW</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Chief Officer Commercial which provided feedback on the review undertaken by WAO between June and December 2018 of the Council's approach to the review of Leisure and Culture Services.</p> <p>The WAO representative presented the report and highlighted points contained therein. The review concluded that the Council faced significant challenges to ensure that leisure services are delivered in a sustainable way to meet its residents' needs. The following proposals for improvement were also made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the learning from the current Trust arrangement is considered when establishing a new leisure services arrangement. • Ensuring the Council's programme of service reviews work to realistic project scope and timescales. • Put plans in place to ensure continuity of leisure services and smooth transition and efficient alternative delivery model(s). <p>A Member said he understood that when leisure services transferred to Aneurin Leisure Trust, the assets were retained by the Council, and as a result the Trust found difficulty in accessing external funding.</p> <p>In response the Managing Director said when the Trust was established it was agreed that the buildings property assets required to deliver services would be leased to the Trust to enable them to deliver services, but ownership of the</p>	

buildings remained with the Council.

In response to a question raised by a Member the WAO representative referred to paragraphs 15 & 16 of the report and explained that WAO sought further clarification on the figures detailed in 2 reports submitted to the Regeneration & Community Services Leadership Team. Following discussions with colleagues in Resources, the Council clarified that the actual savings/cost avoidance since the establishment of the Trust was £4,211,962, which showed that the financial data provided during the review had been inaccurate.

The Managing Director said it was not unusual for reports to be changed following consideration by the Corporate Leadership Team, and the fact that 2 reports came through in such a short time scale suggested that there had been some change. She said it was important to challenge reports, and in this instance both Resources and the Service Area were content and able to clarify to WAO the savings achieved for the transfer of services to the Trust.

In response to question raised by the Chair, the Chief Officer Commercial went through the current phase of the Leisure and Culture Review as outlined in section 6.1.2 of the report.

A discussion ensued when the Officer confirmed that advice was being sought around the financial and management arrangements of the Trust, and the Authority was working very closely with the Trust and to supporting them with development opportunities. In terms of making decisions, the Officer said this was a significant review, but it was intended to make proposals by the end of the year. However, it was likely that any changes would take a 12 month period to implement.

In terms of the budget issues the Managing Director said since the one-off payment put into the Trust by the Council, the Trust had taken action to reduce costs and the Council had assisted them in that process to ensure a strong financial position moving forward. The Chief Officer Resources was also working closely with the Trust and had gained an improved oversight of their financial performance,

	<p>and this was reported to Committee twice a year, and work had also been undertaken to strengthen contract management arrangements to reduce the risk of a budget pressure on the Council.</p> <p>A Member suggested that the financial performance information be reported on a quarterly basis, and the Managing Director undertook to discuss this with the Chief Officer Resources and the Trust.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the WAO representatives for their attendance.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and Members scrutinise, support and make comments on the report and attached appendix (Option 1).</p>	
No. 8	<p><u>RENEWAL OF PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS FOR DOG CONTRL OFFENCES – RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Service Manager Public Protection which provided the findings of the public consultation on the proposed new Public Space Protection Order for dog control offences and the process for their renewal by November 2019.</p> <p>The Service Manager Public Protection spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein. During the public consultation which started on the 6th June, 2019 and ended on the 5th July, 2019, 20 written responses were received from members of the public, The Dogs Trust and Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council. Responses were supportive of the dog fouling aspect of the PSPO, and requests for additional dog fouling bins were also made, and the possibility of providing free dog fouling bags.</p> <p>The Officer said following consideration of the public consultation responses a number of amendments were proposed and these were detailed at section 2.7 of the report. If supported by the Scrutiny Committee, the new PSPO for dog controls would be presented to Council in October.</p>	

	<p>In response to a question raised by a Member regarding Brynmawr Welfare Ground and the CAT, the Officer confirmed that no objections had been received from the organisation, other than to request additional signage. He also confirmed that the play area formed part of the site, and this was still subject to a dog exclusion order.</p> <p>A Member welcomed the report, but expressed concern regarding enforcement of dog fouling.</p> <p>The Officer said enforcement was operated on the general principle of problem areas, and he urged Members to contact Officers to report issues and patrols could be arranged. However, he said enforcement of dog fouling was very difficult as the majority of people know it is an offence and were on the 'look-out' for Enforcement Officers. He also reported that there was a high turnover of staff in this area of work and recruitment was challenging.</p> <p>A discussion ensued when Officers clarified points raised by Members.</p> <p>A Member asked whether there was guidance available for reporting incidents, and the Officer explained that they could contact the office and identify an offender, however, the majority of people were reluctant to provide a statement.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and Members considered and provided comment on the outcome of the public consultation, prior to approval by Council.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 24TH OCTOBER, 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 24th October, 2019.</p> <p>The Service Manager Public Protection reported a delay in the Housing Allocations Policy, and said this would now be submitted at a later date.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the</p>	

	report be accepted as presented.	
No. 10	<p><u>SERVICE REVIEW</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Chief Officer Commercial which provided an update on the review of Leisure and Culture Services, and outlined next steps.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Commercial spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>A discussion ensued when the Officer clarified points raised by Members.</p> <p>The Officer also referred to the Member Working Group, and confirmed that visits were being undertaken to understand what works well, and arrangements that may need to be put in place moving forward.</p> <p>In response to question raised by the Chair in relation to feedback from the Working Group, the Officer confirmed that a Member's Briefing Session would be arranged at an appropriate time and this would include feedback from the Member Working Group.</p> <p>In terms of next steps, the Officer referred to section 6.1.2 which outlined actions to be undertaken during Autumn 2019.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report which contained information relating to the financial/business affairs of persons other than the Authority</p>	

	be accepted and Members scrutinised and supported the report and attached appendix.	
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(BUDGET MONITORING) –
16TH SEPTEMBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S. HEALY (CHAIR)

Councillors D. Bevan
M. Cook
M. Cross
G. L. Davies
P. Edwards
J. Hill
W. Hodgins
H. McCarthy
J. Millard
J. C. Morgan
K. Pritchard
T. Sharrem
T. Smith
B. Summers
S. Thomas

Co-Opted Members

A. Williams

**WITH: Managing Director
Corporate Director of Social Services
Corporate Director of Education
Chief Officer Resources
Chief Officer Commercial
Head of Community Services
Service Manager Accountancy
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor**

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ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from: -</p> <p>Councillors M. Day, L. Elias, J. Holt, C. Meredith, L. Parsons, G. Paulsen, K. Rowson, H. Trollope, J. Wilkins, D. Wilkshire, B. Willis, L. Winnett</p> <p><u>Co-opted Member</u> Mr. T. Baxter</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>Councillors W. Hodgins and P. Edwards declared an interest in the following item:-</p> <p>Item No. 10 - Revenue Budget Monitoring – 2019/2020, Forecast Outturn to 31 March 2020 (as at 30th June 2019).</p>	
No. 4.	<p><u>JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (BUDGET MONITORING)</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6th February, 2019 were submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Item 4 – Revenue Budget 2019/20</u></p> <p>A Member commented that in relation to schools he and another Member spoke in support of schools to provide a balanced view and he felt this was not accurately reflected in the Minutes. The Member referred to page 19 Individual School Budgets (ISB) and said this was also not a balanced view.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<u>ACTION SHEET – 6TH FEBRUARY, 2019</u>	

	<p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee (Budget Monitoring) held on 6th February, 2019 was considered, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Item 5 – Revenue Budget 2019/20</u></p> <p>A Member referred to the full cost recovery of premises related costs for occupancy of Town and Community Councils and requested a breakdown of the full cost recovery be provided.</p> <p>A Member commented that budget setting discussions would shortly be taking place for 2020/21 and enquired if the Council paid at a higher rate for its utility costs. The Chief Officer Resources said that a 20% increase in utility costs had been built into the budget process for 2019/20 and she would enquire if the Council paid any penalties in relation to its utility costs and report back to Committee.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Action Sheet be noted.</p>	<p>Chief Officer Resources</p> <p>Chief Officer Resources</p>
No. 6	<p><u>JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (BUDGET MONITORING)</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 11th February, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 11TH FEBRUARY, 2019</u></p> <p>The Action Sheet arising from the meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee (Budget Monitoring) held on 11th February, 2019 was considered, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Item 7 – Revenue Budget Monitoring 2018/19, Forecast to 31st March 2019</u></p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the Splash Park, the Director of Social Services said that a report had been prepared and presented to the Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee in May that Social Services Scrutiny Committee</p>	

	<p>Members had been invited to attend.</p> <p>A Member requested information regarding the 13% increase in energy costs and Corporate Services energy rebates.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Action Sheet be noted.</p>	Head of Community Services
No. 8	<p><u>JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (BUDGET MONITORING)</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12th July, 2019 were submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p>A Member commented that at the Committee meeting he had requested a breakdown of expenditure costs for public toilets in each Ward and was still awaiting the information.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 12TH JULY, 2019</u></p> <p>The Action Sheet arising from the meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee (Budget Monitoring) held on 12th July, 2019 was considered, whereupon:-</p> <p>A Member enquired when an update review of the Industrial Portfolio would be received. The Managing Director said that this would form part of the MTFS and a report on individual Service Business Reviews e.g. Industrial Portfolio would be presented to the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee in the Autumn.</p> <p>A Member requested a further progress update on the Company Shop, Tredegar. The Head of Community Services said he would report back to Committee in due course.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Action Sheet be noted.</p>	Head of Community Services
No. 10	<u>REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING – 2019/2020,</u>	

FORECAST OUTTURN TO 31 MARCH 2020 (AS AT 30TH JUNE 2019)

Councillors W. Hodgins and P. Edwards declared an interest in this item and remained in the meeting.

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources which provided the forecast financial outturn position across all portfolios for the financial year 2019/20 (as forecast at 30th June, 2019) and to review the actions taken forward to move towards a balanced outturn position.

The Chief Officer Resources spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.

Impact on Budget

In response to a Member's question regarding ALT Termination costs, the Chief Officer Resources said that the forecast overspend would have been £300,000 if reserves had not been used.

Risk including Mitigation Actions

A Member referred to Brexit as an organisational risk and commented on the Government's Yellowhammer Impact Assessment and enquired regarding preparations for financial planning. The Managing Director said that Yellowhammer was the worst case scenario and that an Officer Working Group was working on planning preparations and had geared up to the original March deadline. A Members Briefing session would be arranged for October to update Members and a report would be presented to Scrutiny. The Member felt that the Council may already feel the impact of Brexit by December. The Managing Director said that a risk assessment had been undertaken and if there was a radical change this would be reported to Members.

In response to a Member's enquiry regarding the Sustainable Social Services Grant, the Director of Social Services said that the grant had been received for the last 2 years but confirmation of the grant for 2020/21 would not be received until January/February 2020.

<p><u>Financial Efficiency Projects (FEP)</u></p> <p>A Member commented on the £50,000 increase in recycling income not being achieved due to the delayed use of the baler. The Head of Community Services said that there had been some issues regarding the baler at Silent Valley such as compacting of the aluminium cans and aerosols and training to operate the baler which had delayed its use and had resulted in a shortfall of income generated.</p> <p><u>Appendix 1 - Summary of main forecast adverse variances 2019/20</u></p> <p><u>Environment – Cemeteries</u></p> <p>In response to a Member's enquiry regarding cemeteries, the Head of Community Services said that the net surplus was not enough to offset the forecast adverse variance. Costs had been reduced as much as possible, however, the income target had been difficult to achieve. The Member felt that the income targets should be reviewed.</p> <p>A Member commented that it was important that cemeteries be maintained to a good standard as they were an emotive and sensitive area for residents to visit. He added that it was not always about budgets and maintenance of cemeteries should be addressed in a better manner.</p> <p>Reference was made to the Task & Finish Group and the monies received from Gwent Crematorium and Members felt that this should be referred to the Community Services Committee.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED this course of action.</p> <p><u>Environment – Cwmcrachen Caravan Site</u></p> <p>A Member referred to the forecast adverse variance for Cwmcrachen Caravan Site and enquired if it was due to rents and high utility bills.</p> <p><u>Education- Home to School Transport</u></p> <p>A Member referred to the year on year increase in the Home to School Transport for special schools, the Director</p>	<p>Scrutiny Officer</p> <p>Chief Officer Resources</p>
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	<p>of Education said that it was based on need within the system, some pupils had complex needs and it was difficult to predict increases in demand for the service.</p> <p>Another Member commented that the Authority received a Looked After Children grant for the Social Services Directorate and felt that one Directorate received finance which also affected another Directorate. The Director of Education clarified that costs were linked to LAC, Social Services Directorate picked up the care elements and the Education Directorate picked up the education element of the total cost.</p> <p><u>Appendix 2</u> <u>Transport Services - Parking Enforcement</u></p> <p>A Member referred to civil parking enforcement at schools and requested that Brynbach Primary School and Tredegar Comprehensive be identified as priority areas for enforcement. The Head of Community Services said that there were only two enforcement officers and their remit was to focus on the priority areas of town centres and schools. However, he would arrange for the two schools to be made a priority for officers.</p> <p>Following a Member's comment regarding an SRS update on the new IT system, the Chair responded that a Members briefing session would be arranged with SRS colleagues to give a complete update on new IT systems, as agreed at a recent Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee. It was noted that drop-in sessions had been arranged with the Chief Officer Commercial.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED this course of action.</p> <p><u>Appendix 4</u> <u>Corporate Services – Adverse Variance</u></p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the anticipated shortfall on the Administration Subsidy grant, the Chief Officer Resources clarified that the grant was received to administer Housing Benefits and work was being undertaken to review the overpayments process to address this cost pressure.</p>	<p>Head of Community Services</p>
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	<p>With reference to the installation of dog waste bins, the Head of Community Services said that dog waste bins would continue to be installed where an absolute need had been identified.</p> <p>A Member felt that the deep cleans at town centres were poor value for money.</p> <p>A Member referred to public toilets funding and requested a breakdown of the funds provided to each of the town centres over the last 2 years. The Head of Community Services said that a reduction to the contribution paid to the organisations for running the public toilets was being considered. A one off grant had been received last year, however, internal funding was also provided through the Street Cleansing budget. A breakdown of funding for each town centre would be provided at the next appropriate Committee.</p> <p>Councillor M. Cook left the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>A Member commented that the original concept to use café toilets was good as the café owners had received funding for the public to use their facilities.</p> <p>Another Member pointed out that although the previous administration had closed public toilets, this had been under consideration since 2006, and noted that the toilets had not been re-opened.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the continual restructure of departments, the Managing Director clarified that this was not a continual restructure, the Senior Management Review Phase 2 (SMR2) had taken some time to put in place and the changes in the Regeneration Department referred to were in fact part of SMR2.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding CCTV savings. The Managing Director confirmed that the savings had been achieved.</p> <p>A Member proposed to support the virements with an amendment to read: consider and 'comment upon' an action plan.</p>	<p>Head of Community Services</p>
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	<p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, to recommend that the report be accepted and endorsed Option 1, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that Members provided appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report; • that Members consider and 'comment upon' the Action Plans attached at Appendix 4 developed to address the forecast adverse variances at the end of June 2019; and • recommend the Executive approve the budget virements attached at Appendix 5 which exceed £250,000. 	
No. 11	<p><u>CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING – APRIL TO JUNE 2019 2019/2020 FINANCIAL YEAR</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources which provided an overview of each Portfolio's forecast capital expenditure against funding approvals for the 2019/20 financial year, as at 30th June, 2019.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>A Member referred to the acquisition of Cwm Draw Units 1-6. The Chief Officer Resources said that the purchase had now been completed with a small budget remaining.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorsed Option 1, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that Scrutiny Members continue to provide appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report; • Continue to support appropriate financial control procedures agreed by Council; • the budgetary control and monitoring procedures in place within the Capital Team, to safeguard Authority funding be noted. 	
No. 12	<u>USE OF GENERAL AND EARMARKED RESERVES</u>	

2019/2020

Consideration was given to report of the Chief Officer Resources which provided Members with the forecast reserves position for 2019/2020 as at Quarter 1 (30th June, 2019).

The Chief Officer Resources spoke to the report and highlighted the key points contained therein.

In relation to Education – Gypsy Travellers, a Member raised concerns regarding increased costs to this budget associated with the expansion of Gypsy Traveller sites. The Service Manager Accountancy said that this was not an overspend it was a reserve. The Education Improvement grant had reduced and funding had been set aside.

The Chair commented on the officer representation at the meeting and felt that report authors needed to be in attendance at the meeting. The Managing Director responded that all Directorates had been represented at the meeting.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely to

- Note the planned forecast increase of the General Reserve to 4.47% (above the 4% target level) for 2019/2020 and future years strengthening the Council's Financial Resilience;
 - Note the impact the £0.150m forecast adverse variance for 2019/2020 would have on the General Reserve target; and
 - Continue to challenge budget overspends and implement appropriate service Action Plans, where required.
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
23RD SEPTEMBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR L. PARSONS (CHAIR)

Councillors J. Hill
G.A. Davies
G.L. Davies
P. Edwards
M. Holland
H. McCarthy
J. Millard
M. Moore
J.C. Morgan
K. Rowson
B. Willis

AND: Corporate Director Regeneration & Community
Services
Head of Regeneration
Service Manager Development & Estates
Team Manager Planning Policy
Team Manager Thriving Communities
Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities
Enterprise Facilitation Officer
Scrutiny Officer

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u>	

	An apology for absence was reported for Councillor M. Cross.	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest and dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>ENVIRONMENT, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held on 18th March, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern regarding the delay in the minutes being submitted to Committee. The Chair explained that this was the first meeting of the newly established Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, and these minutes had 'rolled over' from the old Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Another Member said the minutes had already been approved by Council, but he understood that minutes should be approved by the relevant Scrutiny Committee prior to being ratified by Council.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Officer explained that the minutes had been submitted for Members to note the comments from the previous Scrutiny Committees. The Head of Governance & Partnerships was in the process of considering the submission of minutes to Special Meetings in order to avoid a delay in minutes being approved/ratified.</p> <p>Following a brief discussion Members agreed that as the minutes were from the previous Scrutiny Committee and the membership had changed, that the minutes be 'noted'.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be noted.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 18TH MARCH, 2019</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the</p>	

	<p>Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held on 18th March, 2019 was submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>ENVIRONMENT, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Environment Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held on 4th April, 2019 was submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be noted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 4TH APRIL, 2019</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held on 4th April, 2019 was submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Blaenau Gwent Consumer Brochure</u></p> <p>In response to a question raised, the Enterprise Facilitation Officer reported that the Brochure was currently with the Communications Section to check the design and branding, and would be brought back to Scrutiny in due course.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern that this had been ongoing for some time. The Officer said he understood Members' frustration, however, there had been movement within the destination management portfolio and it was important that the document provided a true reflection of what was currently on offer.</p> <p>A Member said the reasons for the delay should be investigated, and that Members should have had sight of the document, albeit in draft form.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.</p>	

No. 8	<p><u>ENVIRONMENT, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the special Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held on 15th May, 2019 was submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be noted.</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 15TH MAY, 2019</u></p> <p>There were no actions arising from the special meeting of the Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held on 15th May, 2019.</p>	
No. 10	<p><u>PROPOSED SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019-20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report which presented the Regeneration Scrutiny Work Programme for 2019-20.</p> <p>A Member said the work of the Leisure Review Working Group was reported to a Joint Scrutiny Committee, and felt that this should continue.</p> <p>In response the Corporate Director confirmed that the Leisure Review came under the remit of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee. However, the outcomes would also be reported to Council for consideration by all Members.</p> <p>The Chair undertook to seek advice of the Head of Democratic Services.</p> <p>The Member proposed that it continue to be reported through the Joint Scrutiny Committee arrangements, and this proposal was seconded.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the work of the Leisure Review Working Group be reported through a Joint Scrutiny Committee arrangement.</p>	Head of Democratic Services

	<p><u>Housing Prospectus – 12th December, 2019</u></p> <p>The Team Leader Thriving Communities said this had previously been reported, and should be removed.</p> <p><u>Town Centres</u></p> <p>A Member said the outcome of the Town Centre Working Group had not been reported to Committee.</p> <p>The Chair explained that the Working Party was formed under the previous Environment, Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee. However, there was scope to re-establish the group under the remit of this Committee.</p> <p>A discussion ensued when a Member said the report scheduled for the 23rd January, 2020 should include the outcomes of the Working Group. He also suggested that the Working Group be re-established, and that the date of the report be brought forward in order to start those discussions.</p> <p>In response to a question raised by a Member regarding Trinity Chapel, the Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities confirmed that a report on proposals would be submitted to Committee in due course.</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Members suggested amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme (Option 2).</p>	Ellie Fry/ Beth McPherson
No. 11	<p><u>ENTERPRISE FRAMEWORK</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Regeneration.</p> <p>The Head of Regeneration presented the report which provided the Enterprise and Innovation Framework that had been co-developed with business professionals from the Blaenau Gwent Enterprise Board to guide the approach being taken by the Council and the BGEB to support businesses and assist in innovative interventions. The</p>	

	<p>Officer confirmed that the BGEB would be meeting later that day to consider the plan for approval which would enable progress moving forward.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern regarding the competitive index ranking for Blaenau Gwent, and stressed the importance of attracting businesses to the area, and said good practice of other LA's should be looked at. He also felt that more detail was needed in terms of business plans.</p> <p>The Officer pointed out that that the Framework provided support and a guided approach to assist the development of business plans. The Framework had been co-developed with the business community and they supported this approach.</p> <p>Following a brief discussion, a Member proposed that Option 2 be supported.</p> <p>Another Member seconded the proposal, but requested that a Special Meeting be arranged when appropriate to consider an overarching Business Plan.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the Executive Committee approve the Enterprise Framework. This would give clear support to the BG Enterprise Board and enable a proactive approach in our efforts to increase the coordination of our business support with a targeted approach based on the UKCI measurement.</p>	Head of Regeneration
No. 12	<p><u>SELF BUILD WALES</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services.</p> <p>The Team Leader Thriving Communities presented the report which informed Members of the Self Build Wales programme to be launched by the Development Bank Wales, and sought approval to engage with the Self Build Wales programme to include submission of a self-build plot, to gauge resident interest.</p> <p>The Officer informed Members that since writing the report</p>	

	<p>the Executive had requested that the Six Bells Plateau be included in the list of those sites for consideration.</p> <p>A Member said whilst he welcomed the proposal, he asked whether The Works Site was suitable due to the close proximity of other proposed developments on the site.</p> <p>The Officer explained that the site was identified for housing in the master plan for The Works site, and one of the benefits of that site was that it was 'ready to go' in terms of infrastructure. In relation to the Nantyglo School site, this may be delayed slightly due to the site investigations currently ongoing.</p> <p>A discussion ensued when the Officer clarified points raised by Members in relation to administration of the programme. In terms of the design guide, she confirmed that this would be considered in more detail in order to determine what would be appropriate for sites identified within the Borough.</p> <p>In response to a further question, the Officer confirmed that other sites throughout the Borough would be considered as the scheme progressed.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and support BGCBC involvement in the initiative and recommended preferred site (Works) to pilot the self-build initiative and gauge public interest within Blaenau Gwent for endorsement by the Executive Executive (Option 2).</p>	
No. 13	<p><u>STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN – CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION AREA</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services and the Service Manager Development & Estates.</p> <p>The Team Manager Planning Policy presented the report which considered whether Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council join the nine other neighbouring Authorities in South East Wales to prepare a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) covering the Cardiff Capital Region area.</p>	

The Officer went through the report and highlighted the key points contained therein.

A Member expressed concern regarding Blaenau Gwent's representation on the Strategic Planning Panel and the weight of the votes for each LA. He also stated that Cllr M. Moore, the Council's nominated Member for the Interim Strategic Planning Panel, should remain the Council's nominated Member for the duration of the current political administration.

The Chair concurred with the Member's comments that Cllr M. Moore should remain the Council's nominated Member.

Another Member felt this was a positive way forward for the Council in terms of the potential benefits for a relatively small investment. He also agreed that Cllr Moore should remain the nominated Member for the duration of the administration.

A discussion ensued when Members commended the report and supported Blaenau Gwent joining the nine other neighbouring Authorities.

In terms of the weighting of votes the Service Manager Development Services confirmed that many options had been extensively considered, and it was decided that it should be based on a combination of population and land area.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorsed Option 1:

- i. The Vale of Glamorgan Council as the Responsible Authority for the purposes of preparing the Strategic Development Plan for Cardiff Capital Region.
- ii. That the Responsible Authority be authorised to submit the Proposal for SDP for the Cardiff Capital Region to the Minister on behalf of the 10 Local Planning Authorities in the region.
- iii. The strategic planning area as being comprised of the 10 Local Planning Authority areas within the Cardiff

	<p>Capital Region as shown on the map at Appendix A.</p> <p>iv. That relevant Officers engage with Welsh Government in drafting the Strategic Development Plan Regulations to deliver the governance arrangements (outlined at recommendation 4 in the report) for the SDP and Strategic Planning Panel (SPP).</p> <p>v. The setting up of an Interim SPP prior to the formal establishment of the SPP. The nominated Member for this Council is Councillor Mandy Moore (Vice-Chair of Planning Committee) on the Interim Strategic Planning Panel. She has delegated authority to take initiative decisions on the preparation of the SDP (with a vote weighted in accordance with the table at Recommendation 4) and thereafter on the Strategic Planning Panel.</p> <p>vi. In the event that Member is no longer able to sit on the Interim Strategic Panel, give delegated authority to the Leader of the Council to nominate a new Member to represent the Council on the Internal Strategic Planning Panel and Strategic Planning Panel.</p> <p>vii. That a Regional SDP Officer Team be established to progress the preparation of the SDP to be appointed by representatives of the Interim Strategic Planning Panel, with appropriate human resource support from the Responsible Authority.</p>	
No. 14	<p><u>RASSAU AND TAFARNAUBACH INDUSTRIAL ESTATE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services.</p> <p>The Enterprise Facilitation Officer presented the report which provided an update on the Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate Business Improvement District proposal.</p> <p>The Officer spoke to the report and highlighted points contained.</p> <p>In response to a question raised by a Member, the Officer</p>	

	<p>confirmed the timeline detailed at section 2.7 of the report was correct.</p> <p>A discussion ensued when the Officer clarified points raised by Members regarding the ballot and the BID process.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and the Scrutiny Committee support the implementation of the BID process to the ballot stage and implement the outcome of the ballot if there was a positive outcome to support the creation of a BID, prior to approval by the Executive Committee (Option 1).</p>	
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

SUBJECT: SPECIAL CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S. HEALY (CHAIR)

Councillors M. Cook
P. Edwards
J. Hill
L. Parsons
J. Wilkins

Leader of the Council/Executive Member – Corporate Services
Councillor N. Daniels

AND: Managing Director
Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services
Chief Officer – Commercial
Chief Officer - Resources
Head of Education Transformation
Head of Governance & Partnerships
Head of Children's Services
Team Leader Performance
Organisational Development Manager –
Payroll / Health & Safety
Corporate Health & Safety Advisor
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u>	

	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Paulsen and D. Wilkshire.	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources which was presented to give Members the opportunity to consider options to allocate £9.9 million of capital funding to the capital programme for the period to 2025/26 based upon a review of current available capital resources and an assumption of capital funding from the Welsh Government for 2024/25 and 2025/26.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>A Member commented on the Cemeteries Investment Programme and said that some cemeteries, including one in his Ward, was running out of burial space and enquired if this issue could be part of the scheme. The Director of Regeneration & Community Services said that this was a programme of works and whilst financial investment in the infrastructure of the seven cemeteries would increase public satisfaction and improve the visitor experience, the issue of running out of burial space would need to be addressed through a separate piece of work.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding timelines of the 21st Century Schools Band B Programme – Secondary School Remodelling Projects. The Head of Education Transformation said that secondary schools were a priority for future investment. Due to the complexity of remodelling ‘live’ schools and to minimise disruption to pupils and provide more time to plan and prepare, remodelling would commence from 2022 in the Band B programme.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s enquiry regarding Tredegar Company Shop, the Director of Regeneration & Community Services said that work with CADW had</p>	

	<p>progressed and the funding allocation would help to address issues going forward, however, it was difficult to predict a timescale for the end of the project.</p> <p>The Leader/Executive Member – Corporate Services commented that officers had prepared a fair capital programme with Education and Household Waste receiving political and professional support from across the Council. In relation to maintenance of cemeteries a programme of works to improve the condition of cemeteries had now been agreed. He felt that this was a fundamentally balanced budget and that it would be prudent to retain a substantial contingency for allocation at a future date.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 3; namely a combination of paring down the schemes in period 1 (19/2020 to 23/2024 which was the most oversubscribed) by 20% to allow the funding to meet the requirements of an optimum number of schemes and allocating to the highest scoring projects in periods 2 and 3, leaving funding remaining in each period for allocation at a future date.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 2018/19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Performance and Democratic which presented the Council's Assessment of Performance 2018/19 for Members consideration.</p> <p>The Head of Governance & Partnerships spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein. The document picked up key points such as engagement, etc. and was a mixture of case studies and key activities. For publication the document would be formally formatted to make it more accessible and readable for the public. The info graphic pages would cover the high level performance and engagement with the community. As the Assessment of Performance was subject to external audit by the Wales Audit Office it was important to capture the progress the Council had made against each Well-being Objective in 2018/19 to ensure the Council was compliant.</p>	

	<p>A Member commented that it was an interesting and easy to read document. The Head of Governance and Partnerships said that it demonstrated the Council's commitment to the community.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the Council's Assessment of Performance 2018/19 be recommended for approval at Council and for publication before 31st October, 2019.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 01/04/2018 – 31/03/2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Organisational Development and the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor which presented details of the annual Authority's Health and Safety and Fire Safety at work performance.</p> <p>The Organisational Development Manager – Payroll / Health & Safety spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>A Member enquired if there were any recurring accidents/incidents. The Corporate Health & Safety Advisor said that there were some recurring incidents but these were followed up with recommendations for preventing further incidents. There had been a significant increase in employee accidents/incidents in the Education Department in relation to violence and aggression towards school based staff and this would require further analysis.</p> <p>A Member referred to the 112 accidents/incidents investigated and asked if this was an increase on last year. The Corporate Health & Safety Advisor said that 112 accidents/incidents was not the total number as it depended on the nature of the accident how the Health & Safety Advisors responded i.e. telephone, etc.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding listing the different types of attacks on staff, the Corporate Health & Safety Advisor explained that this information was reported to the Health & Safety Executive, however, it was not included in the Annual Report as it would be a more</p>	

	<p>complex and difficult to read document. A staff training matrix had been prepared but further training for school based staff needed to be developed. The Member reiterated that it was important that Members be aware of the different types of attacks on staff. The Corporate Health & Safety Advisor said that the inclusion of a more detailed account of accidents/incidents regarding violence and aggression towards staff would be considered for future Annual Reports.</p> <p>The Chair enquired regarding the reasons for the increase in staff absence. The Corporate Health & Safety Advisor said that a separate piece of work in relation to the attendance policy was being undertaken and his colleagues in Organisational Development would have more detail regarding absence statistics.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each Directorate reviews their health & safety management arrangements to ensure they have the capacity to comply with statutory duties; • Any strategic/operational decisions taken by services must be subject to a health & safety risk assessment within the wider impact assessments; and • The Health & Safety Section produces a bi-annual report to the Corporate Leadership Team detailing service areas of non-compliance in relation to fire risk assessments and health & safety inspections with the aim to achieve full compliance. Due to the upward trend within the Education Department it is recommended that a detailed investigation is carried out and a report is produced detailing the findings. 	Health & Safety Advisor
No. 7	<p><u>PREPARATIONS FOR EXITING THE EU</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Governance & Partnerships and the Policy Officer which was presented to provide an update on the preparatory work underway at the Council to prepare for the UK's exit from the EU.</p> <p>The Head of Governance & Partnerships spoke to the</p>	

report and highlighted the main points contained therein, which included that there was a level of uncertainty of the full implications of exiting the EU and the situation remained fluid. Members would be aware of the national picture and that the Welsh Government had published its 'no deal' Action Plan which contained 14 strategic risks. The majority of those risks were outlined in the Council's impact assessment document prepared by the Officer Brexit Core Planning Group (BCPG). The Group used a collaborative approach across services to look at specific issues such as Social Care and engaged with local businesses to determine their views, concerns and preparations for Brexit and received advice and guidance from the WLGA and the Welsh Government.

The Council was working actively with regional partners through the Wales and Gwent Local Resilience Forum to facilitate a collective approach to respond to any risks and issues associated with leaving the EU. A business engagement event had been held in March 2019 and a further event was planned for October and would consider risks relating to any recruitment and retention issues. Work was underway to support the EU settlement scheme and EU national members of the public would receive direct support through the Community Cohesion Officers.

There was uncertainty regarding the EU Investment Fund beyond the end of the current EU funding programme (December 2020). Grant funding from the Welsh Government had been secured through the WLGA for Brexit planning preparations facilitated by the Corporate Policy Officer. The Council was doing everything possible to prepare and understand issues facing the Authority and in the event that the UK did not leave the EU on the 31st October, the work already undertaken in relation to understanding supply and supporting local people could be used in other aspects of work for future issues.

The Head of Governance & Partnerships advised that the Members briefing session on exiting the EU would be held on 16th October, 2019 to enable representatives from the WLGA to attend.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be

	accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the report be noted and the Members briefing session on exiting the EU for all Council Members be held on 16 th October, 2019; and further committee reports as part of the forward work programme be noted.	
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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: **SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY**
COMMITTEE – 17TH OCTOBER, 2019

REPORT OF: **DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S.C. THOMAS (CHAIR)

Councillors: K. Rowson
D. Bevan
G.A. Davies
P. Edwards
L. Elias
K. Hayden
J. Millard
M. Moore
G. Paulsen
T. Sharrem
T. Smith

AND: Corporate Director of Social Services
Head of Children's Services
Head of Adult Services
Service Manager, Children's Services
Service Manager, SEW Adoption Service
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Day and J. Holt.	
No. 3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u>	

	There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.	
No. 4	<p><u>SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 2nd September, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 2ND SEPTEMBER, 2019</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd September, 2019 was submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>EXECUTIVE DECISION SHEET FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Executive Decision Sheet.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Executive Decision Sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>WELSH GOVERNMENT CHILDCARE OFFER – BLAENAU GWENT AND TORFAEN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Children's Services.</p> <p>The Service Manager, Children's Services presented the report which updated Members on the continued roll out of the Welsh Government's Childcare Offer in Blaenau Gwent and the first year of roll out in Torfaen County Borough Council.</p> <p>Members commended the report and felt that the Authority helped working families with childcare support and gave 3 to 4 year old pre-school children a good start.</p> <p>A Member enquired why information on parents who had</p>	

increased their working hours was not presented at a local level. The Service Manager, Children's Services said that the extra hours parents worked could be provided at a local level and parents who worked 10 or 12 hours could be informed that they would be eligible for the Childcare Offer if they increased their hours to 16.

A Member commented that more detail on grants was needed and work with the third sector should be recognised and felt that a reporting mechanism should be included in the report in relation to people going back into work. The Service Manager, Children's Services explained that the Welsh Government did not collect that information, however, a survey could be undertaken to ascertain how many people re-entered the job market as a consequence of the Childcare Offer. The Member responded that this information could be provided by Communities for Work. The Officer clarified that those numbers of people returning to work may not be as a result of the Childcare Offer.

In response to a Member's question regarding Flying Start and the Childcare Offer, the Service Manager, Children's Services clarified that Flying Start was only available in some areas and to the most vulnerable families in the community with children under 2 years of age. The Childcare Offer applied to working parents with 3 or 4 year olds. The Member enquired when the Flying Start scheme would be extended to include other areas with vulnerable parents who experienced issues around childcare. The Officer explained that Flying Start numbers were capped by Welsh Government and only 1/3 of the Borough's 0/3 year olds were included in the Flying Start scheme. The Early Years services were complex and difficult for parents to navigate and it was hoped that the Pathfinder programme would make it clearer for parents.

The Chair suggested that the Executive Member for Social Services write to the Welsh Government to express the concerns raised.

The Committee AGREED this course of action.

A Member enquired regarding who would be eligible for the Childcare Offer. The Service Manager, Children's

	<p>Services said that the Early Years Team had been working closely with Job Centre Plus regarding eligibility and were trying to market the Offer to reach as many people as possible, a video had been prepared for parents with a step by step guide on how to apply. To maximise marketing, letters and postcards would also be sent to parents advising them of the Offer.</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED, subject to the foregoing, to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that Members recommendation to Executive to improve the delivery of the Childcare Offer to both Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen residents be accepted.</p>	
No. 8	<p><u>REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP UPDATE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Social Services.</p> <p>The Director of Social Services presented the report which updated Members on the work and decisions taken over the last 6 months by the Regional Partnership Board, developed under statutory guidance Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act).</p> <p>A Member referred to delays in patients returning home from hospital. The Head of Adult Services said Homefirst provided rapid turnaround and operated in A&E departments. Working collaboratively provided accelerated assessment to safely discharge people from hospital with clear pathways for residents which made a significant difference, however, in terms of discharge from hospitals the five local authorities operated in different ways. The Authority was operating a pilot project on behalf of other local authorities which placed dedicated staff on hospital wards to directly action any reasons for delay. Staff had reported that this pilot project was successful.</p> <p>Another Member raised concerns regarding vacancies in nursing homes and felt that some patient's families felt pressurised into choosing a nursing home quickly. The Head of Adult Services said that there was a number of Care Homes with vacancies, Officers from the Department contacted Care Homes directly for weekly updates which</p>	

identified vacancies within their Care Home and Social Workers based in hospital wards could help with this information. The Health Board had a clear discharge policy that families identify three Care Home placements, one must have a vacancy and expected families to be proactive in identifying these placements.

The Head of Adult Services agreed to speak with the Member outside of the meeting regarding individual cases.

The Corporate Director of Social Services commented that the Living Independently Strategy had been the Authority's ethos for many years. The best route for patients was to return home, however, long term decisions would need to be made in terms of Care Home placements.

Councillor Jonathan Millard left the meeting at this juncture.

The Head of Adult Services advised Members of the current data in relation to Care Home vacancies i.e. 12 vacancies in Care Homes across the Borough, 21 vacancies in dementia homes and 7 in EMI nursing homes.

In response to a Member enquiry regarding the new Grange Hospital, the Director of Social Services said that some discussion had taken place but there was a lack of information available regarding what services would be provided at the hospital but colleagues from the Regional Partnership Board felt that information on services at the new facility would be forthcoming. There was concern regarding travel links to the new hospital, i.e. people may need to take up to three buses to attend the hospital but this would be a concern across Gwent.

The Member said that he had received correspondence regarding the travel links to the hospital which had indicated improvements to Cwmbran Railway Station but the Member had concerns as this was a different line.

In relation to Mental Health services a Member commented that he welcomed the progress made with the Iceberg model.

	<p>With regard to Transformation funding the Director of Social Services said that the Department was looking at different models and Blaenau Gwent was at the forefront and had the ability to implement them. Some funding was only confirmed at a late stage which made it difficult to implement some of the large schemes within the timescale and these concerns had been fed back to the Welsh Government. As with many projects there was some slippage and the Department had put in some slippage bids.</p> <p>Another Member commented that he welcomed the investment for the new hospital, however, some parts of the Borough were semi rural and it was imperative that good transport links to the new hospital from Blaenau Gwent and neighbouring authorities were implemented.</p> <p>In response to a Member's enquiry regarding recruitment issues, the Director said that in some instances staff were seconded into posts but this had an impact on the service they left. Some staff were reluctant to leave existing posts for a short term funded post and most people wanted a permanent role even those in temporary positions.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the decisions of the Regional Partnership Board be supported.</p>	
<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>INTEGRATED CARE FUND UPDATE 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Adult Services.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services presented the report which provided an overview for Members on the current allocation of funding for projects monitored by Adult Services and funded via the Welsh Government Integrated Care Fund (ICF) as at September 2019.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding the impact for citizens if funding was withdrawn. The Head of Adult Services said that if funding was removed the integrated care bed facility, which allowed patients to leave hospital quickly, would be withdrawn and would lead to delays in people leaving hospital while their homes were being adapted. A</p>	

	<p>Compassionate Communities Members briefing session was being arranged to look at how to better support people and GP's so that people were not socially isolated. If funding was withdrawn this would impact on the progress made and preventative services would cease.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the evidence provided to support the way in which available ICF grant funding is being accessed to support the strategic priorities of the Council, and the service to continue to provide progress updates to the Scrutiny Committee in 2020/21 as outlined in the report be endorsed.</p>	
No. 10	<p><u>NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Social Services and the Service Manager SEWAS.</p> <p>The Service Manager SEWAS presented the report on the performance of the South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) and the National Adoption Service (NAS) for 2018/19.</p> <p>In relation to demand for adoptive placements and adopter recruitment a Member commented that the recruitment campaign was extremely good and felt that roundabouts and advertising boards could be utilised for recruitment purposes more effectively.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services said that 70 children were placed with adoptive parents and confirmed that the number of adopters had fallen.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding the delay with children receiving their life journey materials. The Service Manager SEWAS said that a new Co-ordinator had been appointed to help improve the timescales for receipt of the life journey materials with Welsh Government investment funding used to improve performance going forward.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be</p>	

	<p>accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the information as reported be accepted.</p> <p>Councillor Greg Paulsen left the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
No. 11	<p><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 28TH NOVEMBER, 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Chair requested a report on Community Meals Service be included in the Forward Work Programme. The Director of Social Services said that discussions were taking place with the Environment Department to look at a model to increase the number of community meals and would present a report to this Committee at a later date.</p> <p>The Chair raised concerns regarding the Annual National Performance Information contained in the Information Pack and requested that a joint scrutiny meeting be held to consider the item.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED this course of action.</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 28th November, 2019 be approved.</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: **EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 25TH OCTOBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: **DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR H. TROLLOPE (CHAIR)

Councillors: J. Millard
D. Bevan
M. Cook
L. Elias
W. Hodgins
C. Meredith
J.C. Morgan
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Summers
S. Thomas

Co-opted Members

T. Baxter
A. Williams

AND: Corporate Director of Education
Head of Education Transformation
Strategic Education Improvement Manager
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

ALSO: Ed Pryce, Assistant Director - Strategy and Policy (EAS)
Ms C. Leaves, Headteacher Tredegar
Comprehensive School
Mr L. Perrett, Tredegar Comprehensive School

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<u>ANNOUNCEMENTS</u>	
	The Director of Education announced the appointment of Meryl Echeverry as the new Head of Abertillery Learning	

	<p>Community.</p> <p>Councillor Wayne Hodgins congratulated Aspire Blaenau Gwent on achieving the Large Employer of the Year Award at the Apprenticeship Cymru Awards 2019.</p> <p>The Chair and Scrutiny Members extended their congratulations and requested that appropriate letters be forwarded.</p>	Scrutiny Officer
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G.A. Davies, J. Holt and K. Pritchard.</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 11th September, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 11TH SEPTEMBER, 2019</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 11th September, 2019 was submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 6	<u>EXECUTIVE DECISION SHEET FOR THE EDUCATION</u>	

	<p><u>& LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Executive Decision Sheet.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Executive Decision Sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>SCHOOL PERFORMANCE: END OF FOUNDATION PHASE, KEY STAGE 2, KEY STAGE 3 , KEY STAGE 4 (PROVISIONAL)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Strategic Education Improvement Manager which was presented to provide Members with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an update on the agreed reporting arrangements in light of the accountability reforms that are occurring at a national level; and • performance monitoring information in line with agreed reporting arrangements for statutory, end of key stage teacher assessment for 2018/19 for end of foundation Phase, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (provisional) at local Authority level and hence opportunity to provide feedback on processes to secure ongoing improvement. <p>The EAS representative presented the report and detailed the main points contained therein. The format of the report had been agreed by the five regional Directors of Education in the South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) and the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to ensure consistency of reporting and was in line with the national reform agenda.</p> <p>A Member raised concerns around the new reporting arrangements. The EAS representative said that any feedback from Members on what information was required would be considered for potential inclusion in reporting.</p> <p>With regard to individual pupil performance data, the Director of Education said that with the removal of the high stakes accountability, the broader school performance could be scrutinised as this would not involve scrutiny of individual pupil performance data. There would be other arenas where pupil performance discussions on continual</p>	

	<p>improvement could take place, e.g. Member briefing sessions.</p> <p>A Member commented that the regional overview of performance of the new interim measures was easy to understand and gave Members relevant information.</p> <p>The EAS representative informed Members that in paragraph 6.2.3 – all headline measures were interim.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s question regarding individual School Development Plans, the Director of Education said that schools would be addressing the data in their individual Development Plans and would focus on improving the right things. A professional panel would look at the School Development Plans to ensure they were tailored and bespoke to the individual school.</p> <p>A Member commented that in relation to the arrangements that would remain and the documents produced for the Governing bodies, the School Development Plans hold schools to account on Members behalf. Schools were undergoing major changes and needed to re-imagine how education was being delivered. Feedback had been received from staff who were excited about the changes with schools moving in the right direction. One school in particular needed extra support, the Member felt that there needed to be involvement from Executive and Scrutiny Members on reinventing education in Blaenau Gwent with schools and Governing bodies also playing their part.</p> <p>The Director of Education commented on strengthening the role of the Governing body, performance reporting and individual data that was available to Members.</p> <p>The EAS representative pointed out that primary school data training for Governors would be available.</p> <p>A Member referred to Governors and the accountability reforms and felt that cluster training to provide adequate challenge should be arranged. The EAS representative said that if schools required cluster training this could be provided on request.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding performance data for home</p>	
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educated pupils. The Director of Education explained the limitations to the extent that this data could be assured, home educated pupils sat qualifications but the number of home visits were limited and further work needed to be undertaken in this area.

A Member commented that pupils needed a steady environment to encourage learning for their future and not continual change. He felt that some skills were only available in colleges and not in schools.

The EAS representative referred to the national picture and the policy change decision by the Welsh Government. There had been concerns regarding the quality of BTec qualifications and stressed the most able learners would continue on. Only the way schools were supported would change to support continual development. There was one Science Advisor in place and the strongest science departments would support other schools.

The Director of Education commented that over the next 10 years £100m from the Welsh Government had been promised for Science and technology. The role of the Member Strategic Board was to make links closer to schools to better support youngsters and felt encouraged regarding the work to improve sciences.

A Member commented that it was pleasing to note the level of progress made by pupils and enquired how these rates of performance could be measured and presented to scrutiny. The Director of Education said that there was a National Register of Elected Home Educated pupils which contained the reasons why parents had selected home education.

The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that Members scrutinised the revised policy and contributed to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Councillors Wayne Hodgins, Clive Meredith, Bob Summers and Martin Cook left the meeting at this juncture.

<p>No. 8</p>	<p><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 6TH NOVEMBER AND 4TH DECEMBER, 2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Chair raised concerns regarding the Annual National Performance Information contained in the Information Pack and requested that a Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting be held to consider the item.</p> <p>A Member suggested that reports on the Information Packs be included on the web site in future. The Director of Education said that it was important that Information Pack reports be included on the web site for external Regulators to view the information.</p> <p>Another Member suggested that the Executive Member for Education and EAS representatives be invited to the next meeting to secure ongoing improvement and continue to move Education forward.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED this course of action.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding membership of sub groups, the Strategic Education Improvement Manager said that memberships of sub groups could be updated to ensure equal representation.</p> <p>A Member requested a report on literacy and numeracy figures. The Director of Education said that as part of the accountability reform national test scores data was not available.</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meetings on 6th November and 4th December, 2019 be approved.</p>	

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL EDUCATION & LEARNING SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 6TH NOVEMBER, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR H. TROLLOPE (CHAIR)

Councillors: J. Millard
D. Bevan
M. Cook
L. Elias
W. Hodgins
C. Meredith
J.C. Morgan
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Summers
S. Thomas

Co-opted Members

T. Baxter
A. Williams

Executive Member - Education

Councillor J. Collins

AND: Corporate Director of Education
Head of Education Transformation
Service Manager Inclusion
Strategic Education Improvement Manager
Education Transformation Manager
Youth Services Manager
Service Manager Performance & Democratic / Advisor

ALSO: EAS Representatives
Ed Pryce, Assistant Director - Strategy & Policy
Geraint Willington, Director – Resource, Business and
Governance

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p><u>BEREAVEMENT</u></p> <p>It was with sadness that the Chair informed Members of the death of Phil Hackling a former Blaenau Gwent employee within the Housing Service. Members stood and observed a one minute silence as a mark of respect.</p>	
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G.A. Davies and J. Holt.</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT SERVICES (EAS) VALUE FOR MONEY REPORT, FINANCIAL YEAR 2018/19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Education and the Director – Resources, Business and Governance (EAS) who presented the report which described the outcomes of an external report on the value for money (VfM) of the Regional Service in 2018/19.</p> <p>A Member referred to the external consultants conclusion and felt that assurances were needed that to achieve the desired educational outcomes a collective effort from Executive and Scrutiny Members, the EAS and Schools was needed to drive further improvements. The responsibility and accountability rested with everyone. The Executive Member for Education offered a level of assurance and confirmed that a collective approach would be used.</p> <p>The Director of Education gave examples of performance improvements such as language and literature for 7 year</p>	

olds, A* grades and level 6 English had improved. Working jointly in an holistic way had demonstrated clear improvements with the Directorates Service Plan. There was a range of services committed to joint working and raising pupil ambitions.

A Member enquired if the emerging picture of Blaenau Gwent was mirrored across the whole EAS region and felt that concerns needed to be addressed. The Director of Education said regular monthly meetings were held and any emerging concerns could be raised. Discussions also included areas that needed additional challenge to schools. Wider group meetings were held every half term between EAS officers, Inclusion officers, Youth Service, Legal officers and officers from Organisational Development, all shared relevant information to provide additional support where needed and hold the EAS to account.

The EAS representative commented that communication and information was shared at half termly meetings between the five regions with a view to a shared strategy and shared knowledge of individual schools to ensure that appropriate support and challenge had been provided to secure the necessary pace of improvement. The meetings were recorded and actions reviewed at the next meeting.

The Member referred to the differences in school performance. The Director of Education said that the Governor structure included the five local authorities Directors of Education to consider and challenge EAS inspection reports.

In response to a Member's question regarding the 2% ISB being put in the general reserve, the Executive Member for Education advised that this would be part of the wider discussion on the Council budget.

A Member commented that he welcomed the report but expressed concerns regarding educational outcomes in the EAS regions and enquired regarding the proportion of Challenge Advisors appointed to primary and secondary schools and the Mentor support for secondary schools and requested a breakdown of these figures. The EAS representative said

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there was a commitment to capacity building through Mentor support demonstrated by the spending of some £167,000 to fund the programme; • there was an acknowledgment of secondary school performance. • National categorisation - the EAS was accurate and robust in their categorisation with five local authorities support. • Challenge Advisors – changes within secondary schools had been owing to national changes as well as strategic decisions. • Significant strength in leadership in primary schools. <p>A Member requested percentages and numbers of Challenge Advisers supporting primary and secondary schools. The EAS representative would provide the numbers requested.</p> <p>A Member raised concerns around the ISB budget for schools, PDG and FSM had dropped and felt that the Executive Member needed to be aware of this issue. A Member commented that these issues would be considered at a future budget meeting.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that Members provided feedback thereby engaged in self-evaluation processes prior to recommending for approval by the Executive.</p>	EAS representative
No. 5	<p><u>YOUTH SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018-2019</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Youth Services Manager.</p> <p>The Youth Services Manager presented the report which provided an update on the performance of the Youth Service and for Members to scrutinise the impact of the service.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding the potential end of European funding, the Youth Services Manager said that there was a potential risk that European funding would cease, however, part of her role was to look at opportunities</p>	

	<p>and explore funding routes such as the Big Lottery and City Deal.</p> <p>A Member raised concerns regarding duplication of some work. The Youth Services Manager responded that the Youth Support grant received from the Welsh Government enabled the service to appoint additional youth workers to support young people who need additional support with their emotional and mental health. The Manager emphasised that it was about understanding and recognising how youth working can contribute to improving mental health in young people and not about duplication of work. A Youth Homelessness Co-ordinator had been appointed to look on a local level what issues were happening in Blaenau Gwent with the focus on those young people at risk of experiencing homelessness and mental health.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding value for money in relation to the Duke of Edinburgh project, the Youth Services Manager said that Blaenau Gwent held the licence for groups such as local football and rugby teams to set up their own Duke of Edinburgh project, however, schools held their own licence.</p> <p>A Member enquired regarding the maximum age of young people the Youth Service supported. The Youth Services Manager said that the Youth Service co-ordinated the 11-18 Counselling Service. There was a legal requirement to support young people up to the age of 25 and monies had been ring-fenced to meet this duty.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely to accept the report as provided.</p> <p>Councillor Steve Thomas left the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>MANAGEMENT OF PUPIL PLACES AND THE SCHOOL ESTATE 2018/19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Education Transformation Manager.</p>	

<p>The Education Transformation Manager presented the report which provided Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the management of pupil places focussing on both processes and outcomes.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding capacity issues and pupil projections in special schools, the Education Transformation Manager said that the Inclusion team would look at capacity in special schools re pupil projections. There had been significant demand for places at the special school and work was being undertaken on the consultation document for expansion to accommodate pupil numbers.</p> <p>The Member requested that information regarding the special school be added to future reports for Members consideration. The Education Transformation Manager said a report would be included in the forward work programme and information on the special school would be included in future reporting.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED this course of action.</p> <p>Another Member enquired how the Education Transformation team would address surplus places. The Education Transformation Manager said that work on the reduction of surplus places action plan was being developed for schools and the team would look at projected pupil numbers on current trends, explore teaching arrangements, look at pupil population figures in future years and introduce short term measures to monitor pupil numbers.</p> <p>The Education team work closely with schools to monitor capacity in line with projections and focused on what was needed for that particular school. The team would look at self-help for schools to manage their spaces more efficiently.</p> <p>A Member enquired if the team received information from the Planning Department in relation to new residential developments. The Education Transformation Manager said that the team looked at current approved developments and projected proposals and would</p>	<p>Education Transformation Manager</p>
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	<p>incorporate approved developments into the team's projections.</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2, namely that the Scrutiny Committee considered the report and provided comments relating to improvements that can be made to the current monitoring processes.</p>	
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Agenda Item 26

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 19.11.2019

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 18.11.2019

Committee:

Council

Date of Meeting:

12th December, 2019

Report Subject:

Treasury Management Mid-Year Review Report - 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor N. Daniels, Leader of the Council/Executive Member - Corporate Services

Report Submitted by:

Rhian Hayden, Chief Officer Resources

Report Written by:

Joanne Watts, Principal Accountant

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	29.10.19				19.11.19		12.12.19	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to give Members the opportunity to consider the Treasury Management activities carried out by the Authority during the first half of the 2019/20 financial year.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report provides a summary of the Treasury Management activities carried out under delegated powers by the Chief Officer Resources in the period 1st April to 30th September 2019 in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

- 2.2 Treasury Management can be defined as:

“The management of the local authority’s cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. ”

- 2.3 The primary requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice are currently as follows:

- a. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council’s treasury management activities.

- b. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
 - c. Receipt by the Council of an annual Treasury Management Strategy report (including the annual investment strategy report) for the year ahead, a mid-year review and an annual review report of the previous year.
 - d. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring Treasury Management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions, which in this Council is now the Chief Officer Resources.
 - e. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of Treasury Management strategy and policies to a specific named body which in this Council is the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.4 This report is therefore presented to Council to provide a mid-year review report (attached as Appendix 1) of the Treasury Management activities for the 2019/2020 financial year, in accordance with (c) above

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 Option 1 (preferred option)

Members note the activity undertaken during the first half of the 2019/2020 financial year and accept the record of performance and compliance achieved during the first half of the 2019/20 financial year.

3.2 Option 2

Members note the activity undertaken during the first half of the 2019/2020 financial year and do not accept the record of performance and compliance achieved during the first half of the 2019/2020 financial year.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

- 4.1 The report is written under legislation the Local Government Act 2003), Welsh Government guidance and CIPFA codes of practice.
- 4.2 This report also supports the Corporate Plan Priority of being an efficient Council.

5. Implications Against Each Option

Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

- 5.1.1 The Authority has complied with the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 and in doing so has strived for effective risk management and control, whilst at the same time pursuing best value as far as possible.
- 5.1.2 The Authority has effectively managed credit risk throughout the period, so ensuring that it has not been subjected to any financial loss as a result of the credit crisis.
- 5.1.3 The Authority has maximised investment returns as far as is possible whilst managing the associated risk and minimised borrowing costs throughout the period.
- 5.1.4 Investment returns of £35k have been achieved with an average interest rate of 0.55%. This is slightly below the benchmark rate of 0.57% but reflects the fact that the Authority can no longer invest in previous counterparties that paid higher rates, due to credit rating reductions. However, as the annual estimated investment interest was £11,000, it can be seen that this has been exceeded at the half year position.
- 5.1.5 An average interest rate of 0.85% has been paid on temporary borrowings against a benchmark of 1.00%, amounting to £259,000. The estimate for interest paid on short term borrowing is £428,000 for a full year.
- 5.1.6 A summary of the Treasury Management activities for the period are shown in the table below:

	Value	Interest	Average Interest Rate
	£m	£	%
Short Term Loans raised	118	259,000	0.85%
Short Term Investments made	170	35,000	0.55%
Long Term debt outstanding 30/9/18	108,700		3.89%
Short Term debt outstanding 30/9/18	51,650		0.85%

5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

- 5.2.1 The main risk in relation to Treasury Management is that of credit risk and protecting the Authority's cash. This is effectively managed through the Authority's risk averse Treasury Management policy that seeks to protect the capital sum rather than maximise investment returns.
- 5.2.2 In addition on 9 October 2019 the Treasury and PWLB announced an increase in the margin over gilt yields of 1% on top of the current margin of 1.1% which this authority has paid prior to this date for new borrowing from the PWLB. There was no prior warning that this would happen and it now means that every local authority has to fundamentally reassess how to finance their external borrowing needs and the financial viability of capital projects in their capital programme due to this unexpected increase in the cost of borrowing. Representations are going to be made to HM Treasury to suggest that areas of capital expenditure that the Government are keen to see move forward e.g. housing, should not be subject to such a large increase in borrowing.
- 5.2.3 Whereas this authority has in part previously relied on the PWLB as its source of funding, it now has to fundamentally reconsider alternative sources of borrowing. At the current time, this is a developmental area as this event has also taken the financial services industry by surprise. We are expecting that various financial institutions will enter the market or make products available to local authorities. Members will be updated as this area evolves.
- 5.2.4 It is also possible that the Municipal Bond Agency will be offering loans to local authorities in the future. This Authority may make use of this new source of borrowing as and when appropriate.

5.3 *Legal*

- 5.3.1 The report is written under legislation (the Local Government Act 2003), Welsh Government guidance and CIPFA codes of practice.

5.4 *Human Resources*

- 5.4.1 There are no direct staffing implications to report. Staff directly involved with Treasury Management activities will continue to monitor the credit situation on a daily basis, and will notify the Chief Officer Resources accordingly. Any consequential changes required to be made to the borrowings or investment strategy as a result will be reported to the Council.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

- 6.1.1 During the first half of the 2019/2020 financial year, due to the advantageous interest rates, the Authority entered into long term debt arrangements of £13m with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)/from other public

authorities. These arrangements were made either to replace maturing loans or to finance capital expenditure.

6.1.2 Despite this financial climate, the Authority has performed well in terms of its Treasury Management activities during the first half of the year, as detailed in the report and summarised below:

- a. Investment returns of £35000 have been achieved with an average interest rate of 0.55%. This is below the benchmark rate of 0.57% but reflects the fact that the Authority cannot invest in counterparties that pay higher rates, due to credit rating reductions. This is however in line with the Authority's risk averse policy whereby the security of the capital sum is the number one priority at the expense of competitive investment returns.
- b. An average interest rate of 0.85% has been paid on temporary borrowings against a benchmark of 1.00%, so minimising as far as possible the interest payable by the Authority and is evidence of good performance.
- c. All of the Treasury limits and Treasury Management prudential indicators set for the financial year have been complied with during the year.
- d. No institutions in which investments were made during the period had any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full, so the Authority has not been exposed to any financial loss as a result of the difficult economic climate.

6.2 *Expected outcome for the public*

6.2.1 The Council's Treasury Management activities support delivery of services to the public.

6.3 *Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)*

6.3.1 Members of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee and full Council are involved in developing and monitoring compliance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

6.4 *Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)*

n/a

6.5 *Preventative focus*

6.5.1 The Authority's Treasury Management policy prioritises protecting the capital sum rather than achieving higher interest returns

6.6 *Collaboration / partnership working*

n/a

6.7 *Integration(across service areas)*

n/a

- 6.8 *EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)*
n/a

7. Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1 As the nominated Committee, Council will receive three reports in every annual cycle:-
- A Treasury Management Policy report prior to the start of every financial year
 - A mid-year progress report on Treasury Management activity
 - An end of year out turn report on Treasury Management activity.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1*
- *Appendix A*
- *Appendix B*

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TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REVIEW REPORT 2019/20

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2009 was adopted by this Council in February 2010 and this Council fully complies with its requirements. The Code was revised in 2011 and further revised in 2017.

The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council's treasury management activities.
2. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the Council of an annual treasury management strategy report (including the annual investment strategy report) for the year ahead, a mid year review and an annual review report of the previous year.
4. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions, which in this Council is the Chief Officer Resources.
5. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specified named body which in this Council is the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee.

Treasury management in this context is defined as:

"The management of the local authority's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. "

The purpose of this report is to meet one of the above requirements of the CIPFA Code, namely the mid-year review report of treasury management activities, for the financial year 2019/20.

2. THIS TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REVIEW REPORT COVERS

- ❖ Economic Background during the period
- ❖ Interest Rate Forecast
- ❖ Treasury Advisors
- ❖ The Council's treasury position as at 30 September 2019;
- ❖ Borrowing and investment rates for the first half of 2019/20;
- ❖ Mid-year review of the borrowing strategy 2019/20;
- ❖ Borrowing outturn for the first half of 2019/20;
- ❖ Debt rescheduling for the first half of 2019/20;

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- ❖ Compliance with treasury limits and Prudential Indicators for the first half of 2019/20;
- ❖ Mid-year review of the investment strategy for 2019/20;
- ❖ Investment outturn for the first half of 2019/20;
- ❖ Other treasury management issues.

3. ECONOMIC BACKGROUND DURING PERIOD

The first half of 2019/20 has seen UK **economic growth** fall as Brexit uncertainty took a toll. In its Inflation Report of 1 August, the Bank of England was notably downbeat about the outlook for both the UK and major world economies. The MPC meeting of 19 September reemphasised their concern about the downturn in world growth and also expressed concern that prolonged Brexit uncertainty would contribute to a build-up of spare capacity in the UK economy, especially in the context of a downturn in world growth. This mirrored investor concerns around the world which are now expecting a significant downturn or possibly even a recession in some major developed economies. It was therefore no surprise that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) left Bank Rate unchanged at 0.75% throughout 2019, so far, and is expected to hold off on changes until there is some clarity on what is going to happen over Brexit. However, it is also worth noting that the new Prime Minister is making some significant promises on various spending commitments and a relaxation in the austerity programme. This will provide some support to the economy and, conversely, take some pressure off the MPC to cut Bank Rate to support growth.

As for **inflation** itself, CPI has been hovering around the Bank of England's target of 2% during 2019, but fell to 1.7% in August. It is likely to remain close to 2% over the next two years and so it does not pose any immediate concern to the MPC at the current time. However, if there was a no deal Brexit, inflation could rise towards 4%, primarily as a result of imported inflation on the back of a weakening pound.

With regard to the **labour market** employment continued to rise, but at only a muted rate of 31,000 in the three months to July after having risen by no less than 115,000 in quarter 2 itself: the latter figure, in particular, suggests that firms are preparing to expand output and suggests there could be a return to positive growth in quarter 3. Job vacancies fell for a seventh consecutive month after having previously hit record levels. However, with unemployment continuing to fall, this month by 11,000, employers will still be having difficulty filling job vacancies with suitable staff. It was therefore unsurprising that wage inflation picked up to a high point of 3.9% in June before easing back slightly to 3.8% in July, (3 month average regular pay, excluding bonuses). This meant that in real terms, (i.e. wage rates higher than CPI inflation), earnings grew by about 2.1%. As the UK economy is very much services sector driven, an increase in household spending power is likely to feed through into providing some support to the overall rate of economic growth in the coming months.

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In the **political arena**, if there is a general election soon, this could result in a potential loosening of monetary policy and therefore medium to longer dated gilt yields could rise on the expectation of a weak pound and concerns around inflation picking up although, conversely, a weak international backdrop could provide further support for low yielding government bonds and gilts.

4. INTEREST RATE FORECASTS

The Council's treasury advisor, Link Asset Services, has provided the following forecast:

Link Asset Services Interest Rate View										
	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22
Bank Rate View	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25
3 Month LIBID	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.20
6 Month LIBID	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40
12 Month LIBID	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.30	1.40	1.50	1.60
5yr PWLB Rate	2.30	2.50	2.60	2.70	2.70	2.80	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.10
10yr PWLB Rate	2.60	2.80	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.30	3.40
25yr PWLB Rate	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60	3.70	3.70	3.80	3.90	4.00	4.00
50yr PWLB Rate	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60	3.60	3.70	3.80	3.90	3.90

The above forecasts have been based on an assumption that there is some sort of muddle through to an agreed deal on Brexit at some point in time. Given the current level of uncertainties, this is a huge assumption and so forecasts may need to be materially reassessed in the light of events over the next few weeks or months.

It has been little surprise that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has left Bank Rate unchanged at 0.75% so far in 2019 due to the ongoing uncertainty over Brexit. In its meeting on 1 August, the MPC became more dovish as it was more concerned about the outlook for both the global and domestic economies. That's shown in the policy statement, based on an assumption that there is an agreed deal on Brexit, where the suggestion that rates would need to rise at a "gradual pace and to a limited extent" is now also conditional on "some recovery in global growth". Brexit uncertainty has had a dampening effect on UK GDP growth in 2019, especially around mid-year. If there were a no deal Brexit, then it is likely that there will be a cut or cuts in Bank Rate to help support economic growth. The September MPC meeting sounded even more concern about world growth and the effect that prolonged Brexit uncertainty is likely to have on growth.

The balance of risks to the UK

- The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is probably to the downside due to the weight of all the uncertainties over Brexit, as well as a softening global economic picture.
- The balance of risks to increases in Bank Rate and shorter term PWLB rates are broadly similarly to the downside.

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Downside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates currently include:

- **Brexit** – if it were to cause significant economic disruption and a major downturn in the rate of growth.
- **Bank of England** takes action too quickly, or too far, over the next three years to raise Bank Rate and causes UK economic growth, and increases in inflation, to be weaker than we currently anticipate.
- A resurgence of the **Eurozone sovereign debt crisis**. In 2018, Italy was a major concern due to having a populist coalition government which made a lot of anti-austerity and anti-EU noise. However, in September 2019 there was a major change in the coalition governing Italy which has brought to power a much more EU friendly government; this has eased the pressure on Italian bonds. Only time will tell whether this new unlikely alliance of two very different parties will endure.
- Weak capitalisation of some **European banks**, particularly Italian banks.
- **German minority government**. In the German general election of September 2017, Angela Merkel's CDU party was left in a vulnerable minority position dependent on the fractious support of the SPD party, as a result of the rise in popularity of the anti-immigration AfD party. Then in October 2018, the results of the Bavarian and Hesse state elections radically undermined the SPD party and showed a sharp fall in support for the CDU. As a result, the SPD had a major internal debate as to whether it could continue to support a coalition that is so damaging to its electoral popularity. After the result of the Hesse state election, Angela Merkel announced that she would not stand for re-election as CDU party leader at her party's convention in December 2018. However, this makes little practical difference as she has continued as Chancellor, though more recently concerns have arisen over her health.
- **Other minority EU governments**. Austria, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands and Belgium all have vulnerable minority governments dependent on coalitions which could prove fragile.
- **Italy, Austria, the Czech Republic and Hungary** now form a strongly anti-immigration bloc within the EU. There has also been rising anti-immigration sentiment in Germany and France.
- There are concerns around the level of **US corporate debt** which has swollen massively during the period of low borrowing rates in order to finance mergers and acquisitions. This has resulted in the debt of many large corporations being downgraded to a BBB credit rating, close to junk status.
- **Geopolitical risks**, for example in North Korea, but also in Europe and the Middle East, which could lead to increasing safe haven flows.

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Upside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates

- **Brexit** – if agreement was reached all round that removed all threats of economic and political disruption between the EU and the UK.
- The **Bank of England is too slow** in its pace and strength of increases in Bank Rate and, therefore, allows inflationary pressures to build up too strongly within the UK economy, which then necessitates a later rapid series of increases in Bank Rate faster than we currently expect.
- **UK inflation**, whether domestically generated or imported, returning to sustained significantly higher levels causing an increase in the inflation premium inherent to gilt yields.

5. TREASURY ADVISORS

The Council uses external treasury management advisors. The Council recognises that responsibility for Treasury Management decisions remains with the Authority at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subjected to regular review.

The Council retendered for the provision of Treasury Management advisory services as a result of the existing contract expiring on 30th April 2017. This resulted in the appointment of Link Asset Services for a period of two years until 20th April 2019, with an option to extend for a further two years, this option has been exercised by the Chief Officer Resources and Link have been appointed to the 30th April 2021.

6. TREASURY POSITION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Council's debt and investment position at the beginning of the year and the end of the half year was as follows:

This illustrates that the total debt outstanding as at 30 September 2019 was £160.3 million, comprising of long term debt of £108.7 million and short term debt of £51.6 million.

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	31March 2019 Principal	Average Rate/ Return	30Sept 2019 Principal	Average Rate/ Return	Increase/ (Decrease) in Borrowing
	<u>£000</u>		<u>£000</u>		<u>£000</u>
Fixed Rate Funding:					
- PWLB	72,700	4.64%	82,700	4.72%	10,000
- Market Loans	19,000	2.05%	22,000	0.69%	3,000
Variable Rate Funding:					
- Market (LOBO *)	4,000	4.50%	4,000	4.50%	0
Total Long Term Debt	95,700	4.19%	108,700	3.89%	13,000
Short Term Loans(<365 days)	61,649	0.90%	51,649	0.85%	(10,000)
Total Debt	157,349	2.85%	160,349		3,000
Investments:					
- Short Term	4,000		4,000		
Total Investments	4,000		4,000		

* LOBO – Lenders Option Borrowers Option. This loan has a fixed rate for the first two years of 3.85%. The remaining period of the loan (which we are now in) has a rate of 4.5%, but the lender can increase this rate at six month intervals.

7. BORROWING AND INVESTMENT RATES IN 2019/20

The following table displays a selection of interest rates prevailing as at 1st April 2019 and 30th September 2019.

	1/4/2019	30/09/2019
Bank Base Rate	0.75%	0.75%
7 day LIBID	0.57%	0.57%
PWLB 10 year Maturity	2.05%	1.47% *
PWLB 15 year maturity	2.37%	1.78% *
PWLB 25 year maturity	2.60%	2.03% *

***Please note – HMR Treasury on the 9th October added a 1% margin to these rates**

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8. MID YEAR REVIEW OF THE BORROWING STRATEGY FOR 2019/20

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2019/20 was approved by Council in March 2019. The Borrowing Strategy adopted as part of this was as follows:

To utilise the Authority's overdraft facility:

To fund unexpected daily cash deficits;

To fund temporary cash shortfalls where there are no other sources of funding available within the marketplace.

To borrow over the short term:

To fund temporary cash shortfalls;

To maintain a suitably balanced maturity profile; to make short term savings required in order to meet budgetary constraints;

In anticipation of securing longer term loans at more attractive rates.

To borrow over the long term:

To reduce the Authority's average cost of borrowing;

To maintain a stable, longer term portfolio;

To maximise the potential for future debt rescheduling.

If appropriate to avoid all new external borrowing:

To maximise savings in the short term;

To run down temporary investment levels;

To minimise exposure to interest rate and credit risk.

Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer term stability of the debt portfolio. With short term interest rates generally much lower than long term rates, it can be cost effective in the short term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short term loans instead.

However, due to uncertainty surrounding Brexit and the PWLB rates reducing to record lows, the Authority has been able to borrow in recent months into the longer term at affordable rates. This has allowed the Authority to be able to reduce long term borrowing costs and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of short term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for securing advantageous longer term rates when the opportunity arises.

Borrowings undertaken during the period (see section 9 below) have been done so in accordance with this strategy and in the current economic climate it is considered that the approved strategy is still fit for purpose and therefore no revisions are proposed.

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9. BORROWING OUTTURN FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 2019/20

Long Term Borrowing

Definition

Long term borrowing relates to debt taken out for a period of greater than one year. It is taken out for periods of 1 year up to 50 years. This borrowing is required to finance capital expenditure undertaken in the year that is funded through:

- Borrowing approvals from Welsh Government, known as un-hypothecated supported borrowing (USB), for which revenue support for the borrowing costs is provided through the revenue support grant;
- Prudential borrowing, for which borrowing costs are funded through revenue savings.

Total outstanding as at 30th September 2019

The total long term debt outstanding as at 30th September 2019 was £108.7 million. This is made up of debt taken from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), from other local authorities (through the market place), and from the market (LOBO). This debt is due to be repaid within the following years:

Maturing Within	£000s
1YR	11,269
1-2YRS	8,665
2-3YRS	5,697
3-4YRS	7,919
4-5YRS	2,764
5-6YRS	14,051
6-10YRS	17,722
10-15YRS	13,555
15+ YRS	27,054
Total	108,700

New borrowings for the First Half of 2019/20

Due to advantageous interest rates, during the first half of 2019/20, the Authority entered into long term borrowing of £ 13 million.

Short Term Borrowing

Definition

Short term borrowing relates to debt taken out for a period of less than one year i.e. it will all be fully repaid within a year. These short term loans are taken out to manage the Authority's short term cash flow i.e. to fund deficits in cash flow on a daily basis pending receipt of income from grants or other sources, or pending the taking out of longer term debt to fund capital expenditure whilst we wait for advantageous longer term borrowing opportunities. Current short term borrowing rates are very low and are forecast to stay at these levels for the medium term. The Authority is therefore taking advantage of such rates and is borrowing short term to fund its capital expenditure and maturing debt until such time the market indicates that long term rates are more advantageous.

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Total outstanding as at 30th September 2019

The total short term debt outstanding as at 30th September 2019 was £51.6 million. This is made up of debt taken from other local authorities through the market place.

New borrowings for the First Half Year of 2019/20

Appendix A lists the short term loan activity during for the first half year and shows that over the period a total of £61.6 million loans were brought forward from the previous year and £56.5 million of new short term loans were raised. A total of £66.5 million of these loans were repaid during the first half year, leaving a balance outstanding as at 30th September of £51.6 million.

The following table gives a summary which shows that the average rate of interest paid was in line with the benchmark.

	Total Value of Loans during the period	Average Loan	Interest paid during the period	Average Interest Rate	Benchmark Interest Rate *
Short Term borrowing	£118M	£2.31M	£259K	0.85%	1.00%

* Benchmark = 1.0% Budgeted interest rate for short term borrowings

7. DEBT RESCHEDULING

No debt rescheduling was undertaken during the period.

8. COMPLIANCE WITH TREASURY LIMITS

During the financial year the Council operates within the treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Treasury Strategy Statement 2019/20, approved by Council in March 2019.

Operational Boundary for external debt

The Council resolved that this limit be set at £155 million for 2019/20. The average level of borrowings to the 30th September was £156 million, marginally above the limit set.

The operational boundary can be exceeded on an occasional basis, and this is to be expected due to cash flow fluctuations. Sustained breaches however, would indicate that either the limit has been set too low, or that the Authority is breaching its prudential boundaries and that corrective action needs to be taken.

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Monitoring of the operational boundary is undertaken on a daily basis and any such continual breaches would be investigated and a recommended course of action reported to Council.

Authorised Limit for external Debt

The Council resolved that this limit be set at £171 million for 2019/20. The Authorised Limit is set having regard to the operational boundary above.

The average level of borrowings for the first half year to the 30th September was £156 million, so well within the limit set.

The Authorised Limit must not be breached.

Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing

The Council resolved the following limits for the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowings for 2018/19;

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Actual as at 30/09/ 2019
under 12 months	20%	0%	10.37%
12 months and within 24 months	20%	0%	7.97%
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%	15.07%
5 years and within 10 years	75%	0%	29.23%
10 years and above	95%	25%	37.36%

The actual debt maturity profile at 30th September 2019 is well within the limits set.

Upper Limit on Variable Interest Exposure

Council resolved the upper limit on variable rate exposures for 2019/20 should be set at 30% of outstanding long term debt. This strategy limits the proportion of interest which is subject to variable rate terms and hence protects the Council against increased costs in times of rising interest rates.

The actual level of variable borrowings is £4 million (LOBO) which equates to 3.7% of the outstanding long term debt as at 30th September 2019, so is well within the limit set.

9. MID YEAR REVIEW OF INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR 2019/20

The Annual Investment Strategy for 2019/20 adopted by Council in March 2019 was to maintain only temporary, short term investments and to make those investments in accordance with anticipated cash flow requirements (including the investing of sums borrowed at prevailing low interest rates in anticipation of capital spending). The Council's investment priorities are:

- a. the security of capital;
- b. The liquidity of its investments.

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The Council also aims to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. The risk appetite of this Council is low in order to give priority to the security of its investments.

In order to ensure that the Authority's investments are secure and that risk is minimised an investment matrix is used to determine investment counterparties, which factors in Fitch and Moody's credit ratings, credit default swap (CDS) spread data, and credit rating agency comments.

Currently, the only approved investment counterparties available to the Authority are Barclays, the Authority's bank, the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) and other local Authorities. Whilst interest rates receivable on these counterparties is low security of the capital sum is high.

This strategy has been adhered to in determining the investments for the first half of 2019/20 outlined in section 11 below.

10. INVESTMENT OUTTURN FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 2019/20

Appendix B gives details of the investments made during the first half of the year, and the following table gives a summary, which shows the Authority's average rate of return was below the benchmark.

	Total Value of Investments during period	Average Investment	Investment Returns	Average Rate of Return	Benchmark Return *
Internally Managed	£170M	£2.7M	£35k	0.55%	0.57%

* Benchmark = 7 day LIBID

0.57%

No institutions in which investments were made had any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full during the year.

11. OTHER TREASURY MANAGEMENT ISSUES

None to report

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LENDER	NEW LOAN VALUE	RATE %	REPAYMENT DATE	DURATION OF LOAN DAYS	INTEREST DUE TO 30/09/19	PRINCIPAL REPAID 2019/2020	PRINCIPAL OUTSTANDING AS AT 30/09/2019
BG CARE AND REPAIR	149,000	0.30	CALL		224.11		149,000
CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,500,000	0.85	14/08/19	363	4715.76	1,500,000	
BROXBORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.87	04/04/19	188	190.68	2,000,000	
MIDDLESBROUGH B	2,000,000	0.85	18/04/19	182	791.78	2,000,000	
HYNBURN BOROUGH	1,000,000	0.93	22/07/19	273	2853.70	1,000,000	
CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.95	02/07/19	273	7183.56	3,000,000	
SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.95	03/07/19	254	7261.64	3,000,000	
LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.90	03/04/19	156	98.63	2,000,000	
CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA	2,000,000	0.85	26/04/19	182	1164.38	2,000,000	
WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.95	07/08/19	273	9994.52	3,000,000	
WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	03/06/19	182	4660.27	3,000,000	
CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	24/05/19	179	3920.55	3,000,000	
TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.87	17/06/19	182	1835.34	1,000,000	
MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	1,000,000	0.90	18/06/19	182	1923.29	1,000,000	
WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	08/07/19	213	7249.32	3,000,000	
BARNSELY MBC	3,000,000	0.90	10/06/19	173	5178.08	3,000,000	
TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.92	03/07/19	182	4688.22	2,000,000	
THURROCK COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.85	21/05/19	120	3493.15	3,000,000	
SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	11/11/19	273	13536.99		3,000,000
WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.87	31/05/19	120	2860.27	2,000,000	
CALDERDALE MET DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.78	23/05/19	118	1111.23	1,000,000	
CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA	3,000,000	0.87	24/04/19	65	1644.66	3,000,000	
TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.95	28/08/19	181	7756.16	2,000,000	
TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.80	10/04/19	47	197.26	1,000,000	
MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	2,000,000	0.85	23/04/19	60	1024.66	2,000,000	
MIDDLESBROUGH B	3,000,000	1.00	05/09/19	184	12904.11	3,000,000	
DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	2,000,000	1.00	18/09/19	184	9315.07	2,000,000	
NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE	2,000,000	0.95	19/06/19	92	4112.33	2,000,000	
PCC FOR GLOUCESTERSHIRE	2,000,000	0.93	21/06/19	105	4127.67	2,000,000	
B/F Raised in previous years still outstanding	61,649,000				126,017.39	58,500,000	3,149,000
VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.90	22/10/19	181	7,890.41		2,000,000
TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.90	24/10/19	183	3,945.21		1,000,000
LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING	2,000,000	0.97	22/04/20	364	8,504.11		2,000,000
THURROCK BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	03/02/20	278	11,317.81		3,000,000
WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY	5,000,000	0.84	07/10/19	140	15,419.18		5,000,000
EXETER CITY COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	13/03/20	294	9,616.44		3,000,000
EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	28/02/20	276	9,320.55		3,000,000
WEALDEN DC	3,500,000	0.85	29/11/19	182	10,025.34		3,500,000
HYNDBURN BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.95	01/06/20	364	3,123.29		1,000,000
NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE	3,000,000	0.80	10/09/19	92	6,049.32	3,000,000	
NEATH PORT TALBOT CBC	3,000,000	0.80	21/10/19	129	7,167.12		3,000,000
TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL - ROLL OVER TL7694	1,000,000	0.82	18/11/19	154	2,381.37		1,000,000
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER - ROLL OVER TL7694	2,000,000	0.79	20/09/19	91	3,939.18	2,000,000	
NEATH PORT TALBOT CBC	3,000,000	0.80	23/09/19	94	6,180.82	3,000,000	
POL & CRIME COMM.FOR WEST YORKSHIRE	3,000,000	0.84	06/01/20	185	6,075.62		3,000,000
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PCC	3,000,000	0.95	06/07/20	364	6,636.99		3,000,000
POL & CRIME COMM.FOR WEST YORKSHIRE	3,000,000	0.82	08/01/20	184	5,728.77		3,000,000
HYNDBURN BOROUGH COUNCIL - ROLL OVER TL768	1,000,000	0.93	20/07/20	364	1,809.04		1,000,000
PCC WEST MIDLANDS	3,000,000	0.82	24/01/20	186	4,785.21		3,000,000
CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.76	23/01/20	153	2,436.16		3,000,000
ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.74	28/11/19	92	1,378.63		2,000,000
SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.70	31/01/20	123	57.53		3,000,000
Total Raised during the Period	56,500,000				133,788.10	8,000,000.00	48,500,000.00

Total Value of Loans

118,149,000259,805.49 66,500,000.00 51,649,000.00

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INVESTMENTS 2019/2020

APPENDIX B

DATE	BORROWER	VALUE	RATE %	DEAL NO.	BROKER	TERMS	CPID	REPAYMENT DATE	DURATION OF INVESTMENT DAYS	INTEREST RECEIVED DURING PERIOD	INVESTMENTS RECEIVED BACK DURING PERIOD	INVESTMENTS AS AT 30/09/2015
B/E												
01/04/19	PCC - THAMES VALLEY	5,000,000	0.80	1859	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E6054	05/04/19	7	438.36		5,000,000
01/04/19	COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.85	1860	King & Shaxson	FIXED	E4602	29/04/19	31	652.05		1,000,000
03/04/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	4,000,000	0.50	1861	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	12/04/2019	9	493.15		4,000,000
05/04/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	3,000,000	0.50	1862	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	18/04/2019	13	534.25		3,000,000
10/04/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	5,000,000	0.50	1863	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	18/04/2019	8	547.95		5,000,000
12/04/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	2,000,000	0.50	1864	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	16/04/2019	4	109.59		2,000,000
16/04/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	2,000,000	0.50	1865	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	24/04/2019	8	219.18		2,000,000
17/04/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	1,000,000	0.50	1866	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	26/04/2019	9	123.29		1,000,000
23/04/19	ST. ALBANS COUNCIL	1,200,000	0.65	1867	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E1936	21/05/2019	28	598.36		1,200,000
23/04/19	DOVER COUNCIL	1,500,000	0.65	1868	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E2234	30/04/2019	7	189.58		1,500,000
29/04/19	BRADFORD CC	1,500,000	0.65	1869	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E4701	07/05/2019	8	213.70		1,500,000
01/05/19	PCC - THAMES VALLEY	2,000,000	0.70	1870	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E6054	22/05/2019	21	805.48		2,000,000
03/05/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	4,000,000	0.50	1871	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	13/05/2019	10	547.95		4,000,000
07/05/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	3,000,000	0.50	1872	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	10/05/2019	3	123.29		3,000,000
13/05/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	2,000,000	0.50	1873	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	17/05/2019	4	109.59		2,000,000
13/05/19	CALDERDALE COUNCIL - HALIFAX	1,900,000	0.65	1874	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E4702	22/05/2019	9	304.52		1,900,000
20/05/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	5,000,000	0.50	1875	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	24/05/2019	4	273.97		5,000,000
21/05/19	ST ALBANS DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.65	1876	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E4702	03/06/2019	13	463.01		2,000,000
22/05/19	South Somerset District Council	1,000,000	0.68	1877	King & Shaxson	FIXED	E3334	03/06/2019	12	223.56		1,000,000
24/05/19	REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.68	1878	King & Shaxson	FIXED	E1835	03/06/2019	10	186.30		1,000,000
28/05/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	3,000,000	0.50	1879	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	31/05/2019	3	123.29		3,000,000
29/05/19	WAKEFIELD COUNCIL - WAKEFIELD	3,000,000	0.68	1880	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E4705	05/06/2019	7	391.23		3,000,000
29/05/19	ST ALBANS DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.70	1881	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E1936	05/06/2019	7	268.49		2,000,000
31/05/19	PCC WEST YORKSHIRE	1,500,000	0.70	1882	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E6047	07/06/2019	7	201.37		1,500,000
05/06/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	5,000,000	0.50	1883	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	10/06/2019	5	342.47		5,000,000
05/06/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	3,000,000	0.50	1884	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	14/06/2019	9	369.86		3,000,000
05/06/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	3,000,000	0.50	1885	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	18/06/2019	13	534.25		3,000,000
10/06/19	ST ALBANS DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,500,000	0.65	1886	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E1936	17/06/2019	7	311.64		2,500,000
14/06/19	PCC WEST YORKSHIRE	3,000,000	0.65	1887	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E6047	17/06/2019	3	160.27		3,000,000
17/06/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	1,000,000	0.50	1888	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	18/06/2019	1	13.70		1,000,000
17/06/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	6,000,000	0.50	1889	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	19/06/2019	2	164.38		6,000,000
18/06/19	PCC FOR WEST YORKSHIRE	4,000,000	0.68	1890	Martin Brokers	FIXED	E6047	05/07/2019	17	1266.85		4,000,000
18/06/19	PCC FOR WEST YORKSHIRE	4,000,000	0.68	1891	Martin Brokers	FIXED	E6047	28/06/2019	10	745.21		4,000,000
21/06/19	Ards & North Down Borough Council	1,000,000	0.75	1892	KING & SHAXON	FIXED	N0138	22/07/2019	31	636.99		1,000,000
03/07/19	GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.78	1893	KING & SHAXON	FIXED	S016XX	02/08/2019	30	1282.19		2,000,000
27/06/19	WAKEFIELD COUNCIL - WAKEFIELD	2,000,000	0.68	1894	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E4705X	11/07/2019	14	521.64		2,000,000
05/07/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	3,000,000	0.50	1895	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	12/07/2019	7	287.67		3,000,000
11/07/19	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	1896	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	15/07/2019	4	219.18		4,000,000
15/07/19	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	1897	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	19/07/2019	4	164.38		3,000,000
15/07/19	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	1898	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	22/07/2019	7	191.78		2,000,000
17/07/19	DMO	1,500,000	0.50	1899	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	19/07/2019	2	41.10		1,500,000
19/07/19	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council	1,200,000	0.60	1900	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E4702	26/07/2019	7	138.08		1,200,000
19/07/19	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	1901	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	31/07/2019	12	657.53		4,000,000
22/07/19	Hounslow London Borough Council	3,000,000	0.60	1902	BGCBC	FIXED	E5042	19/08/2019	28	1380.82		3,000,000
23/07/19	Wakefield Council	1,000,000	0.60	1903	BGCBC	FIXED	E4705	24/07/2019	1	16.44		1,000,000
31/07/19	CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT	3,000,000	0.60	1904	BGCBC	FIXED	E4701	16/08/2019	16	789.04		3,000,000
05/08/19	DMO	5,500,000	0.50	1905	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	09/08/2019	4	301.37		5,500,000
09/08/19	SOUTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL - SEE TI1910	3,000,000	0.57	1906	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E3334	30/08/2019	21	983.84		3,000,000
19/08/19	DMO	1,000,000	0.50	1907	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	30/08/2019	11	150.68		1,000,000
20/08/19	CALDERDALE COUNCIL - HALIFAX	700,000	0.60	1908	BGCBC	FIXED	E4702	28/08/2019	8	92.05		700,000
22/08/19	CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,900,000	0.60	1909	BGCBC	FIXED	E4701	05/09/2019	14	437.26		1,900,000
30/08/19	SOUTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL - SEE TI1906	1,500,000	0.57	1910	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E3334	02/09/2019	3	70.27		1,500,000
30/08/19	SOUTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.57	1911	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E0103	20/09/2019	21	983.84		3,000,000
30/08/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	4,000,000	0.50	1912	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	06/09/2019	7	383.56		4,000,000
30/08/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	4,000,000	0.50	1913	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	13/09/2019	14	767.12		4,000,000
04/09/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	4,000,000	0.50	1914	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	10/09/2019	6	328.77		4,000,000
04/09/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	5,000,000	0.50	1915	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	20/09/2019	16	1095.89		5,000,000
09/09/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	2,000,000	0.50	1916	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	18/09/2019	9	246.58		2,000,000
12/09/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	2,000,000	0.50	1917	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	24/09/2019	12	328.77		2,000,000
16/09/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	3,000,000	0.50	1918	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	23/09/2019	7	287.67		3,000,000
20/09/19	PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.60	1919	MARTIN BROKERS	FIXED	E0501	01/10/2019	11	361.64		2,000,000
25/09/19	DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE	2,000,000	0.50	1920	BGCBC	FIXED	DMA888	02/10/2019	7	164.38		2,000,000
BARCLAYS BANK SAVINGS ACC (to 30/09/2019)		4,276,610	0.45							9648.76		
		169,676,610								35,009.43	161,400,000.00	4,000,000.00
Average Investments		2,693,280										
Interest Received		35,009.43										
Average Interest Rate %		0.55										

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Agenda Item 27

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 20.11.2019

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 24.11.2019

Committee:

Council

Date of Meeting:

12th December, 2019

Report Subject:

**Treasury Management Annual
Review Report 1st April 2018 to 31st
March 2019**

Portfolio Holder:

**Councillor Nigel Daniels – Leader of
the Council/Executive Member -
Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by:

**Rhian Hayden, Chief Officer
Resources**

Report Written by:

**David McAuliffe, Chief Accountant -
Capital**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	20.08.19				04.09.19		12.12.19	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to give Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Treasury Management activities carried out by the Authority during the 2018/2019 financial year.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report provides a summary of the Treasury Management activities carried out under delegated powers by the Chief Officer Resources in the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

- 2.2 Treasury Management can be defined as:

“The management of the local authority’s cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. ”

- 2.3 The primary requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice are currently as follows:

- a. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy
Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council’s treasury management activities.

- b. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
- c. Receipt by the Council of an annual Treasury Management Strategy report (including the annual investment strategy report) for the year ahead, a mid-year review and an annual review report of the previous year.
- d. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring Treasury Management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions, which in this Council is the Chief Officer Resources.
- e. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of Treasury Management strategy and policies to a specific named body which in this Council is the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee.

2.4 This report is therefore presented to Council to provide an annual review report (attached as Appendix 1) of the Treasury Management activities for the 2018/2019 financial year, in accordance with (c) above.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

3.1 Members note the treasury management activity undertaken during the 2018/2019 financial year and provide comment.

Option 2 (preferred option)

3.2 Members note the treasury management activity undertaken during the 2018/2019 financial year and do not provide comment.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

- 4.1 The report is written in compliance with legislation (the Local Government Act 2003),Welsh Government guidance and CIPFA codes of practice.
- 4.2 The topic in the report also supports the Corporate Plan Priority of being an efficient Council.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

5.1.1 The Authority has complied with the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 and in doing so has strived for effective risk management and control, whilst at the same time pursuing best value as far as possible.

- 5.1.2 The Authority has effectively managed credit risk throughout the period, so ensuring that it has not been subjected to any financial loss as a result of the credit crisis.
- 5.1.3 The Authority has maximised investment returns as far as is possible whilst managing the associated risk and minimised borrowing costs throughout the period.
- 5.1.4 Investment returns of £43,004 have been achieved with an average interest rate of 0.62%. This is above the benchmark rate (based on market forces) of 0.51% but reflects the fact that the Authority can no longer invest in previous counterparties that paid higher rates, due to credit rating reductions. The estimate for investment interest was zero.
- 5.1.5 An average interest rate of 0.90% has been paid on temporary borrowings against a benchmark rate (based on market forces) of 1.00%, amounting to £411,701. The estimate for interest on short term borrowing was £518,000.

- 5.1.6 A summary of the Treasury Management activities for the period are shown in the table below:

	Value	Interest	Average Interest Rate
	£m	£	%
Short Term Loans raised	129	411,701	0.90%
Short Term Investments made	223	43,004	0.62%
Long Term debt outstanding 31/3/19	95,700		4.19%
Short Term debt outstanding 31/3/9	61,649		0.90%

5.2.1 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

The main risk in relation to Treasury Management is that of credit risk and protecting the Authority's cash. This is effectively managed through the Authority's risk averse Treasury Management policy that seeks to protect the capital sum rather than maximise investment returns

5.3 *Legal*

- 5.3.1 The Council carries out Treasury Management activities in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003, and in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and Welsh Government guidance.

Human Resources

- 5.4.1 There are no direct staffing implications to report. Staff directly involved with Treasury Management activities will continue to monitor the credit situation on a daily basis, and will notify the Chief Officer Resources accordingly.

Any consequential changes required to be made to the borrowings or investment strategy as a result will be reported to the Council.

6. Supporting Evidence

Performance Information and Data

- 6.1.1 During 2018/2019, the Authority took £3m in long term debt from other public authorities (PWLb) to replace maturing loans or to finance capital expenditure.
- 6.1.2 Over the past few years the credit rating agencies have downgraded a number of financial institutions such that they no longer meet the Authority's required approved criteria.
- 6.1.3 Despite this financial climate, the Authority has performed well in terms of its Treasury Management activities during the year, as detailed in the report and summarised below:
 - a. Investment returns of £43,004 have been achieved with an average interest rate of 0.62%. This is above the benchmark rate of 0.51% but reflects the fact that the Authority cannot invest in counterparties that pay higher rates, due to credit rating reductions. This is however in line with the Authority's risk averse policy whereby the security of the capital sum is the number one priority at the expense of more competitive investment returns.
 - b. An average interest rate of 0.90% has been paid on temporary borrowings against a benchmark of 1.00%, so minimising as far as possible the interest payable by the Authority and is evidence of good performance.
 - c. All of the Treasury limits and Treasury Management prudential indicators set for the financial year have been complied with during the year.
 - d. No institutions in which investments were made during the period had any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full, so the Authority has not been exposed to any financial loss as a result of the difficult economic climate.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

- 6.2.1 The Council's Treasury Management activities support delivery of services to the public.

6.3 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

- 6.3.1 Members of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee and full Council are involved in developing and monitoring compliance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

6.4 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

n/a

6.5 *Preventative focus*

6.5.1 The Authority's Treasury Management policy prioritises protecting the capital sum rather than achieving higher interest returns.

6.6 *Collaboration / partnership working*

n/a

6.7 *Integration(across service areas)*

n/a

6.8 *EqIA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)*

n/a

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

State how the work will be monitored e.g. through scrutiny or directorate performance management arrangements

7.1 Council and the nominated scrutiny Committee, Corporate Overview, will receive three reports in every annual cycle:-

- A Treasury Management Policy report prior to the start of every financial year
- A mid-year progress report on Treasury Management activity
- An end of year out turn report on Treasury Management activity.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1*
- *Appendix A*
- *Appendix B*

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APPENDIX 1

TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT 2018/2019

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2009 was adopted by this Council in February 2010 and this Council fully complies with its requirements. The Code was revised in 2011 and further revised in 2017.

The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council's treasury management activities.
2. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the Council of an annual treasury management strategy report (including the annual investment strategy report) for the year ahead, a mid year review and an annual review report of the previous year.
4. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions, which in this Council is the Chief Officer Resources.
5. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specified named body which in this Council is the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee.

Treasury management in this context is defined as:

"The management of the local authority's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. "

The purpose of this report is to meet one of the above requirements of the CIPFA Code, namely the annual review report of treasury management activities, for the financial year 2018/19.

2. THIS TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT COVERS

- ❖ Economic Background during the period
- ❖ the Council's treasury position as at 31st March 2019;
- ❖ borrowing and investment rates for 2018/19;
- ❖ annual review of the borrowing strategy 2018/19;
- ❖ borrowing outturn for 2018/19;
- ❖ debt rescheduling for 2018/19;
- ❖ compliance with treasury limits and Prudential Indicators for 2018/19;
- ❖ annual review of the investment strategy for 2018/19;
- ❖ investment outturn for 2018/19;

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3. ECONOMIC BACKGROUND DURING PERIOD

Since PWLB rates peaked during October 2018, most PWLB rates have been on a general downward trend, though longer term rates did spike upwards again during December, and, (apart from the 1 year rate), reached lows for the year at the end of March. There was a significant level of correlation between movements in US Treasury yields and UK gilt yields - which determine PWLB rates. The Fed in America increased the Fed Rate four times in 2018, making nine increases in all in this cycle, to reach 2.25% – 2.50% in December. However, it had been giving forward guidance that rates could go up to nearly 3.50%. These rate increases and guidance caused Treasury yields to also move up. However financial markets considered by December 2018, that the Fed had gone too far, and discounted its expectations of further increases. Since then, the Fed has also come round to the view that there are probably going to be no more increases in this cycle. The issue now is how many cuts in the Fed Rate there will be and how soon, in order to support economic growth in the US. But weak growth now also looks to be the outlook for China and the EU so this will mean that world growth as a whole will be weak. Treasury yields have therefore fallen sharply during 2019 and gilt yields / PWLB rates have also fallen.

Investment returns remained low during 2018/19. The expectation for interest rates within the treasury management strategy for 2018/19 was that Bank Rate would rise from 0.50% to 0.75%. At the start of 2018-19, and after UK GDP growth had proved disappointingly weak in the first few months of 2018, the expectation for the timing of this increase was pushed back from May to August 2018. Investment interest rates were therefore on a gently rising trend in the first half of the year after April, in anticipation that the MPC would raise Bank Rate in August. This duly happened at the MPC meeting on 2 August 2018.

It was not expected that the MPC would raise Bank Rate again during 2018-19 after August in view of the fact that the UK was entering into a time of major uncertainty with Brexit due in March 2019.

Investment rates were little changed during August to October but rose sharply after the MPC meeting of 1 November was unexpectedly hawkish about their perception of building inflationary pressures, particularly from rising wages. However, weak GDP growth data after December, plus increasing concerns generated by Brexit, resulted in investment rates falling back again. Continued uncertainty in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis has promoted a cautious approach whereby investments would continue to be dominated by low counterparty risk considerations, resulting in relatively low returns compared to borrowing rates.

4. TREASURY POSITION AS AT 31st MARCH 2019

The Council's debt and investment position at the beginning of the year and the end of the year was as follows:

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This illustrates that the total debt outstanding as at 31st March 2019 was £157.349 million, comprising of long term debt of £95.700 million and short term debt of £61.649 million.

	31March 2018 Principal	Average Rate/ Return	31 March 2019 Principal	Average Rate/ Return	Increase/ (Decrease) in Borrowing
	<u>£000</u>		<u>£000</u>		<u>£000</u>
Fixed Rate Funding:					
- PWLB	71,942	4.57%	72,700	4.64%	758
- Market Loans	21,500	1.55%	19,000	2.05%	(2,500)
Variable Rate Funding:					
- Market (LOBO *)	4,000	4.5%	4,000	4.5%	0
Total Long Term Debt	97,442	3.76%	95,700	4.19%	(1,742)
Short Term Loans(<365 days)	51,249	0.47%	61,649	0.90%	10,400
Total Debt	148,691	2.88%	157,349	2.85%	8,658
Investments:					
- Short Term	2,000		6,000		4,000
Total Investments	2,000		6,000		4000

* LOBO – Lenders Option Borrowers Option. This loan has a fixed rate for the first two years of 3.85%. The remaining period of the loan (which we are now in) has a rate of 4.5%, but the lender can increase this rate at six month intervals.

5. BORROWING AND INVESTMENT RATES IN 2018/19

The following table displays a selection of interest rates prevailing as at 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019.

	1/4/2018	31/3/2019
Bank Base Rate	0.5%	0.75%
7 day LIBID	0.36%	0.57%
PWLB 10 year Maturity	2.43%	2.05%
PWLB 15 year maturity	2.66%	2.37%

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PWLB 25 year maturity	2.77%	2.60%
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6. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE BORROWING STRATEGY FOR 2018/19

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2018/19 was approved by Council in March 2018. The Borrowing Strategy adopted as part of this was as follows:

To utilise the Authority's overdraft facility:

to fund unexpected daily cash deficits;
to fund temporary cash shortfalls where there are no other sources of funding available within the marketplace.

To borrow over the short term:

to fund temporary cash shortfalls;
to maintain a suitably balanced maturity profile;
to make short term savings required in order to meet budgetary constraints;
in anticipation of securing longer term loans at more attractive rates.

To borrow over the long term:

to reduce the Authority's average cost of borrowing;
to maintain a stable, longer term portfolio;
to maximise the potential for future debt rescheduling.

If appropriate to avoid all new external borrowing:

to maximise savings in the short term;
to run down temporary investment levels;
to minimise exposure to interest rate and credit risk.

Borrowings undertaken during the period (see section 7 below) have been done so in accordance with this strategy and has focused on short term borrowings in order to minimise borrowing costs. Current short term borrowing rates are very low and are forecast to stay at these levels for the indeterminable future. The Authority is therefore taking advantage of such rates and is predominantly borrowing short term to fund the remainder of its capital expenditure and maturing debt until such time the market indicates that long term rates are more advantageous. Towards the end of the financial year, long term rates started to fall and the Council converted £3m of short term debt into long term debt, with a view to make further conversions in 2019/2020.

In the current economic climate it is considered that the approved strategy is still fit for purpose and therefore no revisions are proposed.

7. BORROWING OUTTURN FOR 2018/19

Long Term Borrowing

Definition

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Long term borrowing relates to debt taken out for a period of greater than one year. It is taken out for periods of 1 year up to 50 years. This borrowing is required to finance capital expenditure undertaken in the year that is funded through:

- Borrowing approvals from Welsh Government, known as un-hypothecated supported borrowing (USB), for which revenue support for the borrowing costs is provided through the revenue support grant;
- Prudential borrowing, for which borrowing costs are funded through revenue savings.

Total outstanding as at 31st March 2019

The total long term debt outstanding as at 31st March 2019 was £95,700 million. This is made up of debt taken from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb), from other local authorities (through the market place), and from the market (LOBO). This debt is due to be repaid within the following years:

Maturing Within	£000s
1YR	11,270
1-2YRS	8,666
2-3YRS	2,697
3-4YRS	7,920
4-5YRS	2,764
5-6YRS	4,051
6-10YRS	17,723
10-15YRS	13,555
15+ YRS	27,054
Total	95,700

New borrowings for 2018/19

During 2018/19, the Authority did take y long term debt from the PWLB towards the end of the financial year to replace maturing loans and finance capital expenditure.

Short Term Borrowing

Definition

Short term borrowing relates to debt taken out for a period of less than one year i.e. it will all be fully repaid within a year. These short term loans are taken out to manage the Authority's short term cash flow i.e. to fund deficits in cash flow on a daily basis pending receipt of income from grants or other sources, or pending the taking out of longer term debt to fund capital expenditure whilst we wait for advantageous longer term borrowing opportunities. Current short term borrowing rates are very low and are forecast to stay at these levels for the indeterminable future. The Authority is therefore taking advantage of such rates and is borrowing short term to fund the remainder of its capital expenditure and maturing debt until such time the market indicates that long term rates are more advantageous.

Total outstanding as at 31st March 2019

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The total short term debt outstanding as at 31st March 2019 was £61,649 million. This is made up of debt taken from other local authorities through the market place.

New borrowings for 2018/19

Appendix A lists the short term loan activity during the year and shows that over the period a total of £51,249 million loans were brought forward from the previous year and £129,500 million of new short term loans were raised. A total of £119,100 million of these new loans were repaid during the year (including the brought forward loans) leaving a balance outstanding as at 31st March 2019 of £61,649 million.

The following table gives a summary which shows that the average rate of interest paid was well within the benchmark.

	Total Value of Loans during the period	Average Loan	Interest paid during the period	Average Interest Rate	Benchmark Interest Rate *
Short Term borrowing	£129,500M	£2.26M	£412k	0.90%	1.00%

* Benchmark = budgeted interest rate for new borrowings 1.00%

7.DEBT RESCHEDULING

No debt rescheduling was undertaken during the period.

8. COMPLIANCE WITH TREASURY LIMITS

During the financial year the Council operated within the treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Treasury Strategy Statement 2018/19, approved by Council in March 2018.

Operational Boundary for external debt

The Council resolved that this limit be set at £152 million for 2018/19 .The average level of borrowings to the 31st March was £146 million so within the limit set.

The operational boundary can be exceeded on an occasional basis, and this is to be expected due to cash flow fluctuations. Sustained breaches however, would indicate that either the limit has been set too low, or that the Authority is breaching its prudential boundaries and that corrective action needs to be taken.

Monitoring of the operational boundary is undertaken on a daily basis and any such continual breaches would be investigated and a recommended course of action reported to Council.

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Authorised Limit for external Debt

The Council resolved that this limit be set at £168 million for 2018/19. The Authorised Limit is set having regard to the operational boundary above.

The average level of borrowings for the year to the 31st March was £146 million, so well within the limit set.

The Authorised Limit must not be breached.

Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing

The Council resolved the following limits for the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowings for 2018/2019:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Actual as at 31/3/2019
under 12 months	20%	0%	11.78%
12 months and within 24 months	20%	0%	9.06%
24 months and within 5 years	50%	0%	13.98%
5 years and within 10 years	75%	0%	22.75%
10 years and above	95%	5%	42.43%

The actual debt maturity profile at 31st March 2019 is well within the limits set.

Upper Limit on Variable Interest Exposure

Council resolved the upper limit on variable rate exposures for 2018/19 should be set at 30% of outstanding long term debt. This strategy limits the proportion of interest which is subject to variable rate terms and hence protects the Council against increased costs in times of rising interest rates.

The actual level of variable borrowings is £4 million (LOBO) which equates to 4.1% of the outstanding long term debt as at 31st March 2019, so is well within the limit set.

9. ANNUAL REVIEW OF INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR 2018/19

The Annual Investment Strategy for 2018/19 adopted by Council in March 2018–), was to maintain only temporary, short term investments and to make those investments in accordance with anticipated cash flow requirements (including the investing of sums borrowed at prevailing low interest rates in anticipation of capital spending). The Council's investment priorities are:

- the security of capital;
- the liquidity of its investments.

The Council also aims to achieve the optimum return on its investments

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commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. The risk appetite of this Council is low in order to give priority to the security of its investments.

In order to ensure that the Authority's investments are secure and that risk is minimised an investment matrix is used to determine investment counterparties, which factors in Fitch and Moody's credit ratings, credit default swap (CDS) spread data, and credit rating agency comments.

This strategy has been adhered to in determining the investments for 2018/19 outlined in section 10 below.

10. INVESTMENT OUTTURN FOR 2018/19

Appendix B gives details of the investments made during the first half of the year, and the following table gives a summary, which shows the Authority's average rate of return was above the benchmark. This is despite the fact that the Authority's approved investment counterparties being restricted to the Authority's bank, the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility of the Debt Management Office and local authorities where interest rates are low. This is in line with the Authority's risk averse policy whereby the security of the capital sum is the number one priority at the expense of competitive investment returns.

	Total Value of Investments	Average Investment	Investment Returns	Average Rate of Return	Benchmark Return *
Internally Managed	£223M	£2.5	£43k	0.62%	0.51%

* Benchmark = 7 day LIBID

0.51%

No institutions in which investments were made had any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full during the year.

APPENDIX A

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11/05/2018	UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL -	3,500,000	0.6	05/11/2018	178	10241	3,500,000	
23/05/2018	NEATH PORT TALBOT	3,000,000	0.55	23/08/2018	92	4159	3,000,000	
29/05/2018	HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	5,000,000	0.5	05/09/2018	99	6781	5,000,000	
31/05/2018	BARNLEY COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.58	05/09/2018	97	4624	3,000,000	
07/06/2018	MIDDLESBROUGH B	3,000,000	0.45	07/08/2018	61	2256	3,000,000	
11/06/2018	NEATH PORT TALBOT	2,000,000	0.50	11/09/2018	92	2521	2,000,000	
15/06/2018	HARLOW DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.57	18/10/2018	125	3904	2,000,000	
18/06/2018	EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	2,000,000	0.60	18/12/2018	183	6016	2,000,000	
22/06/2018	EAST RENFREWSHIRE	2,000,000	0.58	22/10/2018	122	3877	2,000,000	
25/06/2018	HASTINGS BOROUGH	2,000,000	0.50	03/10/2018	100	2740	2,000,000	
15/06/2018	WEST SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.60	18/03/2019	276	4537	1,000,000	
19/07/2018	CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.60	04/01/2019	169	8334	3,000,000	
10/07/2018	MIDDLESBROUGH B	2,000,000	0.50	10/10/2018	92	2521	2,000,000	
06/08/2018	BASILDON BOROUGH COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.57	06/11/2018	92	2873	2,000,000	
20/08/2018	TENDRING DISTRICT	1,000,000	0.70	05/02/2019	169	3241	1,000,000	
07/08/2018	WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.68	07/12/2018	122	6819	3,000,000	
17/08/2018	LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON	3,000,000	0.80	08/03/2019	203	13348	3,000,000	
14/09/2018	HYNBURN BOROUGH	1,000,000	0.75	14/03/2019	181	3719	1,000,000	
15/08/2018	DERBY CITY COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.70	25/10/2018	71	4085	3,000,000	
16/08/2018	CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,500,000	0.85	14/08/2019	228	7964		1,500,000
03/09/2018	LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.75	05/12/2018	93	5733	3,000,000	
05/09/2018	PRESTON CITY COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.80	05/02/2019	153	6707	2,000,000	
05/09/2018	HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	5,000,000	0.77	07/01/2019	124	13079	5,000,000	
05/09/2018	TORBAY BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.84	05/03/2019	181	12496	3,000,000	
28/09/2018	BARNLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH	3,000,000	0.85	05/02/2019	130	9082	3,000,000	
28/09/2018	BROXBORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.87	04/04/2019	184	8772		2,000,000
18/10/2018	MIDDLESBROUGH B	2,000,000	0.85	18/04/2019	165	7685		2,000,000
22/10/2018	HYNBURN BOROUGH	1,000,000	0.93	22/07/2019	161	4102		1,000,000
02/10/2018	CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.95	02/07/2019	181	14133		3,000,000
22/10/2018	SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.95	03/07/2019	161	12571		3,000,000
29/10/2018	LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.90	03/04/2019	154	7595		2,000,000
31/10/2018	CHELMSFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.80	01/03/2019	121	7956	3,000,000	
15/10/2018	WIGAN METROPOLITAN BOROUGH	2,500,000	0.75	15/02/2019	123	6318	2,500,000	
26/10/2018	CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA	2,000,000	0.85	26/04/2019	157	7312		2,000,000
07/11/2018	WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.95	07/08/2019	145	11322		3,000,000
03/12/2018	WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	03/06/2019	119	8803		3,000,000
26/11/2018	CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	24/05/2019	126	9321		3,000,000
17/12/2018	TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.87	17/06/2019	105	2503		1,000,000
18/12/2018	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	1,000,000	0.90	18/06/2019	104	2564		1,000,000
07/12/2018	WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	08/07/2019	115	8507		3,000,000
19/12/2018	BARNLEY MBC	3,000,000	0.90	10/06/2019	103	7619		3,000,000
02/01/2019	TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.92	03/07/2019	89	4487		2,000,000
21/01/2019	THURROCK COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.85	21/05/2019	70	4890		3,000,000
11/02/2019	SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	3,000,000	0.90	11/11/2019	49	3625		3,000,000
31/01/2019	WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.87	31/05/2019	60	2860		2,000,000
25/01/2019	CALDERDALE MET DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.78	23/05/2019	66	1410		1,000,000
18/02/2019	CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA	3,000,000	0.87	24/04/2019	42	3003		3,000,000
28/02/2019	TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,000,000	0.95	28/08/2019	32	1666		2,000,000
22/02/2019	TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.80	10/04/2019	38	833		1,000,000
22/02/2019	MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	2,000,000	0.85	23/04/2019	38	1770		2,000,000
05/03/2019	MIDDLESBROUGH B	3,000,000	1.00	05/09/2019	27	2219		3,000,000
18/03/2019	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL	2,000,000	1.00	18/09/2019	14	767		2,000,000
19/03/2019	NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING EXECUTIVE	2,000,000	0.95	19/06/2019	13	677		2,000,000
08/03/2019	PCC FOR GLOUCESTERSHIRE	2,000,000	0.93	21/06/2019	24	1223		2,000,000
	Total Raised During the Period	129,500,000				308,170	68,000,000	61,500,000
	Total Value of Loans	180,749,000				411,701	119,100,000	61,649,000
	Average Loan	2,259,363						
	Interest Paid	411,701						
	Average Interest Rate	0.90%						

		INVESTMENTS 2018/2019							
		APPENDIX B							
					REPAYMENT	DURATION OF INVESTMENT			
DATE	BORROWER	VALUE	RATE %	DATE	DAYS	INTEREST DUE TO 31/03/2019	INVESTMENTS RECEIVED BACK DURING PERIOD	PRINCIPAL O/S AS AT 31/03/2019	
B/E									
	DMO	2,000,000	0.25	09/04/18	14	110	2,000,000		
05/04/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	20/04/2018	15	308	3,000,000		
12/04/18	DMO	3,500,000	0.25	17/04/2018	5	120	3,500,000		
12/04/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	19/04/2018	7	144	3,000,000		
19/04/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.25	24/04/2018	5	68	2,000,000		
24/04/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	30/04/2018	6	123	3,000,000		
03/05/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.25	10/05/2018	7	96	2,000,000		
03/05/18	DMO	5,000,000	0.27	21/05/2018	18	666	5,000,000		
10/05/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.25	18/05/2018	7	96	2,000,000		
21/05/18	DMO	2,500,000	0.25	24/05/2018	3	51	2,500,000		
31/05/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.25	11/06/2018	11	151	2,000,000		
06/06/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.25	18/06/18	12	164	2,000,000		
15/06/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.25	19/06/2018	4	55	2,000,000		
19/06/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	29/06/2018	10	205	3,000,000		
28/06/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	02/07/2018	4	82	3,000,000		
04/07/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	09/07/2018	5	103	3,000,000		
04/07/18	DMO	4,000,000	0.25	20/07/18	16	438	4,000,000		
16/07/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	23/07/2018	7	144	3,000,000		
23/07/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.25	27/07/2018	4	82	3,000,000		
03/08/18	DMO	5,000,000	0.50	07/08/2018	4	274	5,000,000		
07/08/18	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	23/08/2018	16	877	4,000,000		
16/08/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	22/08/2018	6	247	3,000,000		
22/08/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	28/08/2018	6	164	2,000,000		
28/08/18	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	31/08/2018	3	164	4,000,000		
03/09/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	11/09/2018	8	329	3,000,000		
05/09/18	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	13/09/2018	8	438	4,000,000		
05/09/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	20/09/2018	15	616	3,000,000		
20/09/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	26/09/2018	6	247	3,000,000		
28/09/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	01/10/2018	3	123	3,000,000		
02/10/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	15/10/2018	13	534	3,000,000		
03/10/18	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	10/10/2018	7	384	4,000,000		
08/10/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	12/10/2018	4	110	2,000,000		
15/10/18	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	24/10/2018	9	493	4,000,000		
15/10/18	DMO	4,000,000	0.50	19/10/2018	4	219	4,000,000		
19/10/18	DMO	3,000,000	0.50	25/10/2018	6	247	3,000,000		
24/10/18	DMO	2,500,000	0.50	09/11/2018	16	548	2,500,000		
26/10/18	LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON	3,000,000	0.70	22/11/2018	27	1553	3,000,000		
25/10/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	31/10/2018	6	164	2,000,000		
25/10/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	05/11/2018	11	301	2,000,000		
31/10/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	15/11/2018	15	411	2,000,000		
05/11/18	DMO	2,500,000	0.50	06/11/2018	1	34	2,500,000		
05/11/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	12/11/2018	7	192	2,000,000		
07/11/18	DMO	1,000,000	0.50	13/11/2018	6	82	1,000,000		
15/11/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	30/11/2018	15	411	2,000,000		
15/11/18	DMO	1,000,000	0.50	19/11/2018	4	55	1,000,000		
19/11/18	CHEL TENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.68	14/12/2018	25	466	1,000,000		
23/11/18	DMO	1,000,000	0.50	29/11/2018	6	82	1,000,000		
29/11/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	12/12/2018	13	356	2,000,000		
03/12/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	04/12/2018	1	27	2,000,000		
04/12/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	07/12/2018	3	82	2,000,000		
05/12/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	14/12/2018	9	247	2,000,000		
05/12/18	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	17/12/2018	12	329	2,000,000		
06/12/18	Derbyshire County Council	2,000,000	0.70	10/01/2019	35	1342	2,000,000		
13/12/18	BLACKPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.75	07/01/2019	25	514	1,000,000		
17/12/18	DMO	5,000,000	0.50	21/12/2018	4	274	5,000,000		
21/12/18	DMO	1,000,000	0.50	02/01/2019	12	164	1,000,000		
02/01/19	DMO	1,000,000	0.50	07/01/2019	5	68	1,000,000		
04/01/19	DMO	2,000,000	0.50	08/01/2019	4	110	2,000,000		
04/01/19	DMO	1,300,000	0.50	18/01/2019	14	249	1,300,000		
10/01/19	DMO	1,500,000	0.50	14/01/2019	4	82	1,500,000		
17/01/19	DMO	3,500,000	0.50	25/01/2019	8	384	3,500,000		
21/01/19	DMO	1,000,000	0.50	23/01/2019	2	27	1,000,000		
24/01/19	DMO	1,500,000	0.50	28/01/2019	4	82	1,500,000		

28/01/19	DMO	1,500,000	0.50		01/02/2019	4	82	1,500,000	
31/01/19	POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL	4,000,000	0.70		05/02/2019	5	384	4,000,000	
05/02/19	DMO	4,000,000	0.51		15/02/2019	10	559	4,000,000	
11/02/19	DMO	1,500,000	0.50		18/02/2019	7	144	1,500,000	
14/02/19	DMO	3,000,000	0.51		22/02/2019	8	335	3,000,000	
15/02/19	DMO	3,000,000	0.51		01/03/2019	14	587	3,000,000	
21/02/19	DMO	2,000,000	0.51		27/02/2019	6	168	2,000,000	
27/02/19	LONDON BOROUGH OF HOUNSLOW	3,500,000	0.85		06/03/2019	7	571	3,500,000	
28/02/19	BOURNEMOUTH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.85		07/03/2019	7	163	1,000,000	
05/03/19	DMO	2,000,000	0.50		06/03/2019	1	27	2,000,000	
05/03/19	DMO	2,500,000	0.51		15/03/2019	10	349	2,500,000	
06/03/19	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.70		22/03/2019	16	307	1,000,000	
06/03/19	DMO	3,500,000	0.50		08/03/2019	2	96	3,500,000	
06/03/19	DMO	1,000,000	0.51		11/03/2019	5	70	1,000,000	
08/03/19	FOREST OF DEAN	1,000,000	0.85		22/03/2019	14	326	1,000,000	
07/03/19	WAKEFIELD	1,000,000	0.90		14/03/2019	7	173	1,000,000	
08/03/19	WAKEFIELD	2,000,000	0.85		22/03/2019	14	652	2,000,000	
12/03/19	DMO	2,000,000	0.50		15/03/2019	3	82	2,000,000	
15/03/19	DMO	2,500,000	0.51		25/03/2019	10	349	2,500,000	
19/03/19	DMO	2,000,000	0.50		22/03/2019	3	82	2,000,000	
22/03/19	ST ALBANS DISTRICT COUNCIL	2,500,000	0.70		29/03/2019	7	336	2,500,000	
25/03/19	DMO	3,500,000	0.51		29/03/2019	4	196	3,500,000	
27/03/19	DMO	2,500,000	0.50		29/03/2019	2	68	2,500,000	
29/03/19	PCC - THAMES VALLEY	5,000,000	0.80		05/04/2019	7	329		5,000,000
29/03/19	COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL	1,000,000	0.85		29/04/2019	31	70		1,000,000
	BARCLAYS BANK SAVING ACC	4,294,246				365	19189		
		222,594,246					43,004	212,300,000.00	6,000,000.00
	Average Investments	2,501,059							
	Interest Received	43,004							
	Average Interest Rate %	0.62%							

Agenda Item 28

Date Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 20.11.2019

Date Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 24.11.2019

Committee:

Council

Date of Meeting:

12th December, 2019

Report Subject:

Council Tax – Removal of Empty Property Discount Allowance for Prescribed Class C Dwellings

Portfolio Holder:

**Councillor N Daniels –
Leader/Executive Member –
Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by:

**Rhian Hayden, Chief Officer -
Resources**

Reporting Pathway							
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
				19.11.19		12.12.19	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides details of the current policy with regard to Council Tax discounts and sets out a proposal to use the authority's discretionary powers to remove the level of discount in respect of dwellings that are classified as long term empty properties (class C dwellings).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 With effect from the 1st April 2004, the Local Government Act 2003 gave councils discretionary powers to reduce or remove the 50% Council Tax discount awarded in respect of long-term empty properties.
- 2.2 Under the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2004, the Council has previously determined that a discount of 0% be granted to Class A & B dwellings and that a discount of 50% be granted in respect of Class C dwellings.
- 2.3 Class A & B dwellings are properties which can be identified as holiday homes/second home respectively. Class C dwellings can be identified as long term empty properties.
- 2.4 Empty properties, i.e. properties that are unoccupied and are substantially unfurnished, are initially exempt from Council Tax for up to 6 months. A property is considered to be "long term empty" if it has been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than six months and does not qualify for another class of exemption from Council Tax.

- 2.5 As at the 30th September 2019, 1037 dwellings in Blaenau Gwent were receiving an empty property discount.
- 2.6 The Council Tax Base calculation currently takes into account properties that receive a discount as a prescribed class C dwelling, and therefore the base is a reflection of the number of chargeable dwellings included in the funding formula, for distribution of the Local Government Annual Settlement across all 22 Local Authorities in Wales. It is expected that the Welsh Government will amend the funding calculation for 2020/21 onwards so that the Council Tax Base calculation will no longer take into account the discounts for this property class.
- 2.7 Should this amendment be made, the Council could see a reduction in funding of approximately £480,000.
- 2.8 Over the last few years, the majority of councils in Wales have used their discretionary powers under the Council Tax(Prescribed Classes of Dwellings)(Wales)(Amendment) Regulations 2004, to remove the discount on Class C properties. For the financial year 2019/20 there are only 4 local authorities still awarding the discount. It is expected that all Councils will review their policies to provide discounts under these classes from 1st April 2020.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1**

That the Council resolve to set the current discount for Class A, B & C dwellings at 0% with effect from the 1st April 2020

Option 2

- 3.2 That the Council resolve to maintain the existing discount levels for Class A, B & C dwellings with effect from the 1st April 2020.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the**

Council Priorities

- 4.1 If Welsh Government implement the proposed changes to the revenue support grant funding formula, the proposal is required to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy of the Council and would additionally support the Council's, '*Economic Development and Regeneration*', priority by supplementing the proposed 'Growth Strategy' by encouraging owners of vacant properties to bring them back into use and generating additional income through Council Tax.

4.2 **Statutory Responsibilities**

The Council must resolve to use its discretion in relation to discounts for Class A, B & C dwellings.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Financial

Option 1

The change in policy will allow the Council to levy circa £650,000 council tax against Class C dwellings. However, using the current formula used for distribution of unhypothecated funding, this will be offset by the loss of revenue support grant circa £480,000. Subsequently, the net effect of the policy change is an additional £170,000 income for the council based on a 100% collection rate.

Option 2

If the Welsh Government continues with their proposal to amend the Financial Settlement to Local Government the grant due to this Council would reduce circa £480,000, the Council would continue to award discount to long term empty properties and therefore the reduced funding would result in a significant cost pressure to the Council.

5.2 Risk

Option 1

There is potential having to collect the additional Council Tax, may have an adverse effect on collection rate if taxpayers do not pay the additional increase in Council Tax due. Additionally, the Council may experience increased applications for assistance by way of Council Tax Reductions or discounts.. The Revenues team will be monitoring these risks.

Option 2

If Welsh Government continues with their proposal the Council will have a funding shortfall of circa £480,000 in 2020/21 that has the potential to increase in subsequent years.

5.3 Legal

The Council are required to make a resolution for the award of discounts for class A, B & C dwellings as prescribed by the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2004.

5.4 Human Resources

There will be additional work to collect the additional Council Tax charged.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

From analysis of existing data, at the 30th September 2019, it is anticipated that 80% of the empty properties will make the required council tax payment in 2020/21, without further recovery action being required. For the remainder formal recovery action may be required.

6.2 **Involvement**

All current empty property discount recipients will need to be informed of any change in policy as early as possible in order for them to make the necessary budgetary arrangements for 2020/21. Approximately 20% of the current empty housing stocks are owned by social landlords.

6.3 **Thinking for the Long term**

Empty properties can be detrimental to other properties in the vicinity in terms of both market value and quality of life, and can encourage anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, squatting, littering and crime.

There are many positive results in encouraging empty homes back into use;

For the owner:

- If the property is sold, the owner can release equity within the property.
- If the property is rented, the owner receives an income from the property.
- Leaving a property empty could increase insurance premiums.
- Council Tax is paid for by the occupier and not the owner.

For the community:

- The opportunity for fly tipping and anti-social behaviour is reduced
- An empty property can have a negative impact on the neighbourhood, reducing house prices and lowering community pride in an area.
- Provide much needed housing in the borough.

For the local economy:

- Bringing an empty property back into use can contribute to the regeneration of an area, increase spending in the local economy and help to protect the value of surrounding properties.
- Unsightly properties can often deter investment in an

area, which can lead to decline.

6.4 **Collaboration / partnership working**

Whilst there is currently no direct collaboration between local authorities in respect of empty properties it is anticipated that all local authorities in Wales will by April 2020 have used their discretionary powers to reduce the discount allowed in respect of Class C dwellings (empty properties).

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The Revenue section will continue monitoring the effects of collection of council tax from empty properties to ensure income maximisation.

DE

14th October 2019

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Agenda Item 29

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 28.11.19

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 27.11.19

Committee:

Council

Date of Meeting:

12th December, 2019

Report Subject:

Medium Term Financial Strategy & Bridging the Gap

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr. Nigel Daniels, Leader of the Council/Executive Member Corporate Services

Report Submitted by:

**Rhian Hayden, Chief Officer Resources
Anne-Louise Clark, Chief Officer Commercial**

Report Written by:

Gina Taylor – Service Manager Accountancy

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	26/11/2019				05/12/19		12/12/19	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report is presented to Members to gain agreement of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and provides Members with the latest assessment of the Council's financial position over the next 5 years together with the proposed approach that the Council will take to address the financial challenges.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), is a key element within the Council's strategic planning framework. It is this financial framework which will support the Council's financial resilience and ensure it operates sustainably.
- 2.2 The MTFS brings together all known factors affecting the Council's financial position and forms the basis for decision making. The MTFS includes a forward look over the next five years to assess the spending requirements the Council is likely to face to deliver the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan and highlights the level of cuts (reducing or stopping services) that will need to be made to ensure the Council can set a balanced budget each year.

- 2.3 The MTFS & Bridging the Gap document proposes the approach that the Council will take to respond to the financial challenges we face over the next five year period. This will be an iterative process and one that will be developed and refined as our funding position from Wales Government becomes clearer and strategic business reviews are further developed and implemented.
- 2.4 As a consequence of the General Election on 12 December 2019, Wales Government has delayed the announcement of their budget and the provisional Local Government Settlement from the end of November to 16 December 2019, with the final settlement due 25 February 2020. This delay has implications for the budget setting process for 2020/2021 and planning for the actual budget cuts required to set a balanced budget.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 *To include Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CMT/Committees/Other groups)*

Option 1 – That Council:-

- Consider and approve the MTFS;
- Note the forecast funding gap for the period of the MTFS;
- Approve the proposals within the Strategic Business Reviews attached at Appendix 1 of the MTFS.

Option 2 – Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee provide comments and challenge the assumptions in the MTFS and the progress made to Bridging the Gap Programme.

4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

- 4.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a key element within the Council's strategic planning framework and supports the delivery of the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

- 5.1. Based upon the assumptions in the MTFS, a budget gap of £16.2m over the next 5 years is forecast as follows:

Table 1: MTFS Budget Gap

2020/2021 £m	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m	2023/2024 £m	2024/2025 £m	Total £m
3.2	2.5	4.7	2.9	2.9	16.2

- 5.1. The Strategic Business Reviews have been progressing and an update on
2 each review is provided at Appendix 1 of the MTFS. The overall financial achievement towards the budget gap is currently assessed as between £5.4m and £7.9m over the period of the MTFS as follows:

Table 2: Estimated Financial Achievement of the Strategic Business Reviews

	Estimated Achievement							
	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024 & 2024/2025	
	£m		£m		£m		£m	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Strategic Business Reviews	1.5	2.1	1.0	1.4	1.3	1.8	0.8	1.3

- 5.1. Based on the current estimated achievement from the Strategic Business
3 Reviews compared to the budget gap identified in the MTFS, there is a residual funding gap as follows:

Table 3: Residual Funding Gap

	Estimated Achievement							
	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024 & 2024/25	
	£'000		£'000		£'000		£'000	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Residual Funding Gap	1.7	1.1	1.5	1.1	3.4	2.9	2.1	1.6

- 5.1. Bridging the Gap remains the council's medium/long term strategy to
4 address the budget gaps currently identified. However for 2020/21, additional proposals are being developed across portfolios to mitigate the possible residual funding gap.

5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

- 5.2. The assumptions built into the MTFS may change over time e.g. pay &
1 inflation rates, service demand, Revenue Support grant and Council Tax levels.

- 5.2. The Council's current MTFS contains a number of assumptions which
2 impact on the level of its income and expenditure. Changes in these assumptions can have a fundamental effect on the budget gap over the

next 5 years. The impact of a 1% change on our main assumptions has been calculated and can be seen in the following table:-

Assumptions within the MTFS	+/- 1% £'000
ISB – Cash flat	428
AEF – Cash flat	1,100
Council Tax (4%)	333
Non-Employee Inflation (2%)	676
Pay (2%)	460

5.2. There is a risk that the current Strategic Business reviews do not identify
3 sufficient financial benefits to Bridge the Gap in the medium to long term. Alternative proposals may therefore be required.

5.2. Progress against predicted delivery of Bridging the Gap proposals form part
4 of the budget monitoring arrangements.

5.2. These risks are also mitigated by regularly reviewing the assumptions and
5 revising the MTFS to reflect updated information. MTFS will be updated following announcement of the local government settlement.

5.3 ***Legal***

5.3. The Council must set a balanced budget on an annual basis. The MTFS &
1 Bridging the Gap proposals will support this requirement.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

5.4. Not applicable for this report.
1

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1. The attached Medium Term Financial Strategy & Bridging the Gap provides
1 information for Members consideration.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

6.2. The MTFS & Bridging the Gap will support the Council in the development
1 of its annual budgets which in turn will allow the Council to deliver services to the public.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

6.3. Officers & Members of the Council are involved in the development of the
1 MTFS & Bridging the Gap proposals.

6.3. The proposals have been considered by the appropriate Scrutiny
2 Committee.

6.3. Public engagement will be undertaken as part of the budget setting process.
3

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

6.4. The MTFS forecasts the financial position of the Council for a 5 year period
1 and provides information upon which the Council can plan for the future.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

6.5. Included within the Bridging the Gap programme is a proposal focussing on
1 an evaluation of the long term impact of prevention and early intervention
on reducing the requirement for high cost services and better outcomes for
our most vulnerable residents.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

6.6. Achievement of the Bridging the Gap proposals will require cross Council
1 working and collaboration / partnerships with other stakeholders.

6.7 ***Integration(across service areas)***

6.7. Bridging the Gap proposals have been developed across the Council and
1 are crosscutting in nature.

6.8 ***EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

6.8. Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken on the opportunities taken
1 forward as part of the Bridging the Gap proposals.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 *State how the work will be monitored e.g. through scrutiny or directorate
performance management arrangements*

The MTFS & Bridging the Gap will be considered by Scrutiny and Council
as part of the Council's financial planning arrangements.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

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BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2020/2021 to 2024/2025

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1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Council's key financial planning document, is an integral part of the Council's Corporate Business Planning arrangements. The Strategy covers a 5 year period and is updated, reviewed and approved annually by Council. The Strategy will change over time as new opportunities, or policy decisions affect the financial position of the Council.
- 1.2 The MTFS includes a forward look over the next five years to assess the spending requirements the Council is likely to face to deliver its priorities and the level of cuts i.e. reducing or stopping services that will need to be made to ensure the Council can set a balanced budget each year. It provides guidance for officers and Members on the short, medium and longer term financial challenges and enables advance financial planning to be carried out, assisting the Council to understand and meet future demands. Planning now to meet known or anticipated changes in the future provides greater opportunity to phase in the impact of the changes.
- 1.3 The Strategy sets out how the Council will finance its priorities, having regard for the Corporate Plan.

2. **Corporate Plan**

- 2.1 The Council approved the Corporate Plan 2018-2022 in April 2018 and this sets out the Council's Vision, Values and Priorities and these are:

Our Core Vision:

Proud Heritage
Strong Communities
Brighter Future

Our Core Values:

Proud &
Ambitious

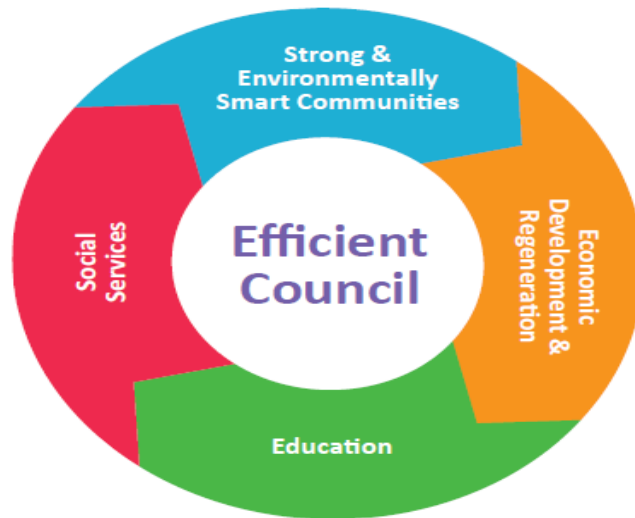
Trust &
Integrity

Working
Together

Fair &
Equitable

Raising
Aspirations

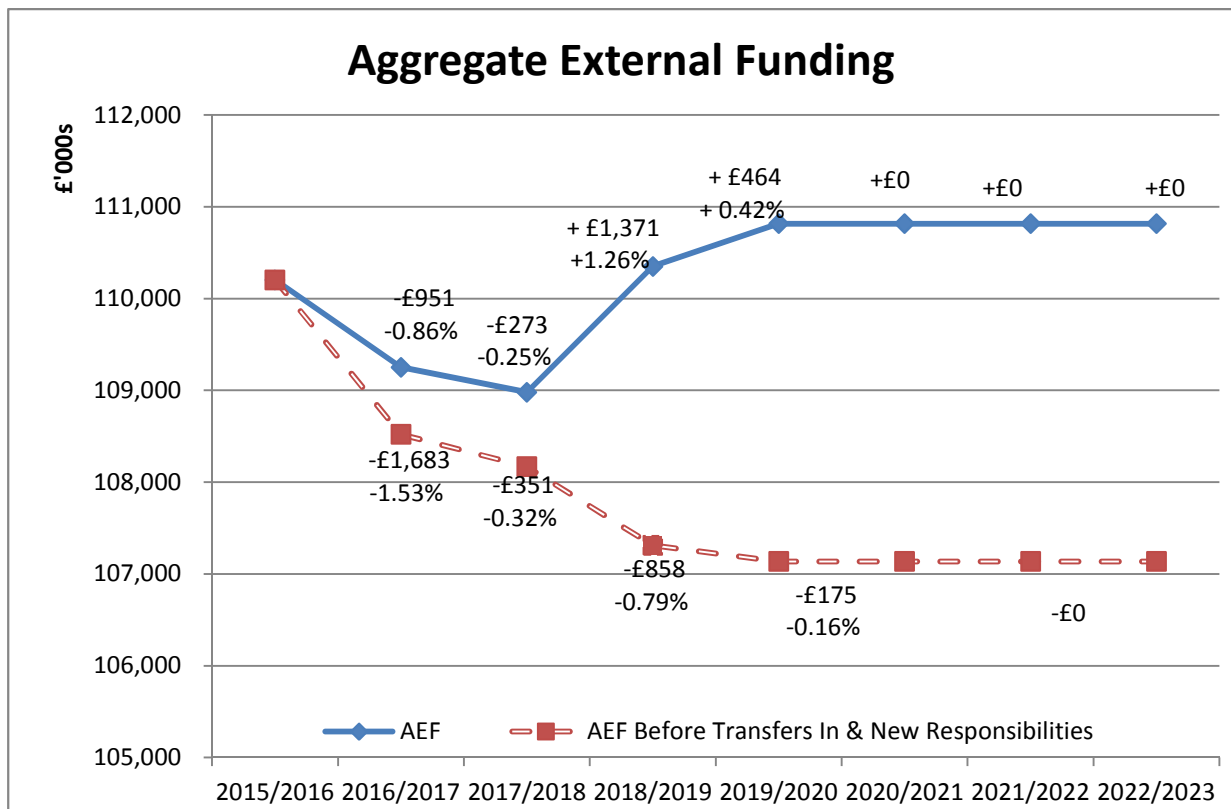
Our Priorities:



3. Revenue Settlement

- 3.1 The Council's revenue settlements for the period 2015/2016 to 2019/2020 and forecast of future settlements is shown in Figure 1. This illustrates the actual cash impact and the impact excluding transfers into the settlement for grants and new responsibilities.

Figure 1: Trend in Aggregate External Funding



- 3.2 The graph demonstrates that on a cash basis the funding received from Wales Government has increased overall by £610,000 between 2015/16 and 2019/20. However in real terms, when Grants transferring into the settlement and new responsibilities are excluded, the funding has reduced by in excess of £3m. This equates to a total of £9.7m over the last 4 years.

This when combined with increased demand for services and increasing costs have contributed to the financial challenge the council has faced in delivering its services to the residents of Blaenau Gwent.

3.3 **2019/2020 Revenue Budget**

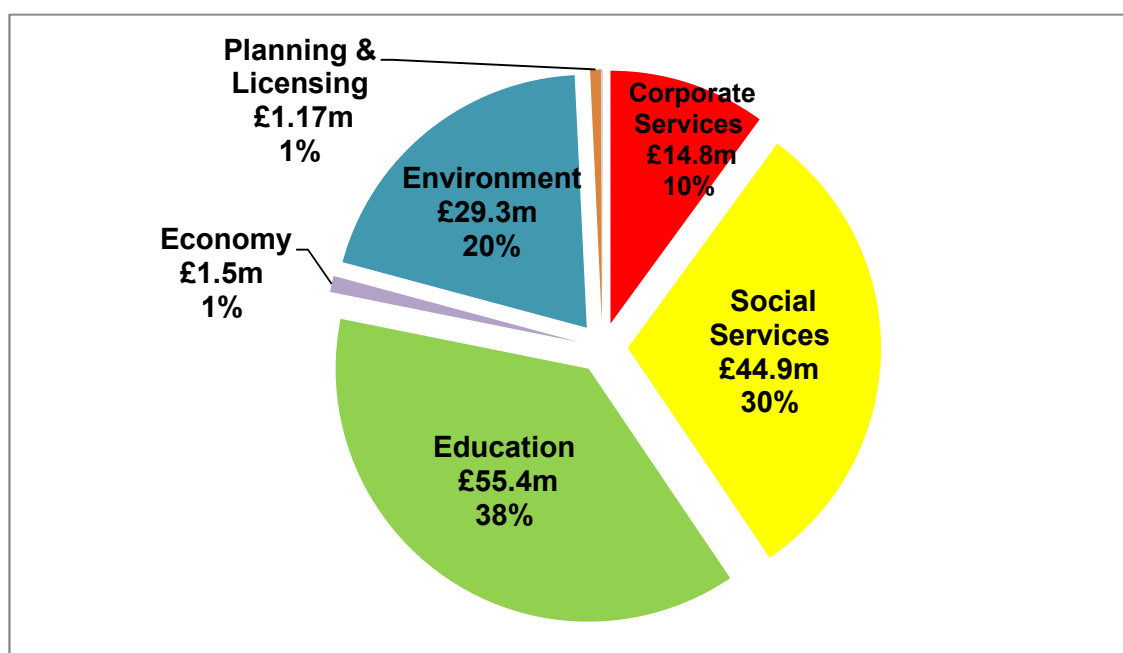
- 3.4 The revenue funding the Council received in 2019/2020 from Welsh Government was equivalent to a cash flat settlement when compared to 2018/2019. The all Wales increase in the Local Government Settlement was 0.2%.

- 3.5 In setting the 2019/2020 budget, the Council agreed:-

- All grants transferring into the Settlement would be transferred to the relevant service
- Additional funding of £1.43m to be built into the budget, over and above pay and price inflation, to address existing and emerging cost pressures
- Savings proposals of £3.4m
- No draw from the General Reserve
- Budget Contingency of £117,000
- Council Tax increase of 4.9%

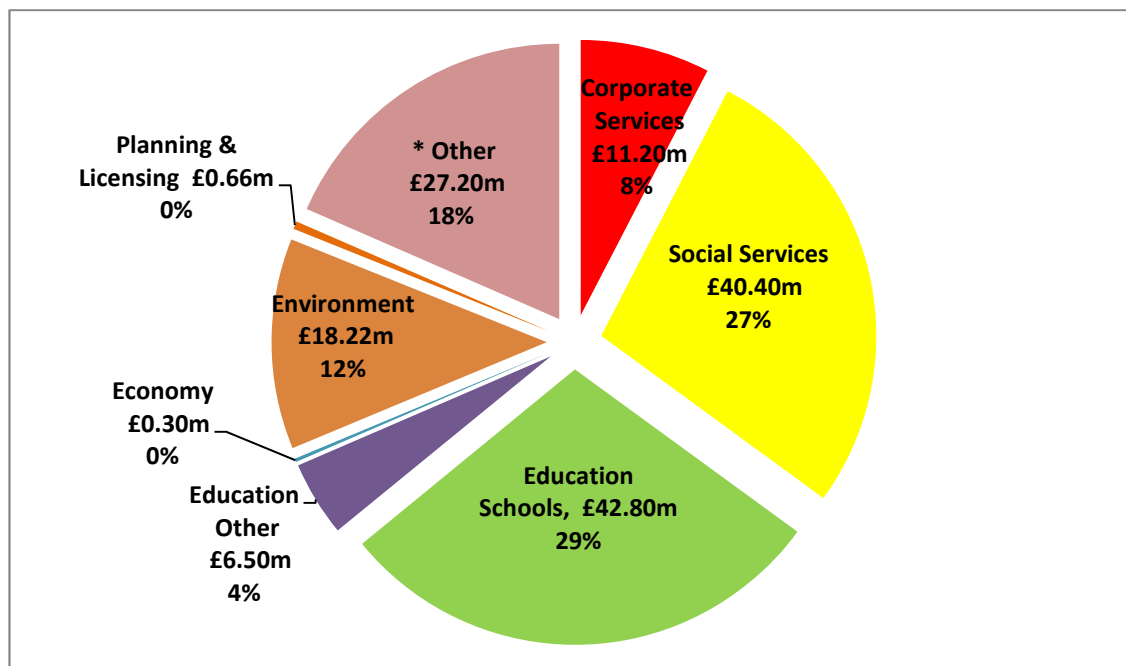
3.6 For the current financial year, the Council agreed a net budget requirement of £144.36m. The budget allocation across Portfolios is shown in figure 2 below:

Figure 2: 2019/2020 Revenue Budget per Portfolio



3.7 The graph shown in figure 3 shows the direct costs of delivering services across portfolios.

Figure 3: 2019/2020 Direct Service Costs per Portfolio

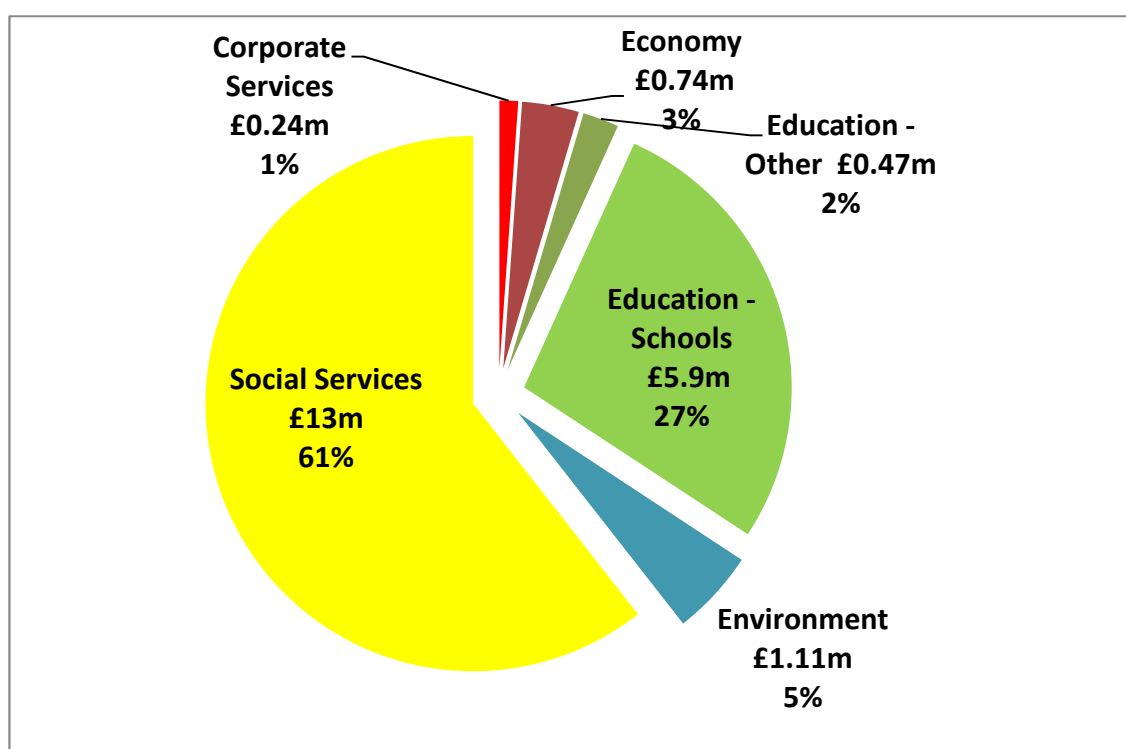


*Other includes:

- Capital charges - £8.4m
- Fire & Apprenticeship Levy – £3.7m
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme - £9m
- IT, Administration Buildings & Insurance - £5.1m
- Other - £1m

- 3.8 In addition, to the agreed net budget, the Council spends a further £22m per annum to support the delivery of services. The Council receives specific revenue grant to fund this expenditure. The assumption within the MTFS is that all grants will continue at the current level, and any reduction or termination of grant will be offset by a reduction in service expenditure.
- 3.9 Specific revenue grant allocations across Portfolios is shown in figure 4 below and it shows the current grant awards for 2019/2020 as at November 2019.

Figure 4: Specific Revenue Grant Funding Per Portfolio 2019/2020



4. **Review and Update of the MTFS**

- 4.1 The MTFS must be regularly reviewed to ensure preparedness from a financial planning perspective. The review will include considering and updating assumptions used in the Strategy to reflect new / emerging information for example inflation, changing demographics, service demand and policy changes etc.
- 4.2 The table below identifies the key assumptions included in the MTFS.

Table 1: Key Financial Planning Assumptions

	Financial Planning Key Assumptions
Pay	<p>Non-Teaching staff – 2% per annum pay increase have been assumed for all years.</p> <p>Teaching Staff – WG have agreed a 2.75% (5% for the lowest grades) increase to teachers pay effective from September 2019. A further 2% has been assumed for subsequent academic years.</p>

	<p>Incremental Pay Progression – the estimated cost of annual pay progression has been applied based on existing staffing</p> <p>Pension – 1% per annum increase on employers contribution to the pension scheme (non- teachers). An actuarial revaluation is due during 2019/2020.</p> <p>Teachers' Pension Scheme – Employers pension contributions increases by 7.12% from September 2019. It has been assumed that additional funding will be provided in the settlement to fund these costs.</p> <p>Vacancy Factor of 1.5% has been built into staffing budgets.</p>
Price Inflation (Non Schools)	<p>Price Inflation – 2% per annum increase has been applied to non-employee related spend (excluding utilities), this is in line with CPI projections. Actual increases will be considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Utilities – 4% per annum increase have been applied to utility costs based on the assumption used in the Re:Fit programme.</p> <p>Income Inflation – Increase in discretionary fees and charges in line with inflation of 2% per annum.</p> <p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme – This has been increased in line with the assumed increase in Council Tax of 4.0%.</p>
Schools Growth (ISB)	<p>No inflationary increase has been applied to the Individual Schools Budget (ISB), it is assumed to be cash flat for the term of the MTFS in line with the assumption for Welsh Government funding.</p> <p>Projected increases or decreases in pupil numbers will impact upon the ISB – for 2020/21 pupil numbers are predicted to increase by 35.5 (based upon September 2019 data).</p>

Specific Grant Funding	This has been assumed to remain at the 2018/2019 level (as identified on the Revenue Grants Register). It is assumed that any reduction in funding is offset by a reduction in expenditure.
Capital Financing	<p>Capital Financing – Capital financing costs reflect the schemes within the current capital programme, with borrowing costs for future schemes funded from either USB (Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing) or prudential borrowing. For 2022/2023, the MRP charge will increase to approximately £2.6m per annum from £0.75m in 2021/2022. However, this is still lower than to MRP charge under the previous policy of £3.8m.</p> <p>The revised MRP policy has enabled the MRP charges to be reduced by £15m during the period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022. The MRP figure is incorporated into the overall revenue budget through the Capital Adjustment. Taking into account the above, the forecast overall impact in the Capital Adjustment in 2022/2023, will be an increased cost of £1.8m per annum.</p>
Council Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax increased by 4.9% in 2019/2020. For planning purposes it has been assumed that Council Tax will continue to increase by 4% per annum. (1% increase will generate approximately £333,000 additional funding). • No additional funding has been assumed at this stage from an increase in the Council Tax Base for 2020/2021 onwards.
Estimated Funding reduction (Aggregate External Funding)	<p>For 2019/20, Welsh Government day to day spending will increase by over 2%, in real term, the largest increase since before the start of austerity measures in 2010/11 (Wales Fiscal Analysis Briefing Note – Analysing the Welsh Government Final Budget 2019-2020 and Local Government Settlement)</p> <p>Across Wales the average Local Government settlement increased by 0.2% with Blaenau Gwent receiving a cash flat settlement, after allowing for a</p>

	number of grants transferring into the settlement. Welsh Government does not currently provide funding forecasts for future years – for planning purposes therefore a cash flat budget for Blaenau Gwent has been assumed for the next 5 years.
Reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The financial modelling assumes no draw from General or specific reserves.

4.3 **Medium Term Financial Forecast**

- 4.4 The table below identifies the funding gap after applying the above assumptions to the 2019/2020 approved Estimates.

Table 2: Assessed Budget Gap

	Medium Term Budget Gap				
	2020/2021 £'000	2021/2022 £'000	2022/2023 £'000	2023/2024 £'000	2024/2025 £'000
Draft Expenditure					
Draft Estimates	147,310	151,575	154,075	155,950	155,675
Revenue Grants	22,170	22,170	22,170	22,170	22,170
Assumed Savings	0	(3,000)	(2,320)	(4,530)	(2,695)
Cost Pressures	700	350	1,000	1,000	1,000
Growth	395	180	0	0	0
Adjusted Draft Budget	170,575	171,275	174,925	174,590	176,150
Draft Funding					
AEF	110,815	110,815	110,815	110,815	110,815
Council Tax	34,590	35,970	37,410	38,910	40,465
Revenue Grants	22,170	22,170	22,170	22,170	22,170
Total Draft Funding	167,575	168,955	170,395	171,895	173,450
Budget Gap	(3000)	(2,320)	(4,530)	(2,695)	(2,700)
Contribution to Reserves	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)
Adjusted Funding Gap	(3,200)	(2,520)	(4,730)	(2,895)	(2,900)

- 4.5 The table identifies a potential funding gap of £16.2m over the next 5 years should the Council continue to deliver services in their existing form.

4.6 **Additional Costs Built into the MTFS**

- 4.7 The draft estimates have been prepared based on the approved 2019/2020 budget and increased in line with the assumptions included in Table 1, and these costs are detailed in the table below:

Table 3: Estimated Additional Costs Compared to 2019/20 Budget

	2020/2021 £'000	2021/2022 £'000	2022/2023 £'000	2023/2024 £'000	2024/2025 £'000
Pay and Pension Inflation	1,427	1,420	1,417	1,426	1,444
General Inflation –					
Third party Expenditure	1,353	1,378	1,407	1,437	1,467
Fees & Charges	(259)	(265)	(261)	(276)	(281)
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	362	376	391	407	423
Capital Charges	257	67	1,809	0	0
TOTAL	3,996	3,850	5,654	3,903	3,980

4.8 **New and Emerging Cost Pressures**

- 4.9 New and emerging Cost Pressures and Growth items have been assumed at £1m per annum for 2022/2023 onwards.
- 4.10 Cost Pressures and Growth items totalling £1m and £0.5m have been included for 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 respectively. Cost pressures will be reviewed and updated to reflect new /emerging information for example the financial impact of Policy decisions and cost pressures emerging during the current financial year.

4.11 **Sensitivity Analysis**

- 4.12 The funding gap identified in table 2, is an indication of the financial challenge facing the Council. The assumptions used in the financial modelling may change over time. The following tables show the impact of changes on the Revenue Support Grant and potential decisions relating to Council Tax levels, pay & funding for Schools.

4.13 **Revenue Support Grant (RSG)**

- 4.14 Table 4 below indicates the impact on the funding gap based on a range of scenarios for Welsh Government funding as compared to the 2019/2020 base position. (Note: a +/-1% change in WG funding

equates to approximately £1.1m).

Table 4: Impact on RSG

	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Cash Flat (as per MTFS)	£3.2m	£2.5m	£4.7 m	£2.9m	£2.9m
Reduction of:					
1%	£4.3m	£3.6m	£5.8m	£4.0m	£4.0m
1.5%	£4.85m	£4.15m	£6.35m	£4.55m	£4.55m
2%	£5.4m	£4.7m	£6.9m	£5.1m	£5.1m
2.5%	£5.95m	£5.25m	£7.45m	£5.65m	£5.65m
3%	£6.5m	£5.8m	£8.0m	£6.2m	£6.2m
4%	£7.6m	£6.9m	£9.1m	£7.3m	£7.3m

4.15 **Council Tax**

- 4.16 The Council increased Council Tax in 2019/2020 by 4.9%. The Council Tax increase is assumed to be 4% each year through to 2024/2025 in the MTFS. The table below sets out the implications on the Council's resources on a range of scenarios on future changes:

Table 5: Impact of changes to Council Tax Assumptions

Council Tax	2020/2021 £'000	2021/2022 £'000	2022/2023 £'000	2023/2024 £'000	2024/2025 £'000
Increase in Council Tax Yield as per MTFS – 4% per annum	1,330	1,384	1,439	1,497	1,556
Increase in Council Tax Yield per year - 4%; 3.5%; 3%; 2.5% 2% (in respective years)	1,330	1,211	1,074	922	756
Impact on Funding Gap - Increase	0	+172	+365	+575	+800
3% increase per annum	998	1,028	1,058	1,090	1,123
Impact on Funding Gap - Increase	+332	+356	+381	+407	+433
6% increase per annum	1,995	2,115	2,242	2,377	2,519
Impact on Funding Gap - Decrease	-665	-737	-803	-880	-963

4.17 **Pay**

- 4.18 The MTFs provides for a pay award of 2% per annum totalling £920,000 for 2020/2021. A change in the assumption would impact as follows:

Table 6: Impact of Changes to Pay Assumptions

Assumption Change	+/- £'000
0.5%	230
0.6%	276
1.0%	460

4.19 **Individual School Budgets (ISB)**

- 4.20 The MTFs assumes no inflationary increase to the 2019/2020 ISB. However, at September 2019, there has been an overall increase in pupil demographics of 35 pupils, and the additional funding requirement has been included within Growth items.

The 2019/2020 ISB budget is £42.8m. A change in the assumption would impact on the funding gap as follows:

Table 7: Impact of changes to ISB Assumptions

Assumption Change	+/- £'000
0.5%	214
1%	428
2.0%	856

5. **BRIDGING THE GAP PROGRAMME**

- 5.1 The Council recognises the challenges that it faces in the short, medium and long terms and has developed a programme of Strategic Business Reviews to deal with potential gaps between anticipated funding and expenditure that aims to build financial resilience. Based on strategic themes our Bridging the Gap programme will identify savings opportunities, potential cost avoidance and new revenue streams. Designed to support a balanced budget it is also focussed on creating the conditions of a commercially minded council. This

includes seeking new revenue streams and ensuring resources are aligned to the strategic imperatives of the council. Following year on year funding reductions and the increased demand, the Council needs to redesign and reshape services in order to reduce costs and maximise income. The approach has a particular emphasis on:

- Maximising the potential of income generation and taking a clearly commercial approach where it is appropriate to do so;
- Re-procurement and re-negotiation of contracts;
- Exploiting the opportunity that digital transformation can provide;
- Making best use of our assets and property;
- Considering what action we can take to influence and reduce demand;
- Looking for opportunities to support residents to do more for themselves;
- Exploiting the opportunities to strengthen financial resilience by supporting growth in the borough

- 5.2 We will continue to ensure we have secured all efficiencies and are practicing robust 'housekeeping' throughout plus seeking potential to work differently through partnership and collaboration.
- 5.3 Table 8 and 9 provides a summary of the current Strategic Business Reviews, further detail on these proposals are attached as Appendix 1.
- 5.4 Table 8 highlights the current assessment of the range of savings that could be delivered between 2020/2021 and 2024/2025. For the period of this MTFS, this is currently assessed as between £5.4m and £7.9m
- 5.5 Table 9 highlights those reviews which are in the early stages of development with longer term outcomes anticipated.

Strategic Business Reviews											
			Estimated Achievement 2020/2021		Estimated Achievement 2021/2022		Estimated Achievement 2022/2023		Estimated Achievement 2023/2024 & 2024/2025		BRAG Status
Review	Corporate Priority	Scope	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	
<u>Maximising Income</u>											
Industrial Portfolio	Economic Development & Regeneration		100	100	100	150	100	100	0	50	
		To review the Council's Industrial Unit Portfolio to identify areas for improvement and opportunities for change to ensure the service operates to maximise income and income efficiency in our net income streams.									
Fees and Charges	Efficient Council		200	200	100	100	100	100	100	100	
		To review and develop an approach to the setting of fees and charges that reflects full cost recovery with options for an additional administration fee of approximately 30% where this is appropriate.									
Commercial Waste	Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities		23	23	64	64	96	96	0	0	
		To roll out a new Commercial Waste service borough wide. A capital bid was submitted to Welsh Government to purchase a new bespoke vehicle and receptacles. The bid was successful and secured £250,000 (Capital) for Blaenau Gwent's Commercial Waste Service. During the financial year 2019/2020, the Trade Waste Service will undergo a full revamp with an implementation date of 1 st April 2020.									

			Estimated Achievement 2020/2021		Estimated Achievement 2021/2022		Estimated Achievement 2022/2023		Estimated Achievement 2023/2024 & 2024/2025		BRAG Status
Review	Corporate Priority	Scope	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	
Income Recovery	Efficient Council		54	100							
		<p>To review current income recovery activities to ensure best / efficient practices in place.</p> <p>Objectives of the review will be to ensure:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income recovery policies are appropriate and include early intervention actions agreed Fees & charges are implemented payment in advance of service delivery (where appropriate) thereby avoiding costs of issuing invoices easy access to various payment methods use of technology is maximised 									
Commercial activity, investment and new income	Efficient Council				50	50	50	50	50	50	
		<p>This strategic review will focus on identifying additional commercial opportunities to supplement the current activities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees and charges Developing the Industrial Portfolio Current income from traded or shared services Property Investment inside the Borough and out of the Borough Investment in energy and low carbon activities Disposals or development of assets and property <p>The review will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service and baseline review of current commercial activities Opportunities to charge for discretionary services Opportunities for further traded or shared services. 									

			Estimated Achievement 2020/2021		Estimated Achievement 2021/2022		Estimated Achievement 2022/2023		Estimated Achievement 2023/2024 & 2024/2025		BRAG Status	
Review	Corporate Priority	Scope	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000		
<u>Maximising Resources</u>												
Third party expenditure – commissioning, procurement and contract management	Efficient Council		550	1,000	250	550	250	550	250	550		
		The Council holds a number of high value contracts with third party suppliers across all of its services. When re-procuring at the end of a contract all steps will be taken to ensure value for money is gained and savings achieved. Similarly during the life cycle of the contract, officer will attempt to make efficiencies where possible. Through a targeted approach to commissioning, procurement, contract and supplier management it is anticipated that savings can be identified.										
Assets and Property	Economic Development & Regeneration		130	210	100	210	150	210	0	0		
		The Council has a range of property assets that is maintains and has a cost pressure relating to its Corporate Landlord role. This review will undertake a strategic review of these assets to ascertain their value to the Council both in financial terms and what service value they afford. The aim of this strategic business review is to identify how best to maximise these assets to strengthen our balance sheet. It will consider the future use of the assets and identify those that may provide opportunities for development, commercialisation or sale. This review would include buildings and green spaces and will align with the growth strategy.										

			Estimated Achievement 2020/2021		Estimated Achievement 2021/2022		Estimated Achievement 2022/2023		Estimated Achievement 2023/2024 & 2024/2025		BRAG Status
Review	Corporate Priority	Scope	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	
Maximising Enablers											
Customer Experience	Efficient Council				50	50	50	50	50	50	
		Better customer experience should lead to reduced cost for the Council. This Strategic Business Review will consider the most frequent customer contact issues and review the end to end experience from the customer view. Changes and improvements in those experiences will be developed to enable customer to resolve their issues seamlessly, enabling them to self-serve as much as possible to ensure our resources are deployed for those you cannot self-serve.									
Work Place Transformation	Efficient Council		50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	
		Building on the first phase of work place transformation this strategic business review is design to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify cost savings in relation to ICT expenditure and contract management Review the print and telephony arrangements to reduce costs Implement a digital strategy to maximise the use of technology Realise the benefits of Office 365 and collaborative working tools and reduce duplication of other ICT solutions Enable remote working to release dependency on our building (linked to the assets and property Strategic Review) Develop our employee offer and become an employer of choice.									

			Estimated Achievement 2020/2021		Estimated Achievement 2021/2022		Estimated Achievement 2022/2023		Estimated Achievement 2023/2024 & 2024/2025		BRAG Status
Review	Corporate Priority	Scope	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	Low £000	High £000	
Growth & Investment Strategy											
Growth Strategy	Economic Development & Regeneration		220	320	150	150	300	300	100	100	
		Our Growth Strategy describes our ambition for developing our Borough and creating new communities. This will involve a programme of housing development that will see an impact on our revenue streams through increase Council Tax. This will contribute to the MTFS and is a critical element of building strong communities.									
Low Carbon	Efficient Council; Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities		138	138			200	350	200	350	
		Develop a Low Carbon Plan which sets out an ambitious vision and targets for BG to become a Low Carbon Borough and supports the corporate objectives of being a more Efficient Council and Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities; Scope should include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessment of current carbon footprint to identify current good practice, gaps and opportunities to move towards being low carbon;Identify Council operations which can make a significant contribution towards a low carbon target – property, fleet, digital, energy, schools, housing – and a more efficient council, this will include where investment is needed to achieve outcomes;Community and Partner engagement to achieve a ‘Whole Borough’ approach utilising (for example) Public Service Board, Town & Community Councils, Youth Forum, Leisure Trust and other existing partnerships;Identify links to Regeneration Themes and projects taking place across the Region through CCRCD, Valleys Task Force and Tech Valleys;									
TOTAL ESTIMATED ACHIEVEMENT (@ November 2019)			1,465	2,141	914	1,374	1,346	1,856	800	1,300	

Table 9: Strategic Business Reviews			
Strategic Business Reviews			
Review	Corporate Priority	Scope	BRAG Status
<u>Maximising Resources</u>			
Use of external grants	Efficient Council	<p>This strategic business review is concerned with the bidding, receipt and deployment of additional grant funding that is available to the council and its partners. It is estimated that the organisation receives approximately £22m additional funding to support our priorities. This review will explore how the grants are utilised across the council to deliver outcomes for our residents. It will also review our governance arrangements to increase transparency and a One Council approach to seeking and using this additional funding.</p> <p>This review will also consider the impact of the removal of these grants and the risk placed on core funding.</p>	
<u>Managing Demand</u>			
Reducing demand by changing behaviours	Efficient Council	The Council's role in place shaping means that we need to encourage and enable communities to do as much as they can for themselves and to build resilience. This strategic business review will identify those services that experience high demand to identify any opportunities to work closely with our communities to encourage changes in behaviour. This has been done in many other locations to deal with issues relating to littering, payment of council tax and antisocial activities.	
Prevention and early intervention services	Social Services & Education	This review will focus on an evaluation of the long term impact of prevention and early intervention on reducing the requirement for high cost services and better outcomes for our most vulnerable residents.	
<u>Maximising Enablers</u>			
Using data to deliver better services	Efficient Council	Becoming a 21 st Century Council means using data and insight to drive decision making. This Strategic Business Review will identify opportunities for the sharing of data to design services and target our resources to deliver outcomes for our residents.	

- 5.4 As opportunities are identified through these strategic business reviews the MTFS will be updated to reflect the impact on each financial year. Some of the reviews will inevitably take longer to have an impact but will potentially yield higher returns in the latter years of this MTFS.

6. **MTFS – SCHOOLS**

- 6.1 For 2019/2020, the Individual Schools Budget received an uplift of 1.6%, and this was due to a number of specific grants transferring into the settlement to fund teachers' pay award (£288,000) and free school meals (£180,000) and an increase in pupil population and pensions (£200,000).
- 6.2 During the current financial year, schools have received a specific grant of £158,000 to fund the teachers' pay award, and Welsh Government have recently announced additional specific grant funding of £12.8m across Wales for 2019/2020 towards the pay award from September 2019. It has been assumed that this funding will continue however WG has given no indication as to whether this funding will continue into 2020/2021 or future years.
- 6.3 The table below highlights the potential cost increases in relation to school expenditure, compared to assumed funding increases over the next 5 years, based on the assumptions identified in table 1 above.

Table 10: Potential Cost Increases for Schools

	2020/2021 £'000	2021/2022 £'000	2022/2023 £'000	2023/2024 £'000	2024/2025 £'000
Expenditure					
Pay increases	1,240	1,300	1,350	1,420	1,490
Pension Increase – APT&C	100	105	110	110	110
Pension Increase – Teachers	1,480	0	0	0	0
Inflation – non pay	180	185	190	190	200
Inflation – Utilities	40	40	45	45	50
Total Expenditure Increase	3,040	1,630	1,695	1,765	1,850
Funding					
Proposed Increase in ISB	0	0	0	0	0
Pupil Demographics	395	0	180	0	150
Additional RSG (Grants transferred)	1,480	0	0	0	0
Total Funding Increase	1,875	0	180	0	150
Funding Gap	(1,165)	(1,630)	(1,515)	(1,765)	(1,700)

- 6.5 The table indicates that schools are potentially facing financial cost pressures of between £1.1 m and £1.8m per annum based on an annual cash flat budget for the ISB. This assumes that additional funding will continue to be provided by Welsh Government to mitigate the forecast additional costs from the increase in the employers' pension contributions for teaching staff.
- 6.6 School Balances have declined over the last few years, however in 2018/2019 there was an overall increase of £774,000, and this increase can be attributed to the specific grants schools received during the year and a decrease in the deficit balances of individual schools after implementing a number of actions to mitigate the deficit.

Table 11 – Actual School Balances (Surplus/ (Deficit)

Phase	2016/2017 £'000	2017/2018 £'000	2018/2019 £,000
Secondary	325	189	285
All Through	128	(847)	(762)
Primary	552	857	1,285
Special	(35)	81	245
TOTAL	970	280	1,054

7. **Reserves Strategy**

- 7.1 Financial resilience is a Council priority and this includes ensuring that reserves are adequate to be able to respond to unexpected events, emerging need or unforeseen budget pressures.
- 7.2 General reserves are unallocated amounts that enable the Council to meet non-specific and/or unforeseen financial liabilities.
- 7.3 The Council agreed a protocol for the management of general reserves in 2016, and this specifies a target level for general reserves of 4% of the last reported actual net revenue expenditure (as included in the Revenue Outturn return).
- 7.4 The level of the general reserve at 31 March 2019 is £5.894m, an in-year increase during the year of £0.412m. This outturn position represents 4.39% of net revenue expenditure as reported for 2018/19, exceeding the target by 0.39%.
- 7.5 During 2018/2019, a “Windfall” protocol was agreed by Council, whereby any in year windfall payments would be allocated directly to General Reserves in order to assist in strengthening the Council’s financial resilience and increase the general reserve.
- 7.6 Earmarked reserves are held by the Council to meet potential future expenditure on specifically identified risks, liabilities and commitments.
- 7.7 In 2015, a protocol was agreed for the establishment, retention, management, review and reporting of earmarked reserves. In addition to the statutory requirements to consider the adequacy of reserves when setting the budget and the extensive disclosures

made in the Statement of Accounts, member scrutiny has been enhanced by the preparation of detailed quarterly monitoring reports. The Chief Officer Resources also holds regular meetings during the year to consider the ongoing requirement and value of earmarked reserves held.

- 7.8 The level of earmarked reserves has declined from £21.437m at 1 April 2012 to £6.57m at 31 March 2019 (a reduction of £14.87m or 69.4%). This decrease in reserves highlights the application of sums for their intended purposes and to some extent the impact of reduced levels of funding for the Authority as a consequence of austerity.
- 7.9 In setting the 2019/20 budget, no draw down from the general reserve has been planned. A contingency of £117,000 has been built into the budget which should increase the general reserve further by March 2020.
- 7.10 It is the Council's intention to maintain the general reserves at a minimum level of 4% and increase the overall level of reserves over time to support the Council's financial resilience.
- 7.11 Given the current level of the General Reserve, it is not planned to utilise any of this reserve to balance the annual budget. The establishment of a budget contingency within the annual budget setting process is proposed of £200,000 per annum, to allow the replenishment of the Council's useable reserves.

This would result in an increase to reserves of £1m over the period of the MTFS.

8. **RISKS**

- 8.1 The Corporate Plan, MTFS and the Bridging the Gap programme are designed to complement each other. They provide the narrative that describes the outcomes we plan to deliver, the financial envelope we intend to work within, and our approach to deliver a balance budget in 2021/2022 and beyond whilst creating the conditions for improved financial resilience.
- 8.2 The risks identified with the Medium Term Financial Strategy are:

1. Exiting the European Union

There is a risk of a slow-down in the UK economic growth arising from exiting the EU with or without a deal. The impact could include an increase in both costs and demand for services.

The impact on the wider economy will depend to a large extent on the precise terms of the withdrawal agreement. It is not considered necessary at this point in time to set aside financial resources in the MTFS to assist in such a scenario. However this will need to be carefully monitored in the subsequent weeks/months.

2. Uncertainty around future WG Funding levels

The absence of any future year guidance on levels of likely settlement from WG.

3. MTFS Assumptions

The budget gap is based on a number of assumptions and any changes may have a significant impact on the funding gap.

The assumptions are reviewed and any potential changes monitored. Section 4.11 to 4.22 above models the impact on the funding gap for a range of scenarios.

4. Achievement of Bridging the Gap proposals

The achievement of planned savings is monitored as part of the budget monitoring & reporting process. Corrective action is taken where adverse variances are identified.

5. Grant Funding

The MTFS assumes that grant funding remains constant. Any decrease in funding or the termination of grant programmes could have a significant impact for the Council, particularly for those grants that are supporting service provision such as Families First, Flying Start, and ICF etc.

Welsh Treasurers works closely with the WLGA and Welsh Government to ensure that grants are maintained or transferred into the settlement.

Where grants are reduced, Services will need to ensure that expenditure is reduced in line with the grant.

6. Volume of Demand

Increased demand for services poses significant risks to planning and this will be monitored.

Document History			
Author	Version		Date
G. Taylor	Draft v1	Corporate Overview	10 July 2019
		Council	11 July 2019
G. Taylor	Draft v2	Informal Executive/CLT	20 November 2019
G. Taylor	Final v1	Corporate Overview	5 December 2019
		Council	12 December 2019

Bridging the Gap Theme		Industrial Portfolio Review								
Bridging the Gap Proposal:		Industrial Portfolio Review							Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:		Cllr David Davies, Executive Member Economy & Regeneration								
Officer Proposal Sponsor:		Ellie Fry Head of Regeneration & Development								
Impact on other Portfolios:										
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	100	100	100	150	100	100	0	50	-	-
<p>Strategic Business Review:</p> <p><i>Work undertaken in phases 1 – 5 to identify opportunities and risks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specialist industrial property consultant has been procured to assist the project team with the recommendations that were identified through the CIPFA report. The primary action from the work so far is to expedite the capital work required to be done to improve the business units and their environs which enables us to rent all/more of the units and begin service charges. Alongside the capex work we would need to take a policy change through Council to enable us to use the portfolio for commercial and economic purposes. This will then unlock the accounting part of the project which will also require change to enable management of the portfolio through a trading account. The capex work is being estimated at the moment with a view to spending the capital before the end of the financial year. The value of the portfolio will improve overall by £300-£350 per annum with the improvements completed. Other savings through recharges will also be possible once the capex work has been completed. 										
<p>Opportunities identified:</p> <p><i>Potential opportunities identified that give indicative figures referenced above</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategic opportunities are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing the policy under which we hold the industrial units to that one where principally they are held for commercial purposes This will allow us to manage the portfolio differently, improve the revenue to maximise the current income we could obtain from the portfolio – amounting to around £300 - £350 extra per annum once the trading account, etc is in place. Undertake the backlog in work required to the portfolio with the Brexit Resilience funding both units and landscape/environment Review all service charges and insurance re-charges to pass onto tenants. 										
<p>Challenges and risks</p> <p><i>What needs to happen to realise the opportunities and stretch the impact to deliver phases 5 - 8?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of work required to be done to enable the portfolio to achieve its target income. Further technical work to unlock opportunities around service charging and rates. Short term compliance challenges that require further funding around ensuring units are statutorily compliant - asbestos, electrical and energy performance – to be addressed in the short term plan to enable the longer term actions to happen. Setting a realistic budget for future years' maintenance to continue to improve the value of the stock. Long term efficient and effective management of the units for better customer satisfaction which can offer BG a better return on its investment - currently risk is that we are doing neither. To satisfy this risk will be a longer term cultural change due to the complexity of the challenges and risks. 										
Invest to save options:										

What additional capacity /investment would further mitigate the risks and maximise the opportunities? How would this investment be set off by additional savings or cost avoidance?

- External expertise has been brought in to put together a detailed assessment of the portfolio and to enable the Council to judge its value. This can be offset through the increased income from the portfolio by around £300 - £350 per annum – resulting in approximately £1m income p/a.
- External expertise is currently in place to assist with shaping the new role(s) and future management of the portfolio. This is an existing role in the Council but will be reshaped to fit the need
- Additional investment will be required each year to ensure that once the portfolio begins to improve that there is sufficient funding to continue the correct levels of maintenance and management. This figure and the management model are yet to be finalised.
- The opportunity to invest in the industrial portfolio to increase the rental value of the units has been taken up. Until the financial treatment of the portfolio is changed the yield is unable to be calculated however we understand that the overall value of the portfolio could go from £7.4m to £12m.
- A future option includes the potential for BG to invest in further industrial developments, as part of a mixed portfolio, and increase returns into BG's overall budget.

Actions:

What will happen during phases 6 – 8 including, involvement of Executive sponsor.

- Finish identification and procurement of the capital work
- Continue operational improvements in the management of the portfolio
- Work with the external consultants to deliver the policy, management and financial changes required.
- Work to deliver the identified opportunities to feed into the MTFS

Executive decisions:	Policy, financial management, budget
Scrutiny Route:	Yes
Consultation:	
EqlA:	

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Income							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Fees and Charges						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Executive Member – Corporate Services							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Chief Officer Commercial							
Impact on other Portfolios:			All							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	200	200	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Strategic Business Review: This Strategic Business Review has focussed on checking that agreed uplifts in fees and charges have been applied, the fees and charges reflect full cost recovery where this is appropriate and that all options for applying fees and charges are explored to provide choice to members. A full cost recovery calculator has been established and tested against a range of fees and charges.										
Opportunities identified: The Strategic Business Review has identified four options for the future: Applying stretch income targets where over achievement is regularly reached; Applying full cost recovery calculator across all fees and charges to identify where the Council is subsidising services; Applying a variety of inflationary uplifts where the market would allow - many of the current fees and charges are based on an assessment of economic activity in the community which has changed; Seek new income for services that are currently provided free but where the Council has the discretion to charge for.										
Challenges and risks The fees and charges Strategic Business Review is closely linked to the income recovery Strategic Business Review. Our view of the community's ability to meet increased fees and charges needs to be considered alongside the unintended consequences of applying fees and charges to currently subsidised or free provision. Scenarios need to be presented to members so that they can make choices in line with their strategic objectives and knowledge of the community.										
Invest to save options: None identified at this time.										
Actions: Review of current fees and charges levels with budget holders and service providers to identify opportunities for stretch targets; Application of the full cost recovery model to understand any levels of subsidy for services; Modelling the application of 1%, 2%, 3% and 4% inflation levels on current fees and charges; Identification of new income from areas where fees and charges are not applied but where services are provided.										
Executive decisions:	MTFS and Bridging the Gap Programme									
Scrutiny Route:	Corporate Overview Scrutiny – Autumn 2019									
Consultation:	Any changes in Fees and Charges would be included in consultation processes with the public as part of consultation in relation to setting the budget									
EqlA:	Screening to be undertaken prior to any variations in setting of fees and charges									

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Income							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Commercial Waste						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Executive Member – Environment							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Richard Crook							
Impact on other Portfolios:										
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	23	23	64	64	96	96				
<p>Strategic Business Review:</p> <p>To roll out a new Commercial Waste service borough wide. The current Commercial waste Service is not fit for purpose and needs to be totally revamped. As a result, a capital bid was submitted to Welsh Government to purchase a new bespoke vehicle and receptacles. The bid was successful and secured £250,000 (Capital) for Blaenau Gwent's Commercial Waste Service.</p> <p>During the financial year 2019/2020, the Trade Waste Service will undergo a full revamp with an implementation date of 1st April 2020. (Appendix 1) will give an overview of the key actions during the next 12 months in order for us to generate additional income for the Council.</p>										
<p>Opportunities identified:</p> <p>During the financial year 2019/2020, the Trade Waste Service will undergo a full revamp with an implementation date of 1st April 2020. (Appendix 1) will give an overview of the key actions during the next 12 months in order for us to generate additional income for the Council.</p>										
<p>Challenges and risks:</p> <p>There is a risk that by introducing a revised pricing strategy, existing Trade Waste customers may decide to purchase a Trade Waste Service from another waste operator.</p> <p>There is a risk that the Authority is in breach of legislation if it does not offer a Trade Waste service for the collection of separate materials.</p> <p>There is a risk that the improvements do not generate the modelled increases in revenue.</p>										
<p>Invest to save options:</p> <p>Non at this time</p>										
<p>Actions:</p> <p>To implement a Trade Waste Collection Service from April 2020</p>										
Executive decisions:	MTFS and Bridging the Gap Programme									
Scrutiny Route:	Community Services Scrutiny 2020/21									
Consultation:	With staff affected by changes in contract arrangements									
EqlA:	Screening to be undertaken prior to the commencement of any new service									

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Income							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Income Recovery						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Councillor Nigel Daniels, Leader of the Council							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Rhian Hayden, Chief Officer Resources							
Impact on other Portfolios:			Crosscutting proposals across various income budgets							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	54	100								
<p>Strategic Business Review:</p> <p>The scope of the review is to review current income recovery activities to ensure best / efficient practices are in place to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income is maximised Recovery policies are appropriate & include early intervention actions Customers have easy access to a variety of payment methods including direct debit & other electronic means Payment in advance of service delivery (where appropriate) to minimise administration costs of issuing invoices and subsequent recovery costs Use of technology is maximised Costs of collection is reduced <p>For Council Tax, Housing Benefits & Sundry Accounts current levels of debt, historic write off of debts and debtor profiles have been analysed (against ACORN classifications) to identify potential measures that could be implemented to minimise debt. This analysis has identified a strong correlation between those households with Council debt with those geographical areas classified as having moderate means, striving families & struggling estates.</p> <p>Discussions with external stakeholders has also highlighted an increased number of BG residents approaching them for money management & debt advice – suggesting that some families are struggling to pay their bills.</p> <p>Current systems and operating policies are also being reviewed to measure their appropriateness and what changes can be implemented to improve efficiency of the activity.</p> <p>Visits to other LA's have taken place – by and large collection practices are very similar.</p> <p>Some process / procedural differences have been identified which may improve the efficiency of collection activity.</p>										
<p>Opportunities identified:</p> <p>Potential opportunities identified that give indicative figures referenced above</p>										
<p>To support residents it is proposed that working with partners the Council:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> take a proactive approach to enable Blaenau Gwent residents to maximize their income, by advising them of potential entitlements e.g. Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Council Tax Reduction Scheme encourage struggling individuals to seek advice and support <p>To identify and test the most suitable method of engagement / support with residents a pilot scheme is to be implemented within the Flying Start Hub in Cefn Golau</p> <p>Colleagues within Flying Start, Housing Benefit & Revenues will develop the potential approaches and test their effectiveness prior to roll out further.</p>										
<p>This could increase in year council tax collection rate (potential one year cash flow benefit).</p>										

<p>Develop Corporate Income Recovery Policy Review CTRS policy and backdating arrangements Improve efficiency of collection processes to 1)Reduce levels of write off 2) Reduce administration costs. Areas already identified are:-</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing payment in advance of service delivery (where appropriate) implementing an online self-serve module for customers encourage greater take up of direct debits or other electronic payment methods Allocate Council Tax payments to current debt rather than past debt 	
<p>The above changes should enable resource efficiencies to be made.</p>	
<p>Challenges and risks What needs to happen to realise the opportunities and stretch the impact to deliver phases 5 - 8? Challenges : The Income Recovery Strategic Business Review is closely linked to the Fees & Charges Strategic Business Review. Householders to be supported to help them manage & meet their liabilities – this may involve signposting to other organisations or identifying potential entitlements such as CTRS etc. Review of CTRS policy to ensure backdating arrangements are appropriate. Increased use of digital means to correspond / interact with customers.</p> <p>Risks: Increased entitlement to CTRS may result in a cost pressure for that budget.</p>	
<p>Invest to save options: What additional capacity /investment would further mitigate the risks and maximise the opportunities? How would this investment be set off by additional savings or cost avoidance? None identified currently.</p>	
<p>Actions: What will happen during phases 6 – 8 including, involvement of Executive sponsor. Continued review of Council Tax Collection Activities (with CIPFA) CTRS Policy to reviewed / revised Corporate Income recovery Policy to be developed Resident support pilot to be implemented</p>	
Executive decisions:	Revised / New policies to be introduced
Scrutiny Route:	Corporate Overview Scrutiny – Autumn 2019
Consultation:	Revised / New Policy development
EqIA:	To be undertaken during policy revision / development

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Income							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Commercial Activities						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Executive Member – Corporate Services							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Chief Officer Commercial							
Impact on other Portfolios:			All							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	-	-	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Strategic Business Review: This Strategic Business Review is closely linked to the review of fees and charges. During this phase the focus has been on understanding those services that are effectively trading as opposed to raising income through the application of fees or charges. With support from APSE a core officer group considered the scope of truly commercial activity and this will inform the future Commercial Strategy.										
Opportunities identified: Develop a critical understanding of the organisational culture and the extent to which it supports an entrepreneurial approach Governance framework for assessing commercially viable opportunities. Detailed analysis examining local markets and developing live business cases – take trading initiatives to business case stage Business case development identifying legal, financial, commercial, strategic objectives, operational considerations and risks Assess strategic potential and identify obstacles and barriers to progress.										
Challenges and risks The strategic intention behind becoming a commercial council needs to be explored and agreed with Members and Senior Leaders to establish corporate objectives for trading and charging. The organisation needs to understand the conditions for successful commercial activity, the strategic potential and identify obstacles and barriers to progress. There is a danger in progressing with trading initiatives without fully formed and tested business cases being in place plus an appreciation of the impact of trading on local businesses where the Council will be competing aggressively in the market.										
Invest to save options: Support is requested to undertake a diagnostic assessment of commercial opportunities. This would involve on-site meetings with key service managers to establish the extent of and potential for trading followed by a report back to the authority leadership. The aim is to assist corporate planning by providing a clear picture of the part that external income generation is able to play in helping meet funding pressures. This would be followed up with further development work at an operational level.										
Actions: Strengthen the Strategic Procurement Board to become a Strategic Board covering Commissioning, Commercial Activities and Procurement. Agree with the organisational conditions needed to support commercial activity. Undertake a diagnostic assessment of commercial opportunities.										
Executive decisions:	Agreement of the Commercial Strategy and focus. MTFS and Bridging the Gap Programme									
Scrutiny Route:	Corporate Overview Scrutiny 2020/21									
Consultation:	With staff affected by increased commercial activities and potential markets									
EqlA:	Screening to be undertaken prior to any commercial activities are put in place in line with the creation of the business case									

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Resources							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Third Party Expenditure						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Executive Member – Corporate Services							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Chief Officer Commercial							
Impact on other Portfolios:			All							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		550		1,000		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	550	1,000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	550	1,000	250	550	250	550	250	550	250	550
Strategic Business Review:										
The focus of this phase was to identify how much, on what and with whom.										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full review of all third party expenditure through examining creditors records for 2017/18 and 2018/19, review of the contracts register and examination of contracts held. • Analysis of data and categorisation • Identification of deep dive areas. 										
<p>Key findings:</p> <p>£80m of controllable spend</p> <p>78,000 separate transactions with 3,320 unique creditors</p> <p>75% of total Council spend (>£100k) is with less than 4% of suppliers, while payments to 74% of suppliers (<£5k) account for only 2.5% of total expenditure</p> <p>89% of all payments are below the compulsory procurement threshold for DMT approval (£25,000) and account for 10% of total expenditure</p> <p>55% of payments are below £1000 in value (each) and 47% below £500</p> <p>863 creditors are registered as suppliers since 2007 (> 12 years) and 557 new creditors set up in FY18/19 alone</p>										
Opportunities identified:										
<p>Manage cost control through tightening contracting arrangements particularly in relation to terms, conditions and liabilities i.e. inflation up lift.</p> <p>Prioritise supplier negotiations and develop a negotiation strategy for contracts due for renewal in 2020/21.</p> <p>Explore with contractors discounts and rebates for different payment schedules.</p> <p>Where appropriate convert agency staff into permanent or temporary posts to reduce additional cost to service including agency fees.</p> <p>Introduce invoice discounting incentives for early payment</p> <p>Strengthen the alignment of spend to strategic priorities and categorise expenditure against need, identifying, at one end of the spectrum, spend that is based on choice and that we could continue to support, and at the other, spend on activities that we must do to satisfy a basic customer need. This will give rise to options of where and how much to invest in different services, initiatives and activities and give members the evidence to support their decision making.</p>										
Challenges and risks										
<p>The complexity of the data and the visibility of the contractual arrangements that are in place means that this requires a deep analysis of information, match data from different sources and detailed reviews of current contract. Alongside this is the need to establish the commissioning intentions for 2020/21 and beyond with current and future suppliers.</p>										
Invest to save options:										
<p>Our ability to move at pace and to work through the data to reach the opportunities has been achieved through the investment in external expertise. This has been funded through an earmarked Procurement reserve. To maintain this pace and focus further support is required and this would be based on a risk and reward contract with payment on results.</p>										

Actions: Deep dive into the use of agency staff to reduce fees being paid to temporary recruitment agencies; Review of discount incentives to utilise our cash flow to drive cost reductions; Reconciliation of creditors expenditure to known contracts to facilitate negotiation of better payment terms; Review of contracts where there has been higher values paid to facilitate negotiations with suppliers; Implement No Purchase Order No Pay as a means of controlling costs.	
Executive decisions:	MTFS and Bridging the Gap Programme
Scrutiny Route:	Corporate Overview in Autumn 2019
Consultation:	With staff affected by changes in contract arrangements
EqlA:	Screening to be undertaken prior to any contract variations being progressed

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Resources								
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Property and Land review						Ref:		
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:											
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Richard Crook								
Impact on other Portfolios:			Education/Social Services/Resources/Environment								
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
	130	210	100	210	150	210					
Strategic Business Review:											
The review of property and land included all council owned property, all property used by the Council on a lease/rental basis and all land owned by the Council. The industrial property portfolio will be covered by a separate review.											
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The pipeline of property disposals has been modelled to test the assumptions in the MTFS in terms of receipts and this has confirmed levels of receipts that can be built into the MTFS• The costs of the operational and non-operational buildings has been reviewed with a focus on where there are high levels of spend and where the trends in terms of costs where not as expected• The review has identified the cost around the Civic centre and Anvil Court need to be considered in terms of existing and future costs and the potential to take a new look at the councils core provision.• Business rates in terms of the increase in cost to the council whilst the council estate has declined has been drilled into further to understand the pattern which sits behind this trend• The property used by services outside of the core provision has been identified and will be reviewed in terms of opportunities for further consolidation• The property that the councils rents for service delivery has also been identified and the lease terms are being assessed in terms of any scope for change• The Councils land holdings have been reviewed in terms of income from rental, why we are holding land and the costs of the holding exercise											
Opportunities identified:											
Proposal 1 – To dispose of all non-operational buildings currently being held by the Council having regard to any grant clawback or legal obligations that may be in place which may affect its saleability. This could secure capital receipts as well as providing savings to the corporate landlord budget in holding costs as well as reducing/avoid rates on the premises (short term)											

Proposal 2 – To ensure the rates paid by the Council are minimised by reviewing the accuracy of current rates payments, and the rating of property in the Council’s portfolio and to introduce a systematic approach to regularly review the rates paid on Council premises. The Council are currently securing specialist advise in this area in order to manage its rates position more efficiently.-

Proposal 3 – To review the Council’s occupation of properties held on a leasehold basis to establish whether there are any opportunities to reduce payments to landlords. The Council are currently securing specialist advice in this area (short to medium term)

Proposal 4 – To review the Council’s current and future requirements for office and civic space to meet forecast future requirements

Proposal 5 – To increase the income derived for land and other assets. All of the Council’s land holdings need to be assessed to identify why land is being held, and the values to the Council in terms of income streams through a series of area reviews. This is an opportunity to not just potentially increase income but to divest the Council of land that may have long term maintenance liabilities(medium term)

Proposal 6 – To utilise capital receipts received from the disposals to create an investment fund for use in bringing residential sites forward and other income generating opportunities.

Proposal 7 – To secure the energy savings delivered by the ReFit investment in the Councils estate

Challenges and risks

There are a number of risks associated with the report including:

1. The market values associated with the disposals may not be realised if the property market takes a downward trend over the next 6 months as a result of the current uncertainty facing the UK economy. The mitigation is to move quickly and review the prices achieved through disposal and determine whether a holding strategy is required to allow the market to recover. This would need to be balanced against the costs of holding the property

<p>2. The review of the Councils rates position may not yield the maximum levels of reductions available to the Council. The mitigation is to use specialist advice and to risk assess each opportunity to maximise the chance of a successful rates appeal.</p> <p>3. The Council may not be able to secure reductions in the levels of rent paid to Landlords. The mitigation is to secure the specialist advice to support the Councils review and to ensure the correct negotiation strategy.</p> <p>4. The risks associated with the development of options for consideration around new office space will be identified in a separate report. At this stage the risk is in not considering a new facility when partners may be considering their property options in Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>5. There is a risk that the Council does not have the capacity to complete the review of the wider land holding and this will be mitigated by looking to undertake these on a structured area based approach.</p> <p>6. The risk around using the savings from the REFIT relate to the using of funds which could have been put towards future energy costs, this is mitigated to a point as the Councils position is safeguarded with the guaranteed returns within the contract and the fact that the council will also benefit from further savings if the energy prices rise.</p> <p>7. There is a risk that if the Council does not create an Investment fund for use in further investments that can generate a return on the investment then income generating opportunities may be lost. This can be mitigated by Council decisions around and Investment Strategy and how it would be funded</p>	
Invest to save options:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional specialist support will be needed to negotiate office rent reductions and business rate reductions • Space and business planning support will be required for the detailed review of corporate office space requirements and in the business case preparation • External review of our Asset Management Plan to set longer term opportunities
<p>Actions:</p> <p>Agreement on the Corporate Property approach in line with Exec/CLT</p>	

discussion Appointment of a Property advisor to negotiate on office rent Appointment of a Business Rates specialist	
Executive decisions:	
Scrutiny Route:	
Consultation:	
EqlA:	

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Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Resources							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Use of External Grants						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:										
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Head of Governance and Partnerships							
Impact on other Portfolios:			All							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<p>Strategic Business Review:</p> <p>The strategic review of grants is to identify the bidding, receipt and deployment of additional grant funding that is available to the Council and its partners. It is estimated that the organisation receives approximately £22m additional funding to support its priorities. The review explores how the grants are utilised across the Council to deliver outcomes for residents. The work includes reviewing governance arrangements to increase transparency and a One Council approach to seeking and using this additional funding. The review also considers the impact of the removal of these grants and the risk placed on core funding.</p> <p>This aim of the review is to ensure that we have a greater understanding of the impact and added value that the grants bring to Blaenau Gwent. The review considers how to maximise the benefits of the grants through close working across all services. It is anticipated that the review may also provide insight and identify opportunities for lobbying to WG for the release of additional funds relevant to Blaenau Gwent. In 2018, the Wales Audit Office carried out a further Financial Resilience review focussed on how effectively the Council maximises its funding opportunities and contains spending demands. The review concluded that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council needed to develop a stronger financial culture to remain financially resilient. This included a better, more strategic use of grants. • The review found that ‘there was no corporate coordination of grant applications and no central record of grants claimed’. 										
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of potential areas of duplication/aligned work/opportunities to work with others, need to be further explored • Need to integrate the review of grants into MTFs and other Bridging the Gap reviews e.g. prevention and intervention • <p>Challenges and risks</p> <p>A number of key risks have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole Council approach needed to effectively manage grants strategically alongside other funding streams including integration of applications for grants into the budget setting process; • Need to consistently apply the approach on how grants are reviewed to ensure they maximise outcomes- some examples of where this is done but also recent funding streams/bids appearing that need to be knitted in • Better understanding and organisational insight needed, including spend profiles, relationship with core funding,% of the grants supporting outcomes/service delivery and staffing alignment to corporate priorities • Ongoing maintenance of central records of potential and successful grant applications needs to be established to support an ongoing strategic overview of this funding stream; 										
<p>Invest to save options:</p> <p>None identified at this time</p>										

Actions:

Next steps agreed By CLT

In response to the key considerations it is proposed that:

- A phased approach is taken to review each area
- A consistent methodology is applied, working with the service areas and Resources;
- Phase 1: integration of approach to other Bridging the Gap reviews, using learning from The review of the Children and Communities Grant (CCG) completion April 2020. CCG is part of the overall strategic review of grants and is included in the governance arrangements and reporting to Council. A CCG Strategic Review Board has been established. A logic mapping exercise has been undertaken to identify all activity involved in the delivery of the 7 workstreams associated to the CCG which resulted in clear areas of review to be taken forward. This included a review of services where potential duplication can be avoided or efficiencies can be achieved.
- Phase 2 Economy and Environment;
- Phase 3 Adult Social Services, ICF;
- Identify a sustainable way forward for maintaining and reviewing grant income and expenditure.

Executive decisions:	
Scrutiny Route:	Joint report with head of Children services on CCG review to COS Feb 2020
Consultation:	TBC
EqlA:	

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Enablers							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			behavioural insights						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Councillor Nigel Daniels							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Head of Governance and Partnerships							
Impact on other Portfolios:			All							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	-	-	-	-	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
<p>Strategic Business Review:</p> <p>CLT have considered the discussion paper and agreed the approach.</p> <p>The Local Government Association has worked with councils across a variety of service areas including waste and recycling and children and adults services. Results of this work are providing an evidence base of effective behavioural insights interventions to help manage demand for services and encourage an early intervention approach where appropriate.</p> <p>Nudges for Social Good- LGA behavioural insights programme</p> <p>The LGA have produced a summary of the top 10 lessons learnt through the programme aimed at providing some useful hints, reminders, challenges and examples.</p> <p>EAST framework (Behavioural Insight Team)</p> <p>Make it Easy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harness the power of default or pre-set option • Reduce the 'hassle factor' of taking up a service • Simplify messages <p>Make it Attractive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract attention-including use of images or personalisation • Design rewards and sanctions for maximum effect <p>Make it Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show that most people perform the desired behaviour-describing what most people do in a particular situation encourages others to do the same • Use the power of networks • Encourage people to make a commitment to others <p>Make it Timely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt people when they are likely to be most receptive- the same offer made at different times can have drastically different levels of success • Consider the immediate costs and benefits- we are more influenced by costs and benefits that take effect immediately • Help people plan their response to events- there is a substantial gap between intentions and actual behaviour. A proven solution is to prompt people to identify barriers and develop a plan to address them 										
<p>Opportunities identified: To work with the BIT on a specific topic as a pilot. Sharing learning with partners such as Public Health. Potential efficiencies- either financial or improved service delivery. Connectivity with the use of data enabler to be maximised.</p>										
<p>Challenges and risks: Capacity. Lack of buy in to the approach. Lack of strategic approach</p>										
<p>Invest to save options:</p> <p>Engagement of external expertise to build capability. Potential to work with NESTA/LGA and BIT</p>										

Actions:

The considerations for Phase 1 include:

- **Define the outcome**

Identify exactly what behaviour is to be influenced. Consider how this can be measured reliably and efficiently. Establish how large a change would make the projects worthwhile and over what time period.

- **Understand the context**

Lived experience- Visit the situations and people involved in the behaviour, and understand the context from their perspective. Use this opportunity to develop new insights and design a sensitive and feasible intervention.

- **Build your intervention**

Use the EAST framework to generate behavioural insights in iterative processes that is likely to return to the 2 points above.

- **Test, learn, adapt**

Put your intervention into practice so its effects can be reliably measured. Using Randomised controlled trials where possible. These introduce a control group so you can understand what would have happened if you had done nothing

Next Steps/ actions (agreed by CLT):

- To establish a Behavioural insight Hub for the Council.
- To consider bringing in the BIT to work with us on a specific project supporting a sustainable approach and establishment of the Hub. This could maximise existing skills such as the policy and performance teams ability to support and deliver randomised controlled trials
- To work with partners who adopt this approach in their business (discussions with Public Health are in progress, sharing of case studies ect)
- To agree a programme of work, aligned to the Bridging the Gap programme and other identified priorities.

Executive decisions:	
Scrutiny Route:	TBC
Consultation:	TBC
EqIA:	TBC

Bridging the Gap Theme			Prevention and Early Intervention							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Taking a closer look at early identification, intervention and prevention approaches						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:										
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Lynette Jones and Damien McCann							
Impact on other Portfolios:			Potential learning which may impact on other directorates approaches							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<p>Phase 1 Members of the Core Team have met to determine a high level approach to this theme. Half termly meetings are diarised for the full team (including support officers) and for the year ahead. The first full meeting is on the 5th September 2019.</p> <p>Phase 2 A proposed programme of work has been developed which has 3 steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying the early identification, intervention and prevention functions across the two directorates; 2. A Logic Mapping Exercise for the Early Intervention and Prevention project was undertaken on the 9th October. It is set out by service area firstly by direct support services and the secondary support services. The data has been taken from the post-it notes captured on the day but will need some sense checking for accuracy but the data has allowed us to identify potential areas for consideration. It is likely that some of the relationships already exist but there is scope to explore the relationships further. The next step is to facilitate a session to undertake a 'lived experience' exercise to identify the extent of the interactions across service areas. In line with other logic mapping exercises there is also a need to consider risks and what success will look like, which will help us frame our next steps. 3. Undertake service reviews, to develop a shared understanding across the two directorates; 4. Exploring possibilities for more blended activity and any learning for other directorates. <p>The Group will consider what external expertise and challenge may be required and seek their involvement.</p>										
<p>Opportunities identified:</p> <p>Potential opportunities identified that give indicative figures referenced above</p> <p>At this stage it is too early to identify an indicative figure. The approach may not accrue efficiency savings, but could deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness of operations. It will remain to be seen and will be dependent on ongoing evaluation by the team of emerging findings.</p>										
<p>Challenges and risks</p> <p>What needs to happen to realise the opportunities and stretch the impact to deliver phases 5 - 8?</p> <p>Challenges: i) Ensuring a clear focus on the work to be undertaken and the rationale for doing it. ii) Securing enough capacity to undertake this work in service areas with high workload. Iii) Re-arranging meetings due to changes to political meetings to ensure leadership.</p> <p>Risks: i) Lack of clear focus presenting a risk that work streams slide off course and goals remain unclear. ii) Workload and need to provide statutory provision often against tight deadlines compromises capacity to undertake the work and progress through the plan is not sustained. iii) need to avoid cancellations of meeting to keep momentum.</p>										
Invest to save options:										

What additional capacity /investment would further mitigate the risks and maximise the opportunities? How would this investment be set off by additional savings or cost avoidance? It is too early in the process to establish whether additional capacity or investment will mitigate risks and maximise opportunities.

Actions:

What will happen during phases 6 – 8 including, involvement of Executive sponsor.

- A joint Education and Social Services Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy;
- Develop a model of early intervention and prevention which could be adopted by other Directorates across the Council to reduce demand on statutory services going forward.

Executive decisions:

Scrutiny Route:

Consultation:

EqIA:

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Enablers							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Designing Services around the customer						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Executive Member – Corporate Services							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Chief Officer Commercial							
Impact on other Portfolios:			All							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	-	-	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Strategic Business Review: <p>The focus of this review has been to identify the key reasons that our residents and businesses contact the Council, what they are trying to resolve, what the experience is like and how effective we are at meeting their needs. An analysis of face to face, telephone, web and postal requests is underway alongside beginning a deep dive into our front door experiences in relation to Place based services to identified opportunities to improve resolution of service requests including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requesting a waste receptacle 2. Resolving issues with potholes 3. Fly tipping <p>This will look at a redesign of the front door and be used to model opportunities for efficiencies and improvements in customer experience across People based services in the medium to longer term.</p>										
Opportunities identified: <p>The redesign of the front door will be mapped from the customer experience perspective through user research and identifying the pain points, the amount of repeat contact created the hand off processes and also the data collection. This should provide us with a clear understanding of the opportunities available to improve the experience and potentially remove those elements of the process that don't add value.</p>										
Challenges and risks <p>The Council's approach to managing customer contact is fragmented with multiple entry points, multiple handoffs and lack of explicit quality standards to manage resident or business expectations. Multiple phone numbers are released to the community however there are triage arrangements in place that leads to a potential bottleneck with residents expecting to get direct access to their case workers but in reality being handed off by other parts of the business. The organisation lacks clarity on what it wants the customer experience to be and then managing that consistently. Unpicking the current situation will require a whole council approach and willingness to walking in our resident's shoes and design our services based on that rather than on service requirements.</p>										
Invest to save options: <p>New skills and approaches are needed to unlock the lived experience of our residents and to thoroughly map the end to end processes. This is an essential capability for the council if it wants to release hidden costs and improve customer experience. Learning from experts in this field would be suggested as part of the next phase of this Strategic Business Review.</p>										
Actions: <p>Kick off the end to end research phase for the front door experience for Place Based service requests Undertake User Research and quantitative analysis. Identify the key issues related with resolving the service requests. Identify options to improve the experience. Identify opportunities for maximising the use of technology to enhance service provision.</p>										
Executive decisions:	MTFS and Bridging the Gap Programme									
Scrutiny Route:	Corporate Overview Scrutiny – 2020/2021									
Consultation:	User research will inform any service redesign									
EqIA:	Screening to be undertaken prior to any service changes being progressed									

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Enablers							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Work place transformation						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:			Executive Member – Corporate Services							
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Chief Officer Commercial							
Impact on other Portfolios:			All							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Strategic Business Review: The focus on this phase has been identifying aspects of work place practice where costs can be reduced, productivity can be enhanced and technology can be maximised. This Strategic Business Review is also concerned with managing the investments needed in our current technology landscape due to changes in licensing arrangements with Microsoft.										
Opportunities identified: Managing our IT suppliers and rationalising the number of systems we have currently supporting the business; Introduction of paper reducing ways of working through better use of printers, copiers, scanners to control our costs Progress with plans to implement Office 365 in 2020/21 to enable the decommissioning of some of the systems we currently have in place. Undertaking a review of our telephony to drive down costs and enable improved remote working.										
Challenges and risks Our current level of understanding of our technology landscape is fragmented and our relationships with our key suppliers have been in place for many years and in some cases decades. It is likely that in some cases we are not achieving value for money for our products. The complexity and the impact of continuing to support legacy systems means a fundamental review is required whilst simultaneously immediate action is needed to control and reduce our costs.										
Invest to save options: Additional capacity is needed bring focus and expertise to the supplier landscape. Experienced IT client support would ensure we seek the savings quickly and in a sustained manner.										
Actions: Identification of systems owners across the organisation. Identification of account managers in the supplier space. Set up initial negotiation meetings with the key suppliers and in particular those where we have long standing relationships. This will include a review of the current products, contractual arrangements and price liabilities. Progress with the preparations for implementation of Office 365 to enable disinvestment in certain systems that will be no longer needed. Develop the business case for a Hybrid Mail Room produce to manage print, copying and record retention arrangements for the future.										
Executive decisions:	MTFS and Bridging the Gap Programme									
Scrutiny Route:	Corporate Overview Scrutiny – Autumn 2019									
Consultation:	With staff affected by changes in contract arrangements									
EqIA:	Screening to be undertaken prior to any contract variations being progressed									

Bridging the Gap Theme			Maximising Enablers								
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Using data to better deliver services					Ref:			
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:											
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Head of Governance and Partnerships								
Impact on other Portfolios:			All								
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
	-	-	-	-	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	

Strategic Business Review:

Local Government Association – Nesta Data Report

The Local Government Association reports that most councils are only just starting to get to grips with all the data they have, and to understand the ways they could use it to make improvements. The data held by the local government sector is a potential goldmine of insights into how to improve people’s lives and make communities better. The research suggests that there are few areas of council activity in which data cannot be used to help councils save money, improve services or inform decision making. The research acknowledges that getting value from data requires taking a ‘problem-oriented’ mindset, which looks for opportunities for data analysis to produce actionable and impactful insights.

The WAO local government national review on the use of data, included a paper specific to Blaenau Gwent. Summary of local review findings:

- Lacks a clear data vision. It is too focussed on a potential short term financial investment and does not currently realise the benefits of using data and its potential to create long term efficiencies. Far more impactful than any such investment will be a change in culture to an environment that treats data as a key resource;
- Holds a wealth of data. Breaking down departmental silos to integrate data across the authority will help other services to put it to best use;
- Consolidated performance team has strengthened corporate use of data. This should be built on by setting corporate data management standards and coding for services core data. This will further enable data sharing across different teams and services areas.

Opportunities identified: testing at phase 1 will include:

- The integrity of the data available within service areas, how robust it is will influence how it is used. Is the data of good quality and are data quality issues understood and managed;
- Can we identify data development areas, are we clear where we don’t have the data we need for proper insight;
- Is the data connected to decision making structures, making business cases and accessing financial resources;
- Is the use of data to measure performance consistently in place across the Council, is it relevant and used to monitor impact and outcomes; and
- Is the culture of the organisation ready, do we make our data open and do we engage with it – do staff recognise that data can support them to do their jobs better to deliver outcomes?

Challenges and risks

- Capturing and analysing the data may challenge the technical capacity of staff as there is potential for a gap between the aspirations of the project and the technical expertise and skills of staff.
- There can be resistance to open data, and people might not use it, often teams are nervous that data quality is poor or that the data might show them in a bad light.
- Proactively seeking data to inform decisions as opposed to basing decisions on intuition, accumulated experience or even subconscious biases is a difficult shift. Even with robust insights decision making can be challenging to previously held beliefs.

Invest to save options:

<p>Actions:</p> <p>Next Steps- agreed by CLT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish a working group with appropriate representation from all directorates ; • Agree the scope and terms of reference for the group using Agile project methodology; • An organisation action plan based on the Nesta Data Maturity Framework to be developed by the group; and • Reporting by Sponsor, who will need active involvement, to CLT as part of the Bridging the Gap programme. 	
Executive decisions:	
Scrutiny Route:	TBC
Consultation:	TBC
EqlA:	TBC

Bridging the Gap Theme			Growth & Investment Strategy							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Growth Plan						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:										
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Richard Crook							
Impact on other Portfolios:			Education/Social Services/Resources/Environment							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	220	320	150	150	300	300	100	100		
Strategic Business Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Housing sites reviewed to assess developability and time lines for delivery and average council charge figure agreed for use in generating estimates for income from new build• Numbers of vacant properties identified and the policy changes by other Councils to reduce the discount for vacant properties assessed• Links to the VTF vacant property approach have been made• Match funding identified for the VTF vacant property approach• Vacant property officer post established for 1 year to assess business case for a longer term approach• Potential wider economic benefits calculated in terms of spend into the BG economy• Industrial/commercial development opportunities to be refreshed when the Industrial estates review completed• The need for a Council Investment Methodology identified and example of approaches used by other councils have been highlighted• 										
Opportunities identified:										
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity 1 – Increased income in terms of the Council Tax through increased residential properties• Opportunity 2 – Increased income in terms of Council Tax by reducing the number of vacant properties receiving discounts• Opportunity 3 – Increased Capital receipts on Council owned land• Opportunity 4 – Increasing the population will mitigate RSA impacts of other councils growing• Opportunity 5 – Wider opportunity for increase in spend in the BG economy from additional residents• Opportunity 6 – Income generation from Energy Investments in Wind Turbines									
Challenges and risks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council need to approve a revised Vacant property policy in terms of council tax discount• The council needs to put in place an Investment approach• Energy Prospectus needs to be agreed										

Appendix 1 (n)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk 1- Is around the reliance on the private sector to deliver the housing numbers/the market to drive demand for the houses • Risk 2 – Is that the investment opportunities for the Energy projects are not secured/considered viable 	
Invest to save options:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional modelling may be required around the Energy Opportunities depending on the time line/rate of return sought by the Council
<p>Actions:</p> <p>Council Report on the discount for Vacant property</p> <p>Discussion/agreement around the Energy prospectus with the Executive and then scrutiny</p> <p>Appointment of the Vacant Property Officer</p>	
Executive decisions:	
Scrutiny Route:	
Consultation:	
EqIA:	

Bridging the Gap Theme			Growth & Investment Strategy							
Bridging the Gap Proposal:			Sustainable BG – Low Carbon Borough						Ref:	
Executive Portfolio Sponsor:										
Officer Proposal Sponsor:			Michelle Morris							
Impact on other Portfolios:			Potential to impact on all Portfolios, and across partnerships, by reducing costs and introducing new ways of working based on achieving more sustainable and low carbon solutions to support service delivery and meet national targets for public sector carbon reduction.							
Delivery in:	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
Values (low – high)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	138	138			200	350	200	350	200	350
Strategic Business Review: Work undertaken in phases 1 – 5 to identify opportunities and risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 – Project Scope agreed and Project Group established and meeting regularly; Phase 2 – Discovery Workshop held with NRW to identify good practice and opportunities for carbon and cost reduction; Phase 3 – Data analysis undertaken, using NRW Model, which will identify the baseline for carbon emissions from Council operations; this has included identify existing projects and initiatives which will support the delivery of #Sustainable BG and which are not currently factored into the MTFS (in progress); Phase 4 – Publish #Sustainable Blaenau Gwent – Low Carbon Plan, this will include identifying early initiatives to start delivery of benefits immediately but also to ensure delivery against national targets set out for the public sector by 2030 (End of March 2020); 										
Opportunities identified: The Council is already engaged in a range of projects/initiatives which will contribute to the objectives of #Sustainable BG; Opportunities already identified include: Fleet Review (Regional) EV Charging Infrastructure (Regional) Street Lighting Review Energy Prospectus Refit Project Strategic Property Review Sustainable Procurement The Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board (BGPSB) has also agreed that Climate Change will be one of its priorities over the next 12 months and the Council will lead on bringing together a partnership around identifying how collaboration across the public sector in the Borough can support the delivery of national targets and achieve a more sustainable position for Blaenau Gwent.										
Financial Savings: 2020/21 The Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) scheme has been replaced with effect from 1 April 2019 with the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting Framework (SECR). The 2019/2020 CIPFA Accounting Code includes no specific reference to accounting arrangements resulting from this framework, so it is assumed that at present there is no ongoing financial impact. This will result in a saving of £138k in the revenue budget in 2020/21. 2021/22 Onwards Savings in subsequent years are currently indicative pending the completion of the data analysis and agreeing priorities for action within the #Sustainable BG Plan.										

Challenges and risks:

The work already underway needs to be aligned to this project and co-ordinated to provide a pipeline of activity with the potential to deliver financial and non-financial benefits; this will allow a strengthening of governance, committee overview and pace in delivery; political leadership for the changes required will be important and the Executive Member – Regeneration is the Executive Sponsor for this project.

There may need to be some investment to support innovative solutions and change including planned procurement and service delivery to switch to more sustainable solutions e.g. fleet, energy; the Council already has access to the Salix Programme (WG funded) but there is the potential to expand investment from external grant support;

Behavioural change will be critical to change the way that Officers deliver services and how residents access them and the delivery of identified benefits will need to be supported by strong communications;

Stretch targets can be achieved if the scope of the work is extended to partners and there is an opportunity to create a more sustainable borough led by this initiative from the Council and Public Service Board;

Active participation of schools in this work will enable benefits to be stretched through the promotion of positive behaviour change and reduction in operating costs;

There is a risk that if a new Carbon Reduction Tax is introduced by Government that the early saving proposed will not be achieved. We are not currently aware of any proposals to continue the tax into next financial year.

Invest to save options:

Access to some WG support already in place e.g. Salix and grants to commence investment in EV Charging infrastructure;

However the Council will need to investigate other funding opportunities to develop #Sustainable BG Plan and agreed projects which will include consideration of specific business cases for Spend to Save funding; for example there may be a case for seeking capital investment through the capital programme but any request would be supported by a business case;

Actions:

Phase 6 – develop #Sustainable BG Plan detailing initiatives which will form part of the Plan and the benefits that will be delivered; during this period it is intended to engage with Elected Members and staff to ensure that the right opportunities and commitment is obtain to deliver against the vision and targets;

Phase 7 – present #Sustainable BG Plan to Council for approval, following scrutiny process;

Phase 8 – delivery of Plan from March 2020 onwards with annual reporting into Committee on progress;

Appendix 1 (o)

Executive decisions:	Executive Sponsor – Cllr David Davies, Executive Member Regeneration
Scrutiny Route:	Regeneration Scrutiny – November 2019
Consultation:	Elected Members; Council Staff; PSB
EqlA:	Screening to be undertaken prior to #Sustainable BG Plan being presented to Council;

Updated 7th November 2019

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Agenda Item 30

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 26.11.2019

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 24.11.2019

Committee: **Council**

Date of Meeting: **12th December, 2019**

Report Subject: **Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Performance Review 2018/19 Q4**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Nigel Daniels, Leader / Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Michelle Morris, Managing Director
Ellie Fry, Head of Regeneration**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
13.08.19	03.09.19	09.09.19			14.11.19		12.12.19	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the performance of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) during 2018/19.
- 1.2 This report highlights areas of interest in the attached report which has been produced by the Cardiff Capital Region Programme Director and was presented to the CCR Cabinet in June 2019. This report summarises and highlights key programmes of work Blaenau Gwent (BG) are engaged in and are of interest to BG.

2. Background and Context

- 2.1 The report includes progress of the programme against key targets identified within the CCR Business Plan for 2018/19. Detail includes:
- 2.2 Highlights for BG include:
 - Metro and Metro+ - Transport for Wales (TfW) progress
 - Digital Strategy
 - Strategic Sites and Premises
 - Approval of the Investment Framework
 - Framework and principles agreed for Strategic Development Plan (SDP)
 - Housing Catalyst Fund
 - Skills Program - Graduate Scheme (Pilot)
 - MIPIM 2020
- 2.3 In its meeting on the 10th June CCRCD Regional Cabinet discussed and agreed the Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 4 – attached at Appendix One.

2.4 Budget Position 2018/19

It is important to understand the overall budget position which relates to funding remaining available for City Region projects in the future. Regional Cabinet 2018/19 Annual Business Plan Quarter 4 summary indicates the overall budget is as follows:

2.5 Wider Investment Fund Top-Slice (£742,500)

The final 2018/19 underspend against this budget amounts to -£571,493. The full value of any underspend is available to support the WIF Top-Slice in future years, subject always to observing the 3% cap (annual and cumulative) as approved by Regional Cabinet. The underspend consists of -£110,184 against the budget set aside for Regional Bodies and -£350,366 against the Programme Development & Support Budget (to support the 'Project Delivery Pipeline'). In addition, investment income totalling -£110,943 was received during the year in respect of unspent HMT revenue grant funding.

2.6 2018/19 Approved Project Budgets (£13,840,000)

Due to changes in the programme of work, there is slippage of £1,381,600 (or 10.1%) against the Compound Semi-Conductor Foundry approved capital budget. However, based on the revised programme, this amount is expected to be drawn down and fully utilised in 2019/20.

2.7 2018/19 In-Year Project Approvals

Given the current status of the Project Delivery Pipeline, Regional Cabinet has approved the slipping of this capital sum (£4.015M) forward, two years to financial year 2020/21, based on the projected out-turn positions at that time. This will ensure that funding is protected for investment in future projects.

**2.8 City Deal Programme Update
Metro and Metro Plus**

The Regional Transport Authority (RTA) will oversee progress of the Metro Plus scheme which has established the principle of a programme of activity complementing and enhancing the proposed Metro and Metro Central investments. The concept is currently being developed and rolled out with the governance, co-ordination and leadership support of the RTA. Blaenau Gwent Council is represented by the Executive Member – Regeneration.

2.9 Metro Plus (Phase 1) is a programme of 10 transport schemes which are part of the wider metro infrastructure. Metro Plus schemes are not individual projects, but a programme of enabling infrastructure, to stimulate economic growth and regeneration across the region, supporting the sustainable mobility of people, and improving the way people make their economic contribution.

2.10 The initial schemes that make up the programme are:-

- a) Pontypool and New Inn Park and Ride
- b) Severn Tunnel Junction Park and Ride
- c) Pyle Park and Ride

- d) Pentrebach Interchange
- e) Porth Transport Interchange
- f) **Abertillery Transport Hub**
- g) Caerphilly Interchange
- h) Barry Docks Interchange
- i) Cardiff East Bus Priority
- j) Newport to Cardiff Transport Priority

- 2.11 Transport for Wales (TfW) is currently preparing an Outline Business Case for improved frequency of services on the Ebbw Vale Rail Line including the Abertillery Transport Hub. Options included delivery of 2 trains per hour to both Ebbw Vale and Abertillery with the potential to link to routes to both Cardiff and Newport. The OBC is expected to be completed this Autumn.
- 2.12 In addition, there has been progress made on the Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) studies and renewables as part of the integrated transport system. A bid for funding for electrical charge points across the Gwent local authorities has been successful and will enable BG to commence the installation of Electric Vehicle charging points.
- 2.13 **CCR Digital Strategy**
The CCR Digital Strategy continues to be developed for the CCR. However, in the meantime the expected early funding submission to implement a Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) involving BGCBC, MCC, NCC and TCBC has now been delayed pending a package being put together for improvement to the digital infrastructure across the 10 CCR local authorities.
- 2.14 **Strategic Sites and Premises**
An initial report has been put together to identify the significant gaps in the supply of 'Grade A' employment floor space across a wide range of property types in CCR. The report sets out a broad-based strategy covering the provision of new employment property. It seeks to highlight those property types and interventions which may have the greatest impact as part of a balanced portfolio of employment buildings. A meeting has been held with the consultants to better understand and reflect the opportunities in BG particularly leveraging benefits of development along the Heads of the Valleys. A final report is awaited from the City Deal office.
- 2.15 **Approval of the Investment Framework**
The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal is a £1.229bn investment over twenty years that is expected to create 25,000 new jobs, leverage an additional £4bn of investment in the region and provide a 5% Gross Value Added (GVA) uplift.
- 2.16 There are two components to the Deal – the £734m investment in the South Wales Metro and the £495m Wider Investment Fund (WIF). The delivery of the Metro programme is being overseen by Transport for Wales and the deployment of the WIF is the responsibility of Regional Cabinet and is

available for the funding of high-potential projects in the region through its Investment and Intervention Framework.

2.17 A three-priority approach has been developed in partnership with the investor community to leverage maximum economic and social benefits from the £495 million WIF. The three priorities are:

- The *Innovation Priority*, worth £220 million, will look at proposals demonstrating unique intellectual property, market leadership and competitive strength. It will support propositions in targeted growth sectors that have the greatest potential for direct economic return on investment through job creation and GVA increase.
- The *Infrastructure Priority*, worth £200 million, will focus on targeted co-investment and pooling of resources to deliver maximum impact through the delivery of new physical and digital infrastructure projects including roads, public transport, broadband, skills, sites or testbeds.
- The *Challenge Priority*, worth £75 million, will seek to stimulate the adoption of new products and solutions in South East Wales. It will look at growing new markets and welcomes proposals that emerge from competitive spaces where more than one organisation or individual might be equipped to deliver, in order to offer more flexibility and scope for experimentation.

2.18 The funding model aims to build a delivery pipeline with partners, within and beyond the Cardiff Capital Region, while focusing on the priorities outlined in the Industrial and Economic Plan, which was launched in February 2019 – attached at Appendix Two.

2.19 **Framework and principles agreed for SDP**

Agreement has been reached at the CCR Cabinet to prepare a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the region. The 10 local authorities are currently presenting reports to their respective Councils to seek formal approval. A report seeking this Council's approval will be presented to Council on 12th December, 2019.

2.20 **Housing Catalyst Fund**

2.21 The Residential Investment Research & Strategy Division at Savills have been commissioned by the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal to conduct a specific piece of research to help understand the most appropriate approach to any the Housing Catalyst Fund that will be aimed at unlocking sites and accelerating supply.

2.22 As part of their research work, Savills have engaged with Local Authorities, including Blaenau Gwent (via Housing Strategy, Regeneration Division) to understand current programmes of development and associated challenges within the local housing market.

2.23 A range of challenges were identified and communicated to the research team, including; land reclamation grant clawback and the reducing capital receipts as a result, the need for Social Housing Grant or other grant incentive to support scheme viability, poor local ground conditions and topography, satisfying Sec 106 requirements, possible increase in housing standards from WG (energy, dimensions) etc.

2.24 For Blaenau Gwent it was highlighted that the marginal viability of schemes due to the issues above could be mitigated by an investment fund and thus creating a more level playing field (with other more favourable/viable areas) for quality development schemes.

2.25 Following the research exercise undertaking over the Summer, Savills were scheduled to present their findings and recommendations to the CCRCD in the Autumn (September) to inform the make-up/scope of the Housing Catalyst Fund.

Graduate Scheme (Pilot)

2.26 The initial pilot scheme will aim to deliver 50 graduate positions between April 2019 and March 2020 to businesses in the CCR through two key approaches:

- 1) The delivery of two cohorts of a graduate development scheme
- 2) Events to link students / graduates from key subject areas and employers from key sectors

The scheme offers free services to businesses and paid employment to graduates. We have engaged with local manufacturing and engineering businesses (linked to Aspire and on our data base). To date there has been some interest from businesses in participating in the scheme.

2.27 MIPIM 2020

The CCR Regional Business Council in conjunction with CCR City Deal Cabinet, has confirmed it will participate in International Property Event (Le marché international des professionnels de l'immobilier (MIPIM) 2020. This will ensure the presence of the region at a key international trade event raising the profile of the region and promoting investment opportunities.

2.28 Valleys Regional Park (VRP)

The CCR Cabinet has agreed with Welsh Government and relevant local authorities in the Swansea Bay City Deal that the development and implementation of the VRP will be hosted by Bridgend CBC, on behalf of all authorities, and with financial support from Welsh Government to fund the arrangements.

2.29 The VRP will be overseen by a Board of the Leaders from the partner authorities and supported by a Forum comprised of nominated officers also from those authorities, and other key stakeholders. All partner authorities will be asked to sign up to a legal agreement detailing these delivery and governance arrangements.

2.30 In 2018 Welsh Government announced a series of Valley Gateway Sites – Dare Valley Country Park (Rhondda Cynon Taff), Caerphilly Castle (Caerphilly), Cwmcarn Forest (Caerphilly), Blaenavon World Heritage Visitor Centre (Torfaen), Cyfarthfa Park (Merthyr Tydfil), Ynysangharad War Memorial Park (Rhondda Cynon Taff), Parc Bryn Bach (Blaenau Gwent CBC), Parc Slip Nature Reserve and Bryngarw Country Park (both Bridgend).

2.31 All sites were invited to submit proposals direct to Welsh Government for capital funding, outlining options for delivery against the ambition of the VRP prospectus. The outcome of this process was announced earlier in September and Parc Bryn Bach has been awarded funding of £500,000 to develop facilities including a bunk house and adventure play area.

3. **Recommendations for Consideration**

That the content of the CCRCD report is noted and an Option applied.

3.1 **Option 1**

For Council to consider the overall progress, and completion of the key targets for 2018/19 and endorse the report.

3.2 **Option 2**

For Council to consider the overall progress and make any specific comments on progress prior to endorsement of the report.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The CCRCD is a key strategic initiative for the Council, which will assist in delivering the Corporate Plan in terms of job creation, housing and improved transport connections in addition, alongside nine other Local Authorities we are working to deliver a range of programmes to improve the connectivity, infrastructure and business governance of the region

5. **Implications**

5.1 There are no direct implications as part of this report

6. **Monitoring Arrangements**

6.1 The CCRCD Annual Business Plan 2019/20 will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Regional Cabinet and six monthly reports will be presented to the Blaenau Gwent Scrutiny and Council meetings.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix One - CCRCD 2018/19 Quarter 4 Performance Report*
- *Appendix Two – CCR Industrial and Economic Plan*

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18 FEBRUARY 2019

2018-19 ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN - QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT OF CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION DIRECTOR

AGENDA ITEM: 6

Reason for this Report

1. To inform key stakeholders, principally, Regional Cabinet and also, Wales and UK Governments of the Quarter 4 reporting position against the 2018/19 City Deal Business Plan, thus discharging the reporting requirements of the Assurance Framework and providing a comprehensive overview of progress.
2. To provide regional Cabinet with an update of actual expenditure and projected full year out-turn as at Quarter 4 against the approved Wider Investment Fund budgets as set out in the Annual Business Plan for the financial year 2018/19.
3. To recommend that Regional Cabinet approve the Quarter 4 report, which has been seen and informed by Wales and UK Governments, in order for formal submission to government partners.
4. To note the continued changes to the format, structure and shape of the report, in order to provide a 'balanced scorecard' approach in order to provide a consistent, concise and coherent means of evaluating and monitoring performance and progress.

Background

5. Regional Cabinet approved its 2018/19 Annual Business Plan at its meeting on the 26th March 2018, which included details of the Wider Investments Fund budgets for that year. The report also provided an overview of the key work streams that would need to be progressed during the year.
6. At its meeting of the 18th June, Regional Cabinet received 2018/19 Work Programme, which provided details of the tasks and activities required in the coming year to address the requirements of the Joint Working Agreement and the Assurance Framework. That programme of work was accepted by Regional Cabinet as the Work Programme for the 18/19 financial year, and allowed the required resources to be identified and for progress to be monitored by the Regional Cabinet.
7. That Work Programme also forms the basis of the Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports which are issued to the UK and Welsh Governments. Changes have been made to the structure, format and shape of the Performance report in order to:

- Situate plans, actions and priorities in the context of the targets that City Deal is required to deliver against;
 - Reduce extraneous information volume; place a clearer emphasis on delivery and provide a one page overview of headline issues and progress;
 - Provide a high-level account of strategy and 'direction of travel' alongside assurance on matters relating to Finance, Risk and Assurance;
 - Set out the key priority areas and activities guiding key interventions under the headings of Programme Delivery; Partnerships; Communications & Reach; Influence & Engagement and required Actions; and,
 - Demonstrate strength in the pillars underpinning delivery of City Deal around Culture, Capacity and Leadership.
8. In September 2018, the ten point plan to evolve the City Deal, in the light of new challenges and opportunities, was implemented. In the intervening seven to eight months, huge strides forward have been made in 2018/19, the most notable of which include:
- The undertaking of comprehensive **sectoral analysis** by Prof Max Munday at Cardiff University, which has established a clear evidence base, knowledge of key sectoral strengths and priorities and potential for comparative advantage. Coupled with this has been success in securing two KESS PhD studentships to develop the CCR data competency and dashboard facility and two MSc Data Science students who will join the team for the summer to work on specific projects;
 - The first city region in UK Government's City Deal Cohort 2 participants to have a full and agreed **Locality Evaluation Framework** in place. We have also received our first (of three) Baseline Report from National Evaluation Panel, Consortium Lead, which will inform the Gateway Review process in 2021.
 - Industry-led leadership of CCR's first **Economic and Industrial Growth Plan** which sets out priority sectors for intervention, signals the importance of inclusive economic growth and commits to growing eco-systems and industrial scale clusters. The Plan was launched in three locations (Caerphilly, London and Cannes) to a diverse audience of investors, businesses, public bodies, community organisations and academic institutions
 - The development of the **Investment and Intervention Framework** in close collaboration with the Regional Economic Growth Partnership in order to complete the Assurance Framework; establish three funds for priority intervention (Innovation, Infrastructure and Challenge) and set out the way in which City Deal intends to do business through the principles of 'evergreen', co-investment and challenge-led approaches
 - Extending **reach and influence** – developing closer links with Innovate UK through co-investment; UKRI Board through membership of the WG Science Advisory Council, links with the Royal Society and the Wales Government's London Office; the UK2070 Commission and, stepping up substantially social media reach and press reports, marketing activity and creating the CCR brand and reaching new audiences and investors through keynote addresses at scores of conferences, events and networks
 - **Accelerating delivery:** successful notification of SIPF ph 1 for the Compound Semiconductor Cluster; development of medical tools and diagnostics bid for Wave

2 SIPF; development and launch of CCR Graduate Scheme, approval of the case for Metro Plus and the energy, skills and digital model to support it (Low Vehicle Emissions, on-site renewables and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure). Two successful SBRI bids and three successful Govtech bids as well as the initial procurement work on a Housing Catalyst Fund. CCR has also received successful notification via WEFO for its first stage submission under the Institutional Capacity Call for a Public Services Testbed

- **Progress against targets:** with the first investment made by City Deal in the CSC Foundry, 60 new high-skill jobs have been created and recruited to, with a further 55 in progress in the CSA Catapult Centre. According to the UK Competitive Index 2019, Cardiff Capital Region is the second most improved region in competitiveness terms and ONS figures published on workplace analysis through the Annual Population Survey (April 2019) shows there are now c700,000 jobs in the Cardiff Capital Region.
- Establishing the **City Deal Office** with a new base in Tredomen, agreement of a new fit for purpose resourcing plan and the development of expertise, resources and assets across multiple partners, collaborations and networks
- **Strengthening the back office** – City Deal budget is on target; performance monitoring is consistently demonstrating key points of progress; the local evaluation framework is agreed; the Annual Governance Statement is in place as well as a comprehensive Risk Register and regular reports and updates are made to government colleagues and partners
- **Withstanding key governance tests** - City Deal has committed to developing a Strategic Development Plan – a first regional land use framework – reported to Regional Cabinet on 10 June 2019.
- **Internationalisation** – a good deal of focus has been spent on building the brand and developing a profile through engagement in shaping Wave 3 of Ser Cymru, launching the Industrial Growth Plan at Wales in London Week and participating in MIPIM 2019. Added to this are the developing links with the South West of England and membership of GW4
- **Building a region** – City Deal as seen against the backdrop of new challenges and tests takes on a greater significance. Beyond delivering a funding programme, developments such as Brexit and the loss of EU funding means that City Deal is our key means through which to build a sustainable, resilient and more self-reliant future for the region. In this respect, City Deal has started to carve out new principles and ways of working (co-investment, evergreen and challenge led investment) the practice for which is being sought after and replicated by others. CCR officers are in knowledge transfer discussions with several other City Deals ongoing across all parts of the UK.

9. It should be further noted that these changes and the furtherance of the above outcomes has now been embedded as part of the new Annual Business Plan for 2019/20 and reporting requirements will therefore be aligned with this consolidated approach from April 1st 2019. The detail ordinarily contained within this report is now set out in the attached appendices:

- Appendix 1: CCR City Deal Quarter 4 Performance 'Balanced Scorecard'
- Appendix 2: CCR City Deal Quarter 4 detailed Work Programme Update
- Appendix 3: AGS Quarter 4 Update (containing the Risk Log)
- Appendix 4: Internal Audit Action Plan
- Appendix 5: Wider Investment Funds Budget Quarter 4 Update

- Appendix 6: Wellbeing of Future Generations Assessment

Legal Implications

10. The report sets out the Quarter 4 performance and is submitted to Regional Cabinet for consideration pursuant to the reporting requirements within the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Assurance Framework. As regards individual projects referred to in the Work Programme, then legal advice on those projects will be reflected in the relevant reports as and when such matters are reported to Regional Cabinet.

Wellbeing of Future Generations

11. In developing the Plan and in considering its endorsement regard should be had, amongst other matters, to:
 - (a) the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards,
 - (b) Public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are : a. Age; b. Gender reassignment; c. Sex; d. Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality; e. Disability; f. Pregnancy and maternity; g. Marriage and civil partnership; h. Sexual orientation; i. Religion or belief – including lack of belief and
 - (c) the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act') is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales - a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and is globally responsible. In discharging their respective duties under the Act, each public body listed in the Act (which includes the Councils comprising the CCRC) must set and published wellbeing objectives. These objectives will show how each public body will work to achieve the vision for Wales set out in the national wellbeing goals. When exercising its functions, the Regional Cabinet should consider how the proposed decision will contribute towards meeting the wellbeing objectives set by each Council and in so doing achieve the national wellbeing goals.
12. The wellbeing duty also requires the Councils to act in accordance with a 'sustainable development principle'. This principle requires the Councils to act in a way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Put simply, this means that Regional Cabinet must take account of the impact of their decisions on people living their lives in Wales in the future. In doing so, Regional Cabinet must:
 - Look to the long term
 - Focus on prevention by understanding the root causes of problems
 - Deliver an integrated approach to achieving the 7 national well-being goals
 - Work in collaboration with others to find shared sustainable solutions
 - Involve people from all sections of the community in the decisions which affect them.

13. Regional Cabinet must be satisfied that the proposed decision accords with the principles above. To assist Regional Cabinet to consider the duties under the Act in respect of the decision sought, an assessment has been undertaken, which is attached at appendix 6.

Financial Implications

14. Regional Cabinet approved its 2018/19 Annual Business Plan and the associated budgets at its meeting of the 26th March 2018. Appendix 5 provides an update as at Quarter 4, which in summary indicates:

Wider Investment Fund Top-Slice (£742,500)

15. The final 2018/19 underspend against this budget amounts to -£571,493. The full value of any underspend is available to support the WIF Top-Slice in future years, subject always to observing the 3% cap (annual and cumulative) as approved by Regional Cabinet.
16. The underspend consists of -£110,184 against the budget set aside for Regional Bodies and -£350,366 against the Programme Development & Support Budget (to support the 'Project Delivery Pipeline'. In addition, investment income totalling -£110,943 was received during the year in respect of unspent HMT revenue grant funding.

2018/19 Approved Project Budgets (£13,840,000)

17. Due to changes in the project's programme of work, there is slippage of £1,381,600 (or 10.1%) against the CSC Foundry Ltd's approved capital budget. Based on the revised programme, this amount is expected to be drawn down and fully utilised in 2019/20.

2018/19 In-Year Project Approvals

18. The 2018/19 Annual Business Plan contained uncommitted revenue and capital resources of £1.000 million and £4.015 million respectively. These resources were put in place to provide Regional Cabinet with a level of flexibility to approve additional sums during the year in the event that In-Principle and/or emerging projects found themselves in a position to be allocated approved project funding during 2018/19.
19. On 17th December 2018, Regional Cabinet approved the CCR Graduate Scheme with an indicative 2018/19 budget requirement of £31,450 to be funded from the revenue resources set aside in the 2018/19 Business Plan. As at the 31st March 2019, £7,034 had been spent against this budget, with the remaining £24,416 being carried forward to fund costs which will now be incurred in 2019/20. There were no other revenue resource commitments identified during 2018/19.
20. As outlined in previous monitoring reports, no in-year capital resource requirements have been identified during 2018/19. Given the current status of the Project Delivery Pipeline, Regional Cabinet at its meeting of the 18th February approved the slipping of this capital sum (£4.015M) forward, two years to financial year 2020/21, based on the projected out-turn positions at that time. It is normal practice to include projections (at

a point in time) within future year budgets, which are then subsequently updated to reflect the final out-turn position, once this has been established.

21. Regional Cabinet should note that the 2019/20 Annual Business Plan (ABP) incorporates the positions outlined above, to the extent these impact on budgets incorporated within the ABP. It is normal practice to include projections (at a point in time) within future year budgets, which are then subsequently updated to reflect the final out-turn position, once this has been established. Any material changes will be reported to Regional Cabinet as part of the regular budget monitoring reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

22. It is recommended that the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet:
 1. Note the overall progress at Quarter 4 2018/19, including the budget position reported at Appendix 5 and approve that where relevant, the 2019/20 Annual Business Plan budgets will be prepared on the basis of the projections reported at this time
 2. Consider and if deemed acceptable, approve the Quarter 4 performance report
 3. Authorise th Director of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal to formally submit the Quarter 4 performance report, including supporting information to both UK and Welsh Governments, and other stakeholders as required, on behalf of the Regional Cabinet.

Kellie Beirne

Director, Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

10 June 2019

Appendix 1	CCR City Deal Quarter 4 Performance 'Balanced Scorecard'
Appendix 2	CCR City Deal Quarter 4 detailed Work Programme Update
Appendix 3	AGS Quarter 4 Update (containing the Risk Log)
Appendix 4	Internal Audit Action Plan
Appendix 5	Wider Investment Funds Budget Quarter 4 Update
Appendix 6	Wellbeing of Future Generations Assessment

CCR CITY DEAL QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE – MAY/JUNE 2019

GOOD GROWTH SUPPORTING & DELIVERING 5% GVA UPLIFT, 25K NEW JOBS & £4BN LEVERAGE

STRATEGY & DIRECTION

- CCR competitiveness analysis produced
- Industrial and Economic Growth Plan launched and published
- X4 reports commissioned and underway to inform long-term energy planning around sustainable transport (Metro Plus)
- Written/verbal evidence given to EIS Committee on RSPs in March 19
- Draft final version of the Intervention and Investment framework produced and awaiting decision (June 2019)
- Work nearing completion (May 2019) on Skills for Future, Strategic Sites and Premises and Digital Framework & procurement of Housing Fund
- Strength in Places – phase 2 ‘seed’ approval notified
- Work commissioned to inform a Clean Growth mission for CCR
- Framework and governance arrangements for SDP agreed in principle
- CCR response to WG proposals for creation of Joint Transport Authorities

FINANCE & ASSURANCE

- Three meetings held of CCR City Deal Overview and Scrutiny meeting now held and external training session delivered, with an agreed annual work plan in place
- Investment and Intervention enhancements to governance suggested by Investment Framework (establishment of Investment Panel and refreshed Programme/ CEX Board) underway
- Work on the Investment Fund to be translated into a supplemental and business friendly Assurance Framework by Local Partnership – underway with Metro Plus SOP as first test case
- Work on Metro Plus ‘Common Assessment Framework’ underway
- Production of consolidated Statement of Accounts underway
- Financial reporting for Q4 – posted and on budget
- Outturn report – awaiting approval (June 2019) and containing comprehensive Annual Governance Statement and updated Risk Log
- Agreed Local Evaluation Framework for SQW ‘one year out’ report to inform Gateway Review – awaiting formal approval (June 2019)
- 2019/20 Cabinet and Partnerships planner produced and operational

PROGRAMME PIPELINE & DELIVERY

- Draft project pipeline in development to underpin Investment framework
- Strategic Outline Programme approved for Metro Plus – programme management underway and all relevant supporting studies commissioned
- Graduate scheme operational with staff appointed and all promotional material underway
- Procurement of Housing Catalyst Fund underway
- Business case production for Strength in Places CS Cluster bid underway with economic analysis commissioned for submission in Sept 2019
- Work underway on Strength in Places 2 for CCR bid on Medical Tools and Diagnostics
- CSA Catapult co-located with CSC Foundry May’19 with 5 year business plan and budget in place
- Outline submission to WEFO ‘Building Institutional Capacity’ for Public Services Testbed
- LFFN submission revisions pending with agreement to work with WG on a regional scheme
- Interest expressed on £400m EV scheme, transport SBRI & 2 successful SBRI for Bridgend (energy) and Monmouthshire (food security)
- Torfaen successful Govtech bid addition to Monmouthshire
- Scheme proposal CS Cluster received

PARTNERSHIPS

Regional Economic Growth Partnership:

- Regional Industrial Plan launched in Caerphilly, London and Cannes
- Formation of Investment Panel
- Secured PhD studentships to inform data insight & foresight
- Commitment for bi-annual reports secured from Board of UKRI
- Assistance to Swansea Bay CD
- Secured speaking slot at CBI Spring event
- Institutional Investor meetings lined up
- Dinner with Ian Campbell and IUK – co-investment and delivery

Regional Business Council:

- Sectoral groups now established
- Communications plan established
- Post MIPIM event planned for 1 May
- New member appointment process
- Roundtable event with BSA
- Business Plan prepared and awaiting approval – June 2019

Regional Skills Partnership

- Q2 performance report approved
- Scheme developments on STEM & hard to reach young people underway
- Stakeholder workshops held and evidence to EIS Committee
- Planning for a youth regional forum

RTA:

- SOP approved for Metro Plus
- Response to JTA consultation

COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING & REACH

- Press: Coverage has increased significantly, from 7 pieces in Q3 to 46 in Q4. Direct coverage by CCR has quintupled from Q3-Q4
- Website: Website has received more traffic – 2,000 clicks up on Q3
- Website: Overall page views has increased by 10,000 from Q3-Q4
- Website: Biggest news story: 50m Metro Plus Plans
- Social Media: 13% increase in followers; number of posts from CCR City Deal account has tripled, & there are more frequent posts (328% increase)
- Social Media: More engagement, which has quintupled and was over 10K in Q4
- Website: 4803 overall visitors & page views 18869
- Twitter: 2565 followers
- Twitter: 346.9k impressions
- Twitter engagement: 10,773
- City Deal featured in top 20 Women in Business and Wales’ most influential women (Western Mail)
- MIPIM coverage report appended to MIPIM Report

INFLUENCE & ENGAGEMENT

- CCRCDD keynote speeches/ inputs to:
 - Various keynotes and panel contributions at MIPIM 2019
 - Science Advisory Council for Wales
 - UKRI Meeting with Cardiff University and Rebecca Endean
 - CS Connected
 - Royal Society events on net zero carbon and 2.4% R&D target
 - Study trip Belfast 2019 – invite received
 - Innovation Point Board, Caerphilly CBC & Monmouthshire CC
 - National Infrastructure Commission
- Commitment from UKRI Board members to provide bi-annual updates from UKRO direct to REGP
- Representation on Regional Investment Panel, Valleys Taskforce, Foundational Economy Advisory Group
- Selected to run Wales event on UK Commission 2070
- Request for City Deal to take on lead responsibility for Valleys Taskforce Regional Park programme

ACTIONS PENDING

- Operationalise Innovation and Investment framework with all related governance enhancements
- CCR MIPIM Launch 2020
- Compete all outstanding commissions to further the delivery programme – skills, energy, digital and housing and sites and premises
- Comprehensive proposals pending on SIPF 1 & 2 Compound semi-conductors and medical tools and diagnostics
- Respond to formal Shared
- Clarify position on topslice of Wider Investment Fund for resource and capacity investment – proposal now awaited
- Clarify position on treatment of leverage in the Gateway Review and target revision
- Focus work of s151 group on making progress with wider fiscal programme and measures - NNDR
- Production of Investment Prospectus now in train along with Investment Guidance and Manual
- Launch CCR Energy Mission
- Launch CCR Foundational Economy Challenge

KEY ACTIVITIES

CULTURE, CAPACITY & LEADERSHIP

- PhD KES studentships to commence in May 2019
- Additional support secured for expert programme management
- Prince2 Training for all City Deal Office staff
- Challenge prize training – delivered
- Knowledge development: KTN and bi-weekly team briefings
- CCRCDD role in assessing current round of SBRI Accelerator bids
- CCRCDD Director appointed to Chief Scientific Adviser’s Panel Wales

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Work Programme 2018-19
Evolving our City Deal – Areas to Shape Emerging Regional Plan and Approach

(1) DATA RICH – EVALUATION READY

To address the issue of low levels of data insight and foresight and to ensure we have a robust baseline from which track progress and key advancements	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission sectoral analysis and an overview of competitiveness as regional and place level 		Work underway	First report due in Dec 2019	Final report received and embedded into Economic and Industrial Growth Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission work on a data dashboard to provide a portal that brings together and makes sense of data sources that are relevant to tracking and telling the story of the region 			Commissioned and due in Q2-3 2019/20	Underway and expected in Q2 2019/20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt the National Evaluation Framework and work with SQW to develop the local evaluation frameworks, logic models and plans to inform the work needed for the Gateway review 		Report approved by Cabinet in Sept 2018		Local Evaluation Framework fully agreed – awaiting cabinet approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action in conjunction with SQW, the first set of stakeholder surveys and interview to inform the work needed for the Gateway Review 		Preparation work underway	Phase 1 to be completed	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure investment through the KES Studentship scheme for PhD student to join the City Deal Office to inform and develop data capacity and competency 			Secured with start date of April/ May 2019	

To address the issue of low levels of data insight and foresight and to ensure we have a robust baseline from which track progress and key advancements	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the work commenced by Data Cymru on the Regional Skills database 			Completed	Now being amalgamated with sectoral analysis work

(2) SETTING OUR STALL OUT – REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY / PLAN

To set out our core competitive strengths and have a key means of engaging with the WG Economic Action Plan and the UK Industrial Strategy	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop context to the JWA five year business plan 			Draft complete	Cabinet approval in Feb '19 launched in Caerphilly, London and Cannes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set out core competitive and sectoral strengths and demonstrate synergies with Four Grand Challenges & priorities featuring in the Economic Action Plan 			As above	As above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Welsh and UK Government to respond to the Local Industrial Strategy guidance and provide the first Industrial Strategy in Wales 			Opportunity set out in Cabinet Report Dec 2018	Agreement reached with WG to produce single economic framework for region
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate increased number of submissions into the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund 			Submissions made to: Energy Revolution	Notification of successful phase 1

			SIPF Stations of Future	SIPF for CS Connected. Final submission underway. Second submission into SIPF 2 underway for Medical Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convert the core elements of the Industrial Strategy/ Plan into a CCR Investment Prospectus and to be ready for MIPIM in March 2019 				1 st draft

(3) DELIVERY PIPELINE 'ECO-SYSTEM'

To develop the tools needed to enact robust assessment and decision-making in line with our key targets (GVA, jobs and leverage) and to monitor delivery against current work streams and projects	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an integrated project pipeline document to be monitored and assessed by Regional Cabinet and informed by the REGP by end of 2018/19 			Work has commenced	To be completed in line with IIF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and bring forward for approval by UK Govt, Wales Govt and CCR Cabinet, a new Investment and Intervention Framework and the establishment of three sub-funds to establish the criteria and evaluation tools for investment decision-making 			Work has commenced and Local Partnerships commissioned	Awaiting cabinet approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once approved, launch the three funds in early 2019 – Regional Infrastructure Fund, Challenge Fund and Innovation Investment Fund 				Q1 & 2 2019/20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of the Annual Business Plan for 2019/20 				Completed & approved in Feb '19

KEY PROGRAMMES (lifted from Annual Business Plan)				
Regional Skills Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign LSKIP to become CCR Employment and Skills Board Plan delivery of WG contractual requirements Develop a CCR Employability Plan Skills for the Future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To produce the Outline Business Case To produce a full business case by August 2018 To initiate phase 1 delivery Connecting the Region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RTA Meetings to take place quarterly with progress reports to Joint Cabinet Finalise consultation on Regional Transport Plan Secure agreement of all 10 Councils for Regional Transport Strategy RTA to oversee development of Metro Plus scheme To prepare a programme business case for Metro Central in Cardiff Central Square and Business District Digital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure project development support to design proposals for regional digital infrastructure 			Reg Skills Partnership – now to be Transferred to NCC, Skills lead	CITB secondment in place
			Q1 submitted and feedback received	As above
				Underway under auspices of RSP
			Re-worked bus case underway. Nesta commissioned. Graduate scheme for approval to Regional Cabinet Dec '18	Prog of quick wins underway Graduate Scheme approved and operational Nesta report due in Q1 2019/20
			Complete	Metro Plus SOP approved Feb '19 Cabinet and scheme development underway. Update pending Metro Central
			Underway	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a development plan business case for digital infrastructure OBC • To report to Regional Cabinet to progress • Sign up to Open Data Licence <p>Housing Investment Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure project development support to enable design and development of proposal • To prepare and develop business case • To report to regional Cabinet on progress in forming a Fund and comply with Assurance Framework to secure investment alongside WG <p>Strategic Sites and Premises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify agreed list of strategic sites • Prioritise into short/med/long terms opportunities with WG • Explore sources of investment and report findings • Explore potential for a Regional Development Fund supported by WG and City Deal • Establish a strategic property register • Identify sources of investment for sites and premises redevelopment and development <p>Visitor Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce regional visitor economy plan and for Regional Cabinet agreement • Review constitution of Destination Management Group • Identify and secure opportunities for delivery against the Plan • WG resources and City Deal resources to be aligned for delivery in CCR <p>Energy</p>			<p>Underway OBC in draft and consultation day with EGP 12.12 Completed</p> <p>Business case underway with Dev Bank</p> <p>Phase work identified key sites and premises agreed with WG. Phase 2 work commissioned Work handed over to City Deal office</p> <p>Draft Plan produced Update to Regional Cabinet in Dec 2019</p>	<p>Revision work to Digital framework underway – contained in ABP 2019/20</p> <p>Discussion commenced with WG re: regional infrastructure plan and trunk road opportunity</p> <p>Procurement advert devised – report to Cabinet Q1 2019/20</p> <p>Interim report on Phase 2 work due in May 2019</p> <p>Site list and data visualisation to be complete</p> <p>To be completed. Interim report is ready</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify regional investment opportunities in key renewable energy schemes, industrial energy management and manufacturing technologies Identify and secure potential resources Regional sustainable energy plan <p>Urban Renewal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop proposals that revitalise town centres and urban locations Identify all sources of funding to enhance centres and towns and opportunities for job creation and secure TRI <p>Innovation & Entrepreneurial Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support meetings of RBC and report recommendations to regional Cabinet and investment support for proposals Secure project development support for the Technology Venture Capital Fund and secure investment support and decision through partners and Assurance Framework Report progress on National Software Academy and development of National Cyber Academy Public Services testbed to be rolled out and developed Support and develop internationally renowned CSC Cluster Support CSC Foundry Ltd and development of Foundry 			<p>Local Partnerships pro bono input Stations of Future submitted X two Energy Revolution schemes secured</p> <p>TRI proposals secured Bi-monthly TRI meetings</p> <p>MIPIM report supported 09.18 Superseded by Investment Framework Not relevant at this time</p> <p>SIPF bid submitted</p>	<p>Energy workshops held March and April 2019. Clean Growth mission work underway – as per ABP 2019/20</p> <p>2018/19 TRI schemes underway with 90% spend on target</p> <p>Ongoing. Tech fund incorporated into IIF</p> <p>EOI to be submitted to WEFO</p> <p>SIPF – notification and seed award secured</p>
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(4) CONSOLIDATED & EFFECTIVE 'GOOD GOVERNANCE'

To establish a streamlined effective 'good governance' that utilises the full range of talents, skills and assets available to City Deal	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the detailed 'Evaluation Criteria, Methodology and Weightings' along with a range of 'practical, user-friendly guidance notes' which support the Assurance Framework that demonstrates we are open for business and the way in which that business will be conducted 			Under-way	Awaiting approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-visit the number, variety, composition and frequency of the plethora of groups, partnerships and fora developed to support City Deal and streamline, consolidate and schedule into an appropriate and supportive governance network by end of Quarter 4 				Incomplete – ABP 2019/20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer the 'host' authority status for the Regional Skills Partnership to lead body, Newport City Council 			Transition period in effect	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place arrangements for transitioning Lead Authority responsibility for CSC Foundry Ltd during 2019/20, including meeting all statutory requirements. 				Underway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and monitor a concise and coherent Risk Register and complete work around City Deal wider Risk Environment 			Actioned	Risk register in place and shared with WAO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a comprehensive Annual Governance Statement 			Actioned	Actioned and 2018/19 update pending
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Financial Monitoring Reports to Regional Cabinet, Welsh Government and UK Government 			Actioned	Actioned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new Future Generations/ Sustainability Assessment to demonstrate that all decisions are foregrounded in FG considerations 			Actioned	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively contribute to and develop presence and profile at UK Govt Steering Group Meetings, Pan-UK Implementation Panel and all relevant cross-government partnerships 			Actioned	Actioned
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(5) DEVELOP CITY DEAL INFLUENCE, PROFILE & VISIBILITY

To establish the profile and visibility of the City Deal and City Region with key decision-makers, investment sources and the people and organisations who can help grow our high potential ideas	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address full range of external partnerships, events, investment community and others to develop understanding of the purpose and profile of CCR 		City Deal input at 5 events	City Deal inputs to 20 events	15 events supported and attended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationship with UKRI and Innovate UK through direct interaction, University-led partnerships and input into key policy and strategy development 			CCRCD on GW4 Partnership	Support for Royal Society events and CSA Panel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop relationship with WG and regional working structures and strategies 			Director appointed to CSA Council	Appointment to Reg Inv Panel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop role of REGP as industrial figure-heads supporting CCR and CCRCD 			REGP lead on Industrial Plan, data & investment framework	Invite to support Swansea
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain a seat for CCRCD at UKRI level by 2021 			ongoing	On-going

(6) CREATE 'OFFICE OF CITY DEAL'

Develop a professional, efficient and sufficiently resourced City Deal Office capable of driving and delivering step change in the region		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Define and make a case for the capability and capacity needed to underpin delivery with a Resourcing Plan bringing forward for decision in January 2019			Early thinking developed	Restructure & Resourcing Plan approved and recruitment underway	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop branding and marketing required to establish the City Deal core identity and brand and value proposition			Prototype designs established	Plans on track in Readiness for MIPIM 2019 and all branding in place	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish a new CDO presence at the Innovation and Technology Centre in Tredomen with a clear 'front of house' provision			CDO move date 10 Dec	Complete	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Launch the new City Deal website			Completed	Complete	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a comprehensive Communications plan and set targets for reach, profile and sentiment assessment			Draft developed	ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a targeted social media campaign				Ongoing – significantly improved results reported in Q4	

(7) REFOCUS ROLE OF INDUSTRY & ENHANCE LOCAL LEADERSHIP

To demonstrate City Deal is enabled and overseen by strong local leadership alongside strong and vibrant industrial leadership	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a challenge-led approach which focuses on Regional Cabinet's approach and commitment to understanding and solving big problems in region 			Part of Investment Framework - underway	Part of Investment Framework – awaiting approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the 'good growth' proposition and articulate ambitions for growth that is sustainable and inclusive 			Part of Comms Plan - underway	Embedded in strapline & dedicated post and role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Regional Business Council to establish the 2018/19 Business Plan to articulate their priorities and key activities to engage and involve the business community 			For decision Dec 2018	Underway – Q1 2019/20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the increasing profile and growing programme of work of the Regional Economic Growth Partnership 			Industrial Plan, data and investment framework	Underway – plan for 2019/20 produced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and submit proposal to WEFO for building Institutional Capacity – Public Services testbed 			underway	Completed

(8) CHALLENGE FOCUSED & MISSION-LED

Growing our ability to secure investment on a competitive basis	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a challenge-fund to align with UKRI and UKIS 4 Grand Challenges 			Underway as part of investment	Draft produced and Challenge Prize Centre

			framework work	training delivered. Discussion with WG re: collective challenge prize on Foundational Economy
• Secure co-investment commitments from Innovate UK and WG			Proposal paper to be developed by InnovateUK	In principle agreements
• Document learning from successful SBRI and GovTech work				Commenced through SBRI Accelerator
• Engage with work of Nesta's Challenge Prize Centre			Contact established	Completed
• Develop competency around Open Data and Open Data-led projects and propositions through the Digital OBC work				Commenced through SBRI Accelerator
• Secure UKRI resources in 5 major investment programmes in 2019/20				ongoing

(9) INTERNATIONALISM & COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

To grow the global reach and profile of CCR and CCRCD and develop and market our comparative advantage	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
• Produce Investment prospectus by March 2019 for MIPIM that promotes both the region's liveability and investability				Draft produced

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote region at MIPIM 2019 and work with Dept for IT to promote regionally significant scale projects and propositions in its Prospectus and take-up Panel opportunities 			Contact established and drafts in development	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and sponsor Wales Week in London 2019 			Confirmed	Launch event successful in for 28 Feb & at Cannes in March 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop links with the Vanguard and Manumix and the wealth of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships & programmes, bringing global great practice into the region 			KTN participation with Innovate UK	Underway through WG Innovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote our commitment to sustainable development through more targeted activity with public purpose organisations – Bcorps, Co-ops and employee-owned organisations and through a commitment to the Circular Economy 			Yet to progress	ABP 2019/20

(10) TOWARDS A MORE SELF-RELIANT CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION

To develop City Deal alongside other means and mechanisms for reducing dependency and increasing regional economic self-reliance	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a plan to systematically explore, test and implement full range of fiscal powers and incentives – NNDR, Tax Increment Financing, Retail and Institutional Investment etc 			Yet to progress	Meeting sought with HMT and TIF Law Company
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, approve and implement Investment and Intervention Framework in order to target approach to investment leverage 			Underway	Awaiting approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the appropriate junctures at which to explore and develop the opportunities that currently sit outside of City Deal in order to begin bringing about greater coherence and clarity to the areas in which there is agreement to act as a region 			Progress with Regional Skills	Agreement in principle on SDP process

			Partnership and SDP	and governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop inter-regional links and connections and identify areas in which collaboration to enhance competition will best serve CCR 			Input into Severnside Summit	Informing recent discussion on sub- regional brand and leadership

Appendix 3: AGS Action Plan – Quarter 4 Update

Table 1 below outlines the baseline position that was included in the audited version of the 2017/18 Statement of Accounts. As part of the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), twenty assurance statements were assessed as demonstrating a strong, moderate or limited level of assurance (shown as red, amber and green respectively). Table 1 shows the distribution of ratings assigned to the twenty assurance statements, and outlines agreed actions required.

Table 1: Baseline Position (2017/18 Audited Statement of Accounts)

	Assurance Statement	Suggested Action	Responsible Officer/s	Review Period	Mechanism for Review
	Statements: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20	Periodic review of Good Practice Assurance Statements undertaken during the year.	Programme Director, s151 Officer, Monitoring Officer & CEXs	6 monthly	Half-year review of AGS
1	Codes of conduct exist and are effectively communicated	Clarity needed on the applicability of Policies and Procedures outside of those explicitly outlined in the JWA The need to correctly document the employment arrangements in place is paramount. HR (Accountable Body) to advise, with any non-compliance escalated to CEXs via Programme Director	Programme Director with advice from Accountable Body	Quarterly	Progress against action monitored and reported on a quarterly basis
2	We ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and internal policies	Need to remind City Deal partnering authorities of the Governance Protocol approved by the Joint Committee in relation to the decision making framework	Programme Director / CEXs	Quarterly	Progress against action monitored and reported on a quarterly basis
3	We are committed to openness and acting in the public interest	It is recognised that the arrangements for Welsh Language need to be more visible and therefore, need to be strengthened.	Programme Director with advice from Accountable Body	Quarterly	Progress against action monitored and reported on a quarterly basis
14	We have mechanisms to review the effectiveness of our framework for identifying and managing risks	Programme Director to lead on putting in place the appropriate arrangements in respect of Strategic Risk Management	Programme Director	Quarterly	Progress against action monitored and reported on a quarterly basis

Table 2 tracks quarterly updates against the baseline position through the financial year 2018/19, with progress being reported to Regional Cabinet as part of the Quarterly Performance Reports.

Table 2: AGS Action Plan Progress Overview Table - Qtr 4 RAG assessment

Assurance Statement		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	We have and effectively communicate codes of conduct to define standards of behaviour for members and staff, and we have policies for dealing with whistleblowing and conflicts of interest.				
2	We ensure: a) Compliance with relevant laws and regulations, b) Compliance with internal policies and procedures, and c) that expenditure is lawful.				OA
3	We are committed to openness and acting in the public interest.				OA
4	We have established clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.				OA
5	We have developed and communicated a vision, which specifies intended outcomes for citizens and service users, which is used as a basis for planning.				
6	We have translated the vision into courses of action for our function, its partnerships and collaborations.				OA
7	We have mechanisms in place to review the effectiveness of the decision-making framework, including delegation arrangements, decision-making in partnerships, information provided to decision makers and robustness of data quality.				OA
8	We measure the performance of services and related projects and ensure that they are delivered in accordance with defined outcomes and that they represent the best use of resources and value for money.				
9	We have defined and documented the roles and responsibilities of members and management, with clear protocols for effective communication in respect of the authority and partnership arrangements.				
10	Our financial management arrangements conform to all relevant legislative and best practice requirements.				
11	We have effective arrangements in place to discharge the monitoring officer function.				
12	We have effective arrangements in place to discharge the head of paid service function.				
13	We provide relevant induction training and have mechanisms in place to identify the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training.				
14	We have mechanisms to review the effectiveness of our framework for identifying and managing risks and performance and for demonstrating clear accountability.				OA
15	We ensure effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are developed and maintained.				
16	We have an effective scrutiny function in place.				
17	Our internal audit assurance arrangements conform to Public Sector Internal Audit standards and relevant best practice.				
18	We have arrangements in place for the delivery of the core functions of an audit committee.				
19	We provide timely support, information and responses to external auditors and properly consider audit findings and recommendations.				
20	We incorporate good governance arrangements in our partnerships and other joint working arrangements.				

OA – Outstanding Actions. Following the completion of a Status Review during Quarter 3, these assurance statements were identified as having actions identified, either to improve or to maintain the level of assurance provided.

Performance monitoring conducted at Quarter 4 indicated that of the twenty assurance statements, 17 were rated 'green', whilst 3 remained at an 'amber' rating.

There are 6 Actions ongoing where work towards achieving a higher level of assurance is being undertaken. These actions relate to the 'amber' statements outlined above, as well as a number of 'green' statements, in order to maintain and enhance the level of assurance provided. The position is summarised in below.

Updates on Agreed Actions – Qtr 4

Assurance Statement 2 – Amber rating	
<i>Statement</i>	<i>We need to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and internal policies.</i>
<i>Agreed action</i>	Need to remind City Deal partnering authorities of the Governance Protocol approved by the Joint Committee in relation to the decision making framework.
Update Qtr 4	<p>Cabinet briefing and meeting dates for 2019/20 are agreed and in place.</p> <p>However, further work required on developing the Regional Cabinet 'Forward Plan' and communicating this to relevant officers and stakeholders to ensure that draft reports are developed and circulated for advice and comment in a timely manner, allowing sufficient time for officer consideration and input. Therefore, the rating remains amber at this time.</p>

Assurance Statement 3 – Green rating	
<i>Statement</i>	<i>We are committed to openness and acting in the public interest.</i>
<i>Agreed action</i>	It is recognised that the arrangements for Welsh Language need to be more visible and therefore, need to be strengthened.
Update Qtr 4	<p>Cabinet agendas and minutes are produced in Welsh as standard and all other reports and items are available in Welsh upon request. This protocol is applied to all policies, strategies, plans and consultation papers etc. as mandated by regulation.</p> <p>Policies and procedures will be constantly updated to reflect the latest guidance and to ensure there is clarity regarding the services that are available in Welsh and accessibility is clearly visible to all.</p> <p>The action in respect of the 'Register of Members Interests' is now complete and the relevant link is included under each Cabinet Member's profile within the City Deal website.</p> <p>Regional Cabinet meetings are not held in fixed locations and it is our aim to hold meetings in a variety of locations</p>

	and venues across the region in order to maximise accessibility and opportunity across the region's geography.
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Assurance Statement 4 – Green rating	
<i>Statement</i>	<i>We have established clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.</i>
Status review	<p>Clear channels of communication have been established with the community and other stakeholders, however, it is recognised that further work is required to build on this position and respond to any feedback that is received.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A key channel of communication employed by the Cardiff Capital Region is its dedicated website. This is in the process of being relaunched to improve accessibility and navigation to ensure that the required information can be found quickly. 2. Work ongoing to develop further the working relationships and understanding with the Skills Partnership Board and the Regional Business Council.
Update Qtr 4	<p>Website relaunched to improve accessibility and navigation and to assist with information being located quickly. New Marketing & Communications post (once in place) will undertake an audit of the new website to assess the impact of the changes made to to-date.</p> <p>Develop further the working relationships and understanding with the Skills Partnership Board and the Regional Business Council.</p>

Assurance Statement 6 – Green rating	
<i>Statement</i>	<i>We have translated the vision into courses of action for our function, its partnerships and collaborations.</i>
Status review	<p>Approval of the Joint Working Agreement (JWA) 5 year Strategic Business Plan and Annual Business Plans translates the Cardiff Capital Region's vision into tangible actions. However, to assist with monitoring actual progress against these plans, the need to introduce a mechanism for establishing and monitoring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has been identified.</p> <p>As a minimum these KPIs will need capture progress against the key criteria such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) £4bn of private sector leverage; (ii) creation of 25,000 jobs;

	<p>(iii) 5% uplift in GVA in the region.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consideration will be given to the introduction of KPIs as part of the 2019/20 Annual Business Plan approval process. 2. Work is now being progressed on developing the Evaluation Framework, including application of the HMT five-case business model. This work will need to recognise that a sense of proportionality is required, and that the Councils may opt for an alternative approach for smaller projects. Whilst the five-case approach may be appropriate for certain projects, it does not naturally lend itself to all projects.
Update Q4	<p>Approved 5 year JWA Business Plan is in place with the 2019/20 Annual Business Plan being approved by Regional Cabinet during Qtr 4.</p> <p>Work is being progressed on developing the Investment & Intervention Framework and associated Toolkit, including application of the HMT five-case business model. This work will need to recognise that a range of approaches will need to be developed that are 'proportional' to the value, complexity, timescales etc. of the proposal being evaluated.</p> <p>Furthermore, whilst the five-case approach naturally lend itself to typical infrastructure projects, the work outlined above will also need to consider business case development approaches for non-infrastructure type projects e.g. those coming forward under the Challenge Fund.</p>

Assurance Statement 7 – Green rating	
<i>Statement</i>	<i>We have mechanisms in place to review the effectiveness of the decision making framework, including delegation arrangements, decision-making in partnerships, information provided to decision makers and robustness of data quality.</i>
Status review	<p>The Joint Working Agreement (JWA) contains the appropriate mechanisms to review the effectiveness of the decision making framework.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 2019/20 Work Programme includes an action in respect of delegation arrangements. 2. Work is being progressed to establish a series of measures on the economic and social make-up and performance of the region, as well as a baseline against which future performance can be assessed. This sectoral analysis data will inform the Gateway Review process and facilitate more effective decision making, through a better understanding of the region's strengths, and the opportunities which exist to

	make strategic interventions that are likely to have the greatest impact. The first draft of the sectoral analysis report was received in January 2019.
Update Qtr 4	<p>The 2019/20 Work Programme will be monitored in respect of the 'delegation arrangements' action.</p> <p>First 'State of the Region' report is due w/c 01/04/2019. The report will bring together the sectoral analysis work undertaken during the second half of 2018/19 and inform the economic baseline against which future performance can be measured and assessed. This will be key to inform decision making going forward.</p> <p>REGP to formally consider the report during Qtr 1 2019/20. It will be important to ensure continuity of this workstream and provide regular update reports going forward. Bid submitted to KESS for PHD student support to assist with continuing this work over the medium term.</p>

Assurance Statement 14 – Amber rating	
<i>Statement</i>	<i>We have mechanisms to review the effectiveness of our framework for identifying and managing Risks.</i>
<i>Agreed action</i>	Programme Director to lead on putting in place the appropriate arrangements in respect of Strategic Risk Management.
Update Qtr 4	<p>A 'Risk Register' has been in place since the latter part of 2018/19 and work now needed to develop the wider Risk Management Strategy, including an assessment of the risk environment, appetite, monitoring and escalation processes.</p> <p>The Programme Director is in the process of implementing the City Deal Office restructure approved by Cabinet. Once in place, this will provide additional capacity and allow the next stage of the Risk Management Strategy to be developed through-out 2019/2020.</p> <p>In preparation for the above, the Programme Director is engendering a risk / performance culture to ensure risks are managed effectively and reported accordingly. This will be achieved through regular performance /risk management reviews taking into account the Investment & Intervention Framework and wider strategic risks that the City Deal programme of delivery may be exposed to.</p>

Appendix 4 - Internal Audit Action Plan: Quarter 4 Update

1. Cardiff Council's Internal Audit Service is responsible for providing internal audit services to the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Accountable Body. To enable the Internal Audit Service to fulfil its role, a 5 year 'rolling' audit plan has been prepared covering the period from 2018-19 to 2022-23 and sets out the proposed work required each year, to secure appropriate levels of assurance.
2. The first audit of the 5 year plan covered governance, transparency and the effectiveness of decision making and was undertaken at the beginning of the current financial year (2018/19). The final report was issued in July 2018.
3. In summary, the key findings largely mirror the conclusions reached as part of the AGS process outlined above. The audit report's Recommendations, Risk Rating, Management Response and Agreed Actions have been captured as a separate Action Plan and a detailed update was provided as part of the Quarter 1 Performance Report.
4. At Quarter 4, three of the four actions have been completed and the position is summarised below:

R1. Development of a Risk Management Policy and Strategy – In progress.

Strategic Risk Register now in place which captures details of the 9 Strategic Risks along with current controls and further management actions clearly documented.

The Cardiff Capital Region relies on the policies, strategies and processes of the Accountable Body, however, work completed on preparing the Risk Register has identified the need to develop the wider Risk Management Strategy, including an assessment of the risk environment, appetite, monitoring and escalation processes.

The Programme Director is in the process of implementing the City Deal Office restructure approved by Cabinet. Once in place, this will provide additional capacity and allow the next stage of the Risk Management Strategy to be developed through-out 2019/2020.

In preparation for the above, the Programme Director is engendering a risk / performance culture to ensure risks are managed effectively and reported accordingly. This will be achieved through regular performance /risk management reviews taking into account the Investment & Intervention Framework and wider strategic risks that the City Deal programme of delivery may be exposed to.

R2. Establishment of a Joint Scrutiny Committee – Complete. Three Joint Scrutiny meetings have now taken place and a Work Programme has also been developed.

R3. Establish and maintain a register of declared interests – [Complete](#). A link has been added to the Cardiff Capital Region's website directing the user to the 'declarations of interest forms' home website for each Cabinet Member.

In addition, every Cabinet meeting has an agenda item reminding members of the need to declare any interests, with any such declarations being added to the minutes and decision register for those meetings.

R4. Training to be provided on new Contract Standing Orders and Procurement Rules – [Complete](#). There will be an ongoing review of training requirements for current and new staff throughout the year.

Appendix 5 - Wider Investment Fund Budget – Quarter 4 Update

1. The 2018/19 Wider Investment Fund (WIF) Annual Business Plan approved a programme of expenditure as detailed in Table 1 below, along with the proposed funding priority.

Table 1: 2018/19 Approved WIF Expenditure & Funding

	£'000
<u>Indicative Programme Expenditure</u>	
Wider Investment Fund Top Slice	742.5
Approved Projects	13,840.0
In Year Revenue Project resources	1,000.0
In Year Capital Project resources	4,015.0
Total Investment	19,597.5
<u>Funded by</u>	
HMT Contribution (Revenue)	-1,892.5
HMT Contribution (Capital)	0.0
Total HMT Contribution	-1,892.5
Council Contribution	-17,705.0
Temp Borrowing 'Cost of Carry'	0
Total Funding	-19,597.5

2. The WIF Top-Slice revenue budget is set at £742,500 and supports the work of the Regional Bodies. In addition, the budget includes amounts in respect of Programme Development & Support.
3. Regular updates have been provided to Regional Cabinet throughout the year via the Quarterly Performance reporting mechanism. As at Quarter 3 there was a projected under-spend of £286,123. Details of agreed budgets and final expenditure for 2018/19 are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. 2018/19 WIF 3% Top-Slice – Quarter 4 Update

	2018/19 Budget £	2018/19 Outturn £	2018/19 Variance £
<u>Regional Bodies</u>			
Regional Transport Authority	52,193	46,020	-6,173
Regional Skills Partnership	102,193	65,169	-37,024
Regional Economic Growth Partnership	70,000	19,316	-50,684
Regional Business Council	50,000	33,697	-16,303
Sub-total	274,386	164,202	-110,184
<u>Programme Development & Support</u>			
-			
<u>In-Principle Projects</u>			
Digital Strategy	130,000	81,958	-48,042
Metro Plus	0	1,634	1,634
Housing Investment Fund	100,000	2,388	-97,612
-			
Programme Dev' & Support (Un-allocated)	238,114	31,768	-206,346
Sub-total	468,114	117,748	-350,366
Investment Income	0	-110,943	-110,943
Total	742,500	171,007	-571,493

Regional Bodies: (-£110,184)

4. The Regional Bodies element of the WIF Top-Slice budget amounts to £274,386 and includes sums set aside to advance the work of the Regional Transport Authority, the Regional Skills Partnership (RSP), the Regional Economic Growth Partnership (REGP) and the Regional Business Council (RBC).
5. There are 2 FTE posts funded from these budgets (1 FTE each relating to the Regional Transport Authority (underspend £4,522) and the Regional Skills Partnership (underspend £715). These underspends are mainly due to a delay in recruitment to the Regional Transport Authority post.
6. As part of the RSP budget, £50,000 was allocated to Strategy Development. £13,446 of this budget has been used to fund the work of NESTA to inform the next steps of the Skills for the Future business case.
7. In terms of the REGP budget, expenditure to date includes the commissioning of external support to establish a 'Sectoral Analysis' for the region. This data will provide a baseline against which future performance can be measured and assessed, as well as supporting the Gateway Review process. Put simply, the data will facilitate more effective decision making, through a better understanding of the region's strengths and the opportunities which exist to make strategic interventions which are likely to have the greatest impact. This work is partly complete, with £15,000 spent in 2018/19 and the balance of the commission (£15,000) will be met from the 2019/20 allocation.

8. The RBC's Annual Business Plan was approved by Regional Cabinet at its meeting of the 17th December 2018. The expenditure for the year consists of the RBC's contribution (£33,697) to the City Deal's presence at MIPIM in March 2019, resulting in an underspend of -£16,303 against the approved budget.

Programme Development & Support Budget: (-£350,366)

9. A total budget of £468,114 was approved across Programme Development & Support and is allocated between projects that had secured an 'In-Principle' approval (£230,00) and with the balance (£238,114) being available to support emerging projects and initiatives during the year.
10. Work is ongoing on the Digital Strategy project with total spend in 2018/19 of £81,958. Of this, £79,000 was spent on business case development costs and the remaining budget will be carried forward to contribute towards further work planned for 2019/20. The £100,000 allocation approved in respect of the Housing Fund project was largely not utilised in 2018/19 and the balance will be available in 2019/20 to continue the work.
11. With regard to in year emerging projects and initiatives, a budget of £29,172 was approved to support a part-time secondment to lead the work on data analytics, economic forecasts and sectoral assessments. The actual cost for this support amounted to £31,768 in 2018/19.

Investment Income: (-£110,943)

12. In line with the Accountable Body's approved treasury management strategy for City Deal, balances held in respect of unspent HMT revenue funding has been invested, with net interest received during the year amounting to -£110,943.

Qtr 4 WIF Top-Slice Summary

13. In summary, a total of £117,748 was spent against the £468,114 budget approved for Programme Development & Support (including In-Principle projects), resulting in an under-spend of -£350,366. Once the under-spend on Regional Bodies is factored in, coupled with the unbudgeted investment income of -£110,943, the total net underspend for the year amounts to -£571,493.
14. As set in previous reports, the underspend reflects the reduced level of activity which has taken place during the due to the transition to the City Deal Office (restructure) and the development of the Investment & Intervention Framework, which is due to be considered by Regional Cabinet at their June meeting.
15. The full value of this underspend is available to support the WIF Top-Slice in future years, subject always to observing any caps approved by Regional Cabinet from time to time and compliance with grant funding terms and conditions.

2018/19 Approved Project Budgets

16. The 2018/19 Annual Business Plan approval included budgets in respect of Year 2 costs relating to the Compound Semi-Conductor Foundry Site project. These were budgeted at £13.84 million, consisting of both project related expenditure and the ongoing cost of servicing the Special Purpose Vehicle (Project Delivery & Implementation budget). An update against these budgets is outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3: 2018/19 Approved Project Budgets

	2018/19 Budget £'000	2018/19 Outturn £'000	2018/19 Variance £'000
CSC Foundry Site Funding	13,690	12,308	-1,382
CSC Project Delivery & Implementation	150	150	0
Total	13,840	12,458	-1,382

17. At 31st March 2019, the majority (90.0%) of the budget has been released to Monmouthshire County Council as Lead Authority for the Compound Semi-Conductor Foundry project based on the arrangements contained within the project funding letter and the supporting legal documentation. These documents provide a maximum cap on the level of City Deal funding that can be made available to the project. The balance of £1.38 million represents budget slippage to financial year 2019/20.

2018/19 In Year Revenue and Capital Project Approvals

18. The 2018-19 Annual Business Plan contained additional revenue (£1.000 million) and capital (£4.015 million) resources which were made available to provide Regional Cabinet with a level of flexibility to approve sums during the year. This could be in respect of In-Principle and/or emerging projects that come forward as part of the Cardiff Capital Region's 'delivery pipeline' and also meet the requirements of the Assurance Framework.
19. Regional Cabinet were advised at Quarter 3, given the development of Investment & Intervention Framework referred to above, it was unlikely that any new commitments would crystallise in 2018/19, over and the approved Graduate Pilot Scheme. Table 4 outlines the position in respect of In-Year Approvals.

Table 4: 2018/19 In-Year Project Approvals

	Budget £'000	Qtr 4 Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
<u>In Year (Revenue) Project Resources</u>			
Graduate Pilot Scheme	31	7	-24
Unallocated	969	0	-969
Total Revenue Resources	1,000	7	-993
In Year (Capital) Project Resources	4,015	0	-4,015

20. The Graduate Pilot Scheme was approved by Regional Cabinet at its meeting on 17th December 2018 and has incurred costs of £7,034 during 2018/19. Costs relate to some initial staffing resources and the setup of a bespoke website and are less than the £31,450 that had been estimated. Any unspent budget will be made available in 2019/20 to ensure the pilot scheme is fully resourced as set-out in the cabinet report.

Future Generations Assessment






Name of the Officer completing the evaluation: Kellie Beirne Phone no: 07826 9219286 E-mail: kellie.beirne@cardiff.gov.uk	Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal Setting out substantive performance and progress against the approved annual business plan for 2018/19.
Proposal: Quarter 4 Performance	Date Future Generations Evaluation form completed: 28 May 2019

1. **Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	Assessing progress with City Deal and the targets set around GVA, jobs and leverage – is our key means of securing greater prosperity. Reporting progress in this way contributes to a growing sense of self awareness.	Proposals to improve progress against each of the projects currently in progress – are set out in the report. This report does not seek to simply report progress – but to address the actions needed to drive it.
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	References to submissions around the 'Energy Revolution' challenge fund are described in the report. Also recent submissions around EV and work to underpin the roll out of LEV. In addition, the development of the Metro Plus scheme is critical to embodying resilience and sustainability.	This activity will be driven up in future. In addition as physical infrastructure schemes enter delivery – more comprehensive assessments will need to be carried out in full.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	A number of the interventions in train – Skills, Housing and Transport improvements seek to make a contribution to the way the region 'works', how it promotes opportunity and unlocks potential	
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	The place-shaping component of our City Deal is set out in the report	A greater contribution will be made to this by the aforementioned data capability, sectoral analysis and place assessments.
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Attending MIPIM, Wales in London week and CS Mantech to promote the CCR will see us play a stronger part in developing the economic wellbeing of our region and country, thus impacting social and community objectives. It will help make our country feel more connected and outward looking.	Develop the legacy impact of the event, sustaining new connections, sharing great practice and potentially securing propositions and deals that support economic growth.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Our City Deal is uniquely Welsh – but pitches towards being world leading in areas of competitive strength. This enables a strong reflection on our rich culture and heritage.	
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	City Deal is about delivering as far as possible across 10 LAs and a population of 1.5m people. It is about economic gains – but importantly how this will convert as tools for improving people's lives. Some of the specific interventions around skills and housing – will seek to make a more direct contribution to equity of access and equal opportunity for all. New role around Inclusive Growth will make a contribution to this as well as work to support the Foundational Economy.	The new Investment Framework is underpinned by criteria that focuses on economic inclusion – seeking to achieve shared prosperity and the spread of benefits across the region.

2. How has your proposal embedded and prioritized the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	The report describes performance in the round. It sets out short-term interventions and balances these against the long-term delivery of major programmes.	The plan has been iterated to reflect a more co-ordinated format. This is now followed up in the production of the Annual Business Plan 2019/20.
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	A cornerstone of our process is the strength of partnership working. An update on governance is set out in the report.	
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	Communications and engagement remain a feature of our work.	More needs to be done to develop engagement platforms – beyond formal partnerships – to reach communities, hard to reach groups and those who currently have a limited understanding of City Deal. Improving social media, web presence and marketing materials will increasingly make a contribution to this.
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	This is set out in the REGP work on the developing Regional Economic and Industrial Plan.	This will be an increasing focus of scheme and programme delivery.
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	City Deal seeks to make a contribution on place and to improving the life chances of people in the region.	

3. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The report is an overview of performance in all of the relevant aspects of projects, partnership, governance and investment. The protected characteristic assessments related to specific proposals will need to be drawn out in the relevant business cases and proposal documents.	None arising at this time.	As plans develop and unfold as discrete activities requiring decisions – impacts will be comprehensively assessed. As with this and all the categories below, as work continues on data development and data analysis, we will glean better insights into our employment base and working demographic profiles.
Disability	As above	As above	
Gender reassignment	As above	As above	
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	As above	
Pregnancy or maternity	As above		
Race	As above		
Religion or Belief	As above		

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sex	As above		.
Sexual Orientation	As above		
Welsh Language	As above	Not at this time but the situation will be kept under review.	

4. Safeguarding & Corporate Parenting. Are your proposals going to affect either of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Not directly relevant –however, building the future economy should have a profoundly positive impact on ability to safeguard the future of our residents		
Corporate Parenting	Not directly relevant – however building strength in the economy should create opportunities for all of the young people entrusted in our care		

5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

- Evidence and input contributed by theme leads
- Outcomes of assessments such as audit reports
- Delivery against targets set out in individual business cases/ approved project documentation

6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The areas requiring attention and focus are set out and follow-up actions will be assessed and monitored ongoing through the quarterly reporting mechanism. .

7. MONITORING: The impacts of this proposal will need to be monitored and reviewed. Please specify the date at which you will evaluate the impact, and where you will report the results of the review.

The impacts of this proposal will be evaluated on:	
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Cardiff Capital Region

Industrial and Economic Plan

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Foreword

The Industrial and Economic Plan has been developed by Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Economic Growth Partnership (EGP) in conjunction with CCR Regional Cabinet, to set direction, and to identify and address the priorities facing the region. The Plan is designed to be flexible, in order to better adapt and respond to the dynamic challenges the region will face over the next twenty years.

The Plan highlights some of the region’s productivity challenges and endorses innovation-led, scalable projects that the EGP believes are necessary to generate sustainable growth and inclusive prosperity.

It also recognises that cohesion amongst all stakeholders is fundamental to its success, including joined-up regional and UK Government policy, bona-fide public-private sector partnerships, reciprocal collaboration with education providers and social enterprise engagement.

The Plan advocates global connectivity through investment in best in class transport systems, housing, digital infrastructure, and employable skills in order to fulfil its objectives of job creation, improved productivity and the leveraging of evergreen investment.

Alongside the South Wales Metro, which is the “back bone” for the Plan, targets have been set to create 25,000 new jobs, achieve 5% increase in GVA, and leverage £4bn of additional investment in CCR.

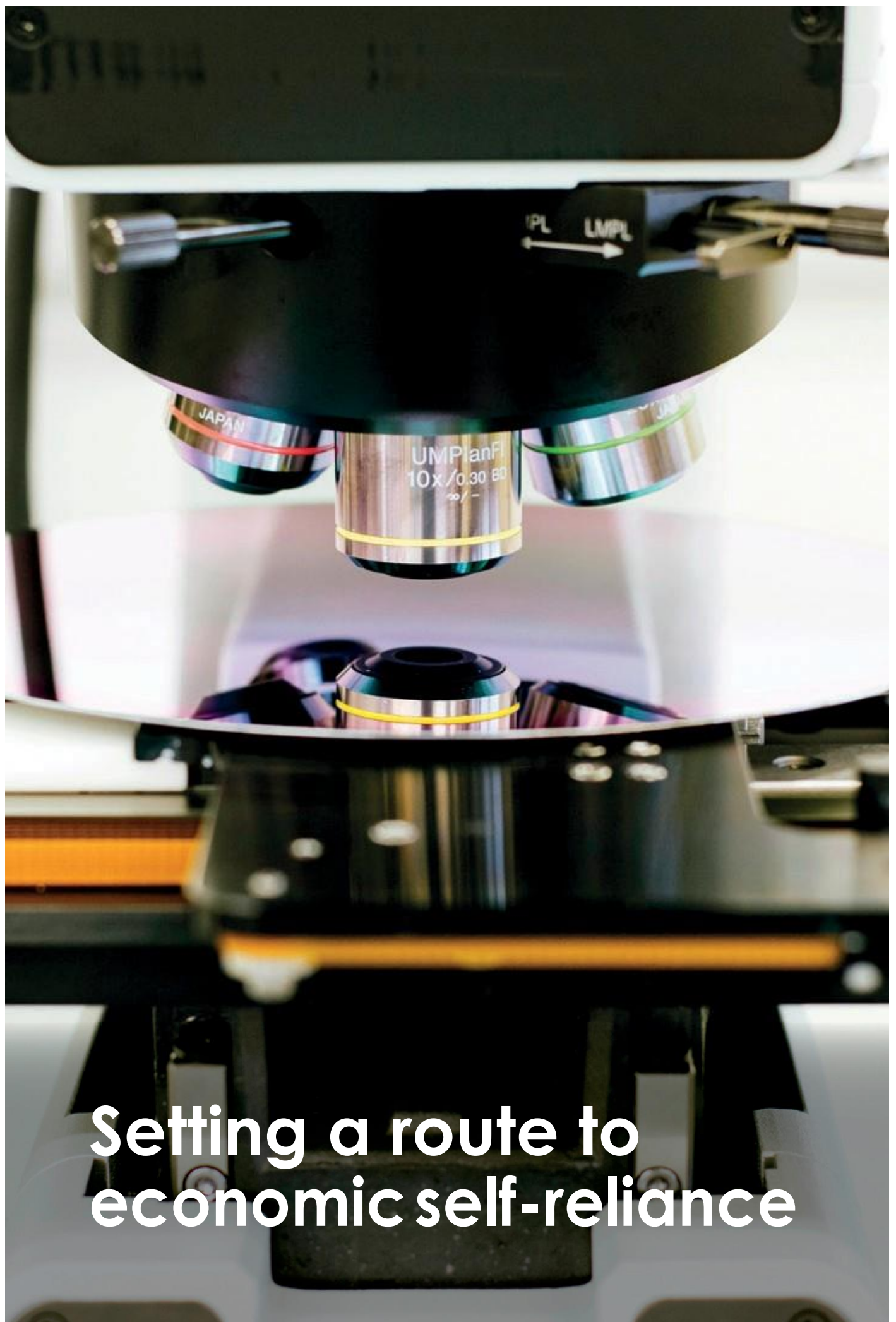
The EGP has also been tasked with designing an Investment and Infrastructure Framework. This will address three designated and interconnected investment priorities: innovation, infrastructure and more specific challenges such as those posed by mobility, an ageing population, AI and clean growth. This is an inventive approach recognising the need to improve the business environment within the CCR, rendering the region competitive and investable with a global focus, both inwardly and externally.

Like any plan its success will be determined by action and leadership. If all stakeholders commit to its implementation, the ambition of generating a thriving and resilient economic region capable of sustaining future generations’ prosperity can be delivered.

It remains to thank the EGP Board and the Office of the City Deal, for their extensive professional input and dedicated support to delivering this Plan.

J. Frank Holmes
Chair, Cardiff Capital Region
Economic Growth Partnership





01.

Introduction

The Regional Economic Growth Partnership was established to advise on the implementation of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal's Wider Investment funds. This Industrial and Economic Plan sets out an ambitious and long-term plan to boost productivity and accelerate economic and inclusive growth in the region by making the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) a highly investable proposition, backing businesses to create good and sustainable jobs through targeted investments in skills, priority industries, infrastructure and innovation. This is a complete departure from siloed infrastructure and sectoral programmes of the past, and is a 20-year plan which will need to be flexible and adapt over time – it will be refreshed and updated periodically.

We are currently in an extremely dynamic and turbulent time with no more European Structural Funds, no more City Deals – the end of the allocation of public funds – and a move towards competing for funds and investments based on competitive advantage. This is a significant shift, moving away from a dependency culture to a competitive culture, where influence and excellence are core commodities. We will also need to embrace co-investment approaches, be more challenge focussed in our approach and explore what fiscal levers and incentives can be maximised to ensure the future productivity and prosperity of the region.

Our approach will be based on:



Cohesion

Policy collaboration and delivery partnerships ensuring that there is cumulative impact to the range of investments and interventions delivered by the City Deal.



Scale

Limited number of significant interventions, rather than a disparate range of loosely connected small-scale activities.



Leverage

Maximise the City Deal investments by attracting co-investors with complementary funding and resources.



Return on Investment

Demonstrable impact and benefit will be expected from all investments and interventions.



Ecosystem Development

Supporting the development of a strong economic and innovation ecosystem to deliver the plan and develop clusters of excellence within our region.

“We will address two mutually supportive objectives of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequalities.”

The purpose of the plan is to guide the deployment of funding, policy decisions, and targeted effort to ensure the future productivity and prosperity of the region. It sets out the principles that will guide the region towards self-reliance, rather than a more detailed, prescriptive roadmap. The future is profoundly unknowable, and there are many moving parts in a modern economy: it is simply not possible to plan long-term economic growth more precisely. But we can create attitudes, infrastructure and support that offer the best chances of fostering it.

In delivering sustainable and inclusive growth, we will address two mutually supportive objectives of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequalities. The introduction of inclusive and regenerative growth as central threads of the plan emphasise the need for an economic agenda that drives sustainable economic growth and productivity across all of the region.

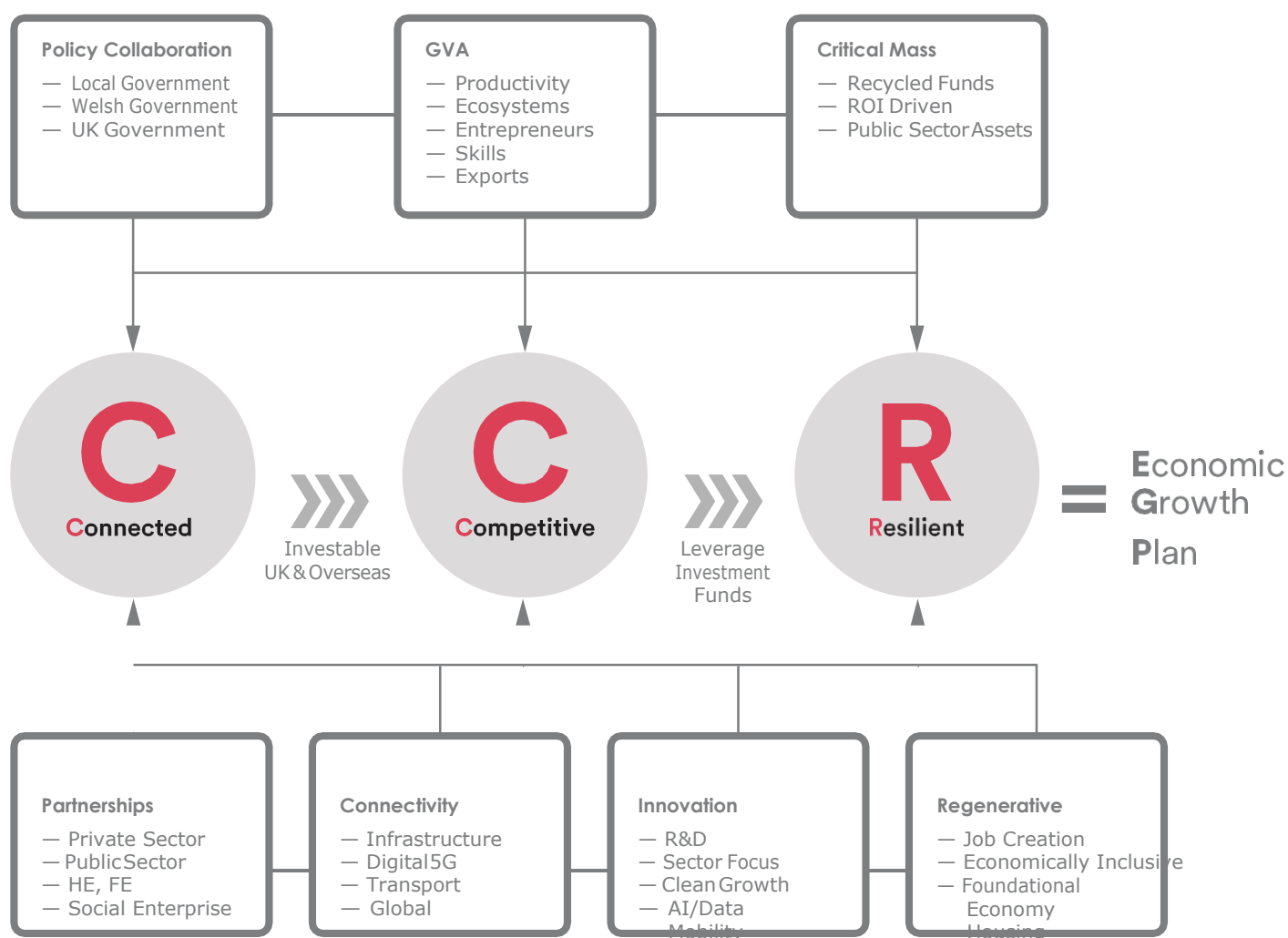
The CCR Industrial Plan is promoting a new way of working within the region, with UK Government, Welsh Government and local government working together and in partnership with the private sector, Higher Education and Further Education institutions, third sector and other public sector bodies on boosting productivity and accelerating sustainable, competitive and inclusive growth. This will build on the foundations established in the CCR City Deal. Where appropriate, we will work with partners beyond the CCR in both the Swansea Bay Region, the South West of England and beyond where the critical mass across the partnerships will allow a greater strategic focus to improve productivity.

The role of government is to be a shaper of our region; to convene, facilitate and catalyse strategic interventions and investments that will deliver on our combined goals and objectives. Delivery of the plan will be a partnership between the private, public, education and third sectors.

The development of the CCR Industrial Plan has been led by the Economic Growth Partnership and has involved partnership with the wider business community and government at all levels. It builds on the Growth and Competitiveness Commission Report (2016); and is informed by the UK Industrial Strategy (2017), Welsh Government Economic Plan (2017), Well-Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, local economic development strategies, and two recent Science and Innovation Audits that cover the region – the South West England and South East Wales S&I Audit (2016) and the South Wales Crucible Audit (2018).

The Economic Growth Partnership is investing in analytical capability to provide robust and reliable data on a series of economic and social indicators to better understand the performance of the region. This will ensure well informed decisions are taken in the delivery of the regional industrial and economic growth plan.

Cardiff Capital Region: Connected, Competitive and Resilient



02. Overview of the Regional Economy

The CCR City Deal was agreed in 2016, and the Growth and Competitiveness Commission report set out a broad framework for an enabling approach that addresses the key issues of growth, inclusivity and sustainability. The Metro has been tendered, and a significant investment has been made in the Compound Semiconductor Foundry providing further stimulus to the development of the CS Cluster in the region. These investments sit alongside and are complementary to other investments made by the UK Government, Welsh Government, Welsh European Funding Office, and the Development Bank of Wales within the region.

The region is well skilled with a high proportion of the population with qualifications of degree level or equivalent, has a Capital City at its heart that has cultural and sporting facilities the envy of many other cities in the UK and further afield. The quality of life is second to none with great coastline, forests, parks and rivers, with the Brecon Beacons National Park nestling to the north of the region.

Whilst tentative progress has been made recently with a reduction in unemployment, and value added has risen, we have not seen the required

upturn in economic productivity: GVA per capita remains low, like other regions in the UK. Participation rates – the proportion of the population that is economically-active – could be higher. The relatively-large proportion of public sector work poses a challenge; as does poor physical and digital connectivity within and around the region. There is also room to develop a more aspirational, outward-looking and entrepreneurial culture, and a need for better support for smaller, growing businesses.

Work is ongoing to develop an analytical framework to provide evidence to identify the key inclusive growth challenges of the region, which will assist in establishing appropriate interventions to address the twin objectives of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequality.



“The region is well skilled with a high proportion of the population with qualifications of degree level or equivalent...”

03.

Investment and Intervention Framework

We are establishing an investment and intervention framework that will contain three designated and interconnected investment priorities linked by common focus on securing a coherent, competitive, sustainable and fair regional economy. The region is open for business and the investment and intervention framework will outline clearly how we are conducting our business. The three designated investment priorities (Innovation, Infrastructure, and Challenge) will support the delivery of the plan and will be established in partnership with the investor community to drive forwards our economic ambitions and priorities within the region. We will have a focus on an evergreen approach to our investment funds with a strong co-investment principle.

The Innovation investments will focus on opportunities where there is demonstrable competitive strength, leveraging significant other investments which will provide direct returns to the fund. The rate of return in this category will be high and ensure an evergreen investment fund for the region whilst providing a significant contribution towards jobs growth, investment leverage and GVA uplift. The Infrastructure investments will focus mainly on infrastructure projects where the public sector creates the

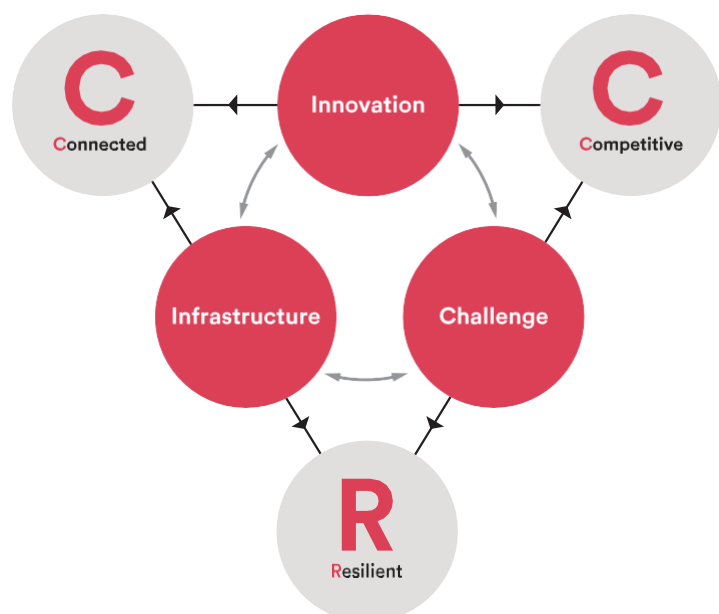
conditions for private sector success and civic benefits. The return on investment here will typically be indirect due to its enabling nature. Finally, the Challenge investments will seek to attract the best solutions for specific challenges faced by the region: these may be in the commercial domain, but are also likely to be in such strongly-inclusive areas as the foundational economy. As a result, it is expected that there will be both direct and indirect returns on investment.

The ultimate aim of the investments will be improving the business environment within the CCR, creating rich ecosystems that stretch and support the development of key sectors in the economy, improving comparative performance against other cities and regions in the UK and internationally. We aim to make the CCR one of the most investable regions within the UK.

The Investment and Intervention Framework will build a delivery pipeline with our partners within, and beyond, the region focussed on the priorities identified within this plan. It will be a key facilitator to support an interconnected set of proposals over the next five years to deliver on the ambition and priorities outlined in this plan.

“We aim to make the CCR one of the most investable regions in the UK.”

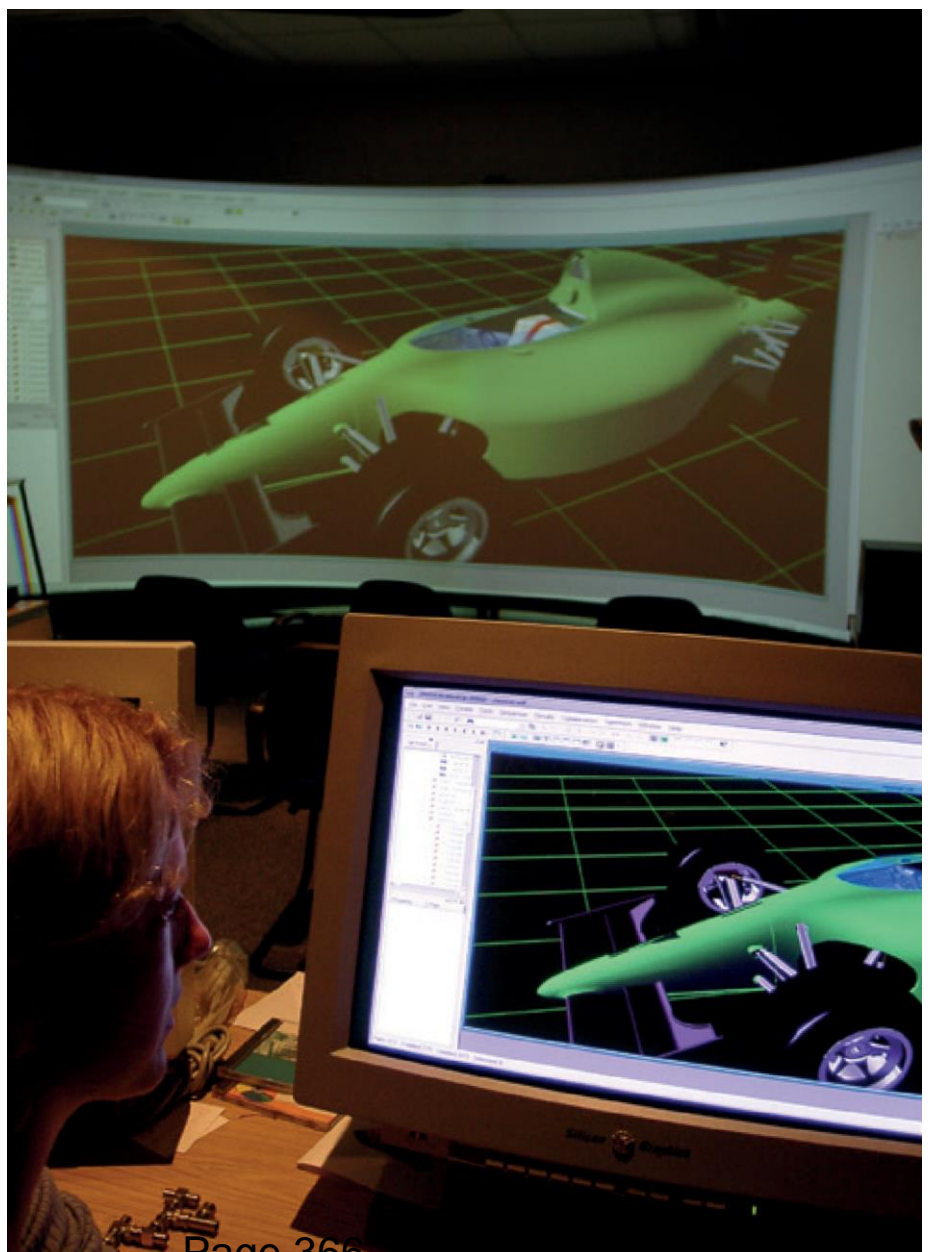
CCR Investment Fund Structure



04. Regional Priorities to Boost Productivity and Accelerate Sustainable, Competitive and Inclusive Growth

Regional priorities to boost productivity and accelerate economic and inclusive growth have been identified to specifically build on our strengths and address our weaknesses.

We believe that this two-pronged approach will boost local productivity and overcome our local barriers within the region. The remaining sections of the plan outline our priorities.



05. Businesses that Succeed

The CCR wishes to perform economically on a par with any region in the UK and internationally. It currently sits towards the bottom of most of the economic productivity and competitiveness tables in the UK. In order to move the needle and improve the economic prosperity of the region, we must:

- Identify areas of comparative strength in the CCR that can compete at a UK level and internationally, and invest in them;
- Create rich ecosystems that stretch and support the development of key sectors within the economy – take a challenge led approach that drives up ambition and cohesiveness;
- Encourage and support entrepreneurship so that our population not only seeks employment but creates employment within the region;
- Improve productivity within the Foundational Economy;
- Target our most deprived and isolated communities and support regenerative growth;
- Turn the large public sector base within the region into an asset that adds prosperity to the region.

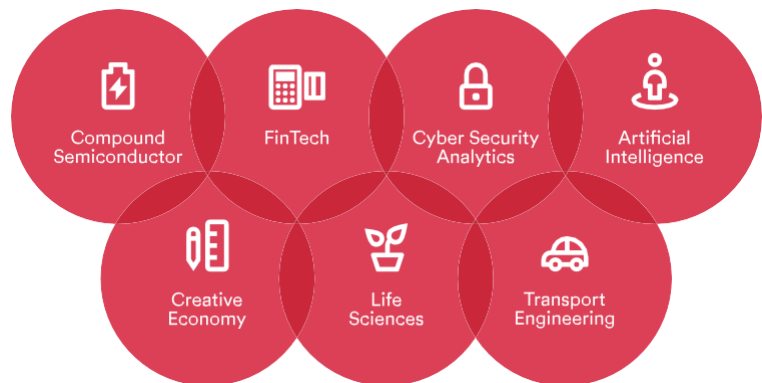
Building on our competitive advantage and opportunity within the economy we will strategically target sectors for support, enabling them to grow and flourish. These will include – but will not be limited to – the following:

- Compound Semiconductors, its supply chain and applications
- FinTech
- Cyber Security Analytics
- Artificial Intelligence and Data Science
- Creative Economy
- Lifesciences and more specifically the medical devices and diagnostics sub-sectors
- Transport Engineering – automotive, trains and aircraft

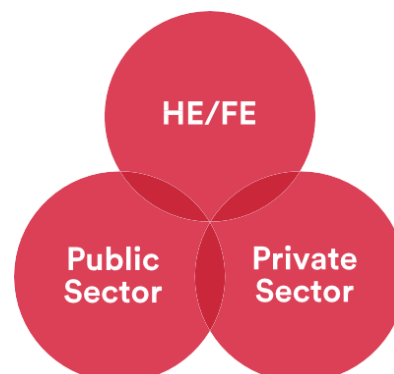
The list of strategic sectors is not exclusive, and we will support investments in other sectors such as energy and environment if a compelling case is made. Sectoral analysis work is ongoing to ensure that our focus is evidence based.

We will also promote the CCR as an attractive place for business and encourage close collaborations and partnership working across the private sector and with the public sector, Higher Education and Further Education sectors. Cross-sectoral collaboration and cohesion will be a central feature of our approach. CCR is open for business.

Sectors to strategically target:



Cross sectoral collaboration and stakeholder cohesion is a central feature:



06. Skills of the Future

We have a skilled workforce in the region, with our Colleges and Universities playing a critical role, but there is more to be done. We need to continue to work on joining up the education, employment and skills system to meet the region's business and public sector needs of today and in the future. We must ensure that the region has a highly-skilled, motivated and forward-thinking workforce with a significant supply of critical skills to enable businesses to flourish over the next decades from entry level to masters and doctorate level qualifications.

We will look to enhance existing and develop new provisions where required to drive the priorities of our businesses in the region. Working in partnership with our education and training providers, we will:

- Develop proposals for data, cyber, digital and software scientists to exploit the potential of the new industries of the future and derive added value from existing and more traditional industries;
- Develop proposals to service the needs of our priority sectors within the region e.g. Compound Semiconductor Cluster;
- Develop proposals for a high-quality executive leadership training for business leaders across the region (targeted specifically at SME's with growth potential);
- Develop a programme of entrepreneurship across the region (targeted at 14 to 21-year olds) to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs within the region;
- Support existing initiatives to increase apprenticeships in growth sectors across the region at all levels;
- Upskill the public sector with data literacy, research and development, procurement, and innovative leadership capacity;
- Work with current schools, colleges, universities, and private providers to ensure that sufficient local home grown talent is nurtured and trained to service the needs of our foundational economy.

“We must ensure that the region has a highly-skilled, motivated and forward-thinking workforce...”



07. Infrastructure Fit for the Future

Connectivity is critical – both digital and physical. We need a reliable infrastructure that connects the region, both within and wider afield, to boost productivity and prosperity. The current Metro plans are a significant step in this direction and we will bring forward further proposals to maximise and unlock future potential offered by its development. We will ensure that we have a road, rail, air and digital infrastructure (fixed and mobile) to connect us to the world. Working with our partners we will:

- Develop a Digital Connectivity Plan to make the region one of the most digitally advanced regions in the UK;
- Continue to work closely with the UK and Welsh Governments to further develop, enhance and implement the transport network to improve links within the region, reduce congestion and connect people;

- Embrace the Metro as a backbone to connecting CCR and shaping places on its networks;
- Develop a series of strategic employment spaces across the region to meet the needs of businesses;
- Develop proposals for energy efficient and accessible housing;
- Utilities networks – ensure, for example, we are ready for the future of electric and/or hydrogen vehicles;
- Develop the organisational and data infrastructure and capacity within the public sector to embrace the challenge led approach through a Public Services Testbed.

A region wide strategic focus will enable key towns across the region to be connected ensuring that the growth of the economy is balanced and inclusive

Strategic Hubs and Opportunity Areas

Cities

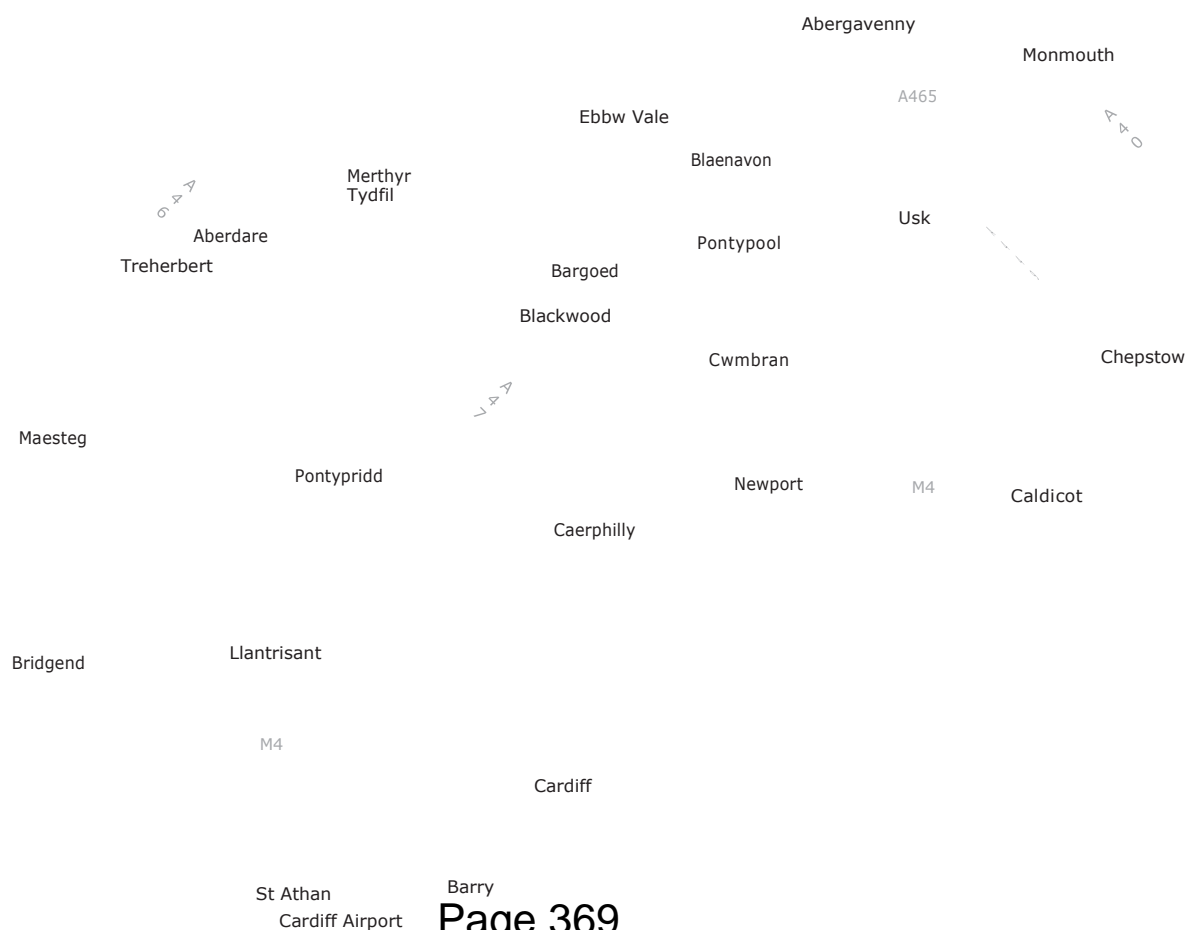
Cardiff, Newport

Enterprise Zones

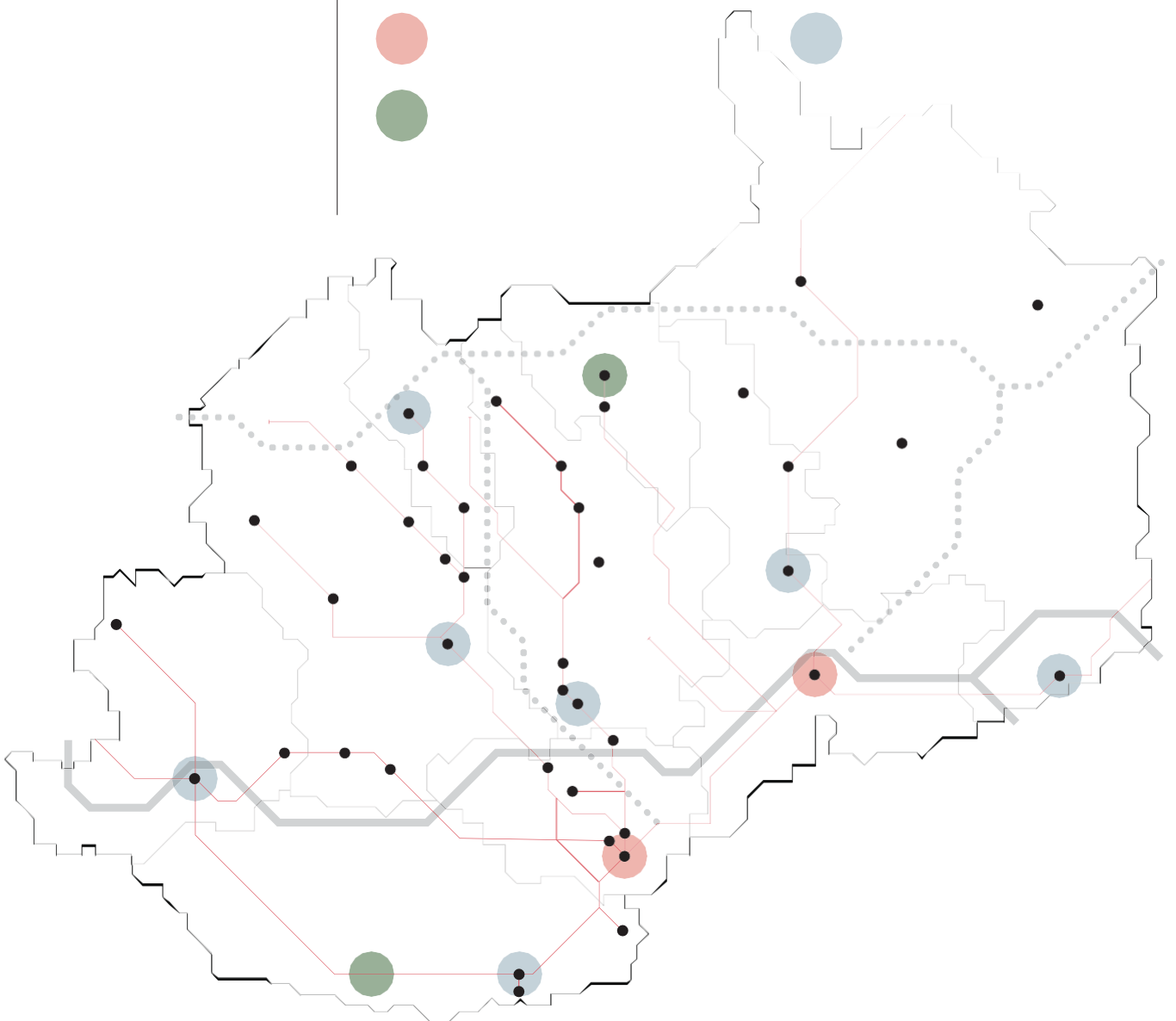
Ebbw Vale, Cardiff Airport & St Athan

Strategic Hubs

Barry, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Caldicot, Cwmbran, Merthyr Tydfil, Pontypridd



← 55 Miles Wide →



08. Enabling Innovation-Led Growth

The UK Government Industrial Strategy identifies four Grand Challenges signalling a shift towards a challenge led approach to driving future productivity and prosperity. The Grand Challenges are future-facing

and will shape our economic future. They are underpinned by expected developments in technology that will transform industries and societies around the world in which the UK could play a leading role.

Expected developments in technology:



AI and Data Economy

Putting the UK at the forefront of the artificial intelligence and data revolution.



Clean Growth

Maximising the advantages for UK industry from the global shift to clean growth.



Ageing Society

Harnessing the power of innovation to meet the needs of an ageing society.



Future of Mobility

Becoming a world leader in the way people, goods and services move.

In time, other unidentified challenges will present themselves and we as a region must be able to react and address them.



2.4%

Target UK GDP to be spent on
R&D by 2027

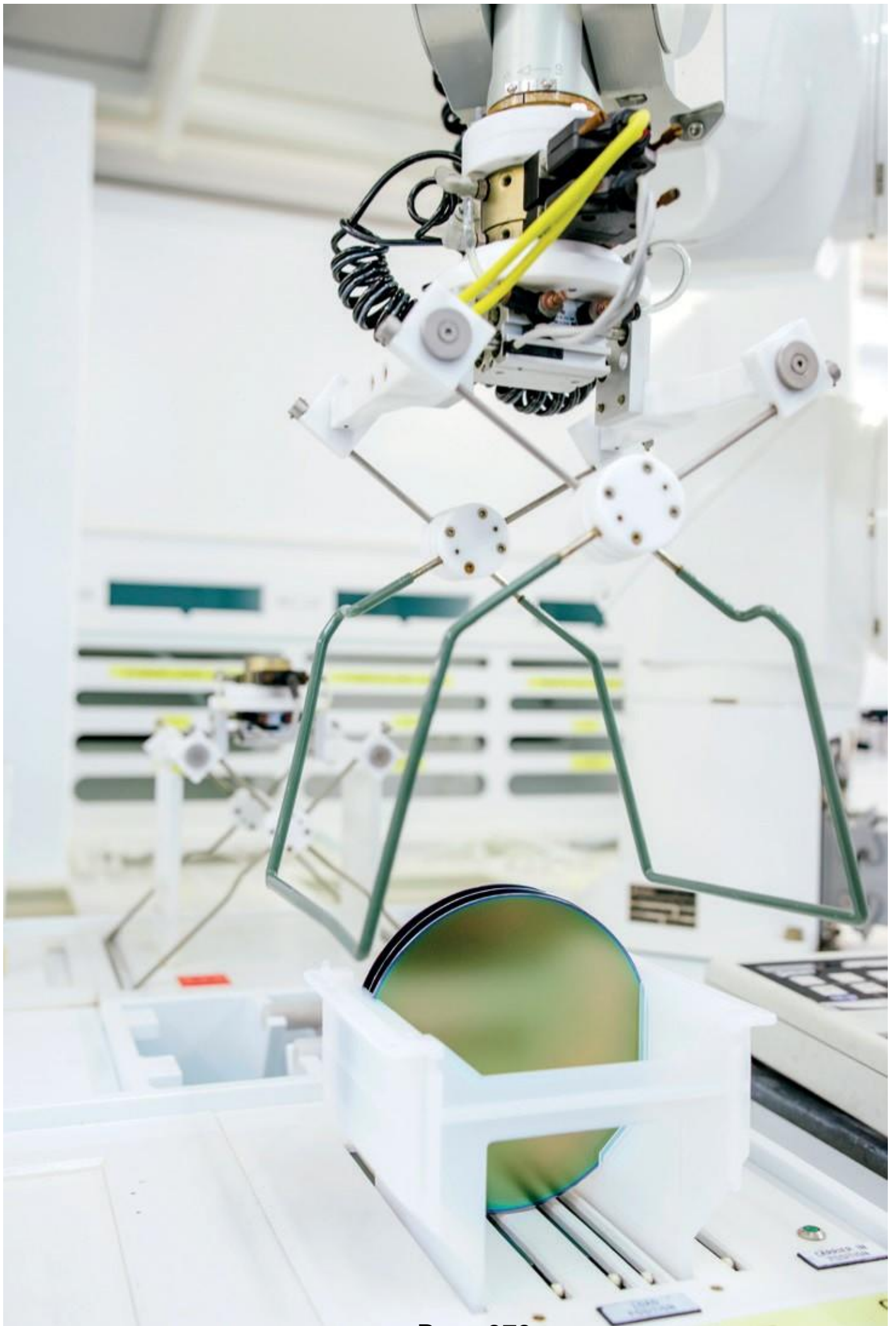
We will take a broad view of innovation, including innovation that increases productivity from the foundational economy, embracing innovation in public services, through to innovation in unique Intellectual Property where market leadership is evident. Successful innovation and commercialisation within this context will be critical to our success, and we will use novel instruments such as Challenge Funds to spearhead invention and promote competition for financial awards to best in class participants.

With historically low levels of competitiveness and productivity, coupled with low levels of R&D investment and intensity, we will encourage a greater focus on R&D and innovation within our region. In the context of the UK Industrial Strategy, and the target of increasing R&D spend to 2.4% of UK GDP by 2027, we must support our economy to adapt and adjust to the wider economic context. Therefore, our focus on innovation-led growth will be central to our plan and we will identify our areas of competitive strength and support the establishment of clusters that can compete internationally.

Recognising the local importance of the public sector, we will establish a Public Services Testbed with a mission-driven approach to generate new collaborations and public services improvements and enable the delivery of public sector innovation and economic value. This approach involves the identification of a major 'grand challenges' and the development of 'missions' with clear and ambitious targets for improvement that form a basis upon which a number of related and complementary multi-sector (private, public, third sectors) projects may be identified in order to deliver business growth opportunities. The combination of public services innovation with new thinking in public sector procurement has the potential to generate new market opportunities, and commercial value that benefits the region.

“...we will encourage a greater focus on R&D and innovation within our region.”



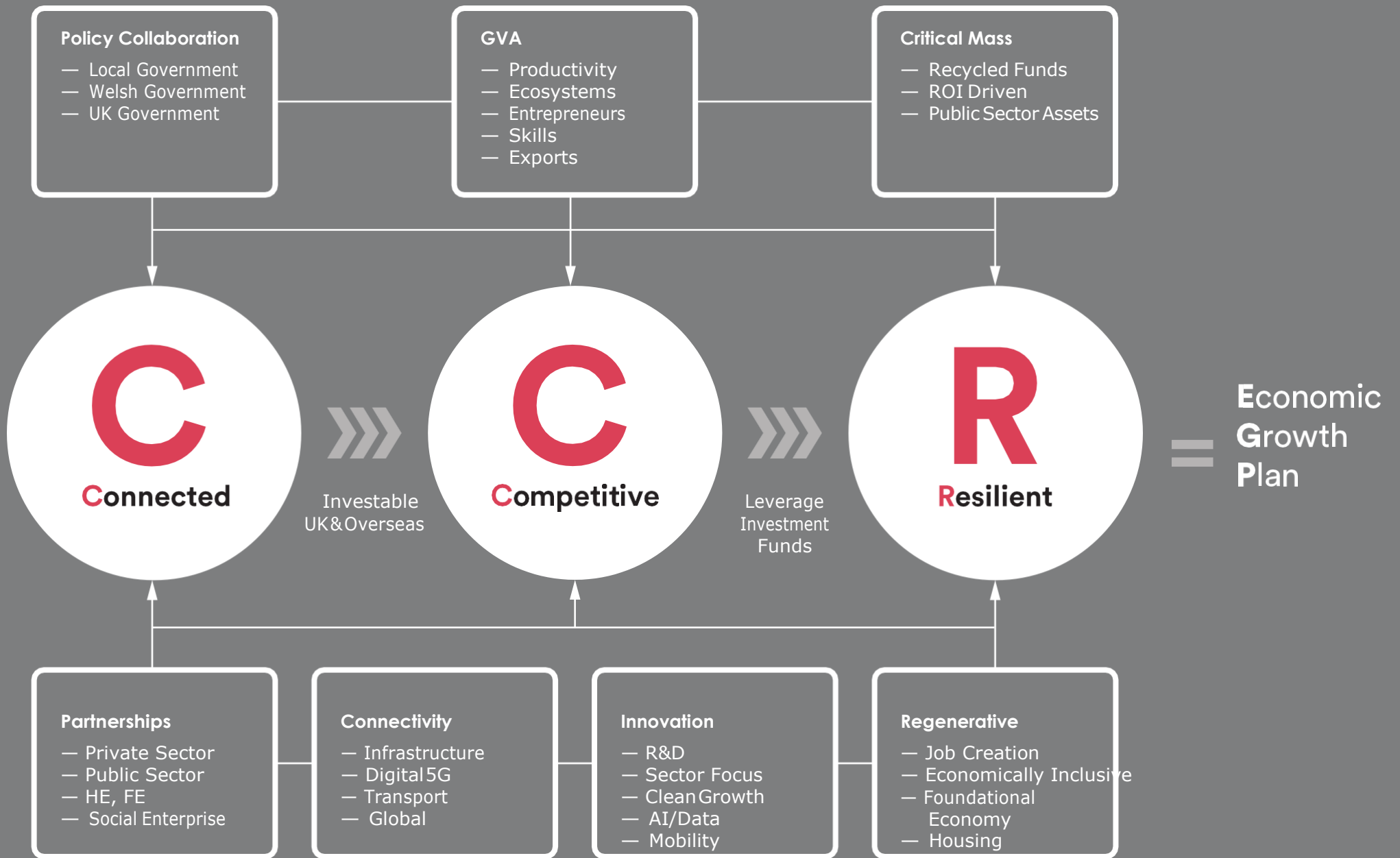


Useful Information & Contacts

Cardiff Capital Region

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Agenda Item 31

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 19.12.2019

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 24.11.2019

Committee: **Council**

Date of Meeting: **12th December 2019**

Report Subject: **Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny Progress Report**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr N. Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Gemma Wasley, Service Manager Performance and Democratic**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
23.10.2019	29.10.2019			05.11.2019			12.12.2019	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny Progress Report covering the period April 2019 to September 2019 attached at Appendix 1.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The progress report attached at Appendix 1 has been developed to incorporate the established action plans covering Scrutiny support, Member development and managing and modernising.
 - 2.2 Progress updates on the Scrutiny support action plan and Member development action plan have been presented to the Democratic Services Committee on systematic basis.
 - 2.3 As part of the ongoing review process it was recognised that by integrating progress against these plans into one report and including a section on facilitating the democratic arrangements, Members would have a fuller picture of performance.
 - 2.4 The Corporate Performance and Democratic Team, which includes the Scrutiny support function and Democratic Services function, under the Head of Democratic Services, has developed the revised version, which for consistency reflects the style and format used to present other performance information into the democratic process.
 - 2.5 The intention is to continue to develop the progress report to include further actions and performance measures, which will link to the corporate business planning arrangements.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The report has been agreed by the Departmental Management Team and included on the agenda of the Corporate Leadership Team as part of their information pack.

Democratic Services Committee considered the report at their meeting on 5th November 2019 and recommended Option 1 for consideration by Council.

Option One

- The Council considers and approves the information included within the Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny Progress Report (Appendix 1).

Option Two

- The Council considers the information included within the Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny Progress Report (Appendix 1), provide specific comment or amendment prior to approving the document.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

The Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny Progress report supports the Corporate Plan's priority 'Efficient Council'. It also supports the requirements under the Local Government (Wales) Measure.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

The only direct financial implication relating to the action plans would be any training needs that are identified through the Member Development Programme. In house training options are developed to support Members where possible.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There are risks associated with reputation and not maximising the opportunity for monitoring of progress of actions to deliver the Council's democratic arrangements. The revised progress report aims to provide Members with a more joined up picture of performance across the key elements of the democratic arrangements.

5.3 ***Legal***

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

There are no direct staffing implications associated with this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Appendix 1 provides performance information.

- 6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***
Members being fully informed of performance across the key elements of democratic arrangements will support them to undertake their role as Elected Members both within and outside of the Council in order to effectively represent their constituents.
- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
Forward work programmes of the scrutiny committees include areas of work that promote positive benefits for people who fall under the protected characteristics.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
The Action Plans support the Council's longer term monitoring to ensure its Democratic Arrangements continues to be developed and reviewed, including managing and modernising.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
By working to improve the democratic functions of the Council we are looking to prevent further amendment or the need for regulation in future. This work is anticipated to become more prominent as the requirements of the Well-being for Future Generations Act are implemented.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
As part of the continuing development of the scrutiny function peer learning opportunities with other local authorities are undertaken.
- 6.7 ***Integration(across service areas)***
Democratic activity impacts all Directorates of the Council integrating the work of both members and officers.
- 6.8 ***EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***
There are no negative impacts on the protected characteristics associated with this report.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1 The action plans for both Scrutiny and Democratic Services are monitored by the Corporate Performance and Democratic Team as part of the Council's business planning framework.

The Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny progress report is monitored regularly by the Democratic Services Committee and Council.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1 – Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny Progress Report*

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Democratic Arrangements and Scrutiny Progress Report

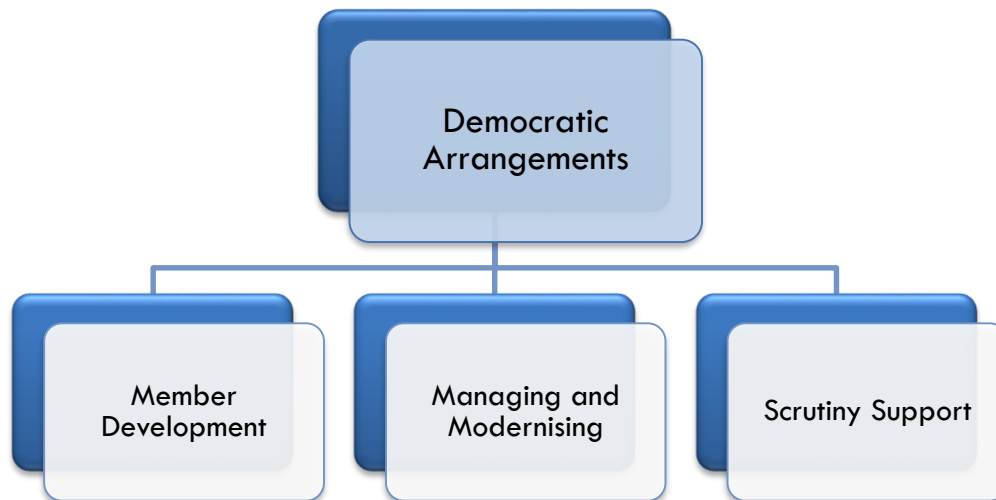
Period: April – September 2019

Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

Scope of the Report

This report provides detail on the work carried out to embed Democratic Arrangements and Support for Members, focusing on the development of establishing more effective ways of working. The role of an Elected Member is increasingly complex and therefore appropriate support and guidance is vital.

For this report format support has been categorised into 3 broad areas, as shown below:



Member Development including:

- Review and implementation of members training programme;
- Review and implementation of the members Personal Development Review (PDR) and Competency Framework procedures; and
- Development of a members development and support library.

Managing and Modernising:

- Members ICT and Support; and
- Modern.gov.

Scrutiny Support including:

- Provide advice and guidance to Members and Officers on Scrutiny protocols, procedures, and the effective operation of Scrutiny in meetings and outside of meetings;
- Supporting the development of transparency within the process by promoting scrutiny committees to the public; and
- Providing an advisory role to support each Scrutiny committee.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to present an overview of progress made to support the Democratic Arrangements including Democratic Support and Scrutiny Support. The reporting period covers April 2019 – September 2019. The report sets out the key activities and measures used to monitor performance against each priority actions and key actions set as part of the business planning arrangements.

Member Development

Key Activity

Support for Members Appointed to Outside Bodies: Further work has been undertaken following the Council's Annual Meeting in May 2019 to promote the approved framework to support members in their role on outside bodies and to report the learning from these organisations in the work of the Council. Two reports were recently considered by Full Council relating to Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and were positively received by Members. This work will be on-going.

Review of the Mentoring Framework: Following a review of the Member Mentoring Framework, 3 Elected Members completed mentoring training. Further work to promote the framework will be undertaken as part of the Personal Development Review (PDR) and Competency Framework process, which will take place during November.

Member Support and Development Programme: The Member Support and Development Programme have been on-going throughout the course of the year with a further 17 sessions held between April – September 2019. The 2019/2020 Member Development Programme has been developed and aligned to the forward work programmes of the committees. Training needs identified via the Personal Development Review (PDR) process (which will take place during November) will also be incorporated as part of the programme.

Development of a central database of information for Members: Work has been completed on establishing this dedicated resource on the intranet and Members have been notified that the site is now 'live'. The database includes key documentation and information and will continually be updated to include resources from the Member Development and Training sessions.

Elected Member Personal Development Review (PDR) and Competency Framework Procedures: Since adoption of the scheme in May 2018 the first round of PDR sessions took place in November 2018 with the Senior Salary Holders (SRA). Following this initial implementation, feedback has been received from Members and minor amendments have been made to the document to facilitate the process. These will be trialled as part of the PDR review process this year. Personal Development Reviews for SRA holders will be externally facilitated during November 2019. Following this process individual action plans for each SRA holder will be developed.

Discussions have taken place with Group Leaders regarding offering PDR's to non-Senior Salary Holders.

Future Area of Focus

The future focus for this area of work is:

- Continue to review, develop and embed processes for Democratic Arrangements;
- Continue to provide support to those Members Appointed to Outside Bodies;
- Continue to update and provide information on the central database of information for Members;
- Continued support to Members in respect of the PDR process; and
- Provide support to Members as part the Mentoring Framework Arrangements.

Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

Key Performance Measures

Member Briefing Sessions – April to September 2019			
Name of Event	Portfolio	Date of Event	Number of Members Attending
Education Transformation	Education & Learning	8 th April, 2019	12
Regeneration & Community Services Directorate Update	Regeneration	10 th April, 2019	19
Young People's Services	Education & Learning	15 th April, 2019	19
Home Start Blaenau Gwent	Externally Facilitated	16 th April, 2019	12
Town Centres – Exploring Opportunities	Regeneration	24 th April, 2019	20
Persistent Absenteeism	Education & Learning	24 th April, 2019	11
Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence	Externally Facilitated	3 rd June, 2019	7
Planning & Licensing Training	Planning/Licensing	4 th June, 2019 & 21 st June, 2019	15
Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estates – Business Improvement District	Regeneration	6 th June, 2019	16
Care Closer to Home	Externally Facilitated	12 th June, 2019	15
Keeping Up with the Jones' Campaign	Community Services	28 th June, 2019	14
Regeneration Department – Overview of the Service and Priorities Moving Forward	Regeneration	3 rd September, 2019	4
School Balances	Education & Learning	3 rd September, 2019	10
Assistive Technology/Digital Solutions to Promote Independence	Corporate Services	12 th September, 2019	10
Tai Calon – Universal Credit	Resources/Externally Facilitated	20 th September, 2019	12
Welsh Government Youth Support Grant	Education & Learning	24 th September, 2019	14
Blaenau Gwent On The Move	Corporate Services	30 th September, 2019	17

Managing and Modernising

Key Activity

ICT for Members: Following discussions within political groups and to provide additional support for Members, 'Essential Skills' ICT Sessions was developed and offered to Members which focussed on the use of Microsoft Outlook and provided a basic understanding of Word. Three sessions were delivered in-house by the Council's Digital Inclusion Officer and Democratic Services. In total, 14 Members attended and the sessions were well received. Further sessions may be arranged during the course of the year following the roll out of Office 365. The Chief Officer Commercial also provided three 'drop in' sessions for Members regarding ICT arrangements during September in order to record the specific concerns and issues being experienced by members with regards to ICT.

Modern.gov: As part of the modernising agenda, a new electronic agenda management system has been procured and introduced Council wide. The Modern.gov System offers broader functionality and is more user friendly for Officers, Members and the public to access and view on-line information such as minutes and agendas. An 'app' has also been procured for Member and officers that will enable agendas to viewed and annotated on tablets/I Pads. This new system went 'live' on 1st October, 2019. Specific support has been provided by Democratic Services to Members who required assistance.

Future Area of Focus:

The future focus of the Democratic Services team will be to:

- Potential for the provision of Webcasting linked to the forthcoming Local Government Bill;
- Continue to provide ICT support to members including Office 365;
- Member sessions with SRS in order to pick up issues raised; and
- Continued phased implementation of the Modern.gov Agenda Management System.

Scrutiny Support

Key Activity

Forward Work Programmes: Work commenced on the development of the Forward Work Programmes for 2019/20 during April of this year. Officers within the Performance and Democratic Team worked with each department and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs to develop the Forward Work Programmes. The Forward Work Programmes were agreed at the relevant scrutiny committees during July 2019; these have been translated and made available on the Blaenau Gwent Website and in the Members Library. Forward Work Programmes have been advertised in the local press as required by the Local Government Measure. Regeneration Scrutiny Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme in September 2019 and it is currently awaiting translation.

Development of Processes to Further Engage the Public in Scrutiny: Work has continued in this area, items that may be of interest to the public continue to be promoted on Social Media; in doing so it is hoped to encourage questions from the public that could be raised at scrutiny committee meetings and then responses from the Committee fed back to the public via Social Media. In order to try and make Scrutiny more visible to the community scrutiny committees continue to be held outside of the Civic Centre. It is also intended to explore promoting scrutiny via other forums, e.g. Youth Forum, Older Peoples Forum and GAVO. Officers are currently working with the Engagement Team to encourage representation from young people at Scrutiny Committee meetings; the Engagement Team intend to raise this opportunity at the Youth Forum to establish if there is any interest by the young people in either attending scrutiny committee meetings or being involved in some way.

The Council is actively involved in the **Joint Scrutiny Committee of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD)**. Each of the 10 local authorities is represented on the Committee. Currently the Chair of Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is the Blaenau Gwent representative on the Joint Committee. Five meetings have taken place to date. The next meeting is planned for January 2020. A Workshop is scheduled for nominated Chairs during November 2019 to consider the dedicated support required from members on the committee in order for them to perform their role on the joint committee.

Future Area of Focus

The future focus of the Scrutiny function will be to:

- **Evaluating Scrutiny:** Scrutiny Committee meetings are evaluated following every formal meeting, to which the whole committee is invited to attend. Discussions have taken place on how to present feedback of the evaluations to members and officers and it has been agreed that this will be done via Chairs and Vice-Chairs meetings and CLT. This will commence during Q3. The Annual Scrutiny report will also be developed and presented to Council by May 2020.
- Continued engagement with the CCRCD.
- Continued promotion of the scrutiny process and making it more transparent and open.

Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

Key Performance Measures

Indicator Description	Q1 2018-19	Q2 2018-19	Q1 2019-20	Q2 2019-20
Number of Formal Scrutiny Committees held	8	10	8	11
% of Member Attendance at Formal Scrutiny Committees	77.9%	69.2%	73%	59%
Number of members of the public attending scrutiny meetings	0	0	0	0
Number of recommendations amended by scrutiny	5	0	2	0
Number of recommendations amended by scrutiny accepted by Executive committee	3	0	1	0
Number of reports requesting amendments following Quality Assurance by Scrutiny Officer	1		1	2

Member Attendance at Scrutiny Committees Period from 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019

	Agreed Committee Membership	Number of Meetings Held	Total Members Due to Attend	Actual Members in Attendance	% of Members in attendance at Scrutiny Committees	% of Members in attendance at Scrutiny Committees during same period 2018/19 Cycle
Corporate Overview	15	5	75	47	62.6%	73.3%
Social Services	15	3	45	31	68.8%	75.0%
Education and Learning	15	3	45	34	75.5%	80.0%
Environment, Regeneration and Economic Development (April – May 2019)	15	2	30	16	53.3%	65.3%
Community Services (June 2019 onwards)	15	2	30	23	76.6%	-
Regeneration (June 2019 onwards)	15	1	15	13	86.6%	-
Scrutiny Committees	90	16	240	164	68.3%	72.9%
Joint Safeguarding	22	1	22	11	50%	80.8%
Joint Finance	34	2	68	36	52.9%	67.6%
PSB	-	-	-	-	-	-
Joint Committees	56	3	90	47	52.2%	73.0%
Overall	146	19	300	211	70.3%	72.9%

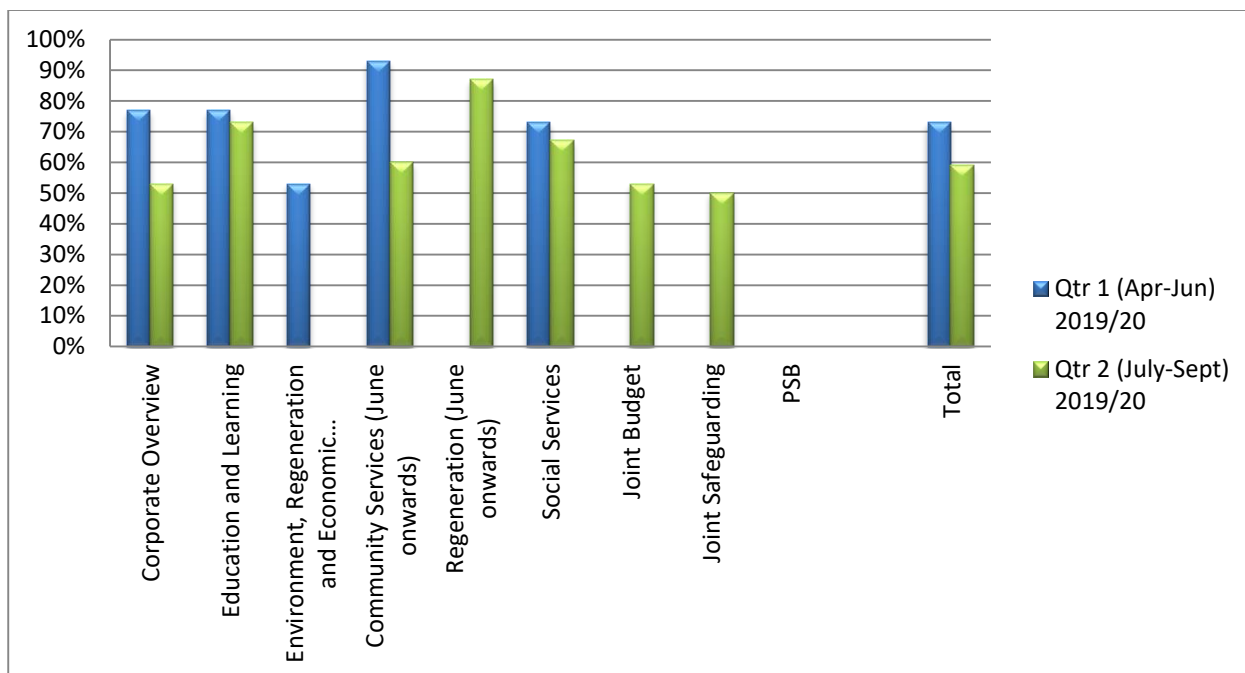
*To note – the number of committee meetings held in 2019/20 may differ from the number held in the same period during 2018/19

Member Attendance at Formal Scrutiny Committees

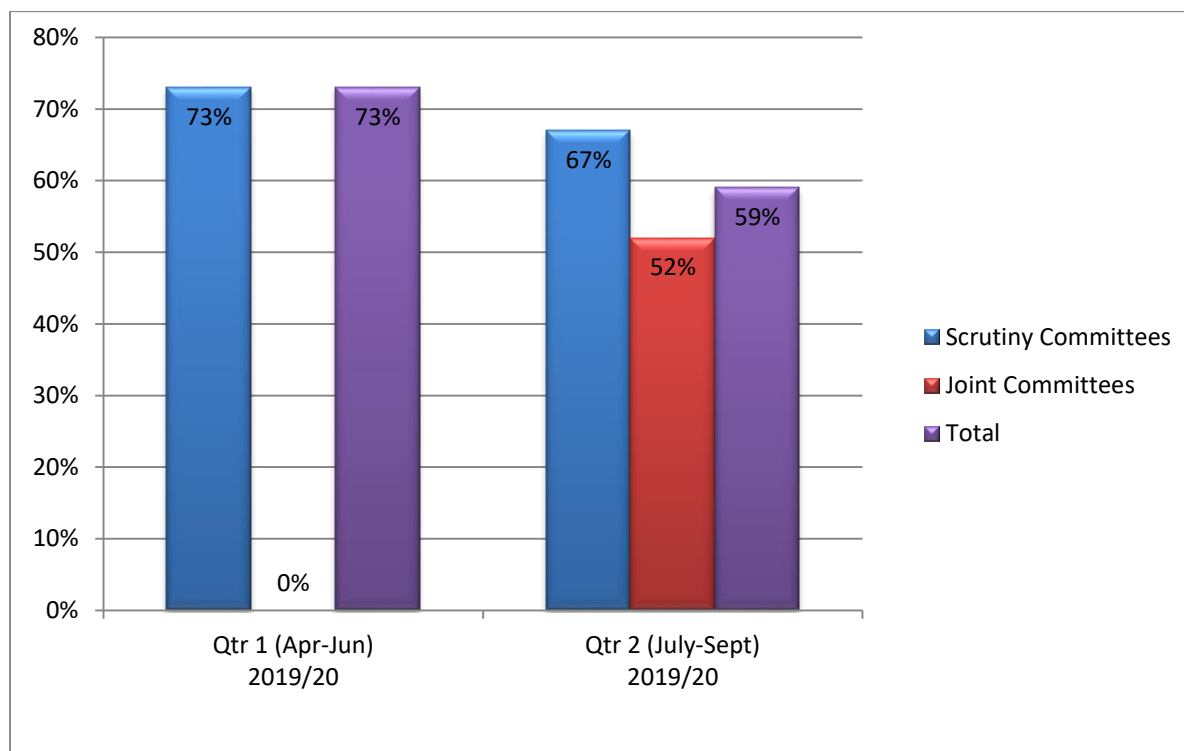
Period: April – September 2019

Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

Member Attendance by individual Scrutiny Meeting



Members Attendance by Meeting Type



- **Scrutiny Committees** include Corporate Overview, Social Services, Education and Learning, Environment, Regeneration and Economic Development. Two new committees from June 2019 – Community Services and Regeneration.
- **Joint Committees** include Joint Safeguarding, Joint Finance and Public Services Board Scrutiny

Agenda Item 32

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 26.11.19
Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 25.11.19

Committee: **Council**

Date of Meeting: **12th December, 2019**

Report Subject: **Time Off For Reservists Policy**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Nigel Daniels, Leader of the Council / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Author: **Rebecca Morris, HR Business Partner**

Report Submitted by: **Andrea J. Prosser – Head of Organisational Development**

Reporting Pathway <i>Dates of meetings must be included in the reporting pathway below</i>									
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder	Committee Chair*	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee Corporate Overview	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
X	X						X	X	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek ratification from Council to introduce a new policy for the Authority for Time off for Reservists (Appendix 1).
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.
 - 2.2 Providing support for reservists, including leave for training is an important element of the Silver Award - the Council does currently make provision for this in its Schedule of Leave of Absence. The Council has been granted silver award status pending the formal introduction of the proposed policy.
 - 2.3 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) is a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant, launched in 2011 by the UK government, to promote and support the Armed Forces Community.
 - 2.4 BGCBC is also the lead organisation in delivering on the Armed Forces Covenant at a local level. The Armed Forces Steering Group is the delivery body. Administrative support comes via the Policy and Partnerships team. The Steering group is chaired by Cllr Brian Thomas, Armed Forces Champion.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 The Corporate Leadership Team has reviewed the proposed policy and comments/suggestions have been reflected in the report and policy.

3.2 The Executive Committee considered this report and the proposed policy on the 13th November 2019 and endorsed the Policy for ratification by Council.

4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

4.1 The other four Gwent authorities have all already achieved the Silver Award (as have many other Welsh local authorities and other public bodies) and Newport and Caerphilly have now achieved the Gold Award in 2019.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget

Each department will need to consider any time off for Reservists and the costs of any cover arrangements. BGCBC currently has 1 member of staff registered as a reservist. Therefore, current cost implications are limited.

5.2 Risk

Failure to implement the attached policy will prevent BGCBC from achieving the Silver Award

5.3 Legal

This information is contained within the attached policy.

5.4 Human Resources

Benefits of Reservist Training:

- World-Class transferrable training – paid for by Department for Defence
- Employees gain accredited, transferable skills
- Enhanced recruitment and employee retention

Reservist training leave has to be formally requested as far in advance as possible, the council will try to allow leave wherever service needs allow.

There is currently one member of staff who acts as a reservist.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

This information is contained within the attached policy.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

This information is contained within the attached policy.

- 6.3 **Involvement** (consultation, engagement, participation)
Meetings have taken place with the Regional Armed Forces Coordinator who has confirmed the policy is in line with the vision of the Gwent and South Wales Authorities.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
This information is contained within the report.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
N/A
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
N/A
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
N/A
- 6.8 **EqlA** (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed) (Service reviews and policy developments etc should consider if any changes will have a negative impact on the protected characteristics, if so, these will need to be stated and a full EqlA needs to be undertaken and attached to the report in the Background Document section).
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 Managers will be required to monitor all Reservist arrangements when either deployed or required to attend training.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 –Time Off for Reservists Policy



Time off for
Reservists Policy.doc

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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Time Off For Reservists Policy



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Issued: xx Review: xx

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NOTES

This scheme has been developed on a corporate basis but the operational requirements of schools have been taken into consideration. The scheme is recommended to Governing Bodies for adoption. Support in managing issues in relation to the subject matter of this scheme can only be offered to schools where LEA recommended policies and procedures have been adopted and in line with any Service Level Agreement with Organisational Development (OD) in force at the time.

GLOSSARY

Regular Reservists are former full-time members of the Armed forces. They may still be liable for call out for a number of years after their military service has ended, depending on their age, length of original service and the skills they have.

Volunteer Reservists are made up of civilians who accept an annual training commitment and are called out to supplement the Regular Forces whenever Operational demands require it. If they're mobilised they'll carry out the same roles to the same high standards as their Regular counterparts. They also receive the same training and develop the same skills.

Standard Volunteer Reservists, although Volunteer Reservists train over many years for active duty, they are only mobilised when absolutely necessary. In most circumstances, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) uses 'Intelligent Selection', which is the process of identifying willing and available individuals for specific appointments. This includes consulting with the Reservist's employer.

All Volunteer Reservists make a serious commitment to training. For the majority of them, this is around 30 days a year, made up of some midweek evenings, some weekends and one 15-day continuous training period (Annual Camp).

Full-Time Reserves (FTRS) gives Reservists the opportunity to apply for a full-time post for a fixed period (this is different from mobilisation).

Additional Duties Commitment (ADC) gives Reservists the opportunity to undertake part time work with the Armed Forces. This could be with a Regular or Reserve Unit, but it's more likely to be within a headquarters establishment. ADCs sometimes form part of a job-sharing arrangement. The minimum commitment is 13 weeks - at least one day a week throughout this period.

High Readiness Reserves have specific skills which the Armed Forces may occasionally need but at short notice. Reservists have to volunteer for High Readiness status, and if they have a full time job (or work more than two days a week) they will also need to have the written consent of their employer. This consent takes the form of an agreement that is renewed annually. If they are mobilised, an HRR can be asked to serve for up to nine months.

Sponsored Reserves enables the MoD to enter into a defence contract on condition that an agreed proportion of the contractor's workforce has a Reserve liability. These Reservists can be trained and called out to undertake the contracted task as members of the Armed Forces.

Mobilisation is the process of calling reservists into full-time service to serve alongside the Regular Armed Forces on operations. All Reservists are committed to the possibility of being mobilised if necessary. They are normally required to serve abroad but it is possible they would be needed to serve the UK, for example in the event of a national emergency.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out how the Council/School supports staff who are reservists. The reserve forces include the Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marines Reserve, Army Reserve and Royal Air Force Reserves.

The Council/School recognises that many of the skills that reservists gain during their training are transferable to the workplace. The Council/School will assist reservists as far as possible, for example by taking into account unusual leave requirements or the need to amend working patterns.

This policy must be cross-referenced with all other relevant Council/School [policies](#).

2. WHAT THE POLICY COVERS

All applications for reserve forces' leave are to be made under the provisions of this policy. A process flowchart is attached as [appendix 1](#).

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Reservists are required to inform the Council/School that they are a member of the Reserve Forces and the specific force that they belong to. Each leave year, full time employees who are reservists will be given 15 days (111 hours), pro rata for part time employees, extra paid leave to help them meet their commitments to the reserve forces. The reservist should make the request under the Leave of Absence Scheme ([see appendix 2](#)), to their Line Manager/Headteacher stating the leave is for "Military training". While the Council/School will do its best to accommodate any requests to use this extra leave, the Council/School cannot guarantee that reservists extra leave requests will be given priority. To avoid reservists being unable to take time off when needed, they must apply for this extra leave as soon as possible after they are informed that they need to take time off.

This offer is available only to employees who provide evidence that they need to take the time off as a reservist (for example, a letter from their Commanding Officer) when booking their leave. The offer cannot be used for days when the reservist is not undertaking reservist activities or to recover from the physical demands of a weekend away with the reserve forces.

All leave dates must be approved in advance by the reservist's Line Manager/Headteacher.

4. RESERVIST MOBILISATION

Each of the Reserved Forces follows a strict procedure when mobilising reservists. This includes notifying the Council/School and the reservist of the date when they are required to report for duty and a period of pre-mobilisation training.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) aims to give a least 28 days' notice of mobilisation, although for operational reasons it can sometimes be less. There is no statutory requirement for a minimum period of mobilisation.

On being called up, the reservist should inform their Line Manager/Headteacher. The Council/School will also receive an information pack, which sets out the date and possible

duration of mobilisation as well as their statutory rights, obligations and how to apply for financial assistance. Both the reservist and the Council/School have the right to apply for an exemption or deferral mobilisation under certain exceptional circumstances.

5. APPEALS FOR EXEMPTION OR DEFERRAL

The Council/School recognises that under the Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985, if it believes that the reservist's absence on military service is likely to do "serious harm" to the Council/School, it may apply for an exemption or deferral of mobilisation. The Council/School recognises that the criteria for exemption or deferment from being mobilised are strict and will seek exemption or deferral only in exceptional circumstances. The application for exemption is required to be made by the Head of Service/Headteacher.

The Council/School's application must be submitted to the relevant Adjudication Officer (the person specified in the call-out notice or the Adjudication Officer at the mobilisation centre) within the period of seven days immediately following the date of the employee's receipt of the mobilisation process.

6. RESERVISTS' RIGHTS DURING MOBILISATION

There is no requirement for the Council/School to pay the reservist during their absence on military operations. During this period the reservist receives service pay from the MoD, along with a standard award to make up any difference (up to the statutory limit) between their service pay and normal average weekly earnings.

The reservist who is called up is entitled to remain a member of their occupational pension scheme. Provided that they agree to continue to pay their own contributions, the MoD will pay the employer contributions that the Council/School would have made.

If the reservist's mobilisation commences or ends part way through the annual leave year then the annual leave entitlement for that year will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

7. RESERVISTS' DEMOBILISATION

Before returning home, reservists will undergo a process of 'winding down' with their unit in a controlled environment for up to four days. Here, they will be given time to relax as well as receive a series of briefings to help prepare them for civilian life.

These include:

- An update on media coverage of the conflict they have been involved in, so they know what people at home have heard about it.
- A presentation on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder by specially trained medical staff, and the opportunity for one-to-one interviews.

Once a reservist arrives back in the UK, they will be taken to their demobilisation centre, where the process of reintegration continues. As well as all the necessary postoperative administration procedures, such as handing back their uniform, they will undergo a series of medical assessments, and receive further briefings on stress, their return to work, welfare guidance and

advice. One-to-one and specialist sessions are available throughout their remaining time in service, and can continue for as long as needed.

They will then be formally demobilised and free to start their post-operational leave. All Reservists are entitled to a period of leave and will continue to be paid by the MoD during this time. (This usually works out at an average of around 30 days including any amount of annual leave they have built up during deployment.) Post-operational leave allows the reservist to fully readjust and prepare for civilian life.

Regular contact with their employer during their post-operational leave will help ease their transition back to work. Most reservists find it useful if Managers and colleagues are kept informed during this period, and to have an informal interview with their Line Manager/Headteacher on their return. This will give an opportunity to talk about their experiences and to update them on any key changes within the Council/department.

Regardless of the length of the military action, the mobilised reservist has the right to be reinstated in their former job within six months of demobilisation and, on the terms and conditions that are no less favourable than those that would have been in place prior to being called up.

The Council has an obligation to reinstate the post holder into employment at the first opportunity once notified of their availability. The employee should be reinstated into the post in which they were employed prior to the call up, and on terms and conditions comparable to those, which would have applied had there been no call out, unless not reasonable and practical. Heads of Service will need to evidence why they are unable to reinstate the reservist to their former job.

Reservists can be included on the Redeployment List, if necessary, due to them not being able to return to their previous post. Reservists can only be considered for redundancy purposes where there is a service review/restructure, or departmental need. Redundancy criteria should not discriminate against Reservists on the grounds of their Reserve service or call-up liability.

A Reservist's employment cannot be terminated on the grounds of their military duties or their liability to be mobilised. To do so would be a criminal offence under s.17 of The Reserve Forces (Safeguarding of Employment) Act 1985.

If a reservist is not happy with the offer of alternative employment they must write to the Head of Organisational Development stating why there is reasonable cause for them not to accept it. If a reservist believes that the Council/School's response to their application denies their rights under the Reserved Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985, an application can be made to an external body called the "Reinstatement Committee" for assessment. Consideration will be given to the reservist's application and, if accepted, can make an order for reinstatement and/or compensation.

If the Council/School wishes to appeal against a Reinstatement Committee's decision they can make a further appeal.

To exercise the right to be reinstated, the reservist must write to the Council/School no later than the third Monday after demobilisation confirming their intention to return to work within the following 13 weeks. The initial 13-week period may be renewed for a further 13 weeks if circumstances such as illness or injury prevent the reservists return during the initial period. However, the reservist forfeits their right to return to the Council/School if they fail to do so within 26 weeks of demobilisation.

Once the reservist has been reinstated, the Council/School will continue to employ them in that same occupation if possible and on the same terms and conditions for:

- A minimum of 13 weeks following reinstatement, if the employee was employed for less than 13 weeks prior to mobilisation.
- 26 weeks following reinstatement, if employed for more than 13 weeks but less than 52 weeks prior to mobilisation.
- 52 weeks following reinstatement, if the reservist had been employed for a consecutive period of at least 52 weeks prior to mobilisation.

The continuity of the reservist's period of employment is not broken by a period of compulsory or voluntary mobilisation, if they are reinstated in their former post within six months of demobilisation.

When calculating the employee's total period of continuous employment, the Council/School will discount the number of days falling in the period between the day on which the reservist is called up for military operations and the day prior to their return to work.

For example, if a reservist was called up for duty in January 2019 for 52 weeks and prior to their call up they had 4 years 26 weeks service. When they return to work in January 2020, they are reinstated to their former post. They still only have 4 years and 26 weeks' continuous service.

8. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial assistance for employers in the event of an employee who is a Reservist being mobilised (financial assistance is not provided for the 15 days of training) is governed by the Reserve Forces (Call out and recall) (Financial Assistance) Regulations 2005 (as amended March 2015). These cover additional costs above the normal earnings of the called-up Reservist associated with replacing that employee. There are 3 types of award available:

One-off costs

- Agency fees, if a recruitment agency or employment agency is used to find a temporary replacement; or Advertising costs.
- No financial cap on claims, but any claim must be supported by relevant documentation.
- Handover costs of five days before mobilisation and five days on return to work (subject to the daily cap on the claim which is the employees daily pay rate plus £110 (per day).
- Specialist Clothing costs, up to 75% (to a maximum of £300) for purchasing specialist clothing for a person who replaces a Reservist during a period of mobilisation.
- Training costs up to £2000 of the costs of training necessary for a Reservist's replacement during mobilisation, to ensure that they are as effective as possible in the role.

Recurring costs

- Overtime costs, if other employees work overtime to cover the work of the Reservist [by the amount that such costs exceed earnings of the Reservist].
- Costs of temporary replacement [by the amount that such costs exceed earnings of the Reservist].

The maximum claim available is £110 per day (£40,000 per annum). Claims can be made for every normal working day that the Reservist is away on service. An application for one-off costs and recurring costs must be made within 4 weeks of the end of full time Reservist service.

Training award

If a returning Reservist has to undertake additional training as a direct result of their mobilisation (routine training excluded), then the Council/School can make an application for the financial assistance.

9. AFTERCARE

When a reservist returns to work, it is crucial that the department ensures a smooth re-integration into the workplace/team. This will require consideration of:

- The need to update on changes and developments in the Service Area/Council.
- The need to offer specific refresher training where it is sought/considered necessary.
- Where the job duties have changed since mobilisation a period of skills training may be required to assist with new aspects of the job.
- Reasonable time off to seek therapeutic treatment if required.

In order to support the reservist back into the workplace, the department may need to implement supportive measures, and a referral to Occupational Health may be necessary. For further guidance, please seek advice from Organisational Development, in line with relevant Council/School policies.

In addition, further sources of guidance and information can be obtained from the following:

- Your Reservist's chain of command - Unit Admin, Welfare, Pastoral and Medical Staff
- Navy Personal and Family Service and Royal Marines Welfare (www.rncom.mod.uk)
- Army Welfare Services (www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support)
- Forces Help RAF (www.rafcom.co.uk)
- Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme (in partnership with the NHS referred via GP) 0800 032 6258
- Veterans UK (www.veterans-uk.info)
- Confederation of Service and Ex Service Organisations (www.cobseo.org.uk)

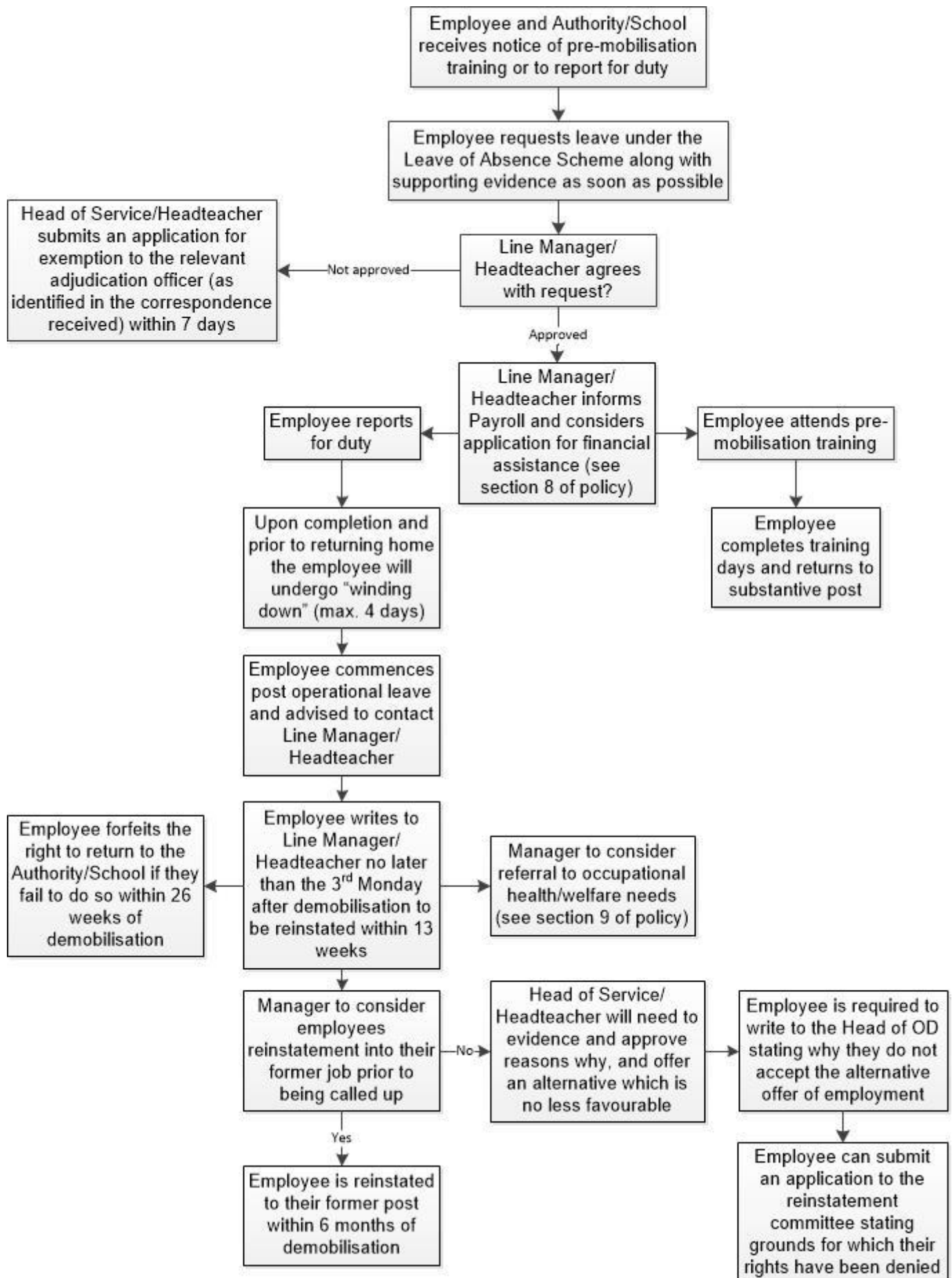
10. FURTHER INFORMATION

Managers can get further information from SaBRE, (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers). You can contact SaBRE about any issue relating to the support of Britain's Reservists and employers via their helpline on 0800 389 5459 or by email via www.sabre.mod.uk.

11. REVIEW OF THE SCHEME

A review of this scheme and procedure will take place when appropriate. Any amendments will be consulted on with all the relevant parties. However, in the case of amendments or updates relating to legislative requirements that do not change the general principle of the policy, the scheme will be amended and reissued.

APPENDIX 1: PROCESS FLOWCHART



Reservists

Request for Leave of Absence



SECTION 1 – PERSONAL DETAILS (TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE)

Full Name			
Home Address			
Designation			
Place of Work			
Staff Number		N.I. Number	

SECTION 2 – LEAVE OF ABSENCE DETAILS (TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE)

Dates From	Dates To	Time Requested (hours/full days)	Reason For Leave Of Absence

Employee Signature		Date	
--------------------	--	------	--

SECTION 3 – FOR COMPLETION BY LINE MANAGER/HEADTEACHER

Request Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>	Request Declined	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Line Manager/Headteacher Signature			Date	

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION ONLY

Correspondence	<input type="checkbox"/>	OD Authorised Signature	
Update System	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date	

Agenda Item 33

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 26.11.19

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 24.11.19

Committee: **Council**

Date of Meeting: **12th December, 2019**

Report Subject: **Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr D Davies**
Executive Member – Regeneration & Economic Development

Report Submitted by: **Richard Crook**
Director of Regeneration and Community Services

Report Written by: **Lynda Healy**
Team Manager – Building Control and Development Plans

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
15/10/19	22/10/19				04/11/19		12/12/19	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Council will require a new Local Development Plan (LDP) from 2021. Preparatory work has begun. This report seeks approval of the Preferred Strategy (Appendix 1) to be taken forward for consultation. This is a key document in the process and sets the strategic framework for the new replacement LDP.

2. Scope and Background

Background

- 2.1 In October 2018 the Council agreed to prepare a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) on the basis that the current Local Development Plan (LDP) was failing to deliver and would cease to exist at the end of 2021.
- 2.2 The Delivery Agreement, between the Council and Welsh Government, sets out the process and timetable for the preparation of the RLDP (agreed in October 2018). The Preferred Strategy represents the culmination of a period of pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement (Stage 1).
- 2.3 This stage has involved extensive engagement with stakeholders to build consensus on the preferred strategy. Two sets of workshops were held; the first sought to identify the challenges the Borough faced and agree a Vision of where the Borough should be by the end of the Plan period (2033). The second workshop looked to agree the level of growth, the spatial distribution of that growth and the settlement hierarchy to locate the growth.

- 2.4 Invitations to the workshops were sent to everyone on our consultation database (166), members and internal officers. Over 80 people attended with representatives from all target groups. Targeted workshops were also held with the Children's Grand Council, the Youth Forum and representatives of the business community.
- 2.5 A report of consultation identifies how stakeholders have influenced the selection of the Preferred Strategy. Two reports have been prepared one on the Issues and Vision and another on the Spatial Strategy Options both are available [on line](#).
- 2.6 Informal consultation with Welsh Government on the draft Preferred Strategy identified concerns with the level of growth and the level of flexibility that was being proposed. They considered the growth level too ambitious and undeliverable based on past build rates. This has resulted in the setting of a slightly lower housing requirement figure (117 rather than 141) than that which was generally supported by stakeholders. Similarly the flexibility was reduced from 27% to 21%.
- 2.7 Welsh Government also raised a fundamental concern with the preferred spatial strategy, which sought to disperse growth across the Borough with all main settlements all classed as Tier 1. This was considered to be contrary to Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10) and the principle of delivering sustainable development. To address this concern the settlement hierarchy was increased from 3 tiers to 5 and the spatial distribution of growth is being focussed on the most sustainable settlements Tiers 1 and 2. Whilst the growth is spread across the Borough it is not equally spread as was generally supported by stakeholders.
- 2.8 Whilst the proposed strategy is a compromise in terms of what stakeholders generally supported it is a more deliverable and sustainable strategy and maximises existing opportunities.

Scope

- 2.9 The Preferred Strategy is the first formal consultation in the RLDP preparation process and sets out how the County Borough is to evolve over the period to 2033. It provides the strategic framework for more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP.
- 2.10 The Preferred Strategy sets out the Council's vision, outcomes, objectives and Spatial Strategy to guide the level and distribution of future growth and development. It is supported by a number of Strategic Policies which set out how the strategy outcomes are to be delivered.
- 2.11 The Preferred Strategy has been guided by a framework of key inputs that comprises:
 - National legislation and policy;
 - Local and regional policies and strategies;
 - An evidence base relating to key issues for the Plan to address.

Content

- 2.12 The Preferred Strategy (See Appendix 1) document includes:
 - An **introduction** explaining what the Preferred Strategy is (section 1)
 - A summary of the **Context** of Blaenau Gwent and its regional and legislative context (section 2)

- A summary of the **Challenges** the area faces and the **Drivers** for change (section 3)
- The **Strategic Framework** in the form of a **vision** for the future development of the Borough with clear **outcomes and objectives** for the preferred strategy to meet. This section also provides an overview of the growth and spatial strategy options that have been considered in determining the preferred strategy. It goes on to provide detail of the preferred strategy in terms of **growth and spatial distribution** (section 4)
- Strategic policies to **implement and deliver** the **Strategy** (section 5)
- The **Next Steps** for Candidate Sites and future stages (section 6)

- 2.13 The Preferred Strategy is for **Sustainable Economic Growth** with an aim to improve prosperity and close the employment gap with the rest of Wales (See Appendix 1: Strategic Policy 1 pp 25-26). This involves helping 3,375 people into work through increasing economic activity, reducing unemployment, reducing out-migration and out-commuting. This will be achieved by enabling good quality, secure and sustainable jobs. All this can be delivered through maximising opportunities from the City Deal, Valleys Task Force, Tech Valleys, Enterprise Zone and Metro proposals. To enable this, the Preferred Strategy identifies the need for 46 ha of employment land to be allocated in the deposit plan. It should be noted that this will not require any additional land allocations to those already identified in the current Plan.
- 2.14 The Strategy makes **provision** for an aspirational 2.9% (1,996) increase in population and a 6.5% increase in households (2,020) (based on a popgroup Short Term 2012-2017 scenario which is similar to the WG 'Principal' projection but includes the last 3 years statistics (See Appendix 1: pp 69-70)). This will be achieved by delivering **141** homes per annum totalling **2,115** over the Plan period. This is ambitious but achievable. A less ambitious **housing requirement** figure is set (based on a dwelling led scenario of 120 per annum) which the Plan **must** meet and this requires **117** homes to be built per annum totalling **1,755** over the Plan period (See Appendix 1 pp 76).
- 2.15 This growth is to be distributed across the Borough based on a new settlement hierarchy that has been derived from a sustainability assessment of settlements (See Appendix 1: pp 29). Nearly half the homes (45%) are to be delivered in the Primary Settlement, 50% in the Main Settlements and 5% in Secondary Settlements, Villages and Hamlets. Within the main settlements the homes are proportionally allocated based on the population size and capacity to deliver. The detail of this is set out in Strategic Policy 1 in section 4 of the Preferred Strategy (See Appendix 1: pp 26-27) and is summarised in the table below:

Settlement Tier	Name	Number (Share %)
Tier 1: Primary	Ebbw Vale	952 (45%)
Tier 2: Main	Tredegar	423 (20%)
Tier 2: Main	Brynmawr / Nantyglo / Blaina	423 (20%)
Tier 2: Main	Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six Bells)	211 (10%)
Tier 3: Secondary	Cwm Aberbeeg / Brynithel / Llanhilleth	106 (5%)

Tier 4: Village Tier	Swfrydd	
5: Hamlets	Trefil, Pochin and Bedwellty Pits	

- 2.16 To provide as much information as possible to the public at this stage, strategic mixed use sites are identified (See Appendix 1: pp 29-30). These are:
- The Works, Business Hub, Ebbw Vale (3.5ha employment land) and 250 homes
 - Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor - Rhyd y Blew (13.2 ha employment land) and Bryn Serth (10 ha employment land) and 805 homes
 - Nantyglo Comprehensive Site (220 homes) and other uses

- 2.17 Only a limited number of new housing allocations are required when completions to date (18/19); sites with planning permission; small and large windfalls; and strategic mixed use sites are taken into account. Additional allocations are only required in Tredegar (217 homes) and Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six Bells) (149 homes) (See Appendix 1: Strategic Policy 8 pp 44).

- 2.18 To ensure future developments are delivered in a sustainable manner and meet with Welsh Government requirements (Sustainable Key Planning Principles and National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes) four sustainable outcomes are identified. These outcomes are then delivered by a set of Strategic Policies as follows:

Outcome 1: Create a Network of Sustainable Vibrant Valley Communities (Placemaking)

Strategic Policy 2: Sustainable Placemaking and Design

Strategic Policy 3: Climate Change

Outcome 2: Create Opportunities for a Prosperous Low Carbon Economy and Promote Learning and Skills

Strategic Policy 4: Employment and Growth

Strategic Policy 5: Growing Tourism

Strategic Policy 6: Sustainable Minerals Management

Strategic Policy 7: Sustainable Waste Management

Outcome 3: Create Well-Connected, Active and Healthy Communities

Strategic Policy 8: Delivery of Homes

Strategic Policy 9: Gypsy and Travellers

Strategic Policy 10: Retail Centres and Development

Strategic Policy 11: Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

Strategic Policy 12: Social and Community Infrastructure

Outcome 4: Protect and Enhance the Distinctive Natural and Built Environment

Strategic Policy 13: Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment

Strategic Policy 14: Preservation of the Built Environment

Strategic Policy 15: Environmental Protection

- 2.19 Another area of focus for stakeholders has been our town centres in terms of their hierarchy and future roles. As it has been difficult to build consensus on a way forward Strategic Policy 10: Retail Centres and Developments proposes that the existing retail hierarchy is reviewed based on the results of a new Retail Study (See Appendix 1: pp 46-48). As soon as the growth level is agreed a retail study will be commissioned which will undertake an assessment of key market trends; shopping patterns; and quantitative and qualitative retail need. Decisions on the retail hierarchy

are technical matters based on evidence of the ranking, catchment areas and mix of uses along with an assessment of the likely future status of town centre based on growth plans and availability of sites.

- 2.20 In order to ensure that the Preferred Strategy is sustainable it will be subject to an Integrated Sustainable Assessment including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA). A Habitat Regulation Preliminary Screening is also being undertaken.

Next Steps

- 2.21 Subject to consideration of Scrutiny and approval by Council, the intention is to undertake a 6-week public consultation exercise on the Preferred Strategy and Initial Integrated Sustainability Report in January / February 2019. The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the Delivery Agreement (October 2018) and will include:

- Email / letter to consultation database
- Press Releases
- Use of Social Media
- Availability on Website
- Drop in Exhibitions across the main towns
- Making available deposit documents at Council offices and all public libraries

- 2.22 The intention is to work closely with the Communications Team to prepare a communications strategy which will include the preparation of an easy read Preferred Strategy and an animation to engage the public in the process.

- 2.23 Following the consultation exercise, responses will be reported back to Council. A consultation report will be prepared and published containing details of all the representations and the Council' responses. Where considered appropriate the responses will inform the preparation of the Deposit Plan.

- 2.24 A further call for Candidate sites and supporting information (viability and deliverability) for existing Candidate Sites that meet the Preferred Strategy will be sought in February 2020 (See Appendix 1 pp 59).

- 2.25 The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to public consultation in October 2020.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 Members of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered this report on the 4th November and recommended option 2 approval subject to an amendment to a paragraph in the Preferred Strategy Document regarding the Circuit of Wales. This paragraph has now been deleted from the Preferred Strategy document.

Option 1: To approve the Preferred Strategy for public consultation.

Option 2: To approve the Preferred Strategy subject to amendments for public consultation.

Option 3: Do not approve the Preferred Strategy.

Preferred Option

- 3.2 Option 1: To approve the Preferred Strategy for public consultation.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

Corporate Plan

- 4.1 The Preferred Strategy will enable the delivery of Economic Development & Regeneration, Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities and Education (improvements in school buildings).

Statutory Responsibilities

- 4.2 There is a statutory responsibility to prepare a Local Development Plan for the Borough and to keep that Plan up to date.

Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

- 4.3 The strategic policies in section 5 of the Preferred Strategy are cross referenced to the Well-being Plan objectives and address all 5 objectives.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

Option 1: To support the Preferred Strategy for public consultation

Will enable the Preferred Strategy to be consulted on within 3 months flexibility of the timetable set out in the Delivery Agreement.

Option 2: Support amendments to the Preferred Strategy

If changes do not require significant amendments and the Initial ISA can be updated quickly then the Preferred Strategy may be able to proceed within 3 months flexibility of the timetable set out in the Delivery Agreement. If the changes are significant it would lead to a delay which would lead to the need to renegotiate the Delivery Agreement with Welsh Government.

Option 3: Do not support the Preferred Strategy

This would lead to a delay due to the need for further engagement, a rewrite and an update to the Initial ISA and would take us over the 3 months flexibility. This would require a change to the Delivery Agreement which would need approval from the Council and Welsh Government and would lead to a delay in adopting the Plan.

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

Further studies will be required on Retail, Special Landscape Areas, Renewable Energy Assessment, Viability of Affordable Housing provision, Viability work on sites, and an Update of the Ebbw Vale North Sustainable Framework. Also a student placement has been appointed to assist in the preparation of the Plan. These costs can be covered by the LDP Reserve (£192,166). In the longer term there will be a budget pressure in 2021/22 (£132,388) due to Examination costs.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

- There is a risk that the Plan is not in conformity with the draft National Development Framework (NDF)
Work has been undertaken to align the strategy and policies with the draft NDF and comments have been made on some aspects of the NDF.
- There is a risk that Welsh Government raises issues with the Preferred Strategy
We have addressed the Welsh Government Officers concerns and they are confident that any other issues could be addressed by the Deposit Plan.
- There is a risk that Welsh Government raises issues with the lack of regional agreement on the growth figure.
We have worked with neighbouring LPAs to agree growth figures but in the absence of a SDP it is not possible to achieve agreement on a regional level. This is due to the fact that only 4 of the 10 LPAs are proceeding at present.
- There is a reputational risk to the Council if we do not meet set timescales.
A Member workshop has been held prior to scrutiny in order to identify and where possible address concerns.

5.3 ***Legal***

Regulations 15 and 16 of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 requires public consultation over a statutory 6 week period on the Preferred Strategy and options; and to consider if changes are needed to the Preferred Option and Strategy for the replacement LDP.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

There are no HR resource issues.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

The Delivery Agreement sets out the timetable which we must adhere to. A slip of more than 3 months requires us to gain agreement from Council and Welsh Government.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

A clear indication of where development will take place and what is required from new developments.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

Preparation of the RLDP provides a number of opportunities to engage with our stakeholders, residents and customers, including the business community. To ensure this we listened to a wide range of views to inform the plan and decision making process. The Pre-Deposit Engagement Stage has been all about engaging with our stakeholders including the business community to identify our challenges, vision and preferred strategy. The next stage is about consulting residents and customers.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The RLDP is about planning for the future to ensure Blaenau Gwent is sustainable and that we address the future needs and demand for development in the area.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The RLDP provides an opportunity to understand the root causes of issues and prevent them by being proactive in our thinking and understanding the need to tackle problems at source.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

We have worked in partnership with Monmouthshire and Torfaen in commissioning a number of studies and pieces of work to support the RLDP. We have also held regular meetings to ensure a consistency of approach. In addition all neighbouring LPAs and partners were invited to take part in a series of workshops.

6.7 ***Integration(across service areas)***

Key staff, from across the authority were invited to attend workshops and a number of these have been consulted on the draft preferred strategy.

6.8 ***EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

A full impact assessment is currently being undertaken.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 There will be Annual Monitoring Reports to Scrutiny (information item) and Executive.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1: Preferred Strategy
- Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal
- Habitat Regulation Preliminary Screening Report
- A full list of background documents is set out in Appendix 2 of the Preferred Strategy

Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033

Preferred Strategy

November 2019



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is responsible for preparing and keeping up to date the Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP is the Council's land use plan that will establish where and how much development will take place in the County Borough. It will also identify which areas are to be protected from development. The current LDP was adopted in 2012 and covers the period 2006-2021. Whilst a replacement LDP is required for the period 2018-2033, it needs to and will build upon the first adopted LDP. Once adopted, the Council will be required to make development management decision in light of policies in the Replacement Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

1.2 The LDP has a direct and meaningful effect on the communities of Blaenau Gwent. The Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) is about shaping the future of Blaenau Gwent as a place to live, work and visit. The RLDP will respond to the needs of a growing and regionally important economy making provision for jobs, homes and infrastructure. It also ensures the well-being of its communities is maintained, and the impacts of the development and use of land are managed sustainably. It will guide funding and investment programmes, other plans and strategies whilst providing for the enhancement and protection of our environment and environment qualities. In doing so it provides a measure of certainty and confidence about what kind of development will, and will not, be permitted and at what locations during the Plan period.

1.3 The part of Blaenau Gwent which is within the Brecon Beacons National Park has its own separate development plan which is also currently being reviewed and is not part of the RLDP plan area.

1.4 In September 2017, a review was undertaken of the current LDP and a review report published. This review, whilst finding that many aspects of the adopted LDP are functioning effectively, also identified that there were issues requiring attention in relation to parts of the Plan and its strategy. The review report showed that parts of the strategy were not being delivered as intended with both the level and spatial distribution of growth requiring further consideration.

What is the LDP Preferred Strategy?

1.5 The **Preferred Strategy** is the first formal publication in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land until 2033. It also sets out how much development is needed and broadly where this is likely to be. It represents the completion of a period of pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement, the outcome of which has had a clear influence over the selection of the Preferred Strategy.

1.6 The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:

- Identify **Key Challenges and Drivers** for the County Borough
- Define an **LDP Vision** and set of overarching **LDP objectives** that respond to the key issues and drivers

- State the anticipated scale of future growth in population, housing and employment, based on the analysis of **Strategic Growth Options**
- Describe the overall spatial planning framework for the County, based on an analysis of potential **Spatial Options**
- Set out broad **Strategic Policies** that will deliver the Vision and Objectives

1.7 Site specific land use allocations and detailed development management policies are not put forward in this strategy document. Such detailed elements will form part of the Deposit Plan. However a list of development management policies is attached at appendix 1 setting out which are to be amended and which are to be retained.

Supporting Documents

1.8 The Preferred Strategy has been subject to an integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations Assessment (WGFGA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) to assess the extent to which the emerging planning policies will help to achieve the wider environmental, economic and social objectives of the RLDP. The Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal of the Blaenau Gwent Preferred Strategy is published separately and is available on the Council's website alongside this document. It has also been screened under the Habitat Regulation Assessment which is also available on the Council's website.

1.9 Other supporting documents listed at Appendix 2 provide the rationale and evidence base for the Preferred Strategy. These focus in more detail on some of the key issues that are of particular significance for the County Borough and therefore the RLDP. They should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy, as only their main findings are highlighted in this document given the significant amount of data and background information they contain. These have been published separately and are available on the Council's website.

Stakeholder Engagement

1.10 During May and June 2019, a series of workshop sessions were held to build consensus in relation to the issues / challenges the County Borough faces and for the RLDP to address. The workshop sessions also sought to identify where we want to be by 2033 in the form of a Vision. This was known as Workshop 1. A full [report of consultation of Workshop 1](#) has been published and is available on the Council's website.

1.11 During July 2019, workshop 2 was held which consisted of a series of sessions in relation to identifying the preferred level of growth, spatial distribution of growth and settlement hierarchy to deliver the growth with a view to building consensus on a preferred spatial strategy for the RLDP that addresses the issues / challenges and meets the vision. A full report of consultation of Workshop 2 has been published and is available on the Council's website.

How to Comment on this Document

1.12 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council would welcome your views on the RLDP Preferred Strategy. A 6 week consultation period will run from XXXXX. The document is available on the Council's website XXXXX, and copies are available for inspection during normal office hours at the Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale, Anvil Court, Abertillery and all public libraries.

1.13 Please submit any comments on this document on the forms provided by email to planningpolicy@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk or in writing to:

Development Plans Team

Civic Centre

Ebbw Vale

NP23 6XB

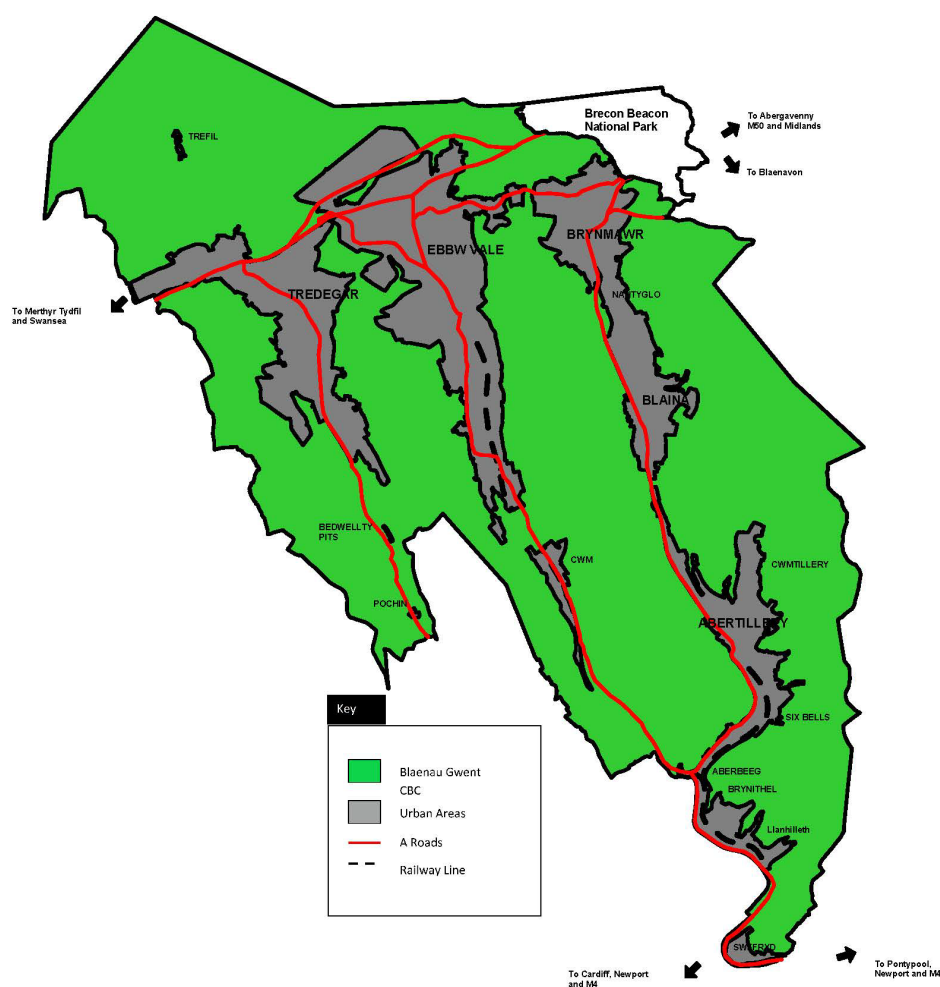
1.14 Further information and advice can be obtained from the Development Plans Team by email (planningpolicy@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) or telephone (01495 355538). Please note that this consultation relates to issues and topics discussed in the Preferred Strategy and is not an opportunity to make detailed comments on individual Candidate Sites. All comments should relate to the questions included at the end of each Section of the Preferred Strategy, which are designed to assist with your representation.

2.0 CONTEXT

Blaenau Gwent Context

2.1 Blaenau Gwent's location in the South East Wales region, 20 miles north of Newport and 20 miles north east of Cardiff offers opportunities to benefit from the Cardiff Capital Region. Blaenau Gwent covers an area of approximately 10,900 hectares and has an estimated population of 69,700 (2018). It has one of the highest population densities in Wales as most of the population is concentrated in 23% of the area; in the primary and main settlements of Ebbw Vale; Tredegar; Brynmawr / Nantyglo / Blaina; and Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six Bells). As a result, Blaenau Gwent is characterised by a close association between densely urbanised (often linear) communities and large tracts of open countryside.

Settlement Context Plan



2.2 Blaenau Gwent's origins lay in the wide range of local and natural resources for making iron and steel. As a result, heavy industry came to fill much of the three main valleys of Sirhowy, Ebbw Fach and Ebbw Fawr. Whilst the coal industry declined in the 1970's and 1980's, the steel industry remained a major employer up until the closure of Ebbw Vale Steelworks in 2002, leading to huge job losses. The manufacturing sector which grew around these industries continues to form an important part of the Blaenau Gwent economy today.

2.3 The loss of the coal and steel industries is highlighted by a population reduction. However, over the last decade, the population of the area has stabilised, although people continue to leave the area to find housing and employment elsewhere. Currently 49% of Blaenau Gwent's working residents commute outside the borough to work and commuting distances have increased.

2.4 Early and rapid economic and population growth led to major physical expansion with dense terraced houses built close to workplaces along the valley floors or clinging to the valley sides. These pre1919 terrace houses make up 52% of the current housing stock (census 2011).

2.5 The loss of heavy industries have resulted in many of these former sites benefitting from urban regeneration schemes. For example, redevelopment of the former Steelworks site (known as The Works) is well underway with the completion of a new hospital, learning zone, leisure centre and an extension of the Ebbw Vale rail link from Ebbw Vale Parkway to Ebbw Vale town.

2.6 The environmental degradation and pollution that were the by-products of rapid industrialisation has seen a dramatic improvement. The landscape has changed – spoil tips which once dominated the valleys have been removed or landscaped.

2.7 The way people live their lives has changed. The influence of technology has led to significant changes in the way people shop, communicate and enjoy themselves and benefit from services such as health, care and education. There have also been significant pressures worldwide with factors such as population growth and dependence on fossil fuels putting pressure on the environment. Climate Change is a threat to Wales' health, economy, infrastructure and natural environment.

Regional Context

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

2.8 The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) aims to develop and promote South East Wales as a great place to live, work and do business. A £1.2 billion Cardiff Capital Region City Deal will unlock significant economic growth across the Cardiff Capital Region which includes the ten local authorities of Cardiff, The Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Bridgend, Torfaen, Newport and Blaenau Gwent. In May 2018, a five year Strategic Business Plan to leverage maximum economic and social benefits has

been agreed by all 10 local authority partners, the plan specifies the regional strategic objectives of the CCR which are:

- Prosperity and Opportunity – building the capacity of individuals, households, public sector and businesses to meet challenges and grasp opportunity, creating a more productive economy;
- Inclusion and Equality – A vibrant and sustainable economy which contributes to the well-being and quality of life of the people and communities in the region now and in the future; and
- Identity, Culture, Community and Sustainability – Forging a clear identity and strong reputation as a City Region for trade, innovation and quality of life.

Neighbouring Planning Authorities

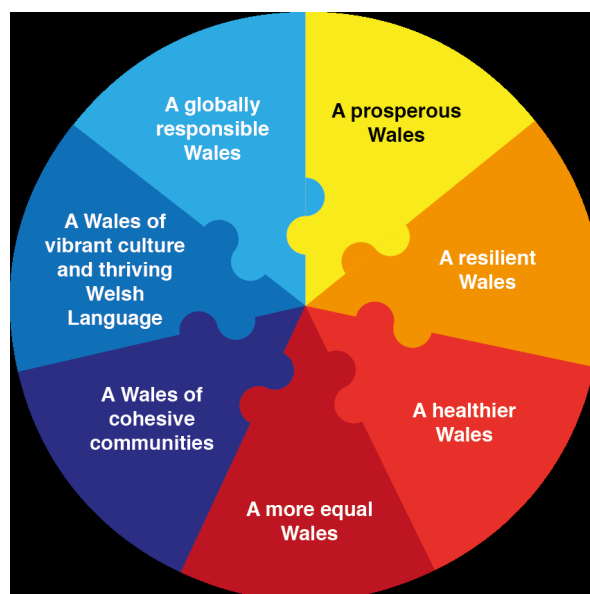
2.9 Monmouthshire County Council (CC), Torfaen County Borough Council (CBC) and Brecon Beacons National Park are all currently reviewing their Local Development Plans. Brecon Beacons National Park is further ahead in the process as they consulted on their Preferred Strategy in July – August 2019. The timetables of Monmouthshire CC and Torfaen CBC are fairly aligned with that of Blaenau Gwent as all are expected to publish their preferred strategy in October / November 2019. Caerphilly County Borough Council are to commence preparation of a Replacement Plan shortly. Blaenau Gwent CBC is committed to working collaboratively with its neighbouring authorities and a number of joint pieces of evidence base have been produced, with further joint research currently commissioned. All neighbouring authorities have attended the pre deposit participation engagement and regular meetings are held on the emerging RLDPs.

Legislative Context

2.10 The Preferred Strategy has been prepared in the context of several key pieces of legislation, which set out the requirements for the emerging RLDP. A summary is provided below for reference.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

2.11 The Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG) Act (Wales) 2015 is a key piece of legislation which aims to further improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales now and in the longer term. The Act puts in place a 'sustainable development principle' which is a duty for public bodies to "act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The Act is underpinned by seven 'well-being' goals, which public bodies must work to achieve:



2.12 Due consideration to these goals and the broader sustainable development principle will be demonstrated at each stage of plan preparation through the five ways of working contained in the Act. These require consideration of involvement, collaboration, integration, prevention and long term balancing factors in the decision making process, all of which have formed and will continue to form an intrinsic part of the LDP's development. Each strategic policy will closely link with and reference the goal(s) which relate most to its purpose and implementation, with emphasis on maximising social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits to ensure that the Council has carried out its sustainable development duty.

2.13 An assessment of the compatibility of the RLDP objectives against the WBFG Act and Local Well-being Plan goals and objectives is set out in the Vision and Objectives Supporting Document.

Planning (Wales) Act 2015

2.14 The Planning (Wales) Act sets out a series of legislative changes to deliver reform of the planning system in Wales, to ensure that it is fair, resilient and enables development. The Act addresses 5 key objectives including strengthening the plan led approach to planning by introducing a legal basis for the preparation of a National Development Framework (NDF) and Strategic Development Plan (SDP), discussed in further detail below.

2.15 The NDF is a 20 year land use framework for Wales and will be the national development plan for Wales and replace the current 'Wales Spatial Plan. The NDF will:-

- set out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system nationally, regionally and locally can deliver it;
- provide direction for SDPs and LDPs and support the determination of Developments of National Significance;
- sit alongside Planning Policy Wales, which sets out the Welsh Government's planning policies and will continue to provide the context for land use planning;
- support national economic, transport, environmental, housing, energy and cultural

- strategies and ensure they can be delivered through the planning system; and
- be reviewed every 5 years.

2.16 Further information on the draft NDF is set out below.

2.17 SDPs are intended to provide a regional spatial framework for the future development and use of land within a defined region. In this case, Blaenau Gwent forms part of the Cardiff Capital Region and there is broad agreement that this will be taken forward as the basis for the footprint of a SE Wales SDP (excluding the BBNP). This will allow larger than local issues, such as housing and infrastructure, which cut across Local Planning Authorities boundaries, to be considered in a comprehensive way. Whilst the Council is proceeding with a RLDP, simultaneous collaborative working will be undertaken with neighbouring authorities and the broader region to prepare an SDP. A joint evidence base will also be shared wherever possible to this end.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016

2.18 The Environment (Wales) Act puts in place the legislation to plan and manage Wales' natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined up way. It includes an enhanced biodiversity duty which requires public authorities to maintain and enhance biodiversity and to promote the resilience of ecosystems.

Active Travel (Wales) Act, 2013

2.19 The Active Travel (Wales) Act aims to promote walking and cycling as an attractive mode of transport for purposeful journeys (i.e. to access work, school or shops and services). It seeks to instil a lasting transformation of how developments are planned to incorporate walking and cycling infrastructure from the outset as well as encouraging long-term behaviour change.

Policy Context

2.20 The Preferred Strategy has been prepared in the context of a wide range of plans, programmes and strategies at a range of spatial scales. Some of the key documents are summarised below for ease of reference.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 10, 2018

2.21 Edition 10 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW10) sets out the land use planning policies and overarching sustainable development goals for Wales, revised to contribute towards the statutory well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. PPW10 requires a presumption in favour of sustainable development and considers a plan-led approach to be the most effective means of securing sustainable development through the planning system. PPW10 has a strong focus on promoting placemaking, which is considered instrumental to achieving sustainable places, delivering socially inclusive development and promoting more cohesive communities. Placemaking is deemed a holistic approach that

“considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings” (PPW10, 2018, p.16).

2.22 In order to inform the spatial strategy, PPW10 requires development plans to “include a spatial strategy covering the lifetime of the plan which establishes a pattern of development improving social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being” (PPW10, 2018, para 3.38). The link between the number of homes due to be provided and the expected job opportunities is clearly emphasised, as is the location of any new development in relation to existing or planned infrastructure. This is held important to minimise the need to travel, reduce private car reliance and increase opportunities for cycling, walking and the use of public transport. Development plans are deemed to “provide the main means for achieving integration between land use and transport planning” (PPW10, 2018, para. 4.15).

2.23 PPW10 specifies a well-defined search process to identify development land. Sustainable previously developed land and/or underutilised sites within existing settlements should be reviewed first before suitable, sustainable greenfield sites within or on the edge of settlements are considered. In either case, “a broad balance between housing, community facilities, services and employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas should be promoted to minimise the need for long distance commuting” (PPW10, 2018, para. 3.46). Significant weight is attached to developing active and social places in the form of well-connected cohesive communities.

National Development Framework 2020-2040 Consultation Draft (WG, August 2019)

2.24 The draft National Development Plan Framework (NDF) sets out 11 outcomes which collectively are a statement of where Wales want to be in 20 years time. The NDF aims to develop:

A Wales where people live....

1. and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places
2. in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services
3. in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth
4. in places with a thriving Welsh language
5. and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth
6. in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted
7. in places where travel is sustainable
8. in places with world class digital infrastructure
9. in places that sustainable manage their natural resources and reduce pollution
10. in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems
11. in places which are decarbonised

2.25 The draft NDF requires Growth and new development to be in the right place, undertaken in the right way and make more efficient use of our natural resources to achieve the NDF outcomes. Its spatial strategy has three components:

- where in Wales growth should be focussed;

- how growth should be planned; and
- how we should power and heat places using renewable energy.

2.26 Under the section, “Where Wales will grow”, Blaenau Gwent is in ‘the Valleys’ **growth area** though is not identified as a regional centre to accommodate growth.

2.27 Under the section, “how growth should be planned”, the focus of policy is around achieving **sustainable urban growth in towns and cities that are compact and orientated around urban centres and integrated public transport and active travel networks**. Higher density and mixed use development on sites with good access to urban centres and public transport hubs, including new and improved Metro stations are being promoted. The NDF also encourages new public service facilities of a significant scale to be located in town and city centres. Publicly owned land must be reviewed to identify potential sites for development, including for mixed use and affordable housing developments to support the creation of sustainable places. Affordable housing is also a priority and LDPs are required to include targets based on regional and local housing needs, identify sites for affordable housing led developments and explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing. There is an emphasis on increasing mobile phone coverage and a move towards ultra -low emission vehicles including the creation of a network of rapid charging points. An emphasis is also placed on safeguarding ecological networks and maximising green infrastructure. Cumulative action towards achieving the enhancement of biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems should be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment. There is also a plan to develop a national forest with a target to increase woodland cover by 2,000 ha per annum.

2.28 As part of powering and heating places with renewable energy and district heating networks, targets are set to produce 70 per cent of electricity consumption to be generated from renewable energy by 2030. It also includes targets for local ownership of some of this energy. The draft NDF sets out a clear traffic light based approach to its policy on large scale wind and solar renewable energy projects. Green is priority areas for Solar and Wind Energy where there is a presumption in favour of development and where the principle of landscape change is accepted. **A significant part of Blaenau Gwent is in a priority area for Solar and Wind Energy. The NDF also sets out priority areas for District Heating networks and in this case none are identified in Blaenau Gwent.**

2.29 The NDF sets out strategies for the three regions of Wales. **Blaenau Gwent is in the South East Region. Here the focus of growth is focussed on Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys.** Cardiff is to retain and extend its role as the primary national centre for culture, sport, leisure, media, the night time economy and finance. Newport is a focus for regional growth and investment and this emerging policy document aspires to see the City play an increased strategic role. **The Welsh Government supports co-ordinated regeneration and investment in the Heads of the Valleys area to increase prosperity and address social inequalities.** Welsh Government central estimates identify a need for 71,200 additional homes until 2038 and over the initial five years (2018/19 to 2022/23) 48% of the additional need should be affordable homes. These estimates form part of the evidence and context

on which Housing Requirements for Strategic Development Plans can be based and should be considered at the regional level and not on the basis of the individual local planning authorities. A Green Belt is identified around Newport and the eastern part of the region. Growth is to be focussed in places with good active travel and public transport connectivity. Land close to metro stations should be the focus of development. There are plans for the growth of Cardiff airport to increase capacity and improve transport links. Welsh Government supports the establishment of the Valleys Regional Park and LDPs are required to embed its principles into planning frameworks.

Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales, 2019

2.30 This Plan sets the foundations for Wales to transition to a low carbon nation; setting out the Welsh Government's approach to increasing efficiency and cutting emissions of greenhouse gasses by at least 80% by 2050. This is vital to meet the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, thereby contributing to a fairer and healthier society. The five ways of working of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 guide Wales's decarbonisation action, ensuring effective collaboration and involvement with stakeholders to integrate decarbonisation, limit further effects of climate change and maximise all 7 national well-being goals.

2.31 The planning system has an important role in facilitating decarbonisation. Planning Policy Wales' focus on placemaking encourages well-designed development that ensures communities have all the services they need within easy reach. A wide plethora of other planning related priorities also encourage lower carbon emissions whilst simultaneously creating places people can live well. These include promoting renewable energy developments, restricting the use of fossil fuels and incorporating active travel principles (walk and cycling) into new developments. Low carbon infrastructure can ultimately help increase efficiency through the way energy is produced and transmitted, the design and construction of buildings and the transportation of people and goods. All development plans must ultimately support these strategic decarbonisation goals to facilitate clean energy and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Blaenau Gwent Corporate Plan 2018-2022

2.32 The Corporate Plan is the Council's roadmap setting out a vision, values and priorities for the period 2018-2022. It outlines clearly what the people of Blaenau Gwent can expect from the Council but equally, what is being asked of Blaenau Gwent's citizens and partners.

2.33 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's core vision set out in the Corporate Plan is "Proud Heritage, Stronger Communities, Brighter Future." This is intrinsically linked to land use planning and is therefore key to the delivery of the RLDP. The five core values are: Proud and Ambitious, Trust and Integrity, Working Together, Raising Aspirations and Fair and Equitable. The key priorities from the Council's Corporate Plan that support the development of the RLDP are: Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities; and Economic Development and Regeneration.

Blaenau Gwent Local Well-being Plan – The Blaenau Gwent We Want (2018-2023)

2.34 The Blaenau Gwent Local Well-being Plan was endorsed in April 2018 and is a long term vision for the area over the next 35 years.

2.35 The Plan outlines objectives for improving well-being in Blaenau Gwent and meeting duties under the Well-being and Future Generations Act 2015. It is the result of an extensive process of ongoing conversations with the public through the Blaenau Gwent We Want engagement programme, close work with partner organisations and analysis of the evidence to build up a detailed picture of what well-being looks like and how it can be improved.

2.36 The 5 objectives in the plan have been developed to reflect that Blaenau Gwent wants...

- The best start in life for everyone
- Safe and friendly communities
- To look after and protect the natural environment
- To forge new pathways to prosperity
- To encourage healthy lifestyles

2.37 A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places. The RLDP will be an integral means of maximising the well-being of Blaenau Gwent's residents and its communities; thereby ensuring that these five objectives are balanced and integrated into the core of the Plan, whilst shaping each stage of plan preparation.

South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan (January 2015)

2.38 The five South East (SE) Wales Valley local authorities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen have jointly developed a Local Transport Plan.

2.39 The LTP sets down the vision and objectives for transport in the SE Wales Valleys area and provides a short and long term programme of interventions to work towards achieving these goals. The short-term programme sets down those schemes that are priorities for the next 5 years up to 2020. The longer-term programme identifies aspirations up to 2030.

2.40 The Local Transport Plan focuses on targeting investment in transport that will support the following Welsh Government priority areas:

- Support economic growth and safeguard jobs across Wales, but with a particular focus on the City Regions, Enterprise Zones and local growth zones;
- Reduce economic inactivity by delivering safe and affordable access to employment sites across Wales;

- Maximise the contribution that effective and affordable transport services can make to tackling poverty and target investment to support improvements in accessibility for the most disadvantaged communities; and
- Encourage, safer, healthier and sustainable travel.

2.41 Transport has always had an integral relationship with sustainable spatial planning and the RLDP will continue to link transport with the full plethora of strategic planning themes. These include the economy, employment, the environment, health and social care, education and physical activity. In addressing these links, transport can be used as a tool to promote equality, improve welfare and deliver an inclusive, fairer society.

3.0 KEY CHALLENGES AND DRIVERS

Challenges

3.1 The following key challenges have been identified for the RLDP to address. These have been influenced by stakeholders at a series of engagement events, the Council's review report and other supporting documents. At the engagement event, the current LDP challenges for the adopted plan were evaluated and reviewed. A full report of consultation of the Issues and Vision Workshops is available to download on the Council's website. A Background Paper on the Vision and Objectives is also available.

3.2 The key challenges have been grouped under the headings of economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects which are illustrative of the broad spectrum of areas where the Plan can affect change.

Economic
Challenge 1: Economic growth The area suffers from high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity, high benefit dependence and limited quality employment opportunities, which together result in low household incomes. A key challenge for the area is to reduce inequalities with the rest of Wales and secure jobs for the future. This will mean increasing the proportion of jobs in sectors with good growth prospects, such as, new technologies and advanced manufacturing, IT and cyber security, tourism, low carbon sustainable technologies and the foundation economy. The challenge is to provide land, services and environments that will enable economic growth.
Challenge 2: New roles for town centres Town centres are suffering as a result of a change in people's shopping habits. A key issue is that town centres need to diversify and broaden their offer to create footfall. Town centres need to have clear roles so that they don't compete against each other. The challenge is to provide a more flexible policy approach and identify clear roles.
Challenge 3: Improving education attainment and skills A high proportion of adults have no qualifications and education attainment is generally low. Whilst education attainment has improved considerably, lately, more needs to be done in this area. People have limited and low skill levels to gain good quality jobs. The challenge is to ensure that skills and training match the economic growth sectors and the infrastructure is put in place so that facilities can be accessed by all.
Social
Challenge 4: Population growth and improving housing offer The area has stabilised its population, although people are still leaving the area to find housing and employment elsewhere. One of the problems with out-migration is that it tends to be biased towards those more mobile and economically active. The challenge is to provide land for housing and provide the jobs to retain people in the area.
There is a shortage of flats, bungalows and detached properties to meet housing requirements. The quality of existing private housing stock is an issue in terms of modern living and efficiency requirements particularly in the rental sector. Affordability remains an issue. The challenge is to ensure new developments contain a mix of house types and

tenure; managing the number of vacant properties; and improving the quality of the private housing stock.

Challenge 5: Creating a well-connected network of communities Being able to access services, jobs and markets is a key requirement for any area to be successful. Good links are required both inside and outside of Blaenau Gwent. The challenge is to help develop a transport network which improves connectivity within and outside of Blaenau Gwent. The completion of the dualling of the Heads of the Valleys road and improvements to the Ebbw Railway are key.

Blaenau Gwent is made up of a number of towns and villages but only a few are large enough to be self-sufficient in terms of comprising an adequate range and mix of services. As a consequence, it is vital that a network of settlements is created to provide the sustainable level of services for the area. This network of settlements is also a key part of delivering sustainable communities where local and regional services can be easily accessed through sustainable modes of transport.

Challenge 6: Supporting Sustainable transport: For those trips that do have to be made a much greater proportion will need to be by walking, cycling and public transport. This would also make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions and provide for those without access to a car. Blaenau Gwent has low car ownership and a poor evening and Sunday bus services. The challenge is to create an environment and transport network in which it becomes a more attractive choice to walk, cycle or travel by public transport.

Challenge 7: Promoting physical and mental health and well-being for all Development and renewal of settlements needs to take account of all aspects of the quality of life of those who live there, including safety, health and freedom from disturbance. In particular, Blaenau Gwent has low life expectancy and high numbers of people with limiting long-term illness. Fear of crime is also a key issue for residents. The challenge is to provide the infrastructure and create environments that promote safety, health and a sense of well-being for all.

Environmental

Challenge 8: Creating a place which supports its green environment Blaenau Gwent, sits at the head of the South Wales Valleys on the fringe of the Brecon Beacons with its dramatic uplands in the north and steep sided valleys to the south. This landscape is a major asset which needs to be appreciated by residents and visitors alike. The natural environment with its variety of wildlife is valuable in its own right but can also contribute to the economic and social well-being of the area. Climate change and disrespectful activities are a threat to this. The challenge is to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increase the resilience of ecosystems.

Challenge 9: Sustainable use of natural resources Responsible use of the area's physical resources is a key part of a better future. The challenge is to promote the circular economy by reducing waste generation and maximising reuse and recycling, ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources and the provision of an adequate supply of minerals.

Challenge 10: Environmental Quality Air and water pollution, noise, land contamination and dereliction have long blighted the area and affected people's health and well-being and whilst this has improved in reality there is still room for improvement. Climate change means that the areas subject to the risk of flooding are growing. The challenge is to help ensure that the physical environment is safe and healthy; and that land is used efficiently.

Challenge 11: Sustainable design and the provision of renewable energy Blaenau Gwent has the potential to generate much more of its own energy by sustainable means that reduce carbon emissions. The design and layout of buildings could contribute to a reduction in the consumption of energy and emission of greenhouse gases. Meanwhile, some change in climate is certain to occur and it will be necessary to adapt to this in the future development of the area. The challenge is to help, through the development process, to achieve the potential for reducing greenhouse gases and impacts of climate change.

Cultural

Challenge 12: Creating places with a distinctive sense of identity Blaenau Gwent has a distinctive, location, history and townscape and this is a further potential key to the area's transformation. This will mean bequeathing to future generations the best of the legacy of the past, including the heritage as an iron, coal and steel producer, the links with the Chartist movement and the birthplace of Aneurin Bevan. The challenge is to protect, conserve and enhance the best of the buildings and townscape.

The Welsh language is integral to the character, culture and history of Wales. Whilst Blaenau Gwent does not have a large Welsh speaking population as found in other parts of Wales, the challenge is to ensure that the spatial planning system protects and enhances Welsh culture and language where possible.

Key Drivers

3.3 Having identified the key challenges the County Borough faces up to 2033 and which the RLDP needs to address, this section seeks to identify the key drivers to realising some of the challenges and to assisting in delivering the changes required.

Cardiff Capital Region

3.4 The overarching economic objectives of the City Deal are to create 25,000 new jobs and leverage £4 billion in private sector investment across the region. Key themes have been identified to focus the approach: Connecting the Region; Regeneration and Infrastructure; and Skills and employment. These strategic themes have key implications for the Blaenau Gwent RLDP.

3.5 Connecting the Region – the digital strategy will help to make the area a smart region, driving innovative and disruptive solutions to attract private sector partnership and investment, including Welsh and regional connectivity, regional and community fibre connectivity, mobile 5G access and maximising open data.

3.6 A key project is the £738million Metro project, which aims to extend the transport networks to improve access to new and existing activities for work, training, education, culture, retail and leisure in South East Wales. The development of a 3-4 mile rail link from Abertillery to Ebbw Fawr Valley at Aberbeeg has been proposed as part of the scheme. This will also include a park and ride for 100 vehicles. An increase in the frequency of services to 4 per hour is also being investigated.

3.7 The key outcome of the Metro project is to create an integrated transport infrastructure which will enable the social and economic objectives of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. An additional rail link at Abertillery and Aberbeeg, in combination with a more reliable and frequent service, would help improve the economic prosperity for Blaenau Gwent.

3.8 Regeneration and Infrastructure – the Housing Investment Fund has been proposed to support the need for more homes to be built across the region. The fund will support house building ranging from larger builders and developers on stalled housing sites on former industrial sites through to small builders, community builders, custom builders and regeneration specialists on small sites across the region. The fund will also help to help stimulate the SME building sector across the region by providing loan development finance and launching a Customer Build Scheme releasing smaller plots of public sector land with a full package of support for SMEs to deliver new homes in the community.

3.9 Skills and Employment – the Skills for the Future project supports provides region-wide school engagement with pupils and parents to offer careers advice and guidance, support for businesses to address barriers of participation, including a skills investment fund and a commitment to support delivery of over 10,000 additional apprenticeships, graduate internships and upskilled employees in the private sector.

Our Valleys Our Future (WG 2018 Delivery Plan)

3.10 A ministerial taskforce for the South Wales Valleys are working to improve the prosperity in the South Wales valleys. They have published a high-level plan which outlines its priorities for the future. These are:

- **Good quality jobs and the skills to do them**

3.11 The vision is ‘to close the employment gap between the South Wales Valleys and the rest of Wales. This means helping 7,000 people into work, further creating thousands of new fair, secure and sustainable jobs across the Valleys’. Ebbw Vale has been identified as a strategic hub which is the focus of public sector investment. Proposals include: Tech Valleys – automotive and technology, employment space, residential development and digital. There is also a focus on the foundation economy to be supported to create additional jobs. The sectors being targeted are food, health, construction, retail, social care and child care. Maximising regional potential of the A465 is another area the Taskforce is exploring.

- **Better public services**

3.12 The vision is ‘Public services will be working with the third sector and local communities to respond to people’s needs. Support will be available to help people lead healthier lifestyles, improving well-being and addressing health inequalities; public transport will be joined-up, affordable and help people get to work, school or training and to leisure

facilities; we will improve education outcomes for all children and close the attainment gap'. A number of actions are put in place to achieve this.

- **My local community – Valleys Regional Park**

3.13 The Vision is 'A valley's Landscape Park will have been set up to help celebrate and maximise the use of their natural resources and heritage; Valley town centres will be vibrant places, with attractive green spaces which support local economies; and the Valleys will be a recognised tourist destination, attracting visitors from across the UK and beyond'. A number of actions are put in place to achieve this. The Valleys Regional Park is to sustain the improvement and management of a highly-visible network of uplands, woodlands, nature reserves and country parks, rivers, reservoirs and canals, heritage sites and attractions across the Valleys, linking with our towns and villages.

Enterprise Zones

3.14 The Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone is one of eight enterprise zones launched in Wales by the Welsh Government in 2012. The Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone focuses primarily on the advanced materials and manufacturing sector. The Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone comprises of four areas totalling 40 hectares of developable land. The main objectives for Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone is business growth and job creation. The incentives available are of a fiscal nature with a planning scheme that offers a fast track application service and no pre-application advice fee. A Strategic Plan for the Enterprise Zone was produced in 2018 which makes recommendations for future direction and strategy. The responsibility of the Enterprise Zone lies with the Tech Valleys Strategic Advisory Board.

Tech Valleys

3.15 In 2017, Welsh Government announced it would invest £100m in the Tech Valleys project over ten years. Tech Valleys refers to the proposed automotive technology park in Ebbw Vale. The investment will support the creation of more than 1,500 jobs, predominantly within new technologies and advanced manufacturing. Welsh Government have announced £25m over the next three years (2018-2021) as part of this commitment.

3.16 The Welsh Government have published a Tech Valleys Strategic Plan (April 2018) to set out how innovative technologies will be attracted to Ebbw Vale and the South Wales Valleys. The plan also includes how it will complement other initiatives and the expected economic benefits.

4.0 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Replacement LDP Vision (2018-2033)

4.1 An exciting and challenging Vision of what the area should look like in 15 years-time has been developed and will guide the future development of Blaenau Gwent. The LDP Vision has been developed to take into account the policy context, key challenges and drivers for change.

Through collaborative working, by 2033, Blaenau Gwent will become a network of connected **sustainable, vibrant valley communities** that support the **well-being** of current and future generations with:

- a **prosperous low carbon economy** where people have the skills, knowledge and opportunities to achieve a better quality of life; and
- residents living in **well connected**, healthy and safe communities, in a range of good quality homes with better access to services;
- its **distinctive natural environment**, cultural and historic identity is protected and enhanced creating a place where people want to live, work and visit.

Replacement LDP Objectives (2018-2033)

Delivering the Vision

4.2 The RLDP Vision has been broken down into four outcomes and these are considered central to the delivery of the RLDP vision as they embrace the principles of sustainable development and the concept of placemaking and embed the duties set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

- **Outcome 1:** Create a Network of Sustainable Vibrant Valley Communities (Placemaking)
- **Outcome 2:** Create Well-Connected, Active and Healthy Communities
- **Outcome 3:** Create Opportunities for a Prosperous Low Carbon Economy and Promote Learning and Skills
- **Outcome 4:** Protect and Enhance the Distinctive Natural and Built Environment

4.3 Under the four key Outcomes sit 19 objectives which have been identified to address the challenges facing the County Borough and to reflect updated national policy and legislation. The 19 objectives have been formulated to create the right conditions to address the various social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being outcomes. The draft vision and objectives will continually be refined during the process to reflect the development of the evidence base.

4.4 The objectives are set out below according to the theme under which they sit. They are also cross referenced to the relevant Revised LDP challenge listed in section 3.0.

LDP Objective Number	Headline	LDP Objective
Outcome 1: Create a Network of Sustainable Vibrant Valley Communities (Placemaking)		
1	Spatial Strategy	To promote the 4 main settlements of the County Borough as the focus for major employment, commercial and residential development
LDP Challenges Addressed:		1, 2, 4, 5, 6
2	Demography	To increase opportunities for people to live and work within Blaenau Gwent resulting in population growth.
LDP Issues Addressed:		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
3	Placemaking	All developments should contribute to creating high quality, attractive, safe and sustainable places which enhance the community in which they are located whilst having regard to the natural, historic and built environment and supporting and safeguarding the welsh language.
LDP Issues Addressed:		7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
4	Climate Change	To minimise climate change impacts through reduced emissions of greenhouse gases in both new and existing developments, and to adapt to climate change through considerations of its effects through the design and location of new developments This can be achieved by: Maximising the use of previously developed land; Promoting the re-use and restoration of derelict land and buildings; By focussing development away from areas vulnerable to flooding; By increasing the supply of renewable energy; Encouraging balanced job and population growth to reduce out commuting; Provision of broadband connectivity to reduce the need to travel; Provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality; and Provision of quality green infrastructure.
LDP Issues Addressed:		6, 8, 9, 10, 11
Outcome 2: Create Opportunities for a Prosperous Low Carbon Economy and Promote Learning and Skills		
5	Economic Growth	To support economic growth through the creation of a thriving, well-connected, diverse economy which provides a range of good quality employment opportunities to enable indigenous business growth, attract inward investment and competitive innovative businesses in appropriate growth sectors.
LDP Issues Addressed:		1

LDP Objective Number	Headline	LDP Objective
6	Education and Skills	To contribute to the improvement of the education and skills infrastructure through ensuring that skills and training match economic growth sectors and facilities can be accessed by all.
LDP Issues Addressed:		3
7	Minerals / Waste	To meet the County Borough's national, regional and local requirements to manage and dispose of its waste and to safeguard and to use its mineral resource in a sustainable manner.
LDP Issues Addressed:		9
8	Circular Economy	Promote the circular economy and make the best use of material resources for the benefit of both the built and natural environments.
LDP Issues Addressed:		9
9	Tourism	Develop a growing tourism economy to support sustainable and vibrant town centres recognising the role of the County Borough's proximity to the Brecon Beacons National Park, local heritage and leisure opportunities.
LDP Issues Addressed:		1, 2, 12
Outcome 3: Create Well-Connected, Active and Healthy Communities		
10	Housing	To improve the range and quality of housing through ensuring new developments contain a mix of house types and tenures thus providing affordable, accessible and aspirational homes for existing and future residents.
LDP Issues Addressed:		4
11	Town Centres	To sustain and enhance a network of 4 town centres serving their own populations and valley catchments whilst recognising that the role of these centres is evolving.
LDP Issues Addressed:		2, 5
12	Sustainable Transport	To promote accessibility for all by prioritising walking and cycling (active travel) then public transport and finally motor vehicles thus reducing air borne pollution, the need to travel and dependency on private vehicles.
LDP Issues Addressed:		6
13	Accessibility	To create a network of well-connected settlements where services are easily accessible through improved integrated sustainable modes of transport
LDP Issues Addressed:		5
14	Infrastructure	To create an accessible network of green open spaces and high quality leisure and community infrastructure to contribute towards improving health and well-being.
LDP Issues Addressed:		7

LDP Objective Number	Headline	LDP Objective
Outcome 4: Protect and Enhance the Distinctive Natural and Built Environment		
15	Ecosystems	To protect, enhance and manage the ecosystems of Blaenau Gwent by enabling them to adapt to climate change through connecting existing areas by creating new linkages and stepping stones.
LDP Issues Addressed:		8
16	Green Infrastructure	Promote multi-functional green infrastructure with an emphasis on its integration with existing and new development.
LDP Issues Addressed:		7, 8
17	Landscape	To protect, enhance and manage the distinctive landscape of Blaenau Gwent to help foster sustainable tourism and community pride.
LDP Issues Addressed:		8, 9
18	Historic/Cultural	To protect and enhance the historical and cultural environment of Blaenau Gwent to contribute to the regeneration of the area.
LDP Issues Addressed:		12
19	Environmental Quality	To safeguard the quality of water, air and soil and tackle all sources of pollution including noise.
LDP Issues Addressed:		10

Growth and Spatial Strategy Options

4.5 In order to deliver the objectives and meet the Vision the Council must consider how much growth is required for the lifetime of the Plan (2018-2033) and where it should be located. A number of different options of growth, how it should be distributed across the Borough and the Settlement Hierarchy for its delivery have been considered. Following extensive engagement with Stakeholders (a report of consultation of the strategy options is available) and consideration of key evidence including supply factors a preferred option has been developed. The background to the identification of the Preferred Strategy is set out in Appendix 3: Strategy Options and a more detailed consideration of the options are set out in the Growth Option Background Paper and the Spatial Strategy Background Paper.

4.6 In summary four options were prepared and considered. The first **Option 1: Growth and Regeneration** was based on the current LDP and involved a medium level of growth; with a north south divide and a focus of growth on Ebbw Vale; and a settlement hierarchy based on an analysis of the roles of towns. Details of this are set out below.

Option 1: Growth and Regeneration (Current LDP)		
Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
Medium Growth Population: 162 to 846 gain (0.2 to 1% growth) Housing: 79-99 per annum (Total 1,185-1,485) Employment: loss of 48 to 64 per annum (Total loss of between 720 to 960)	North / South split with most of the growth in the north and with a focus of growth in Ebbw Vale	Principal Hub: Ebbw Vale District Hubs: Tredegar Brynmawr Abertillery Local Hub: Blaina

4.7 Option 2: Balanced and Interconnected Communities involved a low level of growth; with equal distribution across the borough; and based on using the sustainable assessment of settlements to distribute this growth. Details of this are set out below.

Option 2: Balanced and Interconnected Communities		
Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
Low Growth Population: loss of between 587 to 1,815 (-0.8% to 2.6% loss) Housing: 19-54 per annum (Total: 285-810) Employment: loss of 106 to 71 per annum (Total loss of – 1,065 to 1,590)	Balanced Growth Equally distributed across the borough	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Principal Settlements Ebbw Vale Tredegar Brynmawr/ Nantyglo/Blaina Abertillery / Cwmtillery / Six Bells / Brynithel / Llanhilleth / Aberbeeg Tier 2: Secondary Settlements Cwm Tier 3: Hamlets Trefil, Pochin, Bedwellty Pits and Swfrydd

4.8 Option 3: Economic Growth Strategy involved high growth; with a north south split based on opportunities for growth along the Heads of the Valleys; using the sustainable assessment of settlement to distribute the growth. Details of this are set out below.

Option 3: Economic Growth Strategy		
Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
High Growth Population: 1,996 to 5,009 gain (2.9% to 7.2% growth) Housing: 141-226 per annum (Total 2,115 - 3,390) Employment: loss of 16 to a gain of 61 per annum (Total loss of 240 to gain of 915)	North / South split based on opportunities for growth along the Heads of the Valleys	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Principal Settlements Ebbw Vale Tredegar Brynmawr/ Nantyglo/Blaina Abertillery / Cwmtillery / Six Bells / Brynithel / Llanhilleth / Aberbeeg Tier 2: Secondary Settlements Cwm Tier 3: Hamlets Trefil, Pochin, Bedwellty Pits and Swfrydd

4.9 The final option, **Option 4: Sustainable Economic Growth** was the same as option 3 but spread the growth equally across the Borough. Details of this are set out below.

Option 4: Sustainable Economic Growth		
Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
High Growth Population: 1,996 to 5,009 (2.9 to 7% growth) Housing: 141 to 226 per annum (Total 2,115 to 3,390) Employment: -16 to 61 per annum (Total -240 to plus 915)	Balanced Growth Equally distributed across the borough	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Principal Settlements Ebbw Vale Tredegar Brynmaur/ Nantyglo/Blaina Abertillery / Cwmillery / Six Bells / Brynithel / Llanhilleth / Aberbeeg Tier 2: Secondary Settlements Cwm Tier 3: Hamlets Trefil, Pochin, Bedwellty Pits and Swfrydd

4.10 The Preferred Growth and Spatial Strategy is **Option 5: Sustainable Economic Growth** but includes a **slightly lower growth level** than originally identified following as assessment of supply factors in relation to delivery and viability. It also includes a **more refined Settlement Hierarchy** to ensure that growth is directed to the most sustainable communities. This change was made to address concerns raised through the Initial Sustainability Appraisal of the options and Welsh Government's concerns that the settlement hierarchy was contrary to PPW, the principle of delivering sustainable development, promoting Active Travel, placemaking and the evidence.

Option 5: Sustainable Economic Growth		
Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
High Growth Population: 1,471-1,996 to (2 to 2.9% growth) Housing: 117-141 per annum (Total 1,755 to 2,115) Employment: loss of 28 to 16 per annum (Total loss of 420 to 240) With UR reducing & EA adjusted + CR Reducing 210 to 225 per annum (Total of 3,150-3,375)	Spread across the Borough based on Sustainable Settlement Assessment	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Primary Settlement Ebbw Vale Tier 2: Main Settlements Tredegar Brynmaur/ Nantyglo / Blaina Abertillery (including Cwmillery and Six Bells) Tier 3: Secondary Settlements Cwm Aberbeeg / Brynithel / Llanhilleth Tier 4: Villages Swfrydd Tier 5: Hamlets Trefil, Pochin and Bedwellty Pits

The Preferred Growth and Spatial Strategy

4.11 The new strategy is one of **Sustainable Economic Growth** and includes the following three elements:

- Growth Level – How much housing and jobs are planned
- Spatial Distribution Strategy – Sets out where the growth will be located

- Sustainable Growth Outcomes – Details how the outcomes meet the key Planning Principles and national placemaking outcomes that should be followed to achieve the objective of sustainable places.

4.12 The strategy has an economic focus with an aim to **improve prosperity to close the employment gap with the rest of Wales**. This involves **helping 3,375 people into work** through increasing economic activity, reducing unemployment, reducing out-migration and out-commuting. This will be achieved **by enabling good quality, secure and sustainable jobs**. All this can be delivered through maximising opportunities from the City Deal, Valleys Task Force, Tech Valleys, Enterprise Zone and Metro proposals.

4.13 The Strategy encourages **growth** based on a clear understanding of the population and household changes over the Plan period. It accepts that in order to create sustainable and viable places it must plan for a more balanced age structure. This has its challenges as the younger population is declining and the older population is increasing. It must strike a balance by providing the right level of housing and employment growth and the necessary community infrastructure to encourage the younger population to return and middle aged population to remain in the area. Whilst enabling the older population to live healthy and active lives. The Plan makes provision for **2,115 new homes** which supports **household growth of 6.5%** and a **population growth of 2.9%**. The strategy has had to consider deliverability by reviewing what has been delivered in the past and identifying what can be delivered in the future

4.14 **Distribution of the growth** reflects a desire to **spread this growth** in an equitable manner in order to achieve a **sustainable pattern of growth**, minimise unsustainable patterns of movement and support local services and facilities. This involved an assessment of the level of sustainable transport and accessibility, the availability of local facilities and services and the level of employment opportunities in and around settlements. Further information on how this has been undertaken can be found in the Sustainable Assessment of Settlements Background Paper.

4.15 Strategic Policy 1 below sets out the strategy.

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Economic Growth

In order to deliver sustainable economic growth:

1. Provision will be made for the delivery of at least 1,500 jobs with an aspiration to deliver 3,375. To enable this 3-46 ha of employment land will be allocated.
2. Provision will be made for the delivery of 2,115 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 1,755 of which at least 478 will be affordable.
3. The new homes will be distributed across the borough in line with the settlement hierarchy with 45% of the homes being directed to the Primary Settlement, 50% to Main Settlements and 5% to Secondary Settlements, Villages and Hamlets.

Settlement Tier	Name	Number (Share %)
Tier 1: Primary	Ebbw Vale	952 (45%)
Tier 2: Main	Tredegarr	423 (20%)
Tier 2: Main	Brynmawr / Nantyglo / Blaina	423 (20%)
Tier 2: Main	Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six Bells)	211 (10%)
Tier 3: Secondary Tier 4: Villages & Tier 5: Hamlets	Cwm and Aberbeeg / Brynithel / Llanhilleth Swfrydd Trefil, Pochin and Bedwellty Pits	106 (5%)

4. Strategic Mixed-Use Sites are identified at:

- The Works, Ebbw Vale (3.5 ha of employment land) and 220 homes
- Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor - Rhyd y Blew (13.2 ha of employment land) and Bryn Serth (10 ha of employment land) and 805 homes
- Former Nantyglo Comprehensive School Site (220 homes) and other uses

5. Sustainable growth will be achieved through delivering the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Create a Network of Sustainable Vibrant Valley Communities (Placemaking)

Outcome 2: Create Opportunities for a Prosperous Low Carbon Economy and Promote Learning and Skills

Outcome 3: Create Well-Connected, Active and Healthy Communities

Outcome 4: Protect and Enhance the Distinctive Natural and Built Environment

LDP Objectives	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19
WFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To forge new pathways to prosperity
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner Creating and Sustaining Communities

Growth Level

4.16 The Growth level identified allows the Borough to deliver a sustainable level of housing growth whilst at the same time supporting economic growth. It should be noted that the level of population growth does not actually increase the number of people in the working age population and indeed even under the aspirational level it leads to a total loss of 240 people over the Plan period. However, the growth in the workforce is expected to come from increasing the activity rate, reducing economic inactivity and reducing out-

commuting of the current population. If the intention to reduce inequalities with the rest of Wales is achieved and bring out-commuting levels to more sustainable levels then there would be 3,375 more people in the workforce based on the provision figures. The lower figure of 1,500 jobs identified in the policy is based on the Tech Valleys initiative and is backed by funding made available from Welsh Government.

Scenario	Change 2018–2033				Average per year		
	Population Change	Population Change %	Household s Change	Household s Change %	Natural Change	Net Migration	Dwellings
Provision	1,996	2.9%	2,020	6.5%	6	127	141
Requirement	1,471	2.1%	1,671	5.4%	14	84	117

4.17 As identified above the level of growth is based on making provision for a 2.9% growth in population that is 1,996 more people resulting in a population of 71,733 by 2033. Although the housing requirement figure set delivers a 2.1% growth in the population of 1,471 increasing the population from 69,435 in 2018 to 70,906 by 2033. The housing requirement figure would result in a population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 87 and a population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,668. Whereas the provision figure would result in a population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 196 and a population increase in the 60+ age group of 5,088. Actual changes are likely to lie somewhere between these figures as they are only estimates of what might happen.

4.18 In terms of household growth provision is made for 6.5% that is 2,020 more households whilst the requirement figure would result in 5.4% growth that is 1,671 more households. To meet the household growth identified the household growth figures are converted into dwelling requirement figures. The Plan makes provision for 2,115 homes to enable the delivery of 1,755 this equates to a 21% flexibility to enable sites that do not come forward or to enable the higher aspirations for the area if all of the sites were to be delivered. It is currently estimated that at least 478 of the homes will be affordable details of this can be found in the Housing Supply Background Paper.

Spatial Distribution

4.19 An assessment of the roles and function of settlements undertaken for the current LDP led to the creation of valley areas with each having a district town centre or in the case of Ebbw Vale a sub-regional town centre. This is largely led by the physical characteristics of the area which naturally divides the area into 3 valleys the Sirhowy, Ebbw Fawr and the Ebbw Fach. The size of the Ebbw Fach and the fact that it had two district town centres led to it being split into Upper and Lower Ebbw Fach.

4.20 Within these valley areas the Strategy guides the location of growth to the most sustainable locations based on an assessment of settlements and creation of a Settlement Hierarchy.

Hierarchy	Settlements
-----------	-------------

Tier 1: Primary Settlements	Ebbw Vale
Tier 2: Main Settlements	Tredegar
	Brynmawr/ Nantyglo/Blaina
	Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six Bells)
Tier 3: Secondary Settlements	Cwm
	Aberbeeg / Brynithel / Llanhilleth
Tier 4: Villages	Swfrydd
Tier 5: Hamlets	Trefil Pochin Bedwellty Pits

4.21 The strategy focuses 45% of this growth in the Tier 1: Primary Settlement and 50% in Tier 2: Main Settlements with 5% in all other settlements. This growth split is based on directing growth to the most sustainable settlements that have the capacity to deliver.

Strategic Mixed-Use Sites

4.22 In order to offer some certainty of where development is taking place Strategic Mixed-Use Sites, that is sites of over 100 homes, that include a mix of uses are identified. These Sites have been taken through the Candidate Site Assessment Process and judged to be suitable for development. These sites have sufficient evidence of viability and deliverability.

4.23 **The Works** – is the regeneration of the former steelworks site in Ebbw Vale which aims to transform the site into a vibrant and distinctive area. It is a sustainable regeneration project driven by four objectives: economic, social, resources and environmental. The project aimed to create new places for learning, working and recreation. It is integrated into the town centre to make stronger connections and links to important landmarks. The scheme has already delivered a primary and special education needs school, hospital, a learning zone, leisure centre, playing pitches, a central Valley Wetland Park, cycleway, an extension to the railway and a mechanical link to the town centre. The site now needs to deliver (B1) office accommodation, commercial floor space, 220 homes and employment land. An opportunity exists to create an exciting business hub close to the rail station.

4.24 The supporting Masterplan needs to be updated to reflect the current position of development at the site and some amendments to the uses of some sites. The Masterplan is also supported by design codes and an energy statement. Planning permission has been granted for parts of the business hub and one of the parcels of land has already been sold for residential development. See appendix 5 for a map of the site.

4.25 **Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor** – The site fans out from the town centre in a north westerly direction to the Heads of the Valleys Road. The Vision for the site is to create a series of developments that complements and enhances the vibrancy of Ebbw Vale as a sustainable community. Key aspects of the corridor will be to support a vibrant town centre with sustainable residential development and provide improved economic opportunity and leisure facilities centred to the north capitalising on the opportunities presented by the Heads of the Valleys dualling. It is intended that all the developments will achieve high

sustainability and urban design standards. The development will capitalise on the opportunities presented by the environmental setting of the area through high quality public realm and green infrastructure. A key focus will be to complement the educational opportunities presented at 'The Works' with suitable employment space and create additional opportunities in market sectors such as tourism.

4.26 Development of the site is currently guided by the Ebbw Vale Sustainable Development Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance document. The framework has assessed the development potential of the area and identified the following elements:

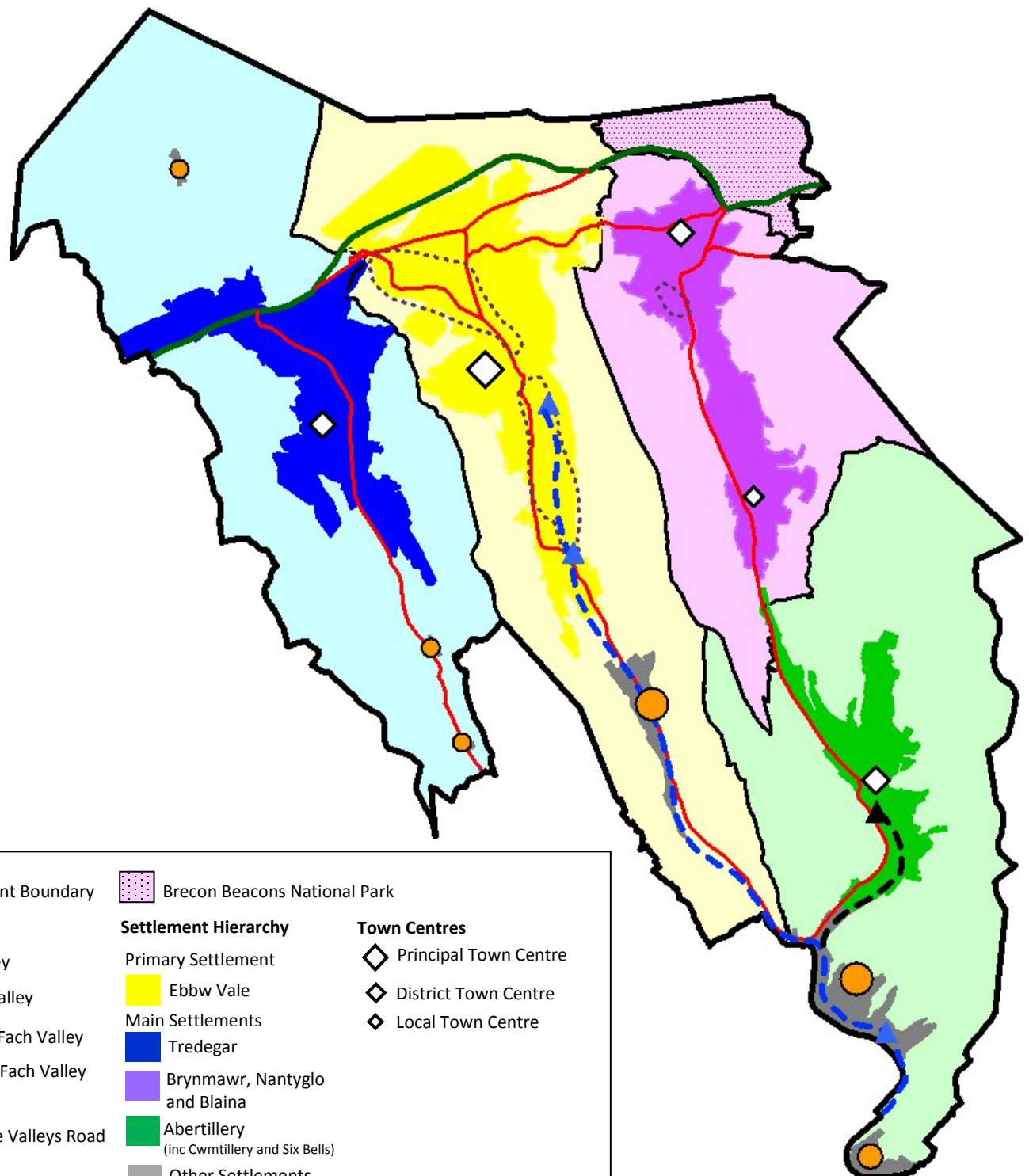
- Strategic mixed-use employment site – on land at Rhyd-y-Blew (29.8 ha of which 13.2 ha is the indicative developable area);
- Employment and road side services - at Bryn Serth (22.8 ha of which 10.5 ha is the indicative developable area);
- Commercial leisure hub – commercial leisure and associated A3 uses (4 ha);
- Residential - 805 homes including 10% affordable housing on three parcels of land (23 ha) (It should be noted that not all of the existing facilities are required to relocate to enable the provision of 805 homes); and
- A network of green links – to allow the effective integration of the SINCs and other key habitat areas.

4.27 This will be reviewed to ensure that it is up to date and reflects current guidance. In light of delivery rates it is unlikely that the full 805 homes will be delivered in the Plan period. Based on an average of 30 per annum it is anticipated that at least 450 homes will come forward from this site during the Plan period. One part of the site already has planning permission for housing (100) and another part has planning permission subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement (250). See appendix 5 for a map of the site.

4.28 Former Nantyglo Comprehensive School - the closure of the school and leisure centre has created an opportunity for a strategic mixed-use site. A masterplan is being prepared to create a well-designed, aspirational place to live with leisure space and good pedestrian / active travel linkages throughout. The site can accommodate in the region of 220 new homes but the exact figure and mix of uses will be identified in the RLDP. See appendix 5 for a map of the site.

Key Diagram

The Key Diagram illustrates the Preferred Strategy.



Key

Blaenau Gwent Boundary	Brecon Beacons National Park	
Valley Areas	Settlement Hierarchy	Town Centres
Sirhowy Valley	Primary Settlement	Principal Town Centre
Ebbw Fawr Valley	Ebbw Vale	District Town Centre
Upper Ebbw Fach Valley	Main Settlements	Local Town Centre
Lower Ebbw Fach Valley	Tredegar	
	Brynmawr, Nantyglo and Blaina	
	Abertillery (inc Cwmillery and Six Bells)	
Transport	Other Settlements	
Head of the Valleys Road	Secondary Settlement	
A Roads	Village	
Railway Station	Hamlet	
Railway Line	Strategic Mixed Use Sites	
Proposed Railway Station		
Proposed Railway extension		

Outcomes

4.29 The outcomes set out in the strategy not only deliver the vision of the Plan and meet the objectives set but also embrace key planning principles and sustainable placemaking outcomes identified in Planning Policy Wales and will thus ensure the delivery of sustainable development. In order to demonstrate this cross references are made within the strategic policies (set out in section 5) to the Welsh Government's key planning principles and this is also summarised below. In addition appendix 4 cross references all the Strategic Policies against the national sustainable placemaking outcomes.

Preferred Strategy Outcomes	National Planning Principles				
	Growing our economy in a sustainable manner	Making best use of resources	Facilitating accessible and healthy environments	Creating and Sustaining communities	Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental
Outcome 1: Create a Network of Sustainable Vibrant Valley Communities (Placemaking)	●	●	●		
Outcome 2: Create Opportunities for a Prosperous Low Carbon Economy and Promote Learning and Skills	●	●		●	●
Outcome 3: Create Well-Connected, Active and Healthy Communities	●	●	●	●	
Outcome 4: Protect and Enhance the Distinctive Natural and Built Environment		●			●

4.30 The following Strategic Policies deliver the Sustainable Economic Growth Strategy.

5.0 STRATEGY DELIVERY

Strategic Policies

5.1 This section sets out the strategic policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). The format and structure reflect the outcomes identified from the vision.

- **Outcome 1:** Create a Network of Sustainable Vibrant Valley Communities (Placemaking)
- **Outcome 2:** Create Opportunities for a Prosperous, Low Carbon Economy and Promote Learning and Skills
- **Outcome 3:** Create Well-Connected, Active and Healthy Communities
- **Outcome 4:** Protect and Enhance the Distinctive Natural and Built Environment

5.2 Each of these four outcomes includes key subject areas (e.g. employment, tourism, housing, environment, etc) and their strategic policies. The structure of the Strategic Policies allows them to cross reference to: the objective; the national Well-being goals; local Well-being objectives; and the 5 key planning principles set out in Strategic Policy 1.

Outcome 1: Deliver a Network of Vibrant Valley Communities (Placemaking)

5.3 These policies focus on delivering placemaking and ensuring that our communities are sustainable in the long-term. Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Economic Growth plays a major part of delivering this network of vibrant valley communities and is supported by the following policies on Sustainable Placemaking and Design and Climate Change.

Strategic Policy 2: Sustainable Placemaking and Design		
To deliver a Network of Vibrant Valley Communities we need to create sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise thus the design of new developments needs to deliver:		
1. Inclusive design that offers choice and ease of access for all;		
2. Environmental Sustainability in terms of maximising energy efficiency, making efficient use of resources, preventing the generation of waste and pollution, and consideration of ecosystems services;		
3. Sustaining or enhancing local character in terms of the layout, form, scale and visual appearance of development;		
4. The reduction of crime and disorder, where appropriate; and		
5. Reduce reliance on the car by integrating the development with the wider public transport routes and active travel routes.		
RLDP Objectives		3, 4, 12, 13
Well-being	of	A More Equal Wales

Future Generations Act (Wales) (WBFG Act)	A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Globally Responsible Wales
Local Well-being Plan (LWBP)	Blaenau Gwent wants safe and friendly communities
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments

5.4 Good design must be inclusive and this can be addressed through placing people at the heart of the design process. Through providing choice by ensuring that where a single design solution cannot accommodate all users flexibility is built into the building. Acknowledging diversity and difference by making provision to meet the needs of people with sensory, memory, learning and mobility impairments, older people and people with young children will lead to more usable environments. Good design also needs to address the inequality of access to services, education and employment experienced by people without access to the car which is an issue for Blaenau Gwent.

5.5 Good design should promote environmental sustainability. Developments should seek to maximise energy efficiency and the efficient use of other resources (including land), minimise the use of non-renewable resources and prevent the generation of waste and pollution. In addition to considering landscape and green infrastructure and ecology, consideration should be given to all features of the natural environment and how these function together to contribute towards the quality of places. This embraces the principles of 'ecosystems services' and sustainable management of natural resources.

5.6 The special characteristics of the area should be considered in the design of the development. The layout, form, scale and visual appearance are important planning considerations and a clear rationale for design decisions will be required. These should be based on site and context analysis, a strong vision, performance requirements and design principles and should be provided to accompany planning applications, or where appropriate included in a design and access statement. Where an area is not recognised for its character, developments will be required to contribute to the areas transformation.

5.7 Crime prevention and fear of crime are social considerations that need to be taken into consideration by the development plan and in taking planning decisions. The aim in all developments should be to produce safe environments that do not compromise on design quality.

5.8 New development should avoid creating car-based developments and contribute to minimising the need to travel and reliance on the car, whilst maximising opportunities for people to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys. Existing infrastructure should be utilised where possible. Where new infrastructure is required it should be integrated within and beyond the development boundary. This could include works to connect to active travel routes or provision of bus priority measures on highway corridors serving new developments.

Strategic Policy 3: Climate Change

All development proposals will be required to make a positive contribution towards addressing the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Means of achieving this may include:

1. Having low/zero carbon energy requirements by reducing energy demand, and promoting energy efficiency;
2. Supporting the development of renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation;
3. Supporting development proposals that incorporate district energy network development and expansion of The Works district heating network;
4. Promoting efficient use of land through giving preference to brownfield land and development at higher densities on sites located close to transport corridors or town centres, thereby reducing the overall need to travel;
5. Utilising local materials and supplies (adopting circular economy principles); and
6. Avoid, or where appropriate, minimise the risk of flooding including the incorporation of measures such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and flood resilient design.

RLDP Objectives	3, 4, 8, 12
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To look after and protect the natural environment
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact Making the Best use of Resources

5.9 One of the themes embodied in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act is the need for ‘a resilient Wales’ whereby there is capacity to adapt to change such as climate change. A key principle of sustainable development, as recognised in PPW is ‘tackling climate change by reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change and ensuring that places are resilient to the consequences of climate change’. Welsh Government advises that ‘climate change will have potentially profound environmental, economic and social justice implications and failure to address it will make planning for sustainability impossible’.

5.10 Climate change is being experienced in many forms. Typical ‘events’ include increasingly intense rainfall, more severe storms, rising sea levels and increasing average temperatures. These have a number of effects including flash flooding and storm damage, changes to landscape and wildlife habitats and the health impacts of increasing average temperatures.

5.11 The principles of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy provision are now incorporated into Building Regulations and proposed changes due to be out for consultation in Autumn 2019 will be looking to increase efficiency. However, the LDP needs to ensure that new development has regard to broader principles of sustainable design in order to significantly reduce energy usage and carbon emissions. Passive building techniques can help achieve these principles through design that makes best use of orientation and shading to facilitate solar gain and passive cooling to optimise thermal comfort. Such policy approaches can also help ensure that new development is designed to be resilient to future climate change effects.

5.12 The Plan will also support renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation technology as part of decarbonising our energy supply and meeting Welsh Government's target of 70 per cent of electricity consumption to be generated from renewable energy by 2030. The draft National Development Framework (NDF) identifies parts of Blaenau Gwent as priority areas for Solar and Wind Energy where there is a presumption in favour of development and where the principle of landscape change is acceptable. This and an assessment of the potential for renewable energy generation, using the Welsh Government Toolkit and the Blaenau Gwent Energy Prospectus (2019), will inform the Deposit Plan in terms of identifying areas of search or the potential for particular types of renewable and low / zero carbon energy.

5.13 The Blaenau Gwent Energy Prospectus identifies the opportunity for development proposals to incorporate district energy network development and expansion of The Works district heating network.

5.14 The planning system has a role to play in planning to minimise the underlying causes of climate change and planning for the consequences of climate changes. New development should be located to make use of existing infrastructure, services and amenities, with increased densities on mixed use sites and sites with access to local facilities and public transport. The development of brownfield land should be promoted, where suitable as it can also reduce the need for greenfield sites to be developed.

5.15 As set out above a key effect of climate change is the risk of flooding and this brings with it issues relating to the likelihood of flooding as well as the intensity of flooding. The Development Advice Maps accompanying Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Flood Risk (WG 2004) identifies the flood risk zones as set out in the TAN. This information will have an important influence on where development allocations will be located, along with the type of development, and will also inform policies on flood risk whereby subsequent development proposals, in the form of planning applications can be assessed. The approach of the Plan will be to steer highly vulnerable development away from flood risk areas, to assess the implications of development in areas at risk of flooding and to ensure that new development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

5.16 Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) established Sustainable Drainage Approval Bodies (SAB). The SAB is established to evaluate and

approve drainage applications for new developments where construction work has drainage implications, and adopt and maintain surface water drainage systems according to the Act. SAB consent must be in place for development to commence and could result in a potential change in site layouts and lower densities.

5.17 A Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment will be prepared for the Deposit Plan and will inform the identification and assessment of subsequent allocations.

Outcome 2: Deliver opportunities for a Prosperous Low Carbon Economy and Promote Learning and Skills

5.18 This outcome covers the economic components of the strategy which is an important part but also complements the other outcomes, which collectively come together to deliver sustainable economic growth strategy. This section sets out the strategic direction for Sustainable Economic Growth, Tourism, Minerals and Waste.

Strategic Policy 4: Employment and Skills

Opportunities for sustainable economic growth will be delivered by directing employment generating development to the most appropriate and sustainable locations, supporting expansion of existing businesses and ensuring spatial alignment between housing and employment growth. The Employment Land Review identifies 46 ha hectares of land for employment and business purposes should be retained to accommodate at least 1,500 new jobs over the plan period. This will be delivered by:

1. Allocating 3-46 ha of land for employment purposes (The proposed employment site allocations required will be confirmed at the LDP Deposit stage).
2. Retaining and safeguarding the following strategic sites for employment purposes:
 - a. The Works, Business Hub, Ebbw Vale (3.5 ha); and
 - b. Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor, Ebbw Vale (Rhyd-y-Blew (13.2 ha) and Bryn Serth (10 ha)).
3. Supporting the development of land close to the proposed Metro station at Abertillery.
4. Capitalising on the key economic drivers and allocated funding in place for Blaenau Gwent in the form of the Enterprise Zone designation, Tech Valleys, Valleys Task Force and the Cardiff Capital Region.
5. The employment roles of major industrial areas will be identified to assist in the diversification of employment and support the growth in good growth sectors such as new technologies and advanced manufacturing, IT and cyber security, tourism, low carbon sustainable technologies and the foundation economy.

6. A first class learning infrastructure being put in place to ensure that residents gain the skills they require to match the economic growth sectors.	
7. Local labour market agreements being negotiated with developers to enable local employment to secure employment and skills development.	
RLDP Objectives	1, 2, 5, 6
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To forge new pathways to prosperity
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner

5.19 The LDP Strategy recognises that, in order to address some of the serious socio-economic problems in Blaenau Gwent, a progressive approach must be taken in the development of land for economic purposes. The Employment Land Review Background Paper identifies that the LDP allocates 3 to 46 ha of land for employment and business purposes which will enable the delivery of at least 1,500 new jobs across the plan period. The scale of jobs provided is based on the Enterprise Zone (Tech Valleys) and Valleys Task force plans for the area and aims to lower the unemployment rate, increase the economic activity rate and decrease out-commuting.

5.20 The Blaenau Gwent economy has experienced major structural change moving from dependence on heavy industries that historically dominated the local economy. Blaenau Gwent should support the growth in good growth sectors such as new technologies and advanced manufacturing, IT and cyber security, tourism, low carbon sustainable technologies and the foundation economy. The designation of the Blaenau Gwent Enterprise Zone primarily focuses on the advanced materials and manufacturing.

5.21 The baseline evidence base shows that skill levels and education attainment has improved in Blaenau Gwent. However, more progress needs to be made. The RLDP should contribute to the improvement of the education and skills infrastructure through where appropriate securing through S106 agreements skills and training match the economic growth sectors and supporting infrastructure provision.

5.22 The LDP will seek to safeguard existing sites and premises where appropriate and necessary. This will ensure retention of the employment land portfolio, prevent economic growth being constrained by a lack of land and help to meet the employment needs of the local and wider economy. The Employment Land Review Background Paper will however inform decisions on the possible deallocation of some of the existing employment protection areas that are no longer considered to be viable, suitable or required to meet identified employment needs in the Deposit LDP.

5.23 The regeneration opportunities in Blaenau Gwent continue to present local employment opportunities in the construction sector. The development opportunities at

the strategic sites of The Works and Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor could allow for planning obligations to be used to secure local employment in the growing construction sector.

Strategic Policy 5: Growing Tourism	
To deliver a growing tourism economy the Plan will support:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major destination attractions that would draw large numbers of people to the area and provide a significant number of jobs; 2. High quality accommodation, venues, businesses, events, attractions, cultural tourism, rural enterprise, activity tourism and a diverse and attractive food and drink sector; and 3. The establishment of the Valleys Regional Park. 	
Providing developments avoid unacceptable, adverse environmental or amenity impacts and are supported by adequate existing or new infrastructure provision.	
RLDP Objectives	1, 2, 5, 6, 11
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of Vibrant culture and Welsh language
LWBP	To forge new pathways to prosperity To look after and protect the natural environment
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner Creating and Sustaining Communities

5.24 A major destination attraction would be a game changer in the perception and role that tourism plays in the Blaenau Gwent economy. Being well located in terms of access to rail connections, the Heads of the Valleys Road and the Brecon Beacons National Park there is potential for an attraction that could draw large numbers of people to the area and provide a significant number of jobs. Planning permission has been granted for such a facility (Circuit of Wales) and a further application made to extend the life of this application. However, at present there is no certainty around the delivery of this proposal. This strategy also recognises the role smaller developments can make in supporting the tourist economy.

5.25 The LDP Strategy recognises the importance of tourism and the tourist industry to the economy of the County Borough. By attracting more visitors to the area it will also enable us to support sustainable and vibrant town centres. The LDP will provide the framework for the provision and protection of well-located, good quality, tourism, sport, recreation and leisure facilities and to diversify tourism in the County. The LDP will seek to ensure that proposals for new tourism related development are located in sustainable and accessible locations and that local communities are not adversely affected.

5.26 The Valleys Regional Park seeks to maximize the social, economic and environmental potential of the Valleys' natural and cultural assets and it is important that the concept is developed in Blaenau Gwent. The Park concept will help us sustain the improvement and management of our highly-visible network of uplands, woodlands, nature reserves, country parks, rivers, reservoirs, heritage and attractions. The aim is to improve links from these areas to our towns.

5.27 The land-use planning system has a key role in ensuring that tourism related development maximises the economic and employment benefits that tourism can bring in a sustainable manner and protects those qualities in the natural and built environment upon which tourism depends. The LDP Strategy seeks to encourage high quality sustainable tourism based on the County Borough's distinctive and valued natural environment, its historic features, the individual identity of its settlements and its cultural heritage. A number of Candidate Sites have been received for tourism proposals and there are also plans in place to improve the tourism offer at the Garden Festival Site in Ebbw Vale.

Strategic Policy 6: Sustainable Minerals Management	
Blaenau Gwent will sustainably manage its mineral resources by:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a minimum 10 year land bank of permitted aggregate reserves throughout the plan period and meeting the apportionment identified in the most up to date Regional Technical Statement. This will require the identification of preferred areas for future working in relation to a potential lateral extension at Trefil Quarry (Limestone) and/or a new quarry at Land South East of Cwm (Pennant Sandstone); 2. Encouraging the efficient and appropriate use of high quality minerals and maximising the potential for the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as an alternative to primary land won resources; 3. Safeguarding areas underlain by non-energy minerals of economic importance where they could be worked in the future to ensure that such resources are not unnecessarily sterilised by other forms of development; 4. The use of buffer zones to reduce the conflict between mineral development and sensitive forms of development; 5. Ensuring that minerals proposals do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment and amenity; and 6. Securing appropriate restoration and after uses for mineral sites which can deliver specific environmental and community benefits. 	
RLDP Objectives	5, 7, 8
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To forge pathways to new prosperity

Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact Making the Best use of Resources Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner
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5.28 Minerals are a finite resource and can only be worked where they occur. Blaenau Gwent has a variety of mineral resources which are broadly found in the following locations: an outcrop of Limestone in the north of the County Borough; outcrops of coal across the central area; and an extensive resource of Pennant Sandstone in the south. Non-energy mineral resources will be protected from other types of permanent development through the identification of mineral safeguarding areas based on the British Geological Survey (BGS) Resource Maps. No individual circumstances have been identified that require the safeguarding of any primary coal resource.

5.29 The latest South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party (SWRAWP) Annual Report (2018) establishes that at the end of 2018 Blaenau Gwent had 6 years supply of aggregates. The current planning permission for quarrying of limestone at Trefil Quarry also expires in 2024. As such, there isn't a sufficient supply of minerals and the Plan must therefore either make an allocation or identify Preferred Areas in order to achieve a 10 year supply at the end of the Plan period.

5.30 The South Wales Regional Technical Statement (RTS) (2014) sets out the contribution that each constituent local authority should make towards meeting the regional demand for aggregates. A revised RTS is currently being prepared and is due to be published early in 2020. The revised RTS will make recommendations for any apportionments necessary to ensure an adequate supply of crushed rock, including the nationally recommended minimum provision of 10 years, are available for the entire duration of the RLDP. This will require the Council to make provision which will require the identification of potential resources. Two candidate sites have been submitted one at Trefil Quarry (Limestone) and another Land South East of Cwm (Pennant Sandstone). Consideration will need to be given to allocating or identifying preferred areas at one or both of these sites in the RLDP.

5.31 The strategy is also about promoting the increased use of alternatives to naturally occurring minerals. The re-use and recycling of construction and demolition material and industrial wastes serves not only to reduce the amount of waste produced but also conserves scarce resources and minimises environmental damage. The current and emerging RTS makes an allowance for this source before setting the contribution each constituent local authority needs to make.

5.32 The strategy aims to balance the need for the safeguarding of nationally important mineral resources and ensuring their appropriate extraction against the potential impact of such development on residential occupiers, the landscape, and on sites of nature conservation or geological interest. These are key considerations that will inform consideration of the two candidate sites at Trefil Quarry and Land East of Cwm.

5.33 When determining planning applications for minerals, consideration needs to be given to securing appropriate restoration and after uses which can deliver specific environmental and community benefits.

Strategic Policy 7: Sustainable Waste Management

To deliver sustainable waste management the Plan will:

1. Ensure that all proposals conform to the principles of the waste hierarchy supporting those that move waste up the hierarchy;
2. Create an integrated and adequate network of waste recovery and disposal installations that has regard to the nearest appropriate installation concept and self-sufficiency principles;
3. Encourage the provision of in-building treatment facilities on B2 employment sites with sufficient amounts of available vacant buildings and land, subject to there being no unacceptable adverse effect on the environment or the amenity of adjacent users and communities that cannot be mitigated;
4. Support the co-location of facilities to enable the development of heat networks where appropriate; and
5. Support the circular economy by encouraging the minimisation of the generation of waste and the use of reused and recycled waste materials in the design, construction and demolition stages of development.

RLDP Objectives	4, 5, 7, 8
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To look after and protect the natural environment To forge pathways to new prosperity
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Making the Best use of Resources Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner

5.34 The Planning system has an important role to play in facilitating sustainable waste management. The Welsh Government's Policy for waste management is set out in – Towards Zero Waste' (2010) and associated Sector Plans. The waste hierarchy provides the starting point for consideration of waste management proposals. Waste prevention and re-use is at the top of the hierarchy, followed by preparation for re-use, recycling, recovery and finally disposal. As far as possible, waste should be driven up the waste hierarchy.

5.35 The Collections, Infrastructure and Markets (CIM) Sector Plan requires the provision of an integrated network of facilities and indicates a move away from the reduction of disposal and recovery options for treating waste and a move towards high volume source segregated collection followed by reprocessing as well as preparation for re-use and prevention. The 'Nearest Appropriate Installation' concept and the principle of self-sufficiency will only be applicable in relation to mixed municipal wastes (covered by Article 16 of the revised Waste Framework Directive).

5.36 The most recent Waste Planning Report for South East Wales was published in April 2016 and concludes that there is currently no need for additional landfill capacity within the region. In addition, the report advises that any new proposal for further residential waste treatment should be carefully assessed to ensure that overprovision does not occur within the region. As such, no specific need for such waste management facilities has currently been identified at a regional level.

5.37 At a more local level, Blaenau Gwent CBC is a member of Tomorrow's Valley, a residual waste procurement partnership, which has entered into a 25 year contract with Viridor Waste Management Ltd to treat municipal residual waste at their Energy from Waste Facility at Trident Park in Cardiff. Planning permission has also been granted for an additional household waste recycling centre which will serve residents in the southern half of the County Borough and no further supporting waste management infrastructure, such as waste transfer stations, is considered necessary to deal with municipal waste. In terms of organic waste Blaenau Gwent CBC has awarded a 15 year contract with an option for a 3 year extension.

5.38 Whilst no candidate sites have been put forward for future waste sites to serve commercial and industrial sectors, the Borough does have enquiries for waste management facilities on existing general employment sites. Such sites are broadly considered to be suitable locations for in-building waste management facilities, due to their similarities with the appearance of industrial buildings, the type of industrial processes involved and the nature of the impacts. As such, employment sites that allow B2 uses such as the Primary and Secondary employment sites identified in the current Plan are considered appropriate locations for new waste management facilities. The appropriateness of any unforeseen new waste proposal will be subject to minimising adverse environmental impacts and avoiding risks to human health; protecting areas of designated landscape and nature conservation; and protecting the amenity of residents and other land uses and users. A Waste Planning Assessment will be required for all applications for a waste facility classified as a disposal, recovery or recycling facility. This will ensure all such proposals have proper consideration of the principles contained in Technical Advice Note 18: Waste (WG 2017). The assessment should be appropriate to the nature scale and size of the development proposed.

5.39 The Council has moved from disposal of waste to landfill to high volume source segregated collection followed by reprocessing as well as preparation for re-use and prevention. The latest recycling figures for Blaenau Gwent indicates that the Council have reached the 58% target set for 2016 but have improvements to make to meet the target of 64% by 2021. As indicated above, planning permission is in place for a household waste recycling centre in the south of the Borough to help to deliver this requirement.

5.40 The siting of energy from waste installations should consider locating in proximity to energy users. Likewise, site energy users should choose to locate in proximity to existing operational energy from waste facilities. This enables developments to benefit from heat being created.

5.41 Waste prevention and approaches towards encouraging reuse and recycling should be considered at an early stage as part of materials choices and design. The cut and fill balance of materials excavated as part of any development should be assessed to avoid the creation of waste. This will support the circular economy and contribute to greenhouse gas reductions.

Outcome 3: Deliver Well-Connected, Active and Healthy Communities

5.42 This outcome seeks to deliver well connected active and healthy communities for all sectors of society. This will be achieved by enabling everyone to have access to good quality affordable homes, services and recreation facilities. The section sets out policies on Housing, Gypsy and Travellers, Town Centres, Transport, Infrastructure and Health and Well-being.

Strategic Policy 8: Delivery of Homes

To ensure local housing need is met and sustainable communities are created:

1. The Plan makes provision for 2,115 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 1,755 homes of which at least 478 will be affordable.
2. In order to meet this an allowance for completions to date, existing commitments, windfall contributions from small and large sites totalling 1,282 homes is made leaving 833 homes to be allocated in the Plan.

Settlement Tier	Total from completions, commitments, small and large windfall	Strategic Mixed use Allocations (identified)	Number of homes to be allocated	TOTAL
Tier 1: Ebbw Vale	677	675 (320*)	0	952 (+45)
Tier 2:Tredegar	206	0	217	423
Tier 2:Brynmawr / Nantyglo/ Blaina	231	220	0	423 (+28)
Tier2: Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six Bells)	62	0	149	211
Tiers 3,4 and 5	106			106
	1,282	540*	366	2,115 (+73)

**denotes number to be delivered in the Plan period*

(a further breakdown of this table is provided at Appendix 6 and further explanation is provided in the Housing Supply Background Paper)

3. In allocating housing sites priority will be given to previously developed (brownfield) land within existing settlements, then previously developed land on the edge of existing settlements and then greenfield sites within or on the edge of settlements;
4. A range of sizes of sites will be made available to support self-build, and the small

and medium house builders; and	
5. Proposals to bring empty properties back into use will be supported.	
RLDP Objectives	1, 2, 4, 5,
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	Safe and friendly communities
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments Making the Best use of Resources Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner Creating and Sustaining Communities

5.43 The Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policy 1) provides a framework for the provision of 2,115 to enable the delivery of 1,755 homes in Blaenau Gwent over the Plan period.

5.44 Of major importance to the Strategy is the delivery of sustainable linked communities, so development must include a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenure. The Local Housing Market Assessment (March 2019) identifies the need for 478 affordable properties over the Plan period and this need is for 1 and 4 bed properties. To meet the need a number of affordable led sites will need to be identified in the Plan. The Plan will look to maximise the delivery of affordable homes on publicly owned sites, where financially viable.

5.45 The Delivery of this growth is being distributed across the borough in line with the settlement hierarchy set out in Strategic Policy 1. This policy provides the detail on the source of this delivery and the extent of land that remains to be allocated in each area. An allowance is made for sites completed, sites under construction, large and small windfall sites (sites that normally involve the re-use of a building or development of sites that become vacant within the settlement boundaries); and land with existing planning permission known as commitments. Commitments have been discounted through an assessment of sites that sit outside the existing 5-year land supply identified in the Joint Housing Land Availability Study (2019). Detail of this process and the workings of all these figures are set out in the Housing Supply Background Paper. It should be noted that with the inclusion of the proposed strategic sites there is a surplus of land in Ebbw Vale and Brynmawr.

5.46 In considering which sites are to be allocated in the RLDP a search sequence will be followed, starting with the re-use of previously developed land and buildings within settlement boundaries defined by the adopted LDP; followed by brownfield land on the edge of settlements; and finally on greenfield sites within and or on the edge of settlements. As already identified in Strategic Policy 3 developments will be encouraged to include higher densities on sites located close to transport corridors or town centres, thereby reducing the overall need to travel.

5.47 To support self-builders and local small and medium sized builders a range of sizes of sites will be made available in the Deposit Plan. A list of small sites will also be made available and updated annually alongside the Joint Housing Land Availability Study.

5.48 Although the number of empty properties in the Borough has reduced there is still an issue with long-term empty properties and plans are in place to bring back into use 20-40 per annum over the next five years. Though these sites are not counted in the housing requirement they will contribute to the provision of homes in the Borough and enable greater flexibility.

5.49 The deposit plan will include 2 new policies. One will cover the location and design of new homes and will look to address space standards in new development. The other will address houses of multiple occupation which has recently become an issue in Blaenau Gwent.

Strategic Policy 9: Gypsy and Travellers	
Land will be made available to accommodate any future unmet gypsy and traveller accommodation needs.	
RLDP Objectives	2
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	The best start in life for everyone Safe and friendly communities
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments Creating and Sustaining Communities

5.50 The latest Gypsy & Traveller Housing Needs Assessment (2015) identified an unmet need of 12 units in the Borough. Since this time two permissions have been granted totalling 5 units thus leaving a demand for a further 7 units. This is in addition to the land already identified in the current LDP which was taken into account in the needs assessment. There are plans in place to replace the existing Gypsy and Traveller Site with modern facilities and meet the shortfall identified. However, an updated Gypsy & Travellers Needs Assessment will be undertaken and if a need is required land will be identified to meet this additional need in the RLDP.

Strategic Policy 10: Retail Centres and Development
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To sustain and enhance a network of town centres, the current retail hierarchy will be reviewed and a new hierarchy will be identified in the deposit plan based on evidence from a Retail Study. 2. To support and sustain the town centres new roles will be explored as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Abertillery will explore complimentary roles around culture, leisure and

<p>tourism;</p> <p>b. Brynmawr will explore opportunities to develop complementary roles around tourism and leisure;</p> <p>c. Ebbw Vale will expand its role as the main administrative and service centre for the Borough; and</p> <p>d. Tredegar will expand its tourism offer through maximising the benefits of local heritage.</p>	
<p>3. In order to maintain or enhance the vibrancy, vitality and attractiveness of the town centres:</p> <p>a. Shops, offices and other commercial premises where appropriate, will be upgraded by means of refurbishment and redevelopment;</p> <p>b. Appropriate comparison and convenience retail office, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities will be supported;</p> <p>c. Opportunities will be sought to improve access to, and within, retail and commercial centres by all modes of transport, prioritising walking, cycling (Active Travel) and public transport.</p>	
<p>4. Given the evolving role of town centres, the town centre and primary retail area boundaries will be reviewed and drawn in recognition of the need for a degree of flexibility in maintaining occupancy and footfall, and to enable a tailored approach to be taken for each centre having regard to health checks and masterplans.</p>	
<p>5. If appropriate, land will be made available to accommodate future local retailing need.</p>	
RLDP Objectives	1, 5, 9, 11,
WBFG Act	<p>A Prosperous Wales</p> <p>A Resilient Wales</p> <p>A More Equal Wales</p> <p>A Healthier Wales</p> <p>A Wales of Cohesive Communities</p> <p>A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language</p> <p>A Globally Responsible Wales</p>
LWBP	To forge new pathways to prosperity
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	<p>Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments</p> <p>Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner</p>

5.51 To sustain and enhance a network of town centres, the current retail hierarchy will be reviewed and a new retail hierarchy will be identified in the deposit plan based on evidence from a retail study. A retail study will be commissioned to provide the evidence for a retail hierarchy of town centres, through an assessment of: key market trends; shopping patterns; and quantitative and qualitative retail need. If appropriate, land will be identified in the deposit plan for future retailing needs.

5.52 The role of town centres has been identified as a key issue by stakeholders. The strategic policy explores new roles for the town centres in order for them to benefit from planned tourism and leisure growth. The retail study which will be commissioned for the deposit plan will review the identified roles.

5.53 Ebbw Vale will expand its role as the main administrative and service centre for the Borough. There are also opportunities to develop its cultural role based on its iron and steel history.

5.54 Abertillery has opportunities to develop complementary roles around culture, leisure and tourism. The Guardian at Parc Arreal Griffin is a popular tourist attraction which Abertillery should look to benefit from. One of the strengths of Abertillery town centre is the position of the centre relative to woodland and upland landscapes. There are opportunities to develop new infrastructure to enable people to use these environments and to explore the scope of 'opening up' the natural setting of the town. The Metropole, the Llanhileth Institute and Ty Ebbw Fach offer opportunities around culture and links need to be forged with the town centre.

5.55 Tredegar will expand its tourism offer through maximising the benefits of local heritage. Recent and planned investment at Bedwellty Park and Gardens and Bryn Bach Park provides opportunities to attract visitors and for the town to benefit by catering for the needs of the visitors. The historical legacy provides opportunities to build tourism opportunities around heritage trails such as the Aneurin Bevan Trail and Iron makers trails.

5.56 The location of Brynmawr, at the gateway to the Brecon Beacons National Park, the Valleys Regional Park and Blaenavon World Heritage Site provides opportunity to service visitors either through providing facilities or encouraging them to stay over in Brynmawr. New development opportunities enable it to offer leisure and tourism facilities.

5.57 The low car ownership rates in Blaenau Gwent together with high levels of deprivation means that the Council needs to ensure that all members of the community can access the retail areas. This relates to all modes of transport, prioritising walking, cycling (Active Travel) and public transport.

Strategic Policy 11: Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

1. To deliver sustainable transport and accessibility the Council will work with partner organisations to:
 - a. Deliver the Metro Improvements including the proposed extension of the rail service to Abertillery, the increase in frequency of rail services on the Ebbw Valley Railway and integration of public transport services and active travel routes across the South East Wales Region.
 - b. Deliver the key transport measures and schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan.
2. To improve sustainability, developments should be located and designed to minimise travel, reduce dependency on the private car and enable sustainable access to employment, local services and community facilities. Depending on the nature, scale

and siting of the proposal the development will be required to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Accord with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy; b. Safeguard, enhance and expand on the active travel networks identified in the Council's Existing Routes Map and Integrated Network Map, including links to the networks as a means of improving connectivity; c. Be designed to provide safe and efficient access to the transport network, which includes active travel routes, public transport routes and the strategic highway network; and d. Provide vehicle charging infrastructure. 	
RLDP Objectives	4, 5, 12, 13
WBFG Act	A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To forge new pathways to prosperity To encourage healthy lifestyles
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments

5.58 A key part of the strategy is to create a network of well-connected communities which is currently not in place. This relies on the provision of a network of active travel routes that links homes to local services, employment and green spaces and an efficient and integrated public transport network. The Metro proposals will enable Blaenau Gwent to deliver an efficient and integrated public transport network through: increasing the frequency of rail services on the Ebbw Valley Railway to 4 per hour (2 to Ebbw Vale and 2 to Abertillery); providing a new rail link to Abertillery; and the delivery of an integrated public transport service. These proposals are planned to be delivered by 2023.

5.59 The provision of a choice of transport modes that offer realistic travel alternatives to the private car is fundamental to creating sustainable communities. Sustainable travel options support healthy living and active lifestyles, and help to alleviate problems caused by over dependence on the car. Where cars are to be used there needs to be a move away from petrol and diesel vehicles to ultra-low emissions vehicles. It is important that new developments plan for the charging infrastructure required.

Strategic Policy 12: Social and Community Infrastructure

In order to maintain and improve the quality of life and health and well-being of residents the RLDP will:

1. Protect community facilities;
2. Allocate land for new schools, where required and support the development of the

Welsh Language;	
3. Allocate land for new health facilities, where required.	
4. Allocate land for burial grounds to meet identified need;	
5. Protect outdoor recreation space and open space;	
6. Protect allotments from development; and	
7. Support improved mobile phone coverage.	
RLDP Objectives	6, 14
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	The best start in life for everyone Safe and friendly communities To look after and protect the natural environment To encourage healthy lifestyles
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments

5.60 Community facilities are important to creating social and active communities. The term community facilities includes education facilities, cultural facilities, health services, libraries and places of worship. They can be owned by the public, private or community groups. The RLDP needs to take a strategic and long-term approach to the provision of community facilities, ensuring that the requirements of the community are met. The RLDP makes provision for a modest amount of growth to avoid putting pressure on existing services. However, where new house building does create a need that cannot be accommodated the development will need to make sure that the needs of the new residents are met.

5.61 The Council is currently working on delivering the 21st Century Schools Programme. Band A is nearing completion with the opening of the Six Bells school this year. Band B planning is underway and covers the period 2019-2024 with bands C and D to follow. Land will be allocated in the RLDP where required. The capacity of schools proposed under the 21st Century Schools Programme, where possible in line with financial and programming capabilities, will reflect any new growth in school places caused by the RLDP. The change in the population of children proposed in the RLDP and the potential impact on the capacity of primary and secondary schools will be assessed and where required mitigated for, when allocating residential sites.

5.62 The Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20 is directly aligned to both the Welsh Government's and the Council's Welsh Language strategic frameworks.

The strategic priorities within the current plan, which is set for review in 2020 are as follows:

- Raise the profile and levels of participation for Welsh-medium education across the County Borough by 2020, to contribute to the vision for one million speakers by 2050.
- Increase the early year's provision offer to stimulate parental demand to enable growth across the County Borough.
- Increase transition rates from Welsh-medium nursery provision to Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg by 50% in 2020.
- Work regionally with South East Wales Local Authorities to secure places for Blaenau Gwent learners in Welsh-medium secondary provision.

5.63 The Council will continue to invest in the growth and development of Welsh-medium early years and education provision, this will be a key area of focus moving forward, in relation to both the 21st Century Schools Programme and associated Welsh Government capital schemes.

5.64 Primary and secondary health care facilities will need to be fit for purpose and able to accommodate the changing population over the RLDP period. The Aneurin Bevan Health Board's medium term plans include the provision of primary care resource centres to serve Ebbw Vale and Tredegar. Allocations will be made for these facilities in the RLDP. Our population is ageing, which will put different pressures on the health service.

5.65 Two of the three cemetery extensions in the current LDP have been implemented with the third at Dukestown due to be delivered in 2021. The existing allocation at Dukestown will be taken forward and any new need will also be addressed in the RLDP.

5.66 Recreational spaces serve a dual role of providing a place for play, sport, activity and relaxation but they also promote nature conservation and biodiversity and contribute towards the areas of green infrastructure. They encourage physical activity, which contributes to health and well-being. A new open space assessment will be undertaken to ensure that quality issues are also addressed and a new provision standard will be set that acknowledges the difficulty the area has in meeting the Fields in Trust Standard. The Exegesis assessment of openspace/greenspace has been updated and will feed into the RLDP. The RLDP will look to identify the greenspaces that it seeks to protect.

5.67 Allotments are an important community resource and have a wide range of community benefits. Allotments will be retained and protected particularly where they are an important part of the green infrastructure or have community value. The assessment of demand will be updated and provision will be made for any unmet demand.

5.68 Mobile phones are an essential tool in everyday lives and good mobile communication coverage is important to economic well-being. We will work with telecommunication operators to improve mobile coverage in the area through providing clear policy advice on location.

Outcome 4: Protect and Enhance the Distinctive Natural and Built Environment

5.69 This section covers the Natural and Built Environment of Blaenau Gwent and aims to protect it for the current and future generations to enjoy. There is a need to future proof our assets both in response to the challenges presented by climate change and also in promoting low carbon solutions. Protecting species, habitats and landscapes; enabling opportunities for connecting with the natural environment and encouraging healthier lifestyles have the benefits of improving physical and mental health and well-being. This section sets out the strategic direction for the natural and historic environment.

Strategic Policy 13: Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment	
Blaenau Gwent's distinctive natural environment and landscape will be protected and where possible enhanced through:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protecting the countryside from inappropriate development; 2. Protecting and enhancing important landscapes such as the nationally designated Brecon Beacons National Park and locally designated Special Landscape Areas; 3. Ensuring that development does not have a significant effect on neighbouring Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's); 4. Protecting nationally identified Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's); 5. Ensuring that the network of locally identified Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR's) are protected from inappropriate development and enhanced; 6. Protecting those attributes and features which make a significant contribution to the character, quality and amenity of the landscape; 7. Building resilience into the existing ecosystems through creating a network of green infrastructure and local wildlife sites linked by wildlife corridors and stepping stones; 8. Ensuring development seeks to produce a net gain for biodiversity ecosystem resilience by following the 'Step-Wise' approach and ensuring links are created to the green infrastructure network; and 9. Supporting woodland planting. 	
RLDP Objectives	3, 4, 14, 15, 16
WBFG Act	A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To forge new pathways to prosperity To encourage healthy lifestyles

Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact
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5.70 The natural environment of Blaenau Gwent has seen considerable improvements over the past 40 years but now needs to adapt to threats from climate change and pressure from development. The LDP Strategy aims to protect and enhance the local landscape, ecosystems and geodiversity. This is to be achieved through protecting land outside settlement boundaries from inappropriate development. The existing settlement boundaries identified in the current LDP will be reviewed to ensure consistency with a South East Wales agreed methodology and will be identified on the proposals map of the Deposit Plan.

5.71 The national and local landscape of the borough and the surrounding area needs to be protected. Given the close proximity of the Brecon Beacons National Park development proposals within Blaenau Gwent have to have regard to the nationally important designation and should not have an unacceptable impact on the setting of the Park. The local landscape is currently protected through locally designated Special Landscape Areas identified in the current Plan. These are to be re-assessed to ensure consistency with neighbouring authorities. The duly amended SLAs will be identified on the proposals map of the Deposit Plan and will be protected from development by an amended Development Management Policy. The current Plan also identifies two green wedges to prevent the coalescence of communities which will need to be reviewed.

5.72 Blaenau Gwent does not have any European Protected Sites within the borough however there are a number within close proximity and it is important to ensure that development does not have a significant effect on such sites. The sites in close proximity include the Usk Bat Site, Cwm Clydach Woodlands, Aberbargoed Grasslands, Sugar Loaf Woodlands, Brecon Beacons, Langorse Lake / Llyn Syfaddan, Coed y Cerrig, Cwm Cadlan, Blaen Cynon and the River Usk.

5.73 It is also important to protect, enhance and manage the three nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the Borough at Cwm Merddog Woodlands/Coed Ty'n y Gelli, Brynmawr Sections and Mynydd Llangynidr. Development that affects a site of national importance for nature conservation will be subject to particular scrutiny to establish any potential or indirect effects upon such sites. Where potential impacts remain unknown, a 'precautionary approach' will be taken.

5.74 Since adoption of the current LDP a further 11 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) have been designated and 5 more Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). There are now a total of 155 SINCs and 12 LNRs. The aim is to protect these sites from development and enhance them where possible. The new SINCs will be added to the list in the Deposit Plan and the proposals map and the current development management policy is to be revised.

5.75 The impacts of climate change means that we need to build resilience into our ecosystems by protecting ecological networks and landscape features that are important

for biodiversity to promote the six attributes of: resilience; diversity; extent; connectivity; condition; and adaptability. This is to be achieved by: enhancing the green infrastructure network by identifying protecting and linking designated sites and ecological corridors. Natural Resources Wales is currently preparing an Area Statement for South East Wales due in March 2020. A major part of this work is looking at habitat connectivity mapping to inform and strengthen the importance of key connections. The Area Statement must be given regard in the RLDP in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. This work will inform the preparation of: a Green Infrastructure Assessment; a Green Infrastructure Plan; a revised Development Management Policy on Green Infrastructure; and Supplementary Planning Guidance to support the implementation of the revised policy.

5.76 New development will be encouraged to provide for a net improvement in terms of biodiversity by taking account of it as part of the design. This is to be achieved by following the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Step Wise approach which involves the following steps: identify and safeguard any existing, or potential, important habitat/species and ecological connectivity; avoid loss of any existing or potential important habitats or species; or fragmentation of ecological connectivity; design biodiversity into applications/projects (e.g. landscaping, SUDs, site layout, living roofs and facades etc.); mitigate for any unavoidable harm or loss to important habitat/species or fragmentation of ecological connectivity; compensate for any unmitigatable habitat/species losses that can be justified; and lastly enhance and increase the biodiversity of the site or off-site, if on-site cannot accommodate such requirements.

5.77 The NDF sets a target to increase woodland cover by at least 2,000 ha per annum to help build the resilience into our ecosystems, to secure the delivery of climate change and decarbonisation aspirations, and to ensure the productive potential of Welsh woodlands is maintained. Blaenau Gwent will support such initiatives.

Strategic Policy 14: Preservation and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Blaenau Gwent's distinctive built environment will be protected, preserved and where appropriate enhanced through:

1. The protection and sustainable management of the Blaenavon World Heritage Site setting and buffer zone;
2. Preservation and enhancement of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Remains;
3. Preserving Listed Buildings and their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest;
4. Preserving and enhancing the Tredegar Conservations Areas;
5. Protection and conservation of the Bedwellty House Historic Park and Garden and its setting;

6. Protection of the Historic Landscapes at Brynmawr/Clydach Gorge and Blaenavon;	
7. Preservation and enhancement of Historic Assets of Special Local Interest; and	
8. The promotion of heritage tourism.	
RLDP Objectives	3, 5, 9, 18
WBFG Act	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	Safe and friendly communities
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact Making the Best use of Resources Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner Creating and Sustaining Communities

5.78 Blaenau Gwent's historic environment reflects its distinctive archaeological and social history and needs to be preserved and enhanced. As part of the buffer zone of the Blaenavon World Heritage Site is located in Blaenau Gwent, it is important that we ensure that it is protected and sustainably managed. We are working in collaboration with Torfaen and others to prepare and adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance to provide consistent planning guidance on further details to be taken into account in guiding future development.

5.79 There are 13 scheduled ancient monuments located in Blaenau Gwent. When considering development proposals that affect them or nationally important archaeological remains, there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation *in situ* that is there would be a presumption against proposals which would involve significant alteration or cause damage, or would have a significant adverse impact causing harm within the setting of the remains.

5.80 One further Listed Building has been identified at: the Pack Horse Bridge, Aberbeeg since the current Plan was adopted. This will need to be added to the appended list in the RLDP. There are now 54 Listed Buildings and Structures in Blaenau Gwent and special attention will be given to the desirability of preserving the buildings, their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Any application for Listed Building Consent will need to be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement.

5.81 There are two Conservation Areas in Blaenau Gwent; one is based around the Bedwellty House and Gardens. The other adjacent to this covers the southern area of Tredegar town centre. This is supported by a Tredegar Townscape Initiative Conservation Area Appraisal and Design Guide which sets out detailed advice for developers when submitting planning applications, Listed Building Consent or Conservation Area Consent (including consent of advertisements and demolition works). Special attention must be

given to preserving or enhancing conservation areas when making planning decisions. Development proposals will be judged against their effect on the character or appearance of a conservation area as identified in the above guide. There is a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. There is also a special provision for trees in conservation areas which are not the subject of a tree preservation order. Any application for Conservation Area Consent will need to be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement in accordance with the (Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016). Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has supported historic building improvement to aid regeneration works across the conservation area and has supported a number of buildings being brought back into use for tourism purposes.

5.82 The Bedwellty Historic Park and Garden and its setting will be protected and preserved. It is for an applicant to show they understand the significance of the registered park and garden and the likely impact on the local authority to determine whether the impact is likely to be unacceptably damaging.

5.83 There are parts of 2 Historic Landscapes on the Register of Historic Landscapes in Wales in Blaenau Gwent. One based around Blaenavon but extends into Blaenau Gwent and the other at Brynmawr/Clydach Gorge. Whilst this is a non-statutory advisory register it is used to make decisions at a strategic level about the historic importance of areas identified and also where development proposals require an Environmental Impact Assessment or if there is more than a local impact on the historic landscape.

5.84 Heritage buildings and structures which have a particular architectural or historic interest in the local context, while not meeting the strict quality standard for inclusion on the statutory list of Listed Buildings, can still contribute to the conservation or enhancement of the local character. The Council has prepared Supplementary Planning Guidance which includes a list of local buildings and will be consulting on this alongside the Deposit Plan.

5.85 The historic built environment is a valuable resource that should be preserved in line with national planning policy. There is potential to harness this resource in a sustainable manner, for example, through promoting heritage tourism, for the purposes of regeneration. The Blaenau Gwent Tourism Strategy (2009) set out plans to develop heritage sites as tourism attractions, by developing tourism trails to heritage locations, providing on site interpretation and improving the marketing of the sites. The Destination Management Plan 2016-2019 recognises that the heritage and culture of the area is the stand out reason for visitors coming to the area. 'The special and proud history, a landscape that tells of the earliest settlers in the area and the wealth of historical sites, museums and archives draw in visitors on a daily basis. It is essential that we not only protect and maintain but also capitalise on this valuable asset'. The RLDP will ensure that a framework is put in place to support tourism opportunities.

Environmental Protection will be achieved through requiring development to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protect and where appropriate improve the water environment and water resources, including quantity and quality; 2. Reduce exposure to air and noise pollution; 3. Balance the need for lighting with: the protection of the natural and historic environment; preventing glare to neighbouring uses and the need to reduce carbon emissions; and 4. Take a precautionary approach to the location of potentially polluting development. 	
RLDP Objectives	19
WBFG Act	A Resilient Wales A More Equal Wales A Healthier Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Globally Responsible Wales
LWBP	To look after and protect the natural environment
Key Planning Principles (PPW10)	Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact Making the Best use of Resources

5.86 The EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) established a strategic approach to water management and a common means of protecting and setting environmental objectives for all ground and surface waters. It aims to protect and restore clean water and ensure its long-term sustainable use. At present 50% of rivers and 30% of groundwater reach the 'Good Status'. This is due to sewer outflows, pollution from industrial estates and old mines and issues with fish migration. The Council is proactively working to help clean, protect and preserve Blaenau Gwent's rivers through a number of environmental projects. Development will only be allowed where adequate provision is made for the necessary infrastructure to secure the protection of water quality and quantity and, wherever practicable, improve water quality.

5.87 Development likely to result in emissions to air of any of the pollutants identified in the UK's National Air Quality Strategy and/or any other pollutant which may have an adverse impact upon the air quality within the Borough or has the potential to cause harm to human health and/or the environment should therefore provide a full and detailed assessment of the likely impact of these emissions. This should also demonstrate that there has been consideration of the cumulative effects of other proposed or existing sources of air pollution within the vicinity of the proposed development. Development will not be permitted where it is considered that the resultant emissions to air will have an unacceptable impact on the existing and/or future air quality within the Borough or where there will be an unacceptable adverse impact on public health and/or the environment, taking into account the cumulative effects of other proposed or existing sources of air pollution in the vicinity.

5.88 Potential sources of disturbance such as noise, vibration, odour or light can potentially have a significant effect on the quality of life of those living or working close

by or on protected species. Where a proposed development may adversely affect local amenity or protected species the applicant may be required to include both an assessment of the likely impact and proposed remedial or mitigatory measures to minimise the impact. In order to minimise light pollution and increase energy efficiency, the Council will need to be satisfied that any external lighting scheme is the minimum required for security and working purposes.

5.89 In considering the location of potentially polluting development a precautionary approach will be taken.

6.0 NEXT STAGE

Candidate Sites

6.1 Candidate Sites are sites suggested by the public for inclusion in the LDP, either as land for development, or for protection from development. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council issued a call for Candidate Sites between 15th November and 24th January. A Candidate Sites' Register has been prepared and is published alongside this document for information.

6.2 Assessment work has commenced and all sites received to date have been subject to a Stage 1 filtering exercise which discarded sites that failed the submission criteria i.e. below the minimum size threshold for allocations; sites suggested for protection; development remote from urban areas; insurmountable constraints such as located within statutorily protected areas or on fundamentally constrained land, such as significant flood risk area. A total of 17 sites were ruled out as a result of this assessment. The next stage is for the sites to be assessed against the Preferred Strategy to determine which sites go through to stage 3 assessment.

6.3 Following publication of this Preferred Strategy a further call will be made for more sites and detailed information on some existing candidate sites (January to March 2020). This will involve a request for the site proposer to submit detailed information, (where the information was not submitted at stage 1 call for sites) for sites that are compatible with the strategy. The Candidate Site Submission form will need to be completed in full. There will also be an invitation to submit new candidate sites which are compatible with the Preferred Strategy. Site promoters may be required to submit detailed viability information in order to support their submissions, should the Council require this.

6.4 The stage 3 assessment is split into two sections. Stage 3A will involve a more detailed assessment of candidate sites at an officer level using a 'traffic light' coding system. Stage 3B will then involve the assessed sites going through consultation with internal officers and external consultees. Sites will also be assessed on their impact on sustainability. The aspiration is that the Council will have at this stage a list of viable, deliverable, sustainable sites for potential inclusion in the Deposit RLDP.

6.5 In terms of Strategic Mixed –Use Sites i.e. sites with over 100 homes and a mix of other uses have been taken through to stage 3, sites have been judged against the Preferred Strategy and internal and external consultation undertaken to assess their suitability. Those that have sufficient evidence of viability and deliverability are identified in the Preferred Strategy.

Future Stages

6.6 Following consultation on this Preferred Strategy, all comments received will inform the preparation of the Deposit Plan. The Deposit Plan is a full draft of the Local

Development Plan, which includes all policies as well as draft settlement boundaries and land allocations. The Council anticipates consulting on this in the Autumn of 2020.

List of Current LDP Policies that require revision or deletion:

Policy	Justification
Development Management Policies	
DM1 New Development	Revise to reflect changes in national policy, improve clarity and achieve consistency with Monmouthshire and Torfaen.
DM2 Design and Placemaking	Revise to include minor amendments required to improve clarity.
DM3 Infrastructure Provision	Revise to prioritise different types of infrastructure provision.
DM4 Low and Zero Carbon Energy	Revise to reflect the need to change specific criterion and address standalone low and zero carbon energy developments.
DM5 Principal and District Town Centre Management	Revise to reflect any change in approach to town centres.
DM6 Management of Blaina Town Centre	Revise to reflect any change in approach to town centres.
DM7 Affordable Housing	Revise as part of the reconsideration of housing allocation viability and affordable housing requirements and improve effectiveness in addressing extensions to housing sites.
DM8 Affordable Housing Exceptions	Revise to reflect new settlement hierarchy.
DM9 Caravan Site for Gypsies and Travellers	Revise to improve clarity.
DM10 Use Class Restrictions	Revise as part of the reconsideration of the degree of flexibility in the type of uses allowed on primary and secondary employment sites.
DM11 Protection of Community and Leisure Facilities	Revise to include further guidance and clarity.
DM12 Provision of Outdoor Sport and Play Facilities	Revise as part of the reconsideration of development thresholds and reassessment of local standards.
DM13 Protection of Open Space	Revise to include further guidance and clarity.
DM14 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement	Revise to include newly designated sites and improve policy clarity
DM15 Protection and Enhancement of the Green Infrastructure	Revise to improve effectiveness.
DM16 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows Protection	Revise to improve clarity.
DM17 Buildings and Structures of	Revise to include further guidance and clarity

Local Importance	
DM18 Criteria for the Assessment of Mineral Applications	Revise to bring in line with national policy and advice.
DM19 Mineral Safeguarding	Revise to bring in line with national policy and improve clarity.
DM20 Waste	Revise to bring in line with national policy and advice.
Allocations and Designations	
SB1 Settlement Boundaries	Revise to provide greater clarity on appropriate types of development in the countryside and reflect a review of the settlement boundary.
MU1 Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor	Revise to ensure that development remain deliverable.
MU2 'The Works	Revise – certain allocations have been delivered and undelivered allocations should be reviewed to ensure that they remain deliverable.
MU3 NMC Factory and Bus Depot	Revise – to reflect a new masterplan being prepared for the area.
AA1 Action Area	Revise - to ensure that allocations remain deliverable and take into account updated retail requirements.
R1 Retail Allocations	Revise - should be reviewed in the context of the potential loss of commitments, the need for allocations to remain deliverable and updated retail requirements.
H1 Housing Allocations and H2 Housing Commitments	Revise – certain housing sites have been delivered and a review of undeveloped allocations and commitments is required taking into account updated housing requirements.
GT1 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation	Revise - to address updated Gypsy and Traveller need Assessment and if necessary identify a new site.
T1 Cycle Routes	Revise – certain cycle routes have been delivered, a review of undelivered routes is required and new cycle and active travel routes need to be added.
T2 Rail Network and Station Improvements	Revise – certain rail improvements have been delivered and a review of undelivered rail improvements is required.
T3 Safeguarding of Disused Railway Infrastructure	Retain.
T4 Improvements to Bus Services	Revise – certain bus improvements have been delivered, a review of undelivered bus improvements is required and new bus improvements need to be added.
T5 New Roads to Facilitate Development	Delete – new roads delivered.
T6 Regeneration Led Highway Improvements	Revise – certain highway improvements have been delivered and a review of undelivered highway improvements is required.
EMP1 Employment Allocations	Revise – an employment allocation has been delivered and a review of undelivered employment allocations is

	required taking into account updated employment land requirements.
EMP2 Employment Area Protection	Revise - to reflect any change in the status of sites within the employment hierarchy.
ED1 Education Provision	Revise – one education allocation has been delivered, another is nearing completion and any new education provision needs to be added.
CF1 Community Centre	Delete – planning permission has been granted and the facility is now in operation.
TM1 Tourism and Leisure	Revise – tourism related activities have been delivered on certain sites and a review of undelivered allocations is required.
L1 Formal Leisure Facilities	Revise – this undelivered allocation needs to be reviewed to determine whether it remains deliverable.
ENV1 Green Wedges	Retain – though a review is required to strengthen.
ENV2 Special Landscape Areas	Revise – an overall review is required to reflect updated Landmap information and a need for greater cross boundary consistency with neighbouring authorities.
ENV3 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation	Revise – new SINCS to be added and SINC boundary changes required as a result of development.
ENV4 Land Reclamation Schemes	Revise - undelivered allocations need to be reviewed to determine whether they are deliverable.
ENV5 Cemeteries	Revise – certain cemetery extensions have been delivered, undelivered extensions need to be reviewed and any new cemetery provision needs to be added.
M1 Safeguarding of Minerals	Revise – Coal Safeguarding areas to be deleted to reflect national policy.
M2 Minerals Buffer Zone	Revise - to reflect up-to-date planning permissions and the ceasing of mineral operations.
M3 Areas where Coal Working will not be Acceptable	Delete - to reflect national policy.
M4 Preferred Areas	Revise - should be reviewed in the context of meeting regional and national requirements and reflect decisions on planning applications.
W1 Land for Waste Management	Delete – to reflect updated position and lack of need for regional facility.

Suggested New Development Management Policies covering the following issues:

• Houses in Multiple Occupation
• The location and design of new homes and will look to address space standards in new development
• Development in the countryside

List of Preferred Strategy Background Papers and Background Evidence

Preferred Strategy Background Papers

These documents were used to develop the Preferred Strategy:

Document Name	Purpose
Vision and Objectives Background Paper	This report evaluates the Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) Vision and Objectives.
Growth Options Background Paper	This paper has been produced to provide background information on growth options for the Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033. .
Spatial Strategy Options Background Paper	This paper has been produced to provide background information on the spatial strategy options considered for the Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033.
Sustainable Settlement Assessment Background Paper	The purpose of this assessment is to identify those settlements which are potentially suitable to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, role and function. This involves an assessment of the current role and function of settlements, as well as an understanding of the relationships between settlements and their potential future roles.
Employment Land Review Background Paper	The purpose of the employment land review is to quantify the future employment land requirements of Blaenau Gwent and is based on the Welsh Government Practice Guidance for Economic Development.
Housing Supply Background Paper	Provide supporting information regarding the housing supply identified in the Preferred Strategy.
Viability Assessment of Strategic Sites Background Paper	The focus of this report is to assess viability and deliverability issues associated with taking forward strategic site allocations to deliver residential development in Blaenau Gwent.
Compatibility Assessment of the RLDP Vision and Objectives against the Well-being of Future Generations Act	The purpose of this assessment is to demonstrate that the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) assists in the delivery of the 7 Well-being Goals.

Background Evidence

These documents form the evidence base for the Preferred Strategy:

Document Name	Purpose
Report of Consultation – Issues/Challenges and	The purpose of the report is to record all of the information gathered across the series of issues and vision workshop

Vision	events.
Report of Consultation – Spatial Strategy Options	The purpose of the report is to record all of the information gathered across the series of spatial strategy options workshop events.
Pre-Deposit Engagement Paper	This is a live paper and will be updated as the LDP progresses. It sets out who and how people were engaged during pre deposit consultation, the main issues raised and how responses have affected the development of the RLDP. It also illustrates conformity with the community involvement scheme.
Local Housing Market Assessment	Desk-top analysis and assessment of housing need and demand of the housing markets that operate across the borough to explore both the nature and extent of housing requirements in Blaenau Gwent.
Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen LDP Demographic Evidence	To provide demographic evidence, including a suite of population, housing and economic growth outcomes to inform the Spatial Strategy Options paper for consideration in the formulation of the RLDP.
Blaenau Gwent Employment Growth Analysis	This document is an addendum to the main LDP Demographic Evidence, produced in draft form for Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Torfaen. This addendum examines the relationship between population, housing and employment growth under different assumptions.
Candidate Site Register	A log of sites submitted by land-owners, developers and the public as part of the call for sites. The Register is for information purposes only.
SA/SEA Scoping Report	To outline the proposed approach to the LDP's Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment. This report is the first stage of a SA process to identify, assess and address any likely significant effects on the environment from the emerging Blaenau Gwent LDP Review.
Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report	This report details the HRA Screening for Blaenau Gwent RLDP Draft Preferred Strategy. It sets out the methods and findings and the conclusions of the Screening Assessment.
Replacement LDP Delivery Agreement	This document sets out how people will be given the opportunity to influence future development in Blaenau Gwent. It will explain how and when people will be involved and consulted in developing new planning policy for the area.
LDP Review Report	To set out the proposed extent of likely changes to the existing LDP (2006-2021) and to confirm the revision procedure to be followed in preparing the replacement LDP.
Tests of Soundness	This document represents a double-check as the Plan progresses that it complies with the preparation requirements and that it is considered that the plan meets the 3 tests of soundness.

Strategy Options

Growth and Location of growth Options

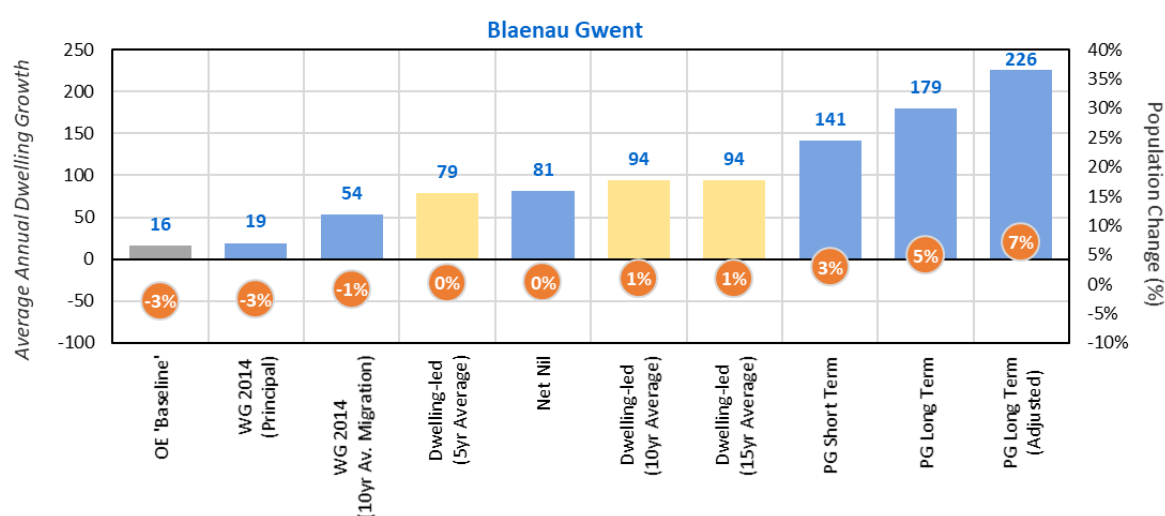
1.1 To identify the level of growth, the Council jointly with Monmouthshire and Torfaen commissioned Edge Analytics to prepare a range of population, household and employment led growth scenarios to inform the growth options. The findings of this work are set out in a Technical Paper Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen LDP Demographic Evidence (October 2019).

1.2 In addition to identifying the level of growth required over the lifetime of the Plan a decision needs to be made in term of where that growth should be located.

Growth Options

1.3 A total of 10 different scenarios have been generated for Blaenau Gwent. The scenarios prepared for Blaenau Gwent showed quite significant variations in terms of the impacts on the population and dwelling growth with each one having different impacts in terms of demographics. The scenarios along with a summary of their impacts are set out below.

Table 1: Annual Dwelling Growth and percentage Population Change



WG 2014 Principal

1.4 Planning Policy Wales advises that the starting point for the analysis of future growth is the latest Welsh Government principal projection which is currently the (WG) 2014 Principal Projection. This incorporates the ONS 2014 mid-year population estimate, plus fertility, mortality and migration assumptions based on a historical five-year period prior to 2014. These were notably lower than the previous WG projections as they were based on a 5 year period of recession where in migration was lower and household sizes had not decreased as quickly as previously considered.

1.5 This scenario projects a population decrease of 1,815 (-2.6%) with an increase of 275 households (0.9%) over the plan period. This scenario is the second lowest household growth range identified estimating an average of 19 dwellings per annum (dpa) over the Plan period (total of 285). The figure of 19 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233 and also lower than the average completions achieved over the past 5 (80) and 10 years (96).

1.6 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of -966 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,174.

1.7 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 1,590 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 1,800 more people in employment over the Plan period.

OE Baseline

1.8 This differs from the other 9 scenarios in that it is an employment-led scenario. Instead of estimating the level of employment that the relevant forecast population growth projection could support, it considers the potential impact of employment change on population and housing growth. It is based on an Oxford Econometrics forecast, informed by a population growth outcome that is similar to that presented in the **WG 2014 Principal** scenario (population decline by 2033).

1.9 This scenario projects a population loss comparable with the WG 2014 Principal scenario that is a population decrease of 1,815 (-2.6%) with an increase of 275 households (0.9%) over the plan period. This scenario is the lowest household growth range identified estimating an average of 16 dpa over the Plan period (total of 240). The figure of 16 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233 and also much lower than the average completions achieved over the past 5 (80) and 10 years (96).

1.10 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 1,080 over the plan period. This is lower than the WG Principal scenario suggests. No assumption on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average were considered.

WG 2014 (10 yr Average)

1.11 This scenario is based on 10 year average migration figures prior to 2014 (i.e 2004/05-2013/14), a period that covers a more diverse range of economic conditions than the WG principal.

1.12 The scenario projects a population loss of 585 (-0.8%) with an increase of 765 households (2.5%) over the plan period. This scenario is the third lowest household growth range identified estimating an average of 54 dpa over the Plan period (total of 810). The figure of 54 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233 and also lower than the average completions over the past 5 (80) and 10 years (96).

1.13 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of -711 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,232.

1.14 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 1,065 over the plan period assuming no change in the unemployment or economic activity rate. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 2,380 more people in employment over the Plan period.

Dwelling – led (5yr Average)

1.15 This scenario is based on annual dwelling growth applied from 2019 onward, based on the last five years completions (2014/15-2018/19). An annual dwelling growth of 80 pa has been applied.

1.16 The scenario projects a population increase of 162 (0.2%) with an increase of 1,127 households (3.6%) over the plan period. This scenario is the fourth lowest household growth range identified estimating an average of 79 dwellings per annum (dpa) over the Plan period (total of 1,185). The figure of 79 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233, slightly lower than the average completions over the last 5 years and lower than the average completions over the past 10 years (96).

1.17 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 373 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,528.

1.18 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 930 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 2,550 more people in employment over the Plan period.

Net Nil

1.19 This scenario is based on internal and international migration flows being balanced between in and out flows, resulting in zero net migration.

1.20 The scenario projects a population increase of 238 (0.3%) with an increase of 1,162 households (3.7%) over the plan period. This scenario is the fourth lowest household growth range identified estimating an average of 81 dpa over the Plan period (total of 1,215). The figure of 81 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233 is slightly higher than the past 5 year (80) completion rate but is below the 10 years average completion rate (96).

1.21 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 299 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,570.

1.22 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 960 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates

reduced to 1.20 then there would be 2,535 more people in employment over the Plan period.

Dwelling – led (10yr Average)

1.23 This scenario is based on annual dwelling growth applied from 2019 onward, based on the last ten years completions (2008/09-2018/19). An annual dwelling growth of 96 pa has been applied.

1.24 The scenario projects a population increase of 675 (1.0%) with an increase of 1,340 households (4.3%) over the plan period. This scenario is the fifth lowest household growth range identified estimating an average of 94 dwellings per annum (dpa) over the Plan period (total of 1,410). The figure of 94 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233, higher than the average completions over the last 5 (80) and is slightly lower than the 10 year average completions (96).

1.25 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 204 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,615.

1.26 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 735 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 2,790 more people in employment over the Plan period.

Dwelling led (15 yr Average)

1.27 This scenario is based on annual dwelling growth applied from 2019 onward, based on the last fifteen years completions (2004/05-2018/19). An annual dwelling growth of 102 pa has been applied.

1.28 The scenario projects a population increase of 690 (1.0%) with an increase of 1,346 households (4.3%) over the plan period. This scenario is the fifth lowest household growth range identified estimating an average of 99 dpa over the Plan period (total of 1,410). The figure of 99 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233, higher than the average completions over the last 5 (80) and last 10 years (96).

1.29 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 237 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,597.

1.30 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 720 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 2,790 more people in employment over the Plan period.

PG Short Term

1.31 This scenario is based on internal migration rates and international migration flow assumptions based on a six year period (2011/12-2016/17). This is a similar time to the WG Principal projection (i.e 5-6 years) but includes the latest three years of population statistics.

1.32 This scenario projects a population increase of 1,996 (2.9%) with an increase of 2,220 households (6.5%) over the plan period. This scenario is the third highest household growth range identified estimating an average of 141 dwellings per annum (dpa) over the Plan period (total of 2,115). The figure of 141 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233 but is higher than the average completions over the past 5 (80) and 10 years (96).

1.33 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 196 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 5,088.

1.34 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 240 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 3,375 more people in employment over the Plan period.

PG Long Term

1.35 This scenario is based on internal migration rates and international migration flow assumptions based on a sixteen- year period (2001/02-2016/17).

1.36 This scenario projects a population increase of 3,400 (4.9%) with an increase of 2,558 households (8.2%) over the plan period. This scenario is the second highest household growth range identified estimating an average of 179 dwellings per annum (dpa) over the Plan period (total of 2,685). The figure of 179 dpa is below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233 but is well above the average completions over the past 5 (80) and 10 years (96).

1.37 Under this scenario there would be population increase in the 0-14 age groups of 231 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 5,068.

1.38 The number of people in the working age range would increase by 300 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 4,005 more people in employment over the Plan period.

PG Long Term (Adjusted)

1.39 This scenario is based on internal in-migration rates adjusted to reflect higher in-migration (based on the last 5-years) from Bristol and South Gloucestershire, following the removal of the Severn Bridge toll. All other migration flow assumptions are consistent with the PD Long Term scenario. This results in an extra 92 people coming to Blaenau Gwent from this area per annum.

1.40 This scenario projects a population increase of 5,009 (7.2%) with an increase of 3,231 households (10.4%) over the plan period. This scenario is the highest household growth range identified estimating an average of 226 dwellings per annum (dpa) over the Plan period (total of 3,390). The figure of 226 dpa is slightly below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233 but is well above the average completions over the past 5 (80) and 10 years (96).

1.41 Under this scenario there would be population gain in the 0-14 age groups of 656 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 5,299.

1.42 The number of people in the working age range would increase by 915 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 4,710 more people in employment over the Plan period.

1.43 These Growth Options were placed into three options of low, medium and high as shown in table follows:

Growth Option	Level of Housing & Employment
Option 1 – Low growth (based on WG latest 2014 projections principal and 10 yr migration and OE baseline)	Population: loss of between 587 to 1,815 (-0.8% to 2.6% loss) Housing: 19-54 per annum (Total: 285-810) Employment: loss of 106 to 71 per annum (Total loss of – 1,065 to 1,590)
Option 2 – Medium growth (based on 3 dwelling led projections (5,10 & 15 yr average) and Net nil migration)	Population: 162 to 846 gain (0.2 to 1% growth) Housing: 79-99 per annum (Total 1,185-1,485) Employment: loss of 48 to 64 per annum (Total loss of between 720 to 960)
Option 3 – High growth (based on PopGroup short term, long term, and long term adjusted)	Population: 1,996 to 5,009 gain (2.9% to 7.2% growth) Housing: 141-226 per annum (Total 2,115 - 3,390) Employment: loss of 16 to a gain of 61 per annum (Total loss of 240 to gain of 915)

Location of Growth

1.44 As well as identifying the overall level of growth needed over the plan period, the Plan must put forward a clear spatial strategy for where this development should take place. As part of the Councils engagement 3 spatial options and two settlement hierarchy options were set out.

Spatial Options

1.45 Three spatial options were identified as follows:

Option 1 Current LDP – Based on a north south divide with the main focus of growth on Ebbw Vale.

- This option has the potential to reinforce and increase the role of Ebbw Vale as the main town (previously referred to as the hub), directing development to the most accessible location where the majority of services are available.

Option 2: Heads of the Valleys – Most growth along the Heads of the Valleys settlements

- This option has the potential to spread the growth along the Heads of the Valleys where there are greater opportunities to accommodate the growth in a fairer manner and placing less pressure on services in Ebbw Vale.

Option 3: Balanced Growth – Growth equally distributed according to sustainability assessment of settlements.

- This option has the potential to spread growth equally across the Borough and sustain local services. Use of the sustainability assessment of settlements will ensure that a greater amount of development will be directed to the most sustainable settlements.

Settlement Hierarchy

1.46 Draft guidance from Welsh Government (Development Plans Manual (Editions 3) paras. 5.15-5.18) requires us to identify a settlement hierarchy and a growth split based on a robust understanding of the role and function of places. Two options were put forward the first is the current LDP hierarchy which was based on an assessment of the role and functions of settlements. Option 2 is based on a sustainable assessment of settlements as set out in Paper on: Sustainable Assessment of Settlements. The identified hierarchies are as follows:

Option 1: Current LDP

Principal Hub:	District Hubs	Local Hub
Ebbw Vale	Tredeggar Brynmawr Abertillery	Blaina

Option 2: Based on Sustainable Assessment of Settlements (based on LDP boundaries)

Tier 1: Principal Settlements	Tier 2: Secondary Settlements	Tier 3: Village and Hamlets
Ebbw Vale Tredeggar Brynmawr / Nantyglo/ Biana) Abertillery / Cwmtillery / Six Bells/ Brynithel/ Llanhilleth and Aberbeeg/	Cwm	Trefil Pochin Bedwellty Pits Swfrydd

Spatial Strategy Options

1.47 From these three elements of growth level, spatial distribution and settlement hierarchy three Spatial Strategy Options were created as follows:

Option 1: Growth and Regeneration (Current LDP)

Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
Medium Growth Population: 162 to 846 gain (0.2 to 1% growth) Housing: 79-99 per annum (Total 1,185-1,485) Employment: loss of 48 to 64 per annum (Total loss of between 720 to 960)	North / South split with most of the growth in the north and with a focus of growth in Ebbw Vale	Principal Hub: Ebbw Vale District Hubs: Tredegar Brynmawr Abertillery Local Hub: Blaina

1.48 This option is based on the current LDP taking into account that it aimed to stabilise the population.

Option 2: Balanced and Interconnected Communities

Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
Low Growth Population: loss of between 587 to 1,815 (-0.8% to 2.6% loss) Housing: 19-54 per annum (Total: 285-810) Employment: loss of 106 to 71 per annum (Total loss of – 1,065 to 1,590)	Balanced Growth Equally distributed across the borough	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Principal Settlements Ebbw Vale Tredegar Brynmawr/ Nantyglo/Blaina Abertillery / Cwmtillery / Six Bells / Brynithel / Llanhilleth / Aberbeeg Tier 2: Secondary Settlements Cwm Tier 3: Hamlets Trefil Pochin Bedwellty Pits Swfrydd

1.49 This option aimed to create sustainable balanced communities acknowledging that they needed to be well connected to make the option sustainable. The option considered that a low growth level would be required to enable equal distribution of growth given the lack of opportunities in the south of the Borough.

Option 3: Economic Growth Strategy

Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
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High Growth Population: 1,996 to 5,009 gain (2.9% to 7.2% growth) Housing: 141-226 per annum (Total 2,115 - 3,390) Employment: loss of 16 to a gain of 61 per annum (Total loss of 240 to gain of 915)	North / South split based on opportunities for growth along the Heads of the Valleys	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Principal Settlements Ebbw Vale Tredegar Brynmawr/ Nantyglo/Blaina Abertillery / Cwmillery / Six Bells / Brynithel / Llanhilleth / Aberbeeg Tier 2: Secondary Settlements Cwm Tier 3: Hamlets Trefil Pochin Bedwellty Pits Swfrydd
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1.50 This option aimed to deliver economic growth which is one of the main issues raised by stakeholders and is a priority for the Council. It was considered that spreading this growth along the Heads of the Valleys would be more equitable than focussing it all in Ebbw Vale.

1.51 Following engagement with Members of the Council a fourth option was included as follows:

Option 4: Sustainable Economic Growth

Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
High Growth Population: 1,996 to 5,009 (2.9 to 7% growth) Housing: 141 to 226 per annum (Total 2,115 to 3,390) Employment: -16 to 61 per annum (Total -240 to plus 915)	Balanced Growth Equally distributed across the borough	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Principal Settlements Ebbw Vale Tredegar Brynmawr/ Nantyglo/Blaina Abertillery / Cwmillery / Six Bells / Brynithel / Llanhilleth / Aberbeeg Tier 2: Secondary Settlements Cwm Tier 3: Hamlets Trefil Pochin Bedwellty Pits Swfrydd

1.52 Members were supportive of an approach which distributed the growth across the Borough. Whilst they considered high growth should be the aspiration they had concerns as to whether this level of growth could be achieved.

Stakeholder Consultation

1.53 Consideration of the options was undertaken with a range of Stakeholders by way of a number of workshops held in July-August 2019. A summary of the feedback received is published as part of the evidence base.

Consideration of Growth Options

1.54 Stakeholders generally supported the high growth option (71%) with the remainder supporting the mid growth (29%) option. Option 3 had no support. Of those that chose a specific option (35 out of 40) within the higher growth scenario there was a more even split across the three scenarios although the PG Long Term adjusted came out as the most popular (42%) with the other 2 scenarios receiving (29% each).

Consideration of Spatial Distribution

1.55 Stakeholders were also asked to identify a preference for the Spatial Distribution of the Growth. Option 3: Balanced Growth was the favoured option with 63% choosing this option. Almost a third of people chose Option 2: Heads of the Valleys (30%) and only 7% choose Option 1: Current LDP (north south divide with an emphasis of growth on Ebbw Vale).

Consideration of Settlement Hierarchy

1.56 When asked to identify the preferred settlement hierarchy most stakeholders (84%) selected the option 2 based on the Sustainable Assessment of Settlements.

Consideration of the Strategy Options

1.57 Stakeholders were given the opportunity to identify their own preferred option by using the options given or through identifying an alternative. Although the favoured option was Option 4: Sustainable Economic Growth only 30% were in complete agreement with the option. The most common disagreement lay with the level of growth with a significant number favouring medium growth, distributed across the Borough and use of the sustainable settlement hierarchy. To address this issue it is suggested that the Preferred Option is amended to include a housing requirement figure at the lower end of the options. Another general concern was regarding the location of growth with over a third of stakeholders (34%) favouring the Heads of the Valleys. However, given that most of the principal settlements are located in the north of the Borough along the Heads of the Valleys there will be a natural weighting towards the Heads of the Valleys.

1.58 It is therefore proposed that the growth level included in options 4 is reconsidered to create the Preferred Strategy Option.

Consideration of Other Issues

1.59 In identifying a growth level need and demand must be weighed against supply factors such as delivery and constraints. The main issue for Blaenau Gwent is delivery with both viability and deliverability being problematic. In terms of deliverability past completion rates would support medium growth of between 80 and 99. This is due to a lack of interest from the National Housebuilders due to viability concerns which has resulted in low delivery rates over the past ten years. Viability of sites is marginal with some areas not being able to

support affordable housing contributions or other S106 requirements. However, more recently the National Companies have returned to the area and there is now some optimism about housing delivery particularly in the Ebbw Vale area.

1.60 Supporting this positive stance is the Council's Growth and Investment Strategy which aims to grow the population and support economic growth. Other drivers for change include Heads of the Valleys dualling, investment from the Cardiff Capital Region, Tech Valleys, the Valleys Taskforce and the Metro.

1.61 It is proposed that the high growth level is moderated to a level that is deliverable. It is proposed that the PG Long Term Adjusted scenario is ruled out on the basis that it is highly unlikely to happen given that net migration levels would need to increase from current average losses of 31 per annum (Stats Wales 2011-2016) to increases of 297 per annum. In addition the housing delivery levels are considered to be undeliverable and unsustainable. Such growth would lead to pressure on existing schools and services which development would not be able to provide due to viability issues.

1.62 The PG Long Term scenario whilst desirable is also ruled out on the basis that it will be undeliverable. This would require a housing completion rate of 179 which is well above (86%) the past completion rate achieved over the last 10 years (96).

1.63 Given on the emphasis placed by Welsh Government on a viable and deliverable housing supply it is proposed to use the lowest level of the PG Short Term Scenario (144 homes) as the aspiration for the Plan and set a housing requirement figure slightly below this at 117 homes per annum which is an increase on what has been delivered over the past 10 years. The aspiration figure will be used to set the flexibility figure of the Plan (22%).

1.64 A new scenario has been created based on a dwelling led projection of 120 per annum. The details of which are as follows:

Dwelling led 120 per annum

1.65 This scenario is based on annual dwelling growth applied from 2019 onward, based on 120 pa being applied.

1.66 The scenario projects a population increase of 1,471 (2.0%) with an increase of 1,671 households (5.4%) over the plan period. This estimates an average of 117 dpa over the Plan period (total of 1,755). The figure of 117 dpa is well below the current LDP dwelling requirement of 233, though is higher than the average completions over the last 5 (80) and last 10 years (96).

1.67 Under this scenario there would be population decline in the 0-14 age groups of 87 and a substantial population increase in the 60+ age group of 4,668.

1.68 The number of people in the working age range would decrease by 420 over the plan period. However, if assumptions on the unemployment rate being reduced and the economic activity rate being increased to the Wales average; and commuter ratio rates reduced to 1.20 then there would be 3,150 more people in employment over the Plan period.

1.69 Issues raised by Welsh Government and the Initial Integrated Sustainable Appraisal led to the need to reconsider the distribution of growth. Whilst the principle is to spread the growth across the Borough the growth needs to be directed to the most sustainable settlements. Settlement Hierarchy to ensure that development is directed to the most sustainable settlements. This has involved the creation of more tiers and concentration of development on the most sustainable settlements. It has also led to the division of the Abertillery / Cwmtillery / Six Bells / Brynithel / Llanhilleth / Aberbeeg settlement into two settlements Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six bells) and Aberbeeg / Brynithel / Llanhilleth. This was to address concerns with the sustainability of these smaller settlements.

1.70 The following Option has been identified as the Preferred Option:

Option 5: Sustainable Economic Growth

Growth Level	Spatial Distribution	Settlement Hierarchy
High Growth Population: 1,471-1,996 to (2 to 2.9% growth) Housing: 117-141 per annum (Total 1,755 to 2,115) Employment: loss of 28 to 16 per annum (Total loss of 420 to 240) With UR reducing & EA adjusted + CR Reducing 210 to 225 per annum (Total of 3,150-3,375)	Spread across the Borough based on Sustainable Settlement Assessment	Sustainable Settlement Assessment Tier 1: Primary Settlement Ebbw Vale Tier 2: Main Settlements Tredegar Brynmawr/ Nantyglo / Blaina Abertillery (including Cwmtillery and Six Bells) Tier 3: Secondary Settlements Cwm Aberbeeg/ Brynithel / Llanhilleth Tier 4: Villages Swfrydd Tier 5: Hamlets Trefil Pochin Bedwellty Pits

Policy Assessment

National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes

National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes	SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	SP6	SP7	SP8	SP9	SP10	SP11	SP12	SP13	SP14	SP15
1.Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact															
Resilient biodiversity and ecosystems													✓		
Distinctive and special landscapes													✓		
Integrated green infrastructure													✓		
Appropriate soundscapes															✓
Reduces environmental risks						✓	✓								✓
Manages water resources naturally															✓
Clean air															✓
Reduces overall pollution															✓
Resilient to climate change			✓										✓		
Distinctive and special historic environments														✓	
2.Facilitating Accessible and healthy environments															
Accessible and high quality green spaces											✓	✓			
Accessible by means of active travel and public transport											✓				
Not car dependent		✓									✓				
Minimises the need to travel											✓				
Provides equality of access											✓				
Feels safe and inclusive		✓													
Supports a diverse	✓							✓	✓		✓				

National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes	SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	SP6	SP7	SP8	SP9	SP10	SP11	SP12	SP13	SP14	SP15
population															
Good connections											✓				
Convenient access to goods and services	✓									✓	✓				
Promotes physical and mental health and well-being												✓			
3.Making the Best use of Resources															
Makes best use of natural resources						✓	✓								
Prevents waste		✓				✓	✓								
Prioritises the use of previously developed land and existing buildings			✓					✓						✓	
Unlocks potential and regenerates	✓							✓							
High quality and built to last		✓													
4.Growing our Economy in a Sustainable Manner															
Fosters economic activity	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
Enables easy communication												✓			
Generates its own renewable energy			✓												
Vibrant and dynamic				✓											
Adaptive to change		✓		✓											
Embraces smart and innovative technology				✓											
5.Creating and Sustaining Communities															
Enables the Welsh language to thrive												✓			
Appropriate development densities			✓												
Homes and jobs to meet society's	✓							✓	✓						

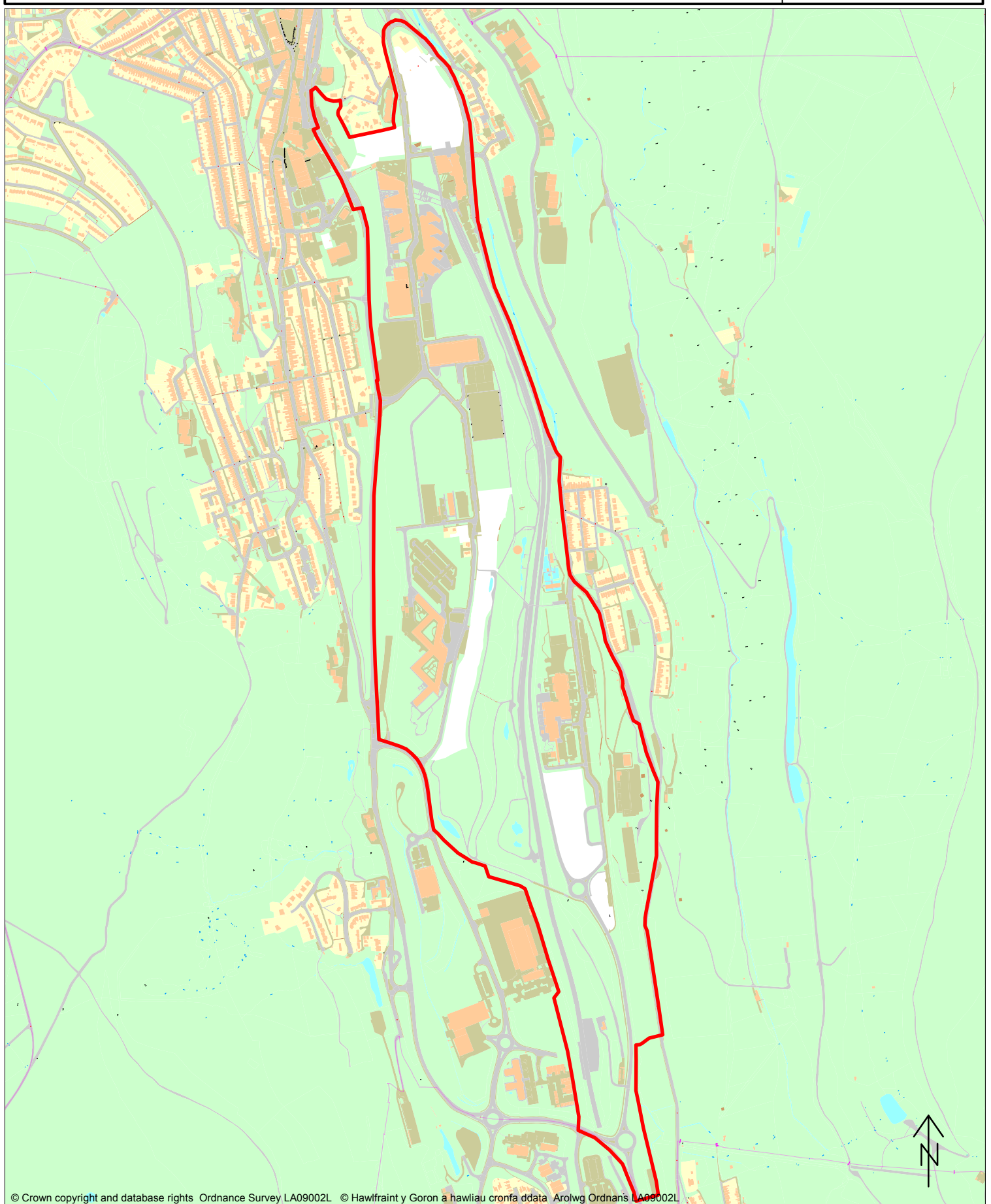
National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes	SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	SP6	SP7	SP8	SP9	SP10	SP11	SP12	SP13	SP14	SP15
needs															
A mix of uses	✓														
Offers cultural experiences					✓								✓	✓	
Community based facilities and services										✓		✓			

Scale :
1:10600

Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan

Strategic Sites

The Works



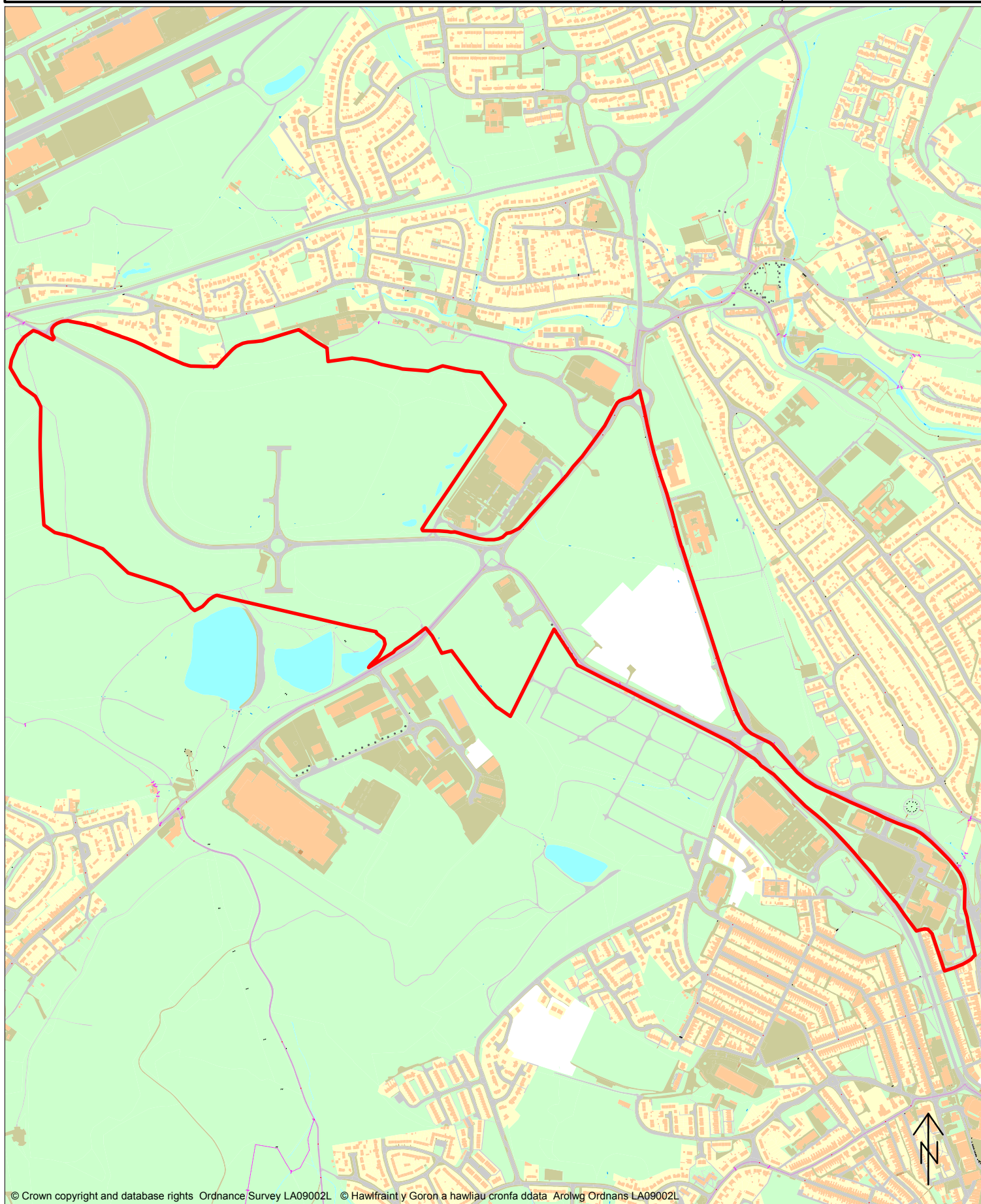
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Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan

Strategic Sites

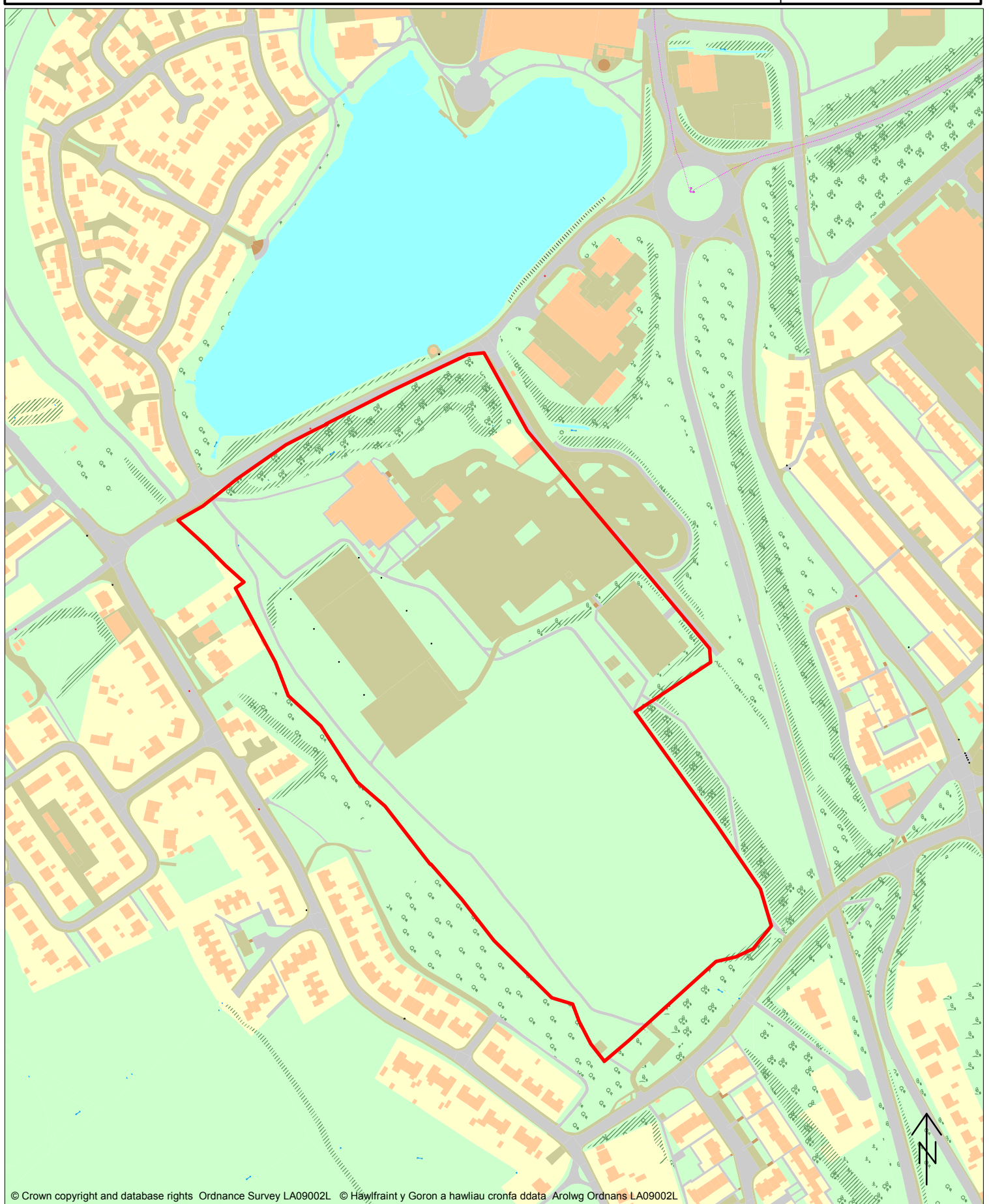
Ebbw Vale Northern Corridor



Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan

Strategic Sites

Former Nantyglo Comprehensive School



Housing Supply Breakdown of Completions, Commitments, small and large windfall sites

Strategy Area	Settlement	Completions	Commitments	Windfall Large (10+)	Windfall Small (under 10)	Strategic Mixed Use Allocations	Non-Strategic Mixed use Allocations	TOTAL
Ebbw Fach	Tier 1: Ebbw Vale	28	425	83	141	675 (320*)	0	952 (+45)
Sirhowy Valley	Tier 2:Tredegar	31	55	53	67	0	217	423
Upper Ebbw Fawr	Tier 2:Brynmaur / Nantyglo/ Blaina	14	97	53	67	220	0	423 (+28)
Lower Ebbw Fach	Tier 2: Abertillery (incl Cwmillery and Six Bells)	2	0	26	34	0	149	211
	Tier 3: Cwm and Aberbeeg / Brynithel / Llanhilleth Tier 4: Swfrydd Tier 5: Trefil, Pochin, and Bedwellty Pits	0	28	51	27	0	0	106
TOTAL		75	605	266	336	540	366	2,115 (+73)

**denotes the number that is expected to be delivered in the plan period*

Further information on completions, commitments and large and small windfall sites can be found in the Housing Supply supporting document

Glossary of Terms

Affordable Housing	Housing where there are secure mechanisms in place to ensure that it is accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and for subsequent occupiers. Affordable housing may be broken down into two categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Rented Housing – consists of the stock provided by Councils and registered social landlords where rent levels have regard to the Welsh Government's guideline rents and benchmark rents • Intermediate Housing – covers housing provision where prices or rents are above those of social rented housing but below market housing prices or rents. This can include shared equity schemes. Intermediate housing differs from low cost market housing, which the Welsh Government does not consider to be affordable for the purpose of the land use planning system.
Biodiversity	The richness and variety of living things (plants, birds, animals, fish and insects etc.) that exist in a given area, and the habitats which support them.
Brownfield Land	See Previously Developed Land
Candidate Site	Land submitted to the Council, as part of a formal process, for consideration as a potential site that might contribute to future development needs of the County Borough.
Community Involvement Scheme (CIS)	The CIS identifies how the LPA intends to involve consultation bodies and the public in the preparation of the LDP. The CIS is submitted to the Welsh Government as part of the Delivery Agreement for its agreement.
Deposit	The term referring to the process of publishing the detailed LDP policies and proposals for public consultation. Placing the plan "on deposit".
Deposit LDP	The draft of the Local Development Plan which is submitted to the Welsh Government for public Examination
Development Plan	A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area.
Ecosystem Services	The multitude of resources and processes that are provided by natural ecosystems and utilised by humans. They include food and water provision, flood control, recreation and cultural benefits.
Equality Impact Assessment	The process of appraising the Plan to ensure its implementation will not discriminate against people who are categorised as being disadvantaged or vulnerable within society.
European Sites	These consist of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). All European sites are designated under European laws.
Green	The network of multi-functional green space, encompassing both land

infrastructure	and water (blue space). Areas included may be both new and existing, both rural and urban, which support the natural and ecological processes and deliver a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
Greenfield sites	Land which has never been built on, typically grassland, farmland or heath.
Habitat Regulation Assessment	This assessment is a tool developed by the European Commission to help competent authorities (as defined in the Habitats Regulations) to carry out assessment to ensure that a project, plan or policy will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site see definition above).
Local Development Plan (LDP)	The required statutory development plan for each local planning authority area in Wales under Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
LDP Adoption	Final stage of LDP preparation process where the LDP becomes the Statutory Development Plan for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
LDP Objectives	A set of overarching intentions that elaborate on the vision and that focus on the delivery of the Plan
LDP Delivery Agreement	A document comprising the Council's timetable for the preparation of the LDP, submitted to the Welsh Government for agreement.
Natural Resources	Materials that occur naturally that are useful to man. Includes minerals, timber, land, stone, ecosystems, etc.
Plan Period	The period of time a plan covers. The Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) covers the period up to 2033.
Preferred Strategy	A stage in the development plan document preparation process where the options for addressing key issues and meeting development requirements are identified and assessed and a chosen strategy to underpin the Plan is put forward.
Previously Developed Land	Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings) and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The curtilage of the development is included, as are defence buildings, and land used for mineral extraction and waste disposal where provision for restoration has not been made through development management procedures.
Public Consultation	A formal process in which individuals and organisations are invited to make representations on the RLDP.
Renewable Energy	Also known as 'Sustainable Energy' is the term used to cover those sources of energy, other than fossil fuel or nuclear fuel, which are continuously and sustainably available in our environment. This includes wind, water, solar, geothermal energy, and plant material often referred to as 'biomass'.
Scheduled Ancient Monument	Archaeological remains of national importance which have been given special status by the Welsh Government because they meet certain criteria.
Settlement	A settlement boundary is a planning tool which involves a theoretical

Boundary	line drawn on a map to identify the boundary to a settlement. Typically housing development is only permitted within this boundary and areas outside it are considered to be countryside.
Settlement Hierarchy	Settlements are classified within the hierarchy according to the population and level of services within the settlement. Some very small settlements with very limited or no services will fall outside the hierarchy and are defined as countryside.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features(basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).
Spatial Options	The range of alternative broad geographical distributions of development required to accommodate the projected level of growth over the RLDP period.
Spatial Strategy	The broad geographical distribution of development to accommodate the projected level of growth over the LDP period.
Special Area of Conservation	A site designation specified in the Habitats Directive. Each site is designated for one or more of the habitats and species listed in the Directive. The Directive requires a management plan to be prepared and implemented for each SAC to ensure the favourable conservation status of the habitats or species for which it was designated. In combination with special protection areas (SPA), these sites contribute to the Natura 2000 network.
Special Landscape Area	A Local landscape designation that identifies areas of landscape importance within the County where special landscape policies will apply.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Generic term used internationally to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The SEA Regulations require a formal "environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use". (see also sustainability appraisal)
Strategic Policy	Overarching policies that set the tone of the LDP and provide guiding principles that underpin the formation of detailed policies and future decision making.
Strategic Mixed Use Site	Sites that can accommodate 100 or more houses and that include a mix of uses
Supplementary Planning Guidance	Supporting policy and guidance that may cover a range of issues, both thematic and site specific and that serve to provide further detail of policies and proposals in a development plan.
Sustainability Appraisal	A tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. economic, environmental and social factors). Each LPA is required by S62(6) of the 2004 Act to undertake a sustainability appraisal of its LDP. This form of sustainability appraisal fully incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive & Regulations.
Sustainable	Enhancing the economic, social and environmental well-being of

Development

people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own generations in ways which:

- promote social justice and equality of opportunity; and
- enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its limits - using only our fair share of the earth's resources and sustaining our cultural legacy. Sustainable development is the process by which we reach the goal of sustainability.

Agenda Item 34

Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: Council

Date of Meeting: **12th December, 2019**

Report Subject: **Memberships Report**

Portfolio Holder: **Executive Member – Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Democratic Services**

Report Written by: **Democratic Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
							12/12/19	

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To present a list of Memberships for consideration and determination by Members of the Council.

2. Scope

2.1 ANEURIN BEVAN COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL

To appoint replacement representatives for Councillors Julie Holt and Mandy Moore on the above.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 To consider the above.

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