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**THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND**

Dydd Mercher, 7 Hydref 2020 Dydd Mercher, 7 Hydref 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

**PWYLLGOR GWAITH**

A meeting of the Pwyllgor Gwaith will be held in Ystafell y Weithrediaeth, Canolfan Ddinesig, Glynebwy on Dydd Mercher, 14eg Hydref, 2020 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris  
Managing Director

**AGENDA**

**Pages**

**1. CYFIEITHU AR Y PRYD**

Mae croeso i chi ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod, mae angen o leiaf 3 diwrnod gwaith o rybudd os dymunwch wneud hynny. Darperir gwasanaeth cyfieithu ar y pryd os gwneir cais am hynny.

**2. YMDDIHEURIADAU**

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

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau.

**3. DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU**

Derbyn datganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

**COFNODION**

**4. PWYLLGOR GWEITHREDOL 7 - 12**

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**5. CYFARFOD ARBENNIG O'R PWYLLGOR GWEITHREDOL 13 - 16**

Ystyried cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd ar 8 Medi 2020.

**6. CYFARFOD ARBENNIG O'R PWYLLGOR GWEITHREDOL 17 - 20**

Ystyried cofnodion y cyfarfod a gynhaliwyd ar 16 Medi 2020.

**7. CYFARFOD ARBENNIG O'R PWYLLGOR GWEITHREDOL 21 - 24**

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15. **BLAENAU GWENT – CYTUNDEB PARTNERIAETH ÔL-16** 81 - 102

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17. **DIOGELU'R CYHOEDD – CYNLLUN AWDURDOD SYLFAENOL** 133 - 142

Ystyried adroddiad Rheolwr Gwasanaeth Diogelu'r Cyhoedd.

18. **ADOLYGIAD I ANSAWDD CYFLENWAD DŴR MEWN**

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Copi i ddilyn

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20. MONITRO'R GYLLIDEB GYFALAF. RHAGOLWG AR GYFER BLWYDDYN ARIANNOL 2020/2021 (FEL AR 30 MEHEFIN 2020) 191 - 210

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22. CEFNOGI CADERNID ARIANNOL – ADOLYGIAD DILYNOL ARCHWILIO CYMRU 225 - 248

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23. DATGANIAD SEFYLLFA AR SYSTEM CCTV Y CYNGOR (MIS EBRILL I FIS AWST 2020) 249 - 256

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To: N. Daniels (Cadeirydd)  
J. Collins  
D. Davies  
J. Mason  
J. Wilkins

All other Members (for information)  
Manager Director  
Chief Officers

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE –  
2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020**

**REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

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

**Deputy Leader/Executive Member –  
Regeneration & Economic Development  
Councillor D. Davies**

**Executive Member – Education  
Councillor J. Collins**

**Executive Member – Environment  
Councillor J. Wilkins**

**Executive Member – Social Services  
Councillor J. Mason**

**WITH:** Interim Corporate Director of Education  
Corporate Director of Social Services  
Chief Officer Commercial  
Chief Officer Resources  
Head of Community Services  
Press and Publicity Officer  
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance

**DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

<b><u>ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>SUBJECT</u></b>	<b><u>ACTION</u></b>
<b>No. 1</b>	<p><b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
<b>No. 2</b>	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>The following apologies for absence were received:-</p> <p>Managing Director Corporate Director Regeneration and Environment</p>	
<b>No. 3</b>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
	<p><b><u>MINUTES</u></b></p>	
<b>No. 4</b>	<p><b><u>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>The minutes of the Special Executive Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 were submitted.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	



**DECISIONS – CORPORATE SERVICES MATTERS**

**No. 5 PROPOSED EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Leader/Executive Member – Corporate Services.

The Leader advised that the Executive Forward Work Programme complemented the Scrutiny Work Programmes which had been agreed prior to the August Recess. The Leader added that the Work Programme had been considered by Portfolio Holders and collectively as an Executive, it was therefore

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and information contained therein be noted.

**No. 6 GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

The following additional grants were reported:-

**EBBW VALE**

Badminton Ward – Councillor C. Meredith

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 1. | St. David’s Church / Ebbw Vale Benefice Church | £200 |
| 2. | Glanffrwd Allotment Association                | £150 |

Badminton Ward – Councillor G. Paulsen

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 1. | St. David’s Church / Ebbw Vale Benefice Church | £200 |
| 2. | Glanffrwd Allotment Association                | £150 |

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.

**DECISION ITEMS – ENVIRONMENT MATTERS**

**No. 7**

**HIGHWAYS CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2017-2021**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Community Services.

The Head of Community Services advised that the report provided an update on progress on the current Highway Capital Works Programme 2017-2021 and presented options around a future 2020-2021 Works Programme for consideration. The Officer added that the report was scheduled to be submitted to Scrutiny and Executive in February, however it was held back in order to ascertain if additional capital would be made available by the end of financial year. However, due to the impact on services as a result of COVID-19 the report had been delayed.

The Head of Community Services further spoke to the report and outlined the key points contained therein. He advised that the public perception of highways related to the condition of roads in local residential areas. The reactive repairs to pot holes and road surfacing are costly and a less effective way of maintaining the highway. The overall percentage of poor conditioned un-classified roads prior to highway works was 17%, however following works carried out over the previous two years this figure had reduced to 11.4%. The proposed 2020-2021 programme would continue to focus on residential/side/ unclassified roads. In addition to these works, it was also proposed that works be undertaken to essential features to the highways such as safety barriers, illuminated traffic signs and speed reduction measures.

The Head of Community Services advised that Scrutiny had welcomed the report with the proviso that any specific areas brought forward by Ward Members be considered in line with the priority matrix.

The Executive Member for Environment welcomed the report and noted the comments raised at the Scrutiny Committee. The Executive Member advised that the highways works programme was a high priority for this Council and pledged her commitment to monitor and review the programme accordingly.

The Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development added that these highway works were critical to our communities and the

investment had seen residential roads brought up to an acceptable standard. He welcomed that these improvements would continue as they were of importance to residents.

The Leader advised that commitment was given in 2017 to residents to bring residential, side and unclassified roads up to an acceptable standard. This commitment had been fulfilled and advised that Appendices A-C clearly outlined the extent of the works completed. It was hoped that this commitment would continue for a further 20 months and beyond as it was our ambition to bring all residential roads up to 100% appropriate usage.

The Leader proposed that the Executive Member – Environment and the Head of Community Services review the next steps of the Highways Improvement Programme. Once this evaluation had been completed it was suggested that discussions be extended to the Chief Officer Resources and the Leader from a financial perspective to ensure these improvements could be maintained going forward. This would ensure that a firm programme of works was in place to provide the Council and the residents we represent with a clear commitment to the continued highways improvement works.

RESOLVED accordingly.

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, Option A was accepted, and the Highway Capital Works Programme 2020-2021 priorities be supported.

**No. 8**

**TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Leader proposed that future meetings be held and 10.00 a.m.

RESOLVED accordingly.

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE –  
8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020**

**REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

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

**Deputy Leader/Executive Member –  
Regeneration & Economic Development  
Councillor D. Davies**

**Executive Member – Education  
Councillor J. Collins**

**Executive Member – Environment  
Councillor J. Wilkins**

**Executive Member – Social Services  
Councillor J. Mason**

**WITH: Managing Director  
Corporate Director Regeneration and Environment  
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance  
Communications, Marketing and Customer Access Manager**

**DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<p><b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>No apologies for absence were reported.</p>	
No. 3	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
	<p><b><u>DECISIONS – REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS</u></b></p>	
No. 5	<p><b><u>LLANHILLETH PIT HEAD BATHS</u></b></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 Business and Regeneration.</p>	

The Corporate Director Regeneration and Environment advised that the report sought approval on a proposed way forward for the redevelopment of the Pithead Baths, Llanhilleth. The site was located in a prominent position in the community and had an ongoing negative impact on the local area due to its derelict condition. The Council had also received a number of dangerous structure complaints from local residents which had resulted in officers visiting the site on many occasions.

The Corporate Director added that previously reports had been presented with the view of taking the site forward for redevelopment. However, due to a lack of funding and the complicated land ownership the Council had not progressed with redevelopment. A number of options for the site was considered and following assessment it was identified that residential development would be the most desired. If this option was agreed officers would then proceed with wider consultation on the proposal with local residents and members as well as preparatory work to establish costs and processes for a formal Business Case.

The Corporate Director further gave an overview of discussions held at the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and advised that the preferred option was accepted.

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration recognised that the site had been an eyesore for the residents of Llanhilleth for a number of years and wished to extend thanks to officers on the work undertaken to bring forward the report. The Executive Member advised that it was our commitment to address areas of outstanding concern. The Executive Member welcomed the report which enabled the Council to proceed to the next stage to ascertain what was deliverable.

The Executive Member for Education supported the report and advised that she was fully aware of the issues the site had caused residents, as well as it being a local hotspot for flytipping. The Executive Member felt that the area was long overdue for investment and welcomed the report.

The Executive Member for Education referred to the consultation process and noted the importance of local engagement in order to address any concerns raised by residents.

The Leader welcomed the report and concurred that consultation was vital and key, particularly in the immediate surrounding. The Leader suggested the Executive along with officers from the Communications, Engagement and Regeneration Teams work together to ensure a robust consultation exercise. The Leader felt that it was also important to include tenants and residents associations as well as other local clubs or organisations.

The Leader added that it was our aspiration to resolve long standing issues which had caused the public concern.

The Corporate Director Regeneration and Environment concurred with the request in terms of the consultation exercise.

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration stressed the need move forward with urgency in order for work to commence and proposed Option 2, this proposal was seconded and it was

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report which contained information relating to the financial/business affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted and Option 2 be approved as contained in the report.



**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE –  
16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020**

**REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC AND COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

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

**Deputy Leader/Executive Member –  
Regeneration & Economic Development  
Councillor D. Davies**

**Executive Member – Education  
Councillor J. Collins**

**Executive Member – Environment  
Councillor J. Wilkins**

**Executive Member – Social Services  
Councillor J. Mason**

**WITH: Managing Director  
Interim Corporate Director of Education  
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance  
Communications, Marketing & Customer Access Manager**

**DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
No. 1	<p><b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>There were no apologies for absence reported.</p>	
No. 3	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
	<p><b><u>DECISION ITEMS – EDUCATION MATTERS</u></b></p>	
No. 4	<p><b><u>HOME TO SCHOOL AND POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY 2021/22: APPROVAL AND PUBLICATION (BY OCTOBER 1ST 2020)</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Education Transformation Manager.</p> <p>At the invitation of the Leader, the Interim Director of Education presented the report and outlined the amended policy changes in Appendix 1. The Interim Director emphasised that there would be no change to distance and reverting to statutory limits.</p> <p>The Executive Member for Education said Councils had a statutory duty to publish their Home to School and Post 16 transport policies by 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2020. She drew Members attention to Section 2.3 of the report which outlined that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council was more generous in respect of home to school transport entitlement than the Welsh Government statutory limits and this demonstrated the Council’s commitment to support pupils and learners.</p>	

The Leader commented that as part of the annual review a commitment had been given that the Council's distance limits would remain the same for the remainder of the current political administration and hoped this would give comfort to parents.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Executive Committee approved the Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy 2021/22 (**Appendix 1**) (Option 1).

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE –  
21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020**

**REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

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

**Deputy Leader/Executive Member –  
Regeneration & Economic Development  
Councillor D. Davies**

**Executive Member – Education  
Councillor J. Collins**

**Executive Member – Environment  
Councillor J. Wilkins**

**Executive Member – Social Services  
Councillor J. Mason**

**WITH: Corporate Director Environment and Regeneration  
Chief Officer Resources  
Communications, Marketing & Customer Access Manager  
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance**

**DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

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

<p><b>No. 2</b></p>	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from:-</p> <p>Managing Director; and Chief Officer Commercial</p>	
<p><b>No. 3</b></p>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
	<p><b><u>DECISION ITEMS – ENVIRONMENT MATTERS</u></b></p>	
<p><b>No. 5</b></p>	<p><b><u>REGIONAL WOOD WASTE RECYCLING FACILITY</u></b></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>The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services advised that the report provided an update on the development of an Outline Business Case for a Public Sector owned and operated Regional Wood Recycling Facility which would be led and located in Blaenau Gwent. The Business Case identified a viable opportunity for the public sector to set up and operate its own waste wood recycling facility in South East Wales which would realise significant cost savings, economic and environmental benefits for the public sector.</p> <p>The Corporate Director added that the report had been welcomed by Scrutiny and the preferred option had gained unanimous approval for recommendation.</p>	

The Executive Member added that this was the initial stage of the Business Case and further work would be undertaken as the project proceeded. The Executive Member welcomed the support from Welsh Government which would benefit recycling targets and the local economy.

The Leader concurred with the comments raised and felt that the request made for Blaenau Gwent to host a regional facility showed the level of confidence Welsh Government had built up in the Authority with regard to waste and recycling over the last 3½ years.

RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report which contained information relating to the financial/business affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted and Option 1 be approved as contained in the report.

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# Agenda Item 8

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.2020

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.2020

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

Portfolio Holder: **All Portfolio Holders**

Report Submitted by: **Cllr Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member  
Corporate 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)
X	x	29.09.20				14.10.20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To present the Executive Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Executive Work Programme is a key aspect of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and supports the requirements of the Constitution.
  - 2.2 The topics set out in the Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's recently revised Corporate Plan, agreed by the Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
  - 2.3 All Scrutiny Committees and the Council Forward Work Programmes have been aligned to the Executive Forward Work Programme.
  - 2.4 As the document is fluid there is flexibility to allow for regular review between the Chair and the Committee.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
  - 3.1 **Option 1**  
To agree the Forward Work Programme as presented for the Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
  - 3.2 **Option 2**  
To suggest any amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme.

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## Executive Committee Forward Work Programme

**Executive Meeting Date:** Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

**Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas:** Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020

\*Reports received after this date will be included on the next agenda of Executive

Decision: 5 Items  
Monitoring: 10 Items  
Information: 5 items

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
<b>DECISION ITEMS</b>				
<b>Portfolio:</b> Leader / Corporate Services				
Grants to Organisations	<b>Approval</b> To agree the Grants to Organisations.	Rhian Daly	N/A	N/A
<b>Portfolio:</b> Deputy Leader / Regeneration				
Brynmawr and Nantyglo Masterplan	<b>Decision</b> To approve the Brynmawr and Nantyglo Masterplan Document and recommend endorsement of a preferred development option.	Nick Landers / Amy Taylor	Regeneration – 21.10.20	N/A
New Destination Management Plan for 2020-2025	<b>Decision</b> To approve the new Destination Management Plan for 2020-2025.	Alyson Tippings/Moe Forouzan	Regeneration – 21.10.20	N/A
<b>Portfolio:</b> Education				
360* Safety Policy	<b>Decision</b> To adopt the ICT policy prior to distribution to School Governing bodies.	Michelle Jones	Joint Safeguarding – 08.10.2020	N/A
Education Safeguarding Policy	<b>Decision</b> To approve the Education Safeguarding Policy.	Michelle Jones	Joint Safeguarding – 08.10.2020	N/A
<b>MONITORING ITEMS</b>				
<b>Portfolio:</b> Leader / Corporate Services				
Communications Strategy Monitoring	<b>Performance Monitoring</b>	Anne-Louise Clark	Corporate Overview – 23.10.20	N/A

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
	To consider the performance of the Communication Strategy focus on the impact of the strategy during COVID19 Pandemic.			
Commercial Strategy Monitoring	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To consider performance of the Commercial Strategy, focus Strategic Commercial Board element. In depth look at each of the 5 elements	Anne-Louise Clark	Corporate Overview – 23.10.20	N/A
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/21	To provide members with an expenditure forecast at the end of quarter 2 across all portfolios for 2020/21.	Rhian Hayden	Joint Budget – 23.11.20	N/A
Forecast Capital Expenditure 2019/20	To provide details of each portfolio's forecast capital expenditure against allocation at the end of quarter 2	Rhian Hayden	Joint Budget – 23.11.20	N/A
Forecast of General and Earmarked Reserves	To present report at the end of quarter 2 detailing the actual and forecast use of general and ear marked reserves.	Rhian Hayden	Joint Budget – 23.11.20	N/A
<b>Portfolio: Environment</b>				
Update on Flood Risk Management Plan	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To report progress on the Flood Management Plan.	Carl Powell / Wayne Jervis	Community Services – 19.10.2020	N/A
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) 2019/20 Annual Report	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Annual report of the implementation of the Environment Act and the Council's Biodiversity duties throughout 2019/20 and consideration of the proposed actions for 2020/21.	Chris Engel	Community Services – 19.10.2020	N/A
<b>Portfolio: Education</b>				
Provisional School Performance	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide a summary of performance in line with accountability changes to ensure that children and young people are provided with the best start in life.	Michelle Jones	Education and Learning – 03.11.2020	N/A
Outcome of Strategic Review on Leisure Services	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To outline the outcome of the review and proposals on the monitoring of Aneurin Leisure Trust in the future.	Lynn Phillips	Education and Learning – 03.11.2020	N/A

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
Response to COVID-19	<b>Progress Update</b> Members to be informed of the response undertaken by Education to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Lynn Phillips	Education and Learning – 03.11.2020	N/A
<b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b>				
Children Looked After	<b>Information Only</b> Members to be informed of the progress in relation to the Children Looked After strategy.	Tanya Evans	Social Services – 05.11.2020	N/A
Integrated Care Fund	<b>Information Only</b> Members to be informed of the future and progress of the Integrated Care Fund.	Alyson Hoskins	Social Services – 05.11.2020	N/A
Review of staff attendance 2019/20, as at end of March 2020	<b>Information Only</b> Members to be informed of the annual review of staff sickness absence.	Andrea Prosser	Corporate Overview – 24.10.2020	N/A
Welsh Language	<b>Information Only</b> To receive the Annual Welsh Language report.	Andrew Parker	Corporate Overview – 24.10.20	N/A

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO:** **THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**REPORT SUBJECT:** **GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS – 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 2020**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** **RHIAN DALY**

**LEAD OFFICER/  
DEPARTMENT** **CHIEF OFFICER RESOURCES,  
RESOURCES**

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**ABERTILLERY**

**Abertillery Ward- Councillor J. Holt**

1. Zion Miners Chapel £200

**Llanhilleth Ward – Councillors J. Collins & L. Parsons**

1. Brynithel Allotment Society £100  
2. Llanhilleth Homing Society £200  
3. Zion Miners Chapel £75

**EBBW VALE**

**Ebbw Vale Rassau Ward – Councillors G. Davies**

1. Rassau OAP Building Fund £250

**CHIEF OFFICER RESOURCES**

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# Agenda Item 10

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Cardiff Capital Region & Welsh Government Aspire Roll Out**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr D Davies, Executive Member Regeneration and Economic Development**

Report Submitted by: **Richard Crook, Corporate Director Regeneration and Community 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)
19.08.20	20.08.20	29.09.20			08.09.20	14.10.20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is:

- 1.1 To gain endorsement for the submission of a proposal to Cardiff Capital Region to roll out the Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme and to become the host authority.
- 1.2 To gain endorsement for the submission of a proposal to Welsh Government to merge the Aspire Blaenau Gwent and Aspire Merthyr Tydfil programmes from September 2021, aiming to retain funding for both local authorities to work with the education sectors aiming to facilitate apprenticeships within the manufacturing sector.
- 1.3 Both proposals will work in parallel with each other under the same management structure which will be cost effective for both funders.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Aspire Shared Apprentice Programme was initially setup in 2015, with funding from WG, as a response to identified market failure within the engineering and advanced manufacturing sector within Blaenau Gwent. It proved so successful that it was expanded to include provision in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in 2017 and the project has been extended to September 2021 in both localities.
- 2.2 In 2019 it won the '**Large** Employer of The Year' award at the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2019 (AAC), which took place at the International Convention Centre, Newport. The award category entitled 'Large and Macro Employer of the Year' recognises and celebrates the employer's commitment to developing their workforce through apprenticeships, whilst also supporting their employees during training

### 2.3 **The Aspire Offer to Apprentices across the CCRC D Region**

- The programme will provide an accessible platform for young people to access bespoke apprenticeship opportunities in the region facilitated by a programme management team liaising with local colleges and apprenticeship learning provider.
- The Aspire Team will provide a range of support from advice on their application form; to encouragement, preparatory guidance for interviews and the selection processes. Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applicants at all stages of the application and recruitment processes and signposting will be provided to other similar advertised vacancies that may be of interest.
- The successful candidates will become part of a cohort that gives them an identity and peer to peer support in the first few months of their working life as an apprentice.
- They will also be supported by a mentor throughout the term of the apprenticeship helping them resolve educational and social impediments to the completion of their apprenticeship. The mentors will also act as a point of mediation between the apprentice, the employer and the educational provider.

### 2.4 **The Aspire Offer to Businesses across the CCRC D region**

- One of the main appeals of the Shared Apprenticeship Programme to businesses is that flexible approach that can be offered, depending on business needs and capacity.
- The main attributes of the Programme are:
  - The creation of 'Partnership Agreement' between industry and the Programme
  - Continued investment in business engagement building upon local level connections
  - The Aspire Team undertake the recruitment process for employers
  - Employers make final recruitment decisions
  - All apprenticeship level positions are paid for
  - Regular reports on the progress of individual apprentices
  - Short surveys are completed at the end of the apprenticeship and feedback is provided to the apprentice and employer
  - The employer has a qualified employee to help take the business forward.

### 2.5 To date the Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme has:

- Recruited and supported 79 apprentices placed in 20 Businesses
- 55% of apprentices within cohorts 1 to 5 have progressed onto higher education / HNC.

- 100% of apprentices on cohort 1 have been employed, of which 64% retained within host employer
  - Framework completed – cohort 1 – 94%
  - 100% of apprentices in cohorts 1-5 have had the opportunity to rotate to another company to fulfil skills gaps
- 2.6 With the submission of the joint proposal costs can be streamlined and alongside the City Deal Proposal become more a cost effective model with the programme management being led by the existing teams in place. The models would have the capabilities to operate across the city region with the additional recruitment of mentors.
- 2.7 It is envisaged that not all 10 authorities may require the support to facilitate apprenticeships, the programme may specifically operate in sectors. It is anticipated that the semi-conductor cluster and the pharmaceutical clusters across the region will most definitely benefit from the programme
- 2.8 It is suggested in both proposals that Blaenau Gwent will be the Lead authority, this will mean that the authority will become the joint employer with host companies across the region.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 This report has been supported by RCSLT and CLT and the report was also presented to the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> September who supported Option 1.

#### 3.2 **Option 1: (Preferred option):**

Consider and endorse the submission of two proposals, one to City Deal and the other to Welsh Government by the end of summer 2020.

Approval provide a strategic context and clear focus to support a partnership and collaborative approach to implementing specific actions and associated Employment and Skills delivery.

#### 3.3 **Option 2:**

Do not consider or endorse the submission of proposals

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

- Cardiff Capital Region: Regional Skills Partnership Employment and Skills Plan mentions the Shared Apprenticeship Programme as a tool to support the achievement of the WG apprenticeship target.
- Tech Valleys
- Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan: Forge new pathways to prosperity through employment and skills development
- Corporate Plan: Economic Development and Regeneration
- Regeneration Priorities: employment and skills, enterprise and innovation.

## 5. Implications Against Each Option

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

#### Short Term

To date there has been no confirmation of funding post 2022 and this is Welsh Government funding.

#### Long Term

It is anticipated that the Welsh Government Proposal will be for £2.2m over 6 Years

The City Deal Proposal will be for £2.6m - £3.3m over 6 academic years' dependant on the level of financial support to SMEs.

It is anticipated that each Local Authority will contribute to the running of the programme within their respective authority circa £20k— as with Blaenau Gwent & Merthyr currently.

Internal Finance Team have been party to initial discussions and the proposals and further meetings are planned to scrutinise the funding and to ensure all programme management costs are covered.

### 5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

Demand for the service across the region doesn't materialise; mitigated through market research, early business/LA engagement and a phased approach to delivery.

Demand for the service exceeds resource available; this will be managed within the realms of the funding, some areas may not require the service and because the programme will be centrally funded the programme management team can allocate resource where required.

Duplication of provisions/lack of engagement from FEs; mitigated through early engagement with providers and colleges. Over the last few months a number of meetings have been held to discuss apprenticeship allocation and how best Aspire could potentially facilitate opportunities and support recruitment and compliment their service.

### 5.3 *Legal*

Legal advice and joint contracts of employment have been agreed for the programme currently and it is expected that these will remain the same for future host employers.

In addition to contracts of employment, there are training agreements in place with the apprentice, Aspire, host employer and training provider.

## 5.4 **Human Resources**

Throughout the process and discussions with both funders, conversations and advice has been sought from OD.

The proposal offers efficiencies between two local authorities through one management team to oversee the regional delivery.

The intention is to:

- Retain BGCBC team within the structure
- MTCBC – retain current staffing team along with the recruitment of an additional mentor
- All officers associated with the regional delivery would be employed by BGCBC

There are ongoing discussions with finance to explore the options and whether the funding can cover any costs associated with any future redundancy cost pressures.

All staff within the programme management team will have fixed term contracts for the duration of the programme which is up to 6 years.

Additional team members will be offered fixed term contracts for 1-2 years' dependant on the caseload.

Continuous employment carried over from other LAs will be a further consideration, if a secondment opportunity is not achievable.

Should there be any consideration to TUPE arrangements for staff from current partner LAs, OD would be engaged as part of the negotiations prior to any formal agreement being made.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

To date the Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Scheme has:

- Recruited and supported 79 apprentices placed in 20 Businesses
- 55% of apprentices within cohorts 1 to 5 have progressed onto higher education / HNC.
- 100% of apprentices on cohort 1 have been employed, of which 64% retained within host employer
- Framework completed – cohort 1 – 94%
- 100% of apprentices in cohorts 1-5 have had the opportunity to rotate to another company to fulfil skills gaps

Key statistics are outlined within the plan providing a baseline against which delivery will be measured.

Measures will be developed to complement specific actions within the plan.

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

- Recruit and support over 300 apprentices across the region over 6 years
- 20% of apprentices to progress onto higher education / HNC.
- 70% of apprentices to be employed within host employer
- 100% of apprentices to have had the opportunity to rotate to another company to fulfil skills gaps

The Employment and Skills plan will outline specific priorities and associated actions to;

- Increase the number of employment opportunities available
- Increase the range of employment opportunities available
- Ensure appropriate employment provision to support people into work and progress once in work
- Train and upskill local residents aligned to demand or growth sectors
- Raised awareness of opportunities to support educational attainment and aspiration
- Increased employment and skills opportunities secured through community benefits.

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

To date the emerging proposals have been developed in consultation/ discussions with:

- Merthyr Tydfil Council
- Welsh Government
- City Deal
- Regional Skills Partnership
- Coleg Gwent
- Coleg Y Cymoedd
- Coleg Merthyr Tydfil
- Torfaen Council
- RCT Council

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

- The proposals aim to meet the needs businesses; future skills planning and fulfil current skills gaps. The success within two local authorities demonstrate the need for a coordinated approach to facilitate the recruitment for business and engagement with learning providers.
- The team are continually working with education to identify progression routes onto higher education as industry requires these higher level skills and with this apprenticeship pathway it provides alternative routes to employment for young people

- The proposals are offering employers and local authorities to demonstrate the employment opportunities within local areas providing skilled young people locally and meeting regional needs

#### 6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Within the plan there is acknowledgement of current employment, skills and attainment figures relating to the local population and our relatively weak performance comparative to other areas within the region. The plan seeks to address this by putting in place measures to address current performance.

#### 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

- The proposals are integral to collaborative working across the city regain and with individual local authorities, that is the key to its success, to date there has been RSP engagement, partner LA and FE discussions, business engagement,
- There are currently Joint Contracts of employment in place with all current employers with apprentices and these documents will be shared and part of the proposal,
- It is vital that the team works closely as they have done in the past with FE. It will be important to utilise the apprenticeship contract within individual providers for each area. Relationship with the FE to support delivery

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

The contents of the plan will link closely with Education.

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

The plan is aimed at ensuring Blaenau Gwent Prospers, this is inclusive of all in our efforts to raise skills and employment levels for residents.

### 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 A baseline, aligned to the proposals will be developed to measure the medium and long term impact of the programme. An annual review and update on progress will be prepared and reported through scrutiny, executive and the PSB.

#### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- N/A

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# Agenda Item 11

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**  
Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**  
Report Subject: **Integrated Responsive Transport Pilot**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr D Davies, Executive Member Regeneration and Economic Development**  
Report Submitted by: **Owen Ashton, Service Manager Business & 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)
19.08.20	20.08.20	29.09.20			08.09.20	14.10.20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek Members views on the purpose and scope of the Integrated Responsive Transport (IRT) Pilot project and approve the project to progress in Blaenau Gwent.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1. The Welsh Government has identified Blaenau Gwent as an area that would benefit from a pilot scheme that it is running across three local authority areas in Wales. Alongside Pembrokeshire and Conwy Councils, Blaenau Gwent will benefit from piloting a new type of public transport that will introduce hybrid service/ bookable journeys that interconnect with rail and other commercial routes and will form part of Transport for Wales' 'Fflecsi' service.
- 2.2. The IRT 'Fflecsi' pilot service will be able to run outside the usual running times of the commercial services to enable travel to shift work in Blaenau Gwent's industrial estates, will link with the main bus routes, and connect with the rail provision to Cardiff.
- 2.3. The project will pilot a new way of delivering bus services in Blaenau Gwent, working closely with the existing commercial service providers and plugging gaps within these services. The project is also working with Job Centre Plus and will aim to improve access to employment for those without access to a car. During times in the day when the demand for IRT service is lower, the buses may be available for journeys for shopping trips or other community provision. There is also scope for the project to support provision for school transport where this is needed – this will help support the viability of the project longer-term.

- 2.4. Two buses will be procured as part of the project and will initially operate in the Ebbw Fach and Ebbw Fawr valleys, this pilot route is supported by transport data. As a result of Covid-19, what were once deemed commercially viable routes for operators are increasingly seen as 'un-commercial'. The precise timings and coverage of the service is therefore still being detailed in consultation with commercial and other operators.
- 2.5. The project will be overseen by a Programme Board made up of BGCBC officers along with representatives from Transport for Wales, Welsh Government, the Community Transport Association and Job Centre Plus (JCP).
- 2.6. The pilot project will provide an opportunity to test the demand for particular routes and services, and will aim to provide a greater level of flexibility and certainty for users. It is hoped that the project will develop routes to such an extent that their patronage creates a sustainable and integrated transport provision, which can evolve with the change in needs and patterns of travel as the area recovers post-Covid-19.
- 2.7. The project will also tie in to the overall transport strategy for Blaenau Gwent, by providing data to improve our understanding of travel patterns and where appropriate, integrate innovative technologies to enable us to enhance and adapt transport services to serve the current and future needs of residents.

### **3. Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1. The Regeneration Scrutiny Committee supported Option 1 at its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- 3.2. **Option 1 – progress with the pilot project to introduce IRT to BG**  
That we progress with the pilot project and introduce IRT to Blaenau Gwent
- 3.3. **Option 2 – to not progress with the IRT pilot**  
That we do not undertake the pilot project in BG.

#### **Preferred Option**

Option 1 – to proceed with the pilot project for BG.

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

- 4.1. This pilot project supports the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-22 Outcome Statements:
- Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities
  - Support a fairer sustainable economy and community
  - To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities

## 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Funding of £286,938 has already been secured from WG to cover the purchase of the two buses and the project development costs. The project delivery costs will be fully funded over two years by the Welsh Government, once the cost model and profile has been finalised – this is currently being worked up. The estimated project start date is October 2020. During and following completion of the project, an evaluation exercise will be undertaken to establish whether to continue the project.

### 5.2. ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has limited experience of running a public transport service. It is therefore proposed that an operator is procured to run the project on the Council's behalf and that a dedicated officer is funded to oversee the pilot – this will be fully funded by Welsh Government for the duration of the project.

### 5.3. ***Legal***

Prior to procuring the project, a contract will be drawn up in consultation with colleagues in Procurement and Legal, establishing the requirements of the service to be provided. This contract will form the basis of the Council's legal agreement with the successful operator.

### 5.4. ***Human Resources***

As noted above, the Council will procure an operator to run the project on its behalf. There will be a need for a dedicated officer to oversee the project – this post will likely be part-time and will be fully funded through the project.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1. ***Performance Information and Data***

N/A

### 6.2. ***Expected outcome for the public***

The project will pilot an Integrated Responsive Transport approach in Blaenau Gwent, aimed at improving access to employment and services and plug gaps within the existing transport service provision. By working with a range of partners, it is hoped that the project can establish a sustainable and attractive public transport offer for local residents.

### 6.3. ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The project presents an opportunity to address some of the challenges facing residents in accessing employment and services via public transport. The project will work with a range of partners to establish a longer-term solution as we move towards a low carbon economy and a post Covid-19 economy.

### 6.4. ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The success of the project is predicated on successful collaboration and partnership working with a range of partners and stakeholders. By working

closely with Transport for Wales, the project will draw on a wide range of experience across Wales and the rest of the UK and by working with JCP the project can target services where they are most needed. Similarly, there is a need for us to work collaboratively with current operators and residents to encourage people to use the services as ultimately, the project's success will depend on whether or not it is used.

6.5. ***Integration (across service areas)***

The project will provide opportunities to support services across the Council. As has been mentioned, there is scope to allow the project to support school transport and, once the core timetable is established, there may also be scope to support other services such as Social Services.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be integrated into the project including gateway reviews at key stages. The project is currently establishing baseline data which will be used to assess the success of the project as part of its evaluation on project completion.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

*None*

# Agenda Item 12

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Strategic Housing; CCRCD Viability Gap Funding**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr D Davies, Executive Member Regeneration and Economic Development**

Report Submitted by: **Richard Crook, Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services**  
**Bethan McPherson, Team Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
12.08.20	20.08.20	29.09.20			08.09.20	14.10.20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- Outline the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) Viability Gap Fund opportunity.
- Update on the current position in responding to the CCRCD Viability Gap Fund opportunity; including identification of potential development sites.
- Seek approval to progress business case(s) and associated work; in order to determine viability gap and support an application to CCRCD.

## 2. Scope and Background

### 2.1 CCRCD Viability Gap Funding opportunity

2.1.1 CCRCD have developed a £35million Viability Gap Fund, a targeted funding programme to bring forward new homes on key strategic housing sites across South East Wales. The fund is open to all 10 Local Authority areas within the region, with primary objectives to; unlock stalled sites that are unviable for housing delivery and enhance the long-term growth prospects and competitiveness of the region.

2.1.2 The capital investment is available to support Local Authority led applications, with specified infrastructure or remediation interventions that will assist in closing a proven viability gap, related to the identified site.

2.1.3 Whilst Local Authority partners must assume primary responsibility for the investment, funding can be awarded to sites owned by either the private or public sector, and sites in mixed and multiple ownership.

- 2.1.4 The Viability Gap Fund should be considered as a last resort, evidencing that all other opportunities have been exhausted and the development would not progress without CCRCD intervention.
- 2.1.5 CCRCD have outlined clear eligibility requirements that each LA and partners will need to satisfy when presenting development sites and submitting associated business cases, which are outlined within Appendix 2.
- 2.1.6 Submitted business cases meeting the eligibility criteria will be assessed and required to demonstrate; Value for money, overall cost of infrastructure / remediation capital investment required, a viability analysis which shows clearly the viability gap, an assessment of the connectivity impacts; and whether they will provide a commitment to providing for a portion of the site (target 10%) to be developed by SME developers.

## **2.2 CCRCD Viability Gap Fund – Revenue Funding**

- 2.2.1 The CCRCD have also made a small revenue fund (£500k) available to those LA Partners with limited capacity/resource, in order to support the preparation of capital funding applications.

## **2.3 CCRCD Viability Gap Fund Timeline**

- 2.3.1 The fund was originally intended to launch in April 2020, which has been delayed, with a revised timeline communicated;
- Fund launch – August 2020
  - Business case submission – Dec 2020
  - Decision – Jan 2021
- 2.3.2 The supporting revenue fund will be available and open to applications until March 2021. A maximum of 3 applications per LA are invited.

## **2.4 Blaenau Gwent position and potential sites**

- 2.4.1 This presents a challenging timeline within which to develop the business case and associated works to demonstrate a viability gap and need for CCRCD intervention (appendix 1 – draft application).
- 2.4.2 In recent years' private sector interest in progressing residential development has been limited in Blaenau Gwent, especially where there hasn't been a partnership approach and associated grant intervention. Aligned to the low demand, commissioning SI works (on BGCBC owned land) to determine viability has not been undertaken; and therefore is not readily available to support a submission to the fund.
- 2.4.3 Based on the eligibility criteria, the housing delivery group has considered known development sites and undertaken a broad assessment to identify those sites that in principle meet the fund requirements. These are identified

in Appendix 2; with the Ashvale Site currently identified as the site most aligned to the criteria and in a position to progress.

- 2.4.4 Utilising the available revenue fund would assist in providing a dedicated resource to support the project delivery team in satisfying the viability gap fund requirements within the restricted timescales. To access the funding, match funding would need to be identified and a meeting with finance has been scheduled.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 RCSLT, CLT and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee have identified Option 1 as the preferred option

#### 3.1.1 **Option 1**

To note the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) Viability Gap Fund opportunity; including the current position within Blaenau Gwent in respect of identifying potential development sites.

To approve continued exploration of the identified sites in order to determine the viability gap; and where appropriate progress business case(s) and associated work to support an application submission to CCRCD Viability Gap Fund.

#### 3.1.2 **Option 2**

To note the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) Viability Gap Fund opportunity; including the current position Blaenau Gwent in respect of identifying potential development sites.

To recommend alternative sites for consideration, to determine viability gap; and where appropriate progress business case(s) and associated work to support an application submission to CCRCD Viability Gap Fund.

#### 3.1.3 **Option 3**

To note the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) Viability Gap Fund opportunity; including the current position Blaenau Gwent in respect of identifying potential development sites.

Recommend that Blaenau Gwent does not pursue the development opportunity through the CCRCD Viability Gap Fund.

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

- 4.1 **Corporate Plan Priorities** Working with private developers and RSL partners to provide a variety of homes.

- 4.2 **Blaenau Gwent Well Being Plan** Providing safe, appropriate and affordable housing to local residents will underpin the 5 objectives outlined within the Wellbeing plan.

## 5. Implications Against Each Option

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

5.1.1 There is a housing delivery group, led by Strategic Housing to take forward the work and potential submission to the CCRCV Viability Gap Fund. The capacity of the team is a potential risk; a submission to the available revenue fund could assist in providing additional capacity/specialist resource. To access the funding match funding is required (50% up to £25k); with options being explored with the finance team.

5.1.2 A further financial consideration is potential funding to undertake initial viability/SI works required in order to support the application. Some of these costs could be recoverable. Consideration to availability of funding from the BGCBC Capital Funding Programme will be required and discussions are scheduled with finance. Depending on the site, some of the costs may be met through private/public partners; or external funding opportunities e.g. TRI.

5.1.3 Some of the sites identified have associated Land Reclamation Grant repayable to WG, this has been highlighted to the CCRCV Project Team for consideration in terms of how it would work alongside any investment funding via the viability gap fund.

### 5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

5.2.1 There are a number of risks associated with the options presented. This section outlines these risks and measures in place that seek to mitigate.

5.2.2 The timeline for preparing and submitting an application (based on known viability gap); and subsequent implementation on site is tight. Limiting the number of sites and selecting those ablest to progress at pace would assist in mitigating this risk. Ensuring appropriate resource (officers) would further mitigate the risk.

5.2.3 Agreement of strategic sites to take forward; not all development sites within Blaenau Gwent meet the fund criteria e.g. min number of units, deliverability and connectivity and have been discounted by the housing delivery group on this basis. To mitigate perception that development will not occur on those discounted sites, alternative approaches to progress will be explored.

5.2.4 Demonstrating a viability gap; a critical part of the submission is the ability to demonstrate a viability gap, which without CCRCV intervention would prohibit the site from progressing. There is a risk that the associated works will not identify a sufficient viability gap to support an application. In this circumstance, alternative approaches would be explored to bring forward development e.g. open market private development, alternative funding including private finance, Social Housing Grant.



- 5.2.5 Developer engagement and agreement to work on an open book principle is a requirement of the Viability Gap Fund; willingness of developers to work on this basis may be a challenge, especially on sites where there is currently no developer engagement. Similarly managing land owner/developer expectations (value/profit) will be a further challenge. Positive and early engagement will be important to identifying appropriate and willing developers, in order to mitigate this risk.
- 5.2.6 CCRCD promotion around the fund may stimulate interest from developer's/land owners of a given site, seeking to pursue the investment opportunity. Officers would manage these enquires on a cases by case basis; against known criteria and would report and new/additional opportunities.
- 5.2.7 Non submission; As areas such as Blaenau Gwent are a priority for the fund, not submitting an application may attract negative views/perceptions. Proactive exploration will help mitigate however noting the above risks will influence our ability to submit an application that meets the criteria and timescales.
- 5.3 **Legal**  
LA will be the lead partner, responsibility for administration including state aid compliance sits with BGCBC; as an authority will be required to ensure the necessary agreements are in place with identified partners. Legal support, advice and guidance will be required.
- 5.4 **Human Resources**  
Housing Delivery Group will oversee the work involved in developing an application and associated submission; utilising relevant departments as necessary (Regeneration, Planning Policy, Development Control, Estates, Tech Services, Procurement). Specialist resource would assist especially in satisfying the tight time lines.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**  
The key performance indicators are identified within the report and include;  
Units delivered, value for money, providing access to strategic employment centres
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**  
New residential development within Blaenau Gwent  
Homes with good connectivity to employment opportunities  
Employment and Training opportunities  
Local business supply chains to support the local economy
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**  
CCRCD will be formally launching the Viability Gap Fund Opportunity, which may stimulate additional interest from land owners and developers to work with BGCBC to bring forward development. Engagement with existing partners on the identified sites will continue. Consultation and engagement

would also form part of any planning applications associated with a given development site.

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

The funding opportunity provides a stimulus to explore available development sites and determine a known viability gap, which can be addressed in order to develop new homes; meeting WG build targets and contribute to local aspirations (increasing local population, generating additional income for the Local Authority via Council Tax return)

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The fund encourages the authority to determine a known viability gap for development sites; establishing this will enable the authority to explore the most appropriate measure to bring forward development in a timely manner.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

To facilitate the opportunities collaboration with partners will be critical and may involve; Private developer's/land owners, Registered Social Landlords

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

Housing Delivery Group consists of representation from Regeneration, Planning Policy, Development Control, Estates, and Housing Solutions. Pursuing opportunities to bring forward quality housing within Blaenau Gwent brings wider benefits and the need for close collaboration with other departments, not least Finance, Education, Social Services and Housing Solutions.

6.8 ***EqIA***

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 CCRCDD have identified governance and assessment procedures to administer the fund; including set deadlines.

Reports relating to any successful bid to the fund and associated timelines would be prepared and submitted.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

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**Viability-Gap Application Form**

<b>1</b>	<b>Contact and identification information</b>	
1.1	Name of Local Authority acting as project sponsor (if a shared bid, list all Local Authorities participating in the bid)	
1.2	Primary contact information of Local Authority project sponsor	Name:

		Telephone:
		Email:

<b>2</b>	<b>Site Information</b>	
2.1	Site details	Site Name:  Site Locations: <i>Address, and easting, northing (coordinates)</i>
2.2	Site size (Ha)	Overall site size (ha), gross and net developable:  Overall net developable housing area (ha) (i.e. net of other use classes):  <i>Is the proposal on greenfield or brownfield land? If both, what is the split?</i>
2.3	Current use class of site	What is the current use class of the site?
2.4	Planning permission  (including surveys, and all other regulatory requirements)	Does the site have planning permission for the proposed development? Please include planning references if available  Is the site allocated in the Local Plan (if applicable)?  If not, please provide a description of a clear route to proposed planning permission

2.5	<p>Strategic importance of the site</p>           <p>Alignment of development of the site to CCR strategic objectives</p>	<p><i>Please provide a qualitative overview of the importance of the site to the Local Authority.</i></p>   <p><i>The site does not need to be allocated in the Local Plan (given the viability constraint), but LA Partners should be able to identify route map to secure inclusion in the Local Plan and/or detailed planning permission.</i></p>   <p>Provide a qualitative analysis of how the site aligns with priorities established in the Cardiff Capital Region Economic Plan...</p>
2.6	<p>What is the nature of the viability problem at the site(s)?</p>	<p>Referring to Appendix I (Fund Eligibility), please provide a description of the nature of the viability constraint in relation to an eligible area of funding.</p>
2.8	<p>What is the likelihood of this development going forward in the absence of securing funding from the CCR?</p>	<p><i>Please provide evidence from the viability analysis to support</i></p>
2.9	<p>Please outline what other sources of finance and funding developers have considered to bring this site forward.</p>	<p><i>In your response, please highlight evidence from the viability-analysis to show why alternative sources of finance are not a viable delivery option.</i></p>  <p><i>Please detail any other funding awarded towards delivery of the site in the last 10 years</i></p>  <p><i>This includes both private finance (e.g. bank loan) and public grant funding (e.g. Welsh Government loans).</i></p>  <p><i>What other delivery options have been considered and why have these alternatives been rejected?</i></p>
2.10	<p>What type of intervention is required to bring this site forward?</p>  <p><i>e.g. physical infrastructure including road / highways, rail crossing, public land assembly, site remediation etc.</i></p>	<p><i>Detail the specific investment-type required to solve the viability-gap on site</i></p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Site Assessment</b>	

3.1	Please provide a full open-book viability analysis undertaken in accordance with Appendix that proves the scale of the funding required to achieve viability on site.	<p><i>Please ensure this provides:</i></p> <p><i>Calculations with scenarios/ sensitivity analysis. Please provide assumptions on GDV, build costs, externals, professional fees, sales costs, finance costs, contingencies and developers profit.</i></p> <p><i>Please also provide:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A List of the professional/ consultancy reports commissioned on this site to date.</i></li> <li>• <i>The number of homes to be provided on site. Will any further homes be unlocked on subsequent phases?</i></li> <li>• <i>An assessment of how land value assumptions align with knowledge of the local land market</i></li> <li>• <i>Breakdown of the funding components required, providing an indication of why these are State Aid compliant</i></li> <li>• <i>Proposed number of units and tenure split.</i></li> <li>• <i>Purchase price details</i></li> </ul>
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		<p><i>Are you in receipt of all technical/ professional advice? if not, please explain what is outstanding?</i></p> <p><i>Have you obtained quotations for the remediation/ infrastructure works? Please provide evidence if available</i></p>
3.2	Please provide evidence of alignment with local policy	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Are you promoting a policy compliant scheme, please provide details. Please provide details with reference to viability analysis</i>
3.3	Please provide an overview of the site's connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please describe the connectivity to the local employment centre via public sector transport</i>
3.4	Please provide a red line boundary of the site, indicating the developable areas and use classes the subject of your application	
<b>4</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>	
4.1	Please provide delivery timelines for completion of the Viability-Gap Funded investment	<p><i>Project Start Date:</i></p> <p><i>Project End Date:</i></p>

4.2	Please provide a development schedule for when housing will be delivered on site	<p><i>Please provide the project start date (for housing delivery) and yearly completion volumes for housing.</i></p> <p><i>N.B. CCR will prioritise development sites that accelerate housing delivery</i></p>
4.3	<p>Please provide a report on title for the entire site to confirm that there are no barriers / restriction to the proposed development and all requisite rights and easements have been secured.</p> <p>If required, please provide multiple reports to align with the overall red line boundary map</p>	<p><i>Provide as attachment (s)</i></p> <p><i>Must include:</i></p> <p><i>Names of owners of land</i></p> <p><i>If private companies, please provide company name and address</i></p> <p><i>Details of any restrictive covenants or other barriers</i></p> <p><i>Dates of when current land ownerships came into their current state.</i></p>
4.4	Please identify any other relevant development partners involved in the scheme i.e. housing developers, third party infrastructure providers (e.g. Network Rail, highway authority, contractors).	<p><i>Please detail any third-party approvals or third-party investments that might be require in order for the project to proceed, or in order to unlock the viability constraints</i></p> <p><i>(e.g. Network Rail approvals)</i></p>
4.5	Please provide a high-level cash flow for draw down of funding and housing delivery.	<p><i>The amount of any funding award will take account of predicted cash flows for the schemes, expected developer contributions and the size of grant needed.</i></p>
4.6	If funding is awarded, please identify a lead and senior officer who will be responsible for monitoring the delivery of the scheme.	<p><i>Please provide their name and role within your organisation.</i></p>
4.7	Please outline the main risks to the project as a whole along with the corresponding mitigating steps that you will take to minimise these risks.	<p><i>Please provide a project risk matrix for the overall site, with specific reference to resolving the viability constraint – including risks and issues (quantified where appropriate), and their proposed mitigation</i></p>



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CCRC D Viability Gap Fund; BG shortlist of sites

Site	Within CCRC D Region	Dwelling Number (40-250)	Connectivity			Regional Employment Centre	Other funding exhausted	Known Viability Gap	Deliverability (within 12 months)	Comments
			Public (rail/bus)	Road	Active Travel					
Ashvale	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Unknown	Potentially	Private developer engaged, initial SI works identifying a grouting requirement, public/private land ownership/interest. Sec 106 may be a further consideration to viability. The viability work should be known within the timelines, to support any application. Proceed as a potential gap fund site	
Rhyd Y Blew	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes	Unknown	Private ownership, Sec 106 a previous constraint to the development, land owner aspiration around value unknown. CCRC D promotion may stimulate engagement.	
Six Bells	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Unknown	Potentially	BGCBC ownership, no Sis for the site, anticipate abnormal s, options appraisal being prepared on the approaches available. Not to proceed through CCRC D, explore alternative routes to development.	
Warn Turn	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Private ownership, development aspirations, potentially not within the available timeline, no active engagement. Call for interest may generate re-engagement.	
Park Hill	Yes	Potentially				Unknown			Call for interest may generate re-engagement.	
Welsh School Site, Brynmawr	Yes	No*	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Enquiries being made with City Deal; Current proposal is social rent, Number of units is too low for City Deal investment (double checking). Also the proportion of 10% SME development may be a factor (informal discussion with RSL to determine) significant grant requirement due to abnormal s and infrastructure. Charitable land matter to resolve. Social Housing Grant still being pursued as an alternative funding stream. Proceed as a potential gap fund site, subject to eligibility checks with CCRC D	

CCRC D Viability Gap Fund - Assumptions:

- Sites capable of delivering between 40 and 350 housing units.
- Above the minimum funding request of £1m.
- Able to demonstrate a Viability-Gap.
- Deliverable within 36 months of the funding award (at least for the phase of development supported by the Viability-Gap Funding), with all funding support drawn-down within this period.
- Able to commit to implement an overage arrangement where 'excess profit' conditions are met.
- Able to commence housing delivery (i.e. first unit commencements) within 12 months of funding award.
- Able to complete all required due diligence and demonstrate that the site is capable of development.

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# Agenda Item 13

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Economy – Post COVID-19 Economic Recovery**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr David Davies, Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development**

Report Submitted by: **Ellie Fry, Head of Regeneration and Development**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
04.09.2020		29.09.20			23.09.2020	14.10.2020		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out the proposed strategy that Blaenau Gwent will adopt in response to the COVID19 pandemic to support the sectors and businesses in the County Borough as a progress update on the ongoing work taking place locally and feeding into the regional initiatives.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The COVID19 pandemic and lockdown have disrupted business and employment across Wales and the UK. The trading of most companies has been disrupted causing both short and long term issues across many sectors.
- 2.2 This report looks at the background of data collated from various organisations and think tanks and then applies modelling to look at the possible unemployment figures for BG. It also considers all the businesses that need assistance and those that can add most to the local economy for the future.
- 2.3 The strategy for recovery of the local economy does not include over £18m that has been invested into the economy through the various funds that have been made available to businesses and administered through Welsh Government and the Council (Economic Development and Finance teams.)
- 2.4 Figures from NatWest Business Survey Quarter 2 2020 indicated that:
- 76% of businesses in Wales were trading during lockdown; a higher proportion were trading at a far lower turnover than prior to the lockdown, and especially compared to the other three nations.
  - 62% saw a decrease in turnover (versus 58% for the UK) with 27% losing half or more of their sales (versus 23% for the UK).
  - For all businesses trading, 6% reported that their turnover had decreased to some extent compared with normal, with a quarter of trading businesses reporting turnover had decreased by more than 50%.

- 80% of large businesses (250+ employees) continue to trade, one in five temporarily closed - may be due to the higher proportion of these firms being in sectors like manufacturing and construction.
- Small firms (< 250 employees) experienced a marginally higher decrease in turnover although a greater proportion have lost more than 50% of their sales.
- By sector, the highest levels of current business activity were found in higher level professional services, reflected in the ease of working from home for employees.
- Two sectors hit hardest - accommodation and food service; and arts, entertainment and recreation - 4 out of 5 firms temporarily closed or paused with more than 50% decrease in turnover.

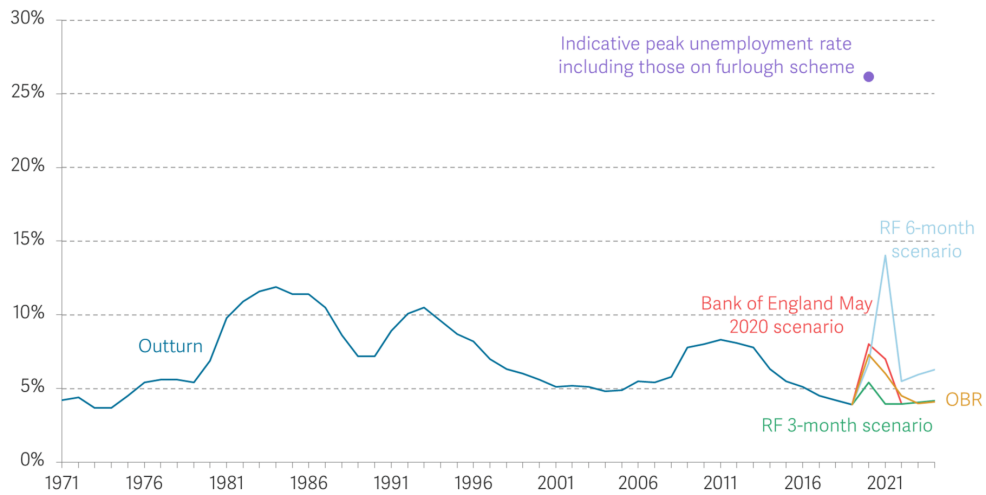
(Quarter 3 figures will not be made available until after September 2020).

- 2.5 Measured at the end of June 2020 the employment situation in BG saw:
- Rise of 1385 new claimants since March (almost doubled figs to 3,135). The rate on increase is 79% (which is below the Welsh ave increase of 97%). BG had proportionally more claimants to start with (e.g. in March one of the highest rates against resident population (16 to 4) at 4%. Now 7.2%
  - Breakdown by age on increase shows similar proportions to overall increase.
    - 16 to 24 (310 new claimants) to 720 overall 76% increase (below Welsh average).
    - 25 to 45 (815 new claimants – noting bigger age band) 82% increase (below Welsh average).
    - 50+ (265 new claimants) to 615 (below Welsh average increase proportionally).
  - Our current rates of new claimants which proportionally is one of the lowest across Wales at 76% is possibly down to having a bigger manufacturing base which remained open through COVID-19 although it has to be remembered that our unemployment was higher than other areas in the first place.
- 2.6 Following the end of the government funded furlough period in October there is strong indication that these figures could worsen and a number of scenarios have been put forward by different financial organisations for the UK.

In terms of business closures estimated data is difficult to access but the Centre for Retail Research has predicted that across the UK some 17,565 shops will shut down during the year. The forecast is 9% higher than the 16,073 shops that closed during the course of 2019, according to the CRR's Retail in Crisis end of year report. That's 1,490 more shops than the 14,583 that closed in 2018.

Almost one quarter of all businesses temporarily closed or paused trading due to the COVID19 pandemic across the United Kingdom from April 2020. The sector with the highest share of business closures were those in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector, with over 82 percent of them closed, compared with just 3.5 percent of human health, and social work businesses. Some of these may not reopen.

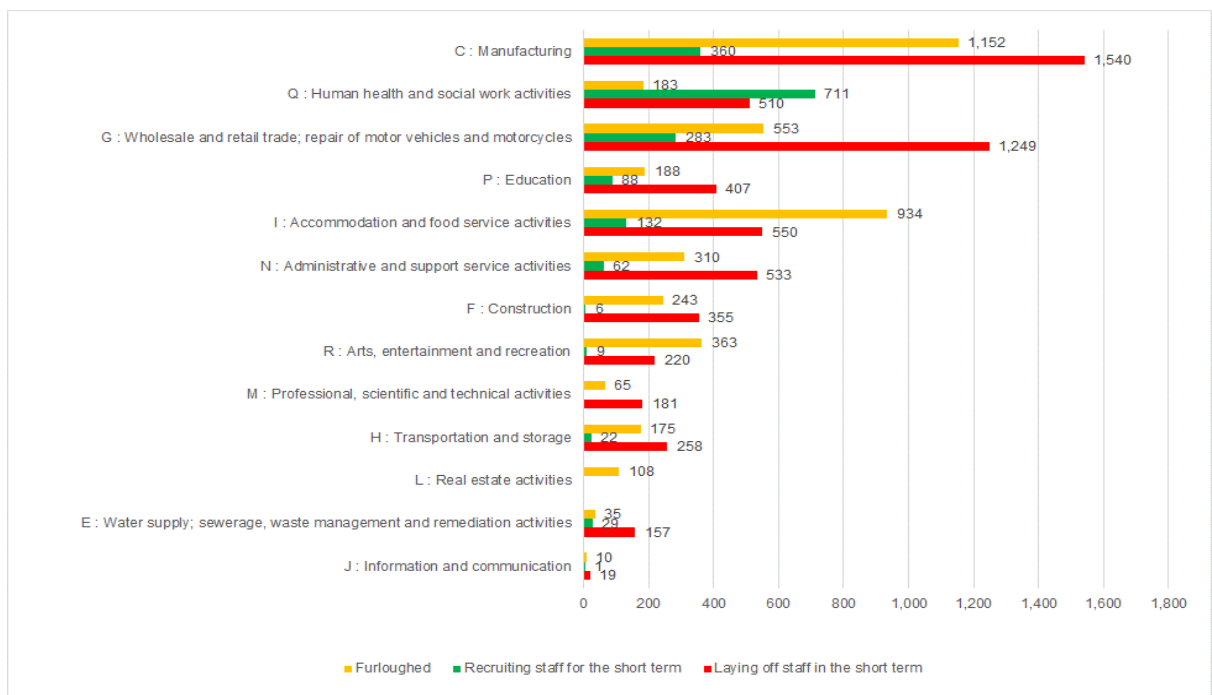
Scenarios for the unemployment rate



Notes: The indicative unemployment level when including those on the Government's furlough scheme (Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme) is based on the Bank of England's estimate of 6 million furloughed workers in 2020 Q2 combined with the annual figure for the unemployment rate.  
 Source: RF analysis of Bank of England.  
 © Resolution Foundation 2020 resolutionfoundation.org

RF – Resolution Foundation,  
 OBR – Office for budget responsibility,  
 BoE – Bank of England (illustrative scenario)

- 2.7 The Loss of around 24% of the total workforce for the UK is anticipated as the worst case and indicates that between 15% – 23% in lower paid employment.
- 2.8 Looking at the COVID scenario modelling for BG; the sectors present in the County Borough have been identified and the percentages of potential employment loss have been applied to give a possible picture of what the resulting unemployment may be.



BRES (BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT REGISTER) 2018, BLAENAU GWENT

- 2.9 The COVID unemployment modelling has been applied to the different sectors and this gives us some actual figures for unemployment in BG. Worst case we could have just over 4,200 additional unemployed with 1,700 new employment expected over the same period. These figures have been modelled as the worst case scenario but need to be a large part of the considerations when putting together the response to the pandemic and recession.
- 2.10 The Bank of England reported in August that UK GDP is expected to have been over 20% lower in 2020 Q2 than in 2019 Q4. But higher-frequency indicators imply that spending has recovered significantly since the trough in activity in April. Payments data suggest that household consumption in July was less than 10% below its level at the start of the year. Housing market activity appears to have returned to close to normal levels, despite signs of a tightening in credit supply for some households. There is less evidence available on business spending, but surveys suggest that business investment is likely to have fallen markedly in Q2 and investment intentions remain very weak.
- 2.11 Alongside the potential disruption to businesses and resulting unemployment there are a number of trends and actions emerging, and we can begin to anticipate the initiatives we need to develop to enable BG businesses to adapt to the new situation:
- Digital maturity will be more important for business delivery across all sectors, and digital skills will become key.
  - Plans for manufacturing moves to robotics, AI will be brought forward across the world and we need to be able to compete.
  - On-shoring means more local supply chains will be sought from UK and EU by bigger businesses.
  - More resilient businesses may mean more storage required for finished products and raw materials.
  - Town centres will need a total rethink, almost everything retail will have some kind of on-line capability, if not based wholly on-line; hospitality venues have been the last to reopen with fewer staff.
  - As homeworking grows more quickly smaller towns could benefit over cities and as businesses change their working model COVID proof spaces with more circulation area inside and out are the new office space.
- 2.12 The strategic approach contains a mix of short and longer terms actions across a range sectors with partners to assist with effective delivery. The main areas are set out below but some of these will require a regional or all Wales approach where BG will need to influence the economic recovery work.
- Manufacturing tech advice, investment and skills
  - Digital skills program across all sectors
  - Supply chain support, sites and premises (on-shoring facilitation)
  - Specific support for growth companies and R&D in BG
  - Identify initiatives for 18-24 post-ed work related training (e.g. FJF)
  - Build the Foundational Economy
  - Widen accessibility through innovative/sustainable transport solutions
  - Enable more start-ups especially town centre and on-line
  - Progress with Test Facility as future facing anchor investment to BG

- 2.13 Manufacturing Tech Advice, Investment and Skills –WG Innovation Team
- Working with WG Regional Relationship Manager
  - Harnessing WG Innovation Team Services
  - Using [madesmarter.com](https://madesmarter.com) as a template
  - Gathering the relevant Innovation services into one package
  - <https://businesswales.gov.wales/expertisewales/support-and-funding-businesses/smartcymru>
  - Developing marketing collateral for businesses
  - Targeting growth manufacturing businesses, include R&D support
- 2.14 Digital Skills Programme Across all Sectors
- Training and upskilling in business and in communities
  - Working with Thales in cyber security skills delivery
  - Working with Superfast Business Wales
  - Feeding into the Regional Skills Partnership
- 2.15 Identify Initiatives for 18-24 work/training
- Aspire roll out to CCR (separate scrutiny report)
  - Future Jobs Fund or similar possible WG scheme – a new Kick-start initiative has recently launched for this age group which the Authority are participating in
  - Partnering with HE/FE around the BG skills strategy initiatives
  - Using MTC Future Skills Report (November due date)
- 2.16 Supply Chain Support (on-shoring facilitation)
- BG procurement supply chain work to be prioritised
  - Working with RSLs on Foundational Economy Project
  - Working with SWCC, CBI and IOD on initiatives to link large companies and SMEs with SME supply chain businesses
  - Link in R&D opportunities
  - Marketing BG sites and premises to potential supply chain businesses
- 2.17 Sites and Premises (on-shoring facilitation)
- Identification of BG sites that require work to become ‘shovel ready’
  - Work to be undertaken to BGs Industrial Portfolio
  - Working with private sector partners and WG to ready sites
  - Enabling 5G and high speed infrastructure for businesses and encouraging adoption
- 2.18 Support for growth / strategic companies in BG
- Identification of those strategic companies and growing companies in BG
  - Work with WG and partners to understand their specific needs
  - Finding the right package of bespoke initiatives
  - Attracting in high growth tech start-ups (Tech Valley) through marketing
- 2.19 Enable more start-ups, especially Tech
- Work with the existing business support services to enable more start-ups especially town centre and on-line (using ProAct and ReAct)
  - Link with DWP on post redundancy initiatives
  - Work with business accelerators to support more tech start-ups

- Ensure we have more 'tech ready' business units in BG
  - Market the Boxworx to small tech start-ups and university spin-outs
- 2.20 Build the Foundational Economy
- Effect – speed up steps needed to reinvigorate the scheme
  - Town initiatives including pop-up and food business
  - Online towns – one application (app) for easy online trading
  - Make local supply chain links work better B2B
- 2.21 Enable workforce through innovative/sustainable transport solutions
- Transport Strategy brief to direct BG's future transport needs post COVID
  - Integrated Responsive Transport (IRT) pilot project links to BID to service shift working
  - 5G use cases for improving/ de-risking travel by public transport

Work has already started on a number of these initiatives with a number of projects being re-worked to take into consideration what is required post-COVID19.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report was presented to the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 and Members supported Option 1.

#### 3.2 **Option 1: preferred option**

To continue working with partners to focus on the initiatives that will bring the most benefit post-COVID to BG. Those that will improve employment opportunities and support businesses to progress with digital improvements and a mix of home, virtual and shared space working.

#### 3.3 **Option 2: do nothing**

To not undertake any further work to the strategy or work on joint initiatives with regional partners.

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

This review supports the Council's aims in the Council's Corporate Plan Refresh 2020-2022 in the following area:

- Support a fairer sustainable economy and community
- To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

So far much of the COVID response budget for businesses has come from Central and Welsh Government. As we work through the projects we will have a better understanding of any budget implications.



5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The risks of doing nothing leave us with a large economic liability and a future recession that may last longer than the last.

5.3 ***Legal***

No legal issues associated with this strategic report.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

No HR issues associated with this strategic report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

The supporting data has been supplied through the corporate team and business statistics from banks including the Bank of England. The actuals are based on Quarter 2 performance, but any scenarios are based on trends and the potential of what could happen.

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

A number of initiatives that can assist individuals and businesses to adapt to the new normal post COVID.

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

The Blaenau Gwent Enterprise Board (BGEB) and the business support agencies are key consultees in this strategy.

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

The strategy is considering the long term needs of BG and businesses in the County Borough to adapt to the new normal.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The strategy aims to assist business and workers in BG to understand and access assistance with the changes that are facing them over the next few years.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

We are working in partnership with other Council Departments and a wide variety of business support agencies, Business Wales, Welsh Government and Housing Associations.

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

The project team is made up of staff from Finance, Community Services, Environmental Health, Planning and Business and Innovation.

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

Screening has been undertaken and no full assessment is required.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The reviews are being monitored through CLT, Scrutiny and Executive.

**Background Documents / Electronic Links**

N/A



# Agenda Item 14

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Revised LA Governor Policy**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanne Collins, Executive Member for Education**

Report Submitted by: **Michelle Jones, Strategic Education Improvement Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
x	x	29.09.20			15.09.2020	14.10.20		

## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Executive Committee for the revised Local Authority Governor Policy.

## 2 Scope and Background

- 2.1 The original Local Authority Governor policy was agreed and implemented during the 2014-15 academic year and established a Member Panel process for the appointment and removal of Local Authority Appointed Governors.
- 2.2 Members will be aware that each maintained school must have a governing body constituted in accordance with the Education Act 2002.
- 2.3 The governing bodies of all maintained schools are corporate bodies. As such, a corporate body has a legal identity separate from that of its members.
- 2.4 As governing bodies are corporate bodies, individual governors are generally protected from personal liability as a result of the governing body's decisions and actions. Provided they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith, any liability will fall on the governing body even if it has exceeded its powers, rather than on individual members.
- 2.5 All school governing bodies are a combination of appointed or elected governors of various types. The composition of each governing body will depend upon the number and age range of pupils at the school and the category of the school
- 2.6 All governing bodies have four key groups of governors; these are:
- **Parent Governors** are elected by the parents or appointed by the governing body to represent the interests of parents on the governing body.

- **Teacher Governors** are elected by fellow teaching staff at the school.
- **Staff Governors** are elected from and by the non-teaching staff employed to work at the school.
- **Local Education Authority (LEA) Governors** are appointed by the Local Authority. Local Authority's can appoint any eligible person as an LEA governor. For example, not all LEA governors are councillors, they may include any person who is interested in supporting schools and whose appointment has the support of the authority.

2.7 In addition to these, the Headteacher (or acting Headteacher) is a member of the governing body unless he or she chooses not to be. Also, different categories of governing bodies may also include some governors of the following types: sponsor, community governor foundation governor etc.

2.8 The revised policy has been strengthened to ensure that the local authority can discharge its statutory function in a timely manner and is considerate of current operational panel arrangements. Consultation on the development of the policy has also taken place with the EAS and the current Local Authority Governor Appointment Panel at their meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The main changes to the policy are summarised below and for ease of reference are: -

- Confirmation of the quorum for meetings,
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities of LA Governor Panel, Full Council and the role of the Executive Member for Education,
- Declaration of interests' section updated, and,
- Operational and management arrangements of the LA governor panel further strengthened and aligned to current practice to further support the timely appointment / removal of LA governors.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been approved by Education DMT, CLT and Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee prior to submission to the Executive Committee. At the Scrutiny Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> September Members recommended that moving forward the LA Appointment Panel be provided with the assistance of a designated business support officer to undertake all administration functions for this panel given the significant business of this panel.

3.2 The options are:

#### **Option 1**

The Leader and Members reject the report and policy as presented and provide feedback.

3.3 **Option 2**

Accept the report and policy as provided and in doing so agree the recommendation of Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee as set out in para 3.1 of this report.

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

4.1 **Statutory Responsibility**

4.1.1 Each maintained school must have a governing body constituted in accordance with the Education Act 2002, which sets out the framework for the establishment of governing bodies. The Local Authority is responsible for the appointment of Local Authority governors.

4.1.2 **Corporate Improvement Plan**

<b>Outcome Statement 2020/22</b>	<b>Corporate Plan activity</b>
Support a fairer sustainable economy and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support all learners to achieve improved outcomes</li><li>• To improve pupil outcomes, progress and wellbeing</li></ul>

4.1.3 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

The statutory framework is clearly aligned to the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan which aims for everyone to have the best start in life. The plan seeks to ensure that the education provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people so that their progress is as good as it should be.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.1 There are no direct financial implications for this policy report. However, the Council allocates approximately £42 million to schools via the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) to provide high quality education and to improve pupil outcomes.

5.1.2 Blaenau Gwent continues to make a financial contribution to the regional EAS arrangements of approximately £300,000+ from the core Education Directorate revenue budget. The EAS is the Council's commissioned school improvement service commissioned to work directly with schools to provide professional challenge and support to improve and this service hosts the Governor Support function.

5.1.3 The provision of administrative and business support arrangements to the panel are covered from within existing arrangements that are in place.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

5.2.1 Risk is associated with underperformance and ineffective processes to improve performance in identified schools. Failure to raise standards is

identified as a key risk to the Council, both in terms of reputation and pupil life chances. This is reflected in the Education Directorate and EAS risk registers.

### **5.3 Legal**

5.3.1 Each maintained school must have a governing body constituted in accordance with the Education Act 2002 which sets out the framework for the establishment of governing bodies. The Local Authority is responsible for the appointment of Local Authority governors and for assessing the effectiveness of the work of governing bodies to support school improvement.

## **6. Supporting Evidence**

### **6.1 Performance Information.**

6.1.1 The most recent Local Government Education Services (LGES) self-evaluation report dated March 2020 confirmed that the process for the appointment of Local Authority Governors is now well established and there is evidence of improved governance in a majority of schools. The Spring term Local Authority termly overview from the EAS, which is the latest data available prior to the Covid emergency identified that there were 58 (15%) vacancies across Blaenau Gwent's schools. This is consistent with the rate of vacancies for the Autumn term. It is anticipated that the changes to the proposed policy will further improve this and moving forward this committee will receive termly updates on the level of governor vacancies.

6.1.2 Moreover, as part of usual business arrangements Governor Support officers contact all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of governing bodies that currently hold vacancies with the details and relevant forms to support the management of vacancies. In addition, the Local Authority Governor Panel now receives details of Local Authority governors whose term of office has come to an end/is due to end in the following term as well as details of the attendance and uptake of training by appointed Local Authority governors.

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

6.2.1 Through the appointment process, Local Authority governors can then play an active role in the improvement journey of schools, and in doing so, contribute to the corporate and wellbeing objectives of the Council.

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

6.3.1 The primary purpose of governing bodies is to ensure the quality of education provision and to act as the accountable bodies for school. The governing body has responsibility for ensuring the good conduct and high standards of educational achievement in the school.

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

6.4.1 The revised policy demonstrates the mature approach to the process to secure effective governance and is aligned with the Welsh Government's strategic document Education in Wales: Our national Mission, the Council's agreed Vision for Education and the Local Government Inspection framework.

## 6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 A key element of the Council's work is to monitor settings and ensure appropriate support to secure continuing high standards. As part of this work the effectiveness of Governing Bodies is scrutinised which includes the level and type of vacancies on governing bodies. Also, Estyn Inspection reports reflect the extent to which settings and Local Authorities have been effective in achieving this requirement.

## 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

6.6.1 Educational school improvement is delivered on a regional basis through the South East Wales Consortium in collaboration with Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen Councils. The EAS host the Governor Support function on behalf of all Councils within the consortia.

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

6.7.1 Ensuring that schools deliver high quality education provision to secure high pupil outcomes relates directly to the corporate outcomes for 2020/22 within the Corporate Improvement Plan.

## 6.8 **EqIA**

6.8.1 An EQIA has been completed for this report and no positive or negative impact has been identified.

## 7 **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 This report sets out the proposed Local Authority Governor Policy that deals with the recruitment and removal of Local Authority governors. Effective governance is a key consideration of leadership and management of schools and a properly constituted governing body is essential for school working arrangements.

7.2 Consequently, the effective management of Local Authority governors is key to securing school improvement and the proposed policy will help facilitate improved governance across the school estate.

### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – LA Governor Policy

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## **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

### **Directorate of Education Policy for the Appointment of LA Governors Academic Year 2020 /2021**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

A Panel for the Appointment of Local Authority (LA) Governors has been established to consider all matters relating to the appointment and removal of LA governors. In making appointments the Panel should note that LA governors cannot be mandated by the LA to take any particular line. They may represent the LA view but in all cases the interests of the school are paramount and all governors must abide by the governing body's rules and code of conduct.

#### **2.0 Membership and terms of reference of the Advisory Panel for the Appointment of LA Governors**

The Panel for the Appointment of LA Governors will comprise of:

- 3 Majority group members (including the Executive Member for Education who will Chair the Panel),
- 3 members from the minority group.

The business arrangements for the meeting will be convened in line with the usual arrangements for Council business and include full secretariat support.

LA governor Panel meetings will be held every half term and arranged in accordance with other Council meetings with dates placed in diaries during the agenda setting process for Council business.

A representative of:

- the Blaenau Gwent School Governors' Association (BSGA), as determined by the Management Committee of that Association, will be invited to attend the Panel in an advisory capacity (i.e. without voting rights)
- a representative of the commissioned EAS Governor support service will attend to provide advice in relation to the governance arrangements including performance

information in relation to attendance, training etc. relevant to any individual application.

- a member of the Education Directorates Departmental Management Team will attend to offer school improvement advice on the school's circumstances and other information as required

In the event of any of the six members of the Panel or the BSGA representative being unable to attend, named substitutes will be eligible to take their place to ensure that all these groups are adequately represented when the Panel meets.

The quorum from the Panel meeting will be **2** which must include one representative **from both the majority and minority groups.**

The Panel for the Appointment of LA Governors will be responsible for appointing LA Governors. Full Council will **endorse** the recommendation of the Panel regarding the appointment of LA governors in line with the approved criteria contained within this policy. However, full Council have to agree the recommendation of the Panel to remove individuals. As such, the date of appointment of any LA governor will be from the date of the Panel.

Should the Council not endorse any recommendations of the Panel regarding any LA governor appointments Council will refer them back to the Panel in the first instance stating appropriate reasons for doing so. In the event of a dispute the matter will be referred to the Councils Monitoring officer for guidance as to how best to proceed.

The Council has an obligation to fill vacancies within 6 months of their notification. In the event of failure by the Panel to make an appointment, or no applications being received. Where this occurs the Executive Member will ask full Council at their next meeting to nominate an LA governor for the school(s) in question.

### **3.0 Criteria for the appointment of LA governors**

The Panel shall apply the following criteria when considering appointments. In applying these criteria, the Panel should consider the appointment of local members wherever

possible and also the experience, skills, expertise and potential contribution to the school of all applicants. Factors for consideration include: -

- Experience as an effective school governor measured in terms of regular attendance and the contribution made during their term(s) of office.
- Willingness to share their individual skills and expertise within the context of the governing body.
- A genuine desire to help improve standards of education within the school in partnership with the Headteacher and the rest of the governing body.
- A knowledge of and an interest in the community in which the school is situated.
- A knowledge of modern education issues.
- A commitment to regular attendance at full governing body meetings as well as meetings of any committees of the governing body to which they are elected.
- A commitment to attend governor training courses organised by the Local Authority/EAS to update their skills and knowledge to enhance their ability and effectiveness as a governor, including the completion of mandatory training within specified timeframes.
- Where a school has developed their school improvement plan and identified a shortage of skills amongst the governing body the panel will give primary consideration to this criterion when recommending individuals to vacancies.

The Governor Support Officer will ensure that the panel is appropriately appraised of this information. To assist the Panel in making their decision applicants will be required to submit an application form outlining their skills and experience that they can bring to the role.

#### **4.0 Criteria for the removal of LA Governors**

In exceptional circumstances, the Panel can recommend that full Council remove LA governors as the appointing authority but this power must be used reasonably as it may be open to challenge. Any queries relating to the removal of LA governors should be referred to the Governor Support Unit of the EAS in the first instance.

Disqualification or the suspension of LA governors, or indeed any governors, is dealt with in Schedule 6 of The Education (School Government) (Wales) Regulations 1999 and is outside the remit of this Panel. However, whilst outside their remit of the Panel the Governor Support Unit will report any such disqualifications or suspensions in respect of LA Governors to the next Panel meeting. Similarly, should suspensions be lifted these will also be reported to the LA Governor Panel.

In the case of any such removals or disqualifications the LA governors concerned will be contacted by the Governor Support Unit and informed accordingly.

### **5.0 Declaration of Interests**

In accordance with Council policy and good practice, members of the Advisory Panel should not preside over:

- where there is an interest in the application being considered.

Should any member(s) of the Panel need to withdraw during the consideration of any appointment(s) the party or organisation that they represent may choose to nominate a substitute providing they are not a governor at the school with a vacancy.

### **6.0 Operational Procedures**

The Governor Support Unit will notify the relevant schools Governing Body the term before of any governor vacancy which is scheduled to end in the next term. This will enable LA governors who wish to reapply to do so in ample time of their term of office ending.

In preparation for each Panel Meeting Governor Support will provide a report of current and future vacancies for the term ahead that will be circulated with the papers for each Panel Meeting.

To improve the recruitment of LA governors this report will be placed on the agenda for Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee as well as full Council so that all members are cognisant of the level of LA governor vacancies and able to support timely recruitment.

Individuals wishing to apply or reapply for a LA governor vacancy will need to apply on the application form (Appendix 1). The application form contains guidance on how to complete the form. All applications will be redacted by the secretariat prior to circulation to Panel members to ensure compliance with GDPR. Anyone who has not completed an application form should not be appointed or re-appointed as an LA governor.

Governors should be chosen on the basis of the contribution which they can bring to a school in terms of their skills and experience. The application form is the fairest method of ensuring that the Council does everything in its power to comply with this requirement when making LA governor appointments.

Should the Governing Body of the School wish the Panel to take into consideration any views expressed by the governing body of the school concerned this should be done in writing to the clerk to the LA Governor Appointment Panel. However, the decision of the LA Governor Panel will be final on all matters relating to LA governor appointments.

The Advisory Panel will meet on a half termly basis and should vacancies increase between panels consideration will be given to calling a special meeting of the panel. This way, vacancies will be considered soon after they become known and it will avoid the situation where schools are without their full complement of LA governors for long periods of time therefore increasing the burden on the remaining members of the governing body.

If the LA, for whatever reason, fails to make an appointment of an LA governor at a particular school within six months of being notified, and Council fail to appoint an LA governor to the vacancy the nominee of the governing body will automatically be appointed.

The agenda, redacted application forms and LA term of office report will only be circulated to Panel Members.

Minutes of Panel meetings will continue to be reported to full Council as a Part I item, notwithstanding the fact that the application forms themselves would remain exempt from public inspection.

Only Panel Members are entitled to attend meetings of the Panel. The only exception is where substitutes are required. There is no entitlement for other Members of the Council to attend meetings of the Panel where they have not been asked to do so.

Once the Panel has met to consider its recommendations on all the current LA governor vacancies these recommendations will be reported to the next scheduled full Council meeting. Similarly, the Governor Support Unit will also contact the Headteacher, Chair and Clerk to the Governing Body with details of appointees.

In the case of LA governors who are not reappointed they will also be contacted by the Governor Support Unit and informed accordingly.

Any queries relating to the procedure for the appointment or removal of LA governors should be referred to the Governor Support Unit in the EAS

## **7.0 Advertisements for LA Governors**

Details of LA Governor vacancies including the names of schools with vacancies will be:

- Included in the papers for Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee and full Council
- Placed on the agenda for Blaenau Gwent School Governors' Association (BSGA) management committee,
- Council website
- Social Media
- Promoted through the Managing Directors message to draw these vacancies to the attention of their staff living in the Blaenau Gwent locality.
- Email to school Headteacher to seek expressions of interest in the post

## **8.0 DBS Arrangements**

Currently there is no legal requirement for school governors to be subject to police clearance prior to them taking up their appointments. However, the Safeguarding in Education Policy has an explicit requirement for all governors to undertake a DBS check upon appointment. This information is monitored on a termly basis.

**Policy approval:**

The Policy is subject to approval by Executive on \_\_\_\_\_

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# Agenda Item 15

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent - Post 16 Partnership Agreement**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Joanne Collins, Executive Member for Education**

Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Interim Corporate Director of Education**

Reporting Pathway (Dates to be Entered)								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
19.08.20	20.08.20	29.09.20			15.9.20	14.10.20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval to establish a Blaenau Gwent Post 16 Partnership Board to oversee the strategic development of academic and vocational provision for learners across the County Borough.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone was established in 2012/2013, following a review of post 16 provision across the County Borough. The post 16 review was a highly contentious school re-organisation project that involved the removal of three sixth forms from secondary schools and the development of a tertiary partnership model in association with Coleg Gwent. The Council project managed the new Learning Zone building to include design, procurement and construction of the £33m post 16 learning establishment.
  - 2.2 There is currently a strong partnership arrangement between the Council and Coleg Gwent, which has matured during recent years. The Learning Zone delivers an annual performance report to the Council, which features as a key component of the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee's forward work programme, featuring as part on the Member Briefing Programme.
  - 2.3 In addition to the Learning Zone, a number of post 16 Work Based Learning organisations provide alternative training opportunities across Blaenau Gwent. These organisations include ACT, Sgiliau (a sub contracted provider for ITEC), and Llamau. Furthermore, an Aspire Apprenticeship programme is delivered by BGCBC and further opportunities are available through organisations such as Tai Calon. These partners are active members of the Raising Aspirations Group (RAG), a strategic multi-agency partnership co-ordinating the work around young people who are at risk of becoming or are currently NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

2.4 The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone's performance in 2020 continues to improve overall. The transformation of post 16 provision across the County Borough has delivered;

- more post 16 learners,
- a greater range of courses, particularly for vocational provision;
- improved attainment levels, in most measures.

2.5 The partnership between the Council and Coleg Gwent has matured and a systematic approach is in place to share data at a strategic and operational level. The partnership will be developed further through the establishment of a Post 16 Partnership Board with representation from the Education Directorate, Coleg Gwent, work based learning providers and Blaenau Gwent secondary school settings. There will also be representation from colleagues in Regeneration to encompass the broader skills and economic development agenda. The intention is for the Partnership Board to be in place by the Autumn term 2020. The draft Terms of Reference for the Blaenau Gwent Post 16 Partnership Board are attached in Appendix 1 and Members' views are sought on the proposed agreement.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been discussed and Option 1 supported by Education DMT, CLT and Scrutiny Committee prior to submission to the Executive Committee. Members are requested to:

**Option 1:** To approve accept the report's proposals as presented in the draft Partnership Agreement.

**Option 2:** Members are requested to consider the information detailed within the report and suggest amendment prior to approval.

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

4.1 Education is a key priority in the Corporate Plan and the provision of effective post 16 learning opportunities are critical to securing improved life chances for young people across the County Borough.

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

#### 5.1 ***Impact on Budget***

The establishment of the Post 16 Partnership Board and the delivery of the proposed agreement will have no direct financial implications for the Council, however, there will need to be the effective use of existing resources from all partners to secure added value and better outcomes for all of our learners.

#### 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The risk of failing to secure improved educational outcomes features on the Corporate Risk Register (CRR), therefore, the establishment of a Post 16 Partnership Board will contribute to mitigating the risk for learners leaving statutory age education provision across the County Borough.

### 5.3 **Legal**

There are no direct Legal implications associated with this report.

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct Human Resources implications associated with this report other than the allocation of time from relevant officers to facilitate the establishment of the Post 16 Partnership Board.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence:**

### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The performance of post 16 learners across the County Borough is shown in the attached FADE document (appendix 2), which covers both academic and vocational aspects of study. The provisional performance in academic year 2019-20 will be presented to Members as part of the Member Development Programme later in the Autumn term.

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

It is expected that the Partnership Board will continue to improve post 16 outcomes across the County Borough.

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

The Partnership Board has been discussed with the key partners and there is a strong desire to move forward in a truly collaborative fashion. There will be a need to engage with post 16 learners once the formal arrangements are adopted to seek their views on the future of provision in order to meet their needs.

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

The Partnership Board will need to plan in the short, medium and long term to secure improved educational outcomes for learners. There will be a forward work plan and key priorities have initially been identified for all partners to work towards in the form of outcome statements, discussed in the draft Partnership Agreement.

### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

The Partnership Board will oversee all aspects of post 16 provision, however, many of the proposed partners are also members of the Raising Aspirations Group (RAG), that co-ordinates the work around young people who are at risk of becoming or are currently NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

### 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

Effective collaboration is at the heart of the Partnership Board and the proposed agreement. To facilitate this, all parties will commit to adopt the following principles in their dealings with each other:

- Build trust and a mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities;

- Committed to openness, honesty and transparency in communications;
- Adopt a positive and constructive approach demonstrating our commitment to work with and learn from each other;
- Ensure there is early discussion of emerging issues to ensure a ‘no surprises’ culture;
- Share a commitment to ensuring high quality outcomes; and,
- Agree a formal process for disagreement resolution and always seek positive solutions for partners, learners and their families.

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

Education and Regeneration will work in an integrated way to support the broader economic impact, particularly relating the post 16 skills agenda.

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

There is no requirement for an EQIA assessment as all partners will have their own Equality Planning arrangements in place.

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

7.1 The Partnership Board will aim to create a culture of accountability to improve outcomes for all post 16 learners. Moreover, subject to agreement of the proposal, the monitoring the outcomes for post 16 learners will feature in the Scrutiny/Executive Forward Work Programmes

**Background Documents / Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 – Draft Partnership Agreement
- Appendix 2 – Post 16 FADE

## DRAFT

### **Blaenau Gwent Post 16 Partnership (BGPP) Agreement**

#### **1. Introduction**

This document outlines the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which underpins the collaborative intent and activities of the signatory organisations comprising the Blaenau Gwent Post-16 Partnership (BGPP). BGPP is an alliance of those responsible for the public education of 11 to 19 year olds in Blaenau Gwent. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, the leadership of our secondary schools and Coleg Gwent are committed to working together to provide the most equitable and best possible, wide ranging educational provision to our post-16 learners.

To facilitate this, the Memorandum of Understanding creates a framework for:

- Effective communication between all partners;
- Creating a solution focused working relationship;
- Sharing information to enable effective inclusion of learners and improved learner outcomes

All parties agree to act in good faith to support the objectives and principles of this MoU for the benefit of all our learners.

The parties to the agreement are:

- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Coleg Gwent
- Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar Comprehensive School
- Ebbw Fawr 3-16 Learning Community
- Brynmawr Foundation School
- Abertillery 3 – 16 Learning Community
- The River Centre 3-16 Learning Community
- Pen-y-Cwm School

## 2. Vision, Values and Outcomes

The parties share the following vision and values for our post-16 learners.

Our Blaenau Gwent offer is one of outstanding educational aspiration and achievement, where every child and young person flourishes, and their learning and achievements are publicly supported and regularly celebrated.

Outcome statements:

- Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone will be a first choice for parents and learners in the area and beyond
- Outcomes for our learners will be at least as good as that for learners in comparable areas in Wales but we will always strive for even more
- We have a shared commitment to continuous improvement, providing access to high quality services to learners and their families

We share a firm commitment to inclusion - education should be accessible for all, offer meaningful and purposeful opportunities and foster the personal development of all the young people in our area.

Outcome statements:

- We will seek to develop our collective inclusive practices by working together to prepare and plan for the implementation of the new ALN Act
- Ensure transition planning is undertaken in a timely manner and informed by person-centred principles

To improve the educational and wellbeing of all of our post-16 learners recognising that this will only be achieved with a focus on our effective communication and collaborative planning.

Outcome statements:

- BGPP will agree an information sharing protocol that encompasses all members and also acts to support the effective partnership working with our primary schools to support transition to Key Stage 3
- Put parents and learners at the heart of our work ensuring there is clear communication with all families through a variety of channels

### **3. Principles for Effective Joint Working**

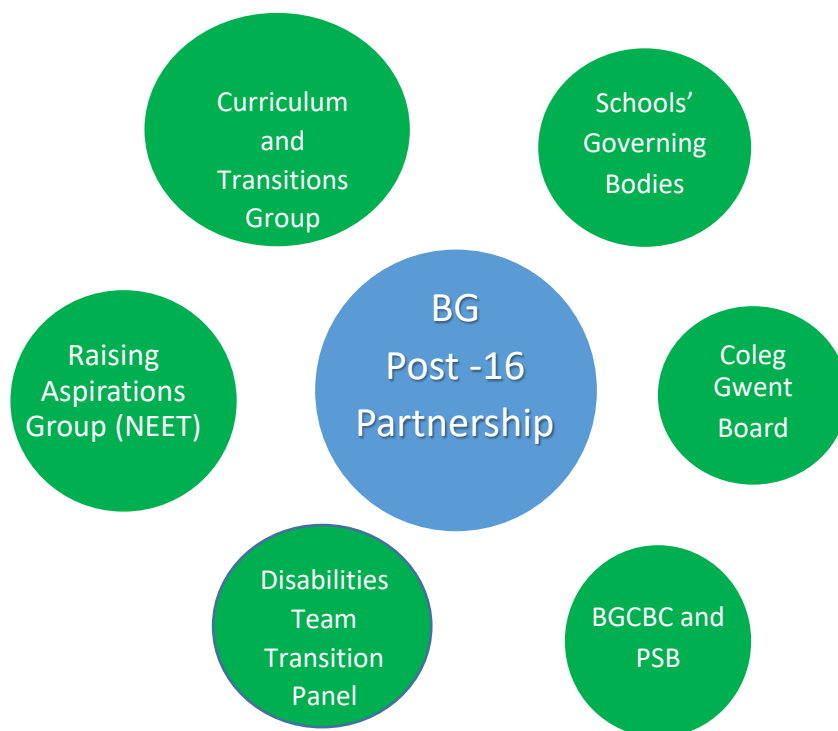
To deliver partnership working successfully it is important to develop good formal and informal working relations that build trust and share responsibility, whilst respecting difference. To facilitate this, all parties commit to adopt the following principles in their dealings with each other:

- We will build trust and a mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities;
- We are committed to openness, honesty and transparency in communications;
- We will adopt a positive and constructive approach demonstrating our commitment to work with and learn from each other;
- We will ensure there is early discussion of emerging issues to ensure a "no surprises" culture;
- We share a commitment to ensuring high quality outcomes;
- We will agree a formal process for disagreement resolution and always seek positive solutions for partners, learners and their families.

#### 4. Partnership Structure and Operational Framework

The BGPP will develop its own action plan that will be reviewed on an annual basis. While this plan will evolve over time, it is anticipated it will initially include:

- Determine and develop a Post-16 strategy
- Provide regular updates to the Public Service Board in addition to member's own governance bodies (see below)
- Report on plans and achievements, including learner outcomes, value added measures and progression. Additionally, agree any changes needed to information sharing agreements to enable these reports to be generated.
- Agree any shared resources, determine tasks as appropriate including establishing task and finish groups to resolve any emerging issues.
- Work with the regional school improvement body, the Education Achievement Service, as necessary to meet the outcomes of BGPP plans.
- Coleg Gwent to present their Annual Performance Report (usually November) to BGCBC Member Briefing
- Review and suggest changes as necessary to the attainment/ added value report for learners in the Borough. This report will be jointly produced by the EAS, the LA and Coleg Gwent giving an overview of learner outcomes from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 5 and will typically be made available in late September each year.



*Fig.1 Suggested governance relationships and dependencies*



BGPLP will form a Post 16 Partnership comprised of the following membership:

- BG Executive Member for Education
- BG Interim Director of Education
- BG Youth Service Manager (Interim Lead for Post 16 partnerships)
- Headteachers of all Secondary Schools
- Coleg Gwent Principal
- Coleg Gwent Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality)
- Public Health Wales representative
- ABUHB representative
- EAS representative

Administrative support will be provided by BG. The group will meet three times per year with each partner hosting meetings on a rolling basis.

Curriculum and Transition Group – this groups need to be established.

The Post 16 Partnership will ask this group to:

- Review transition arrangements to ensure their effectiveness
- Review KS4 and post-16 learner outcomes and progression on an annual basis
- Support enrichment activities for KS4 and post-16 learners
- Ensure join up with the Raising Aspirations Group to continue to proactively support the work of Blaenau Gwent Local County Borough Council in reducing the number of young people who are NEET

\* Head of Learner Services and Head of School from Coleg Gwent; the BGCBC Youth Service Manager (Interim Lead for Post 16 partnership); EAS representative. The group will decide its own chair who will be invited to attend the BG Post 16 Partnership.

## **5. Governance**

Governance arrangements are outlined in fig.1 above. The BGPLP work-plan will be co-constructed by the partners with the clear expectation that each partner will engage with, and seek approval from, their own governance body before agreeing the annual plan.

The Local Authority will issue this agreement to all of the secondary schools in the Borough as an addendum to the existing LA-School partnership agreement.

### **Specific Partner Responsibilities**

The Local Authority will:

- ✓ Provide administration support for BGPP meetings including organising the termly meetings, recording and distribution of minutes etc. However, each partner is expected to host one meeting on a rolling basis;
- ✓ Provide support to keep information sharing protocols up to date and fit for purpose;
- ✓ The LA will work with Coleg Gwent and EAS to co-author a performance report for learners' progress detailing outcomes for learners from Foundation Phase to Key Stage. The exact format and timing of this report will be determined by these partners (To be agreed).
- ✓ Ensure consistent attendance at BGPP meetings.
- ✓ Ensure there is appropriate engagement with agreed transition arrangements as determined by the partnership.

Coleg Gwent will:

- ✓ Keep information sharing protocols up to date and fit for purpose.
- ✓ Ensuring Key Stage 5 data is disaggregated for BG learners and is made available in a way that demonstrates the value added measure for BG learners.
- ✓ Coleg Gwent will work with the LA and EAS to co-author a performance report for learners' progress detailing outcomes for learners from Foundation Phase to Key Stage. The exact format and timing of this report will be determined by these partners (To be agreed).
- ✓ Ensure consistent attendance at BGPP meetings.
- ✓ Agree and timetable transition dates in discussion with Schools.
- ✓ Ensure there is appropriate engagement with agreed transition arrangements as determined by the partnership.

Schools will:

- ✓ Engage in information sharing protocol discussions and agree to share pupil level data to enable pupil progress reporting over time.
- ✓ Agree and timetable transition dates in discussion with Coleg Gwent.
- ✓ Enable the appropriate staff to attend the curriculum and transition group.
- ✓ Ensure consistent attendance at BGPP meetings.
- ✓ Ensure there is appropriate engagement with agreed transition arrangements as determined by the partnership.

Signatories to the agreement:

Date:

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**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council  
Education Directorate Self-Evaluation**

**Team/Service: Education Directorate**

**Title of the evaluation: Post 16 Learning Outcomes**

**Date of report: October 2019  
Report author: Lynn Phillips/Jo Sims**

<b>Report author:</b>	Lynn Phillips/Jo Sims
<b>Service Area:</b>	<b>Education Directorate</b>
<b>Date report written:</b>	October 2019
<b>Focus for the evaluation</b>	The focus of the FADE is post 16 learner outcomes, including both the Learning Zone and Work Based Learning (WBL) opportunities.
<b>Analysis (A)</b>	<p>The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone was established in 2012/2013, following a review of post 16 provision across the County Borough. The post 16 review was a highly contentious school re-organisation project that involved the removal of three sixth forms from secondary schools and the development of a tertiary partnership model in association with Coleg Gwent. The Council project managed the new Learning Zone building to include design, procurement and construction of the £33m post 16 learning establishment.</p> <p>There is a strong partnership arrangement between the Council and Coleg Gwent, which has matured during recent years. The Learning Zone delivers an annual performance report to the Council, which features as a key component of the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee's forward work programme.</p> <p>In addition to the Learning Zone, a number of post 16 Work Based Learning organisations provide alternative training opportunities across Blaenau Gwent. These organisations include ACT, Sgiliau (a sub contracted provider for ITEC), and Llamau. Furthermore, an Aspire Apprenticeship programme is delivered by BGCBC and further opportunities are available through organisations such as Tai Calon. All of these partners are active members of the Raising Aspirations Group (RAG), a strategic multi-agency partnership co-ordinating the work around young people who are at risk of becoming or are currently NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).</p>

**Evaluation (E)****By way of:**

- **Outcomes (or process or change)**
- **Provision**
- **Leadership and management**

This FADE provides an overview report on the Learning Zone's performance, covering a trend analysis over the last 3 years. The FADE details performance information for both 'A' Level results as well as the vocational results.

(i) 'A' Level Results

The Council and Coleg Gwent produce a joint press release on 'A' Level results day. In August 2019, the headline messages included;

- Learning Zone (Ebbw Vale) had a 100% overall pass rate for A\*-E, which is 2.6% above the Welsh average and 2.4% for the UK.
- The pass rate for grades A\*-C was improved to 75.9%.
- All subjects had a 100% pass rate at the Learning Zone.

Coleg Gwent has provided a more detailed analysis of relative performance and a 3 year trend. Table (1) overleaf breaks down the Learning Zone's 'A' Level performance into the following;

- The total number of entries for 'A' Level over 2017 to 2019;
- The percentages of students who achieved the various grade performances A\*/A, A\*-C, A\*-E between 2017-2019,
- A/S results over the period 2017 to 2019; and,
- The All Wales and UK benchmark for performance against grade ranges.

Table 1:

		No of Entries: A Levels	%A* - E	A* - C	A* - A	No of Entries: A/S Levels	%A* - E	A* - C	A* - A
Benchmark:	Wales	-	97.6% (97.4%)	76.3% (76.3%)	27.0% (26.3%)	-	90.0% (90.0%)	62.0% (61.9%)	20.3% (20.4%)
	UK	-	97.6% (97.6%)	75.8% (77.0%)	25.5% (26.4%)	-	88.8% (90.7%)	61.9% (66.3%)	21.5% (27.5%)
BGLZ:	2019	340	100.0	75.9	15.3	616	90.9	63.5	14.8
	2018	391	98.7	74.4	15.6	663	89.9	58.2	10.3
	2017	415	99.0	73.5	13.3	799	86.9	56.1	12.3

The results detailed in Table (1) highlight some key performance trends, including:

- An overall decrease in the level of entries for 'A' Levels over the 3-year cycle, but this is in line with the national picture in Wales and has been impacted by the introduction of the Welsh Baccalaureate;
- Very strong and improving performance (above Welsh average) for A\*-E pass grades;
- An overall improvement in A\*-A grades over the 3 years; and,
- Improvements in all A/S measures over the 3-year period.

There are also Blaenau Gwent Learners who have participated in A Level courses of study in Coleg Gwent establishments outside of the learning zone (different campuses such as Cross Keys College). The consolidated results for all Blaenau Gwent Learners are shown in the table (2) below/overleaf:

Table 2

Blaenau Gwent - Blaenau Gwent	Wales Benchmark			Blaenau Gwent Learners at Coleg Gwent		
	A*-E	A*-C	A*-A	A*-E (%)	A*-C (%)	A*-A (%)
A Level total	97.60%	76.30%	27.00%	99.46%	76.49%	16.76%
AS Level total	90.00%	62.00%	20.30%	91.63%	64.57%	14.49%

The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone's performance is benchmarked through their participation in the UK wide 'A Level Information Service' (ALIS) benchmarking model operated by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM). In 2018, the Learning Zone's added-value performance (based on all students' socio-economic status and predictive grades) places performance in the top quartile of tertiary colleges in the UK. The Learning Zone benchmarking data placed the institution on the 92nd percentile i.e. top 8% for the UK and 1.4 standard deviation above the mean.

#### ii) Vocational Results

The provision of a broader range of vocational learning opportunities was a key strategic driver behind the creation of the Learning Zone.

The vocational results, again over 3 years, is illustrated in Table (3) overleaf. The performance is categorised into levels (level 2 is GCSE and level 3 is 'A' Level equivalents). The data covers the following areas:

- Enrolments (2018/19),
- 3 years completion (retention) data,
- 3 years attainment – pass mark data,
- Success data – product of completion and attainment data.



(NB. Success is the main matrix by which Estyn make their post 16 judgements. In 2018/19, the Learning Zone realised an overall 85% success rate. Estyn would categorise 85% as a Grade 1 – Excellent).

Table 3:

	Enrols	Completion			Attainment			Success		
	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19
<b>Main</b>	1,994	93%	93%	90%	92%	93%	93%	86%	87%	84%
<b>Entry</b>	23	97%	97%	91%	100%	100%	100%	97%	97%	91%
<b>Level 1</b>	274	89%	91%	89%	98%	94%	96%	87%	85%	85%
<b>Level 2</b>	284	93%	89%	85%	90%	90%	94%	83%	80%	80%
<b>Level 3</b>	1,377	94%	94%	92%	92%	94%	92%	86%	88%	85%

The table illustrates that the main performance indicator (success) has had a consistently high performance profile over the last 3 years.

The partnership between the Council and Coleg Gwent in this academic year (2019/20) has further developed. A process is now in place that provides the Council with data indicating the level of post 16 withdrawal to enable specific and timely support for individual learners. An example of the data relating to October 2019 is shown in table (4) overleaf. Consequently, the information will enable appropriate support to be provided through partners within the Raising Aspirations Group.

Table 4

Course Followed	No. learners	No. withdrawn	Withdrawn learners	Destinations (if known)
A level	102	3	Personalised data to be shared via WASPI agreement	
AS level	101	2		
Level 1	117	6		
Level 2	156	5		
Level 3	236	1		
Entry Level	2	0		
Access courses	0	0		
Life Skills	21	0		

### Work based Learning Providers and Apprenticeships

In addition to Coleg Gwent, there are a number of post 16 providers in Blaenau Gwent, who provide training and apprenticeships for young people via work based learning settings. To date, information from Llamau and Aspire Blaenau Gwent Apprenticeship scheme, gives a sense of the types of courses delivered. Further information will be included when it is received later in the Autumn term.

Llamau Learning 4 Life works with some of the most vulnerable young people (those experienced in care, youth justice system or Substance misuse). Their statistics are outlined below:

Sept 18 - Sept 19 Yearly Total	
No. of Referrals	32
No. of Starts	31
No. of Agored Awards	47
No. of C&G Awards	6
No. of Exits	26
No. of Move On's to Employment	5
No. of Move On's to Further Learning	15
No. of CV's	33
No. of Practice Interviews	12
No. of Site Visits	24
No. of Work Tasters	3
No. of Volunteering	7

### Aspire Blaenau Gwent – Shared Apprenticeship Programme

The programme has facilitated over 80 apprentices based within Blaenau Gwent industry on various pathways including:-

- Electrical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Applied Science
- IT
- EEP's
- Commercial focused Business Administration
- Quality Engineering

The team are now in a position to measure outcomes due to the first cohort of apprentices completing their apprenticeships. Below are the outcomes for the first cohort which began their apprenticeships in the academic year 2015/16:

Number of apprentices	Completed their framework	Entered Employment	Progressed onto further learning
18	16	14	9
Percentages	89%	78%	50%

The table above demonstrates that the programme has achieved good success within the first cohort of apprentices with over 89% completing their framework. It should also be noted that 50% of the apprentices have also extended their learning once they have completed their initial framework.

**Development/Improvement required/Recommendation (R) and Way Forward:**

**By way of :**

- Outcomes (or process or change)
- Provision

The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone's performance in 2019 continues to improve overall. The transformation of post 16 provision across the County Borough has delivered;

- more post 16 learners,
- a greater range of courses, particularly for vocational provision;
- improved attainment levels, in most measures.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Leadership and management</b></li></ul>	<p>The Learning Zone will be presenting the 2018/2019 academic year performance to a Member Briefing in the Autumn term and this is an opportunity to have dialogue with Coleg Gwent as we strive for further improvement for all learners across the County Borough.</p> <p>As further WBL results become available, the information will be included within the FADE document.</p> <p>To conclude, the partnership between the Council and Coleg Gwent has matured and a systematic approach is in place to share data at a strategic and operational level. The partnership will be developed further through the establishment of a post 16-partnership board with representation from the Education Directorate, Coleg Gwent and Blaenau Gwent secondary school settings. The intention is for the partnership board to be in place by the spring term 2020.</p>
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# Agenda Item 16

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Investment in Children’s Play Provision**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Joanna Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**

Report Submitted by: **Head of Community Services, Clive Rogers  
Team Manager - Street Scene, David Watkins**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
19.08.20	20.08.20	29.09.20			21.09.20	14.10.20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update in relation to children’s play area sites and seek Member endorsement for the current work programme for the installation of the play equipment into sites in line with the priorities identified following the detailed play area review undertaken and reported to Council in December 2018.

## 2. Scope and Background

### 2.1 Scope

This report provides the rationale for the installation of new children’s play equipment purchased following funding received from Welsh Government through the All Wales Play Opportunities Grant (AWPOG) received at the end of the 2019/20 (March) financial year in the context of the decision made under delegated authority to reallocate the funding originally identified for the Splash Park project. The decision to reallocate the funds was made on the basis that owners of the Festival Park were no longer in a position to take forward the Splash Park project and the Council had to advise Welsh Government of how the funds would be utilised by the end of March 2020 or the funds would be withdrawn.

- 2.2 This report identifies play area sites where the purchased equipment is to be installed, together with providing an identified future rolling programme for any further funding should it become available in future years. This is highlighted within (Appendix 1).

### 2.3 Background

The provision of playgrounds and play areas with physical equipment is not a statutory requirement, although, where equipment has been erected, the Council has a duty to inspect and maintain the equipment in good order. However, Welsh Government have placed a duty on local authorities to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their area. As part of this local authorities have to produce Play Sufficiency Assessments and Play Action Plans. These plans do not

come with an annual funding streams but Welsh Government usually allocate funds towards the end of a financial year in the name of All Wales Play Opportunities Grant (AWPOG).

- 2.4 Wales was the first country in the world to legislate for play under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010. Section 11 of the measure places a duty on local authorities to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their area.
- 2.5 In November 2012, Welsh Government placed a duty on all Local Authorities to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children in their areas. The first Play Sufficiency Assessments and Play Action Plans were submitted in March 2013.
- 2.6 An initial AWPOG grant of £117,000 was received in 2019/20 to support the implementing of the Play Sufficiency Action Plan and/or to take other actions to increase play opportunities for children and young people, a report on this funding was included on the information pack for scrutiny on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and has been identified as phase 1 works.
- 2.7 In March 2020 the Council was notified by Welsh Government of a further allocation of AWPOG funding, this funding had already been received by Blaenau Gwent in 2017/18, (£110,000), this funding had been initially allocated to a project for the creation of a “Splash Pad” facility.
- 2.8 It is pleasing to report that Parc Bryn Bach Tredegar has recently benefited from new grant funding from Welsh Government provided through the Valleys Regional Parks as part of the Discovery Gateway Project, where a new £185,000 visitor attraction (play facility) has been installed at the park and recently opened to the public following Covid 19 lockdown. The new facility has been very well received by visitors to the park.
- 2.9 As the Authority had conducted a comprehensive review of its own playgrounds in December 2018 it was always the intention that when this review was fully complete then AWPOG funding would be used to address recommendations from this review. The total amount of funding required to undertake all the recommendations of the 2018 play area review was estimated at £580,000.
- 2.10 Due to the need to resolve the funding issue during the Covid 19 lockdown period, the Managing Director, advised by both Director of Social Services & Director of Regeneration & Community Services, used delegated authority to approve the purchase of a range/selection of play equipment which is currently held in storage with HAG’s AMP Ltd. awaiting installation.
- 2.11 The Playground Review carried out in 2018 has provided the methodology to be used to prioritise the funding to upgrade children’s playgrounds across the council.
- 2.12 The review was based around the following;
  - play value
  - Site access, and
  - Usage levels



- 2.13 Using this criterion officers have now identified and prioritised play area sites that are in need of upgrading and would benefit from the introduction of new equipment. This is highlighted in more detail within (Appendix 1) of this report.
- 2.14 The following play area sites have been identified as priority 1 and 2 in the play area review and have therefore been identified as phase 2 for the installation of the new play equipment: -

<b>Play Area Sites (Phase 2)</b>
Parc Bryn Bach Tredegar (New adventure play area has been constructed and opened in July 2020)
Banna Park Nantyglo
Duffryn Park Blaina
Gelli Grug Park Abertillery
Brynmawr Welfare Park
Warm Turn Play Area Abertillery
New Rassau Park Ebbw Vale

- 2.15 The methodology used from the Playground Review 2018, has now been used to identify sites suitable for upgrading on a rolling programme should future AWPOG funding be made available. This would allow for implementation to be expedited should future funding require expenditure at short notice, as was the case in 2019/20 and now in this instance for 2020/21.
- 2.16 Additionally, the play area review (2018) identified a number play area sites that had little or no play value and the future of these should be considered further, below is a list of the sites that have been identified for consideration, as follows;

<b>Play Areas Future Use to Be Considered</b>			
	<b>Play Area</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Reason</b>
1.	St James Way Play Area	Tredegar	Play area review 2018
2.	Tredegar Wheeled sports Area (Rear Town Centre)	Tredegar	Play area review 2018
3.	Ball Court Gurnos Est.	Brynmawr	Play area review 2018

4.	Vincent Avenue Play Area	Nantyglo	Play area review 2018
5.	Coedcae Play Area	Nantyglo/Blaina	Play area review 2018
6.	Garn Cross Play Area	Nantyglo	Play Strategy
7.	Glanstruth Play Area	Blaina	Play area review 2018
8.	Brynheulog Play Area	Blaina	Play Strategy
9.	Maeshafod Play Area	Blaina	Play area review 2018
10.	West Side Play Area	Blaina	Play area review 2018
11.	Roseheyworth Play Area	Cwmtillery	Play area review 2018
12.	Roseheyworth Wheeled Sports Area	Cwmtillery	Play area review 2018
13.	Woodland Field Play Area	Cwmtillery	Play area review 2018
14.	Woodland Terrace Play Area	Abetrbeeg	Play Strategy
15.	Oxford place Play Area	Llanhilleth	Play area review 2018
16.	Troy Road Play Area	Llanhilleth	Play Strategy
17.	Abertillery Wheeled Sports Area	Abertillery	Removed new Site to be identified
18.	Garnlydan PA	Garnlydan Ebbw Vale	Play area review 2018
19.	Hilltop Wheeled Sports Area	Hilltop Ebbw Vale	Play area review 2018
20.	Newtown Play Area	Newtown Ebbw Vale	Play area review 2018
21.	Cwm Welfare Ground Play Area	Cwm Ebbw Vale	Play area review 2018

1. Now that the identified play areas in the table above have reached their economic and play value life-span it is intended to engage again with local ward members to discuss options for each site.
2. Should any play area site be considered for closure/removal then there would be cost implications associated with this, this would be in two stages as follows;
3. Stage 1 – Removal of all play equipment and site made safe (costs to be absorbed in existing grounds maintenance revenue budget)
4. Stage 2 – Site clearance of safety surfacing, tarmac, concrete bases etc. returning sites back to natural state would require some capital investment ranging from £1,500 to £10,000 per site, depending on the size and nature of the equipment that was once on site.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

#### 3.1 **Option 1** (preferred option)

Members endorse the current work programme for the installation of the already purchased play equipment into the sites as identified in 2.14 above and support further dialogue at a ward level in respect of the future of children's play areas as listed in 2.16 above in line with the "Play Area Review" undertaken in December 2018.

#### 3.2 **Option 2**

Members not support the proposal.

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

#### 4.1 This report supports the achievement of a number of areas within strategic plans: -

1. Access to recreational space for all residents supports their long term physical and mental health and well-being.
2. Recreational spaces are very important for communities in building positive relationships and attitudes.
3. Physical activity is important to everyone regardless of age or ability.
4. Provision of play in many forms will support the development of children and families.
5. Provision of facilities must be sustainable for the future and must consider the long term financial challenges of the Council. Community Asset Transfer is one option that can support this, as is increased use of the natural environment.
6. Smarter infrastructure of residential areas such as road calming, green space, safe routes etc. is essential to give children the option to "play out" and not have to visit an equipped designated area to play.
7. The report fully supports Council priorities.

### 5. **Implications**

#### 5.1 **Benefits**

- Improved and updated play equipment provides increased play value and benefits to the community
- Well maintained play facilities improves the health and wellbeing of young people
- Play provision will become more sustainable in the long term
- The removal of play areas that are isolated, in poor condition or have little play value will enable the Council to concentrate its effort in larger, multi-use sites that provide for a range of age groups abilities and interests

#### 5.2 **Dis-benefits**

- In the event of removal of a play area some residents would have further distances to visit a play area

### 5.3 Risks

- Having the money clawed back by Welsh Government due to unavoidable delays on proposed timeline
- Residents and/or ward members may wish sites to remain which will result in continued increased costs and low play value

### 5.4 Budget

- The projects/Equipment and installation costs are funded from Welsh Government. The council will continue to support ongoing revenue costs.
- There would be cost implications should any play area be identified for removal

### 5.5 Legal

There are no legal implications linked to this report.

### 5.6 *Human Resources*

There is no impact on human resources associated with this report.

## 6. Supporting Evidence

### 6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

Play areas across Blaenau Gwent are subject to regular recorded inspections and assessment for “Play Value” of each site on an annual basis by an independent assessor.

### 6.2 *Expected outcome for the public*

There is acknowledgement that play areas can provide health and wellbeing benefits for all ages. Play areas tend to be recognised for their traditional equipment such as a swing, slide and roundabout. Whilst equipped play areas have their place, the more modern approach to play provision links to the wider environment.

6.2.1 Open spaces, woodland, cycle tracks, footpaths, water play etc. offer a breadth of opportunities to children and adults for play and recreation. A more strategic, inclusive approach by services will be able to consider these links and support the provision of play so that it is more widely available, whether that is “outside the front door” or within the natural environment.

6.2.2 This approach would support the Council in maintaining the ability to secure play provision and enable it to concentrate its efforts in larger destination facilities that benefit the wider community rather than individual small areas.

6.2.3 The public would benefit from improved recreation provision that is well maintained, fit for purpose and caters for a wide variety of needs and interests.

6.2.4 The Welsh Government’s play legislation directs local authorities to consider the diverse needs of children and are supportive of alternative provision that includes funding for new technology, improvements to open play space, play initiatives and schemes delivered by the third sector, play libraries and free access to leisure facilities

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***  
Extensive consultation was undertaken during the play area review process in 2018, this included engagement with the following organisations, including:

- Blaenau Gwent Member Engagement
- GAVO
- External partners/Community Groups
- The Play Advisory Service
- Welsh Government

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***  
For a long term, sustainable play provision it will be necessary to reduce the number of play areas and provide low maintenance sites to keep costs down.

6.4.1 A number of options have been included in this report that will support the Council in this. These include:

- Developing a strategic, inclusive approach that considers play provision in new developments or changes to services i.e. planning, highways, local development plan with links with cycle tracks, footpaths, open space, schools, and community facilities
- Consideration of larger multi-use sites that are suitable for a range of age groups
- Alternative play provision not necessarily physical equipment
- Promotion of other play providers
- Prioritisation of closures could be based on play areas in the poorest condition, size of site, costs of removal
- Prioritisation of developing an area or changing the use of an area dependent upon location, usage and cost
- Investigate potential sponsorship for play areas

6.5 ***Preventative focus***  
The Council has undertaken a fundamental review of all play areas across the County Borough.

6.5.1 The findings of the review have highlighted the poor condition of many of its play areas and ways that could improve the provision for the longer term.

6.5.2 There will be a need both corporately and operationally to change the service model to one that is fit for purpose for residents, visitors and manageable for the Council in the future.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

There are opportunities to work with housing associations, community groups, trusts and local businesses to secure ways to provide good quality play opportunities.

6.6.1 Initial discussions have taken place that have been positive and will benefit the wider community.

6.6.2 Local childcare providers, childminders and schools would also benefit from future joint working arrangements.

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

The content of this report has been considered across a number of services:

- Social Services – Providing an environment that supports health & well-being for families and individuals.
- Environment – Access to open space is essential for alternative play provision, as well as investigating the options for transferring assets to the community or the organisations within the area.
- Planning, Highways & Countryside – The Local Development Plan will safeguard the area's open recreational space so that links between new developments and the local environment can be utilised in the best way possible, securing opportunities for play.
- Corporate – The decrease in funding each year means that the Council need to reduce costs wherever possible. Continued engagement with key stakeholders whilst changing service provision will be key to successful implementation of the chosen option.
- Education - The continued development of community focussed schools to support children's play and out-of-school-hours learning activities help to improve the learning and wellbeing of pupils, their families and the wider community.

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

N/A

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 A specialist contractor will be utilised for the installation of the equipment and monitored accordingly by appropriate officers.

7.2 Upon completion of the installation, the comparison and rationale document (Appendix 1) will be updated.

- 7.3 Should external funding be made available in the future, the play areas identified as Priority 2 within the comparison and rationale document (Appendix 1) will be the sites where such funding will be utilised.
- 7.4 Within the criteria and rationale document (Appendix 1), sites identified as Priority 2 should be considered for complete refurbishment which would incur significant costs.
- 7.4.1 Officers will work closely with internal and external colleagues and partners to investigate grant funding opportunities that may be explored to fund such schemes. E.g. As Abertillery Park is a protected Fields In Trust site, funding may be available via Fields In Trust.

### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

#### **Attached to this report:**

- Appendix 1 – Criteria Comparison & Rationale for Play Area Upgrading

**Appendix 1**

<b>Criteria Comparison KEY For Table below</b>	
PA	Play Area
WS	Wheeled Sports (skate board/bikes etc.)
BC	Ball Court or Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
Priority 1	Sites identified in 2018 play area review for additional equipment to be installed in year 1 subject to funding
Priority 2	Sites identified in 2018 play area review for additional equipment to be installed in year 2 subject to funding
Priority 3	Sites identified in the 2018 play area review with limited scope to add additional equipment, but items can be replaced/updated subject to available funding.
Priority 4	Sites identified in the 2018 play area review with no scope to add additional equipment and/or sites be considered for long term closure.
Closure 1	Play area sites identified in the 2018 review for closure in 2019/20
Closure 2	Play area sites identified in the 2018 review for closure in 2020/21
Relocate	See site comment below
Monitor	See site comment below



### Criteria Comparison Rationale

		CRITERIA 7	CRITERIA 5	CRITERIA 6	CRITERIA 1	CRITERIA 2	CRITERIA 3	CRITERIA 8	CRITERIA 4		
		Play Value Limited	Risk/Benefit No Challenge Opportunities	Limited Catchment	Social Safety & Casual Supervision Poor Sightlines	Social Safety & Casual Supervision Limited or Low Use	Social Safety & Casual Supervision Vulnerable to vandalism	Development	Unsatisfactory Access	Recommended Action	
LOCATION/TYPE	WARD	Play Value	Risk/Benefit	Catchment	Social Safety & Casual Supervision	Social Safety & Casual Supervision	Social Safety & Casual Supervision	Development	Access	Action	Comments
CHARTIST WAY PA	SIRHOWY	Limited play value for amount of equipment	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities.	Many houses nearby Limited - busy road	Good sightlines	Limited use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Insufficient space for additional items	Tolerable	Monitor	Potential Development of land. No investment until confirmation of future plan
TY NEWYDD PA	SIRHOWY	Good play value for all ages	Good challenge	Few houses Limited - busy road	Reasonable sightlines	Low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Good New 2012	Unsatisfactory	Priority 2	Due to recent refurbishment, improving access will allow for further development.  Priority 2
SOUTHEND PA	GEORGE TOWN	Good play value for all ages	Senior multi play challenge	New access point would increase catchment	Good sightlines	Moderate/Limited use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Good New 2015	Unsatisfactory	Priority 2	Scope for further development.  Priority 2

St. JAMES WAY PA	GEORGE TOWN	Limited for Toddlers, Reasonable for Jnrs & Snrs	No challenge opps	Many houses nearby to one side limits catchment significantly	Limited sightlines - houses Reasonable sightlines - passers by	Moderate use Safe routes to area	Vulnerable to vandalism	Good	Unsatisfactory	Closure 2	- Closure 19/20  - Closed at present (Sept 19) due to continued and high level of vandalism  - Potential development of land & resultant potential new play facility.
St. JAMES WAY BC	GEORGE TOWN	Limited for Toddlers, Reasonable for Jnrs & Snrs	No challenge opps	Many houses nearby to one side limits catchment significantly	Limited sightlines - houses Reasonable sightlines - passers by	Moderate use Safe routes to area	Vulnerable to vandalism	Good	Unsatisfactory	Relocate	Potential development of land & resultant potential new or relocated facility.  Should land use change at both St James Way & Chartist Way, future considerations would be combine relocation/developmen t due to proximity within ward.
BEDWELLY PITS PA	TREDEGAR CENTRAL & WEST	Reasonable for all	No challenge opps	Catchment small	Limited sightlines - houses	Regular use by small number of children	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Equipment in good condition. Appropriate size for catchment	Tolerable	Priority 1 (Year 1)	
TREDEGAR WS	TREDEGAR CENTRAL & WEST	Zero Toddlers Reasonable Juniors Good Seniors	Acceptable Challenge facility	Few houses Users will travel to facility	Limited sightlines - houses	Low use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Development not recommended due to usage. Recommend ed that purpose and use of site should be reviewed.	Satisfactory	Closure 1	Investigate feasibility to relocation of equipment to other Wheeled sports areas.

BRANGWYN RD, CEFN GOLAU BC	TREDEGAR CENTRAL & WEST	Good play value for all ages	Acceptable	Houses surrounding Safe Routes for children Travel distances slightly longer than at first sight	Reasonable sightlines from houses and passers-by.	Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Good play value	Playground - Unsatisfactory Ballcourt - Tolerable	Priority 4	Upgrade complete 2018.
BRANGWYN RD, CEFN GOLAU PA	TREDEGAR CENTRAL & WEST	Good play value for all ages	Acceptable	Houses surrounding Safe Routes for childrenTravel el distances slightly longer than at first sight	Reasonable sightlines from houses and passers-by.	Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Good play value	Playground - Unsatisfactory Ballcourt - Tolerable	Priority 4	Limited scope for further development.
TREFIL 1 PA	SIRHOWY	Good play value for all ages	No challenge opps	Few houses nearby Distance from housing & steep hill limit catchment	Limited sightlines	Low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Equipment in good condition. Appropriate size for catchment	Tolerable - steep hill	Priority 3	Investigations to be made at the option of Business Community sponsorship (Quarry) for future development.
TREFIL 2 UPPER WS	SIRHOWY	Poor for Toddlers Limited for Jnrs Good for Snrs Gives different opportunities to other play areas in village	Acceptable	Very few houses near Steep hill will limit catchment	Poor sightlines	Low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Sufficient for purpose	Unsatisfactory - steep grass ramp, steep hill Modification not reasonably practicable	Priority 4	Potential Closure
BRYNMAWR REC PA	BRYNMAWR	Limited for Toddlers, Reasonable for Jnrs Zero for Snrs	Acceptable	Few houses to one side only limiting catchment	Poor sightlines	Low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Low use	Unsatisfactory	Priority 2	Scope for further development.

GURNOS EST BC	BRYNMAWR	Zero Toddlers Reasonable Juniors Reasonable Seniors Good facility poor location	Acceptable No challenge opps	No housing within 100m	Poor sightlines Isolated will reduce usage	Low use	Vulnerable to vandalism	No justification to develop due to location	Unsatisfactory	Closure 1	
BRYNAWEL PA	BRYNMAWR	Poor for Toddlers Reasonable for Jnrs Zero for Snrs Limited play value	Acceptable	Houses surrounding Safe Routes for children Good catchment	Good sightlines	Limited use could be that few children living nearby	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Check actual and likely child population before any refurb	Tolerable	Priority 2	Scope for further development.
BRYNMAWR WELFARE (Junior) PA	BRYNMAWR	Good for toddlers & young juniors	Acceptable No challenge opps	Few houses nearby Busy Road to one side limited catchment	Limited sightlines Reasonable over side by other users of the park	Moderate use	vulnerable to vandalism due to location	1 or 2 challenge items would encourage use and provide opps for older jnrs and snrs	Satisfactory - Entrance unsatisfactory	Priority 1 (Year 1)	Scope for further development.
BRYNMAWR WELFARE (Toddler) PA	BRYNMAWR	Good for toddlers & young juniors	Acceptable No challenge opps	Few houses nearby Busy Road to one side limited catchment	Limited sightlines Reasonable over side by other users of the park	Moderate use	vulnerable to vandalism due to location	1 or 2 challenge items would encourage use and provide opps for older jnrs and snrs	Satisfactory Entrance - unsatisfactory	Priority 1 (Year 1)	Scope for further development.
BRYNMAWR WELFARE WS	BRYNMAWR	Zero for toddlers Reasonable for jnrs Poor for snrs	Limited	Reasonable number of houses Long walk around for many limiting catchment	Reasonable sightlines Good from passers-by Good oversight by other users of the park.	Low use Too tame for serious users Too far for regular use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	This site is fit for purpose. It is an isolated site with low usage. If there was a sufficient demand the area could be upgraded to give more challenging wheeled sports opportunities or replaced with a ball court.	Unsatisfactory – There is a long steep path Entrance Unsatisfactory – Ramp desirable but it is a low use site	Monitor	Scope for further development. On site community group exploring funding opportunities

WAUNHEULOG PA	NANTYGLO	Poor play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Good for Seniors	Acceptable	many houses nearby but to one side only which limits catchment. The playground is up a steep bank and 50 yards travel from the nearest houses. Most children will have a significantly longer travel distance limiting catchment	Limited sightlines	High/moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Good site. Increase toddler opps But far from houses	Unsatisfactory	Priority 3	
BANNA PARK PA	NANTYGLO	Limited for Toddlers, Good for Juniors, Satisfactory for Seniors	Acceptable Challenge is limited	Few houses to one side Busy Road Limiting catchment	Limited sightlines	Limited use	Vulnerable to vandalism	A satisfactory variety of equipment for all ages	Playground Satisfactory Entrance Tolerable – Ramp will be too difficult for some	Priority 2 (year 2)	
BANNA PARK BC	NANTYGLO	Limited for Toddlers, Good for Juniors, Satisfactory for Snrs	Acceptable Challenge is limited	Few houses to one side Busy Road Limiting catchment	Limited sightlines	Limited use	Vulnerable to vandalism	A satisfactory variety of equipment for all ages	Playground Satisfactory Entrance Tolerable – Ramp will be too difficult for some	Priority 3	
VINCENT AVENUE PA	NANTYGLO	Good play value for Toddlers, Limited for Juniors and Nil for Seniors	Acceptable Challenge is limited for juniors	Surrounding houses Access at one point limiting catchment	good sightlines from adjacent housing but quite a few have high fences and hedges	Limited use	Isolated lone child or single parent may feel vulnerable limits catchment.	There is insufficient space for further developments. The equipment has a reasonable life expectancy	Satisfactory	Closure 2	Potential Closure should funding be sourced for development of Banna Park.

COED CAE PA	BLAINA	Poor play value for Toddlers, Limited for Juniors and Poor for Seniors	Acceptable. No challenge opps	Many houses nearby on 3 sides there are few. Travel is long distance limiting catchment	Reasonable sightlines from houses. Poor sightlines from passers-by	Low use	Small catchment limits use not vulnerable to vandalism	A refurbishment is needed though there is insufficient catchment and usage to warrant a significant increase in facilities	Playground - Unsatisfactory – Grass embankment is steep Entrance Unsatisfactory	Closure 1	
GARN CROSS PA	NANTYGLO	Low play value site	Acceptable. No challenge opps	Few houses nearby to one side only limiting catchment. Long walk around most would have to cross busy road	Limited sightlines from houses Good sight from passers-by	Low use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Isolated site Poor condition Catchment small Review status	Satisfactory	Closure 1	
CENTRAL PARK PA	BLAINA	Limited play value for Toddlers, Very Good for Juniors and Good for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are good "challenge" opportunities	many houses nearby but to two sides only. busy road adjacent. Both factors will limit catchment for unaccompanied children.	good sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by. There is good oversight from other users of the park.	Moderate use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Upgraded a few years ago, this site has high play value. 1 or 2 toddler items could be considered. There is a busy road between the play area and housing which limits local use.	Tolerable	Priority 1 (Year 1)	Identified need for additional Toddler equipment to maximise play value potential.
GLANYSTRUTH PA	BLAINA	Zero play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Zero for Seniors.	Acceptable No challenge opps	surrounded by housing	good sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	Regular use by small number of children	Not vulnerable to vandalism	insufficient space for additional items	Satisfactory	Closure 1	Closure on completion of 19/20 provision of additional equipment at Central Park.  - Justified due to close proximity to Central Par

BRYNHEULOG PA	BLAINA	Zero play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Zero for Seniors.	Acceptable Limited challenge opps	some houses nearby but the play area is at the edge of the housing which limits catchment	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and limited sightlines from passers-by	Moderate use by children who live at that end of the road	Vulnerable to vandalism	Safe location, with some sightlines from nearby housing. regular use by children. Re-siting could be considered. New items could be installed either outside the fenced area or the fence extended.	Unsatisfactory Entrance - Unsatisfactory	Closure 1	Closure on completion of 19/20 provision of additional equipment at Central Park. - Justified due to close proximity to Central Par
BLAINA BC	BLAINA	Zero play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Seniors.	Acceptable WS gives challenge	Few houses limiting spontaneous use	Poor sightlines	Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Fit for purpose, no room for further developments. Some refurbishment of the wheeled sports area desirable.	Playground - Satisfactory Entrance - Unsatisfactory	Priority 3	
BLAINA WS	BLAINA	Zero play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Seniors.	Acceptable WS gives challenge	Few houses limiting spontaneous use	Poor sightlines	Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Fit for purpose, no room for further developments. Some refurbishment of the wheeled sports area desirable.	Playground - Satisfactory Entrance - Unsatisfactory	Priority 4	
MAESHAFOD PA	BLAINA	Low play value site	Acceptable No challenge opps	many houses nearby but the relatively long travel distances will limit catchment	limited sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	Moderate limited use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	insufficient space for additional items	Unsatisfactory	Closure 2	Consideration to be given to potential to redevelop into Kick a bout area

BOURNVILE PA	BLAINA	Reasonable play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Reasonable for Seniors	Acceptable Limited challenge opps	Few houses Busy Road limiting catchment	Limited sightlines	Low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Acceptable level of equipment	Reasonable	Priority 3	
DUFFRYN PARK PA	BLAINA	Limited play value for all ages.	Acceptable No challenge opps	Few houses nearby	Isolated Poor sightlines	Limited use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Too far from houses for much informal use by children but is an attractive park to visit. Could be made into a destination playground.	Unsatisfactory steep path Satisfactory within playground	Priority 2 (year 2)	Consideration for complete refurbishment of play area should funding be available
WEST SIDE PA	BLAINA	Limited for Toddlers, Good Juniors, Zero Seniors	Acceptable No challenge opps	Houses nearby but travel distance long	Reasonable sightlines	Limited use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Room for additional item. Unlikely to increase use	Unsatisfactory	Closure 2	Closure in conjunction with refurbishment of Duffryn Park
ROSEHEYWORTH PA	CWMTILLERY	Poor play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Good for Seniors	Acceptable	many houses nearby but a busy road adjacent limits catchment	limited sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	Limited/ Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Thorough refurbishment of the play area is needed but there is no space for additional items.	Unsatisfactory	Closure 2	Closure but consideration should be given if funding available to refurbish or relocate both Play Area & Wheeled Sports site  Significant funding required  Explore re use of land to fund relocation to alternative site within ward.



ROSEHEYWORTH WS	CWMTILLERY	Poor play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Good for Seniors	Skate area gives challenge	wheeled sports enthusiasts will travel to such a location	limited sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	Limited/Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	The adjacent wheeled sports area is suitable for purpose.	Unsatisfactory	Closure 2	Closure but consideration should be given if funding available to refurbish or relocate both Play Area & Wheeled Sports site - Significant funding required - Explore re use of land to fund relocation to alternative site within ward.
WOODLAND FIELD PA	CWMTILLERY	Good play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Poor for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	few houses within a reasonable travel distance and from one side there is a steep stepped path up from the houses on the other side	isolated and there are poor sightlines from nearby houses	Very low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Low use site which is too far from houses. May be used by children attending sports matches with parents. The site is isolated and access is difficult	Unsatisfactory	Closure 1	
ABERTILLERY PARK PA	CWMTILLERY	Good play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Poor for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	no houses nearby. Distance through the park from the nearest houses is too far for unaccompanied travel by most children	reasonable sightlines	high/moderate use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	will need a good refurbishment in a few years	Tolerable	Priority 2	Consideration for relocation of a new play area within curtilage of park should funding be sourced.  Main borough park, but existing location has resulted in high levels of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Play area temporarily closed (Sept 19) due to vandalism and fire damage.

JIM OWEN FIELD PA	CWMTILLERY	Good play value for all ages	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	Many houses nearby but only a few close enough for (free play) limiting catchment	reasonable sightlines	high/moderate use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	relatively new site (installed in 2002) with a good variety of equipment.	Satisfactory	Priority 4	No scope to add additional equipment within play area
JIM OWEN FIELD BC	CWMTILLERY	Good play value for all ages	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	Many houses nearby but only a few close enough for (free play) limiting catchment	reasonable sightlines	high/moderate use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	relatively new site (installed in 2002) with a good variety of equipment.	Tolerable	Priority 4	
WARM TURN PA	SIX BELLS	Low play value for all ages	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	some houses nearby but mostly on the other side of a busy road which significantly limits catchment	good sightlines	Low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	There are only few houses nearby on right side of road. Effective limited catchment as busy adjacent road will reduce usage from other side	Unsatisfactory	Priority 2	Additional equipment to compensate for closure of Woodland Terrace play area
SIX BELLS PARK PA	SIX BELLS	Good play value for juniors, limited for toddlers and seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	houses surrounding although some children would have quite a walk round to the entrances	good sightlines from nearby houses	moderate use	not vulnerable to vandalism	Playground upgraded in 2014. Most other equipment is about 30 years old	Satisfactory	Priority 3	Friends of Six Bells Park community group successful in obtaining funding to add new equipment, benches and refurbishing old toilets into Café.
SIX BELLS PARK BC	SIX BELLS	Appropriate for purpose	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	Surrounded by housing	good sightlines from nearby houses	regular use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	suitable for purpose	Unsatisfactory	Priority 1 (Year 1)	New Fencing

ABERBEEG WELFARE PA	LLANHILLETH	Low play value for all ages	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	Usage will mostly be limited to families attending the club	poor sightlines from nearby houses and reasonable sightlines from other users of the club (when open).	Low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Review use of playground in light of future use of the club and/or site	Satisfactory	Monitor	- Initially considered for closure but following installation of bridge has improved access and usage.  - Further consideration and review status  - Potential for Priority 2
WOODLAND TERRACE PA	LLANHILLETH	reasonable	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	many houses nearby but play area is at the far end of housing which limits catchment	limited sightlines from nearby houses and limited sightlines from passers-by	low use but may be regularly used by a small number of children living close by	Not vulnerable to vandalism	insufficient space for further developments	Good	Closure 1	
LLANHILLETH PARK (Top) PA	LLANHILLETH	Good play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Limited for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There is limited "challenge" opportunities	housing relatively nearby but only a few houses sufficiently close for unaccompanied travel by children. This is primarily a destination and after school/nursery playground. It is adjacent to the school. With careful management this could be a dual use facility	limited sightlines from nearby houses and limited sightlines from passers-by. There is good oversight from the school and nursery	good use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	good variety of equipment which was installed in 2004/5. There is housing relatively nearby. There is no room for further developments	Satisfactory	Priority 3	

OXFORD PLACE PA	LLANHILLETH	small ball games area adds to the play value	acceptable level of risk at this site. There is limited "challenge" opportunities	houses to two sides only which limits catchment	limited sightlines from nearby house	limited use	not vulnerable to vandalism	relatively small catchment but some refurbishment is desirable. Swing(s) could be installed and/or football surface improved. Consultation with local children and residents is desirable before undertaking any significant improvements	Unsatisfactory	Closure 1	
SWFFRYD PA	LLANHILLETH	Limited play value for all ages.	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	surrounded by houses but many children would have to cross a busy road which limits catchment. The traffic calming on this road is insufficient to make the road safe to cross.	sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by. High hedges/fences restrict sightlines	moderate/limited use	not vulnerable to vandalism	space for a small rotating item. Traffic calming needs to be more severe for children from across busy road area to have safe access.	Satisfactory	Priority 1 (Year 1)	
TROY ROAD PA	LLANHILLETH	Reasonable play value for a small low-use site	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	surrounded by housing but the fairly busy road will limit catchment as will the very steep path from one side	good sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	low use	not vulnerable to vandalism	site appears to have low usage.	Unsatisfactory	Closure 2	

BRYNITHEL BC	LLANHILLETH	Play value is appropriate for this type of facility	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	only a few houses nearby and travel is via long paths to both sides	no sightlines from nearby houses and no sightlines from passers-by	very low use except probably when children come with parents to matches	not vulnerable to vandalism	a long way from houses for informal use. It also has very limited casual supervision. It probably has some use on match days	Unsatisfactory	Priority 4	
BRYNITHEL PA	LLANHILLETH	Reasonable play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Poor for Seniors	There is an acceptable level of risk at this site. The large pirouette gives some "challenge".	surrounded by housing with reasonably safe routes to the play area	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	high/moderate use	not vulnerable to vandalism		Unsatisfactory	Priority 3	
VIVIAN STREET PA	ABERTILLERY	Reasonable play value for a small play area	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities.	many houses to two sides but adjacent busy road and long travel distances for most children significantly reduce the catchment. Path to one side is steep.	poor sightlines from nearby houses and limited sightlines from passers-by	limited use	not vulnerable to vandalism	There is insufficient space for further developments and the equipment has reasonable life expectancy	Unsatisfactory	Closure 1	

ABERTILLERY WS	ABERTILLERY	Play value is appropriate for this type of facility	acceptable level of risk at this site. This is a "challenge" facility	some houses nearby but to one side only. Enthusiasts will travel reasonable distances for a dedicated facility like this	site is rather isolated and there are poor sightlines from nearby houses	Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Provision was made for skaters/skateboarders to use what was an overflow car park. There is a steep path that runs straight into the area. Ramps etc. were added in 2003. The area does not benefit from good oversight and is therefore vulnerable	Unsatisfactory	Closed	
GELLI CRUG PA	ABERTILLERY	Good play value for all ages	an acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	surrounded by housing	good sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	high/moderate use	not vulnerable to vandalism	There is a good variety of equipment for all ages. The Ball Games Area is sufficient for purpose	Unsatisfactory	Priority 2 (year 2)	Consideration for complete refurbishment of play area should funding be available,
GELLI CRUG BC	ABERTILLERY	Good play value for all ages	an acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	surrounded by housing	good sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	high/moderate use	not vulnerable to vandalism	There is a good variety of equipment for all ages. The Ball Games Area is sufficient for purpose	Unsatisfactory	Priority 4	
BEAUFORT RISE PA	BEAUFORT	Limited play value for Toddlers and Seniors. A particularly good variety of play opportunities for Juniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. The space net and wobble balance beams give "challenge" for juniors	surrounded by housing but the very busy road to 1 side will restrict catchment	limited sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	Moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	There is a good variety of equipment. Attractive ground graphics add to the play value of this site	Satisfactory	Priority 3	

PRIMATIVE PLACE PA	BEAUFORT	Good play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Poor for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	a few houses nearby. Most children would have to walk quite a long way to get to the play area and its isolation may make children or parents feel vulnerable. Its catchment is therefore quite restricted	site is rather isolated. There are limited sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	limited use	not vulnerable to vandalism	Quite an isolated site which appears to have fairly low usage	Tolerable	Priority 3	
Page 127 GARNLYDAN PA	BEAUFORT	Poor play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Poor for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	many houses nearby but travel distances are unexpectedly long. There is a busy road to one side. These factors limit catchment	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	Moderate use	not vulnerable to vandalism	a reasonable amount of equipment with good life expectancy	Tolerable	Closure 1	Discussions with Tai Calon regarding potential re use of the land and relocation of new play facility
GARNLYDAN BC	BEAUFORT	Play value is appropriate for this type of facility	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	some houses nearby but to one side only which limits catchment. It may be used by adjacent football pitch users	site is rather isolated. There are poor sightlines from nearby houses	limited use	vulnerable to vandalism	site is sufficient for purpose	Unsatisfactory	Priority 4	Consider if funding available to relocate due to poor existing location

NEW RASSAU PA	RASSAU	Poor play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Seniors	There is an acceptable level of risk at this site. The skateboard area and the overhead bars give "challenge".	surrounded by housing but fairly busy roads will restrict unaccompanied access by some children	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by. The Wheeled Sports Area is rather hidden	high use	vulnerable to vandalism	Some refurbishment only needed as there is already a good variety of play opportunities	Tolerable	Monitor	Further review and consultations required with ward members due to high levels of ASB and vandalism
NEW RASSAU WS	RASSAU	Poor play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Seniors	There is an acceptable level of risk at this site. The skateboard area and the overhead bars give "challenge".	surrounded by housing but fairly busy roads will restrict unaccompanied access by some children	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by. The Wheeled Sports Area is rather hidden	high use	vulnerable to vandalism	Some refurbishment only needed as there is already a good variety of play opportunities	Tolerable	Monitor	Further review and consultations required with ward members due to high levels of ASB and vandalism
OLD RASSAU PA	RASSAU	Limited play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	surrounded by housing but the busy road adjacent will limit catchment	poor sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	high/moderate use	vulnerable to vandalism	good variety of equipment with reasonable life expectancy	Tolerable	Monitor	Further review and consultations required with ward members due to high levels of ASB and vandalism
OLD RASSAU BC	RASSAU	Limited play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	surrounded by housing but the busy road adjacent will limit catchment	poor sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	high/moderate use	vulnerable to vandalism	good variety of equipment with reasonable life expectancy	Tolerable	Monitor	Further review and consultations required with ward members due to high levels of ASB and vandalism Police Aware & Monitoring



GLYNCOED PA	BADMINTON	Good play value for all ages	There is an acceptable level of risk at this site. The Multi-Play gives the feeling of "challenge	many houses nearby but to one side only. This, and the busy road at that one side, limits catchment	good sightlines from houses opposite and good sightlines from passers-by	low use	vulnerable to vandalism	playground equipment is generally in good condition and has a wide variety of opportunities for children of all ages	Tolerable	Monitor	Monitor Site
GLYNCOED BC	BADMINTON	Good play value for all ages	There is an acceptable level of risk at this site. The Multi-Play gives the feeling of "challenge	many houses nearby but to one side only. This, and the busy road at that one side, limits catchment	good sightlines from houses opposite and good sightlines from passers-by	low use	vulnerable to vandalism	playground equipment is generally in good condition and has a wide variety of opportunities for children of all ages	Tolerable	Priority 4	
LETCHEWORTH PA	EBBW VALE NORTH	Limited play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Seniors.	an acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	surrounded by housing but the busy road to one side limits catchment	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	moderate/limited use	not vulnerable to vandalism	busy road to one side will act as a barrier as will limited parental oversight from houses. Possibly both factors will reduce usage. An extra gate has increased catchment.	satisfactory	Priority 1 (Year 1)	
HILLTOP WS	EBBW VALE NORTH	Appropriate play value for a specific facility	A "challenge" area suitable for users from older juniors to early twenties	Most housing is 100+m from the area. A facility like this will attract users from further afield, however for most it is at the top of a steep hill which will	limited sightlines from nearby houses and limited oversight from users of the adjacent community building	limited use	vulnerable to vandalism	Fit for purpose and with a few years life expectancy. Area too far from housing to warrant a local play area. If there were significant use of the adjacent community building, some	Good	Closure 2	Investigate feasibility to relocation of equipment to other Wheeled sports areas.

				reduce informal /spontaneous use				equipment could be considered			
NEWTOWN PA	EBBW VALE NORTH	reasonable for a small play area but there are no toddler opportunities	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	many houses nearby with reasonably safe routes for some children	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	regular use	not vulnerable to vandalism	A small rotating item could be considered, it would need to be outside fenced area. Having a cradle as well as a flat swing in the same bay could be justified in terms of increased play value for toddlers	Unsatisfactory	Closure 2	Closure on completion of new Community area. consult with Tai Calon regarding potential sale and re use of land
Page 130 PENNANT STREET PA	EBBW VALE SOUTH	Limited play value for Toddlers, Good for Juniors and Reasonable for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. The rope swing gives a "challenge" element.	surrounded by housing and many children will have a safe route to the play area. The single access point limits catchment	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and reasonable sightlines from passers-by	high use	vulnerable to vandalism	Most of the equipment is only a few years old. Location and permanent closing of top gate to the green space means that usage will be almost exclusively by those whose houses are adjacent	satisfactory	Priority 2	

CORONATION PARK PA	EBBW VALE SOUTH	Good play value for Toddlers, Reasonable for Juniors and Reasonable for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	small number of houses nearby but to one side only which will limit catchment. Those living reasonably nearby have quite a steep uphill walk to get to the playground	limited sightlines from nearby houses and limited sightlines from passers-by	limited use	not vulnerable to vandalism	slightly isolated site which appears to have only light usage. Big improvements would probably not increase usage and location not good for a significant increase in visitors	satisfactory	Closure 1	
GARDEN CITY PA	EBBW VALE SOUTH	Good play value for Toddlers, reasonable for Juniors and poor for Seniors	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	many houses nearby but the play area is at the edge of the housing which limits catchment	good sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	Moderate use	not vulnerable to vandalism	no space for further developments	satisfactory	Priority 3	
TYLLWYN PA	EBBW VALE SOUTH	Good play value for all ages	acceptable level of risk at this site. Overhead rotator gives "challenge"	surrounded by housing but steep slope and travel distances will act as a deterrent to high regular usage	poor sightlines from nearby houses	moderate/limited use	Vulnerable to vandalism	Good play value and variety of equipment.	Unsatisfactory	Priority 3	
WILLIAM ST, CWM PA	CWM	reasonably good play value for children of all ages	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	many houses to 3 sides with relatively safe routes for many children	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good sightlines from passers-by	high/moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	good variety of equipment for all ages which has reasonable life expectancy	Good	Priority 1 (Year 1)	
WILLIAM ST, CWM BC	CWM	reasonably good play value for children of all ages	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no	many houses to 3 sides with relatively safe routes	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and good	high/moderate use	Vulnerable to vandalism	good variety of equipment for all ages which has	Good	Priority 4	

			"challenge" opportunities	for many children	sightlines from passers-by			reasonable life expectancy			
CWM WELFARE PA	CWM	Satisfactory play value for a small play area	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	few houses nearby which will limit spontaneous informal play	good sightlines from other users of the park	moderate/limited use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	Too isolated for use by many local children but will be used by children with parents at matches	good	Closure 2	Closure to coincide with additional equipment to William Street PA
CWM WELFARE WS	CWM	play value is appropriate for its purpose	acceptable level of risk at this site. This is a "challenge" facility	few houses nearby, however keen users will tend to be older and may travel further than average for a facility like this	poor sightlines from nearby houses and limited sightlines from other users of the park	low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	likely to remain a relatively low-use site	Tolerable	Priority 4	Consider closure in future review.
HILLSIDE TCE PA	CWM	Play value is a little on the low side for the size of the area and amount of equipment	acceptable level of risk at this site. There are no "challenge" opportunities	some houses nearby but the play area is right at the edge of housing which limits catchment	reasonable sightlines from nearby houses and limited sightlines from passers-by	low use	Not vulnerable to vandalism	reasonable amount of equipment with reasonable life expectancy	Tolerable access Tolerable entrance Unsatisfactory due to sloping ground Limited opportunities	Priority 4	Consider closure in future review.

# Agenda Item 17

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Public Protection – Primary Authority Scheme**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor J Wilkins, Executive Member for Environment**

Report Submitted by: **David Thompson – Service Manager, Public Protection  
Steve Osborne- Team Manager- Trading Standards**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
22 July 20	23 July 20	29.09.20			N/A	14 Oct 20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act (RES Act), which impacts on the administration of the Council's enforcement functions in respect of Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards.
- 1.2 The report proposes the adoption of a policy where suitable businesses trading across local authority boundaries, start-up businesses or a single business can be given the opportunity to enter a legal Primary Authority Relationship with Blaenau Gwent Council in respect of regulatory functions.
- 1.3 Members are asked to approve the adoption of Primary Authority partnerships in principle and an associated local policy for Primary Authority.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 All businesses have a responsibility to comply with regulation and the majority take their duties seriously, however navigating legislation and finding the appropriate systems to comply with regulation can sometimes inhibit growth.
- 2.2 Consistent and integrated application of regulation, together with reliable and business friendly advice reduces costs for business whilst giving the assurance of a level playing field with competitors.
- 2.3 Businesses can be fearful of regulation and the powers officers hold in relation to enforcement. Business perception of regulators is changing to embrace the positive interaction regulators can have on business compliance and reducing the risk of falling foul of the law, the public protection risk, reputational damage and cost to the business. Primary Authority is an alternative means for businesses to comply with regulatory requirements.

- 2.4 Primary Authority is a means for businesses to receive assured and tailored advice on meeting statutory regulatory requirements including Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing through a single point of contact. This ensures start-ups get it right from the outset and enables all businesses to invest with confidence in products, practices and procedures, knowing that the resources they devote to compliance are well spent.  
Building on the success of the scheme the eligibility criteria for Primary Authority was expanded and from 1 October 2017 all businesses can now benefit from Primary Authority.
- 2.5 In January 2018 the new national oversight body Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) was launched by Government and tasked with identifying consumer risks and managing responses to large-scale product recalls and repairs. The new body enables the UK to meet the evolving challenges of product safety by responding to expanding international trade, the growth in online shopping and the increasing rate of product innovation. OPSS is a team within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) who exercise the statutory responsibility for management and administration of the Primary Authority scheme on behalf of the Secretary of State.
- 2.6 There are now over 100,000+ businesses and over 200 Local Authority and Fire and Rescue Services in the UK in Primary Authority partnerships which is the Governments preferred route to business support in regulation.
- 2.7 Primary Authority enables a business to form a legally recognised partnership with one local authority (the 'primary authority') to get assured advice about how they can comply most efficiently with regulation. This advice, known as Primary Authority Advice, must then be considered by other local authorities when dealing with that business e.g. when carrying out inspections or addressing non-compliance. Primary Authority ensures consistent interpretation of regulations, regardless of where stores, factories or offices are based or products are sold, thus:
- reducing the costs of complying with regulations
  - reducing the risk of a major breach of compliance
  - reducing the costs associated with failing to comply
- 2.8 Historically, Local Authority regulatory services operated voluntary 'Home' and 'Lead' Authority schemes which aim to address this issue. This approach worked well and was effective for many years. Generally, the Local Authority where the businesses head office was based became a contact point for other authorities so that regulatory issues that apply across the business can be addressed centrally.
- 2.9 Whilst the majority of businesses have been content with the voluntary arrangements, there was a need for strengthening and improving consistency in business support through regulation. Experience has shown that fewer Local Authorities may be prepared to act as Home or Lead Authorities without being able to recover costs for their time.

- 2.10 Through Primary Authority, organisations can form a statutory partnership with a single local authority, which must then provide robust and reliable advice on compliance which other councils must take into account when carrying out inspections or dealing with non-compliance. The scheme proposes that:
- Formal partnerships are made between businesses/trade associations/charities and a local authority and for that local authority to act as a Primary Authority and provide advice and guidance on the legislation covered by the partnership.
  - Where a local authority other than the relevant Primary Authority (described as an “enforcing authority”) proposes to take enforcement action against an organisation with a Primary Authority, the enforcing authority must consult the relevant Primary Authority first.
  - The Primary Authority will then have the right to direct the enforcing authority not to take the proposed enforcement action if they believe that it is inconsistent with advice or guidance that they had previously given.
- 2.11 Where a proposed enforcement action has been referred to a Primary Authority and the parties involved cannot reach an agreement as to the action that should be taken, the enforcing authority, the Primary Authority or the organisation involved can refer the action to OPSS for determination. The purpose of this determination process is to examine whether the Primary Authority’s previous advice was correct, and the proposed enforcement action is inconsistent with that advice
- 2.12 The matter is proposed at this time as a result of a request from a business to enter into a Primary Authority relationship with the Authority’s Trading Standards Service. The request pre-dates the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic and the business remains interested to further this, if the Authority is supportive of Option1.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

#### **Option 1 (Preferred Option)**

- 3.1 That Members adopt the Draft Policy in **Appendix 1** and delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration & Community Services, to enter Primary Authority relationships on behalf of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council for the purpose of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 (RES Act).
- 3.2 That the Primary Authority scheme is offered to appropriate businesses on a cost recovery basis for the Local Authority as detailed in the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act.
- 3.4 Adoption of the policy will help to ensure legal compliance, embrace the principles of better regulation and support local businesses.  
Adoption of the policy will contribute to the Council’s aims to develop a vibrant economy in Blaenau Gwent where businesses of all sizes can access support to meet their regulatory requirements and enhance business growth and the associated benefits to our residents and communities.

- 3.5 Adoption of Option 1 does not compel the service to enter any Primary Authority partnerships but merely permits such an agreement, if deemed appropriate in line with the Draft Policy shown in Appendix 1.

## **Option 2**

- 3.6 That the Primary Authority Scheme is not approved at this time and the Authority continues to offer businesses informal regulatory support where possible and appropriate, noting that this would be without “assured advice” and without an ability to recover costs for providing the regulatory support given.

## **4.0 Implications Against Each Option**

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

#### ***Option 1***

- 4.1 The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act (as amended) (section 31) provides that a Local Authority may recover its reasonable costs for acting as a Primary Authority. This will enable the Council to generate non-traditional funding for the authority and contribute to the Council priorities for developing a vibrant economy.
- 4.2 Regulatory burdens will be reduced if the Council embraces the Primary Authority Scheme. The requirement to consult the Primary Authority prevents unwarranted enforcement actions. Where an inspection plan is in place unnecessary checks and tests are avoided whilst undertaking intelligence/risk based local inspections.
- 4.3 Where businesses require a higher level of support and assistance, the Council will enter into formal agreement with the relevant business to make a charge for such services. This charge, which will be ratified annually by the Council as part of its fees & charges review process, will be set based on official guidance and will reflect the extra level of support and assistance given to Primary Authority businesses.
- 4.4 ***Option 2*** offers a continuation of current services does not present any impact upon the budget.

### ***5.0 Risk including Mitigating Actions***

- 5.1 Both Option 1 and Option 2 requires that any regulatory advice provided by the Local Authority is legally correct. Risks of provision of incorrect advice can leave the Council open to compensation claims and lead to businesses failing to properly comply with the law.

### ***6.0 Legal***

- 6.1 As above, both Options requires that any regulatory advice provided by the Local Authority is legally correct and the risks of failure in this are outlined above.



6.2 Part 2 of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 places a statutory duty on a Council to consult a “primary authority” before taking any local enforcement action against a business with a registered agreement with that “Primary Authority”.

6.3 The Council would be in breach of a statutory duty if it failed to comply with the statutory requirements in respect of notifications or determinations under Part 2 of The Act. Option 1 presents an opportunity to deliver direct support to businesses. Option 2 does not change the current situation of providing support where possible at no cost to businesses without the legal standing of the advice being “assured”.

## 7.0 Human Resources

7.1 There are no Human Resource implications of either option at this time. If Option 1 is adopted, Primary Authority arrangements would only be offered to businesses in a selective manner which is deliverable by the Authority, in accordance with the draft Policy attached as **Appendix 1**. Recharging such businesses for this service may offer opportunities to back fill posts covering Officer time devoted to it, should recovered cost levels be sufficient to do so.

## 8.0 **Supporting Evidence**

### 8.1 Performance Information and Data

There is no relevant performance data currently for Blaenau Gwent in relation to Primary Authority Partnerships as none exist.

### 8.2 Expected outcome for the public

Option 1 would support business compliance with regulatory legislation in a way which is more efficient and recovers the costs of businesses advice work.

Option 2 would continue to support businesses without an ability to provide assured advice or recover such associated costs for the Authority.

### 8.3 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

The Primary Authority scheme has been developed by OPSS in close consultation with business, taking into account their needs. Primary Authority partnerships would require engagement with the businesses in question and consultation with them prior to setting up formal Primary Authority partnership arrangements.

### 8.4 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

The preferred Option allows the Authority to consider setting up more efficient and cost recoverable support arrangements for the longer term.

### 8.5 Preventative focus

The Primary Authority arrangements proposed would help to prevent business non-compliance with the law where formal partnerships are established and would prevent unnecessary investigations and inspections upon the businesses.

### 8.6 Collaboration / partnership working

The preferred Option 1 sets up formal partnerships with businesses in a more collaborative approach to regulatory compliance

### 8.7 Integration(across service areas)

Primary Authority Partnerships can be established to cover a number of regulatory functions, integrating teams in support of that business.

### 8.8 EgIA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)

Any actions arising from the promotion of this scheme to businesses will be underpinned by Council's Public Protection Enforcement Policy, which provides a clear, transparent approach to ensure that there is no discrimination in the Council's actions and that everyone is treated fairly by the Council's officers within the legal processes.

## 9. **Monitoring Arrangements**

9.1 No monitoring requirements at this stage.

## 10. **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

**APPENDIX 1** - Draft Primary Authority Policy to be adopted if **Option 1** is approved.

The following background papers are included for reference.

Primary authority guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-regulation-primary-authority>

Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/13/contents>

Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/industrial-strategy-building-a-britain-fit-for-the-future>

Blaenau Gwent Council Enforcement Policy - [https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Resident/Environmental Health/2018/Enforcement Policy - Final Jan 18.pdf](https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Resident/Environmental_Health/2018/Enforcement_Policy_-_Final_Jan_18.pdf)



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Primary Authority Policy**

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy outlines the context and reasons why Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is adopting the Primary Authority Partnerships Scheme (The Scheme). It goes on to set out the policy for accepting and declining requests from businesses to join the scheme and how these partnerships will operate.
- 1.2 Primary Authority is a statutory scheme, underpinned by legislation that allows an eligible business to form a legally recognised partnership with a single Local Authority in relation to regulatory compliance. This Local Authority is then known as its 'Primary Authority'.
- 1.3 The legislative framework that supports Primary Authority Partnerships is provided by the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 (as amended). Further guidance and detail on the scheme is available at the Office for Product Safety and Standards <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-authority-overview>

#### **2 Context**

- 2.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has agreed that its Public Protection Services may enter into Primary Authority Partnerships with businesses to be operated on a cost recovery basis.
- 2.2 The reasons for this include:
- The benefit to business of the statutory basis of Primary Authority Partnerships
  - The ability to recover costs of providing Primary Authority ensures that Regulatory Services can provide support that encourages business confidence, sustainability and growth.

#### **3 What does a Primary Authority Partnership cover?**

- 3.1 We will continue to carry out our statutory duties in relation to inspections, investigations of breaches of legislation and complaints. These activities do not form part of a Primary Authority Partnership.
- 3.2. The provision of basic advice to all Blaenau Gwent based businesses consisting of directing businesses to guidance materials including web-based advice will continue to be available free of charge. We will continue to provide free, basic support and advice for start-up businesses that are based in the Local Authority.
- 3.4 We can act as a Primary Authority for Environmental Health/ Trading Standards / Licensing and have qualified officers experienced in the following areas of regulation:

- Age Restricted products



- Food Safety and Hygiene
- Health and Safety
- Food Standards
- Agriculture
- Metrology (Weights & Measures)
- Fair Trading
- Product Safety
- Taxi Licensing

3.6 As part of our Primary Authority Partnership, the following services are included:

- Liaison with other enforcement agencies and the public and co-ordination of enquiries from other Local Authorities/ Regulators/ members of the public
- On-going strategic support for the business. This includes providing comprehensive advice and guidance from professionally qualified officers and having regular contact with the partner business.

3.7 In addition, we will consider requests from the partner business to provide additional support such as:

- Training in application of regulatory requirements
- Review of policies, procedures and systems
- Audit of business systems
- Audit of business compliance

#### **4 Requests to enter into a Primary Authority Partnership**

4.1 Requests to enter into a Primary Authority Partnership with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council can be made directly to Public Protection. In some circumstances, requests from businesses may be referred to us through the Office for Product Safety and Standards.

We are committed to support our Primary Authority Partnerships from within our own professional staff resources. This ensures that partner businesses benefit from quality advice from highly trained and competent officers. However, these resources are finite, and we reserve the right to decline requests where we feel that we could not meet this commitment.

4.3 Requests from businesses will be prioritised based on factors such as previous history with us and whether the head office or significant part of their operation is based in the Blaenau Gwent Council area.

4.4 Other requests will be considered but may be declined.

#### **5 Refusal of requests to join a Primary Authority Partnership**



5.1 Whilst we are committed to supporting legitimate businesses and providing services that do this through Primary Authority Partnerships, we reserve the right to refuse requests to join the scheme where we consider that to do so is in the best interests of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

The following are examples of circumstances under which we may refuse a request:

- The partnership would exceed our resource capacity
- The business refuses or fails to agree to the terms and conditions or costs of the partnership within a reasonable time
- There is an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between the business and the Council or any other Regulator
- Outstanding legal action against the business
- Evidence of serious or repeated non-compliance with statutory responsibilities
- Evidence of a failure to follow advice properly given by us or any other Regulator

The decision to accept or refuse a request to enter into a Primary Authority Partnership with us rests with the Service Manager- Public Protection.

## **6 Formation and Delivery of Primary Authority Partnerships**

6.1 Formation of a Primary Authority Partnership involves the following elements:

- Our acceptance of a request to form a Partnership
- Agreement to the standard terms and conditions of Primary Authority
- Agreement on costs and charges and operational matters through the Summary of Partnership Arrangements
- Nomination by the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS)

6.2 Primary Authority Partnerships will be based on the standard terms and conditions developed by OPSS which maintain the integrity of the statutory scheme. Details specific to the partnership will be outlined in the nomination submitted to OPSS who have delegated authority on behalf of the Secretary of State to approve partnerships.

6.3 All businesses in a Primary Authority Partnership with us will be charged fees to recover reasonable costs we incur in acting as the Primary Authority.

6.5 An initial set up fee will be charged to all businesses that entering the scheme. **(to be decided internally)**

6.6 The fees charged will be reviewed six months and twelve months following the date of commencement of the partnership and annually thereafter. Fee levels may be reviewed more frequently if requested by the business.

## **7 Termination of Primary Authority Partnerships**



Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol  
**Blaenau Gwent**  
County Borough Council

7.1 A Primary Authority Partnership may be terminated at any time in accordance with the provisions set out in the legislation and guidance that regulates the scheme.

# Agenda Item 19

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14th October 2020**

Report Subject: **Revenue Budget Monitoring -2020/2021, Forecast Outturn to 31 March 2021 (As at 30 June 2020)**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Daniels – Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	27/8/2020	29.09.20			28/09/20	14/01/20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Executive Committee with the forecast financial outturn position across all portfolios for the financial year 2020/2021 (as forecast at 30 June 2020).

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:

- Forecast financial position to the end of March 2021 across all portfolios
- Forecast outturn for Fees & Charges
- Progress on the achievement of the Bridging the Gap Projects for 2020/2021.

- 2.12 This report will inform the quarterly financial reporting framework to Members.

## 3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 This report will be considered by the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and any comments from the Committee will be provided verbally to the Executive.

### 3.2 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members of the Executive Committee consider the report and

- Provide appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report
- Consider the action plans attached at Appendix 4, developed to address the forecast adverse variances at the end of June 2020

3.3 **Option 2**

Members of the Executive Committee do not accept the report.

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

4.1 This report supports the Council Corporate Plan proposed outcome statement 2020/2022 “An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities”.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget**

5.1.1 The overall forecast outturn as at June 2020, is an adverse variance of £3.185m, before the application of Welsh Government Hardship and Furlough funding forecast of £1.98m, this reduces the forecast adverse variance to £1.2m.

5.1.2 The forecast overall financial position across all portfolios at 30 June 2020 (and before the inclusion of Covid-19 related expenditure ) is shown in the table below:

<b>Portfolio/ Committee</b>	<b>2020/2021 Revised Revenue Budget</b>	<b>2020/2021 Forecast Outturn @ 30 June 2020</b>	<b>Favourable/ (Adverse) To 31 March 2021</b>	<b>Append ref:</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	
<b>Underspending Portfolios</b>				
Education	57.752	57.390	0.362	2c
Social Services	45.352	45.289	0.063	2b
<b>Sub Total (1)</b>	<b>103.104</b>	<b>102.679</b>	<b>0.425</b>	



<b>Overspending Portfolios</b>				
Corporate Services & Financial Management & Strategy	16.726	16.802	(0.076)	2a
Economy	1.233	1.558	(0.325)	2d
Environment	29.894	31.089	(1.195)	2e
Planning	1.118	1.132	(0.014)	2f
Licensing	0.070	0.096	(0.026)	2f
<b>Sub Total (2)</b>	<b>49.041</b>	<b>50.677</b>	<b>(1.636)</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>152.145</u></b>	<b><u>153.356</u></b>	<b><u>(1.211)</u></b>	
<b>Covid-19 Costs</b>				
Cross cutting		0.148	(0.148)	
Social Services		0.763	(0.763)	
Education		0.022	(0.022)	
Environment		1.041	(1.041)	
<b>Sub Total – Covid19</b>		<b><u>1.974</u></b>	<b><u>(3.185)</u></b>	
<b>WG Hardship funding</b>			<b><u>1.295</u></b>	
<b>WG SS Hardship funding</b>			<b><u>0.645</u></b>	
<b>Furlough Income - June</b>			<b><u>0.04</u></b>	
<b>Revised Total</b>			<b><u>(1.205)</u></b>	

- 5.1.3 The forecast includes funding received from the Hardship fund for April to June 2020 of £1.53m and an estimated claim of £0.405m for estimated costs of waste disposal (until the end of September 2020) and homelessness (which has been built into the forecast of expenditure). In addition, the Council has been successful in claiming furlough funding from the national scheme for the period March to May 2020, in the sum of £166,000 and £141,000 of this funding has been built into the current forecast (part of the furlough funding relates to school based staff, which are not included within the portfolio figures above).

The Council has received furlough funding for June 2020 in the sum of £60,000, of which £40,000 has been built into the forecast (school based staff will be excluded from the forecast).

5.1.4 Following the submission of the WLGA Survey on Loss of Income, four areas have been identified where there is a consistent loss of income across all Welsh Authorities, and these include parking, waste, school catering and cleaning and cultural services. Welsh Government has considered claims from local authorities for loss of income for quarter 1 relating to tranche 1 (civil parking enforcement, grounds maintenance, school catering, waste disposal and cultural services) and the Council has received a total sum of £973,000 of which:-

- £613,000 relates directly to portfolio budgets
- £88,000 for schools who arrange their own catering arrangements and
- £272,000 for the Leisure Trust.

Subsequently, £613,000 of lost income has been re-instated in the portfolio forecasts above.

5.1.5 Taking Hardship funding , Furlough income and the initial claim for lost income into account, the net impact on the Council's revenue budget is a forecast adverse variance of £1.2m.

5.1.6 50% of the forecast adverse variance relates to the increased caseload in for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which is currently forecasting an adverse variance of £0.6m, Welsh Government are also considering the financial impact of this across Wales.

#### 5.1.7 **PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS**

5.1.8 The main assumption in this report is that the current lockdown period extends to the end of July. Therefore, it has been assumed that some "normal" budget activity will resume from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020. Future forecasts can be updated to take account of any revisions to the current situation. A summary of main adverse variances is shown as Appendix 1. Portfolio summaries are also included below.

5.1.9 There are some exceptions to the assumption that the lockdown period will extend to the end of July 2020 to take into account :-

- Bulky waste collection (service now re-commenced)
- Existing Household waste recycling centre (now open)
- Schools will re-open from 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020
- the 25% reduction in charges to Home to School Transport providers will cease from 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020
- Social Services Day Services will not be fully operational until December 2020.

5.1.10 The report also indicates the number of vacant posts as at 30th June 2020 (together with the monthly salary plus oncost value) in each portfolio, *where the vacant post has not been used to offset cost pressures elsewhere* and

excluding grant funded posts (see Appendix 6). The Appendix indicates that there are currently 7 vacant posts at a total monthly salary value of £23,000.in this category. This equates to a potential saving of £207,000 to the end of the financial year (should the posts not be filled). The Appendix also includes information relating to vacant posts that are being held vacant to offset cost pressures for varying periods of time, at a total monthly salary value of £38,000.

5.1.11 Action plans to address cost pressures are attached at Appendix 4. However, it should be noted that many of the cost pressures will reduce with the application of further tranches of funding for loss of income (from chargeable services) and potential WG Hardship funding for Council Tax Reduction Support.

5.1.12 **Corporate Services – £76,000 adverse variance**

There are three main adverse variances within the Portfolio:-

5.1.13 ***CTRS - £627,000***

As previously reported, this is due to an increase in the number of claimants resulting from the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It has been assumed that the increased level of claimants will continue for the remainder of the financial year. The WLGA has collated the CTRS cost pressure across Wales and information has been submitted to WG officials, with a view to it being considered by Ministers in the “Star Chamber”.

5.1.14 ***Council Tax Surplus on Collection - £64,000***

This is due to the anticipated shortfall in the surplus on Council Tax collection. Council Tax collection rate to the end of June is 1.1% (£350,000) lower than expected compared to the same period last year. Whilst this is likely to be recovered over an extended period of time (years) it will impact upon 2020/21.

5.1.15 ***Registrars - £65,000***

The forecast adverse variance is due to a reduction in income from fees & charges. Lost income for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the financial year will be included on further tranches of the loss of income claim to WG. It is anticipated that this adverse variance will improve as services are re-introduced

5.1.16 These adverse variances have been offset by two main favourable variances:-

5.1.17 ***Cross cutting Budget £496,000***

Commercial & Contract Management (£496,410) – This budget has been set up to fund contract price increases during 2020/2021, however no requests have been received to date. Further work will be required with the Procurement Section to review contract renewal dates and assess the likelihood of requests for funding from this budget.

5.1.18 ***Departmental Budgets £130,000***

The forecast favourable variance mainly relates to employee related savings due to vacant posts mostly as a result of long term secondments and maternity leave that cannot be filled at the moment due to the current circumstances, also staff on temporary reduced hours and one off grant funding being secured.

5.1.19 The Transformation Fund of £492,000 has been assumed to be fully committed at this stage, to progress and support the Bridging the Gap programme. However, the only transformation project that have come forward for funding is for the business case development for Festival Park.

5.1.20 **Social Services – £64,000 favourable variance**

5.1.21 The forecast is made up of the following main variances: -

- Children's Services  
There is an overall adverse variance of £124,000 which is mainly due to the continuing cost pressure in legal fees resulting from court proceedings in relation to Children Looked After.

5.1.22 The adverse variance have been partially offset by the following areas:-

- Adult Services  
The favourable variance of £167,000 is mainly due to the application of ICF Grant funding for a number of established posts, and the significant loss of income within Provider Services has been offset by Furlough payments and a reduction in staffing cover costs, there has been an assumption that Day Services will not resume service until 1<sup>st</sup> December for this forecast.
- Support Services and Management Costs  
The favourable variance of £20,000 is due to accumulated underspends in staffing costs, travelling expenses and Supplies and Services within the departmental budget and the Workforce Development Plan budget.

5.1.23 **Education – £362,000 favourable variance**

5.1.24 There are four main areas of favourable variances :-

- School Budget Supporting SEN £108,000 favourable – relating mainly to a higher than estimated number of out of county SEN pupils attending BGCBC schools.
- Assuring Access £129,000 favourable – relating mainly to the 25% agreed reduction on Home to School Transport contracts. At this point in time it has been assumed that transport contracts will resume as normal from September 2020.
- LEA Budget Supporting SEN £63,000 favourable – relating to the secondment income for the Principal School Psychologist.
- Home to College Transport £28,000 favourable - relating to non-payment of travel passes for the summer term 2020.

#### 5.1.25 **Economy – £325,000 adverse variance**

The forecast is made up of the following main variances:-

- Industrial Units £226,000 adverse variance – relating primarily from the Council decision to award a rent payment holiday for April 2020 (£68,000), which is unlikely to be funded by the grant relating to loss of income and an estimated contingency for loss of rental income for 6 months from tenants who are deemed high risk in terms of rent payment, as a result of COVID-19.
- Estates Non Rechargeable £55,000 adverse variance – The impact on COVID-19 on the collection of ground rents. At this stage it is unclear if this income is lost to the Council or the collection is delayed.

#### 5.1.26 **Environment Portfolio – £1,195,000 adverse variance**

5.1.27 Variances over £100,000 are indicated below :-

- Departmental Budgets - £143,000 adverse variance – relating primarily to the loss of Tech Services income for external clients (as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown).
- Waste collection and disposal/recycling - £0.549m forecast adverse variance is a result of an increase in residual waste combined with a loss of trade waste income and a suppression of the market price for recyclate (the income loss claimed from WG only covers the period April 2020 to June 2020). The re-introduction of enforcement action should reduce the forecast adverse variance over the remainder of the financial year.
- Grounds Maintenance - £83,000 adverse variance – resulting from a forecast loss of income following the suspension of activities on Recreation & Sports Grounds (the income loss claimed from WG only covers the period April 2020 to June 2020).
- Building Cleaning - £245,000 adverse variance – resulting from an assumed loss of service level agreement income from schools for cleaning for the period April 2020 to July 2020. The cleaning sla income has been included within the claim to Welsh Government for loss of income and will be considered as part of tranche 2 claims (also covering the period April 2020 to June 2020) and so there is the potential for the adverse variance to reduce further.
- Catering Account - £216,000 adverse variance – this is after the application of WG tranche 1 funding for loss of income for the loss of sla income from schools and income from paid meals (for the period April 2020 to June 2020). This will allow schools to retain their sla payments for the period of April 2020 to June 2020.

5.1.28 The adverse variances are offset by:

- Cemeteries - £126,000 favourable variance resulting from a forecast increase in burial fees. There was an increase of 74% (14) in the number of burials taking place during April 2020 when compared to April 2019. It has been assumed that the service will revert to the “normal” level of burials from July 2020.

5.1.29 **Cross cutting issues**

5.1.30 There are some areas of expenditure which will see reductions across a number of portfolios:-

- Car allowances – an increase in home working and the transfer of meetings online has led to a significant reduction in claims. For example, there has been a reduction in expenditure of approximately £66,000 comparing April to June 2020 to the previous financial year.
- Energy costs – the closure of some Council buildings and schools has led to a reduction in expenditure. For example, there has been a reduction in expenditure of approximately £32,000 comparing April to June 2020 to the previous financial year.

5.1.31 **Fees & Charges**

5.1.32 The 2020/2021 portfolio estimates include income budgets in relation to fees & charges (excluding Council Tax) of £14.8m across all portfolios. Attached at Appendix 3 is an analysis of income received against budget for the financial year for individual portfolios, and current forecast indicates an adverse variance against this target of £1.66m, primarily relating to lost income in the sale of recyclate, an assumed loss of cleaning service level agreement charges, charges for Community Care and rental income for Industrial Units. Albeit some of these areas will be considered as tranche 2 loss of income claims by Welsh Government.

5.1.33 Welsh Government has assessed claims for loss of income across Wales for tranche 1, covering parking, waste, school catering and cultural services. BGCBC's initial forecast of loss of income for quarter 1, in these areas amounted to £1.024m (albeit £0.272m related to Aneurin Leisure Trust's loss of income). The Council has received a sum of £973,000 for these areas based on revisions to the original estimates.

5.1.34 Whilst this analysis is useful, it should not be considered in isolation, as elements of any shortfall within Portfolios can be inextricably linked to underspends in expenditure within the same budget heading. Where this is the case, budget holders should action budget virements to ensure that the income targets reflect more accurately expected income. Likewise, any over achievement in income which offset overspends in expenditure within the same budget, should be treated in the same way.

5.1.35 **Bridging the Gap Programme**

5.1.36 The target for the financial achievement of the Strategic Business Reviews in 2020/2021 is £1.465m. Many of the proposals relate to income generation / maximisation and therefore these areas have been factored into the fees and charges information contained within Appendix 3. An overall summary of progress within each proposal is attached as Appendix 5 which also provides an update on progress for each Bridging the Gap proposal.

5.1.37 Appendix 5 forecasts that £1.218m (83%) of savings will be achieved in this financial year.

**Sensitivity Analysis**

5.1.38 Given that Public Health Wales (PHW) are predicting a further spike in Covid-19 related cases in the autumn of 2020, it is prudent to consider the financial impact on the Council's finances, through sensitivity analysis. The budget forecast for the first quarter assumes a phased return of services from August 2020. If these services are affected by a further spike, there is the potential for a further withdrawal of services.

5.1.39 Areas of the budget that could be affected by a potential lockdown situation could include:-

- increased numbers of claimants claiming Council Tax Reduction payments over and above current forecast levels.
- Reduced or lost Council tax income (impacting on the Council Tax collection rate)
- Continuing Loss of income from fees & charges
- Non Achievement of the Bridging the Gap Programme
- Additional costs incurred across a range of services (e.g. PPE, maintaining social distancing, external social care costs)

5.1.40 On the basis that the forecast Covid-19 cost pressure for the April to July 2020 period in this report is £2m (as per the summary portfolio table above), the potential worst case scenario is as follows:-

- August 2020 to September 2020 – potential additional cost pressure of £0.5m
- October 2020 to December 2020 – additional cost pressure of £1.5m
- October 2020 to February 2021 – additional cost pressure of £2.5m
- October 2020 to March 2021 – additional cost pressure of £3m

5.1.41 A mid case scenario would suggest that the forecast Covid-19 cost pressure for the April to July 2020 period in this report is 50% of the worst case scenario ie £1m. The potential financial implications of this scenario are as follows:-

- August 2020 to September 2020 – potential additional cost pressure of £0.25m

- October 2020 to December 2020 – additional cost pressure of £0.75m
- October 2020 to February 2021 – additional cost pressure of £1.25m
- October 2020 to March 2021 – additional cost pressure of £1.5m

5.1.42 At this stage, the additional cost pressures are based on a pro rata calculation, based on known Covid-19 costs incurred. The sensitivity analysis can be updated if and when the situation develops.

5.1.43 Welsh Government has recently announced a £260m funding package for local government to assist with continuing Covid-19 related issues for the remainder of the financial year, which will assist with these forecast cost pressures.

## 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

5.2.1 Grants form a significant element of the Council's income and support the delivery of priority services to the people of Blaenau Gwent. There is a risk that a reduction or cessation of grant funding will result in service levels reducing or services no longer being delivered.

5.2.2 A grants register have been developed and is being maintained and will be considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5.2.3 There is a risk that Action Plans will not address the cost pressures identified

5.2.4 Action Plans have been developed, identifying actions to mitigate the forecast cost pressure. The Action Plans will be monitored as part of the Budget Monitoring and Reporting Framework and the impact reported to the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee, Executive Committee and the Cost Pressure Sub Group.

5.2.5 Savings to date will have been factored into the current forecast. However, some will continue beyond the lockdown period and could contribute towards forecast cost pressures.

5.2.6 There is a risk that Covid-19 will continue into the medium/long term, impacting on Council services and budgets. This risk can be mitigated by the continuation of processes that the Council has introduced since March 2020 eg prioritising services, redeployment of staff, home working.

5.2.7 There is a risk that Welsh Government will not provide Hardship funding for a all cost pressures identified. This risk can be mitigated by a continuing dialogue and lobbying with Welsh Government, through the WLGA and the continuing development of action plans by budget holders.

5.2.8 There is a risk of increase costs for food, fuel and other essential goods and services following the ongoing situation regarding Brexit.

5.2.9 Brexit has been added as an organisational risk to the corporate risk register, whilst a separate, more detailed Brexit high level action plan has been developed and is being monitored by the Brexit Core Planning Group.



5.3 Legal  
N/A

5.4 Human Resources  
N/A

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

6.1.1 A summary page for each portfolio is contained in Appendices 2a to 2g.

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

6.2.1 The report details the financial implications for the Council in providing services to the communities of Blaenau Gwent.

6.2.2 If overspends continue into the medium term, resources will be diminished and this may impact on the Council's ability to provide services to the public.

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

6.3.1 CLT have considered the forecast financial position for 2020/2021 (as 30 June 2020).

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

6.4.1 For new and emerging cost pressures identified during the financial year, budget holders have produced Action Plans which should address the cost pressure during the year. These Action Plans will form part of the quarterly budget reports and will be submitted to the Cost Pressure Sub Group for scrutiny, challenge and monitoring.

6.4.2 Cost Pressures are also considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 Budget holders will continue to develop and monitor Action Plans which should mitigate the forecast adverse variance during the financial year. It may be necessary to implement further actions including maintaining vacant posts and limiting non-essential spend during the remainder of the financial year, where it is possible to do so, to prevent any unplanned draw from reserves at the year end.

### 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

6.6.1 Accountancy works closely with budget holders during the financial year in producing the financial forecast, identifying cost pressures and in developing Action Plans.

6.7 *Integration(across service areas)*  
*N/A*

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

6.8.1 All Bridging the Gap Projects that were approved as part of the budget setting process had gone through the EqlA process.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

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

7.1 Financial reporting to Joint Scrutiny and the Executive is carried out on a quarterly basis. Where services are reporting significant cost pressures, there will be a requirement for Budget Holders to develop and implement Action Plans these will be reported to the Cost Pressure Sub Group, on a quarterly basis.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- *Appendix 1 – Summary of Main Adverse Variances*
- *Appendix 2 – Portfolio Summaries*
- *Appendix 3 – Fees and Charges*
- *Appendix 4 – Action Plans*
- *Appendix 5 – Bridging the Gap*
- *Appendix 6 – Vacant Posts*

**SUMMARY OF MAIN FORECAST ADVERSE VARIANCES 2020/2021**

		<b><u>Adverse Variance 2019/2020 Out turn</u></b> <b>£</b>	<b><u>Forecast Adverse Variance at June 2020 Forecast</u></b> <b>£</b>	<b><u>Action Plan Ref:</u></b>
	<b><u>Adverse variances in Excess of £15,000</u></b>			
1.	<b><u>Corporate Services</u></b>			
	Council Tax Collection	(88,582)	(64,151)	4a
	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	(40,748)	(627,383)	4a
	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	(760)	(64,742)	4a
2.	<b><u>Social Services</u></b>			
	<b><i>Childrens Services:</i></b>			
	Legal Costs	(427,589)	(399,699)	4b
3.	<b><u>Economy</u></b>			
	Estates Management Non Rechargeable	24,535	(54,831)	4c
	General Offices	481	(18,129)	4c
	Nursery Units	39,881	(226,063)	4c
4.	<b><u>Environment</u></b>			
	Technical Services	1,448	(96,000)	4d
	Waste Services	(75,460)	(548,076)	4d
	Grounds Maintenance	0	(83,003)	4d
	Corporate Landlord	(2,960)	(68,850)	4d
	Building Cleaning	0	(244,608)	4d
	Catering	0	(215,804)	4d
	Environmental Health	(9,137)	(66,642)	4d
	Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(64,131)	(25,079)	4d
	Coroner's Court	(18,803)	0	
5.	<b><u>Planning + Licensing</u></b>			
	Planning Committee – dealing with applications	31,944	(31,293)	4e
	Licensing Committee	(8,728)	(25,904)	4e

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## CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/20
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b>DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER RECHARGEABLE SERVICES</b>				
Corporate Services Department	(65,990)	(216,199)	150,209	301,958
Resources Department	(22,110)	(12,304)	(9,806)	(48,590)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>(88,100)</i>	<i>(228,503)</i>	<i>140,403</i>	<i>253,368</i>
<b>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</b>				
Archives	151,640	142,789	8,851	5,881
Festival Park	92,820	98,188	(5,368)	(13,195)
Housing Benefit	(117,130)	(120,835)	3,705	(120,419)
ICT Service	467,240	467,240	0	0
Cross Cutting	(50,000)	(50,000)	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>544,570</i>	<i>537,382</i>	<i>7,188</i>	<i>(127,733)</i>
<b>LEGAL &amp; CORPORATE COMPLIANCE SERVICES</b>				
Registration of Electors	16,670	13,588	3,082	2,752
Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	33,630	98,372	(64,742)	(760)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>50,300</i>	<i>111,960</i>	<i>(61,660)</i>	<i>1,992</i>
<b>GOVERNANCE &amp; PARTNERSHIP SERVICES</b>				
Corporate Management	107,370	112,009	(4,639)	(4,754)
Democratic Representation and Management	1,239,940	1,250,338	(10,398)	(22,382)
CCTV Cameras	84,000	54,255	29,745	19,074
Civil Contingencies	100,820	113,400	(12,580)	
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>1,532,130</i>	<i>1,530,002</i>	<i>2,128</i>	<i>(8,062)</i>
<b>RESOURCES SERVICES</b>				
Corporate Management	338,810	319,615	19,195	27,800
Non Distributed Costs	846,240	843,658	2,582	3,560
Apprenticeship Levy	320,000	314,441	5,559	5,196
Council Tax Collection	(1,333,860)	(1,269,709)	(64,151)	(88,582)
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	9,257,740	9,885,123	(627,383)	(40,748)
N.N.D.R. Collection	(107,040)	(111,197)	4,157	3,391
Grants and Subscriptions	57,270	57,270	0	0
Cross Cutting Budget	988,410	492,000	496,410	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>10,367,570</i>	<i>10,531,201</i>	<i>(163,631)</i>	<i>(89,383)</i>
<b>CORPORATE CHARGES</b>				
Corporate Recharges	4,319,750	4,319,750	0	4
Senior Management Restructure	0		0	(12,590)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>4,319,750</i>	<i>4,319,750</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>(12,586)</i>
<i>cross cutting Covid expenditure</i>		<i>147,712</i>	<i>(147,712)</i>	
<b>CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>16,726,220</b>	<b>16,949,504</b>	<b>(223,284)</b>	<b>17,597</b>

## SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/20
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Children's Services - Commissioning and Social Work	3,562,584	3,487,849	74,735	258,187
Looked After Children	6,961,460	7,236,669	(275,209)	(185,526)
Family Support Services	191,240	188,603	2,637	(3,193)
Youth Justice	237,820	228,118	9,702	9,702
Other Children's and Family Services	2,304,697	2,240,094	64,603	(3,676)
Older People Aged 65 or Over	5,953,020	5,829,234	123,786	337,020
Adults Aged Under 65 with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment	41,800	43,571	(1,771)	(1,771)
Adults Aged Under 65 with Learning Disabilities	3,687,899	3,613,514	74,385	21,329
Adults Aged Under 65 with Mental Health Needs	596,710	609,250	(12,540)	67,433
Other Adult Services	383,910	386,170	(2,260)	(27,020)
Community Care	15,464,780	15,479,232	(14,452)	(174,940)
Support Service and Management Costs	1,003,280	983,610	19,670	92,365
Corporate Recharges	4,962,770	4,962,780	(10)	13
Social Services COVID-19 Costs	0	762,640	(762,640)	(1,061)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>45,351,970</b>	<b>46,051,334</b>	<b>(699,364)</b>	<b>388,862</b>
Social Services Emergency Flood Costs	0		0	(1,619)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>45,351,970</b>	<b>46,051,334</b>	<b>(699,364)</b>	<b>387,243</b>

## EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/20
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b>SCHOOLS BUDGET</b>				
Individual Schools Budget	45,069,380	45,069,380	0	0
Education Improvement Grant	257,800	266,974	(9,174)	8,526
Other Costs	662,320	662,887	(567)	115,939
Supporting Special Education Needs	1,707,570	1,595,782	111,788	2,574
<i>Schools Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>47,697,070</u>	<u>47,595,023</u>	<u>102,047</u>	<u>127,039</u>
<b>LEA BUDGET</b>				
Strategic Management	2,282,620	2,273,803	8,817	(175)
Assuring Access to Schools	2,133,370	2,003,830	129,540	(34,468)
Facilitating School Improvement	419,760	407,754	12,006	(6,410)
Supporting Special Education Needs	337,940	274,839	63,101	69,186
<i>LEA Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>5,173,690</u>	<u>4,960,226</u>	<u>213,464</u>	<u>28,133</u>
<b>OTHER EDUCATION SERVICES</b>				
Further Education and Training	133,290	105,483	27,807	2,897
Youth Service	380,873	369,130	11,743	3,259
Other Expenditure	141,037	144,490	(3,453)	989
Education Departmental Budget	0	(9,895)	9,895	(12,231)
<i>Other Education Services Total Expenditure</i>	<u>655,200</u>	<u>609,208</u>	<u>45,992</u>	<u>(5,086)</u>
<b>CORPORATE CHARGES</b>				
Corporate Support Recharges	4,225,700	4,225,700	0	(22,315)
<i>Corporate Charges Total Expenditure</i>	<u>4,225,700</u>	<u>4,225,700</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(22,315)</u>
covid costs		21,818	(21,818)	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u><u>57,751,660</u></u>	<u><u>57,411,975</u></u>	<u><u>339,685</u></u>	<u><u>127,771</u></u>

## ECONOMY PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/20
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</b>				
Economic Strategy and Development - Departmental Budget	0	14,000	(14,000)	(37,222)
Estates Management - Rechargeable	0	(524)	524	2,179
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>0</u>	<u>13,476</u>	<u>(13,476)</u>	<u>(35,043)</u>
<b>ECONOMY SERVICES</b>				
Affordable Housing	0	0	0	0
Aspire	0	0	0	0
Community Benefits Investment	0	0	0	0
CSCS	(10,000)	2,909	(12,909)	165
Destination Management	16,150	16,150	0	3,174
DRivE	0	0	0	0
Financial Support to Business	4,140	4,140	0	4,947
General Offices	(74,790)	(56,661)	(18,129)	481
Industrial Land	7,000	7,000	0	9,646
Inspire	0	0	0	0
Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	(813,650)	(587,587)	(226,063)	39,881
Pentagon	0	0	0	0
Regeneration Projects	4,900	4,900	0	(1,175)
Resilient Project	0	0	0	(46,851)
Estates Management Non Rechargeable	(90,620)	(35,789)	(54,831)	24,536
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(956,870)</u>	<u>(644,938)</u>	<u>(311,932)</u>	<u>34,804</u>
Corporate Recharges	2,189,880	2,189,880	0	10
Funding from General Reserves	0		0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u><u>1,233,010</u></u>	<u><u>1,558,418</u></u>	<u><u>(325,408)</u></u>	<u><u>(229)</u></u>



## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/2020
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Environment Department - Corporate Division	0	(26,363)	26,363	35
Environmental Services Division	0	73,128	(73,128)	(1,743)
Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	0	96,000	(96,000)	3,453
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>142,765</b>	<b>(142,765)</b>	<b>1,745</b>
<b><u>WASTE SERVICES</u></b>				
Waste Services Team	0	0	0	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b><u>WASTE COLLECTION</u></b>				
Household and Trade Waste Collection	612,320	612,320	0	(2)
Recycling Collection	2,012,370	2,637,854	(625,484)	(1)
Bulky Waste Collection	(2,910)	20,693	(23,603)	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2,621,780</b>	<b>3,270,867</b>	<b>(649,087)</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b><u>WASTE TRANSFER</u></b>				
Civic Amenity Sites	247,970	277,356	(29,386)	3
HWRC Roseheyworth	260,480	156,285	104,195	
Transfer Station	569,370	625,606	(56,236)	(5)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,077,820</b>	<b>1,059,247</b>	<b>18,573</b>	<b>(2)</b>
<b><u>WASTE DISPOSAL</u></b>				
Disposal Of Waste	999,730	1,126,701	(126,971)	(3)
Recycling Disposal	26,030	(314,004)	340,034	(73,710)
Trade Waste Collection, Transfer & Disposal	(28,570)	102,055	(130,625)	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>997,190</b>	<b>914,752</b>	<b>82,438</b>	<b>(73,713)</b>
<b><u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u></b>				
County Borough Cleansing	1,086,700	1,048,620	38,080	1
Cemeteries / Crematorium	(270,660)	(396,516)	125,856	(13,557)
Community Meals	0	0	0	(27,639)
Grounds Maintenance	943,960	1,026,963	(83,003)	(3)
Countryside Recreation Sites	34,690	32,608	2,082	2,093
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,794,690</b>	<b>1,711,675</b>	<b>83,015</b>	<b>(39,105)</b>
<b><u>FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</u></b>				
Corporate Landlord	1,235,240	1,304,090	(68,850)	(2,960)
Corporate Property	11,300	11,300	0	(45)
Building Cleaning	70,240	314,848	(244,608)	(3)
Catering Account	137,462	353,266	(215,804)	33
Appetite For Life & SHEP	42,854	42,854	0	65
School Breakfast Club	384,010	371,825	12,185	(3)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,881,106</b>	<b>2,398,183</b>	<b>(517,077)</b>	<b>(2,913)</b>

## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/2020
	£	£	£	£
<b>HIGHWAYS &amp; ROADS SERVICES</b>				
Highways - Street Care Team	0	1,399	(1,399)	0
Non Operational Land	1,460	0	1,460	0
Licensing (Highway Permits)	(49,380)	(41,212)	(8,168)	316
Shopping Arcade, Abertillery	2,780	2,105	675	675
Road and Street Works Acts	(13,650)	(13,650)	0	0
Multi-Storey Car Parks	272,740	272,740	0	0
On Street Parking	1,100	1,100	0	100
Surface Car Parks	31,790	31,790	0	1,555
Public Transport Co-Ordination	910	910	0	0
Bridges	77,590	77,590	0	0
Structural Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	169,410	169,410	0	0
Environmental Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	19,440	19,440	0	0
Safety Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	71,596	71,596	0	0
Routine Repairs (Principal and Other Roads)	839,918	839,918	0	0
Street Lighting	1,193,090	1,193,090	0	0
Winter Maintenance	390,340	390,340	0	(35,890)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,009,134</b>	<b>3,016,566</b>	<b>(7,432)</b>	<b>(33,244)</b>
<b>TRANSPORT SERVICES</b>				
Traffic Orders	(15,580)	(17,605)	2,025	0
Highways Adoptions	(9,560)	(9,560)	0	0
Traffic / Accident Research	15,690	10,432	5,258	0
Traffic Management	6,760	5,484	1,276	0
Parking Enforcement	0	(5,396)	5,396	(3,026)
Road Safety Education	18,340	18,340	0	3,000
Crossing Patrols	149,220	143,940	5,280	2,828
Concessionary fares and Support to Operators	281,060	281,060	0	0
Local Transport Plans	2,620	2,620	0	2,620
Home to School Transport	0	0	0	0
Transport and Heavy Plant	58,850	58,850	0	(5)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>507,400</b>	<b>488,165</b>	<b>19,235</b>	<b>5,417</b>
<b>CULTURAL &amp; ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>				
General Administration and Markets	(25,480)	(11,132)	(14,348)	(7,404)
Countryside Programme and Management	1,990	1,990	0	0
Landscaping and Afforestation	20,470	20,470	0	0
Reservoirs, Tips, Quarries and Mines	10,130	10,130	0	5,238
Flood Defence And Land Drainage	55,380	55,380	0	256
ENRaW	0	0	0	0
City Deal	62,700	62,700	0	(4,424)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>125,190</b>	<b>139,538</b>	<b>(14,348)</b>	<b>(6,334)</b>
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>12,014,310</b>	<b>13,141,758</b>	<b>(1,127,448)</b>	<b>(148,152)</b>

## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/2020
	£	£	£	£
<b><u>PUBLIC PROTECTION</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Environmental Health	8,000	74,642	(66,642)	(9,137)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>8,000</u>	<u>74,642</u>	<u>(66,642)</u>	<u>(9,137)</u>
<b><u>CARAVAN SITES</u></b>				
Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(52,570)	(27,491)	(25,079)	(64,134)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(52,570)</u>	<u>(27,491)</u>	<u>(25,079)</u>	<u>(64,134)</u>
<b><u>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</u></b>				
Food Safety	6,350	10,133	(3,783)	12,609
Control of Pollution	9,720	5,344	4,376	4,696
Dog Wardens	1,620	2,924	(1,304)	7,469
Animal Health and Welfare	23,360	20,000	3,360	3,360
Pest Control	62,000	70,000	(8,000)	(9,109)
Littering and Dog Control Orders	0	2,744	(2,744)	(4,325)
Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	1,510	1,591	(81)	1,669
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>104,560</u>	<u>112,736</u>	<u>(8,176)</u>	<u>16,369</u>
<b><u>HOUSING SERVICES</u></b>				
Homelessness	244,680	181,246	63,434	54,638
20 Church Street	12,310	13,516	(1,206)	854
General Properties	(8,010)	(7,416)	(594)	(67)
Housing Access	64,170	46,226	17,944	25,281
Works in Default	20	4,187	(4,167)	(3,912)
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,040	863	177	837
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>314,210</u>	<u>238,622</u>	<u>75,588</u>	<u>77,631</u>
<b><u>TRADING STANDARDS</u></b>				
Trading Standards	(18,000)	(24,646)	6,646	2,740
Inspection and Enforcement	4,390	3,230	1,160	4,680
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(13,610)</u>	<u>(21,416)</u>	<u>7,806</u>	<u>7,420</u>
<b>PUBLIC PROTECTION TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u><u>360,590</u></u>	<u><u>377,093</u></u>	<u><u>(16,503)</u></u>	<u><u>28,149</u></u>

## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/2020
	£	£	£	£
<b><u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u></b>				
Fire Service	3,405,680	3,405,680	0	131,968
Coroner's Court	120,830	120,830	0	(18,801)
Corporate Recharges	9,662,500	9,662,500	0	(41)
Procurement Saving	0	0	0	0
Prudential Borrowing	0	0	0	0
Flood Costs	0	5,515	(5,515)	(60,601)
Income Generation	(52,750)	0	(52,750)	0
<b>CORPORATE CHARGES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>13,136,260</b>	<b>13,194,525</b>	<b>(58,265)</b>	<b>52,525</b>
<b><u>LEISURE TRUSTS</u></b>				
<b><u>LEISURE TRUSTS</u></b>				
Leisure Trusts	3,215,660	3,232,688	(17,028)	(5,637)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>3,215,660</i>	<i>3,232,688</i>	<i>(17,028)</i>	<i>(5,637)</i>
<b><u>RETAINED SERVICES</u></b>				
General Entertainment	2,530	2,530	0	544
Corporate Recharges	1,164,900	1,140,062	24,838	(160,406)
General Reserve Funding Re: Staff Support	0	0	0	160,648
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>1,167,430</i>	<i>1,142,592</i>	<i>24,838</i>	<i>786</i>
<b>LEISURE TRUSTS TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>4,383,090</b>	<b>4,375,280</b>	<b>7,810</b>	<b>(4,851)</b>
Covid -19 related expenditure		1,040,693	(1,040,693)	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>29,894,250</b>	<b>32,129,349</b>	<b>(2,235,099)</b>	<b>(72,329)</b>

## PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Item	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2021	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) 2019/20
	£	£	£	£
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>BUILDING CONTROL</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Building Control	0	0	0	0
<b><u>BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES</u></b>				
Building Regulations	3,140	3,140	0	0
Dangerous Structures	22,200	18,051	4,149	27,474
<i>Building Control Total Expenditure</i>	<u>25,340</u>	<u>21,191</u>	<u>4,149</u>	<u>27,474</u>
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Management	0	(12,641)	12,641	6
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES</u></b>				
Dealing with Applications	(202,740)	(171,447)	(31,293)	2,153
Planning Appeals	3,190	3,190	0	3,190
Enforcement	(30)	0	(30)	(914)
<i>Development Management Total Expenditure</i>	<u>(199,580)</u>	<u>(180,898)</u>	<u>(18,682)</u>	<u>4,435</u>
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Plans	0	0	0	22
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Plans	34,080	34,080	0	0
<i>Development Plans Total Expenditure</i>	<u>34,080</u>	<u>34,080</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>22</u>
Corporate Recharges			0	0
Funding from General Reserves	1,257,740	1,257,740	0	0
<b>Planning Committee Total Expenditure</b>	<u><u>1,117,580</u></u>	<u><u>1,132,113</u></u>	<u><u>(14,533)</u></u>	<u><u>31,931</u></u>
<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE SUMMARY</b>				
Licensing	33,360	59,264	(25,904)	(8,731)
Internal Recharges	37,010	37,010	0	2
Funding from General Reserves	0	0	0	0
<b>Licensing Committee Total Expenditure</b>	<u><u>70,370</u></u>	<u><u>96,274</u></u>	<u><u>(25,904)</u></u>	<u><u>(8,728)</u></u>

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## Fees and Charges Forecast 2020/2021 (As at June 2020)

## APPENDIX 3

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£
<b>Fees &amp; Charges</b>						
Corporate Services	Communications	Advertising	Fees & Charges	19,910	900	(19,010)
Corporate Services	Business Support	External Printing and photocopying charges.	Fees & Charges	8,000	3,762	(4,238)
Corporate Services	Legal Fees	Legal Charges	Fees & Charges	14,330	1,890	(12,440)
Corporate Services	Corporate Support	Land Charges	Fixed - Set Locally	32,150	26,519	(5,631)
Economy	General Offices	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	64,000	49,501	(14,499)
Economy	Departmental	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	SLA	66,494	85,567	19,073
Environment	Household and Trade Waste Collection		Fees & Charges	0	0	0
Environment	Recycling Collection	Recycling Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	0	0	0
Environment	Trade Waste	Trade Waste Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	138,189	7,565	(130,624)
Environment	Bulky Waste Collection	Bulky Waste Collection	Fees & Charges	70,375	47,094	(23,281)
Environment	Recycling Disposal	Sale of Recyclate Materials	Fees & Charges	621,985	349,380	(272,605)
Environment	County Borough Cleansing	C&CR - External Cleansing Works	Fees & Charges	210	0	(210)
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Burial Fees	Fees & Charges	485,410	587,100	101,690
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	General Properties	Fees & Charges	2,580	3,000	420
Social Services	Meals On Wheels	Sale of Meals	Fees & Charges	175,280	146,036	(29,244)
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Income from Letting of Playing Fields, Ground Rent & Way Leaves	Fees & Charges	58,805	81,567	22,762
Environment	General Properties	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	8,015	7,416	(599)
Environment	Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	Rental	Fees & Charges	113,947	103,139	(10,808)
Environment	Dog Wardens	Byelaw Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	5,665	494	(5,171)
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Civic Centre - Rental of Land	Miscellaneous	797	693	(104)
Environment	School Catering Service	Sale of Meals		814,091	814,421	330
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Administration charges for administering Appointeeships	Fees & Charges	26,030	14,625	(11,405)
Infrastructure	Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	Fees & Charges	352,018	388,607	36,589
Infrastructure	FEP - Increase in Income	Fees	Fees & Charges	52,750	0	(52,750)
Infrastructure	Licensing (Highway Permits)	Skips & Scaffolding Permits	Fees & Charges	49,534	41,367	(8,167)
Infrastructure	General Administration and Markets	Rental income	Fees & Charges	25,480	11,132	(14,348)
Infrastructure	Traffic Orders	Income from contractors, Welsh Water etc. for road works	Fees & Charges	23,879	23,879	0
Infrastructure	Road and Street Works Acts	Inspection fees, section 74's, FPN, coring, Dropped kerbs etc.	Fees & Charges	49,202	49,202	0
Infrastructure	Highways Adoptions	Highway Searches	Fees & Charges	9,563	9,563	0
Infrastructure	Multi-storey Carparks	Charge to Coleg Gwent	Fees & Charges	30,000	30,000	0
Infrastructure	Civil Parking Enforcement	FPN's	Fees & Charges	105,000	97,000	(8,000)
Infrastructure	Public Transport Co-Ordination	Charge to bus companies for use of Brynmawr Bus Station	Fees & Charges	234	234	0
Licensing	Hackney Carriages	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	78,030	47,381	(30,649)
Licensing	Private Hire Vehicles	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	1,830	239	(1,591)
Licensing	Scrap Metal	Sale of Scrap Metal	Fees & Charges	600	439	(161)
Planning	Enforcement	Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	610	0	(610)
Planning	Development Plans	Heritage Officer Income	Fees & Charges	0	0	0
Social Services	Other Children's and Family Services	Training Fees (Early Years tied in with expenditure which is set	Fees & Charges	0	0	0
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Cwrt Mytton, Home Care, Extra Care & Joint Day Care Unit)	Fees & Charges	582,720	524,219	(58,501)
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Augusta, Supported Living Bungalows & Community Options)	Fees & Charges	337,580	172,575	(165,005)
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Mental Health Needs	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Vision House & Ysbyty'r Tri Chwm)	Fees & Charges	24,920	4,613	(20,307)
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	Fees & Charges in respect of Piper Alarms (IAA)	Fees & Charges	0	0	0
		<b>Sub - Total</b>		<b>4,450,213</b>	<b>3,731,119</b>	<b>(719,094)</b>

## Fees and Charges Forecast 2020/2021 (As at June 2020)

## APPENDIX 3

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£
<b>Fees &amp; Charges - Set Nationally</b>						
Corporate Services	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Fixed - Set Nationally	94,770	25,000	(69,770)
Environment	Food Safety	Hygiene ratings & Health Certificates	Fixed - Set Nationally	2,040	5,320	3,280
Environment	Control of Pollution	Environmental Permits	Fixed - Set Nationally	16,563	17,643	1,080
Environment	Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	Petroleum + Tattoo Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	250	250
Environment	Trading Standards	Explosives Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	776	735	(41)
Licensing	Licence Fees	Various (Gambling, Premises/ Clubs & Street Trading)	Fixed - Set Nationally	57,900	59,139	1,239
Planning	Dealing with Applications	Planning Application Fees	Fees & Charges	213,360	110,865	(102,495)
Planning	Building Regulations	Building Regulation Fees	Fixed - Set Nationally	95,620	95,620	0
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	CHC Income (Home Care)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	70,403	70,403
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	CHC Income (Augusta House; Supported Living Bungalows; Community Options)	Fixed - Set Nationally	50,000	90,952	40,952
Social Services	Community Care	Fees & Charges in respect of Care	Fixed - Set Nationally	3,425,180	3,154,275	(270,905)
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Sale of Property (Cwrt Mytton)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	0	0
Social Services	Community Care	Sale of Property	Fixed - Set Nationally	292,340	292,340	0
Social Services	Community Care	CHC Income	Fixed - Set Nationally	378,650	378,650	0
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	CHC Income (Adult Service Managers)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	0	0
		<b>Sub - Total</b>		<b>4,627,199</b>	<b>4,301,192</b>	<b>(326,007)</b>
<b>Fees &amp; Charges - In Line with Local Agreements</b>						
Economy	Industrial Land	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,750	2,750	0
Economy	Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	Rental income for industrial units	Fixed - Set Locally	827,530	601,767	(225,763)
Economy	Estates - Non Rechargeable	Ground Rent	Fixed - Set Locally	140,980	74,547	(66,433)
Economy	Financial Support to Business	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,650	2,650	0
Economy	CSCS	Charges for Construction Skills Certificates	Fixed - Set Locally	10,000	3,273	(6,728)
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Little Stars Nursery - Rent (Recovery of costs)	Miscellaneous	8,496	12,939	4,443
Education	Inter Authority Recoupment	Charges to other Local Authorities for SEN placements within Blaenau Gwent Schools	Fixed - Set Locally	631,370	835,822	204,452
		<b>Sub - Total</b>		<b>1,623,776</b>	<b>1,533,748</b>	<b>(90,029)</b>
		<b>Total - Fees &amp; Charges</b>		<b>10,701,188</b>	<b>9,566,059</b>	<b>(1,135,129)</b>



## Fees and Charges Forecast 2020/2021 (As at June 2020)

## APPENDIX 3

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£
<b>SLA</b>						
Aneurin Leisure Trust	SLA Income	Provision of Support Services	SLA	243,600	243,600	0
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	SLA	SLA	189,220	44,458	(144,762)
Environment	Building Maintenance	SLA	SLA			
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	178,270	178,270	0
Corporate Services	Organisational Development, Payroll & Health & Safety	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	307,210	307,210	0
Corporate Services	Legal Fees & GDPR	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	40,350	40,350	0
Corporate Services	Communications	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	3,130	3,130	0
Corporate Services	Performance (SIMS Support)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	74,260	74,260	0
Corporate Services	Business Support (Courier)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	5,550	5,550	0
Financial Management and Strategy	Creditors Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	6,230	6,230	0
Corporate Services	ICT	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	0	0	0
Environment	School Catering	SLA with Schools (excludes Corporate Landlord)	SLA	1,089,772	999,772	(90,000)
Environment	Cleaning Services	SLA with Schools	SLA	1,069,989	799,989	(270,000)
Infrastructure	CPM - Schools Biodiversity SLA	SLA with Schools	SLA	14,000	14,000	0
Infrastructure	Winter Maintenance	SLA with LA's for salt Storage	SLA	13,000	13,000	0
		<b>Sub - Total</b>		<b>3,234,581</b>	<b>2,729,819</b>	<b>(504,762)</b>
<b>Court Fees/Fixed Penalty Notices/Fines</b>						
Corporate Services	Corporate Services and Strategy	Legal income and land charges. Advertising.	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	10,000	8,315	(1,686)
Education	Welfare Service	Fixed Penalty Notices	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	2,110	2,110	0
Environment	Littering and Dog Control Orders	Income in relation to FPNs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	128,765	36,010	(92,755)
Corporate Services	Payroll Division	Attachment Orders	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,020	542	(478)
Financial Management and Strategy	Council Tax Collection	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	162,680	151,286	(11,394)
Financial Management and Strategy	NNDR	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,800	1,958	158
Corporate Services	Housing Benefits Account	Admin Penalties	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	25,000	25,000	0
		<b>Sub - Total</b>		<b>331,375</b>	<b>225,220</b>	<b>(106,155)</b>

## Fees and Charges Forecast 2020/2021 (As at June 2020)

## APPENDIX 3

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2020/2021	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£
<b>Consortium Arrangements</b>						
Economy	General Offices	Annual Service & Rental Charge to Torfaen CBC in relation to Archives	Consortium Arrangements	76,438	85,022	8,584
Environment	Disposal Of Waste	Contribution from SVWS	Consortium Arrangements	110,000	110,000	0
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Crematorium Income - Reallocation of surplus at year end	Consortium Arrangements	131,925	133,691	1,766
Environment	20 Church Street	Housing Advice Centre Contribution	Consortium Arrangements	11,975	20,400	8,425
Environment	Housing Access	Income from Housing Associations in relation to Administration of the Common Housing Register	Consortium Arrangements	95,564	108,022	12,458
Environment	Environmental Health	Public Protection Collaboration with Torfaen CC	Consortium Arrangements	0	0	0
		<b>Sub - Total</b>		<b>425,902</b>	<b>457,135</b>	<b>31,233</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>						
Education	Supporting Special Educational Needs	Internal Income - Recovery of pupil lead funding from schools.	Internal Income	50,000	50,000	0
Corporate Services	Corporate Procurement Division	Rebates - Energy & Randstad	Miscellaneous	95,700	102,000	6,300
Corporate Services	Corporate Procurement Division	Purchase Card Income	Miscellaneous	5,140	5,000	(140)
Infrastructure	L&A - Invasive Weeds	Contribution from Caerphilly for Treatment of Knotweed	Miscellaneous	10,000	10,000	0
		<b>Sub - Total</b>		<b>160,840</b>	<b>167,000</b>	<b>6,160</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14,853,886</b>	<b>13,145,233</b>	<b>(1,708,653)</b>

## Action Plan

### CORPORATE SERVICES 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4a

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
<b>Council Tax Collection</b>	(£88,582)	(£64,151)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is due to the anticipated shortfall in the surplus on Council Tax collection. Council Tax collection rate to the end of June is 1.1% (£350,000) lower than expected compared to the same period last year.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b> During the initial months of the Covid 19 pandemic, formal debt recovery action was suspended. From August 2020 recovery action has been reinstated which will hopefully have some impact upon collection rates.</p> <p>Discussions with WG (via WLGA &amp; SWT) will continue to lobby for financial report for this loss of income.</p>	Unknown	Rhian Hayden
<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b>	(40,748)	(£627,383)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is due to an increase in the number of claimants following the Covid-19 pandemic. It has been assumed that the increased level of claimants will continue for the remainder of the financial year. New claims processed in Quarter 1 of 2020, compared to the same period in 2019, have increased by 911 (an increase of 158%).</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p>	Unknown	Rhian Hayden

## Action Plan

### CORPORATE SERVICES 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

#### Appendix 4a

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The WLGA, on behalf of all LA's, has collated the CTRS cost pressure across Wales and information has been submitted to WG officials, with a view to it being considered by Ministers in the "Star Chamber". It is hoped that WG will consider providing additional funding to address this pressure.</li> </ul>		
<b>Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths</b>	(£760)	(£64,742)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced income, due to Covid-19 pandemic (e.g. restrictions on wedding ceremonies)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of income will form part of the claim to WG for financial support. In addition, The Registrar Service is working to clear the backlog of registration services which could have a positive impact on the forecast level of income by the year end</li> </ul>		Andrea Jones

## Action Plan

### SOCIAL SERVICES

**2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)**

Appendix 4b

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Looked After Children	(427,589)	(399,699)	<p><b>Legal Services</b></p> <p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b> There is an ongoing pressure in this area due to the number of looked after children, and the problems with retention and recruitment of staff has resulted in more services being outsourced to an external provider. It is anticipated that the Legal budget will be significantly overspent again this year.</p> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <p>A long term solution will need to be identified in conjunction with Legal Services to mitigate this cost pressure for future years and a collaborative arrangement for legal services is being considered with a neighbouring council.</p> <p>This cost pressure is currently being offset by favourable variances within other social services budgets.</p>		Tanya Evans

## Action Plan

### Economy

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4c

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
General Offices	£481	(£18,132)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covid 19, which resulted in the GO being closed to the general public, has had a detrimental effect on conference and meeting room facilities (including refreshments and equipment hire).</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A claim for loss of income to Welsh Government will be submitted</li> <li>• Re-open the facility to business users and tenants.</li> <li>• Consider diversifying from meeting rooms to office rentals.</li> <li>• Review BGCBC staff office and consider making available as offices to let to businesses.</li> <li>• Future proof the building and adopt new technology for Microsoft Team Meetings, as the video conferencing will have a huge effect on our industry, so we need to embrace it.</li> <li>• Introduce a registered business address for a fee.</li> <li>• Engage with academia (Coleg Gwent), to consider lecture theatre i.e. cinema.</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

### Economy

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4c

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Nursery Units	£39,881	(£226,063)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a delay to the refurbishment/investment to improve attractiveness to incoming and existing tenants as a result of Covid-19</li> <li>• 1 month rental holiday in April given to all businesses within the Units</li> <li>• Covid 19, detrimental effect to the worldwide/local economy. Business start-ups, expansions (including business relocations) on hold. Business community in hibernation mode.</li> <li>• Business Tenant Support Scheme introduced to support SME's within the portfolio i.e. April rent free period and rental holidays.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Rates and Business Innovation Team at BGCBC, worked extremely hard to support business tenants with Covid 19 grants schemes.</li> <li>• Refurbishment scheme underway at Roseheyworth Business Park to focus on constrained business, which will result in further revenue potential.</li> <li>• An exercise to re-value the rentals and potential yield investments.</li> <li>• Secure marketing budget, to Increase marketing awareness to attract new customers i.e. rightmove.co.uk</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

### Economy

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

#### Appendix 4c

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-gear existing leases and offer financial incentives for new tenants.</li> <li>• Exploring options to secure external funding for further refurbishment schemes (WG) i.e. Phase 2 – Roseheyworth Business Park.</li> <li>• Investment plan to review and secure funding for wider refurbishment scheme across the portfolio.</li> </ul>		
<b>Estate Management Non Rechargeable</b>	£24,536	(£54,831)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of non-operational -assets under Bridging the Gap delayed due to staff redeployment on Covid-19 workstreams and suspension of recruitment within the Council</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment commenced</li> <li>• Reduction of expenditure could help but large items of maintenance could limit possibilities</li> </ul>		



## Action Plan

### Environment

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

#### Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
<b>Technical Services</b>	£1,448	(£96,000)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipated loss of income as a result of COVID-19.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of income to potentially be met by way of Covid-19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</li> </ul>		C Rogers / M Price
<b>Waste Services</b>	(£75,460)	(£548,076)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></li> <li>• a forecast loss of recycle income and suppression of market prices.</li> <li>• An estimated increase in residual waste tonnages during the lockdown period. There is the potential for these additional costs to be reclaimed from the WG Hardship Fund in the second quarter.</li> <li>• New Commercial Waste Service was suspended due to covid-19. The loss of income for the period April 2020 to June 2020 has been factored into the forecast, however, the overall savings target from the Bridging the Gap project will be difficult to achieve during the current financial year.</li> </ul>		M Perry / M Stent

## Action Plan

### Environment

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
			<p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased costs and loss of income to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</li> <li>• Commencing side waste enforcement from July 2020, which will reduce residual waste charges. Currently due to easement of side waste, the cost to the authority is approx. £18,000 per month. This figure will reduce as restrictions on black bags commence borough-wide.</li> <li>• Capital bids will be submitted into Welsh Government (27<sup>th</sup> July deadline) for receptacles. If the bid is accepted, this will contribute £50,000 towards the revenue budget.</li> <li>• The delay in the opening of the new HWRC has contributed positively to the revenue budget.</li> <li>• Review social distancing rules in conjunction with the Trade Unions in the Autumn 2020 to potentially revert back to 3 staff in the cab. At the point in time this is agreed, the forecast adverse variance will improve (in relation to agency staff and transport costs).</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

### Environment

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

#### Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
<b>Grounds Maintenance</b>	£0	(£83,003)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of income from suspension of activities and loss of SLA for 6 months as a result of COVID 19</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <p>Loss of income to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</p>		M Perry/ D Watkins
<b>Corporate Landlord</b>	(£2,960)	(£68,850)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forecast based on 19/20 draft outturn, except for known 20/21 Rates and other known expenditure, albeit there will be savings in utility charges for the period of time that the Civic centre is closed.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise and monitor expenditure on all non-essential maintenance buildings.</li> </ul>		C Rogers / M Price

## Action Plan

### Environment

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

#### Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
<b>Building Cleaning</b>	£0	(£244,608)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential reduction in schools SLA due to school's closure as a result of Covid 19</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <p>loss of income to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</p>		C Rogers / M Price
<b>Catering Account</b>	£0	(£215,804)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <p>Potential reduction in schools SLA and loss of school meals income due to school closure as a result of Covid 19, over and above the loss of income claim to Welsh Government for the period April to June 2020</p> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <p>Further loss of income claims to be potentially met by way of Covid 19 grant funding from WG in 20/21.</p>		C Rogers / M Price

## Action Plan

### Environment

#### 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

#### Appendix 4d

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
<b>Environmental Health</b>	(£9,137)	(£66,642)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget pressures resulting from the end of the Public Protection Collaboration have been built into the budget. Some savings delayed due to staff sickness/extended notice period into the new financial year</li> <li>• Other staff savings postponed due to Covid 19 pandemic and reassessment of service needs.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMR 2 report and reassessment of service needs due to Covid 19 pandemic. The Service is likely to need to submit an application for a cost pressure for 21/22</li> </ul>		D Thompson
<b>Cwmcrachen Caravan Site</b>	(£64,131)	(£25,079)	<p><b><u>Reason for Variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity costs are the main reasons for the variance. The plan of action from 19/20 has continued (electricity meter changes and resident recharge increases) and this is led to a decrease in forecast net costs. Work is continuing.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further work is planned to attempt to reduce losses.</li> </ul>		D Thompson

## Action Plan

### Planning Committee and Licensing Committee 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

#### Appendix 4e

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact  £	Responsible Officer
Dealing with Applications	2,153	(31,293)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downturn in Planning Fees received due to the effects of covid 19.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The department is hopeful that fees will improve during the last six months of the year as we come out of Covid19 restrictions.</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

### Planning Committee and Licensing Committee 2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2020)

Appendix 4e

Service Area	2019/2020 Provisional Outturn Variance £	2020/2021 Variance at June 2020 Forecast £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Licensing	(8,728)	(25,904)	<p><b><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed income, due to Covid 19 pandemic – (e.g. Pub and Club renewals)</li> <li>• Reduced income, due to Taxi fee proposed increases not actioned in 19/20 and for 20/21 due to pandemic, but inflationary increases have been applied to the budget in both years.</li> <li>• Potential further loss of income if local businesses are affected by the economic impacts of the pandemic</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers will monitor the budget and consider options to reduce costs. The Service is likely to need to submit an application for a cost pressure for 21/22.</li> </ul>		D Thompson

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Saving Proposal	Approved Estimated Achievement £ 1,465,000	Forecast to be Achieved £	Favourable / (Adverse) Variance £
<b>Overall Savings target</b>  <b>1 Third Party Expenditure</b> a Contract Management - Removing of Inflation applied to the Draft Estimates b Early Settlement Terms / Increased use of the Procurement Card	<b>550,000</b>  500,000 50,000	  500,000 50,000	  0 0
<b>2 Fees &amp; Charges</b> a Stretched Income Targets b Increase in Fees & Charges of 5.5% from April 2020	<b>200,000</b>  105,000 95,000	  47,000 74,000	  (58,000) (21,000)
<b>3 Property &amp; Asset Review</b> Corporate Landlord - Reduction in the Rates & Maintenance Budgets following the CAT transfer / Selling/demolition: a Worcester St - £13,630 Brynmawr District Office - £24,730 Greenacre - £1,600	<b>130,000</b>   73,000	   73,000	   0

Saving Proposal	Approved Estimated Achievement	Forecast to be Achieved	Favourable / (Adverse) Variance
Corporate Landlord - Reduction in the Rates & Maintenance b Budgets re: Buildings to be sold: Bryngwyn Primary & Queen St Primary - £18,000	18,000	4,500	(13,500)
d Increase income re: Land and other charges	3,760	0	(3,760)
e Net reduction in Alt management fee	28,000	0	(28,000)
e Energy Costs - Reduction in budget due to efficiency savings identified following implementation of RE:FIT	7,240	7,240	0
<b>4 Growth Strategy</b> a Council Tax - Increase in collection following the removal of the Empty Property Discount b Council Tax Income	<b>220,000</b> 170,000 50,000	220,000	0

Saving Proposal	Approved Estimated Achievement	Forecast to be Achieved	Favourable / (Adverse) Variance
<b>5 Industrial Portfolio Review</b> - Review of service charges and insurance to pass onto Tenants - Increase income through Investment of capital funding to upgrade units	100,000	0	(100,000)
<b>6 Commercial Waste</b>  Service review - implementation 1/4/2020	23,000	0	(23,000)
<b>7 Low Carbon</b>  Removal of the Carbon Reduction Commitment Budget	138,000	138,000	0
<b>8 Work Place Transformation</b> Cost reduction Measures - ICT Budget - Rationalising systems - Managing Suppliers - Review of printing, scanners, postage etc - Review of telephony	50,000	50,000	0
<b>9 Income Recovery</b>  Review of Income Recovery activities	54,000	54,000	0

Saving Proposal	Approved Estimated Achievement	Forecast to be Achieved	Favourable / (Adverse) Variance
TOTAL APPROVED SAVINGS	1,465,000	1,217,740	- 247,260

non-grant funded vacant post salary plus oncost, for one month, where vacancy is not used to offset cost pressures in other budgets

APPENDIX 6

non-grant funded vacant post salary plus oncost, for one month, where vacancy is used to offset cost pressures in other budgets

	number of posts	salary plus oncost per month £		number of posts	salary plus oncost per month £
corp serv	5	16,268		6	24,787
soc serv	1	4,560		0	0
educ	0	0		1	11,537
env					
highways	0	0		0	0
econ	1	2,258		1	2,258
planning					
licensing	0	0		0	0
	<u>7</u>	<u>23,086</u>		<u>8</u>	<u>38,581</u>

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# Agenda Item 20

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Capital Budget Monitoring, Forecast for 2020/2021 Financial Year (As at 30 June 2020)**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Daniels – Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	24/08/2020	29.09.20			28/09/2020	14/10/2020		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of each Portfolio's actual and forecast capital expenditure against funding approvals for the 2020/2021 financial year, as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:

- Forecast financial position to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 across all portfolios
- Details of any significant adverse and/or favourable variances

- 2.2 This report forms part of the quarterly financial reporting framework to Members.

## 3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 This report will be considered by the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and any comments from the Committee will be provided verbally to the Executive.

### 3.2 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members of the Executive Committee accept the report and

- Provide appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report.
- Continue to support appropriate financial control procedures agreed by Council.
- To note the budgetary control and monitoring procedures in place within the Capital Team, to safeguard Authority funding.

### 3.3 Option 2

Do not accept the report.

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

4.1 This report supports the Forward Looking Corporate Plan 2020/22 as it ensures effective forward financial planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience. This is a key element to achieving "An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities"

## 5. Implications Against Each Option

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

5.1.1 The overall financial position as forecast at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 indicates an adverse variance of £24,000 against a total in year capital budget of £20m.

The overall position across all Portfolios is shown below: -

Total Approvals Q1 (Jun 2020)	Future funding	In year funding	Actual Expenditure to 30/06/2020 (Month 3)	Forecast Expenditure 2020/2021	Forecast Variance underspent / (overspent)
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
61,363	41,347	20,016	2,168	20,040	(24)

5.1.2 Despite the Covid-19 Pandemic actual expenditure to June 2020 of £2m is £300,000 higher compared to Quarter one in financial year 2019/2020. Should the pandemic situation continue to improve it is expected that Capital Expenditure will reach £20m by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

5.1.3 The forecast over-spend of £24,000 relates to the essential capital works following adverse weather and the resulting flood damage in the early part of 2020. A Funding request has been submitted to Welsh Government.

5.1.4 Where overall funding approvals are likely to be exceeded and additional compensatory funding sources cannot be identified, budget holders will initially report the consequences to the Corporate Leadership Team, including proposals to defer/delete other approved schemes.



## 5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

- 5.2.1 Expenditure against external funding approvals needs to be maximised in order to avoid loss of funding. If significant delays in capital expenditure are anticipated or contract costs rise due to a second wave of Covid-19, liaison with funding bodies will be required at the earliest opportunity in order to secure approval for funding re-profile.
- 5.2.2 If funding re-profile cannot be agreed and capital schemes are not kept within budget, then capital reserves may be committed beyond affordable levels, with the consequence that projects that have not yet commenced may be deferred or not undertaken, so impacting upon future Capital Programmes.
- 5.2.3 If capital schemes do not achieve the required level of expenditure within the correct financial year and a second peak of the Covid-19 pandemic materialises, funding may be lost to the Authority and be detrimental to the Authority's chances of securing future funding.
- 5.2.4 The aforementioned risks are mitigated as far as possible through close working relationship with Budget Holders, Technical Services and external funding bodies such as Welsh Government. This ensures that where possible, funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise
- 5.2.5 There is a potential risk of increase in Constructions costs & services following the ongoing situation regarding Brexit.
- 5.2.6 Brexit has been added as an organisational risk to the corporate risk register, whilst a separate, more detailed Brexit high level action plan has been developed and is being monitored by the Brexit Core Planning Group.

## 5.3 Legal N/A

## 5.4 Human Resources N/A

## 6. Supporting Evidence

### 6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

- 6.1.2 The capital programme is attached at Appendix 1.2 and 1.2.

### 6.2 *Expected outcome for the public*

- 6.2.1 The report details the financial implications for the Council in providing capital investment for the communities of Blaenau Gwent.

All forecast overspends and underspends are managed in order that secured funding approvals are not lost and to mitigate any potential adverse impact upon future Capital investment in Blaenau Gwent.

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

The Capital Programme is developed to support the Council's strategic priorities and is considered and agreed by full Council. Corporate Overview Scrutiny and Executive Committees consider the budget monitoring reports on a quarterly basis and provide challenge as appropriate.

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

It is essential that all forecast overspends and underspends are managed in order that secured funding approvals are not lost and to mitigate any potential adverse impact upon the future capital programme.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Capital Services Team will continue their close working relationship with budget holders and external funding bodies to ensure that funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured in future financial years.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The Capital Services Team works closely with budget holders in producing the financial forecast and with external funding bodies to ensure that where possible funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise.

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

N/A

6.8 ***Eq/A***

N/A

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Financial reporting to the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee is carried out on a quarterly basis. Where projects are reporting significant cost pressures, there is a requirement for Budget Holders to ensure that where possible funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1.1
- Appendix 1.2

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2021/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Summary

<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure To: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Corporate Services Portfolio	398,111	102,639	295,472	99,238	3,401	102,639	0
Social Services Portfolio	5,281,669	1,122,005	4,159,664	12,253	1,109,752	1,122,005	0
Economy Portfolio	17,006,319	12,699,312	4,307,007	1,202,145	11,497,167	12,699,312	0
Education and Active Living	28,150,059	2,081,690	26,068,369	29,152	2,052,538	2,081,690	0
Environment Portfolio	6,542,842	1,630,515	4,912,327	645,945	984,570	1,630,515	0
Infrastructure Portfolio	3,012,957	1,855,131	1,157,826	178,559	1,700,568	1,879,127	(23,996)
All Portfolios	971,334	525,192	446,142	1,192	524,000	525,192	0
<b>Total Capital Funding</b>	<b>61,363,291</b>	<b>20,016,484</b>	<b>41,346,807</b>	<b>2,168,484</b>	<b>17,871,996</b>	<b>20,040,480</b>	<b>(23,996)</b>

End of Report

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**Capital Programme - 2020/21 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2020/21**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2021/3

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
<b>Corporate Services Portfolio</b>								
<b>Corporate Services</b>								
101385	Workplace Transformation	135,457	49,238	86,219	49,238	0	49,238	0
327100	Ebbw Vale Test Track	50,000	50,000	0	50,000	0	50,000	0
327101	Emergency Electrical & IT Works Civic Ce	209,253	0	209,253	0	0	0	0
328090	CCTV Upgrade	3,401	3,401	0	0	3,401	3,401	0
<b>Corporate Services</b>		<b>398,111</b>	<b>102,639</b>	<b>295,472</b>	<b>99,238</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>102,639</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Corporate Services Portfolio</b>		<b>398,111</b>	<b>102,639</b>	<b>295,472</b>	<b>99,238</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>102,639</b>	<b>0</b>

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2020	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Social Services Portfolio</b>								
<b>Childrens Services</b>								
323152	Beaufort Road - Extension Training Flat	130,475	130,475	0	0	130,475	130,475	0
323153	Beaufort Road - Outdoor spaces and Exiti	38,675	38,675	0	0	38,675	38,675	0
324719	Flying Start - Cwm 2	10,000	10,000	0	0	10,000	10,000	0
324721	Flying Start - Ebbw Vale North	150,000	150,000	0	0	150,000	150,000	0
324724	Flying Start - Sirhowy Primary	10,000	10,000	0	0	10,000	10,000	0
324735	Flying Start Brynithel FS Centre	20,000	20,000	0	0	20,000	20,000	0
324736	Flying Start Additional Works	90,000	90,000	0	6,550	83,450	90,000	0
324770	Childcare Offer - Sixbells Scheme	1,492,862	0	1,492,862	0	0	0	0
324771	Childcare Offer - Badminton Scheme	1,500,000	0	1,500,000	0	0	0	0
324772	Childcare Offer - Blaina ICC Scheme	437,243	0	437,243	0	0	0	0
324773	Childcare Offer - Swfryd Scheme	500,000	0	500,000	0	0	0	0
<b>Childrens Services</b>		<b>4,379,255</b>	<b>449,150</b>	<b>3,930,105</b>	<b>6,550</b>	<b>442,600</b>	<b>449,150</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Adult Services</b>								
323003	Health & Safety	63,942	0	63,942	0	0	0	0
323005	Tackling Food Poverty - WLGA	23,147	0	23,147	0	0	0	0
323120	Disabled equipment	279,000	279,000	0	0	279,000	279,000	0
323144	ICF Main Capital Programme	99,233	1,210	98,023	1,210	0	1,210	0
323147	Intermediate Care Fund	3,292	160	3,132	160	0	160	0
323148	ICF - Digital & Mobile Assistive Technol	19,000	0	19,000	0	0	0	0
323149	Better Care Capital Project	26,648	4,333	22,315	4,333	0	4,333	0

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<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2021/3</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
323151	Augusta House - Enablement Pods	<b>388,152</b>	<b>388,152</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>388,152</b>	<b>388,152</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>902,414</b>	<b>672,855</b>	<b>229,559</b>	<b>5,703</b>	<b>667,152</b>	<b>672,855</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Social Services Portfolio</b>	<b>5,281,669</b>	<b>1,122,005</b>	<b>4,159,664</b>	<b>12,253</b>	<b>1,109,752</b>	<b>1,122,005</b>	<b>0</b>

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2020	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Economy Portfolio</b>								
<b>Tredegar Regeneration</b>								
326163	Tredegar HLF	893,051	893,051	0	7,910	885,141	893,051	0
	<b>Tredegar Regeneration</b>	<b>893,051</b>	<b>893,051</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,910</b>	<b>885,141</b>	<b>893,051</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Ebbw Vale Town Centre</b>								
326191	TRI - Urban Centre Commercial Property I	407,496	407,496	0	60,495	347,001	407,496	0
326192	TRI- Urban Centre Residential Property E	123,957	123,957	0	0	123,957	123,957	0
	<b>Ebbw Vale Town Centre</b>	<b>531,453</b>	<b>531,453</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60,495</b>	<b>470,958</b>	<b>531,453</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Valleys Regional Park</b>								
326205	VRP - Discovery Gateway	89,461	89,461	0	0	89,461	89,461	0
	<b>Valleys Regional Park</b>	<b>89,461</b>	<b>89,461</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89,461</b>	<b>89,461</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>The Works Site</b>								
325097	Big Arch	777,638	12,469	765,169	12,469	0	12,469	0
325220	Site Investigation Works	19,000	0	19,000	0	0	0	0
325225	Ebbw Valley Railway - Northern Extension	2,441	0	2,441	0	0	0	0
	<b>The Works Site</b>	<b>799,079</b>	<b>12,469</b>	<b>786,610</b>	<b>12,469</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12,469</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other Regeneration</b>								
326006	Tech Valley s Initiative	475,000	0	475,000	0	0	0	0
326180	Lime Avenue Business Park	6,199,476	6,199,476	0	468,161	5,731,315	6,199,476	0

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<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
326181	Lime Avenue Employment park	2,501,013	0	2,501,013	0	0	0	0
326182	Box Works	703,992	703,992	0	369,936	334,056	703,992	0
326183	Regain 2	3,918,513	3,918,513	0	22,103	3,896,410	3,918,513	0
326184	Brexit Schemes	369,465	0	369,465	0	0	0	0
326225	Heat Networks Project	17,385	0	17,385	0	0	0	0
326226	Electric Vehicle Chargepoints	276,897	276,897	0	261,071	15,826	276,897	0
326252	Constrained Units - Roseheyworth	164,847	74,000	90,847	0	74,000	74,000	0
326265	Victoria Business Park - Development	66,687	0	66,687	0	0	0	0
	<b>Other Regeneration</b>	<b>14,693,275</b>	<b>11,172,878</b>	<b>3,520,397</b>	<b>1,121,271</b>	<b>10,051,607</b>	<b>11,172,878</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Economy Portfolio</b>	<b>17,006,319</b>	<b>12,699,312</b>	<b>4,307,007</b>	<b>1,202,145</b>	<b>11,497,167</b>	<b>12,699,312</b>	<b>0</b>

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2020	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Education and Active Living</b>								
<b>Education Services</b>								
324130	Abertillery Comprehensive Lighting Upgr	9,524	0	9,524	0	0	0	0
324138	Education Capital Maintenance	716,802	716,802	0	3,700	713,102	716,802	0
324142	Georgetown Windows & Boiler Replaceme	8,671	0	8,671	0	0	0	0
324143	Rhos-y-fedwyn - Refurbishment	5,378	0	5,378	0	0	0	0
324144	St Marys - Refurbishment	60,000	20,000	40,000	0	20,000	20,000	0
324145	Tredegar Comp - Food & Technology	99,275	80,000	19,275	0	80,000	80,000	0
324201	Class Size - Willowtown	69,557	69,557	0	0	69,557	69,557	0
324203	Period Poverty	6,045	0	6,045	0	0	0	0
324206	Georgetown S106	3,667	3,667	0	3,667	0	3,667	0
324519	Digital 2030 Capital Grant - Post 16	4,620	0	4,620	0	0	0	0
324530	ALN	122,298	0	122,298	0	0	0	0
324532	Ebbw Fawr ASD	3,890	0	3,890	0	0	0	0
324560	Schools IT Infrastructure	140,282	140,282	0	731	139,551	140,282	0
324580	Brynmawr 3G Pitch	793,378	793,378	0	350	793,028	793,378	0
324590	Tredegar Comp 3G Pitch	153,410	0	153,410	0	0	0	0
324740	New Abertillery Primary School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
324743	21st Century Schools Six Bells Project	416,940	196,639	220,301	4,189	192,450	196,639	0
324750	Band B - Welsh Medium New Build	5,993,612	0	5,993,612	0	0	0	0
324751	Band B - New Primary Ebbw Fawr Valley	9,295,589	12,915	9,282,674	12,915	0	12,915	0
324752	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Brynma	3,198,936	0	3,198,936	0	0	0	0
324753	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Abertille	3,199,893	0	3,199,893	0	0	0	0

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2020	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
324754	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Tredega	3,198,335	0	3,198,335	0	0	0	0
324755	Band B - Welsh Medium Remodelling Bro	588,116	0	588,116	0	0	0	0
<b>Education Services</b>		<b>28,088,218</b>	<b>2,033,240</b>	<b>26,054,978</b>	<b>25,552</b>	<b>2,007,688</b>	<b>2,033,240</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Active Living Services</b>								
329089	Abertillery LC Demolition	4,552	3,600	952	3,600	0	3,600	0
329097	Play Equipment	44,850	44,850	0	0	44,850	44,850	0
332368	Play Area Schemes - Boroughwide	12,439	0	12,439	0	0	0	0
<b>Active Living Services</b>		<b>61,841</b>	<b>48,450</b>	<b>13,391</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>44,850</b>	<b>48,450</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Education and Active Living</b>		<b>28,150,059</b>	<b>2,081,690</b>	<b>26,068,369</b>	<b>29,152</b>	<b>2,052,538</b>	<b>2,081,690</b>	<b>0</b>

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2020	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Environment Portfolio</b>								
<b>Environmental Services</b>								
327018	RCAF Long Term Organics Procurement	26,512	0	26,512	0	0	0	0
327039	Kerbside Collections	2,115	0	2,115	0	0	0	0
327042	Collaborative Change Programme 18-19	176,872	0	176,872	0	0	0	0
327043	Household Waste Recycling Centre	1,754,482	454,482	1,300,000	204,051	250,431	454,482	0
327044	AHP Waste Collections	176,000	176,000	0	0	176,000	176,000	0
327045	BRC Decommissioning Project	145,511	0	145,511	0	0	0	0
327046	Repair Cafe	4,541	4,151	390	3,475	676	4,151	0
327047	Council Buildings Recycling Infrastructu	16,705	16,705	0	0	16,705	16,705	0
327061	CAT - Sports Facilities	80,000	80,000	0	0	80,000	80,000	0
327065	Re:Fit	2,922,084	372,685	2,549,399	372,685	0	372,685	0
327067	Market Hall - Asbestos Removal	11,321	0	11,321	0	0	0	0
327068	Cemeteries Investment Programme	200,028	0	200,028	0	0	0	0
<b>Environmental Services</b>		<b>5,516,171</b>	<b>1,104,023</b>	<b>4,412,148</b>	<b>580,211</b>	<b>523,812</b>	<b>1,104,023</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Housing Environmental Health</b>								
328221	Remediation of Contaminated Land/Dereli	154,269	0	154,269	0	0	0	0
350510	Improvement grants - new scheme	745,809	420,000	325,809	47,465	372,535	420,000	0
350550	Support for Independent Living	112,901	92,800	20,101	4,577	88,223	92,800	0
350560	Empty Property Grants	13,692	13,692	0	13,691	1	13,692	0
<b>Housing Environmental Health</b>		<b>1,026,671</b>	<b>526,492</b>	<b>500,179</b>	<b>65,733</b>	<b>460,759</b>	<b>526,492</b>	<b>0</b>

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<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2021/3</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	<b>Environment Portfolio</b>	<b>6,542,842</b>	<b>1,630,515</b>	<b>4,912,327</b>	<b>645,945</b>	<b>984,570</b>	<b>1,630,515</b>	<b>0</b>

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2020	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Infrastructure Portfolio</b>								
<b>Engineering Services</b>								
328040	Cwm By Pass	13,970	0	13,970	0	0	0	0
328148	SRIC - Ebenezer Street	40,000	40,000	0	0	40,000	40,000	0
328310	Local Transport Fund	243,271	243,271	0	17,833	225,438	243,271	0
328312	Local Transport Fund 2020/21	150,000	150,000	0	0	150,000	150,000	0
328314	Local Transport Network Fund	75,000	75,000	0	0	75,000	75,000	0
328315	Local Transport Fund - Project Retention	22,948	0	22,948	0	0	0	0
328318	Active Travel Fund	256,316	256,316	0	128,627	127,689	256,316	0
328319	Active Travel Fund 2020/21	234,000	234,000	0	0	234,000	234,000	0
328322	Local Sustainable Transport Covid Respor	144,000	144,000	0	0	144,000	144,000	0
328350	Access Improvement Grant	34,691	34,691	0	0	34,691	34,691	0
<b>Engineering Services</b>		<b>1,214,196</b>	<b>1,177,278</b>	<b>36,918</b>	<b>146,460</b>	<b>1,030,818</b>	<b>1,177,278</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Highways Network Management</b>								
328063	Bridge Strengthening Works	1,857	0	1,857	0	0	0	0
328095	Ebbw Vale Railway study Phase 3	973	973	0	973	0	973	0
328269	Highways PB Imp. Works.	20,946	0	20,946	0	0	0	0
328270	Highways Improvement Works	1,036,835	4,130	1,032,705	4,130	0	4,130	0
328334	LGBI - Trinant Hall	65,400	0	65,400	0	0	0	0
328404	Flood Damage - Emergency Repairs	0	0	0	23,996	0	23,996	(23,996)
328405	Aberbeeg Road Repairs	405,000	405,000	0	3,000	402,000	405,000	0
328406	Small Scale Works Grant	267,750	267,750	0	0	267,750	267,750	0

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<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2021/3</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	Highways Network Management	1,798,761	677,853	1,120,908	32,099	669,750	701,849	(23,996)
	Infrastructure Portfolio	3,012,957	1,855,131	1,157,826	178,559	1,700,568	1,879,127	(23,996)

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<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
<b>All Portfolios</b>								
<b>All Portfolios</b>								
300300	City Deal	233,500	0	233,500	0	0	0	0
303990	OS Capital Admin/Design & Supervision	524,000	524,000	0	0	524,000	524,000	0
321112	Disabled Access - Special Programme	16,871	1,192	15,679	1,192	0	1,192	0
324672	The Company Shop - Tred	196,963	0	196,963	0	0	0	0
<b>All Portfolios</b>		<b>971,334</b>	<b>525,192</b>	<b>446,142</b>	<b>1,192</b>	<b>524,000</b>	<b>525,192</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>All Portfolios</b>		<b>971,334</b>	<b>525,192</b>	<b>446,142</b>	<b>1,192</b>	<b>524,000</b>	<b>525,192</b>	<b>0</b>



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<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2020</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	<b>Total Capital Funding</b>	<b>61,363,291</b>	<b>20,016,484</b>	<b>41,346,807</b>	<b>2,168,484</b>	<b>17,871,996</b>	<b>20,040,480</b>	<b>(23,996)</b>

End of Report

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# Agenda Item 21

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Use of General and Earmarked Reserves 2019/2020**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Daniels – Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	10/09/20	29.09.20			28/09/20	14/10/20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To report to the members of the Executive Committee the reserves outturn position for 2019/2020 as at Quarter 4 (31 March 2020).
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 There are a number of statutory requirements concerning Local Authority Reserves, including:
    - The Local Government Act 1972;
    - The Local Government Finance Act 1988;
    - The Local Government Finance Act 1992;
    - The Local Government Act 2003; and
    - The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.
  - 2.2 The CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) issued Bulletin 99: Local Authority Reserves and Balances in July 2014. This provides non-statutory guidance on relevant issues including:
    - Proper accounting treatment; and
    - Principles to assess the adequacy of reserves.
  - 2.3 To ensure compliance with CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Panel Bulletin 99 and identified best practice, the Council revised its protocol for managing reserves, with effect from April 2015.
  - 2.4 One aspect of the revised protocol concerns the enhancement of Elected Member engagement and scrutiny, and to this end quarterly reports detailing the actual and forecast use of general and earmarked reserves, including changes in requirement/amounts and risk assessments, are prepared and presented to Executive and Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee during the financial year.
  - 2.5 In order to adopt a long-term approach to the need to provide services to the citizens of Blaenau Gwent, the protocol was amended and agreed by

Council in March 2016 to include a target level for general reserves. This was set as 4% of the last reported actual net revenue expenditure (as included in the Revenue Outturn return).

### **3. Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report will be considered by the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and any comments from the Committee will be provided verbally to the Executive.

3.2 That the Executive Committee considers the attached report of use of general and earmarked reserves for 2019/2020 and:

- note the draft increase of the General Reserve in 2019/2020 to £6.348m, being 4.69% of net revenue expenditure (above the 4% target level).
- consider the impact the £0.454m favourable 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.

Maintenance of general reserves at an adequate level is crucial to the Council being able to meet future liabilities arising from risks for which specific provision has not been made.

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

#### **4.1 National Well-being Goals**

The management of earmarked and general reserves (in recognition of the need to plan for known or predicted future obligations, unexpected events or emergencies), allows the Authority to deliver services in pursuance of its obligations under the national well-being goals.

#### **4.2 Corporate Priorities**

This report supports the Council Priority, "Ambitious and Innovative Council", as it is part of the financial planning and reporting arrangements which support the Council's financial resilience.

### **5. Implications Against Each Option**

#### **5.1 Financial Impact**

5.1.1 Section 6 provides an overall summary of the financial position in relation to the remaining balances in general and earmarked reserves at 31 March 2020.

5.1.2 Table 1 at 6.1.3 (below) shows the outturn position for the general reserve at year-end 2019/2020 to be an increase of £0.454m, to £6.348m. This balance would represent 4.69% of net revenue expenditure, £0.934m above the 4% target level of £5.414m, indicating some progress towards strengthening the financial resilience of the Council and allowing a buffer to deal with unexpected future issues.

5.1.3 The increase in general reserves is due to net portfolio underspends and:

- £117,000 contribution as agreed by Council during the 2019/2020 budget setting process
- £132,000 as a result of a reduction in the Fire Service Precept charge following additional funding from Welsh Government for the increase in employers pension contributions.

5.1.4 Table 2 at 6.1.7 (below) shows the level of earmarked reserves at 31 March 2020 to be £7.705m, an in year increase of £0.876m, which included significant increases in the Insurance Reserve and Delegated School Balances. Further details of earmarked reserve movements are included in Appendix 1.

5.1.5 As a result of the positive provisional settlement, the Council has approved an increase to Reserves in excess of £1.5m for 2020/2021 when setting the 2020/2021 Budget, to support medium term financial planning and strengthening the Council's financial resilience.

## 5.2 Risk

5.2.1 The Council must ensure an appropriate level and use of reserves to support its financial sustainability and to meet future liabilities arising from risks for which a specific provision has not been made.

5.2.2 Included within the 2020/2021 budget, it is planned to increase reserves in excess of £1.5m, with a further £0.2m increase per annum planned for the life of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy. There is a risk that responding to Covid 19 may have a financial impact on the Council's in year budget and its reserves.

5.2.3 Failure to comply with the requirements set out in CIPFA LAAP Bulletin 99: *Local Authority Reserves and Balances*, which include the implementation of a clear protocol for the establishment, use, control and review of reserves, could result in adverse comments by regulators.

5.2.4 A protocol for the management of reserves was adopted in April 2015 to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with CIPFA LAAP Bulletin 99 and identified best practice.

5.2.5 In the short-term, the level and adequacy of reserves are regularly reviewed and monitored through regular outturn/ forecast reporting. In the medium term, reserves are assessed as part of the budget-setting process and the

Medium Term Financial Strategy, which includes provision for an increase in reserves of £0.2m per annum over the life of the Strategy.

- 5.2.6 In comparison to all other Welsh Authorities, at 31 March 2018 Blaenau Gwent had the lowest level of general and earmarked reserves expressed as a percentage of Gross Revenue Expenditure. Comparative information drawn from audited statutory accounts indicates that this position has improved to the end of 2018/2019, as follows:

	2017/2018	2018/2019
Blaenau Gwent Usable Reserves	£10.501m	£12.725m
Blaenau Gwent Usable Reserves as a percentage of Gross Revenue Expenditure	4.63%	5.74%
Ranking in Comparison with all Wales Local Authorities	22	20
All-Wales Average	£25.946m	£26.465m
All-Wales Average	11.44%	11.93%

- 5.2.7 In order to meet the Welsh average, general and earmarked reserves would need to increase significantly to approximately £26.5m.
- 5.2.8 There is a risk that failure to increase reserves further will attract adverse criticism from regulators. This risk can be mitigated by increasing the Council Fund Reserve.

### 5.3 Legal

- 5.3.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.
- 5.3.2 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a duty on chief finance officers' to report on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves when the authority is considering its budget requirement.
- 5.3.3 Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the chief finance officer to report to all the authority's councillors if there is or is likely to be unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. This would include situations where reserves have become seriously depleted and it is forecast that the authority will not have the resources to meet its expenditure in a particular financial year.

### 5.4 Personnel

There are no direct personnel/staffing implications arising out of this report.

## 6. Supporting Evidence

### 6.1 Performance Information and Data

6.1.1 The level of the Council's general reserve disclosed in the draft statutory accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2020 was £6.348m equating to 4.69% of net revenue expenditure (as reported in the 2019/2020 Revenue Outturn forms). The current 4% target level of general reserves in accordance with the reserves protocol is £5.414m.

6.1.2 The revenue budget year-end position for 2019/2020 (as at end of Quarter 4) indicates a surplus of £0.454m after the application of £1.5m from earmarked reserves.

6.1.3 Therefore, the impact on the outturn position for the general reserve at 31 March 2020 would be as follows:

Table 1: General Reserve	£000
Balance at 31 March 2019	5,894
Budgeted Contribution to General Reserve	117
Reduction in Fire Authority Precept	132
Contribution to the Reserve: Net Portfolio Underspends	205
Provisional Balance at 31 March 2020	6,348

6.1.4 Appendix 1 gives details of the total earmarked reserves held at the start of the 2019/2020 financial year (£6.829m) with actual reserve movements to the end of quarter 4 (31 March 2020).

6.1.5 The level of earmarked reserves has been determined in accordance with the agreed reserves protocol. The level of usable reserves available to the Authority increased by £0.876m in 2019/2020.

6.1.6 The current summary outturn position for earmarked reserves at 31 March 2020 is as follows:

Table 2: Earmarked Reserves	£000
Balance at 31 March 2019	6,829
Reserve Adjustments	2,348
Actual Expenditure to Q4	(1,472)
Provisional Balance at 31 March 2020	7,705

6.1.7 For those reserves that have been utilised to fund actual expenditure to 31 March 2020 (£1.472m), details of the expenditure funded have been provided in Appendix 2. Details of additional income transferred to earmarked reserves (£2.348m) have been provided in Appendix 3.

6.1.8 During Quarter 4, earmarked reserves have been assessed for purpose, requirement and adequacy and adjusted where necessary to meet identified liabilities.

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

6.2.1 The management of earmarked and general reserves (in recognition of the need to plan for known or predicted future obligations, unexpected events or emergencies), helps demonstrate stewardship of the Authority's resources and its ability to provide services to the local community.

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

6.3.1 Not applicable.

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

6.4.1 Stewardship of the Authority's resources allows for the provision of services to the local community in the short and long term.

## 6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 Not applicable.

## 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

6.6.1 Not applicable.

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

6.7.1 Not applicable.

## 6.8 **EqIA**

6.8.1 An EQIA is not required as this report provides an estimated outturn position in relation to the Authority's reserve balances for the financial year, on an objective basis in accordance with relevant accounting standards, codes, concepts, principles, guidance and legislation.

## 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 In the short-term, the level and adequacy of reserves are regularly reviewed and monitored through regular outturn/forecast reports.

7.2 There are legal requirements in respect of the reporting of reserves when setting the annual budget and the statutory outturn position is considered by the Authority's external auditors in their audit of the annual Statement of



Accounts.

- 7.3 In the medium term, reserves are assessed as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1
- Appendix 2
- Appendix 3

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**Appendix 1: Earmarked Reserves Movements 2019-2020**

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Balance Brought</u>	<u>Reserve Adjustments</u>		<u>Total Reserve Adjustments</u>	<u>Actual Expenditure</u>	<u>Balance Carried</u>
	<u>Fwd 1 April 2019</u>	<u>Increases</u>	<u>Decreases</u>			<u>Fwd 31 March 2020</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Deminimis Capital Works	<b>87,812.13</b>	41,781.33	0.00	41,781.33	(52,500.00)	<b>77,093.46</b>
Facilities	<b>121,963.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>121,963.00</b>
Energy Centre	<b>55,659.00</b>	3,289.00	0.00	3,289.00	0.00	<b>58,948.00</b>
Industrial Units	<b>0.00</b>	50,000.00	0.00	50,000.00	0.00	<b>50,000.00</b>
IT Infrastructure	<b>133,809.48</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(3,947.69)	<b>129,861.79</b>
Land at Blaenant Road	<b>136,200.00</b>	0.00	(136,200.00)	(136,200.00)	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
WRAP Regional Vehicles	<b>51,944.85</b>	70,921.00	0.00	70,921.00	0.00	<b>122,865.85</b>
Budget Contingency Fund	<b>71,347.89</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(6,996.00)	<b>64,351.89</b>
Building Control Fees	<b>83,180.01</b>	17,540.38	(14,343.35)	3,197.03	0.00	<b>86,377.04</b>
Business Support	<b>9,005.50</b>	0.00	(5,936.50)	(5,936.50)	(3,069.00)	<b>0.00</b>
Business Support Hybrid Model	<b>0.00</b>	53,000.00	0.00	53,000.00	0.00	<b>53,000.00</b>
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	<b>187,836.00</b>	106,894.00	0.00	106,894.00	0.00	<b>294,730.00</b>
Community Asset Transfers	<b>13,868.63</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(13,868.63)	<b>0.00</b>
Corporate Landlord ALT	<b>0.00</b>	18,153.89	0.00	18,153.89	0.00	<b>18,153.89</b>
Deposits and Bonds	<b>3,200.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>3,200.00</b>
Downsizing, Redundancy & Transitional Costs	<b>216,227.51</b>	171,000.00	0.00	171,000.00	(187,138.80)	<b>200,088.71</b>
Election Costs	<b>36,228.83</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>36,228.83</b>
Future Interest Rate	<b>106,000.00</b>	0.00	(106,000.00)	(106,000.00)	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
General/ Voluntary Sector Grants	<b>60,000.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(32,320.00)	<b>27,680.00</b>
ICT	<b>272,120.31</b>	55,155.67	0.00	55,155.67	(102,464.80)	<b>224,811.18</b>
Insurance Liabilities	<b>922,662.65</b>	956,332.58	0.00	956,332.58	0.00	<b>1,878,995.23</b>
Individual Schools Budget (ISB)	<b>186,153.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(159,371.46)	<b>26,781.54</b>
Land & Property Charges	<b>98,591.14</b>	28,956.28	0.00	28,956.28	0.00	<b>127,547.42</b>
Leisure Termination Costs	<b>165,238.28</b>	0.00	(4,590.28)	(4,590.28)	(160,648.00)	<b>0.00</b>
Local Development Plan	<b>192,166.54</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(42,878.00)	<b>149,288.54</b>
LMS Balances	<b>1,009,644.58</b>	265,107.52	(77,388.05)	187,719.47	0.00	<b>1,197,364.05</b>
Members Local Grants	<b>33,834.67</b>	6,512.74	0.00	6,512.74	0.00	<b>40,347.41</b>
Payroll Project Management	<b>23,529.97</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>23,529.97</b>
Person Centred Practice	<b>7,093.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(7,093.00)	<b>0.00</b>
Prudential Borrowing	<b>200,000.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(200,000.00)	<b>0.00</b>
Specialist Commercial Advice (Leisure Trust Review)	<b>64,538.00</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	(45,349.28)	<b>19,188.72</b>
Specialist Commercial Advice (Waste Arrangements)	<b>28,522.07</b>	0.00	(1,902.31)	(1,902.31)	(26,619.76)	<b>0.00</b>

**Appendix 1: Earmarked Reserves Movements 2019-2020**

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Balance Brought</u>	<u>Reserve Adjustments</u>		<u>Total Reserve Adjustments</u>	<u>Actual Expenditure</u>	<u>Balance Carried</u>
	<u>Fwd 1 April 2019</u>	<u>Increases</u>	<u>Decreases</u>			<u>Fwd 31 March 2020</u>
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Stock Conditions Survey	12,137.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,137.34
Strategic Business Reviews	250,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(56,938.73)	193,061.27
Superannuation	500,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	500,000.00
Taxation	141,917.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	(8,004.60)	133,913.08
Technology Park Feasibility Study	80,000.00	200,000.00	0.00	200,000.00	(80,000.00)	200,000.00
Transport Oncost	23,127.00	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	33,127.00
Waste Services	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00
Winter Maintenance	200,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200,000.00
Aneurin Bevan Health Board - Education	55,664.00	8,000.00	0.00	8,000.00	(22,701.48)	40,962.52
Corporate Procurement	44,633.86	4,167.76	0.00	4,167.76	(44,364.00)	4,437.62
CRASB	11,058.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,058.00
Education - Gypsy Travellers	43,618.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	(2,814.00)	40,804.42
EU Exit Preparations for Food Enforcement	9,738.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(9,738.00)	0.00
NER	33,647.89	59,033.36	0.00	59,033.36	(20,528.97)	72,152.28
Leadership Hallmark	24,837.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	24,837.66
Period Poverty	0.00	12,796.05	0.00	12,796.05	0.00	12,796.05
Planning WAG Grant Planning Committee	6,264.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	(4,160.61)	2,103.66
Prevent	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
Regen General Contributions Unapplied (Town Centre Management)	47,588.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	47,588.25
Rights of Way Diversions	20,255.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,255.00
Section 106 Agreements	225,390.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	(54,348.89)	171,041.31
SEW Adoption Collaboration	231,394.30	275,226.81	0.00	275,226.81	0.00	506,621.11
SMIFFs	13,558.11	77,388.05	0.00	77,388.05	(90,946.16)	(0.00)
Sports Council	0.00	29,700.00	0.00	29,700.00	0.00	29,700.00
SSIA/PLOF Grant	20,171.39	0.00	0.00	0.00	(17,365.31)	2,806.08
Syrian Resettlement Programme	0.00	122,980.73	0.00	122,980.73	0.00	122,980.73
Workforce Development Collaboration	93,985.04	8,479.28	0.00	8,479.28	(9,987.07)	92,477.25
Restrictive Physical Intervention	5,903.75	0.00	(570.75)	(570.75)	(5,333.00)	0.00
School Based Counselling	2,385.00	0.00	(2,385.00)	(2,385.00)	0.00	0.00
Youth Service	23,030.81	44,871.53	0.00	44,871.53	0.00	67,902.34
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6,828,683.01</b>	<b>2,697,287.96</b>	<b>(349,316.24)</b>	<b>2,347,971.72</b>	<b>(1,471,495.24)</b>	<b>7,705,159.49</b>

**Appendix 2: Expenditure Funded by Earmarked Reserves, 2019-2020**

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Actual Expenditure to Q4</u>	<u>Purpose of Expenditure</u>
	<b>£</b>	
Deminimis Capital Works	52,500.00	Expenditure incurred for repayment of Invest to Save funding on the Central Depot project.
IT Infrastructure	3,947.69	Leasing cost of Workplace transformation equipment.
Budget Contingency Fund	6,996.00	Funding the safeguarding of Teacher & Learning Responsibility payments at Abertillery Learning Campus following a restructure.
Business Support	3,069.00	Staff training costs.
Community Asset Transfers	13,868.63	Reserve fully utilised to fund Grounds CAT transfers.
Downsizing, Redundancy & Transitional Costs	187,138.80	Redundancies relating to staff downsizing .
General/ Voluntary Sector Grants	32,320.00	Funding the Authority's contribution towards the Citizens Advice Bureau.
ICT	102,464.80	Laptop Refresh
Individual Schools Budget (ISB)	159,371.46	This includes agreed funding for the River Centre £57k and the remainder relates to SEN funding for a number of schools.
Leisure Termination Costs	160,648.00	Additional financial support to Aneurin Leisure to fund early termination costs.
Local Development Plan	42,878.00	To cover Local Development Plan obligations.
Person Centred Practice	7,093.00	Funding of the overspend in relation to Person Centred Practice.
Prudential Borrowing	200,000.00	Repairs to Roads
Specialist Commercial Advice (Leisure Trust Review)	45,349.28	Procurement of specialist advice for reviewing the delivery model.
Specialist Commercial Advice (Waste Arrangements)	26,619.76	Fees in respect of financial due diligence on Silent Valley Waste Services Ltd.
Strategic Business Reviews	56,938.73	Contribution towards 3rd Party expenditure consultant fees.
Taxation	8,004.60	To fund cost in relation to HMRC Making Tax Digital requirements.
Technology Park Feasibility Study	80,000.00	Provision of Concept Reports
Aneurin Bevan Health Board - Education	22,701.48	Transformation, leadership capacity funding.
Corporate Procurement	44,364.00	Utilising reserve for Strategic Business Review Support - 3rd Party Spend Consultant Fees
Education - Gypsy Travellers	2,814.00	Contribution towards employee costs in relation to Early Years.
EU Exit Preparations for Food Enforcement	9,738.00	Food safety expenditure.
IER	20,528.97	Stationery & Postage costs in relation to the Individual Electoral Register.
Planning WAG Grant Planning Committee	4,160.61	To cover the costs of archiving old plans.
Section 106 Agreements	54,348.89	This relates to school class size funding and works at Bedwellty Park.
SMIFFs	90,946.16	This relates to SMIFFs and SIMS* expenditure 2019/2020.
SSIA/PLOF Grant	17,365.31	This relates to secondment costs.
Workforce Development Collaboration	9,987.07	Repayment to Caerphilly CBC in relation to their element of PLOF income retained in this reserve.
Restrictive Physical Intervention	5,333.00	Funding for positive future schemes.
<b>Total to Qtr 4:</b>	<b>1,471,495.24</b>	

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**Appendix 3: Additional Income Transferred to Earmarked Reserves, 2019-2020**

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Income to Q4</u>	<u>Source of Income</u>
	<b>£</b>	
Deminimis Capital Works	41,781.33	Receipts received in 2019/2020.
Energy Centre	3,289.00	Transfer of 2019/2020 Energy Centre underspend.
Industrial Units	50,000.00	Match funding required to fund the grant approval on Industrial Units.
WRAP Regional Vehicles	70,921.00	This includes £24k RCCO to fund vehicles not yet delivered and the remainder to replace regional vehicles in the future.
Building Control Fees	17,540.38	Increase in reserve to include 2019/2020 monies.
Business Support Hybrid Model	53,000.00	To implement the new Hybrid Mail Model including software.
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	106,894.00	Blaenau Gwent's share of Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Reserves (on consolidation of CCRCD Accounts).
Corporate Landlord ALT	18,153.89	Corporate Landlord underspend on Aneurin Leisure Trust buildings.
Downsizing, Redundancy & Transitional Costs	65,000.00	Increase in reserve to cover Downsizing.
ICT	55,155.67	2019/2020 underspend against IT budget and additional sums required for project implementation in 2020/2021.
Insurance Liabilities	956,332.58	Unwinding of Insurance Provision for claims not yet received where it has been assessed the likelihood of payment to settle has reduced.
Land & Property Charges	28,956.28	Increase in potential income arising from changes to existing debt and new charges
LMS Balances	265,107.52	Net surplus on schools 2019/2020.
Members Local Grants	6,512.74	2019/2020 underspend on General Grants and Special Levy.
Technology Park Feasibility Study	63,800.00	Increase in reserve to cover future costs.
Transport Oncost	10,000.00	Surplus on the Transport account 2019/2020.
Aneurin Bevan Health Board - Education	8,000.00	Funding received from ABHB for regional working, supply cover for schools and training
Corporate Procurement	4,167.76	Underspend in relation to telecommunications suspense
IER	59,033.36	This relates to IER Home Office funding and Electoral Reform Grant.
Period Poverty	12,796.05	Establishment of new reserve to cover costs in relation to Period Poverty.
SEW Adoption Collaboration	275,226.81	SEWAS underspend 2019/20 to be held in a specific reserve, maintained independently of Blaenau Gwent.
Sports Council	29,700.00	Sports Council funding to cover costs in relation to works to changing rooms at Abertillery Sports Centre.
Syrian Resettlement Programme	122,980.73	To fund ongoing costs identified in relation to the resettlement of refugee families.
Workforce Development Collaboration	8,479.28	Underspend in relation Blaenau Gwent PLOF.
Youth Service	44,871.53	Increase in reserve to cover backdated restructure.
<b>Total to Qtr 4:</b>	<b>2,377,699.91</b>	

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# Agenda Item 22

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Supporting Financial Resilience – Audit Wales Follow Up Review**

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	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	20.08.20	29.09.20	29/09/20		11/09/20	14/10/20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To present to Members the findings of the follow up review undertaken by Audit Wales on their Supporting Financial Resilience work stream.
  
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 During 2018, Audit Wales carried out a *Supporting Financial Resilience* review with a focus on the Council's effectiveness in terms of maximising funding opportunities and containing spending demands.
  - 2.2 The review concluded that the Council would need to develop a stronger financial culture to remain financially resilient and proposed a number of areas for improvement.
  - 2.3 Audit Wales has subsequently undertaken a follow up review to assess the Council's progress in strengthening its financial resilience, addressing the areas for improvement proposed in the initial review.
  - 2.4 Audit Wales have found that **the Council has responded positively and is making progress against the proposals for improvement and has future work planned to fully address them.**
  - 2.5 The report and the attached Audit Wales review highlights the progress that has been made against each of the areas for improvement identified in 2018.
  
3. **Options for Recommendation**
  - 3.1 This report was presented to the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and Members supported Option 1.
  - 3.2 **Option 1**  
The Executive reviews the findings of Audit Wales, considers the progress made against the proposals for improvement and accept the report and appendix.

3.3 **Option 2**

The Executive reviews the findings of Audit Wales, considers the progress made against the proposals for improvement and 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 Council has a statutory responsibility for its own financial resilience. This is critical to the delivery of the Council's priorities in the medium and long term.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.1 The financial resilience of the Council is reliant upon establishing and maintaining a strong financial culture. The ability to set and deliver a balance budget annually combined with appropriate levels of reserves to mitigate the impact of unforeseen budget pressures is a crucial.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.2.1 The risk to financial resilience are mitigated by strong financial management by the Council including:

- An agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy, which includes a planned increase in the level of the Council's general reserve and development and delivery of the Bridging the Gap programme;
- Regular financial monitoring / forecasts for capital, revenue and reserves;
- Development and delivery of action plans to address in year budget pressures

5.3 ***Legal***

5.3.1 Councils are independent bodies with legal responsibility for their own financial sustainability; they have ownership of assets, powers to borrow and to invest, and hold reserves which enable them to plan for and manage financial risk.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

n/a

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.1 Audit Wales' follow up review sought to answer the question:  
***Can the Council provide assurance that it has addressed the proposals for improvement detailed in the 2018 Supporting Financial Resilience review output?***

6.1.2 Overall Audit Wales found that:  
***The Council has responded positively to the findings of our report: it is making progress against the proposals for improvement and has future work planned to fully address them.***

6.1.3 Specific details relating to the proposals and the Council's progress are provided in the Appendix to this report.

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

6.2.1 Good financial management is essential for the effective stewardship of public money and the delivery of efficient public services.

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

6.3.1 The review involved the appraisal of Council documents and interviews with key officers and the Leader of the Council.

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

6.4.1 Delivery of the Council's priorities depend upon its continuing financial resilience.

## 6.5 ***Preventative focus***

6.5.1 The report highlights areas for improvement to support the Council's financial resilience.

## 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working*** n/a

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

6.7.1 All service areas have a responsibility in ensuring the financial resilience of the Council.

## 6.8 ***EqlA*** n/a

## 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1

### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Audit Wales – Supporting Financial Resilience Follow-up Review – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

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# Supporting Financial Resilience Follow-up Review – Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Audit year: 2019-20

Date issued: August 2020

Document reference: 1961A2020-21

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

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# Summary report

## Summary

### What we reviewed and why

- 1 In 2018, the Wales Audit Office carried out a Supporting Financial Resilience review which focussed on how effectively the Council maximised its funding opportunities and contained spending demands. The review concluded that the Council had an agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy and reserves of 5% but that it would need to develop a stronger financial culture if it is to remain financially resilient. In particular the review concluded:
  - the Council had the highest council tax staff costs of all Welsh councils, and its rate of in-year council tax collection was amongst the lowest in Wales, as was its use of direct debits to collect council tax;
  - there was no corporate coordination of grant applications and no central record of grants claimed;
  - the Council's approach to setting fees and charges lacked clear strategic direction, ownership by services and consistent application;
  - the Council had set out a clear financial plan for 2018-19 but faced significant challenges to its delivery and must improve the budget setting process for future years;
  - the Council had a General Reserve Fund of 5% which was above its minimum target level of 4% and the Council recognised that unforeseen budget pressures could threaten this position going forward; and
  - the Council had lots of data available to it but lacked a culture that consistently used data constructively to proactively challenge, learn and drive improvement.
- 2 The review proposed improvements in each of these areas, as set out in **Appendix 1**, and the Council responded to each, showing the action it proposed to take.
- 3 Further to this report, in his letter dated 18 January 2019, the Appointed Auditor for and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales concluded that:
  - the Council has not yet complied with all its statutory responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources;
  - whilst the Council has arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, there is scope to make further improvements; and
  - all local authorities in Wales face financial challenges, however, the challenge at Blaenau Gwent is significant. Given its level of reserves and budget pressures, the Council will need to develop a stronger financial culture if it is to remain financially resilient.
- 4 We undertook this review to seek assurance that the Council has made effective progress in addressing our 2018 Supporting Financial Resilience review to strengthen its financial resilience.



- 5 We undertook the review between September 2019 and March 2020. The Council provided documents to demonstrate the progress it had made. We then interviewed key officers and the Leader of the Council.

## What we found

- 6 Our review sought to answer the question: **Can the Council provide assurance that it has addressed the proposals for improvement detailed in the 2018 Supporting Financial Resilience review output?**
- 7 Overall we found that: **the Council has responded positively to the findings of our report: it is making progress against the proposals for improvement and has future work planned to fully address them.**
- 8 We reached this conclusion because:
- the Council is taking steps to understand and address the reasons for its lower than average council tax collection rates and high staff costs;
  - the Council has developed a central grants register and is beginning to manage grants more strategically;
  - the Council is making good progress with its strategic review of fees and charges;
  - the Council is strengthening its financial planning and management arrangements;
  - although levels of useable reserves remain low, the Council has taken proactive steps to improve its position and the MTFs demonstrates an ongoing commitment to strengthen the General Reserve; and
  - the Bridging the Gap programme is making effective use of data and further work is underway to improve the way the Council uses data.

# Detailed report

The Council has responded positively to the findings of our report: it is making progress against the proposals for improvement and has future work planned to fully address them

## The Council is taking steps to understand and address the reasons for its lower than average council tax collection rates and high staff costs

### 2018 findings and proposal for improvement

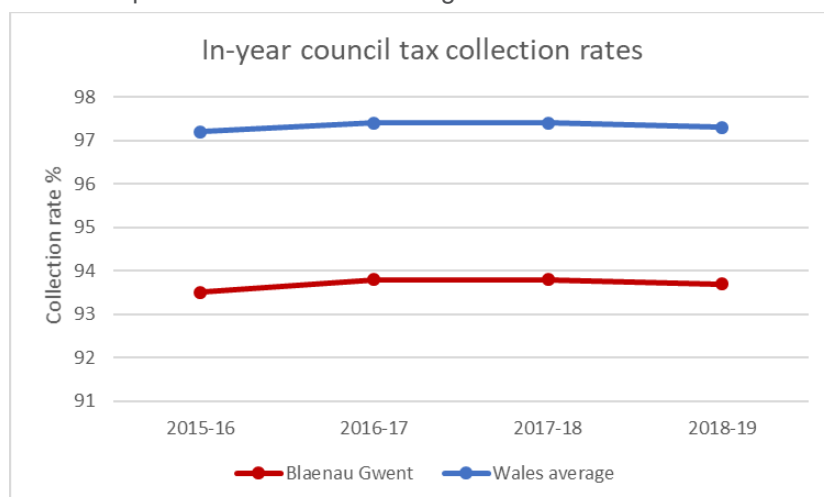
- 9 Our 2018 review found that the Council had the highest council tax staff costs of all Welsh councils, and its rate of in-year council tax collection was amongst the lowest in Wales, as was its use of direct debits to collect council tax.
- 10 As a result we made a proposal for improvement that the Council should review its administration of council tax to ensure prompt and efficient collection. In particular it should:
  - review its council tax collection arrangements with the aim of increasing in year collection rates; and
  - compare its council tax staffing costs with other Wales councils to understand the apparent cost variations and identify potential opportunities for cost savings.

### What we found

- 11 We found that in 2018-19, in-year council tax collection rates remained consistent with previous years at 93.7%, as set out in exhibit 1.

### Exhibit 1: council tax in-year collection rates

The following graph shows the Council's in-year council tax collection rates and how these compare with the Wales average



- 12 The lower than average in-year collection rate is in part due to deprivation levels in the county and the Council's policy to allow residents struggling with council tax payments to spread their payments over a longer period. The Council acknowledges that whilst this supports residents in financial difficulty and improves collection rates over the longer term by preventing arrears and potential debt write offs, it does impact negatively on in-year collection rates.
- 13 Exhibit 2 shows that the Council goes on to collect the majority of outstanding council tax payments over subsequent years, with around 99% collected after four to five years. The Council builds the slower collection rates into its budget process to manage the cash flow implications.

**Exhibit 2: the percentage of council tax collected for prior years as at the end of 2018-19**

The following table shows the percentage of council tax collected in year and over subsequent years

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
% collected by year end	95.7	95	93.5	93.8	93.8	93.7
% collected by 31 March 2019	99	98.9	98.6	98	96.8	

- 14 Since our initial review, the Council has reviewed its council tax collection arrangements and costs by:
- process mapping its recovery and enforcement processes; and
  - visiting several councils with higher in-year collection rates to identify good practices which could be replicated at Blaenau Gwent.
- 15 Although the Council reports that there did not appear to be any significant differences in overall approach, the visits did identify some processes with the potential to improve the efficiency and cost of collection. Where appropriate, the Council is introducing these. For example:
- increased use of digital communication;
  - online self-service module for residents;
  - increased promotion of electronic payment methods, e.g. direct debit, standing orders and payroll deduction; and
  - allocating council tax payments to current rather than old debt.
- 16 The Council's review also considered council tax staff cost variations but found direct comparison was difficult due to differing structures across councils. For example, the Council told us that in Blaenau Gwent dedicated council tax staff deal with council tax queries, whereas some councils use central call centre staff whose time is not charged to council tax administration costs. Staff cost variations remain

under review and the Council expects some of the actions listed in paragraph 15 to result in cost savings.

- 17 In 2019, the Council commissioned the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to undertake an independent review of its council tax arrangements and advise on potential opportunities for improvements. The subsequent report, published in January 2020, found that 'the collection practices within Blaenau Gwent are comparable to other local authorities with all available methods of recovery being utilised where appropriate'. CIPFA also commended the Council's work to maximise the collection of arrears and the resulting low levels of debt needing to be written off. The report includes several proposals in relation to the administration of council tax and the Council is developing an action plan to respond to these recommendations.
- 18 The Council proactively promotes and facilitates electronic payment of council tax. For example, all correspondence sent from the Revenues and Benefits service has a direct debit reminder printed on the front of the envelope. The Council has also introduced more flexible direct debit options, such as weekly payments and payment dates linked to major employer pay dates, e.g. the NHS. In addition, a payroll deduction scheme is available to Council staff. CIPFA's report notes that, at the end of September 2019, 62.8% of Council Tax accounts with a payment to make<sup>1</sup> were paying by direct debit. A further 1.3% of accounts were paying via payroll deduction.
- 19 Work to respond to our proposal for improvement also forms part of the Income Maximisation strand of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme. This includes plans for early intervention and prevention schemes to support the growing number of families experiencing financial difficulties. The Council expects this to have a positive impact on council tax collections rates by helping to maximise residents' household income.
- 20 For example, Revenues and Benefits staff are trialling a project with Flying Start colleagues to engage with residents at an earlier stage. This will help identify whether people struggling financially are accessing the benefits and support schemes available to them, such as council tax reduction schemes. At the time of our fieldwork, the Council had identified the areas it intended to target and planned to begin visiting Flying Start hubs in early 2020. The Council recognises that although this work could improve collection rates, it could also lead to a funding pressure as a result of increased uptake of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

<sup>1</sup> Almost a quarter of all Council Tax accounts in Blaenau Gwent have nothing to pay, for example because they are in receipt of full council tax reduction. CIPFA has therefore removed these from the base number of accounts in calculating the proportion paying by direct debit.

## The Council has developed a central grants register and is beginning to manage grants more strategically

### 2018 findings and proposal for improvement

- 21 Our 2018 review found that there was no corporate coordination of grant applications and no central record of grants claimed.
- 22 As a result we made a proposal for improvement that the Council should manage grants strategically alongside other funding streams. In particular it should:
  - better integrate the applications for grants into the budget setting process (where possible);
  - maintain central records of potential and successful grant applications to support a strategic overview of this funding stream; and
  - review the grants made by the Council to ensure they provide value for money.

### What we found

- 23 We found that the Council has now developed a corporate grants register. This provides a central database of potential revenue grants and records which have been successfully applied for. It also provides information about each grant, including purpose, amount received, number of posts it has funded and links to corporate plan priorities and key strategies where relevant.
- 24 The Council considers the register a starting point for its review of the strategic use of grants, which forms part of the Council's Bridging the Gap programme. The review is examining how grants are used to deliver outcomes for residents and consider the impact of the removal of the grants and the effect this would have on core funding. It also aims to ensure that the Council applies for those grants which support its strategic priorities and aspirations.
- 25 The Council also plans to strengthen governance arrangements for grants. The Strategic Commissioning Group, which is in the process of being established under another strand of Bridging the Gap, will be responsible for overseeing the grants register and ensuring the Council maximises the impact of grant funding and avoids duplication. In addition to this, quarterly updates on the Bridging the Gap strategic use of grants review will go to Corporate Overview Scrutiny.
- 26 The review will take place over three phases, with phase one, which focuses on the Children and Communities Grant, currently underway.
- 27 The Council has collated a register of grants and contributions it has made to other organisations in 2019-20. This provides information on the value of grants awarded, their purpose, and the application process for awarding the grants. For some grants a value for money assessment is included.

## The Council is making good progress with its strategic review of fees and charges

### 2018 findings and proposal for improvement

- 28 Our 2018 review found the Council's approach to setting fees and charges lacked clear strategic direction, ownership by services and consistent application.
- 29 As a result we made a proposal for improvement that the Council should provide robust challenge in the setting of fees and charges to ensure they support delivery of its strategic priorities. In particular:
- develop an income generation policy to support delivery of the Council's strategic priorities;
  - Central Finance should issue clear instructions to managers about increases in fees and charges taking account of relevant external influences;
  - services should comply with budget instructions in respect of increases in fees and charges;
  - Central Finance should carry out robust checks to challenge and confirm compliance with budget instructions; and
  - budgeted income should reflect agreed levels of fees and charges and anticipated activity levels.

### What we found

- 30 We found that the Council has an Income Generation Policy that sets out key considerations around charging. The policy was reviewed in 2018 by an external consultant and deemed to be robust.
- 31 As part of its Bridging the Gap programme, the Council is currently undertaking a strategic review of fees and charges. The review aims to maximise the Council's income by ensuring that fees and charges are set based on full cost recovery where appropriate, and are subject to agreed inflationary uplifts.
- 32 To inform the review, the Council has benchmarked its fees and charges register against those in other councils in Wales with similar levels of deprivation. The Council has also developed a full cost recovery calculator which it is applying to existing fees and charges and to assess new opportunities for charging. The review has so far identified an additional £0.2 million of income for 2020-21 and £0.1 million for subsequent years and this is reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and 2020-21 budget.
- 33 The Council's Finance department is working with budget holders to realign income budgets to reflect activity levels and ensure an annual inflationary uplift is applied. The Council reports that all fees and charges for 2019-20 have been reviewed and are in line with the policy. All uplifts agreed by the Council have also been applied.
- 34 The Council tracks forecast outturn of fees and charges in its quarterly revenue budget monitoring reports to Scrutiny, Executive Committee and Council. The Q2 report shows an income forecast of £14.1 million, a shortfall against target of £0.66 million (4.5%).

## The Council is strengthening its financial planning and management arrangements

### 2018 findings and proposal for improvement

- 35 Our 2018 review found that the Council had set out a clear financial plan for 2018-19 but faced significant challenges to its delivery and must improve the budget setting process for future years.
- 36 As a result we made a proposal for improvement that, to deliver the 2018-19 budget, the Council should respond constructively to 2017-18 budget imbalance that may reoccur in 2018-19, utilising the skills of the Central Finance Team, Strategic Transformation team and budget holders. In particular the Council should:
- critically review and learn from the 2017-18 revenue budget overspends and underspends to identify reasons for imbalances for future year budgets;
  - take action to ensure weaknesses identified do not reoccur;
  - maximise the potential of the Strategic Transformation Team;
  - improve monitoring of savings projects and take clear corrective action to address anticipated under delivery and address the root causes;
  - review skills, capability and development needs of budget holders and provide training/support to meet them; and
  - ensure Central Finance lead on and facilitate a robust financial culture throughout the organisation.
- 37 We made a further proposal for improvement that, in planning for the 2019-20 budget, the Council should improve accountability throughout the organisation for the setting and delivery of the 2019-20 and future budgets. In particular it should:
- identify budget/service imbalances from 2017-18 and forecasts in 2018-19;
  - decide whether overspending is to be funded through extra budget or managed down by management action;
  - decide whether underspending can be maintained and reallocate budget accordingly;
  - introduce workforce planning to the budget setting process;
  - improve accountability for budget setting and delivery; and
  - strengthen budget management by holding budget holders to account and take early timely corrective action.

### What we found

- 38 We found that the Council has strengthened its budget planning processes. Both ongoing and emerging cost pressures are considered as part of the MTFS and budget setting process. Cost pressure funding is then built into the budget, with base budgets adjusted as necessary.
- 39 For example, as part of the budget setting process for 2018-19 and 2019-20 the Council reviewed previous years' cost pressures and overspends to identify those likely to reoccur. It then considered whether these should be managed within existing budgets or awarded a cost pressure. As a result of this process, the Council built an additional £2.4 million into the base budget for 2018-19 and £1.4

million for 2019-20. Other cost pressures were managed through actions to reduce overspends or the use of budget virements from underspending budgets.

- 40 The Council is taking steps to improve its financial management and officers commented that there has been a recent shift in the financial culture of the organisation. Work is ongoing to restructure the Central Finance function to a business partner model and move away from the perception that budget management is a Finance responsibility. To support this, Corporate Leadership Team job descriptions now explicitly reference financial management responsibilities, and performance against budget targets forms part of the appraisal process for senior leaders.
- 41 In addition, the Council now regularly holds budget holders to account as part of strengthened arrangements to monitor and manage in-year cost pressures. For all cost pressures and overspends over £15,000, budget holders must develop action plans; these are challenged by Chief Officers and Executive Members at quarterly Cost Pressure Subgroup meetings. Cost pressures and mitigating actions are also reported in quarterly budget monitoring reports to members.
- 42 The Council recognises the need for training and systems access for budget holders and has plans to develop a financial competencies framework. This will help equip all managers and financial staff with the necessary skills. Further consideration of workforce planning and development will take place during 2020 as the Council develops its new Organisational Development Strategy.
- 43 The Strategic Transformation Team is currently supporting the Council's Bridging the Gap programme. The Council has developed wrap around teams to work on the strategic reviews that underline the programme. These multi-disciplinary teams include officers with relevant skillsets from across the Council, including the Strategic Transformation Team.
- 44 The Council recently worked with CIPFA to help identify further ways to strengthen its financial management arrangements.
- 45 Members receive quarterly budget monitoring reports, including updates on planned savings, providing them with the opportunity to scrutinise performance. Savings that are forecast to be delayed or unachieved are subject to the same monitoring and challenge process as overspends and cost pressures described in paragraph 41 above. Although the Council has a good track record of delivering its planned savings – 91% in 2018-19 and 97% forecast for 2019-20 – the transformational approach of the Bridging the Gap programme is identifying long-term savings opportunities as well as potential cost avoidance and new revenue streams. This will provide a more sustainable approach and reduce the Council's reliance on identifying annual savings.



## Although levels of useable reserves remain low, the Council has taken proactive steps to improve its position and the MTF5 demonstrates an ongoing commitment to strengthen the General Reserve

### 2018 findings and proposal for improvement

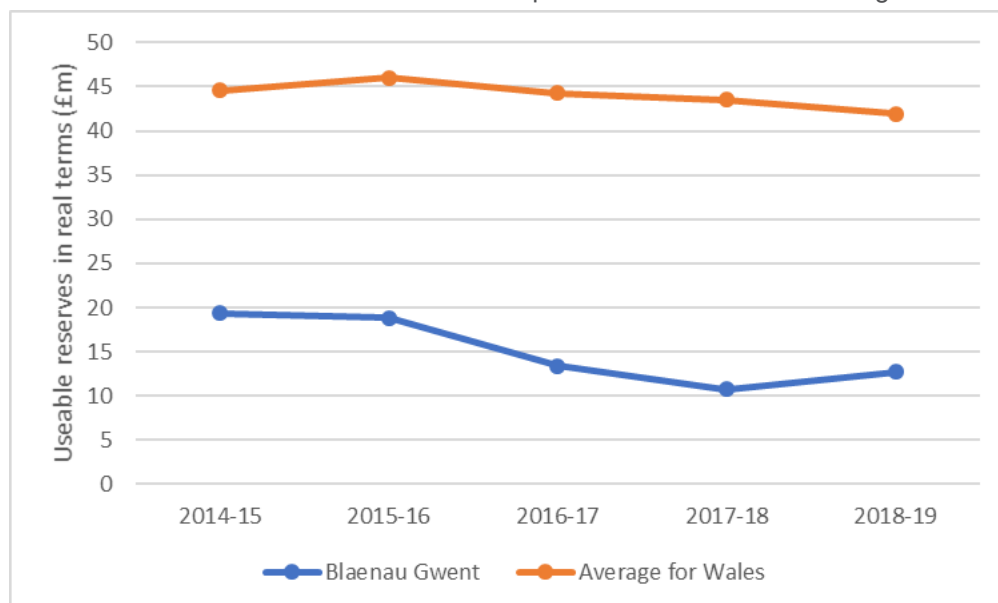
- 46 Our 2018 review found that the Council had a General Reserve Fund of 5% of actual net revenue (as reported in the latest Revenue Outturn return). This was above its minimum target level of 4% but the Council recognised that unforeseen budget pressures could threaten this position going forward.
- 47 As a result we made a proposal for improvement that the Council should maintain careful budgetary controls to ensure unforeseen budget pressures do not result in the General Reserve reducing below its minimum target level.

### What we found

- 48 We found that the Council recognises the need to strengthen its reserves position and is proactive in taking opportunities to increase its General Reserve.
- 49 To this end, the Council increased its general reserve by £0.41 million to £5.89 million at the end of 2018-19 and its total useable reserves to £11.7 million.
- Exhibit 3** below sets out the recent improvement in the Council's useable reserves levels after a period of sustained depletion.

### Exhibit 8: levels of useable reserves between 2014-15 and 2018-19<sup>2</sup>

This exhibit shows how the Council's levels of useable reserves have changed in real terms between 2014-15 and 2018-19 in comparison with the Wales average.



<sup>2</sup> Source: Stats Wales RO data

- 50 The Council has no plans to use the General Reserve to fund budget pressures in 2019-20 and expects to add a further £0.25 million to the Reserve in year.
- 51 The MTFS suggests that the Council has no plans to use the General Reserve to balance budgets over the life of the MTFS. It also includes a £0.2 million contribution to the General Reserve each year. Further to this, the Executive Committee recently approved a recommendation to transfer to reserves any excess savings achieved through the Bridging the Gap programme.

## **The Bridging the Gap programme is making effective use of data and further work is underway to improve the way the Council uses data**

### **2018 findings and proposal for improvement**

- 52 Our 2018 review found that the Council had lots of data available to it but lacked a culture that consistently used data constructively to proactively challenge, learn and drive improvement.
- 53 As a result we made a proposal for improvement that the Council should use data more effectively in managing finances and performance and in setting its budget to achieve and demonstrate value for money. In particular it should:
- review membership of external networks/professional organisations and ensure clear outputs that will benefit the Council's improvement agenda;
  - better embed data into its performance and financial management arrangements; and
  - use data more effectively in the budget setting process to identify value for money opportunities.

### **What we found**

- 54 We found that data plays a key role in the Bridging the Gap programme. The programme includes a dedicated strategic review on using data to deliver better services. However, at the time of our fieldwork this review was not yet underway.
- 55 The Council is also using data to inform a number of other Bridging The Gap workstreams and has developed wrap around, multi-disciplinary teams, including staff with data analysis skills, to support delivery of the work programme. This approach is helping embed a culture of data use throughout the Council.
- 56 There are several examples of the way the Council is using data to inform the Bridging the Gap reviews:
- the Income Maximisation workstream has analysed debtors against the ACORN consumer classification<sup>3</sup>. This indicated that there is a correlation between debtors and deprived areas of the county. In response, the Council is

<sup>3</sup> The ACORN classification analyses demographic data, social factors, population and consumer behaviour to provide an understanding of different types of people and their circumstances.

taking steps to help these residents maximise their income by advising them on potential benefits and signposting to further support.

- the project team working on the Third Party Expenditure review has analysed data to understand and categorise third party spend and identify opportunities to control costs and better align spend to the Council's strategic priorities.
- as part of the review of the CCG grant, the Council undertook a logic mapping exercise, using data to map the inputs, outputs and outcomes of the programmes the grant delivers. This helped identify potential duplication and efficiencies.

- 57 The Policy and Performance Team has also been working across the Council to improve data quality. For example, work is ongoing with the Revenues and Benefits team to understand and resolve previous errors with free school meal data. The team is also working with the Environment directorate to improve performance data. Officers we spoke to commented that data is now more widely used and valued throughout the Council.
- 58 The Council has not yet reviewed its membership of external networks and professional organisations.

# Appendix 1

## Proposals for Improvement: Supporting Financial Resilience Review, 2018

### Exhibit 4: proposals for improvement from the Auditor General for Wales' 2018 Supporting Financial Resilience Review.

#### Proposals for improvement

**P1** We propose that the Council should review its administration of council tax to ensure prompt and efficient collection. In particular it should:

- review its council tax collection arrangements with the aim of increasing in-year collection rates; and
- compare its council tax staffing costs with other Wales councils to understand the apparent cost variations and identify potential opportunities for cost savings.

**P2** We propose that the Council should manage grants strategically alongside other funding streams. In particular it should:

- better integrate the applications for grants into the budget setting process (where possible);
- maintain central records of potential and successful grant applications to support a strategic overview of this funding stream; and
- review the grants made by the Council to ensure they provide value for money.

**P3** We propose that the Council should provide robust challenge in the setting of fees and charges to ensure they support delivery of its strategic priorities. In particular:

- develop an income generation policy to support delivery of the Council's strategic priorities;
- Central Finance should issue clear instructions to managers about increases in fees and charges taking account of relevant external influences;
- services should comply with budget instructions in respect of increases in fees and charges;
- Central Finance should carry out robust checks to challenge and confirm compliance with budget instructions; and
- budgeted income should reflect agreed levels of fees and charges and anticipated activity levels.

## Proposals for improvement

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**P4** We propose that to deliver the 2018-19 budget the Council should respond constructively to 2017-18 budget imbalances, that may reoccur in 2018-19, utilising the skills of the Central Finance Team, Strategic Transformation team and budget holders. In particular the Council should:

- critically review and learn from the 2017 18 revenue budget overspends and underspends to identify reasons for imbalances for future year budgets;
  - take action to ensure weaknesses identified do not reoccur maximise the potential of the Strategic Transformation Team;
  - improve monitoring of savings projects and take clear corrective action to address anticipated under delivery and address the root causes;
  - review skills, capability and development needs of budget holders and provide training/support to meet them;
  - ensure Central Finance lead on and facilitate a robust financial culture throughout the organisation.
- 

**P5** We propose that in planning for the 2019-20 budget the Council should improve accountability throughout the organisation for the setting and delivery of the 2019-20 and future budgets. In particular it should:

- identify budget/service imbalances from 2017-18 and forecasts in 2018-19;
  - decide whether overspending is to be funded through extra budget or managed down by management action
  - decide whether underspending can be maintained and reallocate budget accordingly;
  - introduce workforce planning to the budget setting process;
  - improve accountability for budget setting and delivery;
  - strengthen budget management by holding budget holders to account and take early timely corrective action.
- 

**P6** We propose that the Council should maintain careful budgetary controls to ensure unforeseen budget pressures do not result in the General Reserve reducing below its minimum target level.

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**P7** We propose that the Council should use data more effectively in managing finances and performance and in setting its budget to achieve and demonstrate value for money. In particular it should:

- review membership of external networks/professional organisations and ensure clear outputs that will benefit the Council's improvement agenda;

## Proposals for improvement

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- better embed data into its performance and financial management arrangements; and
- use data more effectively in the budget setting process to identify value for money opportunities.





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



# Agenda Item 23

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Position Statement on the Council's CCTV system (April to August 2020)**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden, Chief Officer Resources (SIRO for CCTV)**  
**Clive Rogers, Head of Community Services**  
**Bernadette Elias, Head of Governance and Partnerships**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
Sept 2020	27.08.20	29.09.20			11.09.20	14.10.20		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To provide an update on the Council's CCTV system covering the period April to August 2020 (during the COVID-19 Pandemic).
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 A comprehensive position statement was provided on the Council's CCTV System to the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020. This report summarised the background of the transition to the new system, key information on CCTV system technical aspects and locations on camera equipment, and also initial performance information on the use of the system from 30 July 2019 to 15 January 2020.
  - 2.2 Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 consideration was given to the provision of the CCTV service with Corporate Leadership Team agreeing that it would continue with a limited restriction on access to footage for the most serious incidents. Furthermore, taking into consideration the national guidance for the pandemic response and in-line with staffing capacity and safety measures the operating of the system has mostly been carried out remotely by staff working from home, as opposed to through the CCTV Control Room at the Civic Centre.
  - 2.3 Gwent Police were fully engaged in the process outlined above, and new COVID-19 protocols were established for requesting and retrieving footage for lockdown and out of hours' arrangements.
  - 2.4 Technical support and interaction with the CCTV system providers, (IDS) during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period also witnessed some

challenges as a consequence of national restriction, e.g. system investigations, site visits, dealing repairs, accessing supporting buildings for resetting systems.

2.5 There continue to be 53 CCTV cameras installed on 33 specific posts in seven CCTV zone areas. These zones cover Ebbw Vale, Abertillery, Brynmawr, Tredegar, Cwm, Blaina and Llanhilleth train station. Each zone is legally compliant through Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) in-line with the expectation of the Surveillance Camera Commissioner. No changes have been made to the locations of the cameras during this period.

2.6 As part of the move to this CCTV system, four deployable cameras were purchased. These remain in the testing phase having not being deployed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report was supported by the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

#### 3.1 **Option One**

That the Executive considers and accepts the information provided in the position statement on the CCTV function during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### 3.2 **Option Two**

That the Executive considers and provides comment on the position statement on the CCTV function during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

4.1 The provision of a CCTV service is non-statutory function and not required under legislation, however the CCTV system is one of a range of tools the Council uses with its partners to tackle crime and disorder, in-line with the requirements of its Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) powers.

4.2 In utilising CCTV to tackle crime and disorder the Council is contributing to the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan Objective for Safe and Friendly Communities.

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.1 As of month five of 2020/21 the CCTV budget is underspent, as a consequence of reduced staffing costs. To be able to respond to the new working arrangements during the COVID-19 Pandemic additional IT equipment was procured to ensure appropriate access the CCTV Control Room from remote locations.

5.1.2 On-going consideration needs to be given to the efficient operation of the system with the budget being utilised for preventative maintenance including regular replacement of components such as recording media (hard drives), cameras, wireless transmission equipment, and ICT equipment such as server and PC's. Without this the system will degrade and become obsolete due to its location within the external environment and future technological and software changes.

## 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

### 5.2.1 **Legal Compliance**

There is risk associated with non-compliance of good practice guidance provided by the Surveillance Commissioners and GDPR requirements

This risk will be mitigated by the appropriate policies / strategies being in place ensuring compliance with legislation and best practice, which have been included into the appropriate forward work programmes for Council business for 20/21.

### 5.2.2 **Revenue Implications moving forward**

There is a risk that unforeseen revenue costs related to dealing with operation of the CCTV arrangements will exceed the agreed budget.

This will need to be kept under review and corrective action taken as appropriate as part of normal budget monitoring.

### 5.2.3 **Technical Issues**

During this period Technical Services have put in place weekly and monthly checks to monitor the system. When required the contractor (IDS) is immediately informed of any faults.

Technical Services continue to hold regular meetings with the contractor (IDS) to discuss the status of the system, any future remedial works required and what future improvements will need to be considered.

Due to the reduced data transfer rates resulting from removing the high cost rental fibre lines from the previous scheme, there are operational issues with retrieval in some instances of extremely large volume of video images when requested by Authorised Organisations such as the Police. Technical Services are currently working with SRS and BT Openreach to investigate options to increase the data speeds at the hub sites.

In terms of specific technical issues in the Blaina Zone, Technical Services are currently working with Western Power Distribution (WPD) and the Contractor (IDS) to investigate and restore the power to the CCTV Columns (previously supplied from old Council Office on the High Street).

Consideration will also be given to the option to install a new BT Openreach fibre line to improve transfer speeds and reliability. Technical Services are awaiting costs.

Technical Services are due to install Dynamic DNS on the CCTV system to allow checks and software maintenance to be carried out remotely.

### 5.3 **Legal**

5.3.1 The Council when operating a surveillance camera system needs to operate within the appropriate legislation e.g. Human Rights and Data Protection laws. The Surveillance Camera Commissioner provides guidance via the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice to support appropriate compliance. A crucial step to ensure that the Council is operating in-line with these expectations is the completion of Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for the CCTV cameras and supporting systems. All current DPIAs remain relevant and lawful with the 'pressing need' to capture CCTV images.

5.3.2 The Control Room where images captured by the system can be checked and transferred is restricted to authorised people. The Council has an obligation to guard against unauthorised use, access or disclosure. During COVID-19 the Control Room has only been accessed in-line with appropriate arrangements for accessing the Civic Centre (e.g. access on Tuesday and Thursday between 9am and 1pm). Both technical and operational access has been required during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

5.3.4 There is a requirement for the Council to regularly review the CCTV system to ensure it remains justified, with an expectation from the use of the DPIA process on an annual cycle. This process will be delayed to the Spring 2021 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

5.4.1 The Council's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) is the Chief Officer Resources, aligned to the responsibilities via the General Data Protections Regulations (GDPR).

5.4.2 The Council's Technical Services Team has project managed the tendering, design, and implementation of the Council's CCTV's system, and continue to provide the technical support required during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

5.4.3 The Policy Team (Community Safety) continue to provide policy support to ensure that the Council is taking into consideration the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice, and has continued to provide operational support to enable the transfer of imagery to responsible authorities such as Gwent Police during the COVID-19 pandemic (March to August 2020) handling all enquiries for CCTV evidence packets to Gwent Police, whilst offering 24/7 cover for any major emergency incidents.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

- 6.1.1 The CCTV system has remained operational and has been actively providing high quality digital imagery to appropriate responsible authorities, such as Gwent Police, to aid the detection and prevention of crime and disorder across the local areas during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- 6.1.2 Following the installation of the system there continues to be a number of technical issues with operational delivery. The technical and external issues have included security and stability of the local low voltage power supplies, use of existing columns and their condition, local wireless interference, outages in broadband lines, vandalism, adverse weather conditions and premature failure of equipment. The issues may continue into the foreseeable future, and as noted above Technical Services are implementing procedures to regularly monitor the system status and undertaking remedial works. The result of these issues has been and may continue to be that the transmission and recording of images has been and maybe interrupted at some periods.
- 6.1.3 Since 1 April 2020, in-line with the COVID-19 Pandemic arrangements with Gwent Police, there have been 26 incidents where CCTV footage was requested; 1 from a member of the public, 1 from a local business and 24 requests from the Police. It is noted that the Police did not follow up with details in relation to 2 of these initial incident enquiries.
- 6.1.4 11 Evidence Packets were produced to support Police enquiries and investigations, which include: Assault / Threat (3), Burglary/Attempt Burglary (2), Hate/Racial Crime (2), Knife (1), Arson (1), Criminal Damage (1), and Road Traffic Collision (1).
- 6.1.5 Of the 24 Incidents, there were 11 where no CCTV evidence was provided, the reasons include:
- No BGCBC CCTV in the area: 4
  - 'Incident not deemed 'serious enough' in-line with agreed COVID-19 arrangements at the time: 2
  - Operational issues with cameras or system: 1
  - Incident beyond the view of available CCTV: 1
  - No evidence found on CCTV footage: 1
  - Matter resolved via other means: 1
  - Discussions with Police ongoing: 1
- 6.1.6 **Compliance update**  
The cameras that are recording in each of the zones have been subject to the necessary DPIAs and have been approved and signed off by the Council's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO).
- 6.1.7 The CCTV Policy and Operating Framework for the Council is being revised in-line with the new GDPR Privacy Commissioner expectation.

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

The provision of CCTV is in place to assist with the prevention and detection of crime and disorder. The DPIA process described above ensures that appropriate consideration is given to the pressing need for surveillance to ensure that the Council is lawfully breaching people's rights under relevant legislation such as human rights and data protection.

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

As part of the implementation of the CCTV system, there was extensive involvement with Gwent Police who also represented views from town centres traders. This dialogue included discussions on the camera positions to identify overlaps and obsolete positions. Gwent Police were fully engaged in the service provision arrangements for CCTV imagery requests during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

The new CCTV system utilises up-to-date hi-tech equipment and software which will provide a long-term CCTV solution, as long as there is appropriate investment in the running, upkeep and maintenance of the overall system. An annual review process will support this process, and allow for forward planning and technological advancement to be regularly considered.

The CCTV Policy and Operating Framework for the Council is being revised in-line with the new GDPR Privacy Commissioner expectation.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The CCTV system provides a service which is focused on reactively providing evidence to police in relation to crime and disorder which will have already occurred.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

There has been extensive collaboration with Gwent Police in relation to the implementation of the CCTV system, and this with appropriate protocol changes implemented for interactions during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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

The new policy and strategy framework for CCTV for the Council, taking into account the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice, will look to take wider consideration of CCTV as a whole, which is utilised by the Council.

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

As this is a progress report there is no requirement to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment. Equality Issues are considered as part of the operational delivery of the service.

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

7.1 The Surveillance Camera Code of Practice outlines considerations for monitoring arrangements for CCTV systems noting there should be

effective review and audit mechanisms. This will inform the Council's new CCTV Policy and Operating Framework.

7.2 The Council's SIRO has established an officer group to monitor the arrangements to ensure compliance, holding one meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic in July 2020. Quarterly meetings have been diarised for the future.

7.3 An annual monitoring report will form part of the Committee's forward work programme for 2021.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- N/A

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# Agenda Item 24

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Waste and Recycling Performance 2019-20**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. J. Wilkins Executive Member, Environment**

Report Submitted by: **Clive Rogers, Head of Community Services  
Matthew Stent, Team Manager Neighbourhood 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)
26/08/20	27/08/20	29.09.20			21/09/20	14/10/20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

To provide the Members of the Executive Committee with an update of waste and recycling performance outcomes for 2019-20.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 The report summarises the waste and recycling performance data for 2019-20 **[APPENDIX 1]**. In 2018/19 we exceeded the WG statutory recycling target of 58% for the first time ever [achieving 59.26%], this year, we have built on that success and exceeded the new [higher] target of 64%, attaining 65.31%. This has been achieved through the hard work and dedication of the Waste Team [officers, wardens and the frontline staff], in partnership with WRAP and with support from the Communications Team, Performance Team, Senior Management, The Elected Leadership and most importantly, the residents of Blaenau Gwent. This year on year success has seen us move from 22nd in 2017/18 to 11th in 2019/20 when compared to all other Welsh Local Authority's, this is as a direct result of the significant improvement we have accomplished in the collection of dry recycling materials at the kerbside.

2.2 All local authorities are required to report their waste data to the Welsh Government. The data reported is for all the waste which the Local Authority collects, known as municipal waste.

2.3 Waste data is collected via various methods (Contract monitoring, weighbridge tickets) on a monthly basis and is collated and validated internally by the Corporate Performance Team. All waste is reported where possible until it has reached a compliant final destination through the various contractors and processes required.

2.4 Waste data is reported to Welsh Government quarterly via Waste Data Flow. Waste Data Flow is the web based system for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government.

2.5 Waste Data Flow is designed for local authorities:

- to allow faster and more accurate data collection of municipal waste statistics, more regularly and efficiently;
- to enhance their local data management for reporting and strategic planning purposes; and
- to offer them streamlined access to performance benchmarking with other authorities.

2.6 Waste Data Flow allows the Welsh Government:

- to monitor progress towards national and local targets;
- to produce National Statistics on municipal waste; and
- to provide an evidence base to guide government policy.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report was presented to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and Members supported Option 1.

3.2 Option 1 to accept the information in the report [**Preferred option**].

3.3 Option 2 to consider the information contained within the report and provide challenge and/or further action for consideration to make improvements.

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

### **Corporate Plan Priorities**

The improvement of waste and recycling performance supports the Council Priority '*Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities*' in particular '*to increase rates of recycling to enable us to achieve national targets*'.

### **Statutory Responsibilities**

Local Authorities in Wales have been set statutory recycling targets through the Wales Waste Measure 2010, and failure to meet the targets will result in a financial penalty from Welsh Government.

### **Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

Waste and recycling services support the Well-being objective '*Blaenau Gwent wants to look after and protect its natural environments*' by using our resources in a fair and sustainable way.

## 5. **Implications Against Each option**

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

The Local Authority may continue to face financial penalties from the Welsh Government if it fails to achieve the statutory recycling targets. These are currently £200 per tonne below the recycling tonnage required to achieve the target, 64% for 2019-20, rising to 70% in 2024-25.

The Local Authority currently pays for the treatment and disposal of black bag waste. As residents recycle more of their waste, the money spent on waste

treatment and disposal will reduce and the income gained from the sale of recyclate may increase. It should be noted that any savings achieved against black bag disposal have been utilised to pay for the additional resources required to continue with the side waste enforcement at kerbside, the black bag sorting at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and the introduction of the “Keeping up with the Jones’s” behaviour change campaign.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

There is a risk that the Local Authority will continue to face financial penalties from the Welsh Government if it fails to achieve the statutory recycling targets.

Failure to ensure that there is robust monitoring of Council services carries with it a number of significant risks:

- Undetected and unaddressed decline in service performance and the quality of provision; and
- Negative impact on the reputation of the Council.

Regular monitoring of waste and recycling performance is a key element in ensuring that the Council knows its services well and is able to support and intervene appropriately.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no Human Resources issues associated with this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

In direct comparison with 2018/19 data, 2019/20 data shows significant improvement with an increase of 6.03 percentage points. The total municipal waste figure has increased by 1199.79 tonnes, this increase is due to an increase in reuse, recycling and composting tonnages and a reduction of residual tonnage.

6.1.1 **Recycling Targets**

Overall there has been an increase in Blaenau Gwent’s recycling rate in 2019/20 and more noticeably since the introduction of side waste enforcement and black bag sorting at the HWRC.

	2018/19	2019/20
Quarter 1	56.58%	62.24%
Quarter 2	62.78%	64.95%
Quarter 3	58.89%	69.69%
Quarter 4	59.22%	63.66%
<b>Annual</b>	<b>59.26%</b>	<b>65.31%</b>

### 6.1.2 **Residual Waste**

There has been a significant decrease in residual waste collected at the kerbside and the HWRC in 2019/20.

#### **Kerbside**

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Quarter 1	2953.002	2436.66
Quarter 2	2431.310	2449.503
Quarter 3	2653.383	2424.583
Quarter 4	2714.096	2488.803
<b>Annual</b>	<b>10751.791</b>	<b>9799.549</b>

In comparison there has been a reduction of 952.242 tonnes (8.86%) of residual waste collected at the kerbside in 2019/20.

#### **HWRC (New Vale)**

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Quarter 1	642.771	215.013
Quarter 2	149.621	211.025
Quarter 3	129.424	180.445
Quarter 4	149.475	176.708
<b>Annual</b>	<b>1071.291</b>	<b>783.191</b>

In comparison there has been a reduction of 288.10 tonnes (26.89%) of residual waste from New Vale HWRC in 2019/20.

#### **Composting Recycling**

There has been an increase in food and garden waste collected at the kerbside in 2019/20.

#### **Food**

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Quarter 1	630.78	747.14
Quarter 2	691.66	737.82
Quarter 3	752.01	846.95
Quarter 4	783.98	893.54
<b>Annual</b>	<b>2858.43</b>	<b>3225.45</b>

In comparison there has been an increase of 367.02 tonnes (12.84%) of food waste collected in 2019/20.

### **Garden Waste**

	2018/19	2019/20
Quarter 1	621.661	593.163
Quarter 2	523.48	756.564
Quarter 3	293.58	241.02
Quarter 4	109.921	128.40
<b>Annual</b>	<b>1548.642</b>	<b>1719.147</b>

In comparison there has been an increase of 170.505 tonnes (11.01%) of garden waste collected in 2019/20.

#### 6.1.3

### **Dry Recycling**

There has been an increase in kerbside dry recycling, noticeably a significant increase in the tonnages of absorbent hygiene products (AHP) collected in 2019/20.

### **Kerbside**

	2018/19	2019/20
Quarter 1	1053.61	1184.04
Quarter 2	1252.02	1246.63
Quarter 3	1173.70	1089.918
Quarter 4	1475.10	1569.82
<b>Annual</b>	<b>4954.43</b>	<b>5090.408</b>

In comparison there has been an increase of 135.978 tonnes (2.74%) of dry recycling collected at the kerbside in 2019/20.

### **Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP)**

	2018/19	2019/20
Quarter 1	91.90	129.32
Quarter 2	113.28	146.84
Quarter 3	125.40	137.68
Quarter 4	125.26	139.40
<b>Annual</b>	<b>455.84</b>	<b>553.24</b>

In comparison there has been an increase of 97.4 tonnes (21.37%) of absorbent hygiene products (AHP) collected at the kerbside in 2019/20.

### **HWRC (Recycling)**

	2018/19	2019/20
Quarter 1	1217.727	1167.869
Quarter 2	1035.93	1270.199
Quarter 3	754.212	2406.361
Quarter 4	861.889	816.639
<b>Annual</b>	<b>3869.76</b>	<b>5661.068</b>

In comparison there has been an increase of 1791.31 tonnes (46.29%) of dry recycling from the HWRC.

### **HWRC (Reuse)**

	2018/19	2019/20
Quarter 1	16.110	26.628
Quarter 2	17.230	28.553
Quarter 3	26.952	21.901
Quarter 4	22.274	20.532
<b>Annual</b>	<b>82.566</b>	<b>97.614</b>

In comparison there has been an increase of 15.048 tonnes (18.23%) of reuse from the HWRC.

#### 6.1.4 **Welsh Local Authority Comparison**

##### **2018/19 Overall**

##### **2019/20 Overall**

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1	Isle of Anglesey CC	69.86%	1	Pembrokeshire	71.65%
2	Bridgend CBC	69.39%	2	Ceredigion	71.57%
3	Flintshire County Council	68.73%	3	Vale of Glamorgan	70.35%
4	Vale of Glamorgan	67.09%	4	Wrexham	69.62%
5	Wrexham CBC	65.73%	5	Conwy	69.32%
6	Caerphilly CBC	65.08%	6	Isle of Anglesey	68.00%
7	Conwy CBC	64.92%	7	Bridgend	67.58%
8	Denbighshire CC	64.28%	8	Newport	66.36%
9	Monmouthshire CC	63.37%	9	Flintshire	65.58%
10	City & County of Swansea	62.88%	10	Monmouthshire	65.57%
11	Gwynedd Council	62.31%	11	<b>Blaenau Gwent CBC</b>	<b>65.31%</b>
12	Pembrokeshire CC	61.96%	12	Merthyr Tydfil	64.99%
13	Merthyr Tydfil CBC	61.59%	13	Swansea	64.97%
14	Powys County Council	61.45%	14	Rhondda Cynon Taff	64.78%
15	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	61.00%	15	Denbighshire	64.76%
16	Neath Port Talbot CBC	60.81%	16	Gwynedd	64.74%
17	Torfaen CBC	60.53%	17	Carmarthenshire	64.66%
18	Ceredigion CC	60.34%	18	Torfaen	64.40%
19	<b>Blaenau Gwent CBC</b>	<b>59.28%</b>	19	Powys	63.05%
20	Cardiff County Council	59.19%	20	Caerphilly	62.51%
21	Newport City Council	58.95%	21	Neath Port Talbot	61.74%
22	Carmarthenshire CC	58.95%	22	Cardiff	58.14%

## 6.1.5 2018/19 Dry Recycling Only

## 2019/20 Dry Recycling Only

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1	Caerphilly CBC	49.93%	1	Ceredigion	50.72%
2	Bridgend CBC	45.96%	2	Caerphilly	49.75%
3	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	45.01%	3	Blaenau Gwent	49.42%
4	Neath Port Talbot CBC	44.86%	4	Rhondda Cynon Taff	49.30%
5	Blaenau Gwent CBC	43.78%	5	Wrexham	49.06%
6	Merthyr Tydfil CBC	43.47%	6	Merthyr Tydfil	47.97%
7	Vale of Glamorgan	42.79%	7	Newport	46.47%
8	Isle of Anglesey CC	42.07%	8	Pembrokeshire	45.74%
9	Torfaen CBC	42.07%	9	Bridgend	45.05%
10	Gwynedd Council	41.84%	10	Torfaen	44.82%
11	Carmarthenshire CC	41.61%	11	Neath Port Talbot	44.27%
12	Newport City Council	41.29%	12	Vale of Glamorgan	44.13%
13	City & County of Swansea	41.28%	13	Carmarthenshire	44.13%
14	Monmouthshire CC	40.06%	14	Gwynedd	43.93%
15	Ceredigion CC	40.05%	15	Flintshire	42.37%
16	Pembrokeshire CC	40.03%	16	Swansea	42.11%
17	Denbighshire CCC	39.57%	17	Conwy	41.75%
18	Cardiff County Council	38.96%	18	Monmouthshire	40.43%
19	Flintshire County Council	36.64%	19	Denbighshire	40.37%
20	Conwy CBC	36.62%	20	Isle of Anglesey	39.55%
21	Powys County Council	34.42%	21	Powys	38.66%
22	Wrexham CBC	31.63%	22	Cardiff	37.55%

## 6.1.6 2018/19 Composting Only

## 2019/20 Composting Only

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1	Isle of Anglesey CC	27.78%	1	Isle of Anglesey	28.43%
2	Conwy CBC	27.73%	2	Conwy	26.77%
3	Powys County Council	24.49%	3	Vale of Glamorgan	25.44%
4	Vale of Glamorgan	23.83%	4	Pembrokeshire	25.13%
5	Denbighshire CC	23.79%	5	Monmouthshire	24.74%
6	Monmouthshire CC	22.98%	6	Denbighshire	23.45%
7	City & County of Swansea	21.31%	7	Swansea	22.63%
8	Pembrokeshire CC	21.26%	8	Flintshire	22.03%
9	Bridgend CBC	20.87%	9	Powys	21.51%
10	Gwynedd Council	20.33%	10	Bridgend	21.02%
11	Cardiff County Council	20.00%	11	Ceredigion	20.84%
12	Wrexham CBC	17.99%	12	Gwynedd	20.66%
13	Flintshire County Council	17.76%	13	Cardiff	20.24%
14	Torfaen CBC	17.45%	14	Carmarthenshire	20.12%
15	Merthyr Tydfil CBC	17.11%	15	Wrexham	19.89%
16	Carmarthenshire C	16.99%	16	Newport	18.74%
17	Newport City Council	16.70%	17	Torfaen	18.41%
18	Neath Port Talbot CBC	15.71%	18	Neath Port Talbot	17.22%
19	Ceredigion CC	15.70%	19	Merthyr Tydfil	16.09%
20	Blaenau Gwent CBC	15.17%	20	Blaenau Gwent	15.55%
21	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	15.01%	21	Rhondda Cynon Taff	14.24%
22	Caerphilly CBC	14.89%	22	Caerphilly	12.56%

- 6.1.7 It is recognised that there is a discrepancy between the decrease in the number of tonnes of residual waste collected and the increase in the number of tonnes of recycling collected. There are a number of possible reasons for this including waste reduction activity in the household and waste transferring across the border to other HWRCs. It should be noted that many of our neighbouring local authorities either operate black bag sorting operations or various methods of residency checks at their HWRCs. As a result, this may drive Blaenau Gwent residents and tonnages back to the borough.
- 6.1.9 The statutory recycling target for all Welsh local authorities is set at 64% for the next 4 years. **The efforts of the residents of Blaenau Gwent have been instrumental in our improved recycling performance**, therefore, the continued support of residents and businesses is required to continue to reduce the amount of non-recyclable waste sent for disposal and increase the amount recycled in Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**  
Increased involvement from our communities as residents recycle in line with service requirements to achieve national targets.
- 6.3 **Involvement** (*consultation, engagement, participation*)  
Through the public engagement sessions, the public have been consulted and their views have been sought regarding the impact of the side waste enforcement policy.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term** (*forward planning*)  
In line with the Councils agreed Waste Management and Recycling Strategy 2018-2025, we will continue to seek to identify actions needed to ensure that not only are fines avoided but crucially that service users and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the aims of the service, the actual services to be provided by the Council, the education and engagement activities it can undertake to promote these, the Council's future plans to meet its aspirations and statutory requirements and how it will work together with residents, partners and neighbours to meet wider goals and agendas.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**  
Improved waste management at a local and national level can help reduce our Ecological footprint, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impact, therefore preventing problems from getting worse.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**  
Waste Services continue to receive strategic, technical and financial support from Welsh Government and Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) through the Collaborative Change Programme to further develop and improve the service to achieve future targets. WRAP and Welsh Government support the implementation of side waste restrictions and behaviour change campaigns.



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

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

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The performance of the waste and recycling service will be monitored by the service on a monthly basis, including, but not limited to:

- Changes in residual waste tonnage collected;
- Changes in tonnage of recyclables and food waste collected;
- Recycling performance;
- Financial position;
- Number of residents presenting side waste;
- Number of residents issued with Section 46 notice;
- Number of residents issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice; and
- Survey results.

Highlight reports on progress will be provided through the internal CCP Board Meetings.

8. **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- *Waste & recycling Performance Annual Report 2019/20 [Appendix 1]*

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**ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION**  
**WASTE & RECYCLING**  
**PERFORMANCE REPORT**  
**ANNUAL – 2019/20**

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## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & TRENDS

Local Authorities within Wales have been set statutory recycling targets of 64% by 2019/20 and 70% by 2024/25. Failure to meet these targets may result in Blaenau Gwent being issued a fine from Welsh Government at the rate of £200 per tonne for every tonne reported below the target level.

### PAM/030 – Percentage of waste, reused, recycled or composted

**Please note:** The following indicators are not the final version and may change following validation by Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Dry Reuse	28.792	31.51	24.12	22.73	107.14
Dry Recycling	3260.497	3565.61	4902.86	3710.74	15439.53
Composting	1321.63	1480.61	1070.80	984.15	4857.20
TMW	7408.71	7818.02	8606.35	7410.80	31243.87
Dry Reuse %	0.39%	0.40%	0.28%	0.31%	0.34%
Dry Recycling %	44.01%	45.61%	56.97%	50.07%	49.42%
Composting %	17.84%	18.94%	12.44%	13.28%	15.55%
<b>Recycling Rate</b>	<b>62.24%</b>	<b>64.95%</b>	<b>69.69%</b>	<b>63.66%</b>	<b>65.31%</b>
Wales Average	67.27%	67.31%	64.72%	63.87%	65.89%

Improvements have been made during 19-20, the recycling rate this year has increased by 6.03 percentage points (subject to NRW validation). The Wales average has also increased by 2.68 percentage points.

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Dry Reuse	98.91	107.14	↑	8.23
Dry Recycling	13153.51	15439.53	↑	2286.02
Composting	4557.12	4857.20	↑	300.08
TMW	30044.08	31243.87	↑	1199.79
Dry Reuse %	0.33%	0.34%	↑	0.01%
Dry Recycling %	43.78%	49.42%	↑	5.64%
Composting %	15.17%	15.55%	↑	0.38%
<b>Recycling Rate</b>	<b>59.28%</b>	<b>65.31%</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>6.03%</b>

The annual comparison shows significant improvement with an increase of 6.03 percentage points. The total municipal waste figure has increased by 1199.79 tonnes, this increase is due to an increase in reuse, recycling and composting tonnages and a reduction of residual tonnage.

### PAM/043 – Kilograms of residual waste generated per person

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
<b>Total residual waste</b>	2797.791	2740.29	2608.57	2693.18	10839.83
<b>BGCBC Population*</b>	69374	69374	69374	69374	69374
<b>Kg per person</b>	40.33	39.50	37.60	38.82	156.25

\*Sourced from mid-year population projections (ONS)

19/20 data shows that the residual waste generated has reduced by 1394.71 tonnes and a reduction of 19.94kg per person when compared to 18/19.

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
<b>Total Residual Waste</b>	12234.54	10839.83	↓	1394.71
<b>BGCBC Population*</b>	69433	69374	↓	59
<b>Kg per person</b>	176.21	156.25	↓	19.94

### Percentage of waste sent to landfill

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
<b>Total Landfilled</b>	11.37	47.90	25.52	17.64	102.44
<b>Total Municipal Waste</b>	7,408.71	7,818.02	8,606.35	7,410.80	31,243.87
<b>Landfill Rate</b>	0.2%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%

There has been a decrease of 684.83 tonnes landfilled when compared to 18/19.

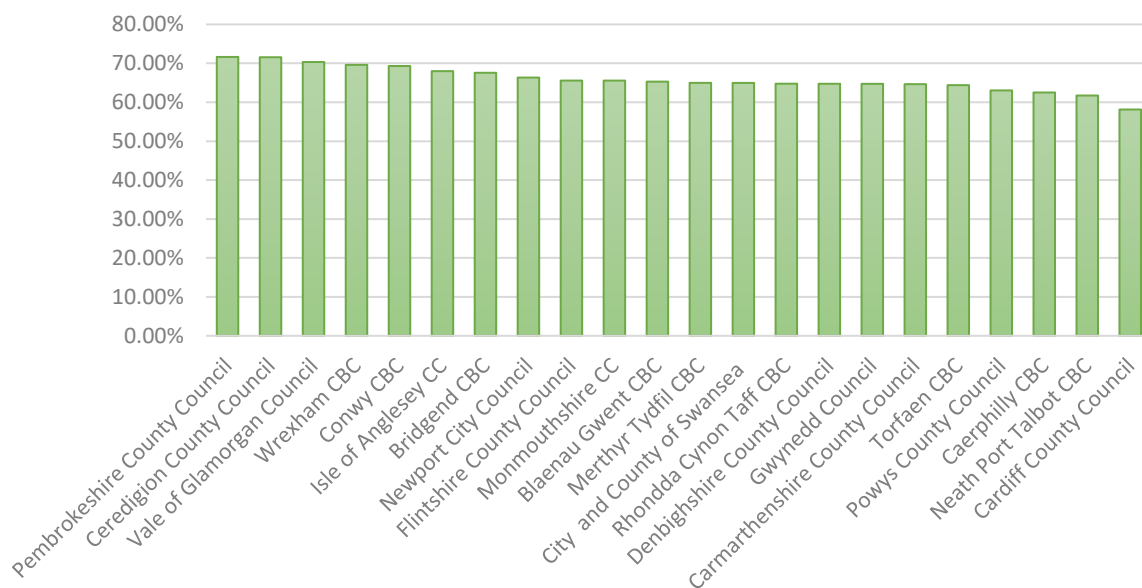
	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
<b>Total Landfilled</b>	787.27	102.44	↓	684.83
<b>Total Municipal Waste</b>	30046.94	31243.87	↑	1196.93
<b>Landfill Rate</b>	2.6%	0.3%	↓	2.3

## Local Authority Comparison

Annual – 2019/20

	Local Authority	Recycling Rate (%)
1	Pembrokeshire	71.65%
2	Ceredigion	71.57%
3	Vale of Glamorgan	70.35%
4	Wrexham	69.62%
5	Conwy	69.32%
6	Isle of Anglesey	68.00%
7	Bridgend	67.58%
8	Newport	66.36%
9	Flintshire	65.58%
10	Monmouthshire	65.57%
11	Blaenau Gwent	65.31%
12	Merthyr Tydfil	64.99%
13	Swansea	64.97%
14	Rhondda Cynon Taff	64.78%
15	Denbighshire	64.76%
16	Gwynedd	64.74%
17	Carmarthenshire	64.66%
18	Torfaen	64.40%
19	Powys	63.05%
20	Caerphilly	62.51%
21	Neath Port Talbot	61.74%
22	Cardiff	58.14%

19-20 Annual Recycling Rate



## Local Authority Comparison

### Dry Recycling Only

	Local Authority	Recycling Rate (%)
1	Ceredigion	50.72%
2	Caerphilly	49.75%
3	<b>Blaenau Gwent</b>	<b>49.42%</b>
4	Rhondda Cynon Taff	49.30%
5	Wrexham	49.06%
6	Merthyr Tydfil	47.97%
7	Newport	46.47%
8	Pembrokeshire	45.74%
9	Bridgend	45.05%
10	Torfaen	44.82%
11	Neath Port Talbot	44.27%
12	Vale of Glamorgan	44.13%
13	Carmarthenshire	44.13%
14	Gwynedd	43.93%
15	Flintshire	42.37%
16	Swansea	42.11%
17	Conwy	41.75%
18	Monmouthshire	40.43%
19	Denbighshire	40.37%
20	Isle of Anglesey	39.55%
21	Powys	38.66%
22	Cardiff	37.55%

Blaenau Gwent is ranked 3rd out of the 22 local authorities when comparing dry recycling only across Wales for 19/20.

### Composting Only

	Local Authority	Recycling Rate (%)
1	Isle of Anglesey	28.43%
2	Conwy	26.77%
3	Vale of Glamorgan	25.44%
4	Pembrokeshire	25.13%
5	Monmouthshire	24.74%
6	Denbighshire	23.45%
7	Swansea	22.63%
8	Flintshire	22.03%
9	Powys	21.51%
10	Bridgend	21.02%
11	Ceredigion	20.84%
12	Gwynedd	20.66%
13	Cardiff	20.24%
14	Carmarthenshire	20.12%
15	Wrexham	19.89%
16	Newport	18.74%
17	Torfaen	18.41%
18	Neath Port Talbot	17.22%
19	Merthyr Tydfil	16.09%
20	<b>Blaenau Gwent</b>	<b>15.55%</b>
21	Rhondda Cynon Taff	14.24%
22	Caerphilly	12.56%

Blaenau Gwent is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> out of the 22 Local Authorities when comparing Composting only across Wales for 19/20.



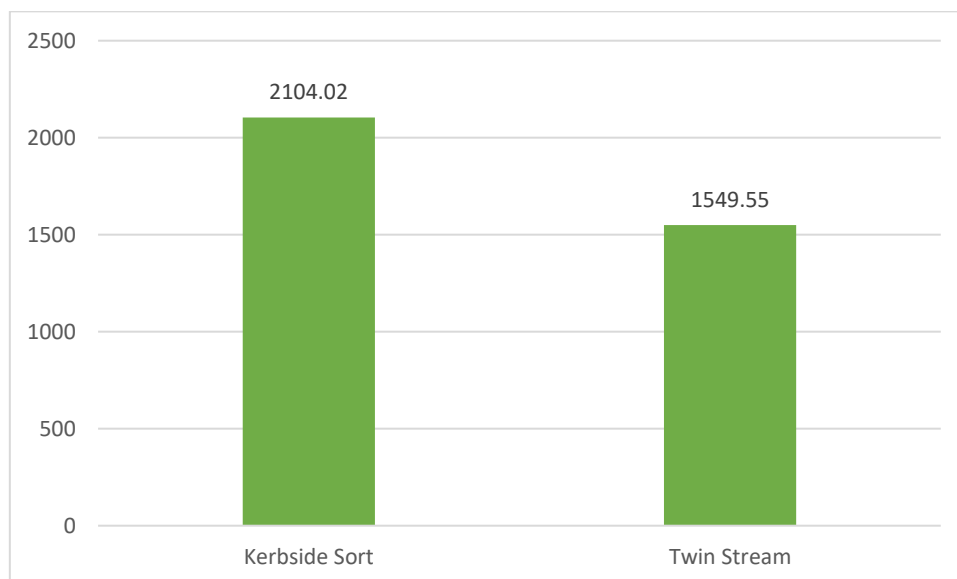
## Carbon Efficiency Comparison

A WRAP issued report entitled “The Climate Change impacts of Recycling Services in Wales” documented the increased carbon benefit of a kerbside sort collection service when compared to a Twin Stream (Co-mingled) collection service.

The report produced the following assumptions;

- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Kerbside Sort = 2569 tonnes CO2e Carbon benefit
- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Twin Stream = 1892 tonnes CO2e Carbon benefit

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Collected recycling tonnage	1902.80	1959.01	1900.31	2427.90	8190.02
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Kerbside Sort	488.83	503.27	488.19	623.73	2104.02
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Twin Stream	360.01	370.64	359.54	459.36	1549.55
Difference	128.82	132.62	128.65	164.37	554.46



## Collected Material Data Analysis

In October 2015, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council made a service change which included moving to a weekly kerbside sort recycling collection and a three-weekly residual collection.

A dedicated weekly Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) was also introduced in January 2017, which required residents to subscribe to the service.

Residual side waste enforcement and a strict black bag sorting policy at the HWRC were introduced during June 2018 to encourage residents to recycle more of their waste.

Starting in September 2019 the “Keeping up with the Jones’s” campaign is currently being rolled out across the borough to encourage residents to recycle more of their waste.

## Residual Waste

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Kerbside	2436.66	2449.503	2424.583	2488.803	9799.549
HWRC	215.013	211.025	180.445	176.708	783.191
Cleansing	161.289	173.467	174.437	190.545	699.738
Commercial	150.045	150.14	149.677	144.408	594.270
Total	2963.007	2984.135	2929.142	3000.464	11876.748

Residual waste collected in 19/20 when compared to 18/19 is as follows

- Kerbside Residual = 952.242 tonnes decrease (8.86%)
- HWRC Residual = 288.10 tonnes decrease (26.89%)
- Cleansing Residual = 35.854 tonnes increase (5.40%)
- Commercial Residual = 67.761 tonnes decrease (10.24%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Kerbside	10751.791	9799.549	↓	952.242
HWRC	1071.291	783.191	↓	288.10
Cleansing	663.884	699.738	↑	35.854
Commercial	662.031	594.270	↓	67.761
Total	13148.997	11876.748	↓	1272.25

## Kerbside Recycling

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Paper	181.36	214.08	217.51	228.680	841.630
Cardboard	280.16	314.84	331.16	487.800	1413.960
Mixed Glass	365.64	375.44	282.84	514.540	1538.460
Mixed Plastics	217.52	215.52	177.06	178.620	788.720
Steel Cans	68.78	67.27	25.86	80.720	242.630
Aluminium Cans	52.12	45.40	42.188	61.880	201.588
Aerosols	0.00	5.54	7.90	9.620	23.060
Small Domestic Apps	16.26	5.54	3.16	5.740	30.700
Textiles	2.20	3.00	2.24	2.220	9.660
<b>Total</b>	<b>1184.04</b>	<b>1246.63</b>	<b>1089.918</b>	<b>1569.82</b>	<b>5090.408</b>

Kerbside recycling in 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 135.978 tonnes (2.74%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Paper	916.060	841.630	↓	74.43
Cardboard	1276.850	1413.960	↑	137.11
Mixed Glass	1452.520	1538.460	↑	85.94
Mixed Plastics	803.300	788.720	↓	14.58
Steel Cans	281.920	242.630	↓	39.29
Aluminium Cans	182.360	201.588	↑	19.228
Aerosols	0.00	23.060	↑	23.06
Small Domestic Apps	5.180	30.700	↑	25.52
Textiles	16.680	9.660	↓	7.02
Mixed Cans & Plastics	19.56	0.00	↓	19.56
				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4954.43</b>	<b>5090.408</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>135.978</b>

## Kerbside Composting

### Food

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Food – Kerbside	718.76	712.38	810.39	858.080	3099.610
Food – Trade	28.38	25.44	36.56	35.460	125.840
Total	747.14	737.82	846.95	893.54	3225.45

There has been an increase of 367.02 (12.84%) tonnes of Food waste in 19/20 when compared to 18/19

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Food – Kerbside	n/a	3099.610		
Food – Trade	n/a	125.840		
Total	2858.43	3225.45	↑	367.02

### Green

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Garden – Kerbside	472.993	592.335	187.882	61.557	1280.891
Garden – HWRC	89.97	108.306	32.411	33.497	264.184
Garden – Commercial	30.20	54.182	20.727	14.767	119.876
Garden – Other	0.00	1.741	0.00	18.579	54.196
Total	593.163	756.564	241.02	128.40	1719.147

Green Waste collected in 19/20 when compared to 18/19 is as follows

- Kerbside Garden = increase of 153.627 tonnes (13.63%)
- HWRC Garden = decrease of 0.413 tonnes (0.16%)
- Commercial Garden = increase of 22.073 tonnes (22.57%)
- “Other” Garden = decrease of 4.782 tonnes (8.11%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Garden – Kerbside	1127.264	1280.891	↑	153.627
Garden – HWRC	264.597	264.184	↓	0.413
Garden – Commercial	97.803	119.876	↑	22.073
Garden – Other	58.978	54.196	↓	4.782
				0
Total	1548.642	1719.147	↑	170.505

## HWRC Recycling / Reuse

### HWRC Recycling

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Sheet Glass	8.66	0.00	0.00	9.680	18.340
Cardboard	34.02	36.50	46.90	46.880	164.300
Hard Plastics	56.44	72.72	35.90	37.840	202.900
Scrap Wood	369.44	357.424	303.68	283.560	1314.104
Inert	438.30	494.76	1791.37	189.440	2913.870
Plasterboard	26.98	39.26	27.54	19.080	112.860
Scrap Metal	59.18	65.36	36.40	45.620	206.560
Paint	7.60	6.05	0.00	0.000	13.650
UPVC	3.00	2.00	1.00	2.000	8.000
WEEE (Cold)	29.701	29.627	24.471	24.791	108.590
WEEE (SDA)	29.38	41.02	27.12	39.960	137.480
WEEE (LDA)	6.62	9.44	8.98	14.260	39.300
WEEE (CRT)	11.05	13.66	12.16	10.560	47.430
WEEE (Flo. Tubes)	0.148	0.218	0.00	0.000	0.366
WEEE (Batt. House)	0.47	0.12	1.84	0.168	2.598
WEEE (Batt. Auto)	1.82	0.00	0.00	0.000	1.820
Mattresses	21.26	26.10	19.58	21.740	88.680
Carpets	59.18	75.00	65.58	68.420	268.180
Cooking Oil	0.40	0.40	0.60	0.200	1.600
Tyres	4.22	0.54	3.24	2.440	10.440
<b>Total</b>	<b>1167.869</b>	<b>1270.199</b>	<b>2406.361</b>	<b>816.639</b>	<b>5661.068</b>

HWRC Recycling in 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 1791.31 tonnes (46.29%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Sheet Glass	9.840	18.340	↑	8.5
Cardboard	147.460	164.300	↑	16.84
Hard Plastics	175.900	202.900	↑	27
Scrap Wood	1267.720	1314.104	↑	46.384
Inert	1317.460	2913.870	↑	1596.41
Plasterboard	112.420	112.860	↑	0.44
Scrap Metal	181.340	206.560	↑	25.22
Paint	29.790	13.650	↓	16.14
UPVC	7.110	8.000	↑	0.89
WEEE (Cold)	101.173	108.590	↑	7.417
WEEE (SDA)	113.270	137.480	↑	24.21
WEEE (LDA)	48.460	39.300	↓	9.16
WEEE (CRT)	37.350	47.430	↑	10.08
WEEE (Flo. Tubes)	0.394	0.366	↓	0.028
WEEE (Batt. House)	1.345	2.598	↑	1.253
WEEE (Batt. Auto)	0.00	1.820	↑	1.82
Mattresses	81.550	88.680	↑	7.13
Carpets	221.600	268.180	↑	46.58
Cooking Oil	2.000	1.600	↓	0.4
Tyres	13.580	10.440	↓	3.14
				0
Total	3869.76	5661.068	↑	1791.306

#### HWRC Reuse

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Textiles	17.77	19.11	13.65	14.040	64.570
Media	3.475	5.543	5.216	2.874	17.108
Gas Bottles	5.383	3.900	3.035	3.618	15.936
Total	26.628	28.553	21.901	20.532	97.614

HWRC Reuse in Quarter 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 15.048 tonnes (18.23%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Textiles	51.69	64.570	↑	12.88
Media	1.131	17.108	↑	15.977
Gas Bottles	29.745	15.936	↓	-13.809
Total	82.566	97.614	↑	15.048

## Commercial & Industrial Recycling

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Trade Recycling	93.48	101.48	81.32	106.20	399.58
Highways Inert	180.00	360.00	400.00	360.00	1300.00
Total	273.48	461.48	481.32	466.20	1699.58

Commercial and Industrial recycling in 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has decreased by 170.08 tonnes (9.10%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Trade Recycling	429.66	399.58	↓	30.08
Highways Inert	1440.00	1300.00	↓	140
Total	1869.66	1699.58	↓	170.08

## Other Materials

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
AHP	129.32	146.84	137.68	139.40	553.24
Road Sweepings	324.06	206.68	434.96	375.80	1341.5
Total	453.38	353.52	572.64	515.20	1894.74

Absorbent Hygiene Products collected in 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 97.4 tonnes (21.37%)

Road Sweepings collected in 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 96.76 tonnes (7.77%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
AHP	455.84	553.24	↑	97.4
Road Sweeping	1244.74	1341.5	↑	96.76
Total	1700.58	1894.74	↑	194.16

## Residual / Recycling Round Data

### Residual Round Data

#### Round 1

Day-Week	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday – W1	17.98	17.37	17.64	18.71	71.69
Monday – W2	17.43	19.32	22.81	16.93	76.48
Monday – W3	17.87	18.51	17.31	17.91	71.59
Tuesday – W1	18.73	17.00	18.76	20.98	75.47
Tuesday – W2	18.65	17.78	17.97	16.47	70.87
Tuesday – W3	15.89	15.90	15.29	18.01	65.08
Wednesday – W1	17.91	18.07	18.29	16.94	71.21
Wednesday – W2	19.33	19.57	18.37	19.57	76.85
Wednesday – W3	17.69	17.05	15.73	18.19	68.66
Thursday – W1	17.92	16.74	17.44	14.28	66.38
Thursday – W2	14.01	14.51	14.30	16.25	59.07
Thursday – W3	17.12	18.05	16.92	13.97	66.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>210.54</b>	<b>209.86</b>	<b>210.82</b>	<b>208.20</b>	<b>839.43</b>

Residual Waste collected on Round 1 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has decreased by 49.31 (5.55%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday – W1	74.79	71.69	↓	-3.1
Monday – W2	77.47	76.48	↓	-0.99
Monday – W3	73.19	71.59	↓	-1.6
Tuesday – W1	71.98	75.47	↑	3.49
Tuesday – W2	77.88	70.87	↓	-7.01
Tuesday – W3	66.96	65.08	↓	-1.88
Wednesday – W1	78.42	71.21	↓	-7.21
Wednesday – W2	79.21	76.85	↓	-2.36
Wednesday – W3	75.79	68.66	↓	-7.13
Thursday – W1	75.28	66.38	↓	-8.9
Thursday – W2	63.25	59.07	↓	-4.18
Thursday – W3	74.49	66.07	↓	-8.42
				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>888.74</b>	<b>839.43</b>	↓	-49.31



## Round 2

Day-Week	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday – W1	14.47	13.74	12.97	13.30	54.48
Monday – W2	14.80	16.22	15.25	13.06	59.33
Monday – W3	18.31	18.41	15.28	15.55	67.54
Tuesday – W1	20.06	20.73	19.17	17.39	77.35
Tuesday – W2	15.27	17.27	16.69	14.04	63.27
Tuesday – W3	15.35	15.56	13.18	13.35	57.44
Wednesday – W1	17.07	17.36	16.25	16.04	66.71
Wednesday – W2	17.41	17.55	16.40	16.10	67.46
Wednesday – W3	16.03	15.70	15.61	15.43	62.77
Thursday – W1	14.90	14.44	13.81	17.27	60.43
Thursday – W2	15.75	13.95	16.21	14.12	60.03
Thursday – W3	15.19	13.95	13.08	15.73	57.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>194.61</b>	<b>194.88</b>	<b>183.89</b>	<b>181.38</b>	<b>754.77</b>

Residual Waste collected on Round 2 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has decreased by 80.47 (9.63%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday – W1	62.38	54.48	↓	-7.9
Monday – W2	66.74	59.33	↓	-7.41
Monday – W3	73.37	67.54	↓	-5.83
Tuesday – W1	86.53	77.35	↓	-9.18
Tuesday – W2	71.63	63.27	↓	-8.36
Tuesday – W3	62.28	57.44	↓	-4.84
Wednesday – W1	72.39	66.71	↓	-5.68
Wednesday – W2	70.83	67.46	↓	-3.37
Wednesday – W3	67.54	62.77	↓	-4.77
Thursday – W1	65.02	60.43	↓	-4.59
Thursday – W2	70.13	60.03	↓	-10.1
Thursday – W3	66.40	57.96	↓	-8.44
				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>835.24</b>	<b>754.77</b>	↓	<b>-80.47</b>

### Round 3

Day-Week	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday – W1	16.74	15.26	15.42	15.25	62.66
Monday – W2	20.34	19.16	19.26	15.11	73.87
Monday – W3	17.29	15.16	17.57	16.38	66.40
Tuesday – W1	17.74	19.31	17.34	17.30	71.69
Tuesday – W2	18.25	16.55	16.43	18.47	69.70
Tuesday – W3	14.47	16.57	15.86	19.54	66.44
Wednesday – W1	16.32	16.66	17.29	14.75	65.02
Wednesday – W2	16.05	14.46	15.08	12.62	58.22
Wednesday – W3	17.68	17.09	15.37	16.19	66.33
Thursday – W1	16.82	16.42	16.49	13.52	63.25
Thursday – W2	27.73	23.16	24.39	14.63	89.90
Thursday – W3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>199.42</b>	<b>189.80</b>	<b>190.51</b>	<b>173.75</b>	<b>753.48</b>

Residual Waste collected on Round 3 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has decreased by 58.29 (7.18%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday – W1	65.05	62.66	↓	-2.39
Monday – W2	82.36	73.87	↓	-8.49
Monday – W3	76.44	66.40	↓	-10.04
Tuesday – W1	77.19	71.69	↓	-5.5
Tuesday – W2	72.99	69.70	↓	-3.29
Tuesday – W3	51.88	66.44	↑	14.56
Wednesday – W1	67.42	65.02	↓	-2.4
Wednesday – W2	66.58	58.22	↓	-8.36
Wednesday – W3	72.80	66.33	↓	-6.47
Thursday – W1	65.75	63.25	↓	-2.5
Thursday – W2	113.31	89.90	↓	-23.41
Thursday – W3	n/a	n/a		
<b>Total</b>	<b>811.77</b>	<b>753.48</b>	↓	<b>-58.29</b>

## Recycling Round Data

### Round 1

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	3.52	3.52	4.32	4.42	15.78
Tuesday	4.65	4.32	4.86	5.87	19.71
Wednesday	4.66	4.91	4.73	4.81	19.10
Thursday	5.28	5.65	5.29	4.15	20.36
Friday	3.63	3.69	4.05	3.53	14.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.74</b>	<b>22.09</b>	<b>23.24</b>	<b>22.78</b>	<b>89.85</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 1 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 3.09 kg per household (3.56%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	13.63	15.78	↑	2.15
Tuesday	17.49	19.71	↑	2.22
Wednesday	20.26	19.10	↓	-1.16
Thursday	20.72	20.36	↓	-0.36
Friday	14.67	14.91	↑	0.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>86.76</b>	<b>89.85</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>3.09</b>

### Round 2

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	4.06	3.81	4.74	4.84	17.44
Tuesday	3.57	3.45	3.70	4.87	15.60
Wednesday	5.16	4.90	5.22	5.61	20.89
Thursday	3.87	4.47	4.13	4.53	17.01
Friday	4.63	4.32	4.68	4.69	18.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.29</b>	<b>20.95</b>	<b>22.47</b>	<b>24.53</b>	<b>89.24</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 2 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 5.06 kg per household (6.01%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	16.39	17.44	↑	1.05
Tuesday	14.96	15.60	↑	0.64
Wednesday	19.20	20.89	↑	1.69
Thursday	16.52	17.01	↑	0.49
Friday	17.12	18.32	↑	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>84.18</b>	<b>89.24</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>5.06</b>

### Round 3

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	4.69	4.59	5.61	4.59	19.49
Tuesday	4.28	4.35	4.87	5.16	18.67
Wednesday	4.41	4.64	4.53	4.36	17.94
Thursday	4.52	4.69	4.95	5.05	19.21
Friday	5.16	5.48	6.12	3.75	20.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.06</b>	<b>23.75</b>	<b>26.08</b>	<b>22.92</b>	<b>95.81</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 3 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 5.08 kg per household (5.60%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	18.62	19.49	↑	0.87
Tuesday	16.53	18.67	↑	2.14
Wednesday	17.37	17.94	↑	0.57
Thursday	18.43	19.21	↑	0.78
Friday	19.78	20.50	↑	0.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>90.73</b>	<b>95.81</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>5.08</b>

### Round 4

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	4.13	4.11	5.26	4.61	18.11
Tuesday	3.45	3.91	4.38	5.55	17.29
Wednesday	3.98	3.16	3.52	4.98	15.65
Thursday	4.37	4.88	4.53	4.87	18.65
Friday	3.74	3.31	3.92	3.84	14.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>19.67</b>	<b>19.38</b>	<b>21.62</b>	<b>23.84</b>	<b>84.51</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 4 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 8.03 kg per household (10.50%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	16.40	18.11	↑	1.71
Tuesday	14.78	17.29	↑	2.51
Wednesday	15.48	15.65	↑	0.17
Thursday	16.33	18.65	↑	2.32
Friday	13.48	14.81	↑	1.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>76.48</b>	<b>84.51</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>8.03</b>

## Round 5

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	4.46	4.65	5.26	5.56	19.93
Tuesday	5.08	5.40	6.01	6.02	22.51
Wednesday	4.99	4.84	5.10	5.59	20.52
Thursday	4.38	4.53	4.72	4.85	18.49
Friday	4.53	4.16	5.02	4.25	17.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.43</b>	<b>23.57</b>	<b>26.11</b>	<b>26.28</b>	<b>99.40</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 5 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 5.79 kg per household (6.19%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	18.58	19.93	↑	1.35
Tuesday	22.38	22.51	↑	0.13
Wednesday	19.49	20.52	↑	1.03
Thursday	16.85	18.49	↑	1.64
Friday	16.30	17.96	↑	1.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>93.61</b>	<b>99.40</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>5.79</b>

## Round 6

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	4.66	4.96	5.78	4.88	20.28
Tuesday	4.49	4.61	5.34	5.22	19.67
Wednesday	3.85	3.88	4.42	4.75	16.89
Thursday	6.54	5.95	8.03	4.69	25.21
Friday	4.34	4.29	4.93	4.33	17.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.88</b>	<b>23.69</b>	<b>28.50</b>	<b>23.87</b>	<b>99.94</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 6 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 5.18 kg per household (5.47%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	18.98	20.28	↑	1.3
Tuesday	18.39	19.67	↑	1.28
Wednesday	16.10	16.89	↑	0.79
Thursday	23.60	25.21	↑	1.61
Friday	17.69	17.90	↑	0.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>94.76</b>	<b>99.94</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>5.18</b>

## Round 7

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	4.67	5.10	5.70	5.67	21.13
Tuesday	4.05	4.35	4.82	5.12	18.33
Wednesday	3.67	3.59	3.81	4.21	15.28
Thursday	4.08	4.13	4.41	4.76	17.38
Friday	3.59	3.65	3.91	4.01	15.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.06</b>	<b>20.81</b>	<b>22.65</b>	<b>23.76</b>	<b>87.29</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 7 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 4.65 kg per household (5.63%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	18.40	21.13	↑	2.73
Tuesday	18.72	18.33	↓	-0.39
Wednesday	14.37	15.28	↑	0.91
Thursday	16.58	17.38	↑	0.8
Friday	14.57	15.16	↑	0.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>82.64</b>	<b>87.29</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>4.65</b>

## Round 8

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	3.97	3.85	4.73	4.42	16.97
Tuesday	5.01	4.85	5.31	4.36	19.53
Wednesday	4.04	4.14	4.61	4.79	17.59
Thursday	3.58	4.08	4.55	4.92	17.11
Friday	3.84	3.84	3.88	3.99	15.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.43</b>	<b>20.75</b>	<b>23.08</b>	<b>22.49</b>	<b>86.75</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 8 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 5.63 kg per household (6.94%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	15.73	16.97	↑	1.24
Tuesday	17.81	19.53	↑	1.72
Wednesday	16.62	17.59	↑	0.97
Thursday	15.88	17.11	↑	1.23
Friday	15.09	15.55	↑	0.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.12</b>	<b>86.75</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>5.63</b>

## Round 9

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	3.51	3.55	4.06	4.76	15.88
Tuesday	4.84	4.63	5.19	4.72	19.38
Wednesday	4.85	4.91	5.08	4.49	19.32
Thursday	3.80	3.98	4.50	4.50	16.78
Friday	4.12	3.79	5.01	4.12	17.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.12</b>	<b>20.86</b>	<b>23.83</b>	<b>22.58</b>	<b>88.39</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 9 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 3.41 kg per household (4.01%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	15.85	15.88	↑	0.03
Tuesday	17.21	19.38	↑	2.17
Wednesday	18.94	19.32	↑	0.38
Thursday	15.51	16.78	↑	1.27
Friday	17.48	17.03	↓	-0.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>84.98</b>	<b>88.39</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>3.41</b>

## Round 10

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Monday	3.34	3.60	3.68	2.15	12.77
Tuesday	4.67	4.61	4.75	2.64	16.67
Wednesday	4.23	3.16	3.14	2.55	13.08
Thursday	3.95	3.76	5.04	2.44	15.19
Friday	2.35	2.31	2.60	2.00	9.26
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.53</b>	<b>17.44</b>	<b>19.22</b>	<b>11.78</b>	<b>66.97</b>

Recycling Waste collected on Round 10 during 19/20 when compared to 18/19 has increased by 0.79 kg per household (1.19%)

	18/19	19/20	+/-	Difference
Monday	13.12	12.77	↓	-0.35
Tuesday	16.87	16.67	↓	-0.2
Wednesday	12.83	13.08	↑	0.25
Thursday	14.24	15.19	↑	0.95
Friday	9.12	9.26	↑	0.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.18</b>	<b>66.97</b>	<b>↑</b>	<b>0.79</b>





## Demand Monitoring Data

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
No. of Requests	6916	6343	5999	9610	28868

## Request Breakdown

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Van Permit	418	437	373	311	1539
Recycling Receptacles	1911	1781	1729	3076	8497
Garden Waste	1392	697	148	366	2603
Request Green Sacks	217	139	28	76	460
AHP	344	408	365	448	1565
Request AHP Sacks	860	938	893	1213	3904
Cancel AHP Collection	20	29	30	24	103
Missed Collection	577	776	647	900	2900
Assisted Collection	51	52	64	83	250
Cancel Assisted	1	0	1	3	5
Request Wheelie Bin	426	328	303	378	1435
Warden Enquiry	272	240	170	218	900
General Enquiry	281	340	381	492	1494
Waste Presented Early	46	60	41	48	195
Commercial Waste	100	118	113	140	471
Christmas tree	0	0	88	419	507
Winter Green Waste	0	0	34	242	276
Bulky Waste	0	0	591	1173	1764
<b>Total</b>	<b>6916</b>	<b>6343</b>	<b>5999</b>	<b>9610</b>	<b>28868</b>

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# Agenda Item 25

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent Education Services DRAFT Self – Evaluation Findings**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanne Collins, Executive Member for Education**

Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Interim Corporate Director of Education**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
✓	✓	29.09.20			15.09.20	14.10.20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to provide the Leader and Members of Executive Committee with an opportunity to contribute to the findings of ongoing self-evaluation processes undertaken within the Education Directorate, across the Council and with key partners.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Blaenau Gwent Education Services are committed to self-review and self-improvement and view these processes as being fundamental to securing ongoing improvement in outcomes, quality and effectiveness. The Education Directorate has adopted a standardised approach for self-evaluation (SE) that is now embedded into the day to day practice. This has been reviewed to align with Estyn's new inspection framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES). This report looks at the emerging findings against the inspection framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES), which will inform evaluations of progress against the key improvement priorities set out in business improvement plans.
- 2.2 The report provides a high-level narrative and the Education Directorate's Self-Evaluation Policy (appendix 1), which sets out the arrangements for effective self-evaluation. The findings from the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) are reflected as actions for improvement in the Directorate's Business Plans at Directorate, Service and Team level. Effective self-evaluation means that the Directorate remains focussed on improving the right things.
- 2.3 A comprehensive data set of school performance, coupled with evaluations of impact and effectiveness of Council based and brokered support feeds into the overall evaluation. It should be noted, however, that self-evaluation is an on-going process and the SER will need to be updated to reflect the 2019-20 provisional KS4 and Post 16 results during the Autumn term 2020.

2.4 A comprehensive self-evaluation process helps identify those areas where progress has been made and where further improvement is required. Emerging findings, via ongoing self-evaluation is captured every Autumn and Spring time as well as via quarterly performance and finance reporting mechanisms. This report details the high-level findings only and these are shown in the Summary SER attached as appendix 2. Moreover, it is the high-level points only, which are presented in the narrative in this report shown under Section 6.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been approved by Education DMT, CLT and Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee prior to submission to The Executive Committee. The Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee requested that reducing the performance gap between genders be included as an area for development and this report has been reflected to include this,

3.2 **Option 1:** to accept the report as presented.

**Option 2:** to reject the report as presented.

This report provides the Committee with important and statutory performance monitoring information, as well as opportunity to identify where progress has been made and where further improvement is required.

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

#### 4.1 **Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

One of the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan aims for every child to have the best start in life. Through effective self-evaluation and improvement planning processes, we seek to ensure that provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people, so that their progress and performance is as good as it ought to be.

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.1 The Council allocates approximately £42.8 million (2019/20) to schools via the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) to provide high quality education and to improve pupil outcomes. The Council's total gross budgeted expenditure per pupil for 2019/20 was £6,372 which is the 4th highest in Wales and £515 above the Welsh average of £5,857.

5.1.2 For 2019/20 the funding delegated to schools was 85.7% which is above the all Wales average and ranked 1st when compared to the family of schools, (Local Authority Budgeted Expenditure on Schools 2019/20). The Education Directorate has an improving position on a 'value for money' basis, in that

performance and school categorisation has improved significantly and the overall central funding has reduced, in line with public sector austerity measures.

- 5.1.3 The Council commissions the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to deliver the statutory functions of school improvement. The annual financial costs being circa £364,000. Schools categorisation profile has improved over the last 5 years against a backdrop of decreasing financial contributions to the EAS: this therefore, effectively represents good value for money. The Education Directorate holds the EAS to account for the impact and effectiveness of their work in schools in Blaenau Gwent.

## 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

- 5.2.1 Risk is associated with weak self-evaluation that fails to accurately identify those areas where good progress has been made and where further improvement is needed. Strong self-evaluation helps services target resources at greatest need and hence bring about improvement precisely where it is needed.
- 5.2.2 Risk is associated with underperformance and ineffective processes to improve performance and progress in identified schools. Failure to raise standards is identified as a key risk to the Council, both in terms of reputation and pupil life chances. This is reflected in the Education Directorate and EAS risk registers.
- 5.2.3 Mitigating actions include:
- strong self-evaluation processes, which accurately identify those areas which need to improve the most;
  - the routine monitoring of quantitative and qualitative information, regular quality assurance meetings between the Council and the EAS, regular quality assurance meetings within the Education Directorate and across teams, school inspection findings and school categorisation results; and,
  - the progress schools make towards targets is also monitored on a termly basis. School safeguarding processes are also closely monitored.
- 5.2.4 Holistic support packages are devised via regular cross service meetings between OD, Finance, Health and Safety, Education and School Governor Support Services. School level performance data is regularly analysed and evaluated to identify emerging trends.
- 5.2.5 The quality of provision i.e. the quality teaching and learning in classrooms is monitored and supported via the EAS. The quality of school leadership is also supported extensively by the EAS via a range of programmes and school-to-school networks.

### 5.3 **Legal**

This report provides information about statutory, end of Key Stage school performance underpinned by processes set out the School Standards and Organisation Act Wales (2013) support strategic and operational activity to improve pupil outcomes.

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

None for this report.

## 6. **Performance Information**

### 6.1 **Performance**

#### **Areas where good progress has been made:**

- School inspection and school categorisation profile has improved significantly with no primary schools in follow up and excellent practice identified in a number of schools;
- GCSE L2 English and Capped 9 improved;
- GCSE A\*/A grades improved in English and Maths;
- Post 16 A-level A\*-C and A\*-E grades were greater than all-Wales means;
- Value-added progress in English and Maths, reading and numeracy for our 7 and 11 year olds have improved;
- The Youth Service exceeded that of the all-Wales means for reach and accredited learning outcomes;
- Primary persistent absenteeism reduced to below that of the all-Wales means;
- The School Based Counselling Service provides good support;
- Permanent exclusions reduced;
- Strong progress through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools programme;
- The Headteacher induction and support programme was very well received by aspiring and new Headteachers;
- The staff wellbeing survey was good; and
- The Council and EAS are evidencing improving value for money.

### 6.2 **Areas where further improvement is required:**

- Higher levels of language acquisition in our very young children in the early years;
- Improved attainment of eFSM pupils and particularly our more able pupils in the early years and throughout education;
- Improve school attendance;
- Progress between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, particularly in English, Maths and Science;
- Further improving provision for pupils with additional learning needs;
- Continuing the work with two schools in an Estyn category; and
- Reduce school exclusions and support parents/carers who opt to Elective Home Educate (EHE).
- Reduce the gender gap

The Council will continue to work with partners across the Council, for example, Children's Services, Regeneration, Legal, Finance and Organisational Development to focus the work on improving pupil outcomes

and supporting school leaders. The Council will also continue to work with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to support our school leaders to improve pupil outcomes and wellbeing. There are changes that it is anticipated be introduced to the reporting and accountability framework for academic year 2020-20 linked to the COVID-19 emergency response, particularly a relaxation in the requirements for School and Council performance reporting arrangements.

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

The Directorate's self-evaluation processes are aligned with LGES and the regional policy for monitoring, supporting, evaluation and intervention in schools through the categorisation process is derived from the National Categorisation Framework. The categorisation process will be suspended in academic year 2020-21.

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

Analysis of individual school performance data is a key element in ensuring that schools are known well by the Council so that appropriate support and intervention can be directed towards areas of greatest need. Effective self-evaluation processes ensure that resources are targeted at greatest need and secure improvement in longer term.

**6.5 *Preventative focus***

Through effective self-evaluation processes, support and monitoring of school performance, early identification of emerging areas for improvement can be identified with consequent early intervention to secure improvement. The effectiveness of the Council's monitoring, support, evaluation and intervention programmes ensure that preventative action is taken early in order to minimise the escalation of concerns.

**6.6 *Collaboration / partnership working***

The Council collaborates with neighbouring local authorities through the South East Wales Consortium for the provision of school improvement services from the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and a range of pupil support services for specific groups such as visually and hearing impaired learners.

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

Effective monitoring, support, evaluation and intervention are fundamental to the Council's wellbeing objectives.

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

There is no requirement for EQIA assessment since there only a limited change of policy or practice. However, implementation of the Council's monitoring, support, evaluation and intervention practice in schools has a positive impact on children and young people and on staff within a particular school. By improving the quality of education, standards and wellbeing are improved for all children and young people.

**7. Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 Monitoring of the emerging findings of self-evaluation is an important mechanism for ensuring that Members of Executive are sufficiently informed to enable them to make informed decisions regarding the quality of education provision and hence pupil outcomes and wellbeing. There are well-established processes in place to ensure that business plans are considerate of emerging findings for improvement.

**Background Documents / Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 – Self-Evaluation Policy
- Appendix 2 - High Level Summary



**Blaenau Gwent County Council**

**EDUCATION DIRECTORATE**

**SELF EVALUATION POLICY**

**September 2020**

**1. Introduction**

Blaenau Gwent Education Services are committed to self-review and self-improvement and view these processes as being fundamental to securing ongoing improvement in outcomes, quality and effectiveness.

The Education Directorate has adopted a standard approach for self-evaluation (SE) that is now embedded into the day to day practice. This has been reviewed to align with Estyn's new inspection framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES).

Self-evaluation activities are undertaken throughout the year and the self-evaluation report (SER) for LGES is updated in October and March of every academic year. Updates are aligned to data release dates from Welsh Government and other time points when data and information becomes available.

At the heart of self-evaluation process are four key questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What do we need to do to improve further?
- How are we going to do it?

The established self-evaluation processes allows both the Council and the Education Directorate to take a critical reflective look at practice, performance and effectiveness. In this way, the Council is corporately able to ensure that its work remains focused on those areas that require improvement and is aligned to the provisions set out in the LGES framework and is aligned to our statutory obligations. The Education Directorate endeavours to ensure that all our children and young people and our educational establishments are well supported to achieve and make good progress in all learning settings across the school estate and partners e.g. Coleg Gwent and the Post 16 Learning Zone.

**2. Who should be involved?**

All relevant stakeholders should be involved in evaluating the Council's Education Services to ensure its continued effectiveness. To achieve this, a range of approaches are used to ensure that any barriers to participation and engagement

are minimised and where possible removed. Moving forward, this will be verified on an annual basis with additional quality assurance processes undertaken to further secure the engagement of stakeholders in this key process. To support this process, a summary SER has been developed at the end of the self-evaluation cycle. The document will highlight the key areas of progress and areas for further improvement and can be used for elected members, schools and wider stakeholders.

The summary SER document is to be distributed to the key stakeholders to ensure that they understand the organisational context and are able to recognise their important contribution to facilitate further improvement. Going forward, this will be managed through core business activities that are aligned to business as usual activities, where officers will provide greater context e.g. breakfast meetings, member briefing sessions, open evenings, parents and other corporate road show events.

For consistency, the following grading question is used in order to assess the response to the question and is used to inform the judgement as to how well the Education Directorate takes account the view of stakeholders in its improvement planning and the services it offers.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
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### 3. What should be involved?

Self-evaluation will involve:

- Asking deep and searching questions about outcomes and progress, quality of provision and effectiveness of leadership and management;
- Using a range of performance data to inform and guide reflections, including that of matched data to inform judgements about progress for specific groups of learners;
- Using other information such as the Corporate Improvement Plan and family benchmarking data relevant to the particular context;
- Using ongoing reflections and enquiry into practice;
- Considering the needs of children and young people (and the various groups) in context; and,
- Using evidence from a range of sources to inform and support self-evaluation, both qualitative and quantitative.

Officers and commissioned services use a FADE approach to support the collection of this information with individual FADE requirements being set out in a FADE Register. The FADE Register also acts as a deployment list for officers and stakeholders. Deployment of FADEs is kept under review by the Education Directorate's Management Team. The Corporate Director oversees the process and

the compilation of the final SER. To complement this policy a SE Toolkit has been devised comprising aides to support the SE processes.

The toolkit is updated on an annual basis in the summer term based upon the learning from the previous self-evaluation cycle.

#### 4. Why have self-evaluation processes?

- To provide an evidence base upon which to arrive at judgements about pupil outcomes and progress, quality of provision and the effectiveness of leadership and management of Education Services and its future improvement journey;
- To reflect on what has been done to consistently deepen understanding;
- To recognise and celebrate good practice, and where appropriate, use this to support others in line with the Vision for Education and our agreed approach to a school-led, school to school methodology;
- To ensure that stakeholders understand the context of the organisation and the contribution that they can make to further facilitate improvement; and
- To improve the performance, impact and effectiveness of Education Services and its constituent parts, including commissioned services to further enable officers and schools to make informed decisions for our children and young people.

The SE process is a cyclical one and the high level activities are summarised below, however, it should be noted that the COVID-19 response will have an impact on some aspects of self-evaluation work in 2020-21 academic year, such as suspending school categorisation:

<b>Date</b>	<b>What</b>
April to August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provisional Teacher Assessment analysis</li> <li>• Performance analysis (school LA vulnerable learners and ALN)</li> <li>• Categorisation review</li> <li>• Self-evaluation toolkit updated</li> <li>• FADES completed in line with the register for last academic year</li> <li>• Improvement tracker for year ahead developed</li> <li>• Emerging findings are reflected as actions in Directorate's business plans</li> </ul>
September to March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All business plans completed on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>• Heads of Service challenge sessions via Wider Corporate Leadership Team (WCLT).</li> <li>• Categorisation confirmed.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning from current self-evaluation process to inform next process.</li> </ul>
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MER: Monitoring (gathering the evidence), Evaluation (arriving at judgments) and Review (making changes as a result) are fundamental components to the improvement process and hence self-evaluation (SE). Findings from SE underpin all business, service and team plans.

There are a range of approaches in place to support this which include:

- Regular reporting to Scrutiny and Executive Committee meetings and Full Council.
- Regular reporting to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).
- Termly Estyn monitoring meetings with the Local Authority Link Inspector (LALI) meetings.
- Regular reporting to Directorate Management Team (DMT) meetings.
- Individual – evaluation of the effectiveness and the performance of Heads of Service through peer challenge sessions and the quality assurance FADEs and the resultant business improvement plans.
- Departmental – through team meetings, processes to hold the EAS to account such as regular EAS/ other commissioned service quality assurance meetings, DMT, FADE approach, Directorate business plan
- Monitoring by specific officer groups e.g. ALN QA, School Admission Forum, Budget Forum, JCC, HT meetings etc.
- Headteachers – engagement with Headteachers occurs throughout the year and evaluated as part of the agreed approach to self-evaluation. This work is further supplemented by a two yearly questionnaire of the assessment of the quality of the services offered by education, which coupled with the level of buy back of SLA services offered to schools which are arranged on a 3 yearly basis provide an overview of the level of satisfaction. Engagement on the draft summary SER takes place at cluster level and is facilitated by Education DMT representatives in the latter part of the autumn term. This work is concluded with the final SER presented to Headteachers for final comment in the spring term.

## 5. Summary

The purpose of self-evaluation is to secure ongoing improvement across services, particularly to enhance wellbeing and progress in pupil outcomes. Self-evaluation is not done in isolation and will be influenced by stakeholders with a key interest and ability to support the implementation of any identified agreed action.

The provision of high quality and tailored education services, which both support and challenge learners is a complex process frequently requiring highly effective

partnership and collaborative working and the involvement of stakeholders being a fundamental aspect to the Council's now mature approach to SE. The Self-Evaluation Policy is considerate of these complex arrangements and seeks to simplify and share the understanding, process and purpose of effective self-evaluation so that ongoing improvement is secured.

This policy is under review in September 2020 and features in the Council's Scrutiny/Executive forward work programmes. The implementation of this policy will be monitored via regular DMT meetings, through performance coaching sessions with relevant officers and by elected members via the forward work programme.

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# Education Directorate Self-Evaluation Summary Report Date: Summer 2020



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## Blaenau Gwent - Context

Blaenau Gwent has 25 schools and their status is detailed below:

- 2 are Maintained 3-16 Learning Communities,
- 1 Foundation Comprehensive,
- 1 Maintained Comprehensive,
- 1 x Maintained 3-18 Special School,
- 1 x Maintained 3-16 SEBD Special School; and,
- 19 Primaries (of which 4 are voluntary aided / faith schools)

There are currently circa 9,000+ pupils on roll across all Blaenau Gwent schools. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) captures the extent of deprivation as a proportion of residents living in each lower super output area (LSOA). The eight considerations of the WIMD are: income; employment; health; education, skills and training; geographical access to services; housing; physical environment; and community safety. Blaenau Gwent has the highest percentage of its LSOAs areas in the most deprived areas across Wales at 10%, for income (19.1%), education (27.7%), and community safety (23.4%).

The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals in Blaenau Gwent was almost 30% during 2010-16 and the highest of all LAs in Wales by a significant margin. The proportions declined during 2016-19, but BG remained the 2nd highest in Wales for all LA schools and highest for secondary schools during 2018-19. Given the evidential relationship between pupil performance and deprivation (using eFSM as a proxy indicator), pupil outcomes in BG would be expected to be among the lowest in Wales. However, within Blaenau Gwent we have high ambitions for all of our learners and our socio-economic standing is a challenge that we are working to overcome to the benefit of all of our children and young people.

Overall, the 2019 WIMD figures and high eFSM eligibility reflect very high levels of deprivation within the authority. They also indicate the significant consideration required to improve educational outcomes to levels within other similar LAs and to consistently match the all-Wales averages. 2018-19 performance figures show that Blaenau Gwent has achieved parity, and indeed, out-performed some LAs in a number of measures confirming the progress being made within its schools.

The 2020 KS4 and Post 16 KS5 provisional results will be included in the Summary SER during the Autumn term to inform the on-going self-evaluation process, however, there is recognition the outcomes were awarded via the Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs) and/or the awarding examination body's assessed grade.

## **Executive Summary:**

This Executive Summary is a high-level analysis of key strategic areas of progress, and importantly, aspects of work identified for improvement across the Estyn Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework. There are clearly more details in the Main Self-Evaluation Report (SER), however, the Executive Summary provides a high-level synopsis to enable the Education Directorate, the Council and key partners to understand and focus on critical strands of work to continue to improve outcomes for children and young people across the County Borough. The information detailed in this document regularly features in the self-evaluation reports presented to Scrutiny and Executive Committees. The Council will continue to work with partners across the Council, for example, Children's Services, Regeneration, Legal, Finance and Organisational Development to focus the work on improving pupil outcomes and supporting school leaders. The Council will also continue to work with partners, such as the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to support our school leaders to improve pupil outcomes and wellbeing. There are changes that will be introduced to the reporting and accountability framework for academic year 2020-20 linked to the COVID-19 emergency response, particularly a relaxation in the requirements for School and Council performance reporting arrangements. Clearly, the Education Directorate will need to remain focussed on self-evaluation procedures, as outlined in the review of the SE Policy 2020, particularly an analysis of the provisional KS4 and Post 16 results during the Autumn term 2020.

Blaenau Gwent's Education Services are committed to self-review and self-improvement and view these processes as being fundamental to securing ongoing improvement in outcomes, quality and effectiveness. The Education Directorate has adopted a standardised approach for self-evaluation (SE) that is now embedded into the day to day practice. This has been reviewed to align with Estyn's new inspection framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES). This Summary SER looks at the emerging findings against the inspection framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES), which will inform evaluations of progress against the key improvement priorities set out in business and improvement plans.

### **Key Strategic Areas of Progress**

#### **Areas where good progress has been made:**

School inspection and school categorisation profile has improved significantly with no primary schools in follow up and excellent practice identified in a number of schools;

- GCSE L2 English and Capped 9 improved;
- GCSE A\*/A grades improved in English and Maths;
- Post 16 A-level A\*-C and A\*-E grades were greater than all-Wales means;
- Value-added progress in English and Maths, reading and numeracy for our 7 and 11 year olds have improved;
- The Youth Service exceeded that of the all-Wales means for reach and accredited learning outcomes;

- Primary persistent absenteeism reduced to below that of the all-Wales means;
- The School Based Counselling Service provides good support;
- Permanent exclusions reduced;
- Strong progress through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools programme;
- The Headteacher induction and support programme was very well received by aspiring and new Headteachers;
- The staff wellbeing survey was good; and
- The Council and EAS are evidencing improving value for money.

### **Key Strategic Areas for Improvement**

#### **Areas where further improvement is required:**

- Higher levels of language acquisition in our very young children in the early years;
- Improved attainment of eFSM pupils and particularly our more able pupils in the early years and throughout education;
- Improve school attendance;
- Reducing the gender gap between boys and girls;
- Progress between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, particularly in English, Maths and Science;
- Further improving provision for pupils with additional learning needs;
- Continuing the work with two schools in an Estyn category; and,
- Reduce school exclusions and support parents/carers who opt to Elective Home Educate (EHE).

## **1.1 Standards and Progress Overall - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

### **Foundation Phase**

- Almost two-thirds of schools improved LLCE results in 2019, while a similar proportion of schools exceeded their targets in MD.

### **Key Stage 2**

- LA-level FP-KS2 value-added progress in:
  - NC maths was above the national figure.
  - Language was a little higher than expected in 2019.
  - Progress in reading was seen in about two-thirds of mainstream schools (about half in 2019) and numeracy reasoning was better than expected in most schools.

- The majority of schools had similar or higher L4+ results compared to their 2019 targets.
- School categorisation and inspection outcomes have improved in recent years.

### **Key Stage 3**

- Two out of four schools improved L5+ English outcomes & three schools improved their L5+ oracy & writing results in 2019.
- L6+ outcomes improved for English 2017-19 and particularly for 2019.
- Three of the four schools improved L6+ outcomes in English and Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> language during 2019 and three schools improved their reading & writing results.
- At LA-level literacy outcomes (oracy, reading & writing) all improved in 2019 with modest improvements made in MFL & PE.
- LA-level KS2-3 value-added progress in reading improved from the previous year
- LA-level progress in numeracy reasoning was also better than expected and twice that for reading.
- 3 of the 4 mainstream secondary schools maintained or improved progress for NC English

### **Key Stage 4**

- Capped 9 points score improved in 2019 and achieved the LA target
- The proportion of learners gaining A\*/A grades improved in both English and maths in 2019.
- The LA-level Welsh Bacc result was higher than expected in relation to the LA's eFSM entitlement.
- Higher than expected ranking in relation to eFSM except for numeracy & science. This was particularly so for the Skills Challenge Certificate result which ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 22 Welsh LAs.
- The proportion of learners attaining A\*-C grades in Welsh 1<sup>st</sup> language increased in 2019 with an improving trend during the last 2 years. 17% of the Welsh-medium cohort attained A\*/A grades in Welsh 1<sup>st</sup> language.
- Abertillery improved outcomes in all but one performance indicator in 2019.
- The proportion of learners gaining A\*/A grades in maths improved in every mainstream school in 2019 and in 3 out of 4 mainstream schools for English & capped 9 points scores.

### **Post-16**

- At A level and AS level, the proportions of learners attaining A\*-C and A\*-E grades were a higher than the all-Wales means in 2019.
- For vocational courses, attainment rates in 2019 were similar to or higher than in the previous year except for L3.
- Entry level learners were 100% successful.

### **Youth Service**

- In 2018/19, 2,010 (17%) of 11-25 year olds were registered as Reach and supported by the Youth Service (Wales 16%). Of these, 301 (15%) gained 456 nationally recognised accreditations.
- In addition, the Youth Service recorded 7,298 anonymous contacts during 2018-19 through the 11-18 Counselling Service, C Card, detached youth work, outreach and out of school activities and events, 1,000 more than previous year.
- Current data indicates 1.69% of learners being NEET. The all Wales figure has not yet been published.

## 1.1 Standards and Progress Overall - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it

### Areas identified for Improvement and Action Required

#### Foundation Phase

- BG and national averages at LO4+ and LO5+ fell for all performance indicators during the last 2 years with the fall being greater for BG in 2019, increasing the performance gap.
- LO6+ differences between BG and national means in 2019 were greatest for PSD.
- A majority of schools attained lower than target results in 2019 indicating inaccuracy and unreliability within school target setting procedures.
- **There is a need to develop value-added procedures for Reception Year to Y2 in order to determine the progress made by pupils within the Foundation Phase.**

#### Key Stage 2

- Welsh and Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> language outcomes fell to a greater extent in 2019 with the latter having a declining trend during the last 2 years.
- L4+ writing outcomes fell more noticeably in 2019.
- Underperforming schools (for NC assessments) the same as in previous years and these continue to be of concern with regard to pupils' learning and standards achieved.
- FP-KS2 value-added progress in NC language moved below the national figure.
- **A minority of schools had inconsistencies between NC and national test progress scores. This questions the accuracy and reliability of assessment procedures within these centres.**

#### Key Stage 3

- L5+ outcomes fell in 2019, particularly for maths, science art, history and geography. All results were lower than the 2019 national means and particularly so for MFL and history. These falls reflect those observed within Wales as a whole. There is a concern regarding assessment reliability at two of the four LA schools.
- A majority of schools had results below their 2019 targets at both L5+ & L6+. Results also indicate target setting as generally unreliable in schools at KS3 (as in previous years).
- LA-level KS2-3 value-added progress in NC English and maths fell considerably in 2019 and was well below the national figure in both subjects. Progress in NC maths was barely adequate and was unsatisfactory in NC English.
- A significant proportion of pupils regressed more than 10 SAS points in both reading and numeracy reasoning during 2016-19. An inordinate number of these pupils were from one centre.
- Some schools had inconsistencies between NC and national test progress scores. This questions the accuracy and reliability of assessment procedures within these centres.

### Key Stage 4

- Results for the new National Measures and in relation to the LA's eFSM entitlement were all lower than the national means.
- The proportion of learners gaining L2+ and 5 A\*/A grades in 2019 was below the LA targets and fell by about 2%, well below the national mean.
- L2 maths & numeracy outcomes fell in 3 out of the 4 mainstream schools in 2019.
- Learner outcomes for Tredegar fell in over one-half of performance indicators in 2019.
- KS3-4 value-added progress
  - declined for both English and maths in nearly all schools during 2017-19 compared with previous years.
  - for maths was much weaker than for English in all mainstream schools.
- Too many pupils failed to progress (or even regressed) in English and particularly in maths in KS4 during 2017-19. On average, pupils at Abertillery and Brynmawr made no progress or regressed in maths during 2017-19.
- For WG modelled estimates, all residuals were negative except for the Welsh Bacc Skills Challenge result.
- Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> language full-course results fell for all grade indicators in 2019 (as was the case nationally) and were lower than the all-Wales figures for higher grade levels.
- The proportion of pupils achieving no qualifications doubled to 2.4% in 2019 and was over twice as high as the all-Wales average.

### Post 16

- The proportion of learners attaining higher level grades (A\*/A) at both A and AS level has increased in 2019, although is still below the Wales benchmark level so is an area for further improvement.
- There has been a small dip in vocational success rates in 2018-2019 and there is room for improvement at L2 courses, which is currently at 80% completion rate. Success rates across the board, however, remain relatively strong.
- Embed process initiated in October 2019 where Coleg Gwent provides monthly updates on retention rates and specific learner withdrawals.

### Risk Considerations

- The risk of failure to continue to make progress on raising educational standards features in the Corporate Risk Register (CRR) and risk mitigation is monitored by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Elected Members via Scrutiny and the Executive Committees.

## **1.2 Standards and Progress of Specific Groups - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

### Foundation Phase

- All LO6+ gender differences were lower than the all-Wales means and particularly so for LLCE.
- Almost one-third of statemented pupils attained LO5+ in LLCE and MD. Both results were higher than the 2018 national means.

### Key Stage 2

- L4+gender differences were lower than the all-Wales means.

- Mean progress scores for boys & girls (as NC levels) were higher than expected during KS2. On average, boys had lower FP outcomes in 2015 but made similar NC progress to girls during KS2.
- Boys made greater progress in both reading and numeracy reasoning during 2015-19.
- Mean progress scores (as NC levels) for eFSM & non eFSM pupils were similar to or higher than expected.
- Over one-half of ethnic minority pupils attained L5 in both English and maths. The mean NC levels were higher than for the whole Y6 cohort in 2019 and national test scores in both reading and numeracy reasoning were also higher.
- All but one LAC progressed at least 2 NC levels for language during KS2 and all but 2 did so in maths during 2019.
- The mean NC progress rates for LAC during 2015-19 were similar to those for the whole cohort in both subject areas.

### Key Stage 3

- L6+ gender differences were lower than the all-Wales means in each core subject, lower than the previous year for most non-core subjects and lower than the national means for about one-half of non-core subjects. L6+ English results also improved in 2019 with a consequent narrowing of the performance gap compared with national outcomes.
- On average, boys made greater progress in numeracy reasoning than girls during KS3 and so reversed the gender gap.
- eFSM and non-Efsm – 2019:
  - differences were lower than the national averages at both L5+ and L6+
  - eFSM pupils made greater progress at reading and numeracy, narrowing the performance gap
  - Mean progress scores in reading and numeracy reasoning were better than expected
- Statemented pupils made, on average, very good progress in reading & numeracy reasoning throughout 2016-19.
- All but 2 of the 16 ethnic minority pupils with matched NC results attained L5 or better in English and maths in 2019. Over two-thirds of EM pupils attained L6 or better in both subjects.
- 2 pupils reached L7 in English and 5 did so in maths.
- The mean progress rates for LAC in reading and numeracy reasoning during 2016-19 were notably higher than the whole cohort.

### Key Stage 4

- KS3-4 progress for eFSM pupils during 2017-19 was similar to or better than that for non-eFSM pupils.
- MAT pupils made far more progress than the Y11 cohort as a whole in both English language / literacy and in maths / numeracy during 2017-19.
- The proportions of SEN pupils attaining A\*-C and A\*-G grades in English language and maths was relatively high, much improved compared to previous year and generally similar to those for non-SEN pupils.
- Ethnic minority pupils had similar outcomes and average progress rates to non-EM pupils in English language.
- In English language / literature and in maths / numeracy compared to the whole Y11 cohort:
  - Young offenders generally had higher outcomes
  - LAC had similar outcomes
  - Low attenders had similar or higher outcomes

## **1.2 Standards and Progress of Specific Groups - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

### **Areas identified for improvement and Required Action**

#### **Foundation Phase:**

- Boys' outcomes continue to be below those of girls in each main performance indicator. However, girls' higher level (LO6+) results have fallen noticeably more than for boys during the last 2 years.
- eFSM pupils had lower outcomes than non-eFSM pupils in nearly all performance indicators in 2019 and the differences generally increased during 2017-19.
- Except for LLCW (attributable to just one Welsh medium school in BG), LO6+ outcomes were lower than for Wales as a whole during the last 4 years.
- BG pupils on SA and SA+ had lower outcomes than those seen nationally (in 2018)

#### **Key Stage 2**

- Boys' outcomes continue to be below those of girls in each main performance indicator. While L5+ gender gaps closed in 2019, this was due to girls' results falling more than for boys.
- eFSM pupils had lower outcomes than non-eFSM pupils in all performance indicators in 2019. The differences were higher than the national means for most indicators and increased during 2017-19.
- eFSM pupils made less progress than non-eFSM pupils during KS2.
- About 6% fewer BG pupils attained L5+ in English and about 7% fewer in maths compared to Wales in 2019.
- Only one BG pupil was recorded as attaining L6+ (in English) in 2019.
- About 4% fewer BG pupils attained SAS >115 in reading and about 7% fewer in numeracy reasoning compared to Wales in 2019.
- The proportions of pupils attaining L4 or better in language fell for all SEN groups in 2019. All outcomes were below the 2018 national means.
- SA and SA+ pupils had considerably lower reading scores than non-SEN pupils in 2015 and, on average, made much less progress during KS2.
- SA pupils had considerably lower numeracy reasoning scores than non-SEN pupils in 2015 and, on average, regressed in in this skill area during KS2.

#### **Key Stage 3**

- Boys' outcomes continue to be below those of girls in a majority of performance indicators. While L5+ & L6+ gender gaps closed in 2019, this was predominantly due to girls' results falling more than for boys.
- Boys' mean NC progress scores were lower than for the girls in both English & maths.
- Boys made less NC progress than girls in both subjects during KS3 and so widened the gender gap.
- eFSM pupils had lower outcomes than non-eFSM pupils in all performance indicators in 2019 (but the differences were lower than the national means).



- eFSM pupils made less progress than non-eFSM pupils during KS3 and so widened the performance gap.
- L6+ outcomes in maths & particularly science fell during the last 3 years and decreased a little more than that observed nationally
- About 10% fewer BG pupils attained L6+ in English and in maths compared to Wales in 2019.
- About 7% fewer BG pupils attained L7+ in English and about 12% fewer in maths compared to Wales in 2019.
- Except for statemented pupils, SEN results were lower than the 2018 national means.
- On average, SEN pupils made less NC progress than non-SEN pupils during KS3 and particularly so for SA+ pupils in maths.
- On average, SA and SA+ pupils made much less progress in reading and numeracy reasoning than non-SEN pupils during KS3.
- NC and national test scores of young offenders were much lower than mainstream averages. Progress rates were also lower than for mainstream pupils. A significant proportion of YOs failed to progress in either NC English or NC maths during KS3.
- Both NC and national test outcomes were, on average, lower for LAC than for other mainstream pupils

#### **Key Stage 4**

- Boys' outcomes continue to be below those of girls in each main performance indicator. Where the performance gaps between boys and girls narrowed, it was usually due to a fall in girls' outcomes rather than an improvement in those for boys.
- The proportion of pupils attaining 5 A\*/A grades fell by about 2% in 2019 and was well below the national mean.
- KS3-4 progress rates for boys and girls in English language / literacy during 2017-19 were just about adequate while those for maths / numeracy were unsatisfactory. The weak progress in maths was a main contributing factor to low school and LA performance at GCSE.
- River Centre pupils had lower outcomes and average progress rates in English language / literature and in maths / numeracy compared to the whole Y11 cohort.
- Ethnic Minority pupils had lower outcomes and KS3-4 progression rates in maths / numeracy than in language. This suggest that support for language development is generally effective at KS4 but that EM pupils may find more difficulty in transposing their language skills within a mathematical context.

#### **Risk Considerations**

- The risk of failure to continue to make progress on raising educational standards features in the Corporate Risk Register (CRR) and risk mitigation is monitored by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Elected Members via Scrutiny and the Executive Committees.

### **1.3 Well-being and Attitudes to Learning - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- Standards of wellbeing and attitudes to learning are good in most primary and secondary schools. High proportions of both primary pupils and their parents expressed positive views about their children's wellbeing in schools.
- All pre-schools and schools participate in effective Healthy School programmes with exemplar work being recognised nationally and there are effective sport and physical activity programmes e.g. swimming programmes with high levels of achievement for learners in place. The proportions of CYP attending sports centres and enjoying PE in school on a weekly basis is higher than the national averages.

- An effective 11-18 counselling service in place for with very positive feedback from attendees, with an extended service for 18-25 year olds.
- BG is one of only a very few Councils to have a fully compliant 3<sup>rd</sup> School Sport Survey to inform more targeted work.
- 3 out of 4 BG secondary schools exceeded the WG modelled figures for attendance in 2018-19.
- Relatively low rate of fixed-term exclusions compared with other LAs in Wales.
- Improving procedures for tracking Children Missing Education (CME).
- An improving trend of increased opportunities for *pupil voice* in BG schools and greater learner participation in decision-making.
- Accredited outcomes for registered young people with the Youth Services are strong and above the Welsh mean.

### **1.3 Well-being and Attitudes to Learning - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

#### **Attendance and persistent absenteeism - Primary:**

- To improve primary school attendance in BG from 94.3% to equate at least to the all-Wales mean of 94.5%
- To reduce primary unauthorised absence in BG from 1.4% to that of the all-Wales means which is 1.3%
- To work to reduce PA in the primary sector to well below that of the all-Wales means i.e. Wales= 1.7%, BG=1.6%

#### **Attendance and persistent absenteeism - Secondary:**

- To improve secondary school attendance from 92.9% to 93.8% (all-Wales means)
- To reduce unauthorised absence in the secondary sector in BG from 2.2% to below that of the all-Wales means (1.6%)
- To reduce persistent absenteeism in the secondary sector in BG from 4.1% to below that of the all-Wales means (also currently 4.1%)
- To continue to reduce the numbers of pupils excluded in primary and secondary sectors.
- To continue to improve pupil behaviour in one school in particular and staff response to pupil concerns
- To further enhance pupil voice activities to inform self-evaluation planning activities

#### **Risk Considerations**

- The risk is that school attendance has an impact on pupil progression and learning, particularly in light of the COVID-19 emergency.

### **2.1 Support for school improvement - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- The LA has improved and detailed knowledge of individual, class and school performance particularly in relation to value-added progress.
- Improved coordination of support to schools via good partnership working between the LA and EAS
- Improved School Categorisation and School Inspection profile over the last 3 years.
- Good outcomes / progress for identified vulnerable groups in recent years.
- The Council is swift in its use of statutory powers which are kept under review

- The process for the appointment of LA Governors is now well established and there is evidence of improved governance in a majority of schools.

## **2.1 Support for school improvement - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

- Partnership work between BG Inclusion Services and EAS Challenge Advisers needs to continue.
- Support to improve early language acquisition and general skill development in the early years.
- Support to improve the effectiveness of learning & teaching of English / reading & maths / numeracy within KS3 & 4 with a particular focus on eFSM pupils and vulnerable groups.
- Support to improve the effectiveness of PDG grant planning and implementation
- Increasing the number / proportions of learners who achieve higher level outcomes at each key stage, but particularly in the Foundation Phase
- Support for assessment and target setting procedures within schools, with a particular focus on formative (assessment for learning).
- Increasing opportunities for schools to share good practice.

### **Risk Considerations**

- The risk is that the COVID-19 emergency response has impacted upon learner progression across the board, but particularly in KS4 and early year's skill development e.g. language acquisition.

## **2.2 Support for Vulnerable Learners - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

Good progress has been made through the comprehensive ALN Provision Improvement Plan:

- The River Centre is now open, ASD provision is in place,
- The ALN Service has undergone a review and is being reconfigured to meet the diversity of present need,
- Resource Base provision has improved, particularly for pupils who experience Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD),
- Excellent practice has been secured in Pen-y-Cwm Special School,
- Estyn judgements in school inspections for care support and guidance remain good or better.

Practice to identify pupil progress using matched data (also for specific pupils groups) is now in its second year and is helping to identify where further improvement in provision is needed, for example,

- in KS3 in particular and in identified schools
- in the progress rates between KS 3 and KS 4 in English and Maths, and
- to secure improved progress for all vulnerable groups, including eFSM and particularly during and between KS3 and KS 4

## 2.2 Support for Vulnerable Learners - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it

### Areas identified for improvement and Required Action

- The quality and effectiveness of support to increase attainment of young pupils in the early years and at the end of the Foundation Phase (particularly eFSM but not solely) needs to improve so that progress rates going forward for these learners is accelerated significantly.
- The quality and effectiveness of support provided for all vulnerable learners needs to improve so that attainment and progress increases significantly both during and between KS 3 and 4. The quality of provision and effectiveness of leadership and management of inclusion, in these Key Stages, need to improve, particularly in identified schools and settings and for the specific groups in this report.
- Exclusions: Monitoring of pupil level exclusion data by all Inclusion teams has improved and is effective, informing the quality of Officers' work and dialogue with individual schools. The establishment of the Safer Schools Partnership approach is beginning to support improved partnership work which will help reduce exclusions in the longer term. Work is currently mainly focussed on two secondary settings in particular to reduce exclusions.
- Revolving Door Approach: effective support in the River Centre is provided to pupils presenting with difficult behaviour and those reluctant to attend school. However, further developments are needed to develop capacity within mainstream settings to enable pupils to remain in and return back to their host schools, particularly for KS 3 pupils. There needs to be a service agreement in place between the River Centre and the Council to formalise the arrangements.
- ALN: the LA and EAS need to work more closely to support schools in improving analysis of pupils with SEN who perform below expected levels to ensure that all pupils show good progress in line with their ability from their individual baselines, particularly for those pupils in KS 3 at SA and SA +level. Such analyses is to include the impact of targeted interventions
- ALN in Early Years: Panel arrangements are effective in providing support for EY pupils with ALN. However, developing ALN capacity-building in EY is in the early stages of development and needs to be accelerated.
- EHE practice for those on the cusp of EHE needs to be more targeted. The Action Plan needs to be fully implemented.
- CME: The local authority needs to continue to monitor CME practices and address any gaps as they arise and embed the agreed processes and ensure that regular reporting continues.
- Young People who offend: all children involved with YOS to have access to 25 hours of education. At KS3 & 4, teachers and schools need to improve levels of support for pupils in line with required improvements for mainstream pupils. Schools / the LA will review their current methodology for SEN categorisation in KS4 to ensure pupils receive the required support necessary for them to attain outcomes aligned to their ability a particular emphasis on improving progress and outcomes of pupils in GCSE maths. Ensure the YOS fully implement their Literacy & Numeracy Strategy. Ensure that the recommendations made by ESTYN via their thematic report are fully implemented.
- EPS Service: to secure better blended working with Children's Services to explore how the EPS can work more effectively within Early Years settings. Work with colleagues in the wider Inclusion team and regionally to continue to provide support and challenge for schools in line with the ALNET Act. In particular, this will need to look at developing ALNCos' role to become more strategic, while also building the skills of the wider workforce to meet the needs of vulnerable learners. Work to develop more consistent practice within and between schools around

behaviour management, in its widest sense, to include a re-focus on the high quality research undertaken by the EPS around SEBD, literacy and assessment as well as developing schools' understanding of the ACEs agenda (with awareness training provided via EAS on a cluster-basis) and further attention to schools supporting the work of their ELSAs.

- Pregnant School Girls and Young Mums: To ensure that as a local authority we are made aware of these pupils in a timely basis, so that exclusions, attendance, support and any alternative provisions are monitored and reviewed on a monthly basis and in compliance with the policy.
- Review the Pen-y-Cwm capacity to meet the increasing demand for places.

### **Risk Considerations**

- The strategic risk relates to the readiness for the implementation of the ALNET Bill's approach to supporting learners presenting ALN and meeting the increasing demand for places in Pen-y-Cwm.

### **2.3 Support for Other Services - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- The Council's 21st Century Schools investment objectives are clearly aligned to the Vision for Education in improving educational standards and this is evidenced in a positive Gateway Review in 2019. Preparations for the Band B programme are well structured and deliverable.
- The Youth Service is good, taking account of its statutory duties and meeting them effectively, providing a wide range of universal and targeted opportunities for young people aged 11-25. Effective participation structures are embedded across the Youth Service. The Independent 11-18 Counselling Service is very effective. The service is line managed by the Youth Service, which allows a co-ordinated approach to wellbeing between all projects.
- The Council has an enhanced knowledge of school capacity linked to the effective annual monitoring processes that are in place; along with an on-going facilities review/management protocols and effective admissions processes. This is evidenced by the annual review and publication of the School Admissions Policy.
- Strong progress is being made in relation to surplus places reduction, with the Council seeing an overall reduction in both the primary and secondary sectors over the last 6 years; with a continued decrease projected for both primary and secondary over the next 2 years, taking the primary percentage to 11% and secondary to 9%, by the 2021/22 academic year – with the overall combined projected status as 12%. There are very few sufficiency issues within Blaenau Gwent schools at present.
- Blaenau Gwent's Post 16 provision is provided in partnership with Coleg Gwent at the Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone in Ebbw Vale. The Learning Zone's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) recognises that there is an effective partnership approach between the Council and Coleg Gwent, which is resulting in improvements to the participation rates of Post 16 learners, a broadening of the learning offer and increasing attainment levels for both academic and vocational learners. The 'A' Level A\*-E pass rate is approaching 99% and well above the national average and the vocational learning success rate (retention/attainment) is over 80% against all levels. The ALIS tertiary benchmarking data places the Learning Zone in the top 8% of Post 16 learning institutions for added value across the UK.
- The Council have a highly effective system in place linked to forecasting and monitoring pupil place requirements; this is evidenced pupil projection accuracy, which was at 97 % for primary 94% for secondary during the 2016/17 academic session and has been continually high over the last 3 academic years.

- The Council has good arrangements in place to support the coordination of early years, childcare and play to ensure sufficiency. Childcare is a rapidly developing sector in Blaenau Gwent and has grown from 142 registered places in 2002 to 1332 places currently. The sector continues to develop in response to emerging needs.

### **2.3 Support for Other Services - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

- The delivery of the WESP targets is dependent upon the Welsh medium seedling proposal and the need to secure the revenue.
- The ET and Youth Services are very dependent upon external funding and sustainability is a key consideration. Therefore, continued monitoring of team capacity is required in order to assess capacity requirements and secure/ sustain the positive progression of service priorities. The ESF Inspire funding risk needs to be escalated.
- There is a need to consider the management of the home to school and college transport operations and/or how the Environment/Regeneration and Education Directorates develop procedures, and agreements that are able to more effectively address identified gaps in reviewing the policy.
- A review of online admissions is required, in order to further improve parental engagement with the admissions process, and address the current ineffective online system. A business case is under development, in line with the use of Capita One's online module, which is the system used within current neighbouring and other Councils throughout Wales. This will require investment, which will be beneficial in the long-term and could enhance partnership working and data monitoring with other Council.

### **Risk Considerations**

- There are risks associated with the revenue implications associated with the Welsh medium proposal as well as the Youth Services Inspire initiative, which is currently funded through European (ESF) funding.
- Responding to the COVID-19 emergency to ensure that learner progression is maintained in safe settings.

### **3.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- The improving School Categorisation and School Inspection profile over the last 3 years demonstrates the increased effectiveness of leaders and managers in Local Government Education Services in Blaenau Gwent.
- The Council considers all evidence and implements its full use of statutory powers, where applicable.
- The impact of good, effective leadership is demonstrated through programme completion for example, the opening of Six Bells, the River Centre, good progress through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band A programme and approval of Band B programme for 2019 to 2025 period.
- Regional leadership is being exercised well by senior officers.

### **3.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

- To initiate the recruitment process for the appointment of a Corporate Director of Education post during the Autumn term 2020. This will be followed with a review of the Education Directorate's structural requirements.
- To continue to develop officer expertise through the Professional Learning Offer.
- To further develop member led self-evaluation activity across key service areas located within Local Government Education Services, for example via the Scrutiny sub-group looking at wellbeing in schools.
- To continue to develop member understanding and effectiveness via the Member Development Programme.

#### **Risk Considerations**

- There are risks associated with securing effective Corporate Director leadership for the Education Directorate, with recruitment initiated in the Autumn term.

### **3.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- The Self-Evaluation Policy (reviewed September 2020) and the SE Toolkit clearly sets out the ongoing cycle for self-evaluation processes and reporting. The FADE approach to writing evaluations is now embedded into routine practice. Processes are totally aligned with corporate policy. The Education Directorate is confident in its SE processes and their ability to sustain continual improvement. The Council is swift in its action and use of full statutory powers where applicable, to secure the improvement required.
- Partnership working between the Council and the EAS is strong and is subject to significant joint working and quality assurance. Impact evaluations reveal that the EAS and direct work of Challenge Advisers is having a positive impact on outcomes, provision and the quality of leadership. The School Categorisation and School Inspection profile has improved significantly over the last 3 years effectively evidencing the effectiveness of our self-evaluation processes. Improvement has been secured in EFLC (out of SI), in Glyncoed Primary School and to a certain degree in ALC (ESTYN monitoring visit summer term 2019). Progress in ALC will continue to be monitored.

### **3.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

- To continue to engage members in meaningful self-evaluation activity, for example the Scrutiny sub-group looking at wellbeing in schools.
- To continue to ensure that business plans bring about the improvement required.
- To continue to engage with a wider stakeholder group when undertaking evaluations, particularly Headteachers.
- To establish the Post 16 Partnership Board formally during the Autumn term 2020.

### **Risk Considerations**

- The risk is that self-evaluation and improvement planning fails to deliver improved outcomes for learners.

### **3.3 Professional learning - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- Senior Officers now hold Chair positions across a number of all Wales groups; this supports their ongoing professional development.
- 121 coaching sessions are embedded as routine practice.
- PDR underpinned by an effective 360 process is now also an embedded process. This also includes contributions from Headteachers for senior Officer's PDR i.e. the Corporate Director for Education and Head of Education Transformation.
- New Headteacher and aspiring deputy induction learning offer is in place and led by an experienced Headteacher.

### **3.3 Professional learning - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

- To engage in more formal evaluations of the impact and effectiveness of CPD for Directorate officers.
- To develop further cost neutral ways in which officers can continue to engage in professional development activity set against a backdrop of Council austerity measures.

### **Risk Considerations**

- The risk is that there is less resources to support professional learning and this impacts on the Directorate and schools' improvement journeys.

### **3.4 Safeguarding - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- The Safeguarding Matrix approach to capturing information is helpful and supports the ongoing improvement in practice in this area.
- The close working arrangements between Education and Social Services have developed well, further supporting a coherence of approach regarding safeguarding in schools and settings. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed and understood by key stakeholders.
- Recent work to respond to community safety issues, counter potential terrorism and extremist behaviours has progressed well, for example, the Safer School Partnership, the Respect and Resilience Action Plan.
- The Operation Encompass work has progressed very well and supports schools in this regard.
- Quality assurance processes to test the robustness of safeguarding processes have been implemented and inform ongoing work in this area.
- The new Council Policy requiring all school Governors to be DBS cleared is being implemented.



### **3.4 Safeguarding - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

- Continue to develop policy and practice that is responsive to emerging school concerns in line with the Vision for Education of school led improvement in a contextual safeguarding approach.
- Full implementation of VAWDASV (Group 1) training needs to be achieved at school level, as well as the implementation of Group 2 training across all LGES settings.
- The 360-degree safe Cymru Policy needs to be agreed by the Executive and implemented in all schools.
- Digitalisation of the safeguarding matrix to be developed and streamlined to enable greater readability, including the roll-out of MyConcern now that the Council has secured a revenue budget.
- Provide greater flexibility in the training offer to increase the uptake of safeguarding training by school governors

#### **Risk Considerations**

- There is a risk that the roll-out of the safeguarding package MyConcern is not implemented fully across the school estate.

### **3.5 Use of Resources - Areas where good progress has been made and how we know**

- The school's Individual Schools Budget (ISB) has been prioritised. Schools have been given a 1.59% uplift for 19/20. Predicted for 20/21 is approximately 5% which is slightly above the Council increase of 4.9%. Capital has been secured to match fund the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.
- Strategic Education Improvement Manager and Service Manager for Inclusion now in post and fully functional.
- Staffing review of officers without line management responsibility completed.
- Financial Efficiency Savings: devised, approved and budget agreed for 2019/20. No savings are required for FY 20/21.
- SENCOM Review completed – BG contributed extensively to the review and supports the findings.
- GEMS provide good value for money
- Arrangements with the regional Education Achievement Service (EAS) provide good value for money.
- There is good engagement of Blaenau Gwent elected members in the governance arrangements of the EAS; thereby effectively holding the EAS to account.
- Use of resources i.e. Education staffing have been significantly streamlined to ensure greater value for money.
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Band B Programme has been approved
- The Education Transformation, Youth Service and Inclusion Services provide good value for money.
- Schools have worked strategically with the Directorate to establish a Premature Retirement Contribution budget for staff terminations.
- Majority of schools have signed up to the 3 year SLA arrangement for support services with the Council.

### **3.5 Use of Resources - Areas for improvement and how we are going to do it**

- Bridging the Gap Programme to continue to seek greater effectiveness and efficiencies, where available.
- To review the Education Directorate Professional Learning Programme so that it provides an effective, overarching strategy; which links professional learning with the findings of self-evaluation and the broad aims of the Directorate.
- To evaluate the impact and effectiveness of staff professional learning on outcomes, wellbeing, provision and the quality of leadership of LGES.
- The viability of other SEWC regional services needs to be kept under close review to ensure sustainability and value for money going forward.
- Schools' deficit balances in the secondary sector have increased and need to be kept under close review going forward; timely support to be provided by the LA.
- To escalate the risk level for Youth Service's funding, as ESF comes to an end in 2022.
- There will need to be close monitoring and support for schools predicting surplus and deficit budgets, particularly for the two all-through schools;
- Effective monitoring of the out of county placement revenue budget is required; and,
- Facilitating robust Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and partnership arrangements with key partners, such as the EAS to ensure effective and sustainable provision for schools.

#### **Risk Considerations**

- Failure to deliver the corporate revenue savings requirements, in line with the Bridging the Gap proposals. This is likely to be impacted by the continued response to the COVID-19 arrangements moving forward.

# Agenda Item 26

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Social Services Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member for Social Services**

Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director of Social 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)
06/08/20	20/08/20	29.09.20			17/09/20	14/10/20		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to provide Executive Members with information on how the Social Services Directorate has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic over the last 4 months. It's particularly important that you are able to get a flavour of the work that is being done, not just in relation to Covid-19, but in continuing our services to ensure that our most vulnerable residents and children continue to get the care and support they require, both in their own homes and registered settings.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has been one of the most dramatic and far reaching events to impact on everyday life. Whilst departments like Social Services are still in part in the responsive phase, there is a need for reflection on how we responded to this pandemic in order to inform and shape the recovery phase, as well as prepare for the possibility of a future outbreak or second wave.
- 2.2 At the beginning of the pandemic, the worst-case scenario was that hospitals and the wider Health and Social Care system would be unable to cope with anticipated massive numbers of patients. This first peak of this pandemic has been less intensive than previously predicted. Hospital capacity and care support in the community was able to cope. The significant input from staff and volunteers at all levels across organisations was extremely positive which enabled services to adapt to change in working conditions and was key to the response across Blaenau Gwent and the region.
- 2.3 It is unclear whether in the future there will be further resurgences of Covid-19. The measures now in place, such as changes to societal safeguards,

social distancing, restricting travel, and limiting of commercial and leisure services, will take time to illustrate the impact that the easing of these restrictions might have on infection transmission rates. The Health and Social Care system already experiences seasonal pressures in the winter period, and the prospect of a rise in Covid-19 infections later in 2020 or 2021, cannot be ruled out.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Report has been considered by the Corporate Leadership Team and Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

#### **Option 1**

Members are asked to consider the report on the Social Services Directorate's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and make any appropriate recommendations.

#### **Option 2**

Accept the report as provided.

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

The Social Services Directorate's response to COVID-19 links to the following key priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater;
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities;
- To put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Welsh Government identified £40 Million to support the Adult Social Care sector in Wales in the fight against COVID-19 which was administered through the Emergency Hardship Fund. This involved the Council agreeing to fund additional spend related to the COVID-19 outbreak by Social Services and its commissioned services and then to submit claims for reimbursement from the Welsh Government for the money that the Council had committed. It is likely that the vast majority of additional funding we have issued will be reimbursed by Welsh Government but no doubt there will be some funding they will challenge and question which may result in additional cost to the Social Services budget.

5.2 In Gwent we worked with colleagues across Gwent Local Authority's to put forward a proposal for the allocation of funding. Directors of Social Services agreed to a regional approach to funding care homes with Aneurin Bevan

University Health Board, with a focus on sustainability. We had proposed three phases, firstly we wanted to rapidly provide a sum per registered bed to cover the 10-week period of the fund across Gwent, to support with their increasing costs and to maintain their sustainability during these difficult times. Secondly, we were then going to target support to those in greatest need and then finally we were going to look to support the domiciliary care market to retain their workforce.

- 5.3 However, this approach was not accepted by Welsh Government (WG) and did not meet the financial terms of the Emergency Hardship Fund (in full); with local authorities being asked to distinguish between healthcare and social care provision in care homes, which was another layer of administration for providers to consider when processing the claims. Health board Chief Executives have also raised sustainability of homes and the impact of patient flow if providers seek to close their doors due to financial viability.
- 5.4 Claims have been submitted to WG for funding from the Hardship fund for the period March to July 2020 for £2.4m to fund additional costs incurred as a result of the Council's response to the pandemic, of which £1.06m relates to Social Services expenditure.
- 5.5 The table below provides an analysis of expenditure claimed from the Hardship fund for the period April to July 2020:

Table 1 – Analysis of Expenditure

	£	<u>Comments</u>
<u>Children's Services</u>		
Staffing Costs	80,957	
Mobile Phones for Parental Contact	402	
<u>Adult Services</u>		
PPE	203,969	
Staffing costs	40,033	
GWICES equipment store and PPE distribution	25,292	
Direct Payments	861	
External Care Providers financial support	646,074	Financial support for April to June 2020, and covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional staffing costs</li> <li>- Increased cost of enhanced infection control</li> <li>- ICT costs</li> <li>- Loss of income from voids as a result of Covid-19</li> </ul>

In House Services	Provider	58,483	
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In addition to this the Council has estimated a significant loss in income mainly due to a suspension of services and reconfiguration of services in line with COVID response:

- Cwrt Mytton – income reduction of £18K - attributed to inability to provide weekly respite
- Community Options – reduction of £185K due to service closure
- Augusta House – reduction of £55k due to current service closure

## 5.6 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

To minimise the impact of COVID-19 on the Social Services budget the department has sought evidence of additional costs as a result of COVID-19 from our commissioned providers prior to paying for these additional costs, so we are confident given our approach that the vast majority of these costs will be reimbursed from the Emergency Hardship Fund. If WG challenge or refuse any of these additional costs, then we will provide further evidence if necessary. However as indicated above there may be some additional costs that do not meet the criteria established by WG for the Emergency Hardship Fund but we anticipate these will be relatively small.

## 5.7 ***Legal***

There are no legal implications within the report, but already there have been a number of reviews undertaken by different bodies and it is likely in the future there may be a public enquiry into the overall handling of the Coronavirus in Wales.

## 5.8 ***Personnel***

There are no personnel issues within the report other than to say it is important that we recognise the work of all the front line care staff including foster carers and their supervisors /managers who have, as always, pulled out all the stops to ensure services were maintained despite the anxieties of some we really can't praise them all highly enough.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

#### **Children's Services**

Across Children's Services we have maintained the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service throughout the pandemic and have prioritised home visits to safeguarding investigations, children on the Child Protection Register, Children Looked After and care leavers and those children on the 'edge of care'. In Children's Services all cases have been risk rated by team managers and these decisions are continually being reviewed. Prior to any visits by

social care staff, we adopted a triage approach which consisted of contacting the family/individual to check if they were self-isolating or presenting symptoms of COVID if they were the visits would be delayed if possible. If due to immediate safeguarding concerns the visit needed to take place staff would comply with public health advice in relation to social distancing, hygiene and PPE if required. Staff have continued to work from our 2 main offices at Anvil Court and Beaufort Road. Each team has provided a skeleton staff to work from the offices on a rota basis.

6.2 Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups and Reviews have been undertaken virtually as have all Court attendances. However, contested Court Hearings and Final Hearings have been postponed. A number of digital platforms have been used to undertake these virtual meetings. These have included teleconferencing, SKYPE and Microsoft TEAMS.

6.3 The number of Children Looked After currently stands at 214 (down from a high of 237). The My Support Team have continued to engage with our most complex children in residential care by providing face to face support in line with public health guidance. We have seen a decrease in the numbers of children in residential care reduce from a high of 18 down to 13.

6.4 Children's Services have been able to continue working throughout the pandemic outbreak and meet the needs of our children and families, all teams including our preventative teams have kept in touch with parents and children virtually. Three of our Flying Start children's hubs have remained open for children of keyworkers throughout the pandemic. Some of the Families First staff have been redeployed to help the Supporting Change Team to support those children on the 'edge of care' as this is one of our highest priorities and seen as an even higher risk area during the COVID crisis. A small number of our flying start staff were redeployed into adult domiciliary care. Our Early Year's Child Care and Play Team have played a crucial role during the crisis. They have worked closely with colleagues in Education to ensure school/child care provision was available for keyworker staff and the most vulnerable children in the borough. The Early Years and Child Care Team have provided significant support to child care providers during COVID-19 which has played a large part in 64% of providers remaining open throughout the crisis.

#### 6.5 **Adult Services**

Across Adults Services we have maintained the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) services throughout the pandemic and have prioritised home visits to families and individuals to undertake safeguarding investigations, Adults Services have continued to discharge patients from hospital (including those recovering from COVID-19) and any emergency assessments. In Adults all cases have been risk rated by team managers and these decisions are continually being reviewed. Prior to any visits by social care staff, we adopted a triage approach which consisted of contacting the family/individual to check if they were self-isolating or presenting symptoms of COVID, if they were the visits would be delayed if possible. If due to immediate safeguarding concerns the visit needed to take place staff would comply with public health advice in relation to social distancing, hygiene and PPE if required. Staff have

continued to work from our 2 main offices at Anvil Court and the Vitcc with staff working on a rota basis from office and home.

- 6.6 The Adult Services Department at the outset of the pandemic had to close our day services and respite care facility to ensure the safety of our most vulnerable people and to maintain social distancing and to ensure resources were concentrated at caring for people in their own homes and care homes. However, we have managed to have our respite facility available in case of an emergency to prevent carer breakdown, although we have not needed to use it at the moment. Careful consideration will need to be given to the timing of the reopening of these services.
- 6.7 We have successfully redeployed staff from community options to our care homes and home care teams to provide cover when staff became sick or more residents require 1:1 support due to isolation. We have seen a reduction in the care families require from domiciliary care agencies. This has been principally driven by family members providing care while they are off work and the fear that domiciliary care staff may transmit the virus into their home's. It is felt that demand will increase as more people return to work.
- 6.8 We have also supported the community hubs set up for those shielding and vulnerable in our communities, our community connectors and supporting people staff have been instrumental with corporate colleagues in delivering this service to vulnerable people in our communities.
- 6.9 From the start of lockdown Adults Services have had to work/ be available 7 days a week to ensure we could react appropriately to the issues being faced by us, i.e. getting recovering COVID-19 patients home, ensuring our care homes and domiciliary care agencies were being supported and provided with PPE and reacting and supporting our NHS colleagues to maintain bed capacity within the hospital system. This has meant our Adult Services staff working on the wards at our community and acute hospitals including working on the COVID wards.
- 6.10 Social Services took over the operational running of the Community Meals service from the 1st April 20, at the point of taking the service on 4 of the 7 drivers had to be shielded as they were all over 70 years of age or vulnerable, whilst one was off on long term sick. We redeployed some of our community option staff to drive the vehicles and also due to the social distance rules only one driver could go out on a round rather than 2 staff previously. Since we took over the services the hot meals have increased from 91 meals a day on average to 128 meals a day on average. This figure will fluctuate on a weekly basis due to starters and leavers.
- 6.11 In terms of staffing, then we did see initially a reduction in our staffing capacity early on as staff were expected to shield or classed as vulnerable, however where these staff can work from home we have facilitated this. Also a number of staff went off self-isolating due to symptoms for 14 days as we did not have access to testing at that point. A similar scenario occurred within our commissioned care homes and with our domiciliary care providers, however



within the last couple of months both Local Authority staff and commissioned staff are at good levels.

#### 6.12 **National Issues**

As you would have seen, national attention has been drawn to the supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), testing and outbreaks of Covid-19 in care homes.

If we take **PPE**, then initially there were difficulties around the supply of PPE encountered with supplies forwarded from the Welsh Government (WG) Pandemic store to local authorities (LAs) who for the first time were asked to supply PPE to local services providers who were in short supply (prior to this those providers were responsible for supplying their own PPE). For the five LAs in the former Gwent area, deliveries are made to the integrated community equipment store in Newport for onward delivery to individual Local Authorities. These deliveries are for both local authority and independent sector staff. Initially we used Augusta House for the supplies to be stored at and providers who required supplies picked these up from Augusta House, more lately we have moved the stores to the depot in Brynmawr. Social Services staff are continuing to distribute PPE on a weekly basis to all Social Care Providers working across Blaenau Gwent, our direct payment personal assistants and where requested by family carers.

6.13 Over the past few months and following representation at all levels, the situation with regards to PPE has improved significantly with regular deliveries and sufficient supplies to meet demand and internally we have continued to try to source our own PPE to reduce demand on WG stock, we have had some success thanks to colleagues in procurement across Gwent. Appendix 1 provides the amount and type of PPE that we have distributed to our commissioned providers of care and support and to our own staff over the last 4 months.

6.14 The position around PPE has been made more complex by frequent changing guidance from Public Health Wales through Welsh Government which has led to a level of misunderstanding amongst staff around the actual PPE they required. Despite this we are holding our own. Staff have the PPE they require to do their jobs safely across Blaenau Gwent.

6.15 **Testing** - Testing of staff exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms has been particularly problematic. At the commencement of the outbreak testing was very difficult to access due to prioritisation of NHS colleagues. When testing of social care staff did become available we were limited to 15 places per LA per day with the only testing facility available to staff being at the Cardiff City Stadium. This was obviously difficult for staff who could not drive nor had access to a car, or had the additional concern of driving when feeling unwell due to the symptoms of COVID 19. Appendix 2 identifies the number of tests on staff carried out in Blaenau Gwent up until the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020.

6.16 Testing of patients coming out of hospital was not put in place until the 29th April 2020, so prior to this discharges were occurring without any testing which

may have resulted in some of these bringing the virus into the homes. Couple this with no or limited staff testing in Care Homes to begin with created some of the problems that until recently we were having to deal with daily.

6.17 Thankfully the position has improved greatly over the past 3 months. The limit of 15 places has been removed, staff now have a choice of which testing station to attend, together with the offer of home testing and access to the Welsh Government portal to book tests. All Care Home staff and residents had been tested across Gwent by mid-June and for the last 8 weeks we have had testing of care home staff on a weekly basis and from the 24<sup>th</sup> August this will be on a fortnightly basis. Challenges remain in relation to the speed that test results are processed by the laboratories due to restricted capacity. This is due to improve from September 2020.

6.18 **Care Homes-** members will have seen over the last weeks and months the coverage around outbreaks in care homes. In Blaenau Gwent we own and run one care home for older people and commission services with a further 14 privately owned homes. Unfortunately, consistent and accurate information around the levels of outbreaks has been extremely difficult to obtain and we like all other LA's in Wales have struggled to get an accurate and timely picture in the private sector. Blaenau Gwent had the first case of COVID-19 within a Care Home in Wales in early March 20 and subsequently there have been a number of deaths related to COVID-19 in Care Homes across Gwent.

6.19 We are now collecting key data from all care homes across Gwent and supporting and ensuring rapid responses to outbreaks by ensuring all residents and staff are tested. Of the 15 Care homes in Blaenau Gwent 6 have had either staff or residents tested positive and 9 have had no outbreaks at all. As of the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020 there are currently 14 clean homes within Blaenau Gwent, which means they have never had an outbreak or have not had an outbreak for the last 28 days.

6.20 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The work the Social Services Directorate has been doing during the outbreak of COVID-19 has been to ensure we minimise the harm of COVID -19 and to keep people as safe as possible from contracting this virus whilst continuing to deliver services to those who have required our help.

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

The Directorate has had to work at speed to try and ensure our communities safety against contracting the virus and has often had to make decision without the consultation or engagement of the public which has often been as a result of implementing Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidance speedily. If at all possible we have tried to consult with providers who have delivered services to the public.

## 6.22 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

Social Services are still in part in the responsive phase, however there is a need for reflection on how we responded to this pandemic in order to inform and shape the recovery phase, as well as prepare for the possibility of a future outbreak or second wave. There have already been a number of reviews to ensure we learn from any of our mistakes and continue with our successes as we look forward and be better prepared for any future spikes in COVID-19.

## 6.23 **Preventative focus**

Social Services have tried to be proactive to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we have continued to make contact with vulnerable individuals, children and families throughout the pandemic as well as continued to visit where it has been necessary and safe to do so. This has been to try and prevent the spread of the virus but also ensure people are able to continue to manage during the lockdown period.

## 6.24 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

In many cases responding to the pandemic has strengthened joint working at local, regional and national levels, with more agile and responsive decision making and action planning being enabled. Relationships with providers have been strengthened by the continual dialogue, with local authorities, and others, supporting homes with the provision of advice and updates, and sharing learning.

## 6.25 ***Integration (across service areas)***

Health and Social Care have had to work closely together to reduce the potential harm of the Coronavirus outbreak for the public, this has included working in an integrated way to ensure we protect and safeguarding vulnerable individuals during these unprecedented times.

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

There is not a requirement for this report to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

## 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 This report is a one off report to reflect on the work undertaken by the Social Services Directorate over the last 5 months of the Coronavirus outbreak within Blaenau Gwent. If and should there be a further outbreak of the virus then we would bring a further report back to identify how and what we were able to do as a Directorate to continue to support our most vulnerable residents and children to continue to get the care and support they require, both in their own homes and registered settings.

## 8. **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

## Appendix 1

Please find following PPE allocated by Blaenau Gwent from 24th March to the 27th July (inclusive):

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>
Face masks	408,800
Latex gloves	366,950
Disposable aprons	221,320
Full face visors	5,625
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,002,695</b>

## Appendix 2

### Access to Testing

Please find following numbers of symptomatic staff tested between 9<sup>th</sup> April and 3<sup>rd</sup> July (inclusive)\*. *This does not include asymptomatic staff who have been tested via the routine care home weekly testing where an average of 3,200 staff are being tested each week across Gwent:*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Numbers tested via LA</b>
Commissioned Providers staff	67
Social Services staff	22
Other Local Authority staff	11
Family Members	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>

\*Please note after the 3<sup>rd</sup> July any staff member could book a test through the Welsh Government Portal so we no longer having an accurate record of testing.

# Agenda Item 27

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 29.09.20

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 29.09.20

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services– 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31st March 2020**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**

Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director of Social 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)
22.09.20	24.09.20	29.09.20			08.10.20	14.10.09		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Committee with safeguarding performance information and analysis from Children's Social Services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Monitoring and reporting systems are well developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.
- 1.2 The information provided will enable members to identify safeguarding trends and areas within the authority that require further development to improve safeguarding practice in order to meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people within Blaenau Gwent.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report contains safeguarding information from Social Services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31st March 2020 (Q's 1, 2, 3 & 4).
- 2.2 This report is written in order to provide a greater focus on the safeguarding agenda. The Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members agreed for safeguarding information to be reported to a Joint Social Services /Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3 A separate briefing note was provided to the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee in respect of the educational element of this report in relation to the period January to March 2020 in the light of the pandemic, and is attached as Appendix 2 for information.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Safeguarding Performance Information has been approved by CLT at their meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

3.2 The report will be considered by the Joint Education and Learning and Social Services (Safeguarding) Scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 therefore any recommendations that arise will be verbally updated to the Executive.

3.3 Having considered the information members can:

#### **Option 1**

Accept the approach and information detailed in the report provided

#### **Option 2**

Consider the information provided and provide comments on where improvement can be made to the current monitoring processes.

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

4.1 The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the Council's Corporate Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Improvement Plan
- Single Integrated Plan
- Corporate Risk Register
- Safe Reduction of CLA Strategy
- Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy

4.2 Social Services work to a number of regional and national safeguarding procedures which can be located on the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board website: <http://sewsc.org.uk>

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Q's 1, 2, 3 & 4 have seen the number of children on the child protection register vary from 61 at the lowest and 72 being the highest. The numbers of children looked after remained stable with the overall trend showing a decrease in numbers. This along with the lower numbers of court applications continuing a positive impact on the budget

The safeguarding team experienced some staffing challenges in the first 3 quarters of the reporting period however this has since changed with the safeguarding team operating at full capacity, which has negated the need to seek staffing support from the independent sector.

## 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The Directorate Risk register identifies the highest risks for the Social Services Department. These are monitored as part of the quarterly report of the Director of Social Services.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data (see Appendix 1) Social Services**

#### 6.1.1 **Referrals to Social Services**

6.1.2 **Figure 1:1** Shows the number of referrals made to Social Services within the four reporting quarters. The chart demonstrates a slight increase in referrals during Q2 (1,192) with a slight dip then in Q3 (1,031) with a second slight rise in Q4 (1189). The overall data evidences consistency in referral rates and despite Q's 2 & 4 showing an increase this increase is not significant enough to raise safeguarding concerns.

6.1.3 **Figure 1.2:** Shows the source of the referrals, again the data provides a consistent picture in that police remain the highest referring agency (1,434 for all four quarters) followed by Education (771) and then closely followed by Health (626)

6.1.4 **Figure 1.3:** shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. During Q2 the number increased to 1,029 from 806 in Q1 this number increased again slightly in Q3 to 1.036. In Q4 this had risen to 1888. The rise in additional referrals on open cases was analysed and it would appear that referrals for those cases open to the 14+ team were high in all four quarters. Further analysis evidenced that of these numbers a high percentage of children were being managed under the exploitation risk management processes and the 115 (contextualised safeguarding) meeting. This would account for the high percentage of referrals for this cohort of children.

For those children aged 0 -13 years the numbers of additional referrals on open cases are on average similar to previous quarters.

It is noteworthy to mention that whilst the numbers of referrals on open case can appear high, duplication and for information only MARF's are also captured under a re referral

#### 6.1.5 **Youth Services**

**Figure 1.4:** Shows the numbers of youth service referrals during this reporting period and the data shows a fluctuation in the numbers of referral throughout the year. Whilst the numbers of referrals are low, I can confirm that those young people attending youth service provision also attend an education

provision and the likelihood is that their needs are picked up through education referrals. Young people are also referred into the preventative service provisions where needs are assessed and met in accordance with that assessed need.

The Youth Service is an active partner on the Space Wellbeing Panel, they sit on the Steering Group as part of the Families First model and they actively participate in the South East Wales Safeguarding Local Network meetings. Multi-agency working and close partnership arrangements with the youth service ensure that safeguarding is prioritised.

#### 6.1.6 **Child Protection**

6.1.7 **Figure 2.2:** Gives a summary of the number of children on the child protection register the numbers of registrations and deregistration is also included. There were a total of 61 children on the child protection register in Q2 to 32 families. This accounted for an additional 17 children being registered in this quarter. The numbers of children on the child protection register decreased by 9 in Q2.

Q3 saw a slight rise in registrations with 72 children on the child protection register to 35 families. During Q4 the numbers of children on the child protection register decreased to 61 The numbers throughout the four quarters indicates an overall trend as the numbers in previous quarters demonstrates similar numbers

70 in Q1 (2019)

61 in Q2 (2019)

72 in Q3 (2019)

61 in Q4 (2020)

6.1.8 **Figure 2.5:** shows the average time a child is on the CPR. The social services senior management team review all those children on the CPR for 12 months or longer to ensure there is no unnecessary drift. It is pleasing to see that over the last 4 quarters these numbers continue to reduce, with no children being recorded as being on the child protection register for more than 24 months. Significant reduction in time spent on the child protection register for periods of 6 – 12 months and 12 – 24 months can also be see in Q4.

6.1.9 **Figure 2.6:** gives the breakdown on both initial and review conferences. They show the numbers of conferences held the number of families involved and the outcomes in terms of registered or not.

The numbers of initial conferences remained consistent averaging between 25/39 throughout this reporting period. (108 in total).

201 review conferences were held in the four Q's with 96 continued registrations and 105 reaching an outcome of deregistration

Of the numbers of initial conferences held throughout the four reporting quarters 94 children were registered 11 were not and 3 registrations were agreed pre-birth.



6.1.10 **Figure 2.7:** shows the number of initial conferences held within timescales. There has been consistency practice in this area throughout Q's 1, 2, & 3 (100%) with a dip Q4 showing at 86%.

6.1.11 **Figure 2.8:** relates to review conferences and the graph shows excellent performance with just slight dips in the 100% target.

- **Q1 – 100%**
- **Q2 – 91%**
- **Q3 – 100%**
- **Q4 – 98.5%**

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

Those children who are assessed to be at risk of harm are protected and safeguarded, and that the Local Authority adheres to legislation regarding statutory intervention.

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

6.3.1 The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental Safeguarding Leads help ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any emerging issues or trends within safeguarding.

6.3.2 Termly meetings also take place with the Safeguarding Leads from all the schools and monthly meetings take place between the safeguarding team and lead education staff.

6.3.3 The SEWSCB local Safeguarding Network group also reviews the safeguarding information to ensure all partner agencies are as fully aware as possible.

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

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) enables Social Services to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future.

## 6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 The work undertaken by the Social Services Directorate looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having a proactive rather than reactive approach to service planning can also help with planning resources.

6.5.2 Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to Scrutiny and Executive Committees enables members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

## 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and its sub groups ensure a multi-agency collaborative approach to safeguarding. Blaenau Gwent fully participates in the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

6.6.1 Additionally, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures each department has safeguarding leads and these meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority. The Leisure Trust lead also participates in this meeting.

6.6.2 Throughout the four Q's partnership working with the police continues to progress through the Early Action Together programme. The Detective Sergeant (DS) in post continues to make positive contributions to the safeguarding process. Strategy Discussions are now being held in a timely manner (within 24 hours) and information relevant to safeguarding decision making happens in a much more efficient manner.

6.6.3 Regarding the quality assurance element to the DS role, it has been reported through the Early Action Together steering group meetings that the police are feeling better supported in the completion of the PPN's and this has been evidenced with the Information Advice and Assistance service as the quality of information in the PPN's is much improved.

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

All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

6.8 **EqIA**  
N/A

## 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

The Local Safeguarding Network Group is a sub group of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board. This group is made up of multi-agency representation from within Blaenau Gwent who monitors and reviews the safeguarding information and performance. This group has direct links with the Youth Forum to ensure the voice of the child is fully considered and heard on safeguarding issues.

### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- *Appendix 1 – BG Safeguarding Reporting Template 2019-2020 (Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4)*
- *Appendix 2 – Briefing Note – Education Element*

# Safeguarding Performance Report

**Social Services**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to  
31<sup>st</sup> March 2020



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

**Blaenau Gwent**

County Borough Council

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**Purpose of the report**

The purpose of this report is to provide safeguarding information that is recorded by Social Services and Education.

Monitoring and reporting systems are well-developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.

Performance information is collated from Social Services and Education information systems which identifies activity, demands and trends of data. This includes a number of items that are statutory requirements as part of the Welsh Government Performance Framework.

The report includes information on the following:

- Referrals received and their outcomes
- Children who are being safeguarded and analysis
- Quality assurance arrangements with education settings
- Broader issues within education that impact upon safeguarding

This report will be shared with Senior Management Teams within Social Services and Education and presented to the Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee for Social Services, Education and Active Living.

# 00 | Community Profile - Demographics

## Community Profile



- 47% of Blaenau Gwent's local areas are amongst the top 20% deprived areas in Wales. (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014)
- The proportion of benefit claimants amongst people of working age was higher in Blaenau Gwent than the proportion across the comparable authorities (working-age client group – key benefit claimants August 2014 - 23.2% in Blaenau Gwent compared to all Wales level of 16.4%)

- The total rate of Blaenau Gwent's recorded offence levels was higher than comparative areas. For the year ending December 2014 Police recorded crimes - 76.89 crimes per thousand population in Blaenau Gwent compared to its most similar group of areas average (as defined by the Home Office) of 69.03 per thousand population.
- Total Population: 69,713 Number of 0 – 17 year olds: **13,607** (2018 Population Estimates)
- Number of Open cases to Children's Social Services as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019: **971**
- Number of pupils attending primary schools: **5,849**
- Number of pupils attending secondary schools: **2,962**

Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services

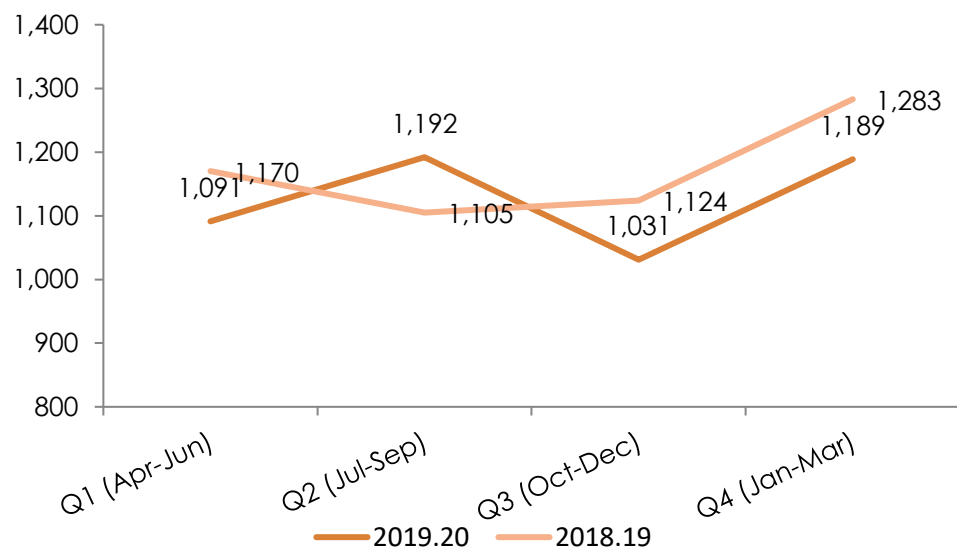
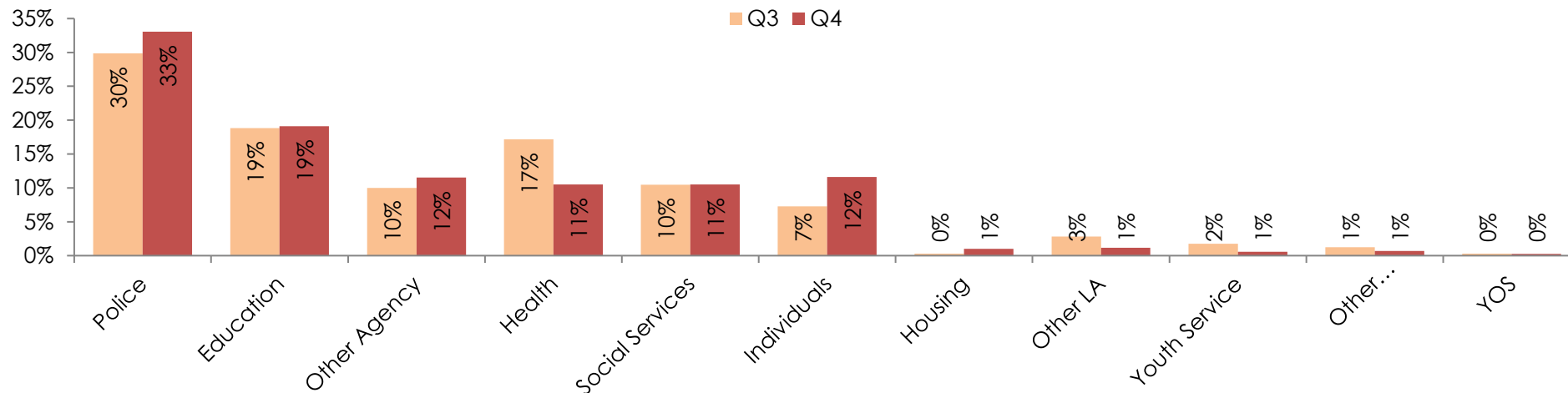


Fig: 1.2 Number and Percentage of Referrals by Source (19.20)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	%
Police	334	399	308	393	1,434	32%
Education	196	154	194	227	771	17%
Other Agency	107	141	103	137	488	11%
Health	154	170	177	125	626	14%
Social Services	114	146	108	125	493	11%
Individuals	138	125	75	138	476	11%
Housing	18	8	3	12	41	1%
Other LA	11	36	29	14	90	2%
Youth Service	18	10	18	7	53	1%
Other Departments	1	2	13	8	24	1%
YOS	0	1	3	3	7	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,091</b>	<b>1,192</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>4,503</b>	<b>100%</b>

# 01 | Referrals to Social Services

Graph showing the source of referrals and the percentage



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Fig: 1.3 Multi-agency referral forms (MARF's) received on open

cases

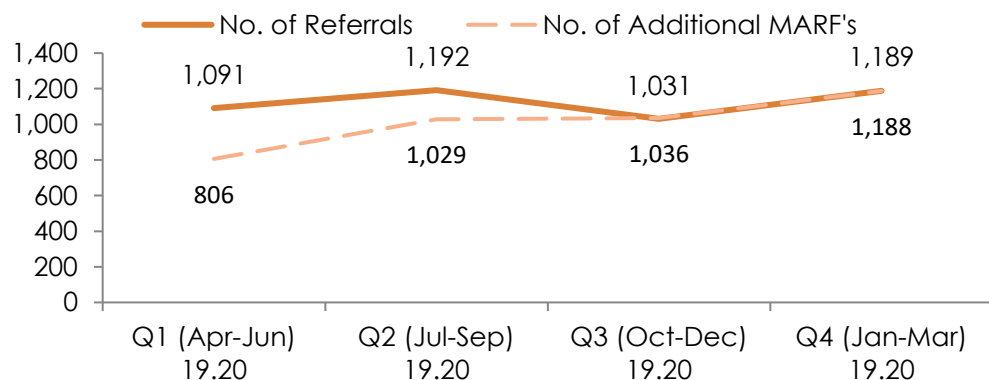
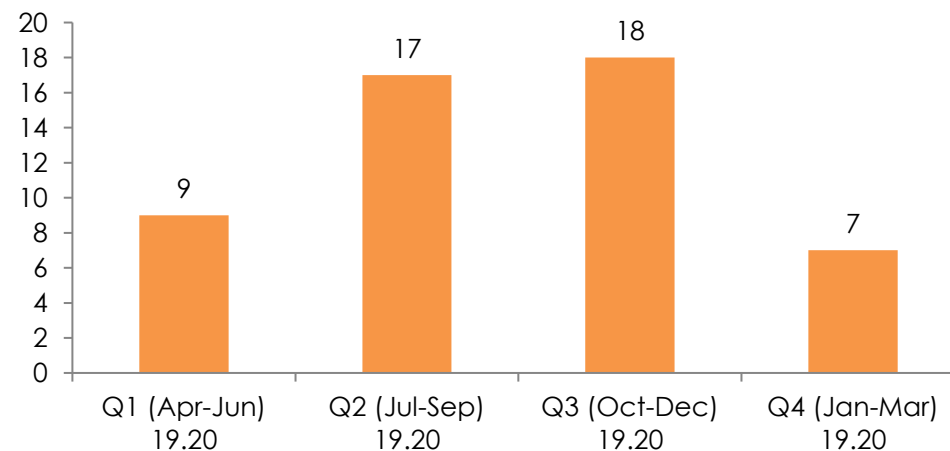
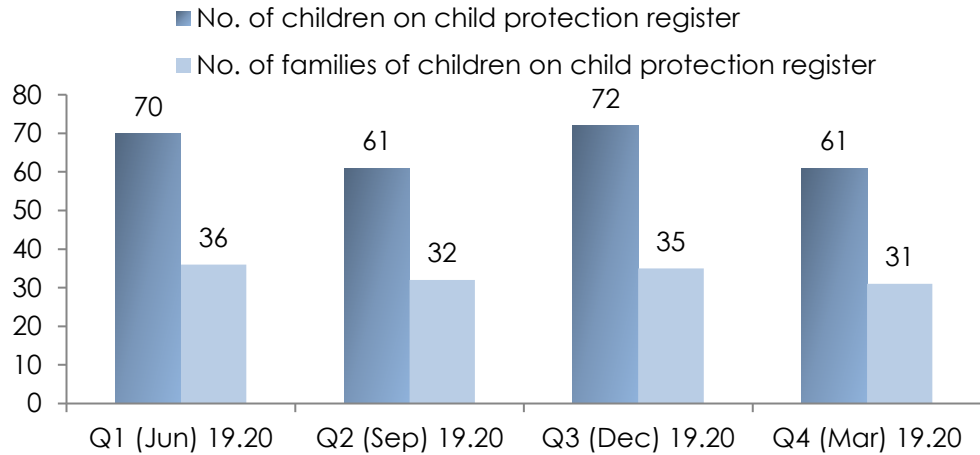


Fig: 1.4 Referrals received from Youth Services

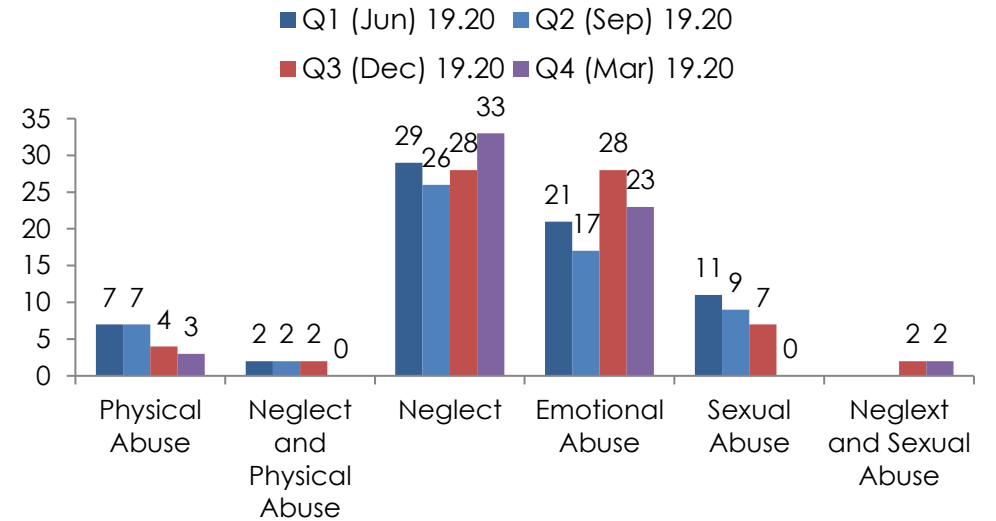




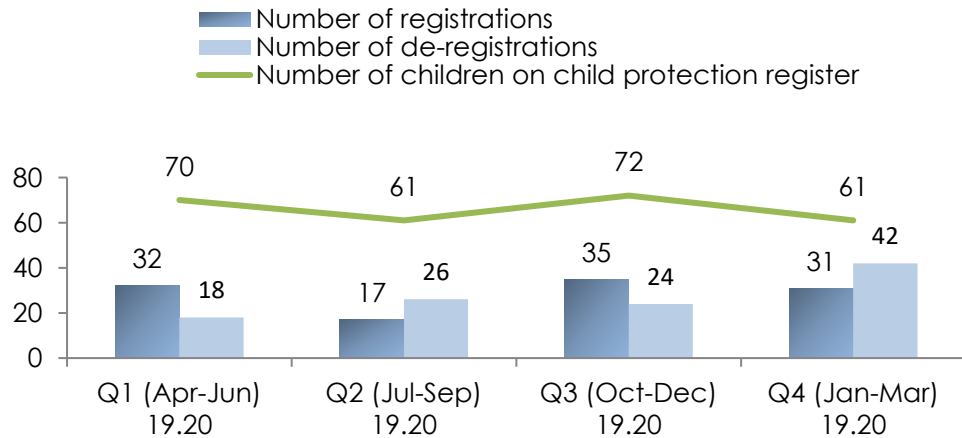
**Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register**



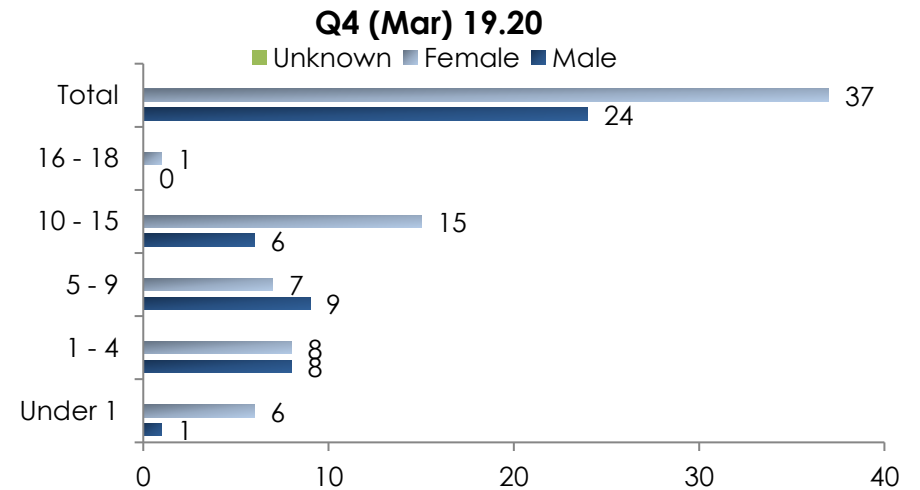
**Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse**



**Fig 2.2 Child Protection Register Summary**



**Fig 2.4 Age Breakdown of children on child protection register**



# 02 | Child Protection Register

**Fig 2.5 Average length of time on register**

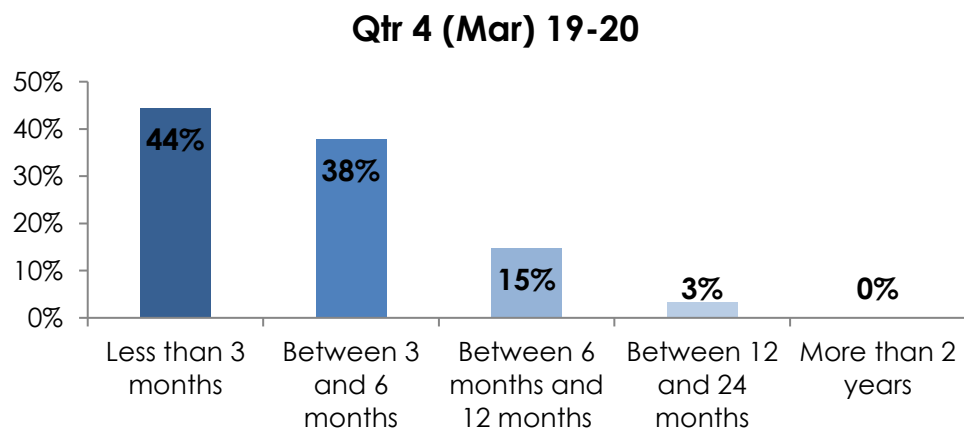


Table showing the breakdown of children on the child protection register over the last 12 months

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	Q1 (Jun) 19.20	Q2 (Sep) 19.20	Q3 (Dec) 19.20	Q4 (Mar) 19.20
Less than 3 months	31	13	31	27
Between 3 and 6 months	8	26	10	23
Between 6 months and 12 months	27	15	24	9
Between 12 and 24 months	3	6	6	2
More than 2 years	1	1	0	0
	<b>70</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>61</b>

# 02 | Child Protection Register

**Fig 2.6: Child Protection Conferences**

	Q1 (Jun) 19.20		Q2 (Sep) 19.20		Q3 (Dec) 19.20		Q4 (Mar) 19.20	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Conferences Held</b>								
Initial Conferences	30	45%	14	20%	39	48%	25	27%
No. of Families	16		8		17		15	
Review Conferences	36	55%	56	80%	43	52%	66	73%
No. of Families	23		28		24		33	

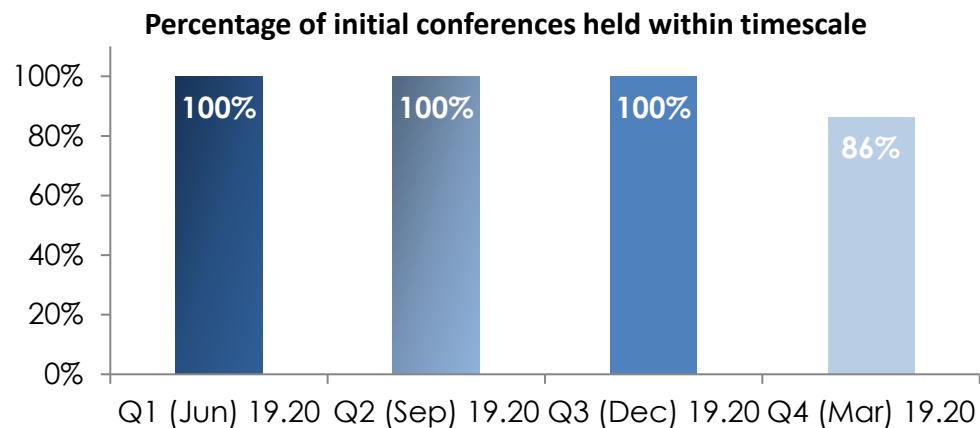
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<b>Initial Child Protection Conferences</b>	<b>30</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>39</b>		<b>25</b>	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Registered	26	87%	14	100%	32	82%	22	88%
Registered at birth	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	2	8%
Not registered	3	10%	0	0%	7	18%	1	4%

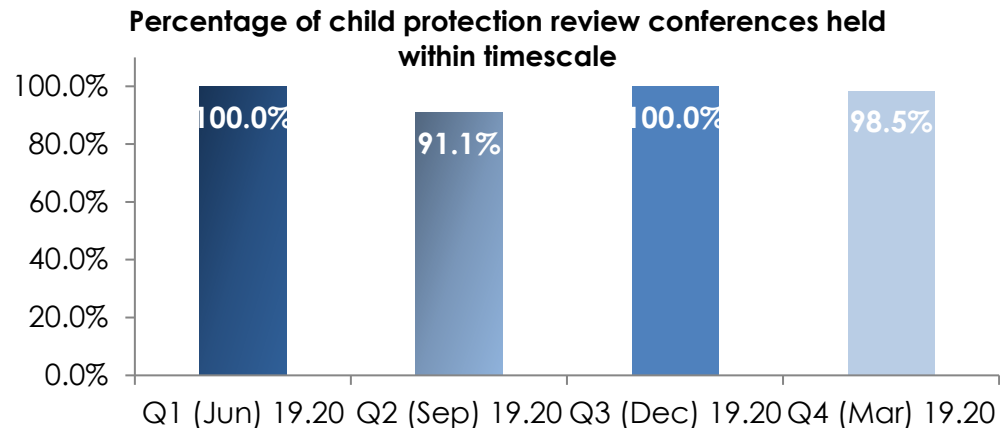
<b>Review Child Protection Conferences</b>	<b>36</b>		<b>56</b>		<b>43</b>		<b>66</b>	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Continue with registration	19	53%	32	57%	19	44%	26	39%
Cease registration	17	47%	24	43%	24	56%	40	61%

# 02 | Child Protection Register

**Fig 2.7 Initial Child Protection Conferences**



**Fig: 2.8 Child Protection Review Conferences**



	Q1 (Jun) 19.20	Q2 (Sep) 19.20	Q3 (Dec) 19.20	Q4 (Mar) 19.20	Annual 19.20
Number of initial conferences held	28	14	39	22	103
Number of initial conferences held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion	28	14	39	19	100
Percentage of initial conferences held within timescale	100%	100%	100%	86%	97%

	Q1 (Jun) 19.20	Q2 (Sep) 19.20	Q3 (Dec) 19.20	Q4 (Mar) 19.20	Annual 19.20
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held	36	56	43	66	201
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	36	51	43	65	195
Percentage of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	100.0%	91.1%	100.0%	98.5%	97%

### **Briefing Note to the Chair and Members of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny**

**8<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

#### **Performance Report**

You will be aware that the joint performance report for the period January to March 2020 was to be submitted to this Committee for scrutiny today. The purpose of me writing is to explain to members the reasons why as an Education Directorate at this juncture, we have not been able to provide this information.

You will be aware that schools closed on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and were repurposed to provide hub provision during the initial phase of the pandemic, with children being provided with an opportunity to check in and catch up for the last three weeks of what would have been the summer term prior to the whole school return commencing on a graduated basis from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

Throughout this time both the local authority, school staff and partners have flexed and responded to the daily challenges that this virus has brought. I am sure that you appreciate that despite children returning to schools at the beginning of the autumn term and the best efforts of headteachers, and governing bodies and Local Authorities to return to the new normal routine, it is far from a 'business as usual'. As such, one of the business activities that has been affected is the routine data collection of information from our schools and partners which is used to inform performance reports such as this. This, coupled with the timing of the production of this report occurring at a time of the education response moving back to an emergency response mode at the same time of whole school reopening has resulted in the information not being available for inclusion in the papers for this meeting.

Clearly and quite rightly, at this juncture headteachers are focusing on the operational leadership challenges faced by schools and to ask for historic performance information at a time when risk assessments are being regularly reviewed in response to the changing nature of the pandemic and its impact on wellbeing of staff and school organisational arrangements would not be appropriate given the current challenges that we jointly face.

However, you will be aware that there are two other education reports on today's agenda, namely the Safeguarding in Education Policy which has been updated in the light of the pandemic and the 360 Degree safe policy which is the ICT policy to support safe learning which is equally important. Moreover, it is intended that the quality assurance process to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements continue to operate and respond to the challenges but at this stage a specific date as to when this committee will receive the historic performance information cannot be determined but the joint Chair of this Committee will be regularly updated moving forwards.

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