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MAE HWN YN GYFARFOD Y MAE GAN Y CYHOEDD HAWL EI FYNYCHU

Dydd Mercher, 14 Hydref 2020

Annwyl Syr/Madam

PWLLGOR CRAFFU GWASANAETHAU CYMUNEDOL

Cynhelir cyfarfod o'r Pwllgor Craffu Gwasanaethau Cymunedol yn Siambr y Cyngor, Canolfan Ddinesig on Dydd Llun, 19eg Hydref, 2020 am 10.00 am.

Yn gywir

Michelle Morris
Rheolwr Gyfarwyddwr

AGENDA

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.

2. YMDDIHEURIADAU

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau.

3. DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU

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

Derbyn datganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

4. **PWLLGOR CRAFFU GWASANAETHAU
CYMUNEDOL** 5 - 12

Derbyn cofnodion y cyfarfod o'r Pwyllgor Craffu Gwasanaethau Cymunedol a gynhaliwyd ar 21 Medi 2020.

(Dylid nodi y cyflwynir y cofnodion er pwyntiau cywirdeb yn unig).

5. **DALEN WEITHREDU – 21 MEDI 2020**

Nid oedd unrhyw gamau gweithredu yn deillio o gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Craffu Gwasanaethau Cymunedol a gynhaliwyd ar 21 Medi 2020.

6. **BLAENRAGLEN GWAITH: 7 RHAGFYR 2020** 13 - 16

Derbyn yr adroddiad.

7. **BLAENGYNLLUN CYDNERTHEDD
BIOAMRYWIAETH AC ECOSYSTEM (2019-2022):
ADRODDIAD BLYNYDDOL 2019/20** 17 - 62

Ystyried adroddiad y Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

8. **CYNLLUN RHEOLI RISG LLIFOGYDD (2016- 2022)** 63 - 90

Ystyried adroddiad y Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

EITEM(AU) EITHREDIG

Derbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiad(au) dilynol sydd ym marn y Swyddog Priodol yn eitem(au) a gafodd eu heithrio gan roi ystyriaeth i'r prawf diddordeb cyhoeddus ac y dylai'r wasg a'r cyhoedd gael eu heithrio o'r cyfarfod (mae'r rheswm a penderfyniad am yr eithriad ar gael ar restr a gedwir gan y Swyddog Priodol.

9. **CYNNIGION AM DEPOT NEWYDD Y CYNGOR** 91 - 114

Ystyried aedroddiad y Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

At: Cynghorwyr M. Moore (Cadeirydd)

C. Meredith (Is-gadeirydd)

P. Baldwin

M. Cook

G. L. Davies

S. Healy

W. Hodgins

J. Holt

H. McCarthy

J. Millard

G. Paulsen

K. Pritchard

T. Sharrem

B. Summers

L. Winnett

Pob Aelod arall (er gwybodaeth)

Rheolwr Gyfarwyddwr

Prif Swyddogion

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
21ST SEPTEMBER, 2020**

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

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. MOORE CHAIR)

Councillors C. Meredith (Vice-Chair)

M. Cook

S. Healy

W. Hodgins

J. Holt

H. McCarthy

J. Millard

G. Paulsen

K. Pritchard

B. Summers

L. Winnett

WITH: Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services
Head of Community Services
Service Manager Development & Estates
Team Manager Neighbourhood Services
Team Manager Street Scene
Business Transformation Officer
Marketing Projects Officer
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor

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

	Apologies for absence were received for Councillor T. Sharrem.	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>Councillor B. Summers declared an interest in the following item:-</p> <p>Item No. 9 – Regional Wood Waste Recycling Facility</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 4th March, 2020 were submitted for points of accuracy.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the special Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 1st September, 2020 were submitted for points of accuracy.</p> <p>Councillor H. McCarthy reported that his apologies had not been recorded.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>INVESTMENT IN CHILDREN’S PLAY PROVISION</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Team Manager Street Scene.</p> <p>The Team Manager presented the report which provided an update on children’s play area sites and sought Members’ endorsement of the current work programme for the installation of play equipment into sites, in line with the priorities identified as part of the detailed play area review undertaken and reported to Council in December 2018.</p>	

The Officer spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein. He said the report outlined 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. This funding was initially allocated for the creation of a splash park facility at the Festival Park site, however, on the basis that the owners of Festival Park were no longer in a position to take the project forward, a decision was taken under delegated authority to reallocate the funding, as the Council had to advise Welsh Government how the funds would be utilised by the end of March 2020, or the funding would be withdrawn.

Appendix 1 of the report identified play area sites where the purchased equipment would be installed, together with a future rolling programme for any further funding should it become available in the future.

The Officer concluded that Parc Bryn Bach had recently benefitted from new Welsh Government grant funding through the Valleys Regional Parks as part of the Discovery Gateway Project, and a new £185k visitor attraction (play facility) had been installed at the Park and was recently opened to the public following the COVID lockdown period, and had been very well received by visitors to the Park.

A Member expressed concern that the decision was taken under delegated authority. She referred to previous meetings where Members had requested Officers to enter into further discussions with Aneurin Leisure Trust regarding the possibility of the splash park facility at Parc Bryn Bach. However, the Member said she welcomed the investment at Duffryn Park, but would have liked engagement with children in the community on the type of play equipment they would have liked installed at the Park.

The Officer said the funding available for the splash park was £110k, however, costings for the installation etc. was in the region of £250k and ALT felt that the project was not financially viable. In terms of engagement with the community, he agreed that this was always the best way to progress, however, on this occasion the deadline to spend the funding by 31st March was extremely restricted, but he

assured that engagement would be undertaken moving forward.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Officer confirmed that the £110k had already been received by the Council in 2017/18 for a splash park facility. This was about repurposing the funding in line with the priorities identified under the Council's agreed play area review.

Another Member said he welcomed the investment on many of the Borough's play areas, but unfortunately some would be closed. However, in the future, and hopefully with new housing developments being undertaken in the Borough the provision of play facilities will increase to match the demand that new developments would bring.

In terms of consultation a Member said he hoped that appropriate consultation would be undertaken prior to any closure of facilities being undertaken. He said some of the planned closures would mean that children would have to cross busy main roads, and this needed to be looked at.

The Chair confirmed that discussions with local Ward Members would be undertaken.

The Officer referred Members to the extensive consultation undertaken as part of the play area review that was reported to Council in 2018 and indicated all children's play areas in Blaenau Gwent, and those at risk of closure at that point in time. He said the recommendation was that when the lifespan of those play areas at risk came to an end, further discussions would be held with local Members.

A brief discussion ensued when a Member said she had previously raised safety concerns regarding the potential closure of Glanystroth and Maeshafod play areas, as children would have to cross a very busy main road. A Member said he agreed that children's safety was paramount, but pointed out that parents were responsible for the safety of children visiting play areas.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted, and Members endorsed the current work programme for the installation of the already purchased play

	<p>equipment into the sites identified at 2.14 of the report, and supported further dialogue at Ward level in respect of the future of children’s play areas as listed in 2.16 of the report, in line with the “Play Area Review” undertaken in December 2018 (Option 1).</p>	
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>WASTE AND RECYCLING PERFORMANCE 2019-20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Team Manager Neighbourhood Services.</p> <p>The Team Manager presented the report which provided an update of waste and recycling performance outcomes for 2019/20.</p> <p>The Officer went through the report and highlighted points contained therein. He said in 2018/19 the Council exceeded its WG Statutory Recycling Target for the first time. This success was built on, and this year (2019/20) the Council had exceeded the new higher target of 64%, attaining 65.31%. This was achieved through the hard work and dedication of the Waste Team, in partnership with WRAP, and with support from the Communications Team, Performance Team, Senior Management, the Leadership and most importantly the residents of Blaenau Gwent. He said this year on year success has seen Blaenau Gwent move from 22nd in 2017/18 to 11th in 2019/20 when compared to all other Welsh Local Authorities.</p> <p>In response to a question raised by a Member regarding the garden waste collection, the Officer confirmed that the figure included the extended winter period collection, which was maintained through the winter with one vehicle. However, the scope to increase garden waste was restricted due to the limited number of green spaces in the Borough and relatively small garden sizes.</p> <p>In relation to the HWRC (Reuse), the Officer said whilst this was a small element of recycling it was intended to maximise this element and extend the service at the new facility at Roseheyworth.</p> <p>A Member said the improving figures were pleasing, but expressed concern regarding the Council’s ranking position,</p>	

particularly with green waste. He also asked whether any notification had been received from Welsh Government in terms of the potential for increased fines for 2020/21 due to the impact of COVID.

In response the Officer confirmed that no information had been received from Welsh Government in relation to penalties. Whilst the targets were challenging, the recycling figure for 2019/20 was positive, and hopefully with the continued support from residents and hard work of the teams involved the same trend would be seen in 2020/21.

A Member referred to the increased target of 70% over the next 4 years, and asked whether the Council had the capacity to achieve this.

The Team Manager Neighbourhood Services confirmed that Officers were already engaging with WRAP advisors on ways to progress to 70% over the next 4 years. The roll out of the Keeping up with the Jones campaign Borough wide would hopefully have an impact, and there were also other initiatives being considered in order to maximise recycling and achieve that target. The situation would be closely monitored to ensure that everything was being done to achieve the target.

He confirmed that savings achieved through the reduction of residual waste was put back into the service to provide additional resources to continue with the kerbside waste enforcement, new recycling receptacles, and implementation of initiatives to increase recycling.

A Member commended the Team on their good work, and said that the introduction of the new system in 2015 had been a success.

Another Member asked whether green waste included was collected from the Borough's social housing providers, the Officer undertook to investigate.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.

	<p>Councillor M. Cook joined the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>The Forward Work Programme for the meeting scheduled for the 19th October, 2020 was submitted.</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Cemetery Capacity report had been moved to the November meeting.</p> <p>A brief discussion ensued when the Scrutiny Officer confirmed that Straying Animals would be the subject of a future report to Committee.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted.</p>	
<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>REGIONAL WOOD WASTE RECYCLING FACILITY</u></p> <p>Councillor B. Summers declared an interest in the following item.</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, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Team Leader Waste Compliance and Development.</p> <p>The Team Manager Neighbourhood Services presented the report which provided an update on the development of an Outline Business Case for a Regional Wood Recycling Facility. The Officer went through the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>In response to a question raised by a Member, the Officer said it was intended for the facility to be 'green' with a low</p>	

carbon footprint, and that the majority of the machines would be electric powered.

A Member asked whether there was the potential to generate income from the facility, and would it assist the Council in hitting its recycling target.

The Officer said improved recycling targets was one of the benefits of the facility for participating LA's, it would also provide clarity for panel board manufacturers in terms of consistency around specification and options for income.

A brief discussion ensued when the Officer clarified points raised by Members.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend that the report which contained information relating to the business affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted, and the Outline Business Case to support the development of the Regional Wood Waste Recycling Facility to the next stage be supported (Option 1).

Agenda Item 6

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **19th October 2020**
Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme: 7th December 2020**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanna Williams, Executive Member Environment**
Report Submitted by: **Cllr Mandy Moore, Chair of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

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	05.10.20			19.10.20			

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present to Members the Community Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 7th December 2020 for discussion and agreement.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Scrutiny Work Programmes are key aspects of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and support the requirements of the Constitution.
 - 2.2 The topics set out in the Forward Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's revised Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
 - 2.3 Effective work programmes are essential to ensure that the work of scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
 - 2.4 The Committee's Forward Work Programme was agreed in September 2020, recognising the fluidity of the document to enable the Committee to respond to urgent and emerging issues, and included timescales when reports will be considered by the Committee. The work programme is managed and implemented by the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer under the direction of the Chair and Committee.
 - 2.5 The forward work programme for the forthcoming meeting will be presented to Committee on a 6 weekly cycle in order that Members can consider the programme of work; request information is included within the reports, as appropriate and / or make amendments to the work programme.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** The Scrutiny Committee consider the Forward Work Programme for the meeting 7th December 2020, and

- Make any amendments to the topics scheduled for the meetings;
- Suggest any additional invitees that the committee requires to fully consider the reports; and
- Request any additional information to be included with regards to the topics to be discussed.

3.2 **Option 2:** The Scrutiny Committee agree the Forward Programme for the meeting 7th December 2020, as presented.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme – Meeting on 7th December 2020

Community Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Dates / Deadlines	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
Monday 7th December 2020 Deadline: 20 th November 2020	1. Environmental / Public Protection Services	Pre Decision Members to consider amendments to the Authority's Front Line Service Delivery arrangements.	Dave Thompson / Matthew Perry	Executive
	2. Uplands Project	Pre Decision To receive a report on the project.	Chris Engel	Executive Approval
	3. Litter & Dog Control Order Enforcement – Performance report	Performance Monitoring To receive the annual report on 2019/20 activity.	Dave Thompson	Executive
	4. Cemetery Capacity Update	Performance Monitoring To be updated on the cemetery capacity following the review undertaken in 2019/20.	Dave Watkins	Executive

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Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **19th October 2020**

Report Subject: **Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) 2019/20 annual report**

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

Report Submitted by: **Clive Rogers, Head of 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)
16/09/20		05.10.20			19.10.20	09.12.20		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on how the Council is meeting its statutory duties under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. As Members will be aware the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan was passed by Full Council in October 2019.
- 1.2 The biodiversity and ecosystem resilience duty under Section 6 of the Act requires that “a public authority must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.”¹

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 In order to comply with the Environment (Wales) Act The Council has produced a Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 This report gives the overview of annual progress against the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) for 2019/20.
- 2.3 To maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council by 2022 aims to:
 - Reduce overall resource use; reuse where possible and recycle everything recyclable.
 - Increase biodiversity and ecosystems understanding in the council staff and councillors through appropriate channels including Service

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/section/6/enacted>

Area Environment Champions and the Councillor Nature Champion role.

- Embody the challenge of integrating the Active Travel, Well-being of Future Generations, Planning and Environment Acts to encourage sustainability in the ways we live, work and play.
- Promote responsible use of natural resources in Blaenau Gwent by working in partnership with others to initiate positive action and behaviour change.
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience on council owned land, particularly with regard to priority species and habitats.
- Support the Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen Local Nature Partnership.

2.4 The three delivery mechanisms are Service Area Action Plans; Environment Champions network and advice from the Natural Environment team.

2.5 Progress in 2019/20 by Service Area against the delivery mechanisms and activity plan for 2020/21 is shown in Appendix 2.

There have been four quarterly Environment Champions meetings, with ten champions in the network representing all Service Areas and Councillors. Meetings were held across council offices and at Parc Bryn Bach. Active travel opportunities noted. Topics included resource use and urban wildlife.

2.6 From the review of progress, the Forward Plan (2019-22) has not been changed. Minor amendments have been made to accurately reflect the Service Area structure, recognising that Organisational Development sits within Commercial Services.

2.7 The annual report and Forward Plan do not cover statutory duties included in the Rights of Way, Planning or Active Travel Acts but is connected to these through the Welsh Government's commitment to sustainable development as the best way to improve the well-being of Wales now and for future generations.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Options Appraisal**

- **Option 1:** Members to not approve the annual report 2019/20 or the activity plan for 2020/21.
- **Option 2: Preferred option** Members to approve the annual report and activity recommended this year to meet the Section 6 Duty.

3.2 To follow the duty public authorities should embed the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems into their early thinking and business planning,

including any policies, plans, programmes and projects, as well as their day to day activities².

Approval of the annual report

- 3.3 Goes beyond the minimum to show a proactive approach to meeting the duty; embeds the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems into business planning and enables an efficient mechanism for reporting and meeting the requirement to report to Welsh Government.

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 Priority:**

Continued efforts to meet the aims of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) primarily contributes to meeting the following priority:

4.2 Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities

- To improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors. Welsh Government funding – Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing (ENRAW) has provided significant levels of funding to support enhancements in this area of work helping to fund improvements at Local nature reserves – Beaufort Ponds and Woodlands, Parc Nanty Waun, Trevor Rowson, Sirhowy Woodlands, Granny’s Wood by working in partnership with local community groups.

4.3 **Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

Continued efforts to meet the aims of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) meets all of the well-being plan objectives:

- The best start in life for everyone
- Safe and friendly communities
- To look after and protect the environment
- To forge new pathways to prosperity
- To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places that they live, learn, work and play

- 4.4 Benefits provided by resilient ecosystems across the well-being goals are shown in appendix 7.2 of the Forward Plan (Appendix 1).

4.5 **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

- 4.6 Continued efforts to meet the aims of the Forward Plan directly contributes to actions needed for the ‘resilient Wales’ goal:

“A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and

² <https://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/natural-resources-management/environment-act/guidance-for-section-6/?lang=en>

ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change)”

- 4.7 By implementing the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 the Local Authority will maximise its contributions to the Well-being Goals.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 *Impact on Budget*

There has been a cost neutral impact on budgets from implementing the Forward Plan. Officer time was funded through existing revenue budgets. Additional external revenue and capital funding to deliver further biodiversity and ecosystem resilience related schemes of work were secured and delivered as follows:

Source – Project	Forward Plan Aims met	Amount	Schemes of Work
ENRaW* - Resilient Greater Gwent	Council owned land Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working Working in partnership	£42,000	Invasive Non Native Species work Support for Go Wild! Event Urban biodiversity
ENRaW* - LNP Cymru	Support the LNP Council owned land Working in partnership	£7,500	Hedgerow creation at Cwmtillery Lakes Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Pond excavation at Cwmcelyn Pond LNR Hedgerow Management at Beaufort Hills Ponds & Woodlands LNR
ENRaW* - Gwent Green Grid	Council owned land Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working Working in partnership	£43,629	Woodland management Access improvements
Welsh Government - Active Travel	Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working Working in partnership	£406,000	Tarmac path in Central Valley LNR
Planning - Biodiversity S106 payments	Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working	£0	N/A

Actions in 2020/21 will have a cost neutral impact on budgets. Officer time will be funded through existing revenue budgets. Additional external revenue and capital funding to deliver further biodiversity and ecosystem resilience related schemes of work have been secured as follows:

Source	Aims to be met	Amount	Schemes of Work
ENRaW* - Resilient Greater Gwent	Council owned land Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working Working in partnership	<£77,000	Invasive Non Native Species work BGCBC owned Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) surveys x5 (GWT and Buglife) Urban biodiversity Action across LNRs
ENRaW* - LNP Cymru	Support the LNP Council owned land Working in partnership	£61,000	Priority habitat work: hedgerows, meadows Verge & grass management
Welsh Government - Active Travel	Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working Working in partnership	£TBC	TBC
Planning - Biodiversity S106 payments	Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working	£0	N/A

*ENRaW – Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being grant from Welsh Government

5.2 *Risk*

The main risk is that failure to meet the aims of the plan will result in the Authority failing to meet its statutory duty and miss out on funding opportunities for delivery of the Council Corporate Objectives and Blaenau Gwent Well-Being Plan.

5.3 *Legal*

The legal implications of failing to meet the Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 are currently unknown.

5.4 *Human Resources*

The ways of working that will develop by working towards the aims of the Plan will contribute to staff health and well-being. For example, by raising awareness of the nearest Local Nature Reserves to council buildings.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

Is gathered quarterly through business plan reporting.

6.2 *Expected outcome for the public*

Biodiversity underpins the health and resilience of all of our ecosystems. In turn, these ecosystems support all life on Earth. This means that taking positive action for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience in Blaenau Gwent will enhance the natural resources the public utilise such as clean water, air and food production including pollination services. The natural environment is also a vital resource to enhance mental and physical health and well-being.

6.3 *Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)*

Activities that meet the aims of the Plan are undertaken between the Natural Environment team and other service areas.

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

The Plan covers the 2019-22 period and will be revised and renewed in line with up to date policy, legislation and evidence. Meeting the duty enables support for long term management of Local Nature Reserves.

6.5 *Preventative focus*

Contributing to the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience will help to mitigate and adapt to climate change and provide positive opportunities to maintain and build mental and physical health and well-being.

6.6 *Collaboration / partnership working*

The work on the Environment Act duty fits with the Blaenau Gwent Well-Being Plan and ways of working could be shared with members of the Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board. Support for the Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen Local Nature Partnership will assist with a strategic approach to environmental and ecological management in both boroughs.

6.7 *Integration (across service areas)*

Access to a healthy natural environment has many benefits to all service areas. Integration will be driven by Environment Champions.

6.8 *Equalities Impact Assessment*

A brief Equality Impact Assessment was submitted with the Forward Plan and has not needed to be updated as the Plan has not changed.

All service area business plan objectives and actions will take into account each of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. They are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Environment Champions network will be open to all and will strive to be representative of employees across the Council.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1 The identified delivery mechanisms will continue to be monitored quarterly by the Governance and Natural Environment teams in the 2020/21 Financial Year.
- 7.2 A report will be submitted to the Community Services Scrutiny committee in the first quarter of the 2021/22 Financial Year summarising progress made, action planned for 2021/22 and any updates on the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan 2019-2022.
- 7.3 The Forward Plan should be revised and approved by March 2022 for the next agreed period.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022)*
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/contents/enacted>
- <https://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/160321-frequently-asked-questions-en.pdf>
- <https://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/150512-biodiversity-and-resilience-of-ecosystems-duty-en.pdf>
- <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/Nature%20and%20mental%20health%20infographic.pdf>
- <https://www.wcva.org.uk/about-us/news/2017/04/doing-your-bit-for-a-resilient-wales>

Glossary

Biodiversity - means 'biological diversity' which refers to all the variety of life on Earth (plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms) as well as to the communities that they form and the habitats in which they live.

Ecosystem - dynamic network of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

Ecosystem Resilience - is the ability of an ecosystem to maintain its normal patterns of nutrient cycling and biomass production after being subjected to damage caused by an ecological disturbance, for example extreme weather events caused by climate change, outbreak of disease or human exploitation.

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Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

**Biodiversity and Ecosystem
Resilience Forward Plan
(2019-2022)**

**To meet requirements of
Section 6 Biodiversity and
Ecosystem Resilience duty of the
Environment (Wales) Act 2016**



Photos: Clockwise from left; Cwmcelyn Pond; Waun y Pound ponds, Silent Valley

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1. Executive Summary

The Council recognises that resilient ecosystems underpinned by a biodiverse landscape deliver multiple benefits for the people of Blaenau Gwent. We are committed to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and working in partnership with others to ensure the sustainability of the subsequent benefits and their contribution to the well-being goals.



Councillor N. J. Daniels, Leader of the council

This Forward Plan has been prepared to meet the Section 6 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and outlines the Council's commitments to meeting requirements of the legislation. It will also contribute to delivering the Council's requirements under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Section 6 of the Environment Act places a duty on the Local Authority to **'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity'** so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions. In so doing, the Local Authority must also seek to **'promote the resilience of ecosystems'**. The duty replaces the section 40 duty in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act 2006), in relation to Wales.

The Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Forward Plan:

- Summarises the relevant legislative requirements for biodiversity & ecosystem resilience (Section 2 and Appendices in Section 7).
- Sets out aims for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to meet the duty (Section 3).
- Through Service Area Action Plans, identifies objectives for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's compliance with the Biodiversity & Ecosystem Resilience duty (Section 4).

Carrying out the requirements under the new biodiversity duty will help to:

- contribute to physical and mental health and wellbeing of people who live and work in the borough;
- offer opportunities for community engagement and volunteering
- take action to intercept and help break down air, water and soil pollution;
- take action to reduce flood peaks; and
- play an important role in tackling global climate change and take action to regulate local climate.

Further benefits provided by resilient ecosystems through the sustainable management of natural resources, and how they contribute to the Well-being Goals, are expanded on in Section 7.2.

2. Introduction to the Forward Plan

The Environment (Wales) Act was introduced in March 2016; it is a statutory duty that the Council must comply with. Part 1 of the Act sets out Wales' approach to planning and managing natural resources at a national and local level with a general purpose linked to statutory 'principles of sustainable management of natural resources'.

Section 6 of part 1 places a duty on the Local Authority to seek to:

- 'maintain and enhance biodiversity' so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions and
- 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'

To assist in implementing the new duty the Local Authority is required to publish a Forward Plan on how they intend to comply with the biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty and then report on how that plan is working. The first Forward Plan was due in March 2017. This was delayed in Blaenau Gwent due to resource constraints and awaiting formal guidance from Welsh Government.

The duty to forward plan ensures that biodiversity is considered at the decision-making level, and the new reporting duty ensures the Local Authority takes responsibility for showing how our actions have helped to enhance our natural resources and ecosystems.

This Forward Plan follows guidance prepared by Welsh Government and considers the seven Wellbeing Goals contained in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the principles of Sustainable Development objectives of the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales and the Ecosystem Approach Principles (Section 7.1, 7.3, 7.4 & 7.5).

Service Area opportunities and objectives (section 4) have been derived via discussion with managers from all service departments throughout 2018 and 2019. These interviews have highlighted risks and opportunities for delivery of the Environment Act duty. The interview template can be found in section 7.6. A more detailed set of questions was used within the Green Infrastructure team and is available upon request.

It will be an evolving plan that can be updated in line with further evidence from Natural Resources Wales such as Area Statements. Blaenau Gwent CBC will be required to report on the outcomes of this plan by December 2019 and then

subsequently every three years. The Forward Plan will be reviewed accordingly in light of that reporting.

3. Forward Plan

3.1 Aims

To maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, by 2022, aims to:

1. Reduce overall resource use; reuse where possible and recycle everything recyclable.
2. Increase biodiversity and ecosystems understanding in the council staff and councillors through appropriate channels including Service Area Environment Champions and the Councillor Nature Champion role.
3. Embody the challenge of integrating the Active Travel, Wellbeing of Future Generations, Planning and Environment Acts to encourage sustainability in the ways we live, work and play.
4. Promote responsible use of natural resources in Blaenau Gwent by working in partnership with others to initiate action and behaviour change.
5. Maintain and enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience on council owned land, particularly with regard to priority species and habitats.
6. Support the Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen Local Nature Partnership.

These aims also contribute to meeting the council's corporate and well-being objectives.

3.2 Forward Plan timeline

Activity in Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to develop and implement the Biodiversity & Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan as required by the Environment Act (Wales) 2016:

2019-20

- Business Plan linked objectives start April 2019
- Implementation of objectives
- Start Environment Champions in April 2019, quarterly meetings
- Report to Welsh Government by end of December 2019

2020-21

- Report to Scrutiny Committee in April 2020
- Implementation of objectives
- Quarterly Environment Champion meetings

2021-22

- Report to Scrutiny Committee in April 2021
- Implementation of objectives
- Quarterly Environment Champion meetings
- Develop new Forward Plan before end of March 2022

2022-23

- Report to Scrutiny Committee in April 2022
- New Forward Plan in place from April 2022

3.3 Forward Plan responsibilities

The Green Infrastructure Team is responsible for leading, reporting on and providing advice related to the implementation of the Environment Act across the council.

The Green Infrastructure Team can provide guidance on fulfilling the Council's Biodiversity Duty however implementation of each action plan will be the responsibility of the individual Service Area managers.

4 Service Area Action Plans

4.1 Governance & Partnerships

Governance & Partnerships	
Summary of functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate performance, scrutiny and democratic services • Policy, partnerships & engagement 	
Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holder of corporate business plan and progress monitoring • Gateway to many engagement forums • Link to well-being plan 	
	Objective 1: Support the integration of Forward Plan objectives into council Corporate Business Plans and provide quarterly reporting
	Objective 2: Provide a link to Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and Public Service Board

4.2 Resources

Resources
Summary of functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial services • Revenue services • Internal audit / risk management
Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Environmental Management System accreditation (e.g. Green Dragon or ISO 14001)
Objectives to be set

4.3 Commercial Services

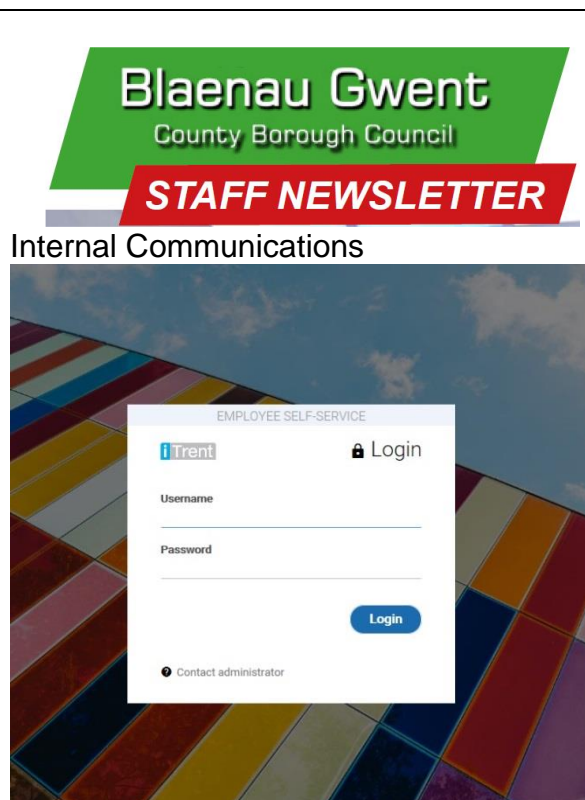
Commercial Services

Summary of functions:

- Customer service
- Communications
- Organisational Development
- Procurement

Opportunities:

- External communications with residents, businesses & tourists
- Internal communication led by Environment Champions group
- Consider local, regional and global impacts of procurement of goods
- Contribute to procurement strategy
- Contribute to Organisational Development strategy
- Encourage work culture changes for example taking meetings outside and actively travelling (cycling or walking) to work



Online HR system

Objective 1:

Take further steps towards implementation of a “paperless office” via the further development of the iTrent system and the roll-out of the self service functions

4.4 Social Services

Social Services

Summary of functions:

- Adult Social Services
- Child Social Services

Opportunities:

- Multiple opportunities exist in children's and adult's services:
- Using green spaces
- Improving and enhancing social service property gardens and grounds
- Engaging well-being of children in council care




Photo: Getty Images

Objective 1:
 Green Infrastructure team (Environment Act leads) to attend Provider Managers meeting annually


Objective 2:
 Encourage nature friendly management at our Provider Services outside spaces

Objective 3:
 Engage our citizens and staff with the environment through involvement in environmental projects within our Provider Services

4.5 Regeneration & Community Services

<h3>Regeneration & Community Services</h3>	
<p>Summary of functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontline integrated services • Public Protection • Property Services • Infrastructure • Regeneration • Planning 	
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate land management • Involving local communities • Engaging more people in their local green spaces • Improving access and quality of local green spaces • LDP policies • Increasing efficiency of council buildings 	
	<p>Objective 1: Work towards the Local Development Plan (LDP) aims, including the production of Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance</p>
	<p>Objective 2: Maintain and enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience on council owned land, particularly with regard to Section 7 priority species and habitats in partnership with community groups, Gwent Wildlife Trust and others.</p>
	<p>Objective 3: Ensure that the Council Embraces the Well-being of Future Generations Act across the service functions and contribute to improving educational standards in relation to biodiversity.</p>
	<p>Objective 4: Support the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) in its work as a strategic partnership of organisations and individuals directing and delivering nature conservation in both Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent boroughs, at local and wider landscape scales.</p>
<p>Supporting pollinators with pollen & nectar rich verge planting in Ebbw Vale. Photo: Liz Hancocks</p>	

4.6 Education

<h3>Education</h3>	
<p>Summary of functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion and school improvement • Transformation & performance • Youth service 	
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging schools and students via educational sessions and eco-councils • Attend Head Teachers meetings • Management for nature on school grounds • To get students involved in the council e.g. work placement projects 	
 <p>Engaging school pupils with Natural Resource Management. Photo: Aileen Vaughan</p>	<p>Objective 1: Engage schools and students via educational sessions and eco-councils and embed sustainability</p>
	<p>Objective 2: Green Infrastructure team (Environment Act leads) to attend a Head Teachers meeting annually</p>
	<p>Objective 3: Encourage nature friendly management on school grounds</p>
	<p>Objective 4: Engage young people with the environment through the youth service</p>

5 Reporting

5.1 Mid-year 2019-20 summary

	Business Plan linked Objectives	Environment Champion	Further engagement
Governance & Partnerships	Yes	Yes	Yes
Resources	No	Yes	-
Commercial Services	No	Yes	Yes
Organisational Development	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social Services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Regeneration & Community Services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Education	Yes	Yes	Yes
Councillors	Not applicable	Yes	Yes

5.2 Reporting schedule

One of the principles of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources set out in the Environment Act is that we should be adaptable and plan, monitor, review and change our work as we gain a better understanding through improved evidence and our experiences. This way we can work together to ensure that with every iteration of the Forward Plan further steps can be taken to embed the duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity into every function of the council.

Blaenau Gwent CBC will be required to report on the outcomes of this plan by December 2019 and then subsequently every three years. The Forward Plan will be reviewed accordingly in light of that reporting.

6 References

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018-22:

<http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/council/policies-plans-strategies/corporate-plan-2018-2022/>

(accessed 13/09/19)

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Well-being Objectives 2017:

http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Council/Policies_Strategies_Plans/Wellbeing_Objectives_-_June_2017-WF3.pdf (accessed 13/09/19)

Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan 2018-23:

<https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/well-being-plan.aspx> (accessed 13/09/19)

Environment (Wales) Act 2016:

<https://gov.wales/environment-wales-act-2016-overview> (accessed 13/09/19)

Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales 2015:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-05/nature-recovery-action-plan-2015.pdf> (accessed 13/09/19)

State of Natural Resources Report 2016:

<https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/research-and-reports/the-state-of-natural-resources-report-assessment-of-the-sustainable-management-of-natural-resources/?lang=en> (accessed 13/09/19)

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

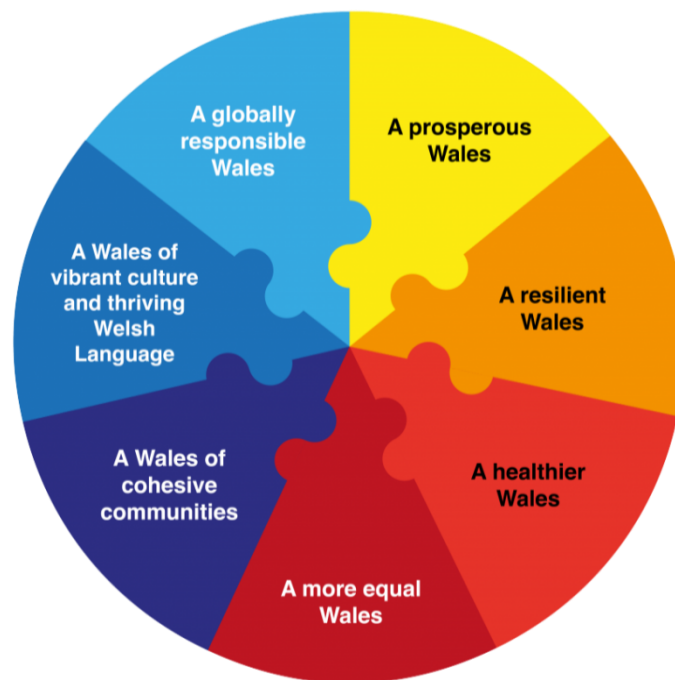
<https://gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015-guidance> (accessed 13/09/19)

7 Appendices

7.2 Link to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ensures the Local Authority takes a more joined up approach to improving the environmental, as well as the economic, cultural and social well-being of Wales. The sustainable management of natural resources put in place by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 enables Wales' natural resources (including biodiversity) to be managed in a more proactive, sustainable and joined-up way.

There are seven well-being goals that the Local Authority must work towards achieving. These are:



The 'resilient Wales' goal is the top commitment to biodiversity:
“A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change)”

By implementing the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 the Local Authority will maximise its contributions to the Well-being goals contained in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

7.3 Benefits provided by resilient ecosystems

Well-being Goals	Benefits
A Prosperous Wales	Natural resources provide significant opportunities for employment and economic activity in Wales. Many of our key industries, such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, energy and tourism are dependent on natural resources.
A Resilient Wales	Biodiversity, mountains, moorlands and heaths, semi-natural grasslands, woodlands, urban greenspaces, rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands, coastline and marine ecosystems all contribute to supporting Wales' ability to adapt to climate change. They are fundamental in supporting all of the well-being goals.
A Healthier Wales	Natural resources make a significant contribution to the physical health and mental wellbeing of people in Wales. For example, trees help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality; access to nature and greenspace has positive impacts on physical and mental health.
An Equal Wales	Equal access to ecosystems that provide cultural services would contribute to equality in Wales. At present, access is not equally distributed. For example, not everyone lives in close proximity to accessible greenspace.
A Wales of Cohesive Communities	Involving communities in the management of their local parks and woodlands has been shown to improve community cohesion and reduce antisocial behaviour.
A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language	Landscapes have played a significant role in the development of distinct cultural practices, such as local building techniques which use local materials and locally specific art and literature.
A Globally Responsible Wales	The environment supplies all our material resources, so we must better understand the impacts of our activities globally in terms of both imports and exports. By making these inter-linkages and dependencies more explicit, it becomes clear that taking action to build the resilience of natural resources will provide significant other benefits across the Well-Being Goals.

Source: State of Natural Resources Report, 2016

7.4 Sustainable Development Five Ways of Working

In addition the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out five ways of working linked to sustainable development, that public bodies must adhere to in order to demonstrate how they are meeting their duty. Any plan/project must now demonstrate that they are following these ways of working.



7.5 Link to the Environment (Wales) 2016 Act Ecosystem Approach

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 helps to deliver the sustainable management of natural resources as it requires the Local Authority, in delivering the new biodiversity duty, to promote the resilience of ecosystems – the ‘**ecosystem approach**’. This approach, developed by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity has been acknowledged internationally as the most effective method of addressing biodiversity decline.

The Environment (Wales) Act puts the ecosystem approach into statute through a set of principles, which are based on the 12 principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). These principles must be used in designing and implementing projects and programmes of work.

The ecosystem approach is an application of joined-up planning and management processes that look at ecosystems as a whole and seeks to build the resilience of those ecosystems and the multiple benefits that they provide. As biodiversity underpins the resilience of ecosystems, it is a fundamental component of the approach.

Ecosystem Approach Principles

1. **Societal Choice:** The objectives of management of land, water and living resources are a matter of societal choices.
2. **Localised Decisions:** Management should be decentralized to the lowest appropriate level
3. **Adjacent Effects:** Ecosystem managers should consider the effects (actual or potential) of their activities on adjacent and other ecosystems
4. **Economic Drivers:** Recognizing potential gains from management, there is usually a need to understand and manage the ecosystem in an economic context. Any such ecosystem-management programme should:
 - a. Reduce those market distortions that adversely affect biological diversity;
 - b. Align incentives to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use;
 - c. Internalize costs and benefits in the given ecosystem to the extent feasible.
5. **Resilience:** Conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning, in order to maintain ecosystem services, should be a priority target of the ecosystem approach
6. **Integrity:** Ecosystem must be managed within the limits of their functioning
7. **Spatial and Temporal Scale:** The ecosystem approach should be undertaken at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales
8. **Temporal Scale:** Recognizing the varying temporal scales and lag-effects that characterize ecosystem processes, objectives for ecosystem management should be set for the long term.
9. **Managing Change:** Management must recognize that change is inevitable

10. **Balancing conservation and use of biodiversity:** The ecosystem approach should seek the appropriate balance between, and integration of, conservation and use of biological diversity
11. **Evidence:** The ecosystem approach should consider all forms of relevant information, including scientific and indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices.
12. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The ecosystem approach should involve all relevant sectors of society and scientific disciplines.

7.6 Link to Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales

The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales produced by Welsh Government in 2015 is aimed at addressing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by:

- putting nature at the heart of decision-making
- increasing the resilience of the natural environment
- taking specific action for habitats and species

It sets out how Wales will deliver the commitments of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to halt the decline in biodiversity by 2020 and then reverse that decline.

By fulfilling the Environment Act's biodiversity and ecosystem resilience duty, the Local Authority will help to achieve the Nature Recovery Action Plan objectives. These are:

- Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels.
- Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principle importance and improve their management
- Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation
- Objective 4: Tackle key pressure on species and habitats
- Objective 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring
- Objective 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery

7.7 Service Area Action Plan interview template

Generating Service Area Action Plans

to contribute to the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan to meet Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

These questions are aimed at finding out what we do well already and what areas we need to focus on to help deliver the obligations under the Act. Your answers will form the basis of service area action plans which will be shared with the service area for feedback before completion of the forward plan.

Name	
Job Title	
Service Area	

Questions

1. What are the opportunities for your service area to gain more from the Green Infrastructure¹ currently present in Blaenau Gwent?
2. Please indicate areas of responsibility/activity within your department:

- Influencing land or resource use
- Land management e.g. activities such as grazing, vegetation removal, planting
- Authorising activities on land
- Utilising council owned land for activities, e.g. Local Nature Reserves or/and the Green Infrastructure network in Blaenau Gwent (footpaths, cycle paths etc.)
- Liaising with environmental organisations or/and community groups
- Work related to energy use; carbon emission etc.
- Procuring or using natural resources on council business e.g. stationary, food, building materials

Others:

¹ Green Infrastructure: is a network of connected, accessible, multi-functional sites (including parks, woodland, informal open spaces, and nature reserves) as well as linkages (such as river corridors and wildlife corridors) that can bring about multiple social, health, economic and environmental benefits to the area. The sites are multi-functional in that apart from their ecological value they can be used for various purposes, for example, leisure activities and promoting tourism with associated benefits in terms of health and the economy.

3. What do you think you already do well?
Examples could be:
policies / actions on the ground / supporting volunteers or community groups
4. What could you do better, or more of, and what are the barriers?

(E.g. when planting areas with wildflowers for pollinators make sure that the habitat is also suitable for other stages of the invertebrate life cycle)

5. Have you started to incorporate the five ways of working linked to sustainable development from the Wellbeing of Future Generations act?
(Long-term/ Prevention/ Integration/ Collaboration/ Involvement)
6. Are there any aspects of green infrastructure or/and biodiversity and ecosystem resilience that you or your service area would like to understand better – please describe?
7. Evidence collecting, decision making and reporting. Are you collecting evidence on the need for, and monitoring the success or otherwise of your actions? Any examples, and can we share your case study/ data?

Further information

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 enhances the previous NERC² Act 2006 duty to require all public authorities, when carrying out their functions in Wales, to seek to “maintain and enhance biodiversity” where it is within the proper exercise of their functions. In doing so, public authorities must also seek to “promote the resilience of ecosystems”.

Under the Act, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has to report to Welsh Government on the actions we aim to take.. This is a statutory requirement that the Council must comply with.

We are currently in development of the Forward Plan. It was agreed at SMT in May 2017 to take forward proposals to interview all service area managers to establish what we are doing well already and what actions we need to take to comply with the Act.

Contacts:

Chris Engel, Green Infrastructure Team Manager, extension 5545
Liz Hancocks, Ecologist, extension 5702

The Green Infrastructure Team is responsible for leading the reporting on and providing advice related to the implementation of the Environment Act across Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

² NERC – Natural Environment and Rural Communities

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) 2019/20 annual report

Section 2.5. Appendix 2.

2019/20 Progress and 2020/21 Activity Plan

Service Area	Business Plan linked Objectives	Progress 2019/20	Areas of Focus and Opportunity 2020/21	Environment Champion/s	Assessment Red – Amber – Green
Governance & Partnerships	1. Support the integration of Forward Plan objectives into council Corporate Business Plans and provide quarterly reporting 2. Provide a link to Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and Public Service Board	1. Objectives now in all Service Area business plans where relevant. 2. Led on delivery of BG on the Move project with associated biodiversity benefits on the Ebbw Fawr Trail. PSB project funded by partners.	Share action on Section 6 duty with other public bodies via Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board and Well-being Plan linked projects. Reference Section 6 duty in Council report guidance	Yes – One (Governance)	Green
Resources	None set	-	Set objectives with Section 6 duty leads	Yes – One (Accounting)	Amber
Commercial Services	Organisational Development (OD): 1. Take further steps towards implementation of a “paperless office” via the further development of the iTrent system and the roll-out of the self service functions	Pay slips now paperless Expenses now paperless Progress has been made through the Low Carbon project, part of the Bridging the Gap programme, on the resource use aim, in line with the ambition to have a zero carbon public sector by 2030.	Include section in Staff Newsletter	Yes – Two (OD; Business Support)	Green

Social Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environment Act leads to attend Provider Managers meeting annually 2. Encourage nature friendly management at our Provider Services outside spaces 3. Engage our citizens and staff with the environment through involvement in environmental projects within our Provider Services 	Ongoing development of outside spaces and delivery of projects.	To be determined	Yes – Two (Adult; Child)	Green
Regeneration & Community Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work towards the Local Development Plan (LDP) aims 2. Maintain and enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience on council owned land, particularly with regard to Section 7 priority species and habitats in partnership with community groups, Gwent Wildlife Trust and others. 3. Ensure that the Council Embraces the Well-being of Future 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supported the inclusion of ecosystem resilience in the Local Development Plan 2018-2033 and reference up to date policies from the Environment Act including Natural Resources Policy and Area Statements. 2. Five Local Nature Reserves were designated in March 2019 3. Engaged with student project to recycle crisp packets (Appendix 2a). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop Biodiversity Net Benefit tracking system in Planning development control as required by Planning Policy Wales 10 (2018) and highlighted by the Chief Planner in October 2019 (Appendix 2d). 2. Support Local Nature Reserves and community groups via collaborative management plans. 3. Continue 4. Support the Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen Local Nature 	Yes – Two (Regeneration; Natural Environment)	Green

	<p>Generations Act across the service functions and contribute to improving educational standards in relation to biodiversity.</p> <p>4. Support the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) in its work as a strategic partnership of organisations and individuals directing and delivering nature conservation in both Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent boroughs, at local and wider landscape scales.</p>	<p>4. Supported the Local Nature Partnership (Appendix 2b).</p> <p>Supported community groups running events and assisted with promotion materials for Wales Nature Week in June 2019 (Appendix 2c).</p>	<p>Partnership Nature Recovery Action Plan. Bring to council for scrutiny and approval.</p>		
Education	<p>1. Engage schools and students via educational sessions and eco-councils and embed sustainability</p> <p>2. Environment Act leads to attend a Head Teachers meeting annually</p> <p>3. Encourage nature friendly management on school grounds</p> <p>4. Engage young people with the environment through the youth service</p>	<p>1. SLA with Natural Environment team; engaging with 17 schools providing indoor and outdoor learning sessions linked to the natural environment</p> <p>2. Update provided in newsletter</p> <p>3. Via School Eco Councils</p> <p>4. Ongoing</p> <p>Schools built as part of the 21st Century Schools programme built to excellent Building Research</p>	<p>To be determined. Adaptation required for Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>Schools built as part of the 21st Century Schools programme built to excellent Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standard.</p>	<p>Yes – One (Education transformation)</p>	<p>Green</p>

		Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standard.			
Councillors	N/A	N/A	Update briefing on Activity Plan and funding outputs. Virtual or in person.	Yes – Nature Champion Cllr Lee Parsons	Green

WALKERS Crisps Recycling Scheme

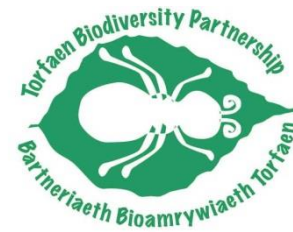


DROP YOUR EMPTY CRISP PACKETS HERE

**ANY BRAND OF CRISP PACKET IS ACCEPTED -
NOT JUST WALKERS**

The crisp packets will be cleaned, shredded and turned into small pellets which will then be converted into plastic items such as benches, plant pots and watering cans.

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Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Local Nature Partnership

Local Nature Partnership 2019/20 Summary

Aims for the year;

1. To support the regional project funding and Area Statement efforts
2. To deliver Partnership projects and recruit a co-ordinator with LNP Cymru funding

Key Dates

LNP field meeting cancelled due to bad weather

LNP meeting 28th November 2019

Key Figures

Independently chaired

100 recipients on mailing list

8 partner organisations on Steering Group

Key Work April 2019 – March 2020

- A planning task & finish group to consider input into the Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan review processes started in April 2019 and has considered the preferred strategies and spatial strategy options
- LNP members invited to and involved with NRW South East Wales Area Statement development workshops in key periods April-July and Nov 2019
- Working across boundaries with Brecon Beacons National Park Authority LNP
- LNP Cymru and Resilient Greater Gwent ENRaW projects awarded in September 2019. Liz Hancocks on LNP Cymru project board since April 2019
- LNP co-ordinator recruited in February 2020, hosted in Torfaen CBC
- Small local projects delivered including Cwmtillery Lakes LNR hedgerow
- Application for additional funding via LNP Cymru project totalling £123,994

Liz Hancocks, Co-secretariat 2019-20, June 2020

Key documents, such as meeting minutes, are available.

*ENRaW – Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being grant from Welsh Government

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Blaenau Gwent,



Caerphilly & Torfaen

**WYTHNOS NATUR CYMRU
WALES NATURE WEEK**

1 - 9 MEHEFIN/JUNE 2019

Events / Digwyddiadau

Friday 31st May Bioblitz the Park!:

10am-2pm at Parc Bryn Bach, Tredegar

Join us to explore and record the biodiversity of Parc Bryn Bach.

FREE. Booking is essential-limited spaces. For more information please contact Nadine Morgan, Biodiversity Officer Nadine.morgan@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



© Jane Corey

Saturday 1st Go Wild! 11am-4pm at Parc Penallta, Ystrad Mynach

Caerphilly County Borough Council's Countryside and Caerphilly Biodiversity Partnership are hosting a great opportunity to meet lots of wildlife and learn about local wildlife. This year's theme is 'Give Nature a Chance'.

FREE, but car parking charges will apply. For more information please get in contact with Maggie Iles, Ecologist ilesm@caerphilly.gov.uk

Tuesday 4th Evening Nature Walk: 5.30pm-7.30pm at Central Valley, Ebbw Vale

Enjoy an evening walk around Central Valley, discovering wildlife highlights and reconnecting to nature; led by Gwent Wildlife Trust.

FREE. Booking is Essential. For more information please contact Gwent Wildlife Trust rward@gwentwildlife.org.



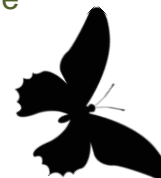
© Nadine Morgan

Wednesday 5th Evening Nature Walk:

5.30pm-7.30pm at 'The British', Torfaen

Enjoy an evening walk around The British site, discovering wildlife highlights and reconnecting to nature; led by Gwent Wildlife Trust. FREE. Booking is Essential. For more information please contact Gwent Wildlife Trust

rward@gwentwildlife.org



Thursday 6th Wildlife Walk along the Brynmawr Common: 6.00pm

Enjoy a walk along the common, discovering wildlife highlights and reconnecting to nature; led by Sustrans and local expert.

FREE. For more information please contact Elena Bianchi , Elena.Bianchi@sustrans.org.uk or 07717 348082.



Friday 7th Wildlife and Wellbeing Day:

10am-3pm at Bedwellty House and Park, Tredegar

A get together of lovely people to chat, learn and explore wildlife. Opportunities include bird watching and nature orienteering.

FREE. Booking is essential- limited spaces. For more information please contact Nadine Morgan, Biodiversity Officer Nadine.morgan@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Saturday 8th Open Day at Parc Nant Y Waun 11am-3pm

Join us to explore and record the biodiversity of Parc Nant Y Waun.

FREE. For more information please contact admin@parcnantywaun.org.uk



Saturday 8th Butterflies on the British:

11.00am-1pm 'The British', Torfaen

Learn about the rich variety of butterflies on The British site in Torfaen.

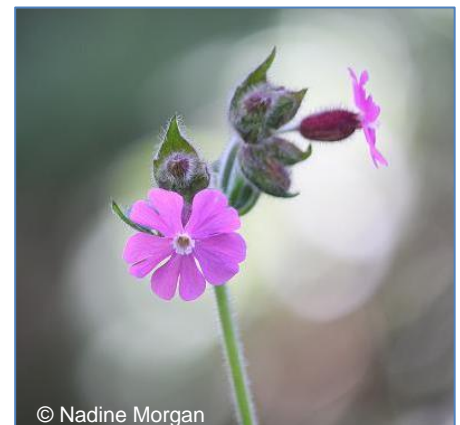
FREE. Booking is Essential. For more information please contact Gwent Wildlife Trust rward@gwentwildlife.org

Saturday 9th Bioblitz!:

10am-3pm at Central Valley Nature Reserve, Ebbw Vale

Join us to explore and record the biodiversity of Central Valley.

FREE. For more information please contact Gwent Wildlife Trust rward@gwentwildlife.org or tel: 01495 307525



© Nadine Morgan

Share your Nature Week fun! Use the hashtag #WNW2019





To: Heads of Planning

23/10/19

Dear Colleagues,

Securing Biodiversity Enhancements

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 10 sets out that *“planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means that development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity”* (para 6.4.5 refers). This policy and subsequent policies in Chapter 6 of PPW 10 respond to the Section 6 Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016*.

The purpose of this letter is to clarify that in light of the legislation and Welsh Government policy outlined above, where biodiversity enhancement is not proposed as part of an application, significant weight will be given to its absence, and unless other significant material considerations indicate otherwise it will be necessary to refuse permission.

It is important that biodiversity and ecosystem resilience considerations are taken into account at an early stage in development plan preparation and when proposing or considering development proposals. Planning authorities should be proactive and embed appropriate policies into local development plans to protect against biodiversity loss and secure enhancement.

The attributes of ecosystem resilience (PPW para 6.4.9 refers) should be used to assess the current resilience of a site, and this must be maintained and enhanced post development. If this cannot be achieved, permission for the development should be refused.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

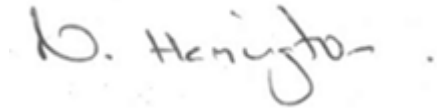
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Welsh Government Offices
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre
0300 0604400

Securing a net benefit for biodiversity within the context of PPW requires a pragmatic response to the specific circumstances of the site. Working through the step wise approach (PPW para 6.4.21 refers), if biodiversity loss cannot be completely avoided (i.e. maintained), and has been minimised, it is useful to think of net benefit as a concept to both compensate for loss and look for and secure enhancement opportunities. A net benefit for biodiversity can be secured through habitat creation and/or long term management arrangements to enhance existing habitats, to improve biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems. Securing a net benefit for biodiversity is not necessarily onerous; through understanding local context, it is possible to identify new opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

Yours faithfully,



Neil Hemington
Prif Gynllunydd, Y Gyfarwyddiaeth Gynllunio
Chief Planner, Planning Directorate

***Section 6 – Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty**

Section 6 under Part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced an enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty (the S6 duty) for public authorities in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales.

6. Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty

(1) A public authority must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.

Service Area	Current Performance	Tier - Name	Hyperlink to Business Plan Spreadsheet
Governance & Partnerships		Tier 1 - Governance & Partnerships	\\cc-file-ms-02\bpandpm\$\Business Planning\1. Governance & Legal\2019-20\Tier 1 - Governance & Partnerships 18-22.xlsm
Resources	No Objectives Set		
Commercial Services		Tier 1 - OD & Business Support	\\cc-file-ms-02\bpandpm\$\Business Planning\3. Commercial\2019-20\Tier 1 - OD & Business Support 2018-22.xlsm
Social Services	No updates	Tier 1 - Provider Services	\\cc-file-ms-02\bpandpm\$\Business Planning\4. Social Services\2019 -20\Tier 1 - Provider Services 2018-22.xlsm
Regeneration & Community Services		Tier 1 - Infrastructure	\\cc-file-ms-02\bpandpm\$\Business Planning\5. Regeneration & Community Services\Tier 1 - Infrastructure 2018-22.xlsm
Education		Tier 1 - Education & Youth	\\cc-file-ms-02\bpandpm\$\Business Planning\6. Education\2019-20\Tier 1 - Education & Youth 2018-22.xlsm

Quarterly Reporting

Copy 'Environmental Objectives' sheet to replace

Environmental Objectives

Progress Filter

Quarter

Ref.	Objective Description	Accountable Officer	BRAG Status															
			2018/19				2019/20				2020/21				2021/22			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Supporting the integration of Forward Plan objectives into council Corporate Business Plans and providing quarterly reporting	Andrew Parker	-	-	-	-												
	Link to Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and Public Service Board	Andrew Parker	-	-	-	-												
			-	-	-	-												
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			-	-	-	-												
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			-	-	-	-												
			-	-	-	-												

Time Period	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2019-20	Quarter 2 (July - September) 2019-20	Quarter 3 (October - December) 2019-20
Progress Summary		<p>Attended the Environment Champion Meeting, and discussion on aligning recycling arrangements across council building. Arrangements to be implemented across Floor 4a. Discussion also ensued about supporting wildlife/nature at Council location, which will be explored.</p> <p>The PSB Well-being Annual Report made good links with the environment and nature theme, which has included lived experience case studies on climate change, case studies on community volunteers from Gwent Wildlife Trust, the Get out in Nature well-being roadshow, and successful BG on the Move project.</p>	<p>Unable to attend Environment Champions meeting in October.</p> <p>Alignment with the BG on the Move project from the PSB has been positive with successful wildlife mural in Ebbw Vale and the completion and launch of the trail, including the installation of interpretation boards and art pieces along the trail.</p>
Challenges & Mitigating Actions			
BRAG			

Environmental Objectives

Progress Filter

Ref.	Objective Description	Accountable Officer	BRAG Status																							
			2018/19				2019/20				2020/21				2021/22											
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4								
	intention of OD to take further steps towards implementation of a "paperless office" via the further development of the iTrent system and the roll-out of the self service functions	Emma Stockham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-																
			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-																
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Quarter

Time Period	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2019-20	Quarter 2 (July - September) 2019-20	Quarter 3 (October - December) 2019-20
Progress Summary			Whilst this is a long-term ongoing process, progress has been made in the following areas: Streamlining of processes eg. reduction in submission of sickness paperwork, increased use of e-mail and staff discouraged from printing off documents unless absolutely necessary; development of Manager and Employee Self-Serve (iTrent), including introduction of electronic payslips and P60s for staff and elected members and mileage claims are also now submitted electronically; Self-Serve also allows employees to amend personal details electronically, thereby reducing the need for paperwork. Facility for submission of subsistence claims electronically is currently being developed. In addition, as part of the review of outgoing mail, a report has been submitted to DMT (20.1.20) to mandate the introduction of electronic correspondence to staff, although this will require further ratification.
Challenges & Mitigating Actions			
BRAG			Green

Environmental Objectives

Ref.	Objective Description	Accountable Officer	BRAG Status															
			2018/19				2019/20				2020/21				2021/22			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Green Infrastructure team (Environment Act leads) to attend Provider Managers meeting annually	Mark Morris / Mary Welch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Encourage nature friendly management at our Provider Services outside spaces	Mark Morris / Mary Welch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Engage our citizens and staff with the environment through involvement in environmental projects within our Provider Services	Mark Morris / Mary Welch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Progress Filter

Quarter

Time Period	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2019-20	Quarter 2 (July - September) 2019-20
Progress Summary		
Challenges & Mitigating Actions		
BRAG		

Environmental Objectives

Progress Filter

Quarter

Ref.	Objective Description	Accountable Officer	BRAG Status															
			2018/19			2019/20			2020/21			2021/22						
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
	Work towards the Local Development Plan (LDP) aims, including the production of Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Guidance	Chris Engel	-	-	-	-												
	Maintain and enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience on council owned land, particularly with regard to Section 7 priority species and habitats in partnership with community groups, Gwent Wildlife Trust and others.	Chris Engel	-	-	-	-												
	Ensure that the Council Embraces the Well-being of Future Generations Act across the service functions and contribute to improving educational standards in relation to biodiversity. (KPI INF 7)	Chris Engel	-	-	-	-												
	Support the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) in its work as a strategic partnership of organisations and individuals directing and delivering nature conservation in both Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent boroughs, at local and wider landscape scales.	Chris Engel	-	-	-	-												
			-	-	-	-												
			-	-	-	-												
			-	-	-	-												
			-	-	-	-												
			-	-	-	-												

Time Period	Quarter 3 (October - December) 2019-20	Quarter 4 (January - March) 2019-20
Progress Summary		
Challenges & Mitigating Actions		
BRAG		

Environmental Objectives

Progress filter

Quarter

Ref.	Objective Description	Accountable Officer	BRAG Status														
			2018/19			2019/20			2020/21			2021/22					
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Engage schools and students via educational sessions and eco-councils and embed sustainability	Claire Gardner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Green Infrastructure team (Environment Act leads) to attend a Head Teachers meeting annually	Claire Gardner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Encourage nature friendly management on school grounds	Claire Gardner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Engage young people with the environment through the youth service	Jo Sims	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Time Period	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2019-20	Quarter 2 (July - September) 2019-20	Quarter 3 (October - December) 2019-20
Progress Summary	<p>The Education Transformation Manager is the designated Environment Champion for the Education Directorate, supporting directorate, schools and office-based engagement and initiatives. All Education Transformation Projects involve the Council's Environment Department, with the aim of enhancing the ecological environment, achieving BREEM excellence, carbon reduction and energy efficiency targets on new build projects, and securing school engagement with the environment agenda.</p> <p>The Youth Service facilitated various programmes throughout the school year which included litter picks, considering sustainability and has introduced recycling measures with the young people in all of its centres. Plans are in place for the Wildlife Trust and beach clearances as part of the summer programme.</p>	<p>The Education Transformation Manager is the designated Environment Champion for the Education Directorate, supporting directorate, schools and office-based engagement and initiatives. The ET manager attended the Environment Champions meeting in August 2020 and shared school-based practice, issues and ideas to support future engagement. All Education Transformation Projects involve the Council's Environment Department, with the aim of enhancing the ecological environment, achieving BREEM excellence on new build projects and carbon reduction and energy efficiency targets i.e. the Six Bells Project, which concluded in September 2019, and securing school engagement with the environment agenda. The BG Ecologist and Transformation Manager plan to meet in the autumn-term, in order to develop a schools engagement strategy aligned to the environment agenda.</p> <p>Summer programme included a weekly project linked to the Wildlife Trust, litter and river bank clearance, beach litter pick.</p>	<p>The Education Transformation Manager is the designated Environment Champion for the Education Directorate, supporting directorate, schools and office-based engagement and initiatives. The ET manager attended the Environment Champions meeting in August 2020 and shared school-based practice, issues and ideas to support future engagement. All Education Transformation Projects involve the Council's Environment Department, with the aim of enhancing the ecological environment, achieving BREEM excellence on new build projects and carbon reduction and energy efficiency targets i.e. the Six Bells Project, which concluded in September 2019, and securing school engagement with the environment agenda. The BG Ecologist and Transformation Manager plan to meet in February, in order to finalise the schools engagement strategy aligned to the environment agenda.</p>
Challenges & Mitigating Actions	N/A	N/A	
BRAG	Green	Green	

Agenda Item 8

Sign off for Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **19th October 2020**

Report Subject: **Flood Risk Management Plan (2016- 2022)**

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

Report Submitted by: **Clive Rogers, Head of Community Services
W. Jervis, Senior Engineer**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
16.09.20	01.10.20	05.10.20			19.10.20	09.12.20		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on progress made in delivery of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's Flood Management Plan of 2016.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report provides the background to the Plan and summarises progress made on objectives and measures since its adoption, and approval by Welsh Government in 2016.
- 2.2 The Plan highlights the hazards and risk of flooding and sets out how the Authority will work with other parties and local communities to manage the risks.
- 2.3 The Plan sets out how over the six-year period, the Council will manage flooding so that the communities most at risk and the environment benefit the most.
- 2.4 The objectives outlined in the Borough's Flood Management Plan come under the headings: Social & Cultural, Economic, and Environmental
- 2.5 The above objectives have been further classed into 3 categories:
- Prevention (11 Measures)
 - Protection (15 Measures)
 - Preparedness (8 Measures)

To achieve the objectives under the headings and categories, the Plan identifies measures designed to reduce flooding.

- 2.6 Including the use of non-structural measures such as avoiding inappropriate development, and covering all aspects of flood risk management, including raising awareness of flooding and providing a better understanding of local flooding issues.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Options Appraisal

- **Option 1:** Preferred option; That Members accept the Report and progress made over the previous 12 months.
- **Option 2:** That Members do not accept the Report and recommend alternative actions going forward.

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

- 4.1
- The attached Appendix 2 is a table of the measures identified in the Plan. The table identifies the progress made since the Plan was adopted in December 2015, and also progress made since the last annual review in 2019.
 - The measures evidenced in Appendix 2 demonstrates how the desired objectives of the Blaenau Gwent Well Being Goals, as well as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act have been achieved

4.2 The findings of Appendix 2 can be summarised as follows:

Prevention (BG01-04)

- Undertook a number of CCTV surveys of culvert inlets to inspect their condition and to understand the reasons for the flood risk at:
 - i. Ladies Row, Picton Row and Georgetown Hill, Tredegar
 - ii. Glanffrwd Terrace, Rear of Holland Street, EV
 - iii. Cwmcelyn, Blaina
 - iv. Railway Street, Meadow Street and the sports field, Llanhilleth

This will enable the Council to effectively consider the risks of future developments, or decide if action can be taken to minimize risk of flooding.

- Commissioned 10 catchment surveys to enable the Council to evaluate expected flows at critical and significant inlets throughout the borough.
- Externally funded assistance from associated engineers within the department and an apprentice engineer has also been appointed to assist with delivery and development of the Flood Risk Management Plan.
- Monitored all three rivers in Blaenau Gwent on a monthly basis. Data was recorded by volunteers and fed back to responsible parties to be acted upon.
- Works and activities were held throughout the year with partners including Groundwork Wales, Natural Resources Wales and Keep Wales Tidy to resolve any issues identified on the rivers and increase the quality of the habitat, with works carried out by staff and volunteers.
- Several school workshops were held at Bryn Bach Park, linked with plastic pollution and flooding.

- 4.3 Technical Services were successful in applying for 100% funded Welsh Government Revenue Grants to undertake the following works and objectives.

Culvert Inlet Catchment Studies	£10,000
Funding the appointment of an apprentice engineer and also others within the department to assist with delivery and development of our Flood Risk Management Plan	£14,496
Various drainage works from revenue grant for Ad Hoc Maintenance works such as maintenance of drainage ditches, culverts and the like.	£32,870
Total value of works	£57,366

- 4.4 The following work was 85% Welsh Government funded. The remaining 15% was funded by other Welsh Government grants which were provided to enable councils to progress with their Flood risk management plans.

Scheme	Total expenditure	Value of Grant
Bridgend Culvert Repairs, Ebbw Vale	£27,538	£21,250
Ebbw Vale House Culvert Repairs, Ebbw Vale	£13,394	£8,500
Total value of works	£40,932	£29,750

- 4.5 Due to the severe storms encountered at the end of the year and early 2020 the Council was unable to complete a scheme anticipated to cost £40,000 with a grant value of £34,000. However, Welsh Government has allowed for carry this money to be carried over to the 2020-2021 budget.

- 4.6 The Council also undertook the following actions as part of our statutory duties.

- 2,675 culvert inspections for year 2019-20.
- 365 Con 29 Land Search requests relating to drainage.
- 108 Planning applications relating to drainage
- 220 Service requests for assistance relating to drainage.

- 4.7 **Protection (BG 05-08)**

- Further tree planting Bryn Bach Park to help store water and slow down surface run-off. Approx. 500 trees were planted, which were provided by Ovo Energy after applying for a free promotion they were offering.
- Weed clearance at Bryn Bach Lake, which consisted mostly of volunteers with minimal Council Officer time.
- Woodland planting to attenuate water and help prevent run-off at Bryn Bach Park.
- The removal of a large amount of rubbish in rivers at Llanhilleth, Dukestown, Tredegar, Bourneville, Blaina and Cambridge Gardens in Ebbw Vale.

4.8 **Preparedness (BG09-13)**

The Authority continues to develop a response to flooding incidents and Multi-Agency Tactical Emergency Management and Strategic Emergency Management training is undertaken on an annual basis.

There is also a Gwent Local Resilience Forum Recovery Plan in place.

4.9 **Challenges and obstacles faced throughout the year 2019 – 20:**

This year has been quite an unprecedented year with climate change bringing storms Brendan, Ciara, Dennis and Jorge. Changes in the way we work due to Covid 19, and unavailability of staff for long periods all contributing to what has been a very difficult period.

5 **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Option 1:** That Members accept the Report and progress made over the previous 12 months.

5.2 **Implications:**

- i. Actions are not evenly distributed across the borough, as they are prioritised by risk.
- ii. Funding may not be available to continue the delivery of the plan. therefore, actions identified in the plan may not be delivered.

5.3 **Option 2.** That Members do not accept the Report and recommend alternative actions going forward.

5.4 **Implications:**

- i. Additional funding may be required to undertake the work.
- ii. Funding may not be available for alternative actions.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Adoption of the 2016 Flood Risk Management Plan primarily contributes to meeting the following priorities:**

Corporate Plan Priority:

- Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities
- To improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors.

6.2 Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan:

Adoption of the Flood Risk Management Plan 2016 – 2021 will help provide the following objectives:

- The best start in life for everyone
- Safe and friendly communities
- To look after and protect the environment
- To forge new pathways to prosperity
- To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places that they live, learn, work and play.

By continuing to work towards the objectives set out in the Flood Risk Management plan, the Council will maximise its contributions to the Well-being goals.

6.3 The Future Generations Act

The Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Flood plan achieves the goals of The Future Generations Act by improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals. It sets out five ways of working needed for Public Bodies to achieve the seven well-being goals.

6.4 Long-term

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the needs to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs

6.5 Integration

Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

6.6 Involvement

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves

6.7 Collaboration

Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

6.8 Prevention

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objective.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 The identified objectives and achievements towards the plan are continually assessed by officers responsible for its delivery.

7.2 The achievements towards the plan will continue to be reported annually through scrutiny as it has done for the previous 2 years since its inception.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

• Flood and Water Management Act 2010
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

BGCBC Flood Risk Management Plan
https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Resident/Planning/Floods_FRMP_complete.pdf

- Flood Risk Management Strategy
https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Resident/Planning/Flood_Risk_Strategy.pdf

Assess how well your project / activity will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals.		
Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p>A prosperous Wales An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>The plan recognises the role of Green Infrastructure in helping to reduce the level of flood risk and the severity. Considering the issue of climate change and flood risk within or schools NRM programme will engender our Future Generations with a clear understanding of climate change issues and Flood Risk</p>	<p>The delivery of Green Infrastructure are a relatively low cost, sustainable option, but they are limited by the resource availability. Our NRM programme optimises progress</p>
<p>A resilient Wales A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>The Flood Risk Management Plan's measures will reduce the risk of flooding and by utilising Green Infrastructure to good effect will add value in terms of enhancing our biodiverse natural environment, and increase resilience to change.</p>	<p>Engaging with our communities and encouraging active participation in the understanding and management of our Natural GreenSpaces will maximise benefits.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>By reducing flood risk we are reducing stress and worry for people in these areas and thus maximising their mental well-being. Encouraging active participation in the management and use of our Green spaces has proven health and wellbeing benefits.</p>	<p>Our communities can be encouraged through initiatives such as Go Green 4 Health , Patient Referrals by GP's and general volunteering opportunities in order to maximise health benefits.</p>

Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p>A more equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>	<p>Active community engagement in Green Infrastructure initiatives will provide opportunities for all citizens to participate regardless of background. Project delivery through Probation Services, Go Green 4 Health etc focus on engaging with hard to reach groups of people.</p>	<p>Promotion and engagement of events to increase levels of engagement. Networking to encourage participation levels.</p>
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</p>	<p>Through working with communities to enable them to respond to flood risk and encouraging events and activities that focus on local green spaces help to help to develop develop cohesive communities.</p>	<p>Supporting local Groups to take an active role in the local environment will maximise the benefits</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>	<p>Establishing local groups to take an active role in their local environmental quality will help to underpin local pride and cultural appreciation</p>	<p>Supporting local Groups to take an active role in the local environment will maximise the benefits</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	<p>By raising awareness and building resilience to flood risk we are making a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	<p>Supporting local Groups to take an active role in the local environment will maximise the benefits</p>

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
MEASURE BG01: We will avoid inappropriate development in flood risk areas							
BG01.1	Adopt the Local Development Plan and implement Policy SP7 which directs new development away from high flood risk areas	Prevention M21	S1, S2, S3	Work with others to avoid inappropriate development	2016-2021	The Local Development Plan has been adopted and Strategic Policy SP7 is used to direct development away from flood risk areas.	Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 is now in place and BGCBC are a SuDS Approval Body (SAB). This means that planning consents have now become completely separate from consents relating to Drainage. However, Policy SP7 ensures that no highly vulnerable development is allowed in high flood risk areas
BG01.2	Raise awareness in Planning Committees when developments potentially impact on flood risk areas.	Prevention M21	S1, S2, S3, Ec2	Work with others to avoid inappropriate development	2016-2021	Development which potentially impact on flood risk areas are identified within planning committee reports	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has been set up as a SuDS Approval Body (SAB). This means that planning consents have now become completely separate from consents relating to Drainage. However, Planning Committee is made aware when applications have implications on flood risk areas.

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
BG02.1	Adopt the Local Development Plan and implement Policy SP7 which includes a requirement to incorporate measures in design and construction to reduce the effects of flooding. This will ensure buildings are designed to reduce the effects of flooding	Prevention M23	S2, Ec1, Ec1, Ec2	Promote flood resilience and flood proofing	2016-2021	The Local Development Plan has been adopted and Strategic Policy SP7 is used to ensure buildings are designed to reduce the effects of flooding	This measure is governed by Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Whereby Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has been set up as a SuDS Approval Body (SAB). This means that planning consents have now become completely separate from consents relating to Drainage. However, where less vulnerable development is permitted in flood risk areas, where necessary, buildings are designed to reduce the effects of flooding.
BG02.2	Promote appropriately designed developments in relation to site levels, creation of high ground and setting floor levels	Prevention M23	S1, S2, Ec2	Promote flood resilience and flood proofing	2016-2021	Advice from NRW on appropriate ground levels and floor level is taken into account in the planning application process.	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has been set up as a SuDS Approval Body (SAB). This means that planning consents have now become completely separate from consents relating to Drainage. However, advice from NRW on appropriate ground levels and floor level is taken into account in

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
							the planning application process.
BG02.3	Increase approaches in road schemes to utilise materials which provide more resilience to flooding incidents where they are likely to occur.	Prevention M23	S4, Ec2, En2	Promote flood resilience and flood proofing	2016-2021	The drainage Officer provides advice on appropriate design for Highway schemes, building in green infrastructure solutions as appropriate.	This measure has been largely overtaken by Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Whereby Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has been set up as a SuDS Approval Body (SAB). This means that planning consents have now become completely separate from consents relating to Drainage. This measure is ongoing
BG03.1	Develop reporting system to register details of events at the time of flooding incidents.	Prevention M24	Ec2	Learn from flood events	2016-2021	funding acquired from Welsh Government allowed us to purchase flood management software which will improve the accuracy of recording flooding incidents Software and training was provided in March 2017 and details of flood events were recorded on the software	The loss of a staff member last year reduced input into the database to a minimum. A new trainee officer has now been appointed and arrangements for further training have been discussed with the software supplier. For which 100% funding has been arranged. It is anticipated that after a short period of training work to update

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
							the database will be continued.
BG03.2	Develop and maintain a register of flood assets.	Prevention M24	Ec2	Learn from flood events	2016-2021	funding acquired from Welsh Government allowed us to purchase flood management software which improved the accuracy of recording our Assets. Software and training was provided in March 2017 and details of flood events were recorded on the software	<p>The loss of a staff member last year has reduced inputting into the database to a minimum.</p> <p>A new trainee officer has now been appointed and arrangements for further training have been discussed with the software supplier. For which 100% funding has been arranged.</p> <p>It is anticipated that after a short period of training work to update the database will be continued. .</p>
BG03.3	Develop a maintenance recording system and ensure these are informed by the register of flooding incidents.	Prevention M24	Ec2	Flood Forecasting warning & incident management	2016-2021	Welsh Government funding enabled the purchase of funding acquired from Welsh Government allowed us to purchase flood management software designed to improve the efficiency of maintenance schedule Software and training was provided in March 2017 and details of flood events were	<p>Since the loss of the officer progress on this aspect has been slow.</p> <p>Inputting of data has ceased due to lack of capacity .</p> <p>A new trainee officer has now been appointed and arrangements for further training has been discussed with the software</p>

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
						recorded on the software	supplier. For which 100% funding has been arranged. It is anticipated that after a short period of training work to update the database will be continued
BG03.4	Carry out a risk assessment of all critical culverts and flood assets, as identified through the register of flooding incidents, maintenance records or flood assets, and prepare an action plan to address any unacceptable risks as a result of the review.	Prevention M24	Ec2	Modelling & Hydrology	2016-2021	Progress has been made with T98 condition assessments of all critical and significant culvert resulting in repairs and replacements of a number of inlets. Funding has also enabled us to undertake CCTV surveys on a number of culverts, resulting in work to address unacceptable risk	Following a T98 assessment of our critical inlets the previous year a number of inlets have now been improved, and updated on our system. This year we have commissioned work to undertake a number of catchment studies which will inform us if the existing culverts are able to cope with the extra demand of the new developments and the resulting additional impermeable surfaces which increase flow at culvert inlets. We have also undertaken additional CCTV inspections throughout the borough.

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
BG04.1	Ensuring flood events are recorded in line with the form identified in PRFA	Prevention M24	Ec2	Flood Forecasting warning & incident management	2016-2021	A system originally put in place for the recording of flood incidents onto spreadsheets . Software and training has since been provided and details of flood events were recorded on the software. This measure is ongoing.	<p>Since the loss of the officer progress on this aspect has been reverted to the spreadsheet until it can be input into the software database.</p> <p>A new trainee officer has now been appointed and arrangements for further training has been discussed with the software supplier. For which 100% funding has been arranged.</p> <p>It is anticipated that after a short period of training work to update the database will be continued</p>
BG04.2	Implementing a geographical database of flood events to inform future mapping of flood risk areas	Prevention M24	Ec2	Flood Forecasting warning & incident management	2016-2021	Flood risk management software has enabled us to commence input of flooding locations and improve the efficiency and accuracy of mapping flood risk areas.	<p>Since the loss of the officer progress on this aspect has been reverted to the spreadsheet until it can be input into the software database.</p> <p>A new trainee officer has now been appointed and arrangements for further training have been discussed with the software</p>

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
							<p>supplier. For which 100% funding has been arranged.</p> <p>It is anticipated that after a short period of training work to update the database will be continued</p> <p>This measure is ongoing</p>
BG05.1	Delivery of the Blaenau Gwent Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), specifically HAP1, Wet woodlands, HAP4, Wetlands and HAP 5 Rivers and Streams.	Protection M31	S1, Ec1, En2	Ensure appropriate floodplain compensation	2016-2021	<p>Working with community groups, schools and external charities including pond restoration and creation.</p> <p>Volunteers participated in the vegetation clearance</p> <p>In 2018 invertebrate monitoring and training has been given to new volunteers.</p> <p>Several areas covering all three rivers in Blaenau Gwent are now monitored on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Trigger levels are set so any concerns with water quality are</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
						<p>raised immediately.</p> <p>Monthly visits to the rivers also ensure that issues noted while on site are reported.</p> <p>An invasive weed treatment programme was continued that identified and treated Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed found on the Rivers Sirhowy, Ebbw Fawr and Ebbw Fach that flow from Blaenau Gwent into Caerphilly.</p> <p>Himalayan Balsam was also treated in a number of locations</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
BG05.2	Consider/Review the designation and management of Local Nature Reserves (LNR) where they assist in flood prevention.	Protection M31	S1, Ec1, En2	Ensure appropriate floodplain compensation	2016-2021	Biodiversity Action Plans have been updated to accommodate Action in the Flood risk management strategy, incorporating planting schemes and habitat management which help to alleviate flooding. BGCBC are contributing to the	Ongoing

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
						water management on local nature reserves in line with the ecological management plan in collaboration with internal teams and community groups.	
BG05.3	Consider planning requirements for wetland habitat creation as part of the Development Management Process.	Protection M31	En2	Ensure appropriate floodplain compensation	2016-2021	Opportunities for wetland habitat creation are being considered within the development management process. The options are always discussed with developers when appropriate.	The implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 has ensured that the requirements for wetland habitat creation as part of the Development Management Process are considered separately as a matter of course.
BG05.4	Consider the designation and management of existing wetland areas where they assist in	Protection M31	Ec2, En2	Ensure appropriate floodplain compensation	2016-2021	A number of pond restorations schemes have been identified to build resilience to climate change and help combat the risk of flooding including; Peacehaven, Tredegar Business	Similar works are ongoing

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
	flood prevention.					<p>Park, Beaufort ponds Six Bells and Trevor Rowson.</p> <p>River clearance involving the removal of large quantities of debris was undertaken at sites throughout Blaenau Gwent.</p>	
BG05.5	BGCBC will encourage developers to incorporate wetland and other natural attenuation schemes in new development through guidance, Policies and pre-application discussions with Planning Control case officers.	Protection M31	S2, Ec2, En2	Ensure appropriate floodplain compensation	2016-2021	<p>2016-17 We have developed draft supplementary planning guidance for biodiversity which considers how to incorporate wetland and other natural attenuation schemes in new developments.</p> <p>2017-18 The above is still relevant but we have seen a fall in enquiries for major housing and other schemes which is when these requirements would become relevant.</p>	Following the implementation of schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the issues are automatically considered as part of the SAB application process.

Specific Measure	Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020	
MEASURE BG06: We will increase approaches that utilise the natural environment, like adopting soft engineering in place of traditional solutions, managing of the land to reduce storm runoff, creating more wetlands to store water							
BG06.1	Identify contributions to delivery of the Woodlands for Wales Strategy (Welsh Gov) e.g. Shelter belt planting opportunities.	Protection M31	Ec2, En2	Sustainable woodland and forestry management	2016-2021	<p>A number of woodland planting schemes have been delivered on school sites</p> <p>1500 trees planted as part of the Sirhowy Valley planting scheme around Peacehaven.</p> <p>Sirhowy Community Woodland Group new woodland Planting – 500 native trees planted.</p> <p>2 Ha of infected Larch clear-felled at Bryn Bach Park and replaced with 5000 native this will build in resilience to climate change, and involved the use of volunteers from 4 local schools and the local community.</p> <p>155meters of hedgerow planting took place</p>	Further tree planting took place during Dec 2019 at Bryn Bach Park to help store water and slow down surface run-off. Approx. 500 trees were planted, which were provided by Ovo Energy after applying for a free promotion they were offering.

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
BG06.2	Review the existing management of ordinary water courses in regard to controlling invasive weeds.	Protection M31	Ec2, En2	RBMP: Manage invasive non- native species	2016- 2021	26 Km of water courses monitored for the presence of Japanese Knotweed with 65 individual sites being treated (Autumn 2016). The sites have been revised and treated where required in September 2017. In 2018-19 an ongoing invasive weed treatment programme was continued which treated Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, and Himalayan Balsam	Waiting for response off the team
BG06.3	Review the existing management plans for Local Nature Reserves which assist in storing and filtering water.	Protection M31	Ec2, En2	RBMP: Improve flows and water levels	2016- 2021	Working with our community groups the LNR management plans form the basis of actions on site. Water courses, ponds and lakes are considered to maximise their potential for storing and filtering water	This measure is ongoing in collaboration with the borough ecologist.
BG06.4	When designing streetscape works consideration will be given to incorporating	Protection M31	S4, Ec2, En2	RBMP: Reduce impacts of other physical	2016- 2021	Consideration is given to the inclusion of tree planting and permeable areas in all	Following the implementation of schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the incorporation of a greater area of

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
	a greater area of tree planting and permeable areas.			modifications		development applications. during 2017- 18, 131 planning applications responded to and opportunities to include additional tree planting included where possible.	tree planting and permeable areas are automatically considered as part of the SAB application process.
BG06.5	Identify opportunities for planting to stabilise river banks.	Protection M31	Ec2, En2	RBMP: Reduce impacts of other physical modifications	2016-2021	We worked with NRW, Groundwork Wales and volunteers at Marine Colliery on bank stabilisation project, using native woodland species (500 native trees planted). Aberbeeg cycle bridge has included bank stabilisation via green engineering and native woodland planting on the embankment. (500 native trees)	No further projects delivered in 2019 -20

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
MEASURE BG07: deploying the sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) approach for surface water management for both new and existing developments							
BG07.1	Adopt the Local Development Plan and implement Policy DM1 which requires proposals to reduce surface water run off through minimising an increase in impermeable surfaces and using Sustainable Drainage systems, where appropriate.	Protection M34	Ec1, Ec2	Support implementation of SUDs	2016-2021	The LDP is a key Council Policy in terms of Development Control. Policy DM1 is considered in all development applications (378 applications considered for 2016)	Following the implementation of schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the reduction of surface water run off by the introduction of more permeable areas are automatically considered as part of the SAB application process.
BG07.2	Encourage developers through pre-application discussions to use sustainable drainage systems pending the introduction of the new SuDS regime	Protection M34	En2	Support implementation of SUDs	2016-2021	The use of SUDs is being considered through the development control process. However we are finding developers are not buying in 100% to the principle until it becomes a mandatory requirement.	Following the implementation of schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the incorporation SuDS are automatically considered as part of the SAB application process.

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
BG07.3	Specify greater use of SuDS systems for new developments as conditions of planning consent.	Protection M34	S1, S2, En2	Support implementation of SUDs	2016-2021	Developers are encouraged to adopt the SuDS management train. However, as it is not yet a statutory requirement we have not attached conditions requiring SUDs but we do attach informative notes to permissions advocating its use	Following the implementation of schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the incorporation SuDS are automatically specified as part of the SAB conditions.
MEASUREBG08: Identifying and protecting areas suitable for inundation and water storage to prevent flooding elsewhere							
BG08.1	Identify areas suitable for inundation and water storage.	Protection M31	Ec1, En2	Identify opportunities for floodplain restoration	2016-2021	No progress has been made in this area at present due to lack of capacity.	Due to the topography of Blaenau Gwent there are limited inundation areas for consideration

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
MEASUREBG09: Enable those at risk of flooding to play a proactive role in shaping the flood risk management service they receive							
BG09.1	Develop community resilience schemes for areas at risk of flooding	Preparedness M43	S1, S2, S3	Provide service to local resilience forums	2016-2021	No further work undertaken at present. National guidance on community resilience has recently been issued by the Cabinet Office. This is currently being considered on a Multi-Agency basis as to what community resilience work is currently undertaken, and what additional work can be done with current capacity (not necessarily solely flood related).	No progress reported

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
BG09.2	Ensuring wider awareness of individual risk to increase levels of preparedness and planning for flooding events	Preparedness M43	S1, S3, Ec1	Raise awareness of flood risk issues	2016-2021	Information on flood risk is now available on various websites (BGCBC, Gwent Local Resilience Forum, Natural Resources Wales). Updates to BGCBC web site are applied as necessary	Progress has been limited this year due to the lockdown and social distancing regulations related to the Covid 19 Virus Progress is also limited due to the Civil Contingencies Team only having capacity to work on COVID-19.
MEASURE BG10: Improve the response to flooding incidents by the emergency response organisations, as well as individuals and businesses							
BG10.1	Ensure lessons from flooding incidents in this and other areas are captured	Preparedness M42	Ec1, Ec2	Learn from flood events	2016-2021	As a result of the flood report forms we are investigating each event of flooding to identify the source and take measures to prevent future occurrences.	This measure is ongoing A debrief will be undertaken of the flooding February 2020, however progress on this is limited due to the Civil Contingencies Team being involved in COVID-19.

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
BG10.2	Appropriate trained staff to ensure awareness of roles, responsibilities and an effective response for those involved in flood response.	Preparedness M42	Ec1, Ec2	Work closely with NRW	2016-2021	Multi agency Tactical Emergency Management (Head of Service) and Strategic Emergency Management (Corporate Management Team) training is undertaken on an annual basis.	Relevant training has been undertaken every year, and all staff with a strategic or tactical role have been trained. Training for 2020 is postponed due to COVID-19
MEASURE BG11: Ensure effective recovery arrangements are in place and supported by all relevant parties							
BG11.1	Involvement in multi-agency recovery planning, ensuring plans are tested for suitability	Preparedness M42	Ec1, Ec2	Provide flood incident response service	2016-2021	A Gwent Local Resilience Forum Recovery plan is in place. This is updated on a 3 yearly basis, and Civil Contingencies are involved in both the development of these arrangements and plan validation.	The Recovery Plan will be tested through recovery of COVID-10

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
MEASURE BG12: Develop better flood forecasting and warning system							
BG12.1	Developing a consistent approach to recording of flood events and flood assets.	Preparedness M41	Ec2	Flood Forecasting warning & incident management	2016-2021	<p>We currently have a hard copy and electronic system for recording of flood events and of our culvert inlet inspection regime.</p> <p>As of Jan 2017 we secured funding for a new software package, in line with NRW requirements for recording data.</p> <p>2017 -18 We have installed the software for the recording of floods and we have commenced the inputting of data</p>	<p>The loss of a staff member last year reduced input into the database to a minimum.</p> <p>A new trainee officer has now been appointed and arrangements for further training have been discussed with the software supplier. For which 100% funding has been arranged.</p> <p>It is anticipated that after a short period of training work to update the database will be continued.</p> <p>Due to long term absence of the drainage engineer It has not been possible to recover any detailed information from within the local authority of properties flooded at Llanhilleth during the storms Ciara, Dennis and Jorge this year.</p>
BG12.2	Develop a communication strategy for at-risk communities where	Preparedness M43	S1, S2, Ec2	Flood Forecasting warning & incident	2016-2021	No progress has been made in this area at present due to lack of capacity.	No further progress has been made due to lack of capacity.

Specific Measure		Measure Type	Link to FRMP Objective	Link to RBMP & Severn FRMP	Time Scale	Progress 2016-2018	Progress 2019-2020
	risks that cannot be immediately reduced are communicated to the Emergency Planning Team and affected businesses or residents.			management		However, There is a resilience group in Cwm set up by NRW.	
MEASURE BG13: Improve communication and support to residents, businesses and communities							
BG13.1	Set up a "Flood Risk Community Engagement Group" to help communicate flooding and flood risk to residents, businesses, community etc.	Preparedness M44	S1, S2	Raise awareness of flood risk issues	2016-2021	No progress has been made in this area at present due to lack of capacity.	No further progress has been made due to lack of capacity

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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