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THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

Dydd Mercher, 3 Tachwedd 2021 Dydd Mercher, 3 Tachwedd 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

PWYLLGOR GWAITH

A meeting of the Pwyllgor Gwaith will be held in Ystafell y Weithrediaeth, Canolfan Ddinesig, Glynebwy on Dydd Mercher, 10fed Tachwedd, 2021 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris
Managing Director

AGENDA

Pages

1. CYFIEITHU AR Y PRYD

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

2. YMDDIHEURIADAU

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

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau.

3. DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU

Derbyn datganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

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

All other Members (for information)
Manager Director
Chief Officers

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 22nd SEPTEMBER, 2021

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

**PRESENT: Deputy Leader/Executive Member –
Regeneration & Economic Development**
Councillor D. Davies (CHAIR)

Executive Member – Education
Councillor J. Collins

Executive Member – Environment
Councillor J. Wilkins

Executive Member – Social Services
Councillor J. Mason

WITH: Managing Director
Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services
Corporate Director Social Services
Corporate Director Education
Head of Organisational Development
Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance
Communications, Marketing and Customer Access Manager
Corporate Procurement Manager - Commercial Services
Service Manager - Customer Experience & Benefits

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

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

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>The following apologies for absence were received:-</p> <p>Councillor N. Daniels Chief Officer Commercial and Customer</p>	
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest and dispensations raised.</p>	
	<p><u>MINUTES</u></p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>EXECUTIVE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 21st July, 2021.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 26th July, 2021.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 1st September, 2021.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	

GENERAL MATTERS

No. 7 CONFERENCE, EVENTS AND INVITATIONS

Wales Festival of Remembrance 2021
6th November, 2021

RESOLVED that Councillor Brian Thomas, Armed Forces Champion be approved to attend.

Reserve and Cadets Association for Wales Event
7th October, 2021

RESOLVED that Councillor Brian Thomas, Armed Forces Champion be approved to attend.

Merchant Navy Day
2nd September, 2021

RESOLVED that Councillor Brian Thomas, Armed Forces Champion be approved to attend.

DECISION ITEMS – CORPORATE SERVICES

No. 8 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 10TH NOVEMBER, 2021

Consideration was given to the report of the Leader of the Council.

RESOLVED that the Forward Work Programme be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.

No. 9

GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS

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

The following grants were received following publication of the report:-

ABERTILLERY

Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor N. Parsons

1.	Abertillery Belles FC	£100
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Six Bells Ward - Councillor M. Holland

1.	Alzheimer's Research UK	£400
2.	Friends of Six Bells Park	£300
3.	Six Bells Over 50's Club	£100
4.	Six Bells Bowls	£300
5.	Six Bells Community Centre	£200

EBBW VALE

Badminton Ward - Councillor C. Meredith

1.	RTB Ebbw Vale FC	£100
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Badminton Ward - Councillor G. Paulsen

1.	RTB Ebbw Vale FC	£100
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Rassau Ward - Councillor D. Wilkshire

1.	Beaufort RFC	£150
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RESOLVED accordingly.

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

No. 10 **ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 2020/21**

Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Performance and Democratic.

The Managing Director advised that the report presented the Council's Assessment of Performance 2020/2021 and informed that the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 had been replaced by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. Therefore, the Managing Director advised that this would be the last Assessment of Performance under these regulations. The Council would still be required to develop reports on the progress made against the Corporate Plan and also implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and reports would be presented to Executive accordingly.

The Managing Director further noted Appendix 1 which detailed the progress the Council had made during 2020/21 and an assessment of the work undertaken as part of the response to the COVID 19. The Managing Director recognised that 2020 had been a challenging year for everyone including the Local Authority and it was a credit to the workforce that this performance was achieved against such challenges. There had been some issues in service areas due to the effects of the pandemic, however all services had picked back up in the summer.

The Managing Director referred the Executive to the options which sought to ensure that it fulfilled all required statutory legislative requirements before being submitted to Council for approval.

The Deputy Leader concurred that the workforce, communities and businesses had all been affected by the pandemic and extended thanks and admiration on the work achieved during this period.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the retrospective progress made be endorsed and included within the Council's Assessment of Performance for 2020/21 and be assured that it fulfils all required statutory legislative requirements before being submitted to Council for approval (Option 1).

DECISION ITEM – EDUCATION MATTERS

No. 11 **HOME TO SCHOOL AND POST 16 TRANSPORT
POLICY REVIEW 2022 – 2023**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.

The Corporate Director Education spoke to the report which sought the views of Executive in relation to the review of Blaenau Gwent Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy for the 2022/23 and summarised the changes and additions made.

In response to comments raised at the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee it was reported that the Policy was reviewed on an annual basis and there was an opportunity for the review, if required. The Corporate Director Education also added that it would feature on the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme and it would be brought back for consideration in 12 months.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and approved the Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy 2022/23 as outlined in Appendix 2 (Option 1).

**EDUCATION ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY AND
ACTION PLAN REVIEW**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.

The Corporate Director Education advised that the report provided an overview of the Education Accessibility Strategy Review process and associated timelines. The Corporate Director outlined the key points as contained in the report and pointed out that Blaenau Gwent had been recognised by the Children’s Commissioner for Wales as being one of the only Councils in Wales to have a published Accessibility Strategy and associated action plan.

The Executive Member for Education welcomed the report which reflected well on the Local Authority and reiterated that Blaenau Gwent had been recognised by the Children’s Commissioner for Wales as being one of the only Councils in Wales to have a published Accessibility Strategy.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1).

INCLUSION STRATEGY AND REVIEW (2021-2022)

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.

The Corporate Director Education outlined the report which detailed plans to review the Inclusion Service during the period of September 2021 – August 2022 in line with the requirements of Welsh Government’s Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. The Corporate Director felt that Blaenau Gwent was well placed to take forward the review and referred the Executive to the key priorities of the Strategy.

The Deputy Leader advised that schools had made good progress during these challenging times and the Strategy would give further support to pupils with special needs. The Executive Member for Executive concurred with the comments raised and welcomed the common approach to be taken by schools across Blaenau Gwent.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the review of the Inclusion Service be agreed to ensure that the requirements of the ALN Act are met, this would include reviewing relevant resourcing, structures, job descriptions and ensuring that relevant arrangements are in place to fulfil the needs of the ALN Act (Option 2).

**DECISION ITEM –
REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS**

No. 14 INVESTMENT IN MICRO-HYDRO DEVELOPMENT

Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities.

The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services advised that the report provided an update on progress of the Micro-Hydro Feasibility Study carried out in Cwm and Llanhilleth and sought approval for the next steps of the Project. The Corporate Director noted the potential eleven areas for investigation and advised that following further research sites in Llanhilleth and Cwm were determined as the preferred locations. Although electricity could be generated at the aforementioned areas it was decided that at this time it was not feasible for the Council to take the work forward further investigations and development.

It was reported that the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee supported the preferred option as the Council had committed to undertake investigations at all eleven areas identified as worthy sites of further exploration for hydro generation.

The Deputy Leader felt that all aspects of energy should be considered in line with work being undertaken around carbonisation and although the commercial element for Council investment was not available, there could be other opportunities to be explored in our communities.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Council choose not to take these schemes forward for further investigation and development. The projects would be closed from the current point and would only be revisited should costs significantly reduce or new technologies become available (Option 1).

No. 15 **PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY APPROACH – TOWN CENTRES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities.

The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services spoke to the report which sought approval to formulate the Town Centre Advisory Boards across the Town Centres of Abertillery, Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale to support a partnership delivery approach for future project delivery. It was hoped that the work undertaken in Tredegar could be built upon and rolled out across all Town Centres.

The Corporate Director advised that the report had been considered by the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and it was requested that Blaina be included in the project. It was confirmed that that this course of action was agreed and Blaina would be undertaken once the Abertillery area had been completed.

The Deputy Leader noted the work undertaken with Tredegar Forum and advised that working with our partners and other businesses was vital to improving our town centres and footfall.

RESOLVED that the report accepted and the Executive provided approval for the formation of a series of Advisory Boards for the Town Centres of Abertillery, Blaina, Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale based upon the Tredegar Advisory Board approach and acknowledge the draft Terms of Reference as outlined in Appendix One. The Advisory Board shall act as a consultative body to oversee development and delivery of Town Centre Strategies and Plans. Each shall start with a small membership identified by members of the Town Centres Task and Finish Group alongside Officers. The membership can then be expanded and developed further as discussions develop.

	<p><u>MONITORING ITEMS – CORPORATE SERVICES</u></p>	
<p>No. 16</p>	<p><u>COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING (APRIL-JUNE 2021)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Commercial and Customer.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Quarter 4 (January to March 2021) update against the Communication Strategy (Option 1).</p>	
<p>No. 17</p>	<p><u>COMMERCIAL STRATEGY QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING (APRIL-JUNE 2021)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Commercial and Customer.</p> <p>An overview of the progress made for Quarter 1 against the Commercial Strategy was provided. A detailed overview of the key points in relation to the Strategic Commissioning and Commercial Board, Customer Experience, Digital, Procurement Officer Group, Procurement Plans and Contract Management and Procurement Strategy and Policy was provided.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader welcomed the report and acknowledged that the commercial aspect of the Council was important for this administration and advised that positive feedback had been received on the community hubs. The Deputy Leader also recognised the work of the procurement team which was paramount in achieving value for money</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted along with the performance of the Commercial Strategy during the period April – June 2021 as presented (Option 1).</p>	

No. 18 **SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE 2020/21**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Organisational Development.

The Head of Organisational Development spoke to the report which outlined sickness absence performance for 2020/21, the continued actions to support improvement in attendance and recognise the positive attendance of the majority of the workforce. It was reported that the overall year end outturn figure for the Council of 11.67 days per full time employee (9.98 days excluding COVID-19 sickness). This was a decrease from the previous year's outturn of 13.91 days (13.48 days excluding COVID-19 sickness). The Head of Organisational Development advised that the outturn exceeded the target set of 10.50 days. It was added that when sickness absence related to COVID-19 had been excluded the outturn figure reduced to 9.98 days which was an overall reduction of 3.93 days bringing the outturn figure below the corporate target. The Head of Organisational Development added that Quarter 1 figures for this financial year are showing an increase in sickness and it was understood that other Councils are experiencing a similar trend in performance.

The Deputy Leader recognised the challenges within the workforce which had been experienced by all Councils due to the pandemic. The Deputy Leader felt that the robust recording and monitoring of sickness in place which was paramount as well as support for staff's health and well being.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the ongoing actions to support improvement in attendance (Option 2).

	<p><u>MONITORING ITEMS – EDUCATION</u></p>	
No. 19	<p><u>EDUCATION SERVICES – MAIN SELF-EVALUATION REPORT (SER)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and acknowledged that effective self-evaluation was an on-going process (Option 1).</p>	
No. 20	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING SELF-EVALUATION OUTCOMES</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1).</p>	
	<p><u>MONITORING ITEMS – REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</u></p>	
No. 21	<p><u>REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community advised that the report sets out a range of the activities undertaken across Blaenau Gwent and highlighted work taken forward around housing, skills and enterprise, energy.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader noted the positive work carried out across the Council over the last 12 months, particularly the Regeneration Team who had worked well in supporting and encouraging businesses to Blaenau Gwent throughout these challenging times. The Deputy Leader wished to thank the Team for the work achieved.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and information contained therein be noted (Option 2).</p>	

No. 22 **PROGRESS UPDATE ON DECARBONISATION PLAN**

Consideration was given to the report of the Managing Director.

The Managing Director advised that this was the first progress report since the adoption of the Council's Decarbonisation Plan. The Managing Director spoke to the report and outlined the progress made along with the actions of the Board. The Council had made good progress but there was still a significant amount of work to be done to overcome the challenges presented by climate change.

In terms of the next steps, the Managing Director noted that further readiness assessments on the remaining transitions would be undertaken. It was anticipated that all of the readiness assessment will be completed during this financial year and progress on agreed actions would be monitored via the Council's existing business planning process on an ongoing basis with updates provided on a quarterly basis. The Managing Director added that the Council was well placed to respond to the Welsh Government's Net Zero Reporting for Local Authorities.

It was further reported that Blaenau Gwent was the first area in Wales to host a Climate Assembly and referred to the members briefing session which was held and the commitment given to publish a Council Response to the findings. This work was underway and would be reported to the Executive and Scrutiny Committee in due course. The Council was also taking a lead role in developing the response provided to the Climate Assembly on behalf of the Public Services Board which would be completed this autumn.

The Deputy Leader stressed the importance of Climate Change and advised that this report helped us to understand the work undertaken to date and further work to be achieved. The Deputy Leader noted that this matter was a worldwide issue and he felt that Blaenau Gwent would play its part. The work done to date placed the Authority in a good position to play our critical part in climate change and decarbonisation. There was a significant amount of work to be undertaken in our communities and as Elected Members we needed to play a part in this work to assist in reducing Blaenau Gwent's carbon footprint.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted along with the progress made as presented (Option 1).

MONITORING ITEM - SOCIAL SERVICES

No. 23 **UPDATE ON STRATEGY TO SAFELY REDUCE THE NUMBERS OF CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Social Services.

The Corporate Director Social Services advised that the report outlined progress made on the Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy. The Corporate Director noted that a new strategy was in place for 2020 – 2025, however it contained the objectives of the previous strategy with additional actions following the independent review by Worcester University.

The Corporate Director stated that the reduced number of children coming into care had been recognised by Welsh Government as a priority and as a result integrated care monies could be accessed to invest and develop services to safely reduce the number of children coming into care. The Corporate Director advised that this had enabled the Council to fund family group conferences, support special guardians and enhance resources in our Supporting Change Team and Enhance the Young Person's Mediation Service.

The Corporate Director further noted the impact of the joint team with Monmouthshire which had resulted in a significant underspend in our children residential budget at the end of 20/21. This was due to the hard work of the My Support Team and 14 plus Team who worked to reduce the numbers of children in residential care and worked to prevent children entering residential care. The Corporate Director noted the reduction in numbers and advised that today the number was 12. Further reference was made to the work undertaken and the Corporate Director informed that as at Monday our children looked after numbers was 189. Although these figures could change at any time there is a continued downward trend in the right direction.

In conclusion the Corporate Director noted the number of vacancies in the Team which made the figures even more remarkable and showed the excellent work of the staff in Blaenau Gwent. The report was positive and showed the continued progress of the Strategy and the positive impact for the children and families of Blaenau Gwent and allowed families to stay together when it was safe to do so as well as reduce the budget pressures.

The Executive Member for Social Services welcomed the report and wished to thank staff in Social Services for their excellent contribution in reducing looked after children in Blaenau Gwent. The Executive Member informed that the CIW had acknowledged Blaenau Gwent's way in which the safe reduction of children Strategy had proved successful.

The Executive Member also reported that there was today 187 looked after children in Blaenau Gwent which was a further reduction since Monday's figure as reported by the Corporate Director.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information therein be noted (Option 1).

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Agenda Item 5

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**

Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme – 15th December 2021**

Portfolio Holder: **All Portfolio Holders**

Report Submitted by: **Cllr Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member
Corporate Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
X	x	20.10.21				10.11.21		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present the Executive Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 15th December 2021.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Executive Work Programme is a key aspect of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and supports the requirements of the Constitution.
 - 2.2 The topics set out in the Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
 - 2.3 All Scrutiny Committees and the Council Forward Work Programmes have been aligned to the Executive Forward Work Programme.
 - 2.4 As the document is fluid there is flexibility to allow for regular review between the Chair and the Committee.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
 - 3.1 **Option 1**
To agree the Forward Work Programme as presented for the Meeting on 15th December 2021.
 - 3.2 **Option 2**
To suggest any amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme.

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Executive Committee Forward Work Programme

Executive Meeting Date: Wednesday 15th December 2021

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Tuesday 23rd November 2021

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

Decision: 4 Items
Monitoring: 18 Items
Information: 3 Items

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
DECISION ITEMS				
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Services				
Grants to Organisations	Approval To agree the Grants to Organisations.	Rhian Daly	N/A	N/A
CCTV Options report	Approval To consider and agree the options.	Bernadette Elias / Andrew Parker	Corporate Overview – 03.12.21	N/A
Portfolio: Education				
Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Monitoring existing plan and draft 10-year plan <i>Please note report and Plan will need to be translated to Welsh by the Directorate.</i>	Decision Members to consider performance against the Education Directorate's current WESP (2012 -20); and to approve the draft BG 10-year WESP, prior to submission to WG in January 2022.	Claire Gardner	Education and Learning – 30.11.21	N/A
Portfolio: Deputy Leader / Regeneration and Economic Development				
Ebbw Vale Placemaking Plan	Decision To approve the proposals for placemaking in Ebbw Vale.	Amy Taylor	Regeneration – 08.12.21	N/A
MONITORING ITEMS				
Portfolio: Leader / Corporate Services				
Communications Strategy Quarterly Monitoring	Performance Monitoring To consider the performance of the Communication Strategy focus on the impact of the strategy during COVID19 Pandemic	Bernadette Elias	Corporate Overview – 03.12.21	N/A

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
Commercial Strategy Quarterly Monitoring	Performance Monitoring To consider performance of the Commercial Strategy, focus Strategic Commercial Board element. In depth look at each of the 5 elements	Bernadette Elias	Corporate Overview – 03.12.21	N/A
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2021/22	Budget Monitoring To provide members with an expenditure forecast at the end of quarter 2 across all portfolios for 2021/22.	Rhian Hayden	Joint Budget – 22.11.21	N/A
Forecast Capital Expenditure 2021/22	Budget Monitoring To provide details of each portfolio's forecast capital expenditure against allocation at the end of quarter 2	Rhian Hayden	Joint Budget – 22.11.21	N/A
Forecast of General and Earmarked Reserves	Budget Monitoring To present report at the end of quarter 2 detailing the actual and forecast use of general and ear marked reserves.	Rhian Hayden	Joint Budget – 22.11.21	N/A
Bridging the Gap (BTG) Programme 2021/22 – Progress update to 30 September 2021	Budget Monitoring To provide members with a forecast of achievement for 2021/22 of the Bridging the Gap programme.	Rhian Hayden	Joint Budget – 22.11.21	N/A
Contracts Over £500,000	Performance Monitoring Members to consider the progress of projects including area concerns.	Clive Rogers	Corporate Overview – 03.12.21	N/A
Portfolio: Environment				
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) 2020/21 annual report	Performance Monitoring Annual report of the implementation of the Environment Act and the Council's Biodiversity duties throughout 2020/21 and consideration of the proposed actions for 2021/22.	Chris Engel	Community Services – 15.11.21	N/A
Civil Parking Enforcement – Annual Review	Performance Monitoring Members to receive the annual review.	Clive Rogers	Community Services – 15.11.21	N/A
Animal Health Service Level Agreement	Performance Monitoring To receive a report on the current collaboration with Powys County Council.	Dave Thompson	Community Services – 15.11.21	N/A
Portfolio: Deputy Leader / Regeneration				

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
Energy Prospectus Annual Review	Performance Monitoring To provide members with information on the progress made since approval of the Energy Prospectus	Amy Taylor	Regeneration – 08.12.21	N/A
Tredegar Heritage Initiative	Performance Monitoring Members to receive the closure report.	Amy Taylor	Regeneration – 08.12.21	N/A
Portfolio: Education				
Management of Pupil Places and the School Estate 2020/21	Performance Monitoring To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the management of pupil places and the school estate throughout the 2020/21 academic session.	Claire Gardner	Education and Learning – 30.11.21	N/A
ALN Reform	Performance Monitoring Scrutiny Members are asked to review the progress made against ALN Reform and associated policy renewal.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Lisa Adams	Education and Learning – 30.11.21	N/A
Safeguarding Vulnerable Learners	Performance Monitoring To provide members with an update on strategies being used to safeguard vulnerable learners, and to provide relevant performance data	Luisa Munro-Morris / Sarah Dixon	Joint Safeguarding – 10.12.21	N/A
Portfolio: Social Services				
Regional Partnership Board	Performance Monitoring Members to be informed of the decisions taken by the Regional Partnership Board	Damien McCann	Social Services – 18.11.21	N/A
Future model of assistive technology / telecare provision	Performance Monitoring Members to be informed of proposals to provide an enhanced telecare / assistive technology offer to promote independence and meet personal outcomes.	Alyson Hoskins	Social Services – 18.11.21	N/A
Portfolio: Joint				
Safeguarding Performance Information Social Services and Education	Performance Monitoring To provide members with Safeguarding Performance and Self-Evaluation information and to influence areas of focus.	Damien McCann/ Lynn Phillips	Joint Safeguarding – 10.12.21	N/A
INFORMATION ITEMS				
Pupil Attendance	Information Members to receive the pupil attendance performance of Blaenau Gwent's.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Lisa Adams	Education and Learning – 30.11.21	N/A

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
National Adoption Service Annual Report	Information Members to be informed about National and Regional progress of Adoption services	Tanya Evans	Social Services – 18.11.21	N/A
Adult Safeguarding Performance Information	Information To receive Safeguarding Performance information relating to Adult Services and to influence areas of focus.	Alyson Hoskins / Andrew Day	Joint Safeguarding – 10.12.21	N/A

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

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

REPORT SUBJECT: **GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS – 10th Nov 2021**

REPORT AUTHOR: **RHIAN HAYDEN**

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

ABERTILLERY

Abertillery Ward- Councillor J. Holt

1.	Chillax	£100
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Llanhilleth Ward – Councillor J. Collins

1.	Chillax	£200
2.	Brynithel Community Centre Coffee Morning Section	£200

Llanhilleth Ward – Councillor N. Parsons

1.	Chillax	£100
2.	Sofrydd Community Centre	£200
3.	Sofrydd Community Youth Club	£200
4.	Soffryd Senior Citizens	£200

Llanhilleth Ward – Councillor H. McCarthy

1.	Chillax	£250
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EBBW VALE

Rassau Ward – Councillor G.A Davies

1.	Ebbw Vale Mini Rugby	£200
2.	One Life Autism Support Group	£200
3.	Garnlydan Presbyterian Church	£200
4.	Toppers School of Dance and Drama	£200
5.	Ebbw Vale Operatic and Dramatic Society	£200
6.	Tredegar Operatic Society	£200
7.	Rassau OAP Building Fund	£200
8.	Special Movers	£200

NANTYGLO & BLAINA

Nantyglo Ward – Councillors J. Mason & K. Rowson

1.	Nantyglo OAP Association	£200
2.	Winchestown OAP Association	£200
3.	Wesleyan Methodist Church	£200
4.	Holy Trinity St Anne's Church	£200
5.	BGfm Limited	£200
6.	Abertillery BG RFC	£200
7.	Hermon Cemetary Trust	£200
8.	1 st Blaina Scouts Group	£200
9.	Nantyglo RFC	£200
10.	Nantyglo Community Shop	£200
11.	Coed y Garn School	£200
12.	Bro Helyg School	£200
13.	Chairs Appeal	£100

CHIEF OFFICER RESOURCES

Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Update on UK Resettlement and Asylum Seeker Dispersal Schemes**
Portfolio Holder: **Leader of the Council, Councillor Nigel Daniels**
Report Submitted by: **Bernadette Elias, Chief Officer Commercial and Customer**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
w/c 27/9/21	30 /9/21	12.10.21			22/10/21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on participation supporting the UK Resettlement scheme (which recently has included supporting the resettlement of Afghan nationals), and seek agreement for the participation in the Home Office Widening Asylum Seeker Dispersal Scheme.

2. Scope and Background

Overview and update on UK Resettlement Schemes

- 2.1 In response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria, in 2015 the UK Government made a national commitment to resettle up to 20,000 Syrian refugees throughout the course of 5 years. During that time, and in recognising the vital role in helping refugees resettle into the UK, local authorities and community partners were encouraged to support the national resettlement programme. In 2016, Blaenau Gwent welcomed the first Syrian family and since that time has successfully resettled 4 refugee families comprising 20 individuals.
- 2.2 Based on the success in delivering the refugee programme and the ongoing national commitment to resettling people who are at most risk of harm, the UK government has encouraged authorities to continue to support refugee resettlement. In 2019, Blaenau Gwent demonstrated a continued commitment to support this national effort by agreeing to continue participating in the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS).
- 2.3 In the lead up to the withdrawal of UK and NATO forces from Afghanistan the UK Government established a standalone scheme to relocate Afghan Interpreters/former Locally Employed Staff (LES) who had assisted UK forces throughout the conflict. Those who qualified for the scheme and who chose to relocate to the UK with their families are not expected to return to Afghanistan.
- 2.4 In May 2021, given the acceleration of the Afghan scheme, the Home Office in collaboration with the Wales' Strategic Migration Partnership (WSMP) wrote to all local authorities requesting potential support. Following these discussions, and in recognition of the existing pledge made by the Council to

continue to support the UKRS, support for the Afghan Scheme was prioritised.

- 2.5 Working with lead officers and partners - as part of the resettlement approach – has ensured that all appropriate support arrangements have been established and the first Afghan family were welcomed into the borough on 9th September.
- 2.6 The capacity of local services is a key element that has underpinned the authority's engagement in the resettlement scheme(s) thus far and to ensure a proportionate level of participation is considered, with regards to future engagement, we have consulted with local partners. Following these discussions, it is proposed that a commitment be made to resettle a total of four Afghan families, this will largely be governed by the availability of suitable accommodation.
- 2.7 **Widening Asylum Seeker Dispersal**
- 2.8 The Home Office is responsible for fulfilling the United Kingdom's obligation under the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the status of Refugees (The Geneva Convention) and ensuring that those genuinely fleeing persecution are given the protection they need.
- 2.9 To achieve this, UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) provides support services for Asylum Seekers, failed Asylum Seekers and Refugees. Statutory provision is in accordance with Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and the Asylum Support Regulation 2000.
- 2.10 The UK has a proud history of granting asylum to those who need it. The number of asylum applications to the UK peaked in 2002 at 84,132. After that the number fell sharply to reach a twenty-year low point of 17,916 in 2010, before rising again to reach 35,737 in 2019.
- 2.11 Due to a shortage of known and suitable accommodation in existing dispersal areas, to assist with future planning and the requirement to create equitable distribution of people seeking asylum amongst Local Authorities in the UK, the Home Office have requested that every Local Authority participates in the Widening Dispersal Scheme to increase opportunities throughout the UK where Asylum Seekers can reside.
- 2.12 On 5th March 2021, a meeting was convened with WLGA, inviting Chief Executives of all Wales Local Authorities to discuss assisting with Widening Dispersal. The Home Office is looking for an 'In Principle Agreement' that permits an accommodation provider contracted by the Home Office to source accommodation for people seeking asylum.
- 2.13 The Home Office has not predetermined the number of people to be placed in each area but want to establish a dialogue that identifies the capacity of each Local Authority and to agree a way forward that works to enable participation.

- 2.14 In March 2021, the Home Office advised there were approximately 10,000 asylum seekers in contingency accommodation (hotels) in England, largely in the Kent and London areas. Significant backlogs in the system to process applications have been caused by the pandemic and there is an urgent need for all areas of the UK to contribute to supporting asylum seekers to move into more suitable, temporary accommodation while their applications for asylum are processed.
- 2.15 Cardiff, Swansea, Wrexham and Newport are the four areas of Wales that are currently designated as Asylum Seeker Dispersal areas. All four local authorities remain committed to the programme, however additional support from all Wales Local Authorities is required in order to contribute to the Home Office target of supporting a further 800 individuals to be accommodated in Wales. More recently Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Conwy have also made progress in their initial phased participation in the scheme.
- 2.16 Further to the all Wales discussions held in March 2021, a follow up meeting with the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership, Home Office and Torfaen County Borough Council has taken place. These preliminary officer discussions explored the potential role Blaenau Gwent could play, recognising the potential benefits of a regional approach to widening asylum dispersal.
- 2.17 As part of the developing regional approach it is proposed that the Council participate in a pilot with two properties focussed at families. This is comparable with the level of participation that has been offered in other areas and considered proportionate for Blaenau Gwent. The pilot would include a full review at a 12-month stage to determine whether the Councils continue with the arrangements of 2 properties, reduces participation, or has the scope to increase participation.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 This report will be considered by the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on 22nd October 2021, and any feedback will be provided verbally to the Executive Committee.

3.1 **Option 1:**

- i. Notes the progress made in participation with the UK resettlement, including most recently the Afghan resettlement programme; and
- ii. agrees the proposal to participate in the Widening Asylum Seeker Dispersal Scheme as a pilot.

3.2 **Option 2:**

- i. Notes the progress made in participation with the UK resettlement including most recently the Afghan resettlement programme; and
- ii. Does not agree the proposal to participate in the Widening Asylum Seeker Dispersal Scheme as a pilot.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 The UK Resettlement Schemes continues to operate sustainably, with excellent partnership work taking place between third sector organisations, the University Health Board and the Local Authority. There are also very strong links with Education establishments within the Authority and the coordinated approach to Blaenau Gwent's work has received widespread recognition. Participation in the Wider Dispersal Scheme would build on this partnership approach and contribute to the Welsh Governments stated ambition that Wales is a Nation of Sanctuary.
5. **Implications Against Each Option**
- 5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***
 - 5.1.1 **Asylum Dispersal**

Asylum Seeker accommodation and support are funded by the Home Office directly, therefore no funding will be given to the Local Authority. Any additional costs associated with Education or Social Care needs of individuals or families arriving into Blaenau Gwent as part of this scheme will need to be met by the Council through existing budgets.
 - 5.1.2 Whilst a decision on an Asylum Seeker's 'Right to Remain' as a refugee is made, all living costs are covered by the Home Office through their delivery partner Clearsprings Ready Homes.
 - 5.1.3 Should an individual be granted Leave to Remain, there may be on-going welfare benefit costs until the person secures employment and becomes financially independent. Eligibility to claim Housing Benefit is determined by the status awarded when someone enters the UK. If granted the right to reside, then the entitlement to claim housing benefit would be at Local Housing Allowance rates for properties.
 - 5.1.4 **UK Resettlement Scheme**

The resettlement programmes are different, these schemes are government funded, and this funding is tapered over 5 years. The grant the LA receives allows the authority to support each arriving family – this support is wide ranging and consists of anything from furnishing their accommodation to helping families adjust to life in the UK. We commission Displaced People in Action (a third sector organisation procured on a regional contract across the 3 West Gwent authorities) to work with each family in supporting them to orientate to their new communities. Each family has an assigned case worker who will assist the family throughout their initial 3-5 years, this support focuses on building independence – supporting families with befriending, volunteering opportunities and, at a later stage, assisting families access employment.
 - 5.1.5 To establish a strong sense of belonging to their new communities, we also promote the value in learning English language and have commissioned an ESOL provider (People Plus) to provide home tuition for all adult refugees.

Support has also been extended to schools who have welcomed refugee children and has funded additional language needs provision – all supported by the Home Office funding.

- 5.1.6 Councils participating in the Afghan resettlement scheme will receive £20,520 per person over 3 years for resettlement and integration costs. £4500 per child for Education and £850 to cover English language provision for adults requiring support

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.2.1 **ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS**

Participating authorities in the Asylum Dispersal scheme do not need to source or maintain properties as this is done by Clearsprings Ready Homes in Wales. Clearsprings Ready Homes accommodate and support Asylum Seekers in the private rented sector and equip accommodation (including rent, licensing, furnishing property maintenance and payment of utility bills). They work closely with the Authority to identify suitable locations to source accommodation that is economically viable and with access to public transport routes and in proximity to community services.

- 5.2.2 They provide full support for individuals and families into a community whilst their asylum application is being assessed. The length of stay in asylum accommodation can be anywhere between 6 months and 2 years, depending on the complexity of the case.

- 5.2.3 Migrant Help will work in tandem with ClearSprings Ready Homes across potential new areas in Wales.

5.2.5 **CEASING SUPPORT FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS**

For those who are granted protection, their access to cash support and accommodation will cease within 28 days of receiving the decision in relation to their application.

- 5.2.6 Those individuals who have been refused asylum can appeal and will continue to receive support whilst they have an appeal outstanding. When they exhaust their appeal rights, cash support and accommodation will cease 21 days after the final decision.

- 5.2.7 At present people without children whose appeal has not been upheld are expected to return their country of origin. However, Section 4 support may on occasions continue to be provided if there is a short-term barrier to them leaving. If they refuse to leave, removal can be enforced (but not to all countries).

- 5.2.8 At present, for families with children under 18, accommodation and cash support only ceases if someone is granted asylum. Families who are refused asylum at present remain supported by UKVI if they have children under 18 and until their youngest child is 18.

5.3 *Legal*

5.3.1 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/LEGISLATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS**

The power to enforce a Local Authority to participate in widening dispersal exists under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. The Minister has made it clear to UKVI that engagement with all Local Authorities will be undertaken and will ensure that all options are exhausted before use of these powers will be considered.

5.3.2 The Council has neither the statutory duty nor the power to provide financial support or accommodation to Asylum Seekers. Section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 provides that the Secretary of State may provide or arrange for the provision of support for Asylum Seekers and their dependents who appear to be destitute. Section 95 support is paid via an Aspen Card, which can be used to withdraw cash as well as used in shops to buy provisions

5.3.3 If an Asylum Seeker is granted Refugee Status, Humanitarian Protection, Discretionary Leave (unless a 'No Recourse to Public Funds' condition is attached); or Indefinite Leave to Remain, they are then able to access mainstream benefits on the same basis as a British National. Where an Asylum Seeker is granted one of these statuses the Council may have a statutory obligation to prevent homelessness.

5.3.4 Failed Asylum Seekers may remain in the UK with no recourse to public funds until they are served with removal directions by the Home Office. Section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 states that a person will have 'no recourse to public funds' if they are subject to Immigration control. Public funds include welfare benefit and public housing.

5.3.5 **DEFINITIONS**

Asylum is protection given by a country to someone fleeing from persecution in their own country. An **Asylum Seeker is someone who has applied for asylum and is awaiting a decision on whether they will be granted Refugee status**. An asylum applicant who does not qualify for refugee status may still be granted leave to remain in the UK for Humanitarian or other reasons. An Asylum Seeker whose application is refused at initial decision may appeal the decision through an appeals process and, if successful, may be granted leave to remain.

5.3.6 If the application is accepted, an Asylum Seeker will generally be granted 5 years refugee status. Successful applicants can work, live and study in the UK and access public funds.

5.4 *Human Resources*

5.4.1 There are limited Human Resources implications to supporting asylum seekers during the application process, ClearSprings Ready Homes provide the management and support for asylum seekers.

- 5.4.2 In the likelihood of asylum seeker families arriving into the borough, there will however be education implications. The authority will be required to provide education for all *accompanied* children, this has implications for any schools within the catchment area of the procured accommodation.
- 5.4.3 From the learning experiences gained in delivering the UKRS (which has supported the resettlement within the borough of refugees from several countries from the Middle East and North Africa region), the degree of mental health complexities may also be a draw on local services. Whilst the psychological trauma of children has been a common presentation in several cases (although not in all), adult mental health (influenced by previous experiences of torture, sexual violence and bereavement) have provided significant challenges, confounded by lengthy waiting lists and in some areas a lack or limited mental health care services.
- 5.4.4 In recognition of the possible resource implications – we are proposing a proportionate yet cautious approach to the authority’s participation in the Asylum Dispersal Scheme. This would include the offer of two properties within the borough, with a full review on the delivery of the scheme and an assessment of future engagement within the scheme.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.2 **ASYLUM DISPERSAL**

Should the local authority agree to participate in the asylum dispersal scheme we will be dialogue with ClearSprings Ready Homes on a monthly basis, and are proposing a full review at a 12-month stage to determine future involvement in the scheme.

6.1.3 **UK RESETTLEMENT SCHEME**

In the case of the resettlement schemes, the authority is far more involved in the support and delivery.

6.1.4 Whilst this support is tailored to the needs of each family it is essential that new arrivals becoming connected to their new community, as such we (via our commissioned service provider DPIA) support families in accessing services such as GPs, schools, dentists, Job centre and also orientate families to the local community - supporting them with transport links to and from town centres and neighbouring authorities. We also support families to orientate to wider communities within South Wales and signpost new arrivals to religious establishments (where appropriate).

6.1.5 To establish a strong sense of belonging to their new communities, we also promote the value of learning English language, as such Blaenau Gwent provide 4 hours of home tuition to each family relocated within the borough - this compliments the existing community based ESOL services which are also available but removes any barriers in accessing language learning.

6.1.6 The lead officer for ongoing management is the Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator, who also manages the Resettlement programme across Torfaen – this provides greater consistency across the region in the delivery of the programme. The Coordinator manages the contracts of DPIA and Peopleplus (ESOL provider), holding bi weekly meetings with the case workers to discuss the progress of each family, this includes evaluating the delivery of all resettlement action plans to ensure there is consistent approaches adopted for each resettled family and that the support is tapered at the appropriate juncture to ensure we nurture independence.

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

6.2.1 Should the local authority agree to participate in asylum dispersal we will be working with partners in a similar way to how we deliver the UK Resettlement Programme. In the first instance this includes; mapping any community tensions and working with partners such as; Gwent Police and community safety leads, housing and health (alongside ClearSprings Ready Homes)- to determine the most appropriate areas within the borough to procure properties.

6.2.2 Learning from the successes in resettling refugee families, it is recommended that a proactive approach to supporting community conversations is also considered, this may include engaging elected members and communities to ensure we dispel any myths regarding asylum dispersal.

6.2.3 There are no expected negative outcomes for the general public in authority's participation in the Asylum Dispersal scheme, we will however, be creating a safe haven within the area for those most in need.

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

Should the local authority agree to engage in the Asylum Dispersal Scheme, we will be working with our partners from ABUHB, Gwent Police, Housing and Education to determine the most appropriate level of participation. We will also be working with local elected members to ensure that the community - where appropriate – are best informed.

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

This report recognises the long-term implications of participation in the Asylum Dispersal Scheme, highlighting key impacts on services such as education and mental health provision. It is also important to consider the implications on housing and how participating in the scheme may somewhat compete with the wider homelessness policies which the local authorities are currently prioritising. However this is mitigated by the cautious and proportionate degree of proposed participation (2 properties).

6.4.1 The participation of Blaenau Gwent in asylum dispersal will also provide future families who have experienced considerable hardship with the route to a long-term safe haven.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Should Blaenau Gwent engage with the Asylum Dispersal Scheme we would be working to help prevent vulnerable children and their families from further trauma and suffering in areas of significant conflict and, further, discharging both our moral and humanitarian obligations.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Following Blaenau Gwent's successful approach to refugee resettlement, we will be consulting all relevant partners in the lead up to any future involvement in asylum dispersal, this includes establishing dialogue with Gwent police and community safety colleagues - with regards to the community cohesion concerns in procuring accommodation. Collaboration with health and primary and secondary care services - to ensure the best support is available to asylum seekers located within the area. Engagement with education services to ensure that schools are best supported in the likelihood of receiving asylum seeker children.

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

Supporting this scheme is an extension to existing commitments across the well-being objectives to support vulnerable people, we will build on the learning we have gained in the participation of resettling Refugees via Vulnerable Persons/ Childrens Resettlement Scheme and we will continue to work with a range of services to ensure partners contribute to a successful approach to Asylum Dispersal.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

There are no positive or negative impacts of the proposal. The proposal at this time is primarily concerned in the first instance in starting discussions with the Home Office, WSMP and Clearsprings Ready Homes.

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

In order to comply with the statutory duties contained with the Equality Act 2010 and meet our Socio-economic duty in providing services which can improve inequality of outcome for people who face socio-economic disadvantage.

6.9b. ***Equality Impact Assessment***

A full Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken to assess the impact of taking forward the widening the Asylum Seeker Dispersal Scheme within the County Borough.

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

7.1 Progress reporting forms part of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

Monitoring of the support provided to resettled families is part of the contract management in place.

ClearSprings Ready Homes provide the management and support for asylum seekers as directed by the Home Office.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *None*

Agenda Item 8

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**

Report Subject: **Proposal to develop a Blaenau Gwent My Support Team (MyST)**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**

Report Submitted by: **Tanya Evans, Head of Children's 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)
1.9.21	16/09/21				7.10.21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to outline the proposal and business case to develop a Blaenau Gwent My Support Team (MyST) instead of the current joint MyST with Monmouthshire.

2. Scope and Background

A report was presented to Social Services Scrutiny Committee in September 2018 recommending the establishment of a joint My Support Team (MyST) between Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire. Scrutiny supported this proposal as did Executive.

2.1 To remind members the MyST provides a multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service for Children looked After. The Team work intensively with children currently in residential care with the aim of bringing them back to live closer to Blaenau Gwent and be placed with foster carers or family members. The Team also works with those children in care who present with complex needs and are at risk of going into residential care to prevent this from happening.

2.1.2 In the summer of 2018 a bid was made via the Children and Families Partnership Board for Integrated Care Fund (ICF) grant money to develop a Gwent wide approach in developing a joint multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service for Children Looked After. As Torfaen and Caerphilly already had a MyST in place the Children's Partnership Board agreed Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire should be the next authorities to develop a joint team. Once this was established Newport would then establish their team.

2.1.3 The Blaenau Gwent / Monmouthshire MyST became operational in May 2019. This report will evidence the work which has been done during the past 2 years in relation to: -

1. Numbers of Blaenau Gwent children MyST have supported to move out of residential care.

2. The numbers of Blaenau Gwent children MyST have prevented going into residential care.
3. The number of Blaenau Gwent Psychological practice consultations undertaken by MyST
4. The actual cost savings made by MyST
5. The cost avoidance as a result of MyST

2.1.4 Monmouthshire CBC is also proposing to develop their own MyST and at the time of writing this report their stand-alone team has now been agreed through their democratic process.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Social Services Scrutiny Committee supported Option 1 at the meeting on 7th October 2021.

3.2 **Option 1 (preferred option)**

For Executive to acknowledge the positive work MyST have undertaken and support the development of a Blaenau Gwent MyST.

3.3 **Option 2**

For Executive to acknowledge the positive work MyST have undertaken but **not** support the development of a Blaenau Gwent MyST

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

4.1 The work of the MyST supports the achievement of the following priorities for social services under the corporate plan

- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater
- To work with our partners including Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities

The My Support Team is also a key part of the Safe Reduction of Children Looked after Strategy 2020 - 2025

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.1 When initially set up the Joint Blaenau Gwent / Monmouthshire MyST was funded by ICF grant money. This grant money was time limited to 18 Months as it needed to move to Newport to enable them to develop their MyST. Therefore, from April 2021/22 Blaenau Gwent have been funding half the costs of the joint team from our core budget. This has been possible by using the savings made from the residential budget.

5.1.2 The Blaenau Gwent contribution to Monmouthshire for hosting the team for 2021/22 is £240,000.

5.1.3 The following information will demonstrate the actual savings and cost avoidance the MyST has achieved during 19/20 and 20/21.

5.1.4 **Figure 1**

Cost Savings in 2019-2020	Cost Avoidance in 2019-2020
Child A - £184,052.57	Child A- £83,169.93
Child B - £27,283.57	Child B - £70,150.01
Child C - £83,852.57	
Total Saving - £295,188.71	Total Cost Avoidance - £153,319.94

5.1.5 For clarity the cost savings made for the 3 children were made as they were all in residential care and then moved with the support of MyST to live with foster carers with therapeutic support. The 2 children where costs were avoided was due to the work of the MyST preventing these children entering residential care.

5.1.6 **Figure 2**

Cost Savings in 2020-2021	Cost Avoidance in 2020-2021
Child A - £218,119	Child A £37,355
Child B- £97,080	Child B £66,957
Child C- £174,449	Child C- £24,886
Child D - £143,083	Child D - £41,482
Child E - £174,666	
Child F- £8,004	
Child G - £75,564	
Child H - £3,794	
Total Saving - £894,759	Total Cost Avoidance - £170,680

5.1.7 The annual cost of a Blaenau Gwent MyST would be £503,467.

5.1.8 The costs of a full Blaenau Gwent team are outlined below. This is based on the forecast that Monmouthshire have provided for the joint Blaenau Gwent Monmouthshire Team for 21/22 but also includes the contribution to regional costs which have to date been met by transformation grant money which is due to end March 2022.

<u>Account</u>	<u>21/22 Forecast</u>
Salaries	329,067.00
Contribution to Regional MyST posts	41,000.00
Standby Allowance	16,000.00
Travel Claims Allowance	10,000.00
Accommodation	15, 000.00
Equipment Purchases	3,500.00
Professional And Specialist Fees (Psychology)	55,900.00
Mobile Telephone Call Charges	1,500.00
IT Hardware	2,500.00
Advertising	1,000.00
Administration	12,000.00
Training Charges	10,000.00
Direct Work with Young People	6,000.00
Totals	503,467.00

5.1.9 Based on the fact that we are currently paying £240,000 to Monmouthshire this would require a further £263,467 to be found from children's service core budget

5.1.10 The additional costs will be funded by cost reductions in the Residential Children's budget which are expected to result from the work of the Myst Team in reducing the number of children requiring residential care in future.

5.1.11 Figure 3 shows the financial benefits the preventative work in Children's Services has had on the Residential Children's budget between 2018/19 and 2020/21.

5.1.12 **Figure 3 Residential Children's Budget**

	Budget	Outturn	Underspend /overspend
18/19	2,592,000.00	3,070,474.00	Overspent 478,474.00
19/20	2,678,430 .00	2,548,152.00	Underspend 130,278.00
20/21	2,703,250.00	2,041,704.00	Underspend 661,546.00

5.1.13 Figure 3 shows how the residential children budget has shifted from an overspend position to a significant underspend position over the last three years. This is a direct result of having a MyST and our 14 plus team working hard to move children out of residential care and closer to Blaenau Gwent.

5.1.14 The establishment of a Blaenau Gwent MyST Team would continue this positive work and increase capacity within Blaenau Gwent to address the backlog of referrals. Based upon previous outcomes it is anticipated that the work of the team would decrease the overall numbers of children in residential care by 2 children each year over the next 3years.

5.1.15 The current average weekly cost of a Blaenau Gwent child to be in residential placement is £4000 a week or £208,000 per year. If the goal of bringing 2 children in residential care back to Blaenau Gwent is achieved this will save the authority £416,000 per year (and offset the additional cost of the team).

5.1.16 During 2020/21, 12 children were admitted into residential care. It is fair to say that due to the complex needs of these children some of them needed this provision at this time. However, if the MyST team had been able to work with some of these children before their needs escalated then fewer children would have needed this provision. In 2020/21 the joint team were able to work with four children to create a cost avoidance of £170K through the joint team, with a full team for Blaenau Gwent then we anticipate that cost avoidance will at least double to £340K a year.

5.1.17 In summary therefore, if agreed, this invest to save proposal will be funded by the expected savings resulting from a reduction in 2 residential placements per annum. Reductions in placements and cost avoidance exceeding those required to fund the proposal will be factored in to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy to support the Bridging the Gap programme.

5.1.18 **Figure 4: Estimated Financial Impact of Establishing a BG Myst Team:**

	Year 1 £	Year 2 £	Year 3 £
Full Cost of BG Myst Team	503,467	503,467	503,467
Current Cost of Joint Team	(240,000)	(240,000)	(240,000)
Additional Cost of BG Myst Team	263,467	263,467	263,467
Estimated Cost Reductions (2 placements per annum)	(416,000)	(832,000)	(1,248,000)
Estimated Financial Impact	(152,533)	(568,533)	(984,533)

5.1.19 The above highlights that the establishment of a BG Myst Team is estimated to achieve savings of £1m by year 3.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

5.2.1 **Risk 1**

Due to lack of capacity the MyST have held a waiting list this year. This poses 2 risks. Children remaining in residential care for longer than needed and children entering residential care because MyST were not able to offer preventative support.

5.2.2 **Mitigation**

The development of a Blaenau Gwent MyST will bring more capacity to work with Blaenau Gwent children to mitigate against these 2 risks

5.3 **Legal**

The proposal of this report is in line with principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014, in particular Part 2 of the codes of practice which outlines the general functions to which local authorities and Local Health Boards **must** have regard.

Part 2 of the code states the level of preventative services that local authorities provide or arrange **must** seek to promote the well-being of people who need care and support. The work of the MyST is clearly aligned to this requirement and evidence of this can be seen in the comments made by those who have used the service.

5.4 **Human Resources**

If Blaenau Gwent have their own MyST the following new posts will have to be created

Team Manager MyST
X 3 therapeutic practitioners

X 2 Young person's practitioners

A structure Chart has been included in **Appendix 1** which show where this new team will sit in the Childrens Services Structure

The Job Descriptions for these posts have already been developed as part of the joint team with Monmouthshire, however they will need to be subject to the Blaenau Gwent job evaluation process.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

6.1.1 The following information will outline why there is a need to establish a Blaenau Gwent MyST.

6.1.2 The following table shows the numbers of children that have entered residential care over the past 3 years

6.1.3 **Figure :**

Year	Number of children
18/19	9
19/20	7
20/21	12

6.1.4 You will note that despite the MyST being established in May 2019 and working intensively with 7 children to enable them to move out of residential care, the rate of children entering residential care during 20/21 nearly doubled from the previous year. The joint Blaenau Gwent/ Monmouthshire Team MyST did not have the capacity to work with these children to prevent these children entering residential care.

6.1.5 During 20/21 Childrens Services have seen a significant increase in the level of risk taking behaviour and complex needs that children are presenting with. It is these children that require intensive therapeutic support which the MyST team could offer if their capacity was increased.

6.1.6 MyST work with only 15 children at any one time. This is the optimum number to ensure the quality and safety in managing the clinical risk with the level of intensity needed both in working hours and especially with the out of hours service. Increasing the numbers of children to 20 with an additional 2 staff has been tried in the region. However, the team started to experience a higher level of instability in the placements and burn out amongst the staff team due to the level and demands in working hours and the on call service. Therefore, the model of service delivery is tried and tested and for Blaenau Gwent to increase MyST capacity a Blaenau Gwent team needs to be developed

6.1.7 The **negative** impact of children entering residential care is significant. None of the 12 children who came into residential care in 20/21 were placed

in Blaenau Gwent. Therefore, connections with their schools, peers, friends and communities were severed. Connections with family members became much harder to maintain. There is significant research to demonstrate the outcomes for children in care are much poorer than the rest of the population. This is why it is critical to work hard and fast to return children to their family so long as it is safe to do so.

6.1.8 The following information provides evidence of what the existing Blaenau Gwent/ Monmouthshire team has already achieved.

6.1.9 As previously mentioned the MyST became operational from May 2019. At this time Blaenau Gwent had 18 children in residential care. In August 2021 we now have 11 children in residential care.

6.1.10 **Numbers of Blaenau Gwent children the team have supported out of residential care.**

From May 2019- August 2021 MyST have successfully worked with 7 children to move them out of residential care into foster placements. At the heart of this work is the relationship the MyST workers build with the children and their support networks. The small numbers the MyST work with at any one time allows their work to be very intensive, providing 24/7 support to the child and their carers. It is this intensive support that has allowed these 7 children to move successfully in a planned way into foster care or return to their parents.

6.1.11 **The numbers of Blaenau Gwent children the team have supported to prevent children going into residential care**

From May 2019 – August 2021 MyST have worked intensively with 4 children whose foster placement was at high risk of breaking down. If the foster placement had broken down the only placements for these children would have been residential care. Providing hands on intensive 24/7 support to the child and foster carers has enabled these placements to remain stable, enabling the child to remain local and continue in the same schools and maintain contact with their family and friendship groups.

6.1.12 **The number of Blaenau Gwent practice consultations undertaken**

MyST provide practice consultations to Social Workers and Foster Carers when they are struggling to understand and support a child whose needs are starting to become complex. These consultations provide advice and guidance in managing emerging complex needs by trying new approaches when managing various risks/behaviours.

6.1.13 MyST have undertaken an evaluation of the consultations undertaken during 2020 -21. The full evaluation can be found under **Appendix 2**. In summary. During this period, 70 consultations took place. Of the 70 consultations, 13 of these consulted with MyST more than once. Out of the 70 consultations held 133 people attended.

6.1.14 The views and feedback from the children and young people, foster carers and professionals experiencing the service is critical to evidence the improved outcomes for our children looked after. Examples of the comments received are below

- Quote from Foster Carer
"We love the photo's and glad you captured those moments! We really appreciate everything you've done for us."
- A later quote from the same foster carer –
"The work that I did with you is still being very useful, thank you for that."
- Quote from Birth Mother
"If it wasn't for MyST home visits wouldn't have started yet. I'm really happy that she can visit. I really appreciate everything you've done for us."
- Quote from IFA Foster Carer
'As long term foster carers over 10 years we have found that having MyST on board has been invaluable in providing care for a child with such complex needs. Without MyST we would be floundering and doubting our ability to continue. The on call service has been crucial in providing consistency and stability in our care.'
- Quote from IFA Foster Carer
"MyST were great at listening and giving useful advice, I have been able to broaden my 'tool belt'"
- Quote from Birth Family Member
"Thank you for last night, I truly appreciate it, having someone to speak to really helps"
- Quote from Foster Carer
"A fresh pair of eyes from MyST was good to see a bigger picture"
- Quote from Foster Carer
'MyST came at the right time. When x was first with us we had support from elsewhere, but if MyST hadn't started working with us x wouldn't be here now'.
- Quote from Foster Carer
Working alongside MyST and being in regular contact with the team has allowed me to share my knowledge and ideas and I feel like a valued person within the child's support network. I feel listened to and that my skill set as a foster carer is appreciated"

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The work of the MyST work to achieve the following outcomes for children

- Children placed closer to home which will enable sustained relationships with their families and friends
- Increased placement stability
- Improved school attendance
- Improved emotional wellbeing

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

As part of the ongoing monitoring there will be consultation with the children and young people, foster carers and staff receiving a service from MyST.

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

The development of the service outlined in this report is aimed at enhancing and improving services for children looked after and young people in the longer term. Bringing children closer to home will enable them to form local support networks in their communities which will no doubt benefit them into the future.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

MyST aims to improve outcomes for children who have experienced multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and who have the most complex and challenging needs. If successful MyST interventions will reduce the use of expensive and sometimes ineffective out of area placements. MyST works in close alignment with the Gwent-wide attachment service, to achieve psychologically-informed environments, including an ACEs-informed workforce.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

MyST is an excellent example of how the Children and Families Partnership is working together to improve outcomes for children and young people who present with complex needs.

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

MyST engages with the whole support network around the child. This includes school, youth workers and any community activities/clubs. The work undertaken to date by MyST has evidenced very close working relationships with schools both inside and outside of Blaenau Gwent.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

The new MyST team will adopt the councils agile working policy which will mean there will not be a requirement to travel to an office base each day but work from home for part of the week. This will play a part in reducing carbon emissions

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

MyST works with children who live in some of the most deprived areas of Blaenau Gwent that have experienced many adverse childhood experiences. The impact assessment has been completed and is attached under **appendix 3**

6.9b. ***Equality Impact Assessment***

The development of a full BG MyST does not required a full impact assessment as it will not adversely impact on the community of Blaenau Gwent

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The following will monitor the MyST arrangements

- The Children and Families Partnership Board
- The Regional Partnership Board
- The Regional MyST Management Board.
- The Project is included as part of the action plan in the Blaenau Gwent Children Looked After reduction strategy which will be monitored on a quarterly basis

Background Documents /Electronic Links

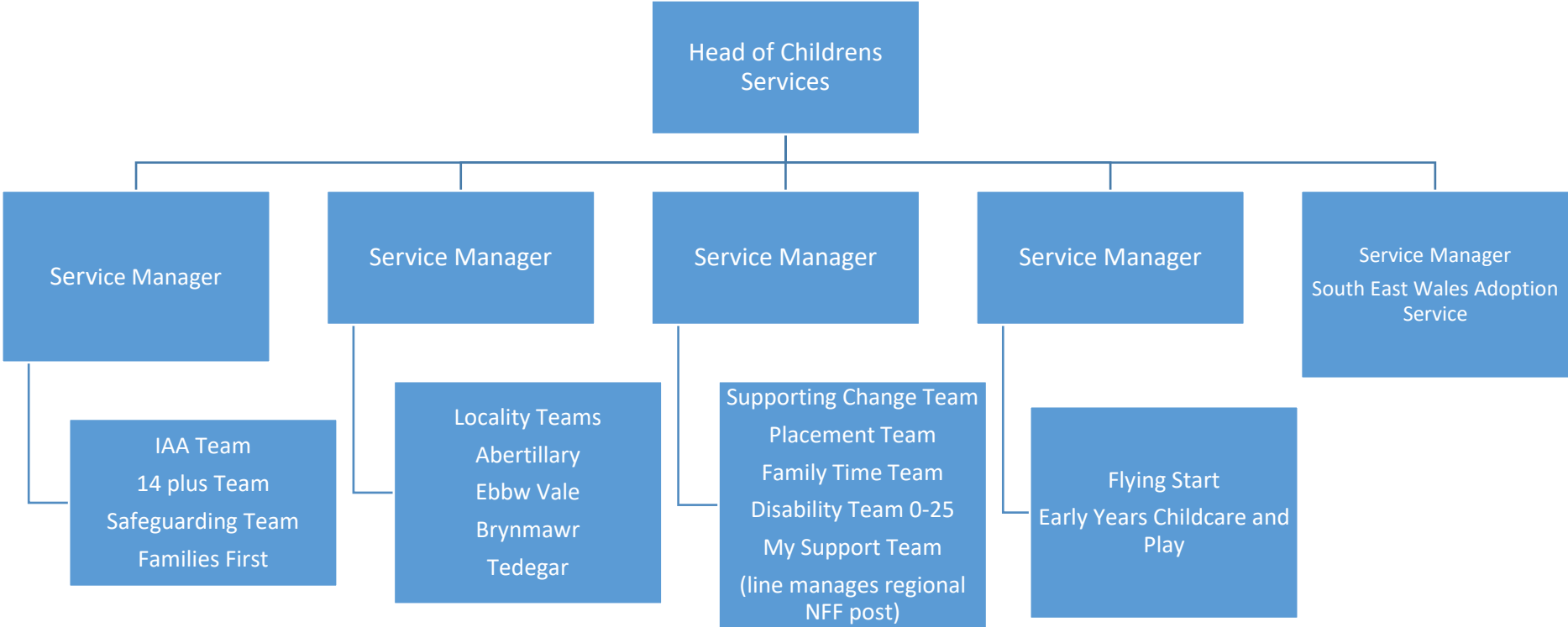
Appendix 1 – Children’s Staffing Structure

Appendix 2 – Consultation Evaluation

Appendix 3 – Socio-Economic Duty

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Childrens Structure May 21



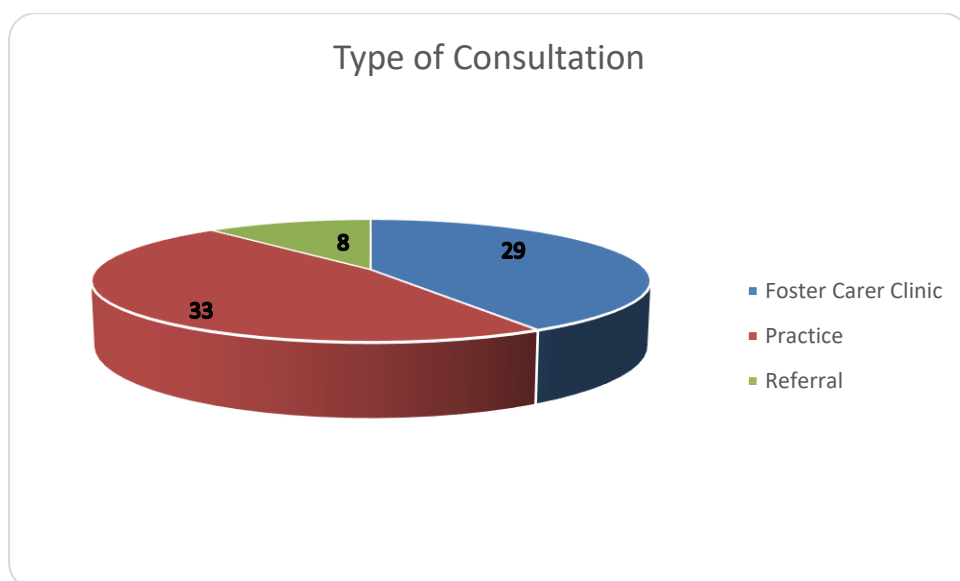
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Blaenau Gwent - Monmouthshire MyST Consultation Service
Evaluation Audit 2020 - 2021

Alongside our intensive placement-based work, MyST aims to be as accessible and supportive as possible to Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire young people who are at the Edge of Care or Looked After. Part of this work involves providing consultation to foster carers, parents, kinship carers, social workers and direct workers to help to understand young people’s psychological needs and develop ideas about ways to meet these needs. All consultees are asked to give us their feedback anonymously so that we can understand more about the impacts that the consultations have, what works well and how they might be improved.

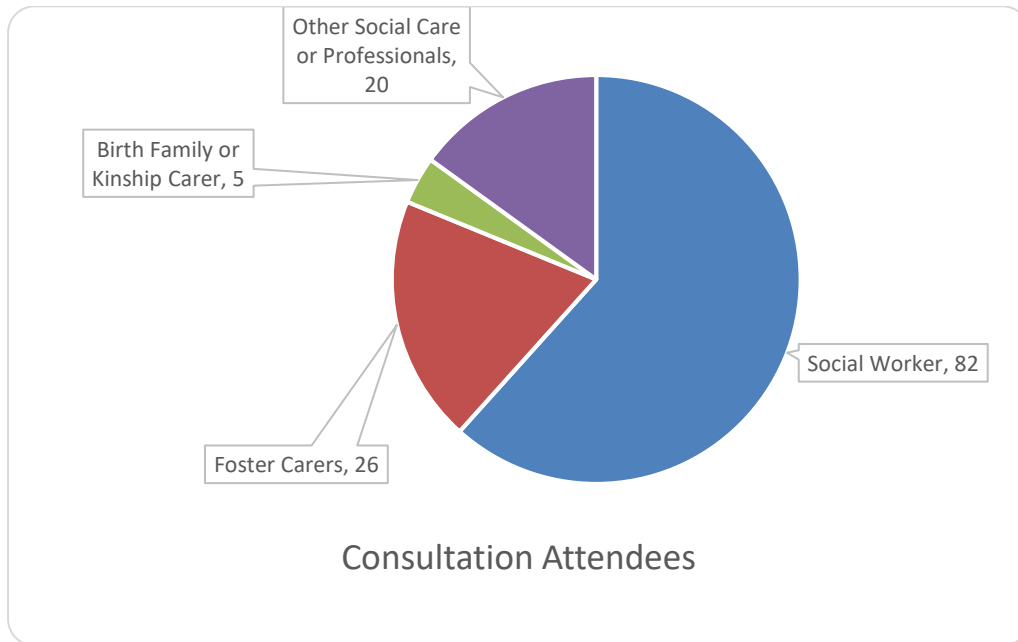
This audit looked at the completed evaluation forms from all those who returned them between 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. During this period, 70 consultations took place. Of 70 consultations, 13 of these consulted with us more than once. Out of the 70 consultations held 133 people attended, 34 of these people returned an evaluation form.

Our consultation criteria is split into three categories these are, practice consultations (with professional colleagues to support their own practice with a child and family), foster carer clinic consultations and referral consultations (to discuss a referral into our intensive direct work service), the below graph demonstrates the number of each provided during the period.



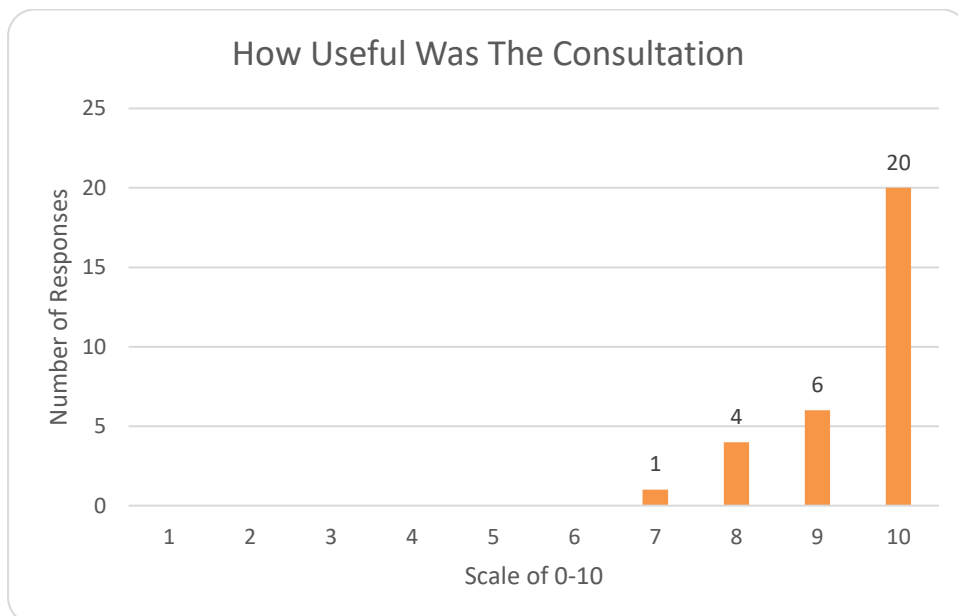
It is worth noting in addition to the 70 consultations that took place in regards to the above categories and additional 34 On-Going consultations took place as part of an intensive workload, carried out usually by the services psychologist or manager.

It is usual for more than one person to attend each consultation of the 70 consultations provided there were 133 attendees; the graph demonstrates the breakdown of these attendees.



The evaluation forms asked attendees to answer the following two questions:

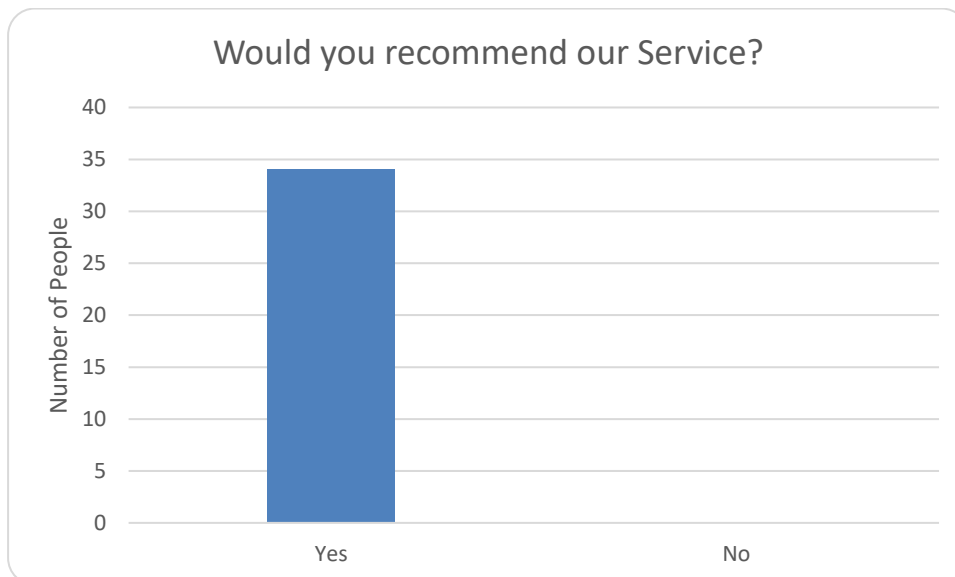
1. How useful was the consultation on a scale of 0-10? (0 being not at all and 10 being extremely useful) The following responses were given:



59% of attendees said their consultation was extremely valuable.

Gwasanaeth Bwrdd Partneriaeth Gwent ~ A Gwent Partnership Board Service

2. Would you recommend our service? The following responses were given:



100% of attendees said they would recommend our service.

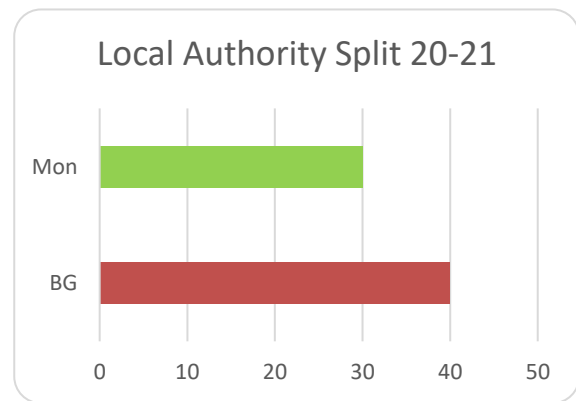
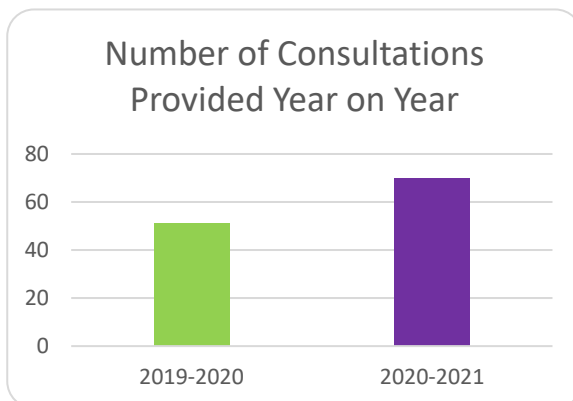
Below is an example of some of this year's qualitative feedback that was provided:

- Helpful to talk and helpful to have feedback about what they're doing and ideas about to what we're doing to refresh our learning.
- Can I say 11+? I feel so happy that I've spoken to you and less overwhelmed
- You were brilliant, that's really helped us. Loads of ideas now
- Nice to be able to discuss and get other ideas and know we're not on our own with it.
- The session was significant and useful as a support mechanism for the foster carers.
- useful and beneficial to have frank and open discussion and think about strategies and how best to support
- nice to discuss as touch on things not yet been thought of and see it with fresh eyes.
- Really enjoyed it, so helpful- brought up dimensions we'd not thought of and will help to work. Like it was holistic
- entirely helpful and useful for staff team - so good to marry up approaches and think about ideas. Thanks.
- really helpful to share ideas and also be reminded of my own skills to use.
- gained a really good insight into this young person in a very short space of time and feel you've got her and understood.
- Both MYST practitioners were extremely knowledgeable, welcoming of other professionals during the consultation, throughout the entire consultation I felt I was heard, supported and provided with recognition.

Gwasanaeth Bwrdd Partneriaeth Gwent ~ A Gwent Partnership Board Service

- It also provided me with reassurance that there is further support for myself to ensure that I am supporting in the most appropriate way to help the family identify/manage the complexities in their lives, help to implement new and more effective strategies and achieve change.
- The session gave me a clearer picture of how to work with this young person and I came away with more confidence in how I could support her and how the team around her could work. It was also good to understand that the way I have been working with her was correct. The hour flew!

Below figures, show the increase demand for consultations, since the start of the service in 2019, however it is important to remember that the service covers two boroughs, from the latest figures we can see the consultation service is being utilised more by the Blaenau Gwent borough.



Discussion

Given the pandemic, it has been an exceptionally difficult year for everybody. MyST’s priority during this time was to offer the same high quality support to our intensive casework, despite this we have still managed to carry out a large number of consultations. Due to the high number of attendees at these consultations, we are disappointed with the low number of feedback evaluations. It is notable that the pandemic brought about a shift to online consultation meetings and this may have influenced upon uptake and returns of evaluation feedback.

The feedback that has been provided is extremely positive. It is notable that there were no negative comments about the consultations.

Qualitative feedback confirms the consultations offer a space for discussion and to check, possibly reaffirm actions the care-givers took and evaluate these in a safe environment. It has been raised that MyST offer useful ideas and identify helpful pieces of work, which would benefit the young people and the carers. One attendee advised, “I feel so happy that I’ve spoken to you and less overwhelmed” this highlights the value the MyST consultation service offers to the local authority foster carers and social workers outside of our core objectives of the service.

Cariad Warrilow – Regional Systems & Resource Coordinator – MyST &

May 2021

Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)

Welsh Government’s [Socio-economic Duty](#) provides a framework to ensure tackling inequality of outcome is at the forefront of decision making.

Please consider how your proposal could affect the following groups:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- People with low literacy/numeracy
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Carers
- Armed Forces Community
- Students
- Single adult households
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales (WIMD)
- People involved in the criminal justice system
- People misusing substances

Socio Economic Disadvantages	Will the proposal have a positive, negative, or neutral impact?	How could you mitigate the negative impacts outlined?	Please highlight any evidence that has been considered (quantitative or qualitative)
<p>Low Income / Income Poverty <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p>Positive impact</p>		<p>A Blaenau Gwent (BG) MyST will increase capacity to work with children to provide placement stability. This will assist low income families in avoiding the need to visit their child/children in residential homes outside of Blaenau Gwent.</p>
<p>Low and/or No Wealth <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i></p>	<p>Positive impact</p>		<p>A BG MyST will increase capacity to work with children to provide placement stability. This will avoid families in spending money in court proceedings and visiting their child/children in</p>

			Residential homes outside of Blaenau Gwent.
Material Deprivation <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e., financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>	Positive Impact		A BG MyST will increase capacity to work with children to provide placement stability, which will in turn improve families personal outcomes and ensure their income is not used for expensive travel to see their children
Area Deprivation <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport) Impact on the environment?)</i>	Positive Impact		A BG MyST will increase capacity to work with children to provide placement stability. which will in turn improve their personal outcomes and integrating positively in their communities. This will cause less disruption for families.
Socio-economic Background <i>(social class i.e., parents' education, employment and income)</i>	Positive Impact		A BG MyST will increase capacity to work with children to provide placement stability which will in turn improve their personal outcomes, resulting in

			families using their income positively on their family rather than for travel, etc to see their child/children in residential care.
<p>Socio-economic Disadvantage <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>	<p>Positive Impact</p>		<p>A BG MyST will increase capacity to work with children to provide placement stability which will in turn improve their personal outcomes like attending school, developing positive family/peer relationships, integrating positively in their communities. This will mitigate against existing disadvantages.</p>

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Agenda Item 9

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, Llanhilleth**
Portfolio Holder: **Executive Member for Environment – Councillor Joanne Wilkins**
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)
07/09/2021	09/09/2021	20.10.21			04/10/2021	10/11/21		

1. Purpose of the Report

To present the S19 Flood Investigation Report for Llanhilleth following the flooding that occurred in Meadow Street and Railway Street during 15-16th February 2020.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 A Section 19 Flood Investigation Report is required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 following a significant flood event. It is the duty of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to investigate all significant flood events that occur in their area (a significant flood event being defined as any flood event where 20 or more properties have been flooded in a single period/event). Once completed, it shall publish its findings in a S19 Flood Investigation Report and to notify any relevant risk management authorities of its findings.

2.2 Blaenau Gwent CBC is the LLFA for Blaenau Gwent, and has recently completed its investigation into the surface water flooding that occurred in Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth in February 2020. The purpose of the S19 report is to review the flooding incident that occurred and the operational response to the flood event. The S19 report also investigates the causes of the surface water flooding.

2.3 Key findings of the S19 Flood Investigation Report for Llanhilleth:

- Saturated Ground:

The winter that preceded the February storms of 2020 was one of the wettest on record and meant that much of the ground was already saturated before the February 2020 storms arrived, leading to an increase of surface water.

- Heavy and Persistent Rainfall:

Storm Dennis, which was the second storm event of February 2020, and occurred between 15th and 16th February 2020, brought an exceptionally high volume of rainfall to South Wales. In a period of 24 hours between 9am on 15th February and 9 am on 16th February 2020, 115 mm of rainfall was recorded at Carno Reservoir Rain Gauge (near Garnlydan, Ebbw Vale), which is 89 % of the total average monthly rainfall for February. At Cwmtillery Rain Gauge, 108 mm of rainfall was recorded in the same period, which is 95 % of the average monthly rainfall for February.

- River Levels:

River levels at Aberbeeg River Station during Storm Dennis exceeded 1.8m, the highest level recorded since records began in 1975. As a comparison, the average river flow recorded at the station is 0.8m. The report found that the surface water flooding was caused by exceptionally heavy rainfall, high volumes of surface water run-off and blockages in the highway drainage infrastructure. There was no evidence of river flooding during the investigation.

- Surface Water:

Due to the saturated ground and heavy and persistent rainfall, surface water increased, particularly at low points.

- Local topography:

A subsequent topographical survey shows that both Meadow Street and Railway Street have a bowl-like topography from east to west, therefore, they both have low points in the middle, and higher ground at each end. This means that when there is a high volume of surface water and rainfall, water travels to the low points (middle of the street) and accumulates.

- DCWW Pumping Station:

Due to the high level of surface water on site, it was initially suspected that the pumping station, located to the east of Meadow Street, had failed. The authority responsible for the pumping station is DCWW, therefore, they were called out to inspect it and ensure it was working properly.

DCWW inspected the pumping station and led its own enquiry into the suspected pumping station failure; the inspection found that the pumps were working during the time the River Ebbw reached its highest peak of 1.82m at 04:00 on 16th February 2020. Therefore, it is unlikely any failure contributed to the flooding at Meadow Street and Railway Street.

- Storm Water Drainage Infrastructure:

Two blockages in the storm water drainage infrastructure of Meadow Street and Railway Street were found in separate locations during Storm Dennis. One blockage was observed at the eastern link road between Railway Street and Meadow Street. The other blockage was observed in the carriageway of Railway Street.

Both blockages caused water to surcharge from nearby inspection chambers, causing water to spill out onto the surface, build up at low points. Drainage officers removed both blockages during the storm and soon the flood water subsided.

2.4 **Key actions of the S19 Flood Investigation Report for Llanhilleth**

BGCBC to continue its routine and critical drainage inspections, particularly prior to forecasted storm events.

BGCBC to investigate ways of improving drainage capacity at Railway Street and Meadow Street.

Reference Appendix A The Section 19 Flood Investigation Report for Storm Water Flooding at Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth (BGCBC Infrastructure Services, August 2021)

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Community Services Scrutiny Committee supported Option 1 at its meeting on 4th October 2021.

3.2 **Option 1**

The Executive Committee accepts the Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, Llanhilleth and agrees to publish the report in accordance with the FWMA 2010 legislation.

3.3 **Option 2**

The Executive Committee rejects the Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, Llanhilleth and makes recommendations for amendments to the report.

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

Blaenau Gwent CBC is the LLFA for Blaenau Gwent and has a statutory duty to investigate all significant flooding in Blaenau Gwent and publish its findings.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There are no financial implications associated with the production of the Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, Llanhilleth report outside of officers' time covered within existing revenue budget provision.

- 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**
There is a risk of non-compliance with the FWMA 2010 if the S19 report is not accepted or published. Publishing the findings of the report will mitigate the risk of non-compliance.
- 5.3 **Legal**
Legal has been consulted on the report and concludes that the report meets the requirements of the FWMA 2010.
- 5.4 **Human Resources**
There are no impacts on human resources in accepting the S19 report.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**
N/A
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
That the report be published and the findings of the investigation be made available to the public.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
Consultation with Blaenau Gwent Civil Contingencies, Neighbourhood Services, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and Natural Resources Wales was undertaken when preparing the report.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
N/A
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
N/A
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
DCWW and NRW
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
Civil Contingencies, Neighbourhood Services and Benefits & Revenues provided information for The Section 19 Flood Investigation Report for Storm Water Flooding at Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth (BGCBC Infrastructure Services, August 2021).
- 6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**
N/A
- 6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**
N/A
- 6.9b. **Equality Impact Assessment**
N/A
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
N/A
- Background Documents /Electronic Links**
- *Appendix A - Section 19 Flood Investigation Report for Storm Water Flooding at Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth (BGCBC Infrastructure Services, August 2021)*

Flood and Waste Management Act 2010

Section 19 Flood Investigation Report for Storm Water Flooding at Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth

Report Date: June 2021



Flood and Water Management Act 2010

Section 19 Compliance: Flood Investigation Reports

Introduction

In accordance with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA), all Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) have a duty to investigate all significant flood events that occur in their area to the extent they deem necessary. The LLFA must investigate which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions and whether those flood risk management authorities have exercised those functions in response to the flood.

A significant flood event is defined as follows:

- 20 or more properties flooded internally from the same source of flooding, or
- Trunk roads, principal A roads or main distributor roads linking urban centres with the primary network are closed for 4 hours or more, or
- Secondary distributor roads (B and C roads) linking villages to the distributor network are closed for 10 hours or more, or
- There is risk to human life

Following the flood events in Llanhilleth during Storm Dennis (15th February – 17th February 2020), which affected 89 homes, Blaenau Gwent CBC, as Lead Local Flood Authority, must carry out a flood investigation and report on its findings.

Contents for Flood Investigation Report:

1. **Executive Summary:** summarising the key points and findings of the investigation
2. **Site Location:** describe flooded area, provide site plan, OS grid reference and table identifying the location and designation of watercourses in the affected and surrounding areas.
3. **Site Location and Catchment Description:** describe topography, geology using available maps and surveys, watercourses and highway drainage.
4. **Flooding Incident**
5. **Flood Investigation**
6. **Conclusion**

1 Executive Summary

Following extremely heavy rainfall during Storm Dennis between 15th and 16th February 2020, significant storm water flooding occurred throughout southern Blaenau Gwent. Between 9 am on Saturday 15th February and 9 am on Sunday 16th February 108 mm of rainfall fell, which is 95 per cent of the month's Long Term Average (LTA) rainfall. This Section 19 Report is focussed on Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth, where 89 properties were flooded. Two residential streets were flooded by surface water during the storm event, causing disruption to many families and damage to homes and businesses.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority for Blaenau Gwent, and under the Flood Water Management Act 2010 it has a duty to investigate any significant flooding that occurs within the county borough, particularly the cause of the flooding and Blaenau Gwent CBC's operational response.

The investigation found that the surface water flooding was caused by exceptionally heavy rainfall, high volumes of surface water run-off and blockages in the drainage infrastructure.

2. Report Scope

The purpose of the report is to review the flooding incident that occurred at Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth between 15th and 16th February 2020 and the operational response. The report will also investigate the causes of the surface water flooding, and will identify those responsible for flood risk in the study area and what actions are required in order to reduce the risk of flooding in the future.

The information used to inform this flood investigation report is as follows:

- Eyewitness statements
- Site photographs taken during the flood incident and immediately after
- Call logs recorded by BGCBC Neighbourhood Services
- A report on the Sewage Pumping Station (The Fields, Llanhilleth), produced by Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (March 2020)
- Assessment of needs spreadsheet for the affected houses recorded by BGCBC Revenues
- CCTV surveys of the existing drainage system after the event

All site photographs in relation to the report can be found in Appendix A of this report.

A copy of the Sewage Pumping Station (The Fields, Llanhilleth) (DCWW, 2020) can be found in Appendix B.

3. Site Location and Catchment Description

The small village of Llanhilleth is located at the southern end of Blaenau Gwent in the South Wales valleys. In 2011, the Census recorded that population of Llanhilleth was just under 5000 people. There is a small high street, located on Commercial Road and High Street, within the village, which has a range of shops including a pharmacy and convenience store.

The study area, where the flooding occurred, comprises of two adjacent residential streets in the north of the village; Meadow Street and Railway Street. Meadow Street is located north of the River Ebbw, and Railway Street is located immediately north of Meadow Street. Both streets have two rows of terraced houses; Meadow Street has 72 properties and Railway Street has 70 properties. The central Ordnance Survey coordinates for the site are: 321588 E, 200719 N.

The streets lay on generally flat, low lying ground that is level with the top of the river bank. However, a topographic survey has shown that the streets have a gentle undulation, and the levels differ throughout the length of the street in an east to west direction, which means there are some low points, particularly in the middle of each street which creates a shallow bowl effect in an east to west direction. For example, manholes in the carriageway at each end of Meadow Street have a level of 139.74 AOD. A gulley outside No. 47 Meadow Street recorded a level of 139.08m AOD, which is a difference of 0.66 m. Similarly, a manhole at eastern end of Railway Street has a cover level of 141.27m AOD, and at the carriageway at the western end of the street has a ground level of 139.62 m AOD. A gulley outside No. 27 Railway Street, has a level of 139.12, which is lower than the eastern and western ends by 2.15m and 0.5m respectively.

Above these two streets are the railway line and the high street, which has a recorded level of 165.2 m AOD at its highest point. Blaen Cuffin Road, which is located off junction with High Street has a recorded level of 173.4 m. In a relatively short distance of 212 m, there is a change in level of almost 35m in a north to south direction.

A flood defence wall was built along this section of the River Ebbw in 1989 by the Environment Agency to prevent fluvial (river) flooding

To the east of the study area are the Llanhilleth Miners' Institute and St Illtyd's Primary School. To the north of the study area is a Llanhilleth Railway Station which forms part of the Ebbw Vale to Cardiff Central railway route. To the west of the study site are two more residential streets and to the south of the site is the River Ebbw.

Figure 1 below shows a map of Blaenau Gwent, its boundary indicated by a red line. Llanhilleth is shown at the southern end of the county borough. Figure 1 also shows the location of the NRW operated rain gauging stations within the county borough.



Figure 1 Map of Blaenau Gwent showing where Llanhilleth is located along with the two Rain Gauging Stations that are monitored by NRW – Ordnance Survey Maps

Figure 2 Below is a site location plan of Meadow Street and Railway Street in relation to the River Ebbw, the railway line and Commercial Road.

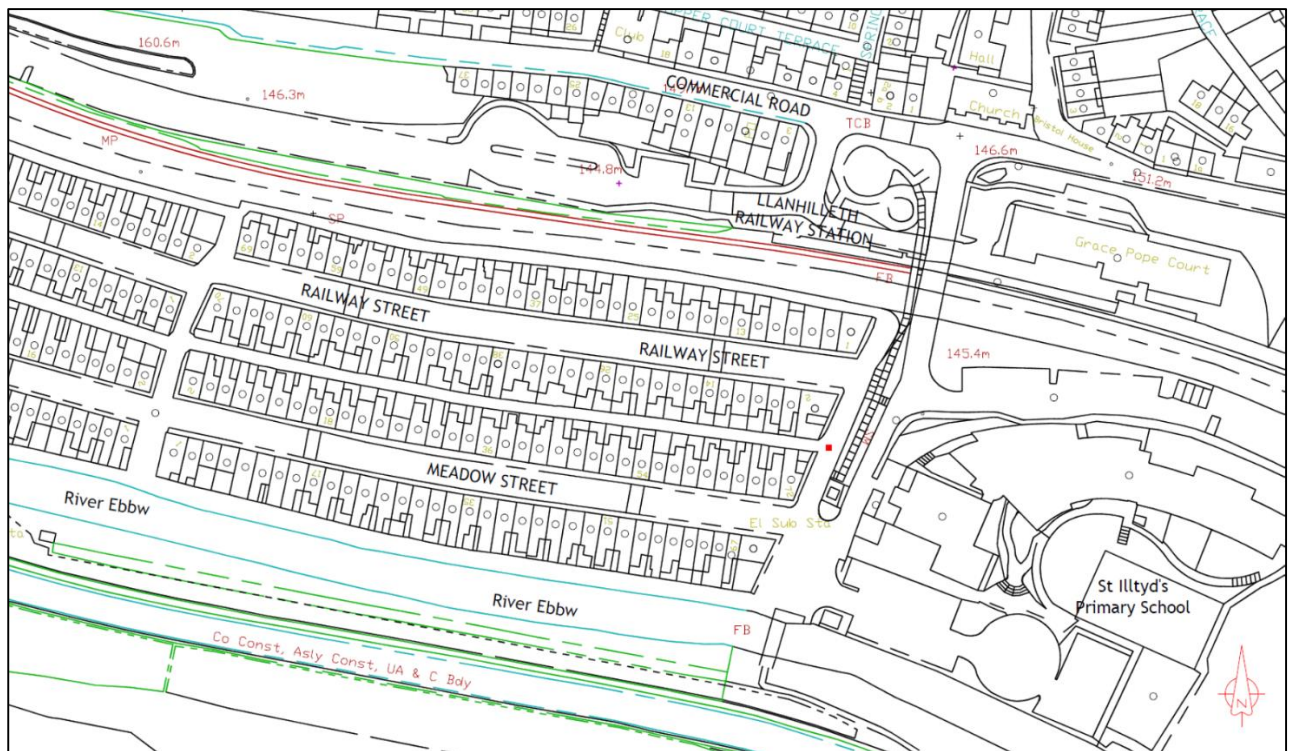


Figure 2 Site Location Plan of Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth

3.1 Catchment Description

The River Ebbw source is the Mynydd Llangatwg and from this point travels through the north east region of the South Wales Valleys. It transcends two river management catchments; the Usk and South East Valleys catchments, which are both managed by Natural Resources Wales. The River Ebbw runs through terrain characterised by relatively steep, narrow channels and limited groundwater. As a result of these conditions, the river reacts quickly to intense rainfall, 'which limits the time available to issue flood warnings' (NRW, 2020: 14). Equally, once rainfall stops the river levels reduce quickly (NRW, 2020).

3.2 Ordinary Watercourses and Drainage

The Lead Local Flood Authority for the area is Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, which has a duty to oversee and manage ordinary watercourses (smaller rivers, streams, surface water and groundwater). Blaenau Gwent CBC has set up regular inspection and maintenance routines of its assets as well as undertaking additional inspections as and when required.

Highway drainage is managed by the Blaenau Gwent Highway Authority, which is responsible for inspections and maintenance of drainage gullies and other highway drainage infrastructure, ensuring it is free of debris and other obstructions to allow surface water to drain away effectively from the highway.

The Nant Cuffin watercourse which takes water from the mountainside above Llanhilleth to the river, enters a large storm water culvert, approximately 800mm diameter where it

crosses under Blaencuffin Road, Llanhilleth, and continues in a southerly direction towards the River Ebbw. It travels underneath Commercial Road, the railway line and the link road between Meadow Street and Railway Street. The outfall of the culvert is located immediately west of the footbridge that crosses the river.

4.0 Flooding Incident February 2020

4.1 Weather Conditions

Prior to February 2020, the winter of 2019/2020 was one of the wettest on record since records began in 1862, therefore, the ground was already saturated before the February storms arrived. Storm Ciara was the first storm to hit Wales in February 2020, followed by Storm Dennis a week later.

4.1.1 Rainfall

During Storm Dennis, which took place between 15th – 16th February 2020, a rainfall gauge based at Carno Reservoir, Ebbw Vale, which is located 8 miles north of Llanhilleth, recorded the equivalent of half a month's rainfall in 12 hours - 68mm of rain - and the equivalent of an entire month's rainfall in 36 hours - 128 mm of rain. In Cwmtillery, located 4 miles north of Llanhilleth, a rain gauge received 95% of February's Long Term Average rainfall within 24 hours. Table 4 below shows the rainfall received in a 24-hour period between 9:00 GMT on 15/02/20.

Table 4.1.1 Rainfall recordings in 24-hour period on 15/02/20

Name of Rain Gauge	National Grid Reference	Total Rainfall from 9:00 GMT on 15/02/20 to 9:00 GMT on 16/02/20 (mm)
Carno	SO1621313036	115
Cwmtillery	SO2209906893	108.2

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Figure 3 is a Rainfall Isohyet Map showing rainfall over a 48-hour period during Storm Dennis in South Wales. The colours on the map show the intensity of the rainfall over the South Wales Valleys during Storm Dennis. The lighter shaded areas are where the most intense rainfall was observed during this period. One area was located over Cwm, Blaenau Gwent, which is upstream of Llanhilleth.

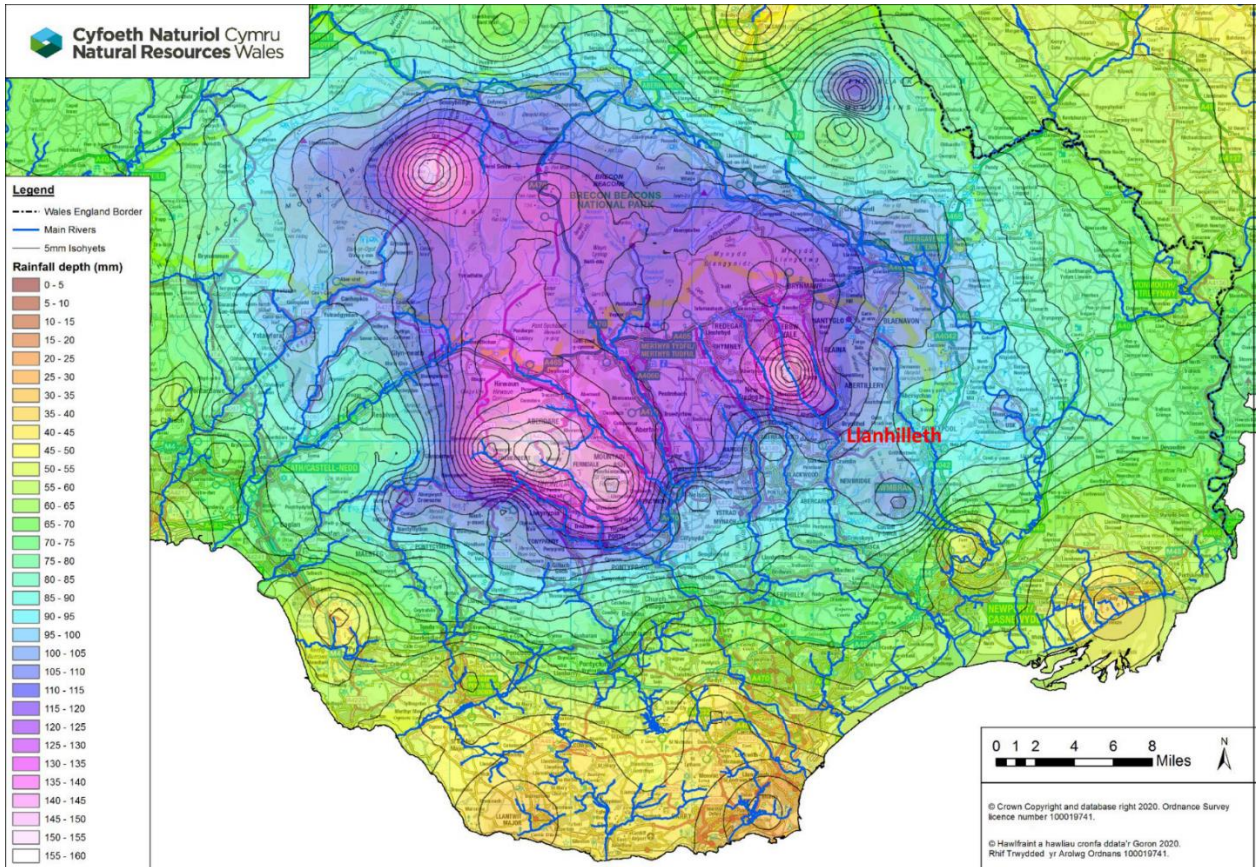


Figure 3 Isohyet Map of Rainfall across South Wales during Storm Dennis (NRW, 2020)

4.1.2 River Flows

The high intensity rainfall received during Storm Dennis had a big impact on the River Ebbw's levels. The table below shows the peak stage each river station recorded during Storm Dennis (each station is located upstream of Llanhilleth). For comparison purposes, the average river flow recorded at Aberbeeg is 0.8 m and the lowest recorded is 0.38 m.

Table 4.1.2 Peak River Stage recordings along the River Ebbw during Storm Dennis

Gauging Station	Date and Time of Peak	Peak Stage (m)
Aberbeeg	16/02/2020 04:00	1.819
Cwm	16/02/2020 02:45	1.235

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4.2 Flood Alerts and Weather Warnings

Before Storm Dennis arrived, 65 flood alerts, 89 flood warnings and 4 severe flood warnings were issued throughout South Wales.

On 15th February 2020 at 11:15 am the MET Office issued an Amber Warning for heavy rain for South East Wales. The warning advised that the heavy rain could lead to fast flowing or

deep floodwaters that could endanger life, cause flooding to homes and businesses and flood waters could completely cut off communities for days.

Blaenau Gwent CBC's Civil Contingencies Team received flood alert data from NRW for three of its river stations within Blaenau Gwent on 15th February 2021 at 13:34. The flood alert stated flooding was possible for the River Ebbw and River Sirhowy, which is also located in Blaenau Gwent but travels along a different valley and is completely within the South East Valleys River Catchment.

Despite the record breaking high river levels recorded by the river stations, witness reports state there was no fluvial (river) flooding at Llanhilleth. The existing flood protection wall located along the river protected the area from river flooding.

5.0 Flood Investigation

This Section 19 focuses on the cause of the localised surface water and ordinary watercourse flooding that occurred between the 15th and 16th February 2021 and watercourse maintenance carried out following the incident.

5.1 Incident Response

Blaenau Gwent CBC is the Lead Local Flood Authority for Blaenau Gwent and its Community Services Section were part of conference calls held by NRW on Friday 14th February 2020 to discuss preparations to be made for any potential flooding. Actions from the conference call to be completed by BGCBC were as follows:

- Additional response teams put on standby for the weekend.
- Sand bags prepared (Filled).
- All culverts on inspection regimes checked again and monitored overnight.
- Critical gullies checked.

On the 15th February 2020, three more calls were made with NRW at 12:00 hours, 18:00 hours and 22:00 hours to ensure measures were in place to help monitor river levels and respond to flooding calls from residents. There were further conference calls at 04:00 hours and 10:30 on the 16th February 2020.

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service and Blaenau Gwent CBC first attended site on the 15th February 2020 following emergency calls and reports of flooding made by residents.

Blaenau Gwent CBC attended Meadow Street and Railway Street in response to reports of flooding and blocked gullies made by residents. Sandbags were provided at properties to stem and divert the flow of the flood water away from properties.

At 03:55 am on 16th February 2020 BGCBC Community Services contacted Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water (DCWW) to report a suspected pump failure at a pumping station located on the river bank east of Meadow Street.

A gully outside No.34 Railway Street was jetted to dislodge a blockage in an inspection chamber in the rear lane between Meadow Street and Railway Street. Once the blockage was removed the water quickly drained away.

Blaenau Gwent CBC made arrangements for the disposal of all flood damaged house contents, including carpets and floor coverings, furniture, white goods, kitchen units and electrical appliances.

5.2 Recovery and Investigation

A total of 86 homes were affected by surface water flooding within Railway Street and Meadow Street, Llanhilleth, which is 60 per cent of the homes within the two streets. The cause of the flooding was a combination of high intensity rainfall over a prolonged period, saturated ground from one of the wettest winters on record and blockages in the storm drainage infrastructure. The flood waters had subsided by 17th February 2020, clearly showing the damage that had been caused to residents' homes.

The recovery of the flood was coordinated and led by Blaenau Gwent CBC's Civil Contingencies Team. A temporary refuge centre was set up in Llanhilleth Miner's Institute for residents displaced from their homes by the flood waters. A door knocking exercise commenced on 16th February 2021 to check on residents and ask whether they required any assistance. Vulnerable residents were offered temporary accommodation at the Miner's Institute or at homes managed by United Welsh Housing Authority (UWHA). Residents whose furniture and white goods had been damaged were offered replacements in joint partnership between Blaenau Gwent CBC and United Welsh Housing Authority.

Electrical testing of flood damaged homes was arranged by Blaenau Gwent CBC.

5.2.1 Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water (DCWW)

Following the call from BGCBC, DCWW attended site on the 16th February 2020 to investigate the pumping station. DCWW led their own enquiry into the suspected pumping station failure and produced a report that states the telemetry panel showed the pumps to be working during the time the River Ebbw reached its highest peak of 1.82m at 04:00 on 16th February 2020 therefore, it is unlikely any failure contributed to the flooding at Meadow Street and Railway Street.

The report also notes that the culvert flowing into the pumping station was full of debris, which built up in the outfall, prohibiting the free flow of water away from the pumping station. The site photographs taken of the culvert outfall show a mass of silt and small stones in the culvert, which led to loss of capacity. A copy of the report can be found in Appendix B of this report.

5.2.2 Blaenau Gwent CBC

Blaenau Gwent CBC investigated the blocked culvert, manholes and gullies reported by residents. Investigations by BGCBC revealed the following:

a) Partial Blockage of Inspection Chamber at Link Road Between Meadow Street and Railway Street:

A large piece of composite board was found in the main storm water culvert underneath eastern link road between Meadow Street and Railway Street. The board caused a partial blockage in the culvert and the force of the water surcharging from the inspection chamber 'blew the cover off' according to one eye witness. The surcharging water discharged from the inspection chamber, which has a ground level of 140.48m AOD, and quickly flowed towards the low points in the rear lane and Meadow Street, which has a low point of 139.08 m

AOD further adding to the high volume of surface water caused by the exceptional rainfall. For the purposes of the report, this inspection chamber is referred to as IC A.

The blockage was removed by a member of BGCBC's drainage team once the flow of water in the chamber had subsided enough to enable it to be safely extracted.

It is considered unlikely, based on topographical levels, that the surcharging water from this manhole added to flood water at Railway Street. This assessment is made on the basis that the levels at the eastern side of Railway Street is 141.02 m AOD, which is some 500mm higher than the cover level of the surcharging manhole. However, it is probable that flood water from Railway Street contributed to the flooding in Meadow Street, because of the topography of the streets.

b) Railway Street Blockage:

A surcharging inspection chamber in the highway outside 34 Railway Street was reported by a resident on 15th February 2020. This was investigated by the BGCBC workforce and a blockage was located in the drain between the inspection chamber in Railway Street and the rear lane causing a surcharge of storm water from the inspection chamber. The inspection chamber, referred to as IC B for the purposes of the report, has a cover level of 139.26m AOD. The lowest point in the carriageway of Railway Street recorded in the topographical survey is outside No. 37, with a level of 139.12m AOD, which is approximately the middle of the street. Due to the shallow bowl effect of Railway Street, it is considered probable that the surcharging water from this manhole pooled in this area of Railway Street causing flooding to properties.

c) Railway Street & Meadow Street Drainage Infrastructure:

The investigation found that two 150mm diameter storm water pipes run along Railway Street, from easterly and westerly directions, meeting at an inspection chamber at a central point in the street. At this inspection chamber, the size and direction of the outlet pipe changes so that water flows in a 300mm diameter pipe in a southerly direction, beneath a Railway Street property, to an inspection chamber in the rear lane between Railway St. and Meadow St.

At this inspection chamber, observations show that a 150mm diameter pipe has been inserted inside a 300mm diameter pipe throughout its length between the inspection chambers at the rear lane and Meadow Street. This section runs underneath a property in Meadow Street. This reduction in pipe diameter means that there is only a 25% capacity of the original 300mm inlet pipe through this section. This may have led to a build-up of storm water in the smaller pipe causing a discharge from the upstream chamber in Railway Street.

From the chamber in Meadow St. The 150 mm diameter pipe then connects into a chamber, which carries a 675mm diameter storm water culvert that flows underneath Meadow Street in an easterly direction before eventually discharging into the river.

Figure 4 below shows the drainage infrastructure of Meadow Street and Railway Street



Figure 4: Plan showing the drainage infrastructure of Meadow Street and Railway Street (DCWW, 2020)

In addition to the reduced capacity along a section of drainage network, a CCTV survey undertaken in March 2020 showed a large amount of debris on an outlet pipe within this drainage infrastructure. It is probable that the build-up of debris in the pipe could have caused a reduction in flow capacity and lead to blockages.

Figure 5 below shows CCTV survey footage of the 150mm pipe inserted into the 300mm pipe between Meadow Street and the rear lane.



Figure 5 CCTV Survey footage of the outlet pipe covered with debris

Figure 6 below shows the three areas within the study area where drainage issues were recorded during Storm Dennis

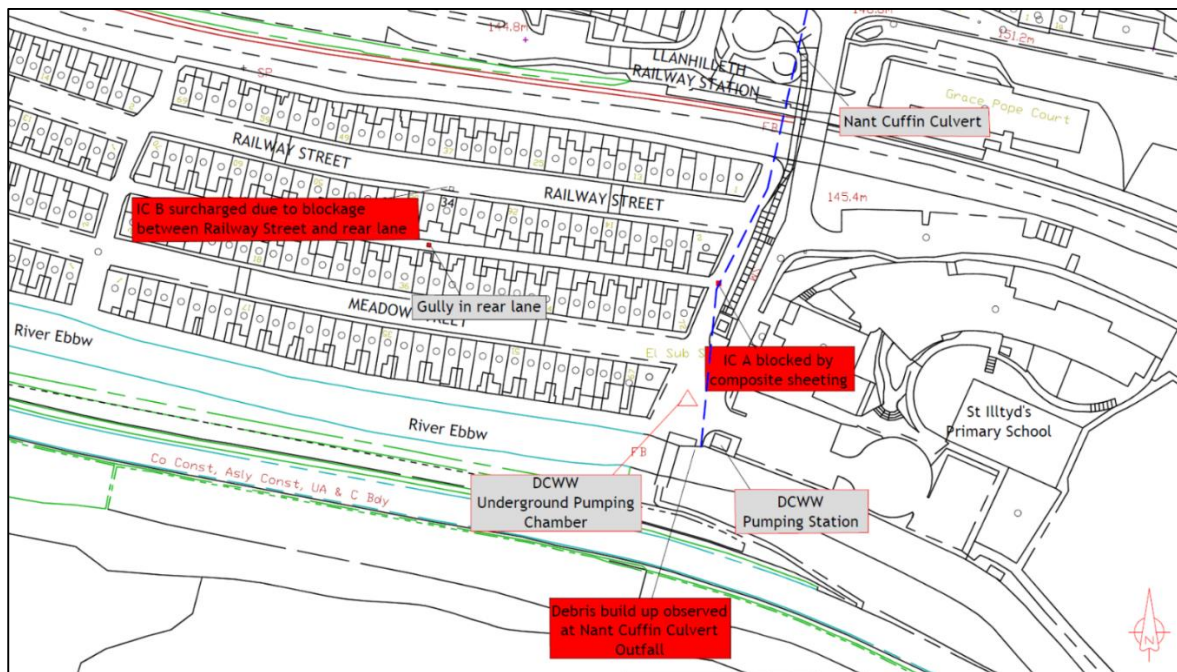


Figure 6 Site of recorded drainage issues within study site

Figure 7 below shows the likely flow paths of the surcharging water during Storm Dennis based on the topography of the streets.



Figure 7 Likely directional flow of surcharging storm water

5.3 Actions

The cover of the manhole chamber, located to the east of the rear lane, which was dislodged by the sheer force of the surcharging water caused by a blockage, was replaced by Blaenau Gwent CBC soon after the storm event had passed.

A CCTV survey was carried out in March 2020 to inspect the drainage system beneath Meadow Street and Railway Street.

Blaenau Gwent CBC has secured Welsh Government funding to upgrade the existing drainage network. Investigations are ongoing as to how drainage capacity can be improved.

Blaenau Gwent CBC will continue to maintain its regular inspection regimes and maintain and repair its drainage infrastructure as necessary. In addition, as part of its flood prevention strategy, it will continue its critical culvert inspections prior to heavy rain and storm events.

The Nant Cuffin Culvert inlets and trash screens will continue to be regularly inspected to check for debris build up. Any visible debris will need to be removed to help ensure the full capacity of the culvert is maintained and to avoid any blockages and surcharges further downstream.

6.0 Conclusion

The Flood Investigation Report set out to investigate the flooding that occurred in Meadow Street and Railway Street, Llanhilleth, during Storm Dennis between 15th and 16th February 2021, causing flood damage to almost 90 homes and disrupting a large part of the Llanhilleth community. The investigation used eye witness statements, rainfall and river level data from NRW, call logs, site photographs and a report made by DCWW.

Storm Dennis was preceded by one of the wettest winters on record, which meant that the ground was already saturated prior to the February 2020 storms. During Storm Dennis, the second storm to hit Wales in February 2020, an exceptional amount of rainfall was experienced in large parts of South Wales, which led to high volumes of surface water. Record breaking data was recorded at rain gauge stations within Blaenau Gwent. Almost a month's worth of rainfall was received within a 24-hour period which fell on saturated ground, causing high volumes of surface water run-off. River levels were also the highest ever recorded, with Aberbeeg River Station recording River Ebbw's river level at 1.8 m during the storm, over a meter higher than its average level. River flooding did not occur at Llanhilleth because of the flood defence wall that is located along the top of the river bank.

Although the drainage systems upstream accommodated the exceptional volumes of runoff, it is probable the blockages in parts of the drainage system contributed to the flooding of Meadow Street and Railway Street. These issues were exacerbated by the topography of Meadow Street and Railway Street, where level differences between the ends and middle of each street create a bowl effect, meaning the middle of each street is at a lower level than the ends. This bowl effect means that surface water runoff gathers at the low points. Due to the exceptional high volume of rainfall and blockages in the system, the surface water built up and caused flooding to properties along each street.

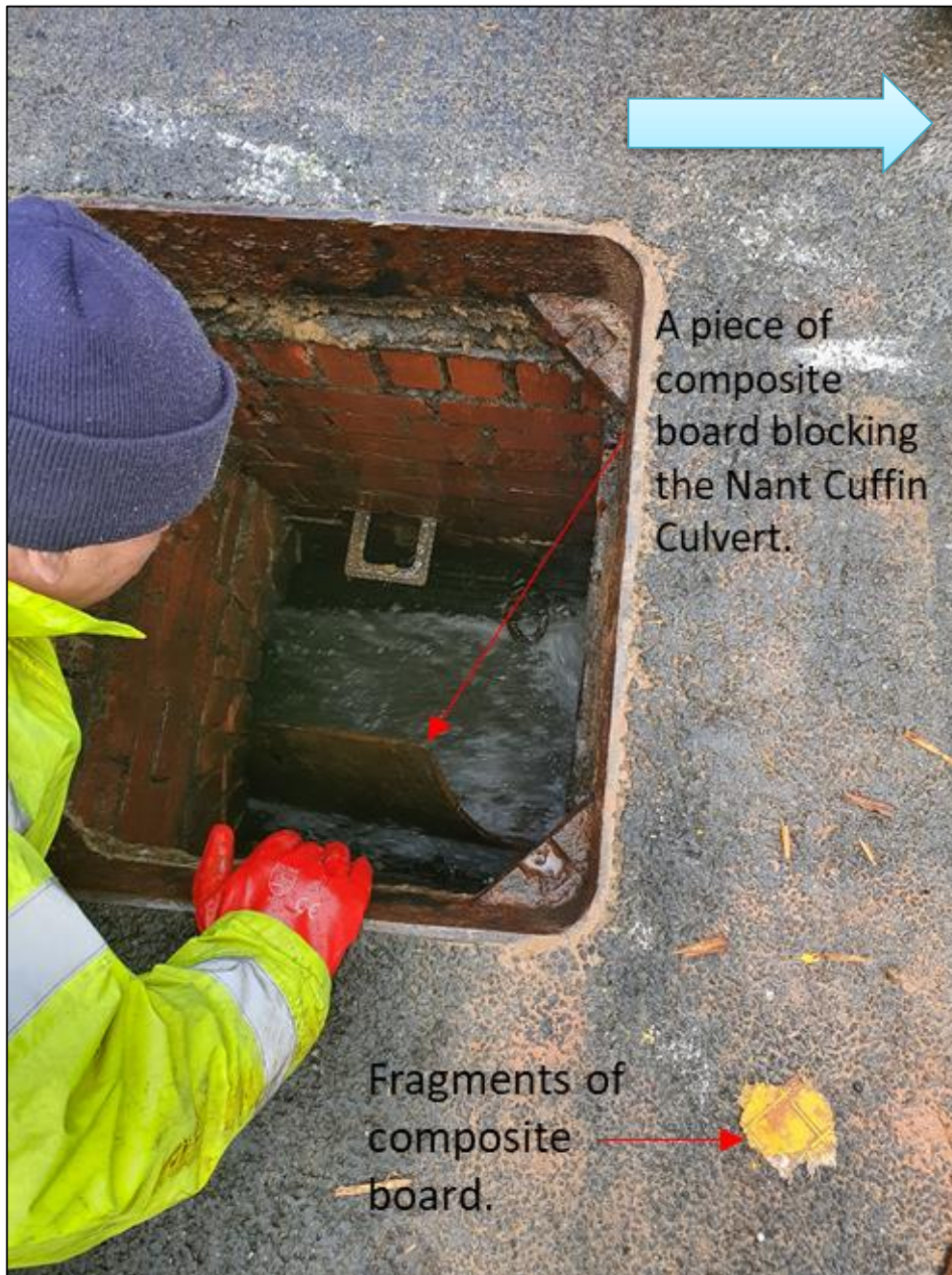
The recovery of the flood was coordinated by Blaenau Gwent CBC's Civil Contingencies Team. The recovery included visiting the affected homes and offering residents temporary accommodation whilst their homes were assessed for damage and electrical testing carried out.

Blaenau Gwent CBC are in the process of investigating the ways in which drainage capacity can be improved for the area.

References

1. February 2020 Floods in Wales: Flood Event Data Summary; Natural Resources Wales, 2020
2. Usk Management Catchment Summary; Natural Resources Wales, 2016
3. South East Valleys Management Catchment Summary; Natural Resources Wales, 2016
4. Llanhilleth SPS (The fields) Asset No 33047 – Investigation Report; Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, 2020

Appendix A: Site Photographs



Photograph 1 Blocked inspection chamber of the Nant Cuffin Culvert, located to the east of the rear lane between Meadow Street and Railway Street. The blockage can be seen inside the chamber, with fragments of it on the surrounding road. Attempts to remove the blockage could only be made once it was safe enough to do so. Arrow shows direction of flow-south towards River Ebbw (February 2020)



Photograph 2 Damaged contents outside homes along Meadow Street, Llanhilleth following Storm Dennis. View East. (February 2020).



Photograph 3 Flood damaged living room of property in Meadow Street. Damaged carpets have been removed and the water mark left by the flood waters can clearly be seen. (February 2020).



Photograph 4 View of inside inspection chamber that was blocked during Storm Dennis. Arrow shows direction of flow of water. Water is flowing freely and unobstructed. (June 2021)



Photograph 5 Rear Lane between Meadow Street and Railway Street. Manhole that was blocked by composite board during Storm Dennis at forefront of photograph. View West. (June 2021)



Photograph 6 Photograph Railway Street view West.



Photograph 7 Meadow Street, View West. (June 2021)



Photograph 8 Rear of Meadow Street along the bank of the River Ebbw. NRW's flood defence wall protected the street from fluvial flooding. View West. (June 2021).



Photograph 9 The River Ebbw flowing in a south easterly direction. At the bottom lh side of the picture is the outfall of the Nant Cuffin Culvert and pumping station inlet. Above the outlet is DCWW's pumping Station building. In the distance is the car park for St Illtyd's Primary School and Llanhilleth's Recreation Ground. (June 2021).



Photograph 10 Llanhilleth Railway Station located immediately to the rear of Railway Street. (June 2021)

Appendix B



S19 Llanhilleth SPS
(33047).pdf

Agenda Item 10

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Date signed off by Chair: 20.10.21

REPORT FOR: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**SUBJECT: INVESTMENT MODEL (MIM) 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS
WELSH EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP – THE STRATEGIC
PARTNERING AGREEMENT MUTUAL**

**REPORT SUBMITTED BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION – LYNN
PHILLIPS**

**CABINET MEMBER: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION – COUNCILLOR
JOANNE COLLINS**

**REPORT FOR KEY/
NON KEY DECISION: KEY DECISION**

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Welsh Government has procured Meridiam Investments as its private sector partner to work with it on the delivery of education and community facilities in Wales, under the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) of the 21st Century Schools Programme.
- 1.2 Meridiam Investments and a subsidiary of the Development Bank of Wales (known as WGCo) have formed WEPCO Limited (hereafter referred to as “WEPCo”) to deliver infrastructure services to a number of Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions (the Participants), through a Strategic Partnering Agreement which was completed on 30th September 2020. Under the terms of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement (the SPA), WEPCo will be required to provide partnering services to the Participants, including (i) project development and delivery; and (ii) supply chain assembly and management. This may lead to the delivery of revenue supported Band B projects pursuant to a separate Project Agreement or, in due course, capital funded projects could be delivered through this contract structure. The Welsh Ministers are also party to the SPA as a Participant.
- 1.3 Following completion of the SPA in September 2020, other Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions now have a window within which they may enter into a short, simple supplemental agreement to the SPA, namely a “Deed of Adherence” which enables the Council from the date of execution to agree with each other person who is or who becomes a party to the SPA to be bound by the SPA (on the same terms and conditions). There is no requirement to re-execute the SPA. The Deed of Adherence is due to be completed later in 2021.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to explain the process and seek Executive Committee approval to enter into the Deed of Adherence to the Strategic Partnering Agreement (SPA), to facilitate the delivery of education and community facilities. The Executive Committee is also asked to approve the appointment of the Service Manager for Education Transformation and Business Change – Claire Gardner as ‘Participant Representative’ to sit on the Strategic Partnering Board.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Executive Committee:

- (a) Approves the execution, delivery and performance of a supplemental agreement to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement dated 30th September 2020 (the “Deed of Adherence”) and from the date of execution of the Deed of Adherence to give effect to and be bound by the terms of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement dated 30th September 2020 as a party to it, to facilitate the delivery of a range of infrastructure services and the delivery of education and community facilities;
- (b) Approves the terms of the Deed of Adherence and the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement dated 30th September 2020 at Appendix A and B of this report and summarised in Appendix 1 and 2 of this report so as to give effect to recommendation (a), subject to recommendation (c) below;
- (c) Notes that the Corporate Director of Education shall complete the Deed of Adherence for execution and is approved to complete all information gaps;
- (d) Notes that the Deed of Adherence shall be executed as a deed and attested in accordance with in accordance with Section 12.5 of the Council’s Constitution of the Constitution; and,
- (e) Approves:
 - (i) the appointment of the Service Manager - Education Transformation and Business Change as ‘Participant Representative’ to sit on the Strategic Partnering Board (SPB) for the purposes of Clause 12 (*Parties’ Representatives*) of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement; and
 - (ii) the name, address and contact details for the purposes of Clause 40 (*Notices*) of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement;
- (f) Notes that in agreeing to enter into the Deed of Adherence it is not being asked during this meeting to decide to proceed with any Project, and that any decision to proceed with a Project will be considered separately and reported back to Cabinet in future report(s) for decision.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.2 As a member of the Strategic Partnering Board (SPB), the Council will benefit from the formal partnership processes, stakeholder engagement and strategic planning processes, along with the associated skills, knowledge, expertise and project-based developments associated with the SPB. The aforementioned processes and factors will positively influence and inform, as well as having the potential to enhance delivery of the 21st Century

School Programme locally, regionally and nationally (please refer to **Appendix 4** for further information on the SPB). The Council will be well informed and actively involved in key strategic and operational developments, along with the associated implications throughout Wales.

- 2.3 Education is a strategic priority for the Council, which is key to facilitating effective delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan, along with the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan. It also features as a priority in the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy and consequently, has generated a high-level of support from the Council's Capital Programme. 21st Century Schools is priority for Education, and is an essential component in delivering the following Corporate Plan outcomes:
- 2.4 Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure in order to benefit our communities – developing innovative and sustainable education facilities, whilst also ensuring that the condition and suitability support effective curriculum delivery and outcomes, along with provision for families and the wider community. Delivering schools that are at the heart of their community, and have meaningful benefits for both current and future generations, enabling them to access quality provision and support across the lifespan.
- 2.5 Support a fairer sustainable economy and community – delivering improved education outcomes and developing economically aware and active citizens.
- 2.6 To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities – promoting independence through learning throughout the course of the child/young person's academic life, whilst also instilling a sense of pride in the local and wider community.
- 2.7 An ambitious and innovative Council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities – delivering effective and accessible education and associated outcomes, improving the life chances and opportunities of children, young people and the wider community.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 The Council understands that if it wishes to access revenue funding for Band B projects from the Welsh Government then it will need to use the Mutual Investment Model to access the funding and WEPCo for delivery. There are no alternative delivery options for such funding. However, at present, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council does not have any plans to deliver MIM projects under the Band B Programme.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The "Mutual Investment Model", or MIM, was formally launched by the Welsh Government on 28 February, 2017 and is a platform for delivery of the "Taking Wales Forward" agenda. MIM has been designed to finance major capital projects due to a scarcity of capital funding. It is based on traditional PPP structures but with the following core principles embedded:
 - 4.1.1 an emphasis on wider community benefits;

- 4.1.2 enhanced stakeholder involvement;
 - 4.1.3 public sector equity investment;
 - 4.1.4 no soft services; and
 - 4.1.5 effective and efficient contract management by the public sector.
- 4.2 The MIM is intended to support additional investment in social and economic infrastructure projects and help to improve public services in Wales. Under the MIM, the private sector partners will build and maintain public assets, and in return the Council supported by funding from the Welsh Government will pay a fee to the private partner, which will cover the cost of construction, maintenance and financing the project.
- 4.3 The Welsh Government has procured Meridiam Investments as its private sector partner to work with it on the delivery of education and community facilities in Wales, under the MIM 21st Century Schools Programme. It will be the only means of delivering revenue funded Band B projects. Meridiam Investments and a subsidiary of the Development Bank of Wales (known as WGCo) have now formed WEPCo Limited (hereafter “WEPCo”), which will deliver infrastructure services to the Participants in Wales.
- 4.4 Welsh Ministers and a number of Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions entered into the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement with WEPCo on 30th September 2020, each being the “Continuing Participants”. The WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement provides for how the parties act together over the long term in a collaborative partnering non-adversarial and open manner to support the effective planning, procurement and delivery of education and community facilities in Wales and the delivery of infrastructure services.
- 4.5 The Council is able to access the Welsh Education Partnership — Strategic Partnering Delivery Model, as described in the OJEU Notice published 11th July 2019 (reference OJEU Ref: 2019/S 133-327173) and enter into a supplemental agreement to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement dated 30th September, namely by a Deed of Adherence (DoA).

The Strategic Partnering Agreement (SPA)

- 4.6 The initial term of the SPA is 10 years. This may be extended by 5 years by any one or more Participants. Under the SPA, WEPCo is required to provide partnering services to the Participants. These services include (i) project development and delivery; (ii) supply chain assembly and management and (iii) other professional services necessary to fund and deliver education and community facilities.
- 4.7 For the first 10 years of the SPA, WEPCo has the exclusive right to provide services to all Participants (as signatories to the SPA) including:
- 4.7.1 Project Development Partnering Services to work up new “Qualifying Projects” (only) for delivery (including supply chain assembly, funding and value for money), set out in more detail in Schedule 3 (Partnering Services) of the SPA; and

- 4.7.2 Project Services (design, construction, testing, commissioning and completion of the premises, hard facilities management, and installation of equipment) relating to a “Qualifying Project” subject to it becoming an “Approved Project” within the first 10 years of the SPA and for a MIM Band B project, provided that it has met the criteria set out in Schedule 5 (Approval Process for New Projects) of the SPA.
- 4.8 “Qualifying Projects” means those identified projects at the outset for delivery by WEPCo (as set out in a Schedule to the SPA) and all other 21st Century Schools and Colleges (Band B) MIM Programme projects, where such a project has been identified by a Participant required to enable them to provide education based services in the region.
- 4.9 Participants may ask WEPCo to provide on a non-exclusive basis:
 - 4.9.1 Project Services relating to capital projects required for the provision of education sector services (where expressly designated and approved under a Strategic Outline Programme) and/or community services;
 - 4.9.2 Strategic Support Partnering Services (such as estate planning, service planning and demonstrating value for money);
 - 4.9.3 Project Development Partnering Services in respect of potential new projects, which are not “Qualifying Projects”, but requested by a Participant;
 - 4.9.4 Ongoing Partnering Services and/or Project Development Partnering Services after ten years, where the initial term of the SPA has been extended; and
 - 4.9.5 Project Services in respect of Qualifying Projects which become “Approved Projects” after 10 years, where the initial term of the SPA has been extended.
- 4.10 If a Participant receives funding for a 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B MIM Programme project, WEPCo has the exclusive right to develop proposals for the delivery of that project (Project Development Partnering Services) within the first 10 years of the SPA.
- 4.11 Therefore, the most likely outcome for a Participant that becomes a party to the SPA is that they proceed to develop a project or projects using the Approval Process in the SPA resulting in the execution of a Project Agreement which will govern the design, build, finance and maintenance of schools or colleges.
- 4.12 Appendix 2 provides a more detailed summary of the SPA.
- 4.13 The SPA commits the Participants and WEPCo to work to the following nine (9) key principles:
 - 4.13.1 to develop close working relationships between WEPCo and the Participants at all levels;
 - 4.13.2 to focus on achieving the best value for money operational performance within agreed timescales;

- 4.13.3 to set in place business and cultural processes to enable the Participants and WEPCo to establish and agree challenging time and performance objectives and to meet or better them;
 - 4.13.4 to recognise each other's needs, constraints, limitations, capabilities, roles and responsibilities to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes;
 - 4.13.5 to identify by regular monitoring, weaknesses and strengths in the relationship between and amongst the Participants and WEPCo and to work together to overcome the weaknesses and to build on the strengths;
 - 4.13.6 to commit to the early recognition and resolution of differences, conflicts and disputes between and amongst the Participants and WEPCo in a 'no surprises' environment;
 - 4.13.7 to appoint within each of the Participants and WEPCo co-ordinators at senior level who will support, defend and promote the long term strategic partnership between them and its principles of operation;
 - 4.13.8 to develop openness and trust in a transparent information and data sharing environment; and
 - 4.13.9 in accordance with the Equality Requirements to positively promote equal opportunities and the Ethical Employment Code by combating discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, disability, age or sexuality and promoting good relations between all sections of the community in 'everything we do' including:
 - a) Delivering high quality Education Sector Services and (where relevant) Community Services for end users; and
 - b) Working with the local community and partners in the public, private or voluntary sectors.
- 4.14 The Strategic Partnering Board (**SPB**) is the guardian vehicle of these commitments.

The Strategic Partnering Board (SPB)

- 4.15 The SPB acts as the primary mechanism for managing WEPCo's performance. The SPB is the central forum in which the Participants can work together with WEPCo, Welsh Government and Stakeholder Representatives to ensure that the key principles of the SPA are met. Participant representation is required on the SPB.
- 4.16 The SPB's role is to approve the Strategic Delivery Plan (**SDP**); ensure any new project proposals are consistent with the SDP; monitor WEPCo's performance against agreed Key Performance Indicators; approve any extension to the SPA term; and approve any proposed disposal of interest in share capital resulting in a loss of control by WEPCo (or subsidiary).
- 4.17 The Council's Representative will be expected to be a senior representative of the Council, with the appropriate authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council. They

should be experienced in holding a director or similar position and have the required skills to make the decisions required to be made by the SPB. The Council will need to consider any likely conflicts of interest and ensure that conflicts of interest do not prevent the chosen representative from fulfilling their role as representative as well as any other role they hold directly in the Council.

4.18 The Council's Representative will attend the SPB meetings at least every three months, together with representatives of each Participant, WEPCo, Welsh Government and other stakeholder representatives as agreed by the Participants. These meetings are to review financial and operating issues and provide strategic input into the partnering arrangements including the exchange of ideas in relation to each of the Participants' accommodation and service delivery requirements.

4.19 The SPB must have a quorum of five (5) Participants' representatives (one of whom must be a representative from Welsh Government) and a WEPCo Representative. If a quorum is not present at any meeting of the SPB within thirty (30) minutes of that meeting's start time, the SPA requires that the meeting is adjourned to the same time and place five (5) Business Days later. For any adjourned meeting, the quorum shall be one Participant's Representative (who must be a representative of the Welsh Government) and the WEPCo Representative. Telephone conference calls or video conferences are valid as a meeting of the SPB. Appendix 3 provides a more detailed summary of the role of the SPB.

4.20 It is proposed that the Service Manager for Education Transformation and Business Change, Claire Gardner, is appointed as the Council's Representative to sit on the SPB. Claire Gardner is a skilled, accredited programme manager with extensive programme and project management experience, who currently has programme management responsibility for the 21st Century School Programme in Blaenau Gwent. She has developed, led and successfully delivered a number of complex, multi-million pound programmes and projects, and is well versed in all aspects of programme and project development and delivery. Claire has over 17 years' management and leadership experience at varying levels across public, third and private sector organisations, and is a member of the Education Directorate Management team. She has led multi-disciplinary teams, services etc. with responsibility for delivering of a vast array of work and change programmes, along with key operational and strategic priorities. Claire is also a trained Gateway Reviewer recognised for her programme management skillset and capabilities, by both Welsh Government Assurance team and external consultants alike. She has reviewed programmes of significant political and strategic importance within the National Health Service, Welsh and U.K. Government.

4.21 The selected representative is fully aware of the terms, conditions, requirements and obligations associated with the role, the Strategic Partnering Board and Agreement. Any conflicts will be managed in accordance with the Blaenau Gwent Code of Conduct for Employees, with due regard to Council's Constitution, Strategic Partnering Agreement, Deed of Adherence and Terms of Reference for the Strategic Partnering Board (please refer to Appendices 1 - 4 for further information).

The Delivery of Projects

4.22 WEPCo shall, if requested to do so by one or more Participants, develop proposals for the implementation and delivery of new projects including Pathfinder Projects through the Approval Process for New Projects set out in Schedule 5 of the SPA. WEPCo will assist

Participants in developing proposals for the delivery of new projects, the preparation of an outline business case and the obtaining of all necessary approvals to progress any new project request by a Participant.

- 4.23 Schedule 5 of the SPA sets out the procedure by which WEPCo and the Participants will work together to agree which New Projects will be taken forward and approved for development by WEPCo and on what basis. Schedule 5 sets out a two stage Approval Process for such New Projects. The approval process shall only apply in relation to Qualifying Projects regardless of whether the period of ten (10) years from the Commencement Date has expired.
- 4.24 WEPCo will work with Participants to develop local delivery plans (addressing Participants' requirements) which will form part of the annual Strategic Delivery Plan (SDP). WEPCo will then review the applicability of the SDP to the provision of education services in the Participant's Region to decide which New Projects should progress. The SPB shall ensure that WEPCo's proposals for New Projects are consistent with delivery of the latest SDP.
- 4.25 WEPCo shall, without entitlement to specific or additional payment, work with the Participants and other members of the SPB to analyse and discuss the range of potential funding options for New Projects, as well as develop the Participants' requirements in relation to New Projects.
- 4.26 WEPCo will be obliged to meet the Participants' requirements for the delivery of any new project including Pathfinder Projects. Authority to proceed to deliver any project and to enter into a Project Agreement, would require further Council approval and reports will be brought back to Cabinet for determination accordingly.
- 4.27 Appendix 4 provides a more detailed summary of the Approval Process for New Projects under the SPA.

Commitments and Practicalities of Entering into the Deed of Adherence to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement (SPA)

- 4.28 Through entry into the DoA, as a supplemental agreement to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement dated 30th September 2020, the Council agrees with each person who is or who becomes a party to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement to be bound by it as a party in that capacity, on the same terms and conditions. Appendix 1 provides a more detailed summary of the Deed of Adherence.
- 4.29 The terms of the SPA offers an opportunity for the Council to draw down a range of strategic support and infrastructure services, in a procurement safe manner, without any obligation to do so, save only where exclusivity is granted to WEPCo in respect of developing proposals for MIM projects. For MIM projects, WEPCo through a robust approval process will still need to meet the Council's bespoke requirements identified at the outset for each new project, which includes site and project specific requirements and demonstrate value for money. Business case approval would also be required in the usual way. If the Council were to seek funding in the future from the Welsh Government for a MIM project, it is expected that WEPCo would be the intended delivery vehicle. As a Participant to the arrangements, this provides the Council with a "seat at the table" to set

priorities and have an understanding of the delivery plans for other participating authorities for education and community facilities in Wales.

What Happens If Approval Is Not In Place By 2021?

- 4.30 Local Authorities and FEIs are encouraged to enter into the DoA, as a supplemental agreement to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement entered into on 30th September 2020 regardless of whether they have a MIM Scheme in place as WEPCo also offers Strategic Support Partnering Services which can assist Participants with estates planning or associated activities.
- 4.31 The purpose of the SPA is to enable Participants to proceed to develop a project or projects using the Approval Process for New Projects within the SPA, resulting in the execution of a Project Agreement. In order to benefit from that process Participants, need to execute and be a party to the SPA.
- 4.32 There may be a procurement risk in entering into the DoA, based on time elapsed argument, if the DoA is not entered into within a reasonable window of time after execution of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement dated 30th September 2020. Execution of the DoA in 2021 is considered to be reasonable.

Potential Procurement Risk

- 4.33 If a Participant were to choose not to sign the DoA and then wanted in the future to access Partnering Services or Project Services from WEPCo, it will not be able to do so in a procurement safe manner.
- 4.34 Similarly, with regards to 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B funding, if a Participant were to choose not to sign the DoA but then wanted to utilise WEPCo to deliver a Band B funded project (whether capital or revenue) in the future, it will also not be able to do so in a procurement safe manner.
- 4.35 Should for example, a Participant secure MIM Band B funding downstream from the Welsh Government for a project not currently identified and it was required to use WEPCo, it would not be able to do so in a procurement safe manner if it had not signed the DoA. WEPCo has the exclusive right to develop proposals for the delivery of a 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B MIM Programme project (Project Development Partnering Services) within the first 10 years of the SPA.
- 4.36 It is therefore recommended that [Cabinet] [the Leader] approve entering into the DoA as set out in this report to ensure that from the date of its execution it is bound by the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement dated 30th September 2020 as a party to it.

5 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Finance

There are no direct budgetary implications associated with this report at present as the Council does not have any MIM projects.

The total 21st Century Schools Programme budget currently stands at £19.6million, with the Council's 35% contribution being £6.86million which has been secured and approved via the Council's Capital Programme.

Legal

Approval to enter into the Deed of Adherence (DoA) and the underpinning terms of the Strategic Partnering Agreement (SPA) is an Executive function requiring a decision of the Executive Committee.

- 5.1 To enter into the DoA and participate as a party to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement referred to in this report, the Council will be relying upon a number of statutory powers:
 - 5.1.1 the "well-being" powers contained in section 2 Local Government Act 2000;
 - 5.1.2 powers contained in the Education Acts 1996 and 2002;
 - 5.1.3 the "incidental" provisions of section 111 Local Government Act 1972.
- 5.2 The well-being powers contained in section 2 Local Government Act 2000 permit the Council to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects—
 - (a) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area;
 - (b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and
 - (c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area
- 5.3 In exercising this power the Council has had regard to the requirements of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act'). The Act places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales - a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and is globally responsible.
- 5.4 The incidental provisions of section 111 Local Government Act 1972 permit the Council to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 5.5 Entering into the DoA and becoming party to the SPA does not, of itself, bind the Council in any way to deliver a Project.
- 5.6 However, there are certain requirements of the Council when proceeding with Projects as set out in this report and Appendices 1-4. Further, the Council will be required to appoint a representative to act on its behalf in relation to the SPA and the Cabinet is asked to approve the appointment of Claire Gardner, Service Manager – Education Transformation and Business Change as 'Participant Representative' to sit on the Strategic Partnering Board. The identity of the representative may change at any time following written notice to WEPCo and all other Participants. Each representative may also at any time, by written notice to WEPCo, authorise others to exercise the functions and powers of the Council.

- 5.7 The power to appoint an individual to the Strategic Partnering Board (SPB) pursuant to Schedule 2 Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007 is reserved to the Executive. The Executive Committee is asked to approve Claire Gardner, Service Manager – Education Transformation and Business Change as ‘Participant Representative’ to sit on the Strategic Partnering Board (SPB).
- 5.8 The DoA is to be executed as a deed and attested in accordance with Section 12.5 of the Constitution. It is noted that formal approval to proceed to deliver any new project, and to enter into associated legal documentation to facilitate the same including a Project Agreement, would require further approval of Executive Committee.

Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

- 5.9 AN EQIA screening exercise has been undertaken in line with the SPA and associated report, which determined that there is no adverse impact upon the protected characteristics.
- 5.10 An EQIA was also completed in line with approval of the 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Programme, which was approved in 2018 and concluded that there was no adverse impact upon the protected characteristics.
- 5.11 Proposals on a project by project basis will contain appropriate equalities documentation. In addition, Socio-Economic and Community Impact Assessments have and will continue to be completed for all projects.

6 LINKS TO CORPORATE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES/CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- 6.1 As detailed within Section 3 above.

7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers

- 7.1 N/A

Reasons for exemption

- 7.2 Appendix B to this report is not for publication by virtue of paragraphs 14 and 16 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it contains information classified as exempt under Schedule 12A that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- 7.3 In all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

8 APPENDICES

Appendix A:	Deed of Adherence
Appendix 1:	Deed of Adherence Summary
Appendix 2:	Strategic Partnering Agreement Summary
Appendix 3:	Strategic Partnering Board Summary
Appendix 4:	Approval Process for New Projects Summary

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Exempt Appendix B: Strategic Partnering Agreement (*this document is available on request to Members*)

Information contained in Appendix B is exempt for the reasons set out in the next paragraph and the information remains exempt unless or until the exemption(s) is or becomes spent.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF THE PROVISIONS OF SCHEDULE 12A PARAGRAPHS 14 AND 16 TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE AUTHORITY HOLDING THAT INFORMATION AND INFORMATION IN RESPECT OF WHICH A CLAIM TO LEGAL PROFESSIONAL PRIVILEGE COULD BE MAINTAINED IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS)).

WELSH EDUCATION PROGRAMME - STRATEGIC PARTNERING AGREEMENT

DEED OF ADHERENCE - SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement (**SPA**) was entered into on 30 September 2020 by 24 Welsh Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions (**Participants**) and WEPCo (being the joint venture company established between the Private Sector Delivery Partner (**PSDP**) and a subsidiary of the Development Bank of Wales).
- 1.2 Since completion, a further five Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions have expressed a wish to enter into the SPA to be able to draw down services from WEPCo.

2. WHAT DOES THE DEED OF ADHERENCE DO?

- 2.1 The SPA provides for the ability for other Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions (**Joining Participants**) named in the OJEU Notice published 11th July 2019 to enter into the SPA on the same terms and conditions as the existing Participants (**Continuing Participants**). In order to access the SPA, the Joining and Continuing Participants are required to execute the Deed of Adherence, a template of which is attached to the SPA at Schedule 10.
- 2.2 The Deed of Adherence is short and simple document, where a Joining Participant agrees with the Continuing Participants and WEPCo that with effect from the date of its execution, it is bound by the existing terms of the SPA (please see separate summary paper on the Strategic Partnering Agreement).

3. WHAT INFORMATION DOES THE DEED OF ADHERENCE REQUIRE?

- 3.1 The Deed of Adherence sets out certain key details of the Joining Participants. The Continuing Participants have already provided the same key details on execution of the SPA. These are as follows:
- i) Full name and position of the person appointed to be the Participant Representative (who in the first instance shall be the representative on the Strategic Partnering Board (please see separate guidance paper on the Strategic Partnering Board) (Clause 12.1 of the SPA);
 - ii) Where WEPCo has subcontracted the Partnering Services to a Partnering Subcontractor, full name and address of the person to whom non-payment of invoices of the Partnering Subcontractor should be directed (Clause 28.5.2 of the SPA);
 - iii) Full name, position and email address for service of notice (Clause 40.1.2 of the SPA);
 - iv) Full postal address for service of notice (Clause 40.1.2 of the SPA); and
 - v) Position of person to whom dispute resolution escalation points should be referred (if dispute cannot be resolved through consultation in good faith) e.g. the Chief Executive (Section 3.2, Schedule 22 of the SPA).
- 3.2 The Deed of Adherence will be executed as a deed, and will therefore require execution under seal in accordance with each Participant's internal governance arrangements. There is no requirement to re-execute the SPA for Continuing Participants.

4. WHAT DOES COMPLETION OF THE DEED OF ADHERENCE MEAN FOR PARTICIPANTS?

- 4.1 Completion of the Deed of Adherence **will not change the terms and conditions of the SPA in any way, save for adding more named parties to the list of Participants.**
- 4.2 Joining Participants will enjoy the same benefits from being party to the SPA as the Continuing Participants (please see separate summary paper on the Strategic Partnering Agreement).

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WEP STRATEGIC PARTNERING DELIVERY MODEL
SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PARTNERING AGREEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION¹

- 1.1 The WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement (**SPA**) is the agreement entered into between the Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions (**Participants**)² and WEPCo (being the joint venture company established between the Private Sector Delivery Partner (**PSDP**) and a subsidiary of the Development Bank of Wales).
- 1.2 The SPA provides for how the parties act together over the long term in a collaborative partnering, non-adversarial and open manner to support the effective planning, procurement and delivery of education and community facilities in Wales and the delivery of infrastructure services.
- 1.3 The SPA sets out the high level principles that underpin the delivery of the parties' obligations; the behaviours, vision and values of WEPCo; the establishment of a framework that promotes excellence and value for money; and the monitoring and management of WEPCo's performance.
- 1.4 Under the SPA, WEPCo will be required to provide **partnering services** to the Participants. These services include (i) project development and delivery; (ii) supply chain assembly and management and (iii) other professional services necessary to fund and deliver education and community facilities.
- 1.5 The initial term of the SPA is 10 years. This may be extended by 5 years by any one or more Participants. Certain protections in the SPA continue in force beyond the term of the SPA until the end of the last associated Project Agreement entered into by the Participant(s) for the delivery of individual education facilities.
- 1.6 WEPCo will have the sole and exclusive right for the term of the SPA to nominate a subsidiary of the PSDP (which will be a special purpose vehicle that holds the majority of voting rights, or a wholly owned subsidiary of such a company) (**Project Co**) to deliver MIM Projects, provided that the relevant criteria in the SPA are met. Approved MIM Projects will be developed by WEPCo, but delivered by Project Co which will enter into a Project Agreement with the relevant Participant to deliver the relevant MIM Project.
- 1.7 Participants will be able to request that WEPCo, or a nominated wholly owned subsidiary of WEPCo, provides other **project services** such as the delivery of design and build capital projects for education or community facilities under the SPA, provided that the relevant criteria in the SPA are met. WEPCo and/or its subsidiaries shall enter into all required agreements for the delivery of capital projects and/or FM services directly with the relevant Participant, which in the case of education sector capital projects shall be substantially in the form of the Template Education Design and Build Development Agreement appended to the SPA.

2 NEW PROJECTS

- 2.1 WEPCo shall, if requested to do so by one or more Participants, develop proposals for the implementation and delivery of new projects by a Project Service Provider. For MIM Projects, the Project Service Provider will be the Project Co that will be created for such purpose and for other approved projects shall be WEPCo or a Subsidiary of WEPCo. The role of WEPCo will include the raising of finance, project development, project management and supply chain assembly and management of a new project up to contractual/financial close, during the construction period and operational period.

¹ Capitalised terms have the meaning provided for in the Strategic Partnering Agreement unless otherwise stated.
² Note those named as a "Contracting Authority" in the OJEU notice will be entitled to sign and enter into the SPA.

- 2.2 The obligations on WEPCo and the relevant Participant in relation to the identification, approval and delivery of a new project are set out in Schedule 5 (*Approval Process for New Projects*).
- 2.3 For an overview of Schedule 5 and a flow chart outlining the Approval Process for New Projects, please see **separate guidance**.
- 2.4 WEPCo is obliged to assist Participants in developing local delivery plans, which will form the basis of an annual Strategic Delivery Plan (**SDP**) developed between the Participants and WEPCo. The Participants' requirements for new projects will in most cases be initiated through the inclusion of such projects in the latest edition of the SDP.
- 2.5 WEPCo will assist Participants in developing proposals for the delivery of new projects, the preparation of an outline business case and the obtaining of all necessary approvals to progress any new project request by a Participant.
- 2.6 With each approved new project, WEPCo will (or will procure a Project Service Provider will) enter into a Project Agreement, a template form of which is appended to the SPA at Schedule 7 (*Template Project Agreements*). For an overview of the Template Project Agreement, please see **separate guidance**. For every MIM Project, the Project Service Provider will enter into a Shareholders' Agreement to establish the relevant Project Co.³
- 2.7 WEPCo must evidence value for money both at the beginning and continuously throughout the development and delivery of new projects in accordance with Schedules 3 (*Partnering Services*), 5 (*Approval Process for New Projects*) and 6 (*New Project Pricing Report*).
- 2.8 The Participants will develop with WEPCo the approach to supply chain assembly for the delivery of a new project, the market testing of design and construction, hard facilities management services and the funding of the new project to ensure value for money. WEPCo and the relevant Participant(s) will work together to ensure that the pricing of a new project provides the relevant Participant(s) with robust, transparent and auditable information as to the costs, fees and prices included within WEPCo's proposals.
- 2.9 WEPCo shall, for all projects, monitor and update (where applicable) the predicted capital, whole life cost and any increase or reduction in estimated costs, the final cost of design and construction and the actual cost of maintaining and repairing each project. WEPCo will be expected to demonstrate to Participants through a WEPCo Performance Report and Annual Review, lower costs and/or greater value for money over the term of the SPA.
- 2.10 Planning permission for approved projects to be delivered by WEPCo must be obtained by WEPCo prior to signing the relevant Project Agreement.

3 PARTNERING SERVICES

- 3.1 WEPCo may provide a range of Partnering Services to Participants.
- 3.2 These fall into three categories:
 - 3.2.1 Ongoing Partnering Services;
 - 3.2.2 Project Development Partnering Services; and
 - 3.2.3 Strategic Support Services.

³ This will be substantially in the form of the Template Project Co Shareholders' Agreement appended to the SPA.

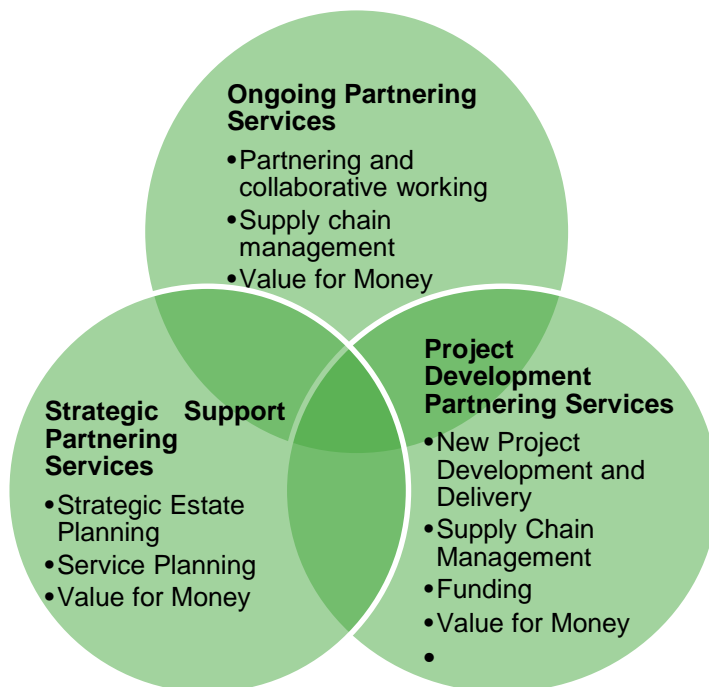


Figure 1 WEPCo Partnering Services

- 3.3 WEPCo shall provide **Ongoing Partnering Services** to the Participants that relate to the day to day operation of WEPCo, the fostering of partnering and collaborative working between the parties, supply chain management and the delivery of value for money.
- 3.4 WEPCo shall provide **Project Development Partnering Services** to implement and deliver projects identified in the SPA and all other 21st Century schools and colleges (Band B) MIM Programme Projects (**Qualifying Projects**) in accordance with the specification, KPIs (including community benefits) and rates set out in Schedule 3 (*Partnering Services*). The role of WEPCo is to develop proposals for a Qualifying Project to meet the Participant's Requirements including affordability and other agreed approval criteria (services, operational, financial and value for money). The scope and specification of the services to be provided by WEPCo will be agreed between WEPCo and the relevant Participant on a project by project basis, together with the approval criteria.
- 3.5 The relevant Participant will remain as "sponsor" for business case approval purposes. The role of WEPCo will be to support the relevant Participant in preparing agreed outputs at each business case approval stage for the delivery of a Qualifying Project.
- 3.6 WEPCo shall also, where requested, provide **Strategic Support Partnering Services**, to support Participants in strategic estate planning and strategic services planning to plan education sector services and where requested, community services. These are discrete, consultancy support services that may be required by Participants. The Participants and WEPCo will jointly develop a Strategic Delivery Plan for the delivery of new accommodation requirements.
- 3.7 WEPCo must monitor the performance of each of the Partnering Services and Project Services at its own cost and expense, meet value for money requirements and demonstrate continuous improvement wherever practicable achieved through agreed KPIs, as developed in accordance with the SPA throughout the term.
- 3.8 For all Partnering Services, WEPCo must provide the Partnering Services in compliance of the WEP Objectives and all objectives set out in the SDP agreed between the Participants and WEPCo. All Partnering Services must meet the requirements for Value of Money set out in clause 13 and seek to obtain continuous improvement in providing the services.

Payment for Partnering Services

- 3.9 Clause 10 of the SPA governs what WEPCo is entitled to charge a Participant for the provision of Partnering Services.
- 3.10 WEPCo recovers Partnering Services Costs relating to Ongoing Partnering Services and Project Development Partnering Services in accordance with Schedule 4 (*Partnering Services Costs*) of the SPA. Partnering Services Costs are recovered either from the Participant on a “pay as delivered” basis, or as a lump sum at financial close of the relevant approved Project, or such costs are rolled into the financial model for the relevant approved Project and are repaid over the term of the relevant Project Agreement.
- 3.11 WEPCo recovers the costs incurred for the delivery of Strategic Support Partnering Services on a “pay as delivered” basis or as otherwise agreed with the relevant Participant procuring such services from WEPCo. The quantum of such costs will be calculated by reference to the rate card which will be included at Schedule 4 (*Partnering Services Costs*).

Subcontracting of Partnering Services

- 3.12 WEPCo is able to subcontract its obligations in respect of the whole or part provision of the Partnering Services to a Partnering Subcontractor but will remain responsible to the relevant Participants for the provision of the contracted out services.
- 3.13 WEPCo is responsible for ensuring the performance by the Supply Chain Members of their obligations under the relevant Supply Chain Agreements.
- 3.14 On the expiry or earlier termination of the SPA, the handover provisions set out in Schedule 20 (*Handover on Expiry or Termination*) will apply. Any staff engaged in the delivery of Partnering Services will transfer under TUPE regulations to the relevant Participant or third party successor provider of services.
- 3.15 For further detail on the scope of Partnering Services in Schedule 3 (*Partnering Services*) and Schedule 4 (*Partnering Services Costs*), please see **separate guidance**.

4 PROJECT SERVICES

- 4.1 WEPCo is responsible for providing **Project Services** to Participants. These are services required under a Project Agreement in relation to the design, construction, testing, commissioning and completion of premises (including any temporary works) and the installation of equipment, together with the provision of facilities maintenance (FM) services.
- 4.2 The SPA acknowledges that Participants may have existing providers in place to provide their accommodation requirements and associated services. WEPCo agrees to work with Participants to ensure the existing providers are treated fairly and that the individuals providing the existing services are, where possible, employed by the Project Service Provider.

5 EXCLUSIVITY

- 5.1 The Participants grant WEPCo the sole and exclusive right for the 10 year term of the SPA to provide:
 - 5.1.1 Ongoing Partnering Services
 - 5.1.2 Project Development Partnering Services in respect of projects identified in the SPA and 21st Century Schools and Colleges (Band B) MIM projects (**Qualifying Projects**)
 - 5.1.3 Project Services in respect of Qualifying Projects that become Approved Projects (as developed through Schedule 5 (*Approval Process for New Projects*)).

After 10 years exclusivity will not apply.

5.2 Participants may request WEPCo to deliver other services:

- 5.2.1 Project Services relating to Major Capital Projects in the education sector, save for MIM projects for a specified period;
- 5.2.2 Project Services relating to capital projects required for the provision of education sector services or community services;
- 5.2.3 Project Services in relation to the provision of FM Services required for the provision of education sector services or community services (not provided as part of any Qualifying Project);
- 5.2.4 Strategic Support Partnering Services;
- 5.2.5 Ongoing Partnering Services and/or Project Development Partnering Services after 10 years (where the term of the SPA has been extended);
- 5.2.6 Project Development Partnering Services in respect of potential New Projects which are not Qualifying Projects.

The above services are not subject to exclusivity.

5.3 The benefits of exclusivity include:

- 5.3.1 Participants will not have to embark on another regulated procurement for the delivery of Partnering Services or Project Services for the lifetime of the SPA.
- 5.3.2 Participants can be assured of the appropriate level of commitment from WEPCo to foster the development of a successful partnership and outcomes over the long term.
- 5.3.3 Participants can be assured regarding value for money and continuous improvement for the delivery of a pipeline of new projects.
- 5.3.4 Delivery of economies of scale over time through the growth of the WEPCo estate.

5.4 Exclusivity can be suspended if WEPCo fails the “Track Record Test” and will not apply until WEPCo passes a subsequent Track Record Test. This is an assessment of whether in the most recent WEPCo Performance Report shared with Participants on an annual basis, WEPCo has met specified KPIs (including those that relate to community benefits) as evidenced.

6 REPRESENTATIVES AND STRATEGIC PARTNERING BOARD (SPB)

- 6.1 Each Participant will appoint a representative to act on its behalf in relation to the SPA. The identity of the Participant’s Representative may change at any time following written notice to WEPCo and all other Participants. Each Participant Representative may also at any time, by written notice to WEPCo, authorise others to exercise the functions and powers of that Participant.
- 6.2 The SPB governs the relationship between WEPCo and the Participants. It will comprise of representatives of each Participant, WEPCo, Welsh Government and other stakeholder representatives as agreed by the Participants.
- 6.3 The SPB will meet at least every three months to review financial and operating issues and provide strategic input into the partnering arrangements including the exchange of ideas in relation to the Participants’ accommodation and service delivery requirements.

- 6.4 A quorum of the SPB is proposed to be five Participant's Representatives (one of whom must be a representative of the Welsh Government) and the WEPCo Representative. For any adjourned meeting, the quorum shall be one Participant's Representative (who must be a representative of the Welsh Government) and the WEPCo Representative. WEPCo and stakeholder representatives will not have a vote at SPB meetings. Decisions will be taken by majority vote. A decision that affects a Participant will only bind it if that Participant's representative has voted in favour of it.
- 6.5 The SPB will approve the annual Strategic Delivery Plan, ensure New Project proposals are consistent with the SDP, manage WEPCo's performance against agreed KPIs, approve any extension to the SPA term and approve any proposed disposal of interest in share capital resulting in a loss of control by WEPCo (or subsidiary).
- 6.6 WEPCo will be obliged to report on its KPIs which will be reviewed by the SPB annually. The SPB will assess whether the Track Record Test has been passed and if any significant performance failure has occurred. Any dispute shall be resolved under Schedule 21 (*Dispute Resolution Procedure*).

7 DEFAULT

Participant Default

- 7.1 Participant Event of Default includes:
 - 7.1.1 one or more Participants being in breach of clauses 9.1, 9.2 and 9.6 (exclusivity clause);
 - 7.1.2 one or more Participants failing to attend SPB meetings which has a material adverse effect on WEPCo or any Project Service Provider;
 - 7.1.3 one or more Participants being in breach of the SPA which delays the execution of any Project Agreement relating to an Approved Project by more than 40 Business Days;
 - 7.1.4 an expropriation, sequestration, nationalisation or requisition of any Facilities or assets and/or shares of WEPCo or its Holding Company or Project Service Provider by a Participant or any other Relevant Authority (where this occurs due to a Relevant Authority, all Participants will be deemed responsible for the Event of Default); and
 - 7.1.5 any non-payment by a Participant under the SPA exceeding £100,000 60 Business Days after demand.
- 7.2 Where a Participant Event of Default occurs, WEPCo may either:
 - 7.2.1 suspend their performance of the SPA in relation to the Participant in default until that Participant can demonstrate to WEPCo's reasonable satisfaction it is capable of performing their obligations; or
 - 7.2.2 notify the Participant of the Event of Default.

If the Participant Event of Default is capable of remedy and has not been remedied within 30 Business Days or is not capable of remedy with immediate effect, WEPCo may either serve notice on each Participant in default terminating the SPA in relation to them with immediate effect or simply notify the Participants in default of the effect their default has had. Any Participants in default will be liable to pay compensation to WEPCo in accordance with section 1 of Schedule 14 (*Compensation on Participant Event of Default and Termination*). If the SPA is terminated in its entirety by the default, compensation under section 2 of Schedule 14 (*Compensation on Participant Event of Default and Termination*) will be payable.

- 7.3 If a Participant is served a Participant Default Notice more than once in any 12 months, it will not receive Project Development Partnering Services or any Strategic Support Partnering Services unless paid monthly in arrears.

- 7.4 The Participants have several liability, other than where two or more Participants have suffered an Event of Default leading to a termination of the SPA, in which case, the loss of WEPCo will be split between the defaulting Participants.

WEPCo Default

- 7.5 The SPA provides for a long list of circumstances which constitute a WEPCo Default including amongst others, WEPCo breaching the SPA, WEPCo failing to provide the Partnering Services, WEPCo breaching health and safety laws; WEPCo failing to pay Participants under the SPA which exceeds £10,000 for 60 Business Days on demand; WEPCo or a Project Service Provider suffering an Insolvency Event; and WEPCo (or WEPCo Party) committing a Prohibited Act.
- 7.6 On a WEPCo Event of Default, each Participant can (acting through the Welsh Government) suspend the exclusivity granted to WEPCo which will include any New Projects that have not yet reached Stage 2 approval. The Participants can lift that suspension at any time and the suspension of exclusivity will be lifted on remedy of the default and where the PSDP shares in WEPCo are sold.
- 7.7 The SPA provides for an escalation of remedies following a WEPCo Event of Default, proportionate to the severity of the default, which may be exercised by the Participants (acting through Welsh Government). These include: suspension of exclusivity; requiring a remediation programme to be implemented; an improvement programme to satisfy Participants that the events will not recur; termination of a non-performing supply chain member; and ultimately termination of the SPA.
- 7.8 WEPCo will reimburse each Participant for all reasonable costs incurred by each Participant as a result of WEPCo's breach of the SPA.

8 WEPCO INDEMNITIES

- 8.1 As would be expected under a long term partnering agreement, the SPA includes provisions under which WEPCo indemnifies the Participants, and the Participants indemnify WEPCo, for certain losses. These are limited to Direct Losses, and exclude Indirect Losses (such as loss of profit and loss of business opportunity), and further Participants partially exclude their liability for their negligence (see below) and claims in tort.
- 8.2 The scope of the indemnity provided by WEPCo is slightly wider than the Participants' indemnities to WEPCo, as the Participants' indemnities are limited to Direct Losses sustained by WEPCo as a consequence of any negligent act or omission by that Participant (or a Participant Party relating to that Participant) relating to the performance or non-performance of the Participant's obligations under the SPA, or a breach of an express provision of the SPA by that Participant. The indemnities provided by WEPCo relate to any act or omission of WEPCo (not just its negligence or breach of an express obligation).
- 8.3 The indemnities cover death and/or personal injury, damage to assets of the other party and third parties. In each case (and subject to the overriding limitation on the scope of the Participants' indemnities described in above), each party is liable for Direct Losses sustained in consequence of any claim for death and/or personal injury of their own employees or persons engaged by them, notwithstanding any act or omission of the other party.
- 8.4 In respect of death or personal injury to third parties, and damage to property, each party indemnifies the other for Direct Losses they cause (save to the extent caused or contributed to by the Participant's own negligence (where WEPCo is indemnifying the Participant) or WEPCo's own acts or omissions (where the Participant is indemnifying WEPCo). Physical damage to property is typically an insured risk, and the indemnity given by the Participants to WEPCo excludes insured losses. Where damage to property has been caused (or contributed to) by the Participant's own negligence, and they are claiming under the WEPCo indemnity, the Participant is responsible for the deductibles under any policy of insurance, and any sums over the maximum amount required to be insured under the SPA insurance policies.

9 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 9.1 Disputes are dealt with in accordance with the resolution procedure set out in Schedule 22 (*Dispute Resolution Procedure*). If a Dispute occurs, the parties must consult in good faith. If that is unsuccessful, the Dispute must be escalated to senior personnel. If that is unsuccessful, the Dispute will be escalated to mediation and failing that to arbitration. The exception to this is where a party requires an order restraining another party from doing any act or compelling another to do any act or a judgement for a liquidated sum where there is no arguable defence.

10 INSURANCE

- 10.1 The insurances listed in Schedule 9 (*Insurances*) and any others required by law must be taken out by WEPCo, subject to insurance being available in the market to cover WEPCo in its role during the lifetime of the SPA. The insurance will cover any indemnity claims against WEPCo in relation to any death or bodily injury or third party property damage arising out of or in connection with the Partnering Services.
- 10.2 If a Project Service Provider notices a risk becoming an Uninsurable Risk under the relevant Project Agreement, the Participants and WEPCo will hold a SPB meeting within 7 Business Days and will use their reasonable endeavours to agree a position with regards to the risk within 20 Business Days of notice.

11 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

- 11.1 WEPCo grants a free, irrevocable, non-exclusive and transferable (but only to any assignee or transferee of any rights or benefits under the SPA or following termination of the SPA) licence to each Participant to use the Intellectual Property Rights which are vested in WEPCo and where possible, where vested in third parties. WEPCo will indemnify Participants where they receive a claim as a result of the Participant infringing third party Intellectual Property Rights (other than as a result of the Participant acting outside of the terms of the SPA).

12 ASSIGNMENT AND SUBCONTRACTING

- 12.1 WEPCo cannot assign or dispose of the SPA without the prior written consent of the Participants, other than where granting security rights in a form approved by the Participants prior to grant.
- 12.2 A Participant cannot assign or dispose of the SPA other than to a limited set of organisations set out in clauses 28.4.1 to 28.4.4, including the Welsh Ministers, an agency of the Welsh Ministers, Government or Local Authority, any other Further Education Corporation or Designated Institution or any person with the legal capacity or sufficient financial resources to perform the obligations of the Participant. Depending on the transferee, the obligations may need to be guaranteed by the Participant.

Bevan Brittan LLP

11 May 2020

WEP STRATEGIC PARTNERING DELIVERY MODEL

ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC PARTNERING BOARD (SPB)

1 INTRODUCTION¹

- 1.1 The WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement (**SPA**) is the agreement entered into between the Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions (**Participants**)² and WEPCo (being the joint venture company established between the Private Sector Delivery Partner (**PSDP**) and a subsidiary of the Development Bank of Wales).
- 1.2 The purpose of the SPA is to establish a long term partnership (initial term of 10 years, which may be extended by 5 years) between WEPCo and the Participants. The SPA provides for the creation of the Strategic Partnering Board (**SPB**); this paper summarises the role of the SPB in the context of the SPA.

2 THE SPA KEY PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The SPA commits the Participants and WEPCo to work to the following nine (9) key principles, and the SPB is the guardian vehicle of these commitments.
- 2.2 The key principles of the SPA are:
- a) to develop close working relationships between WEPCo and the Participants at all levels;
 - b) to focus on achieving the best value for money operational performance within agreed timescales;
 - c) to set in place business and cultural processes to enable the Participants and WEPCo to establish and agree challenging time and performance objectives and to meet or better them;
 - d) to recognise each other's needs, constraints, limitations, capabilities, roles and responsibilities to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes;
 - e) to identify by regular monitoring, weaknesses and strengths in the relationship between and amongst the Participants and WEPCo and to work together to overcome the weaknesses and to build on the strengths;
 - f) to commit to the early recognition and resolution of differences, conflicts and disputes between and amongst the Participants and WEPCo in a 'no surprises' environment;
 - g) to appoint within each of the Participants and WEPCo co-ordinators at senior level who will support, defend and promote the long term strategic partnership between them and its principles of operation;
 - h) to develop openness and trust in a transparent information and data sharing environment; and
 - i) in accordance with the Equality Requirements to positively promote equal opportunities and the Ethical Employment Code by combating discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, disability, age or sexuality and promoting good relations between all sections of the community in 'everything we do' including:

¹ Capitalised terms have the meaning provided for in the Strategic Partnering Agreement unless otherwise stated.

² Note those named as a "Contracting Authority" in the OJEU notice will be entitled to sign and enter D

- a) Delivering high quality Education Sector Services and (where relevant) Community Services for end users; and
- b) Working with the local community and partners in the public, private or voluntary sectors.

3 SPB MECHANICS

3.1 SPB Structure

The SPB will comprise of:

- a) one representative from each of the Participants;
- b) one representative of WEPCo, nominated by the board of directors of WEPCo;
- c) one additional representative of Welsh Government (at Welsh Government's discretion); and
- d) a reasonable number of Stakeholder Representatives interested in or affected by Education Sector Services and/or Community Services;

3.1.1 Participant Representatives are expected to be senior representatives of the Participant, with the appropriate authority to make decisions on behalf of the Participant. They should be experienced in holding a director or similar position and have the required skills to make the decisions required to be made by the SPB. Participants will need to consider any likely conflicts of interest and ensure that conflicts of interest do not prevent the chosen representative from fulfilling their role as representative as well as any other role they hold directly in the Participant organisation.

3.1.2 The identity of a Participant's Representative in the SPB may change at any time following written notice to WEPCo and all other Participants.

3.1.3 A Participant Representative may also give written notice to WEPCo authorising others to exercise the functions and powers of that Participant at SPB meetings.

3.1.4 A Chairman will be appointed on an annual basis from amongst the Participants' Representatives. Save where agreed to the contrary by the Participants, it is intended that the post of Chairman will rotate annually amongst the Participants' Representatives in turn. The Chairman will be non-voting in his capacity as Chairman.

3.2 SPB Meetings

3.2.1 The SPB will meet regularly at least every 3 months to provide strategic input into how the partnering established by the SPA is operating, and to review financial and operating (including performance) issues.

3.2.2 Agendas for SPB meetings will be circulated on behalf of the Chairman five (5) Business Days in advance (with supporting papers) and any party wishing to raise other agenda items will notify all other members of the SPB (with supporting papers) in writing no later than three (3) Business Days in advance.

3.2.3 The SPB must have a quorum of five (5) Participants' Representatives (one of whom must be a representative from Welsh Government) and a WEPCo Representative. If a quorum is not present at any meeting of the SPB within thirty (30) minutes of that meeting's start time, the SPA requires that the meeting is adjourned to the same time and place five (5) Business Days later. For any adjourned meeting, the quorum shall be one Participant's Representative (who much be a representative of the Welsh Government) and the WEPCo Representative. Telephone conference calls or video conferences shall be valid as a meeting of the SPB.

- 3.2.4 The Participants must arrange for a person to take minutes of all SPB meetings and circulate the same to all representatives and the Chairman within five (5) Business Days after the relevant meeting.
- 3.2.5 All members of the SPB are obliged to use reasonable endeavours to ensure their regular attendance at all meetings and each Participant will, unless unavoidable, ensure that its representative on the SPB is appropriately empowered to agree matters on its behalf.
- 3.2.6 Each Participant is required to use reasonable endeavours to ensure that its representative on the SPB conducts himself in accordance with the partnering principles contained in the SPA and in a manner intended to ensure that the SPB complies with its obligations and carries out its functions in a timely manner.
- 3.2.7 Decisions will be taken by a majority vote. WEPCo and Stakeholder Representatives will not have a vote at SPB meetings. A decision that affects a Participant will only bind it if that Participant's representative has voted in favour of it.

4 PARTNERING SERVICES

- 4.1 The SPB will serve as a forum for the open exchange of ideas, and will enable the Participants to discuss their forthcoming accommodation and service delivery requirements to ensure an integrated co-ordinated and practical approach to fulfilling such requirements.

4.2 The Strategic Delivery Plan

The Strategic Delivery Plan (**SDP**) will set out objectives based on Participants' local delivery plans and will be developed annually between the Participants and WEPCo. The SPB will be required to approve:

- 4.2.1 the initial SDP put forward in accordance with Section 1 of Schedule 11 (*Initial SDP*); and
- 4.2.2 any amendments made to the SDP in accordance with Section 2 of Schedule 11 (*Updated SDP*).

4.3 The Management System

The SPB shall be required to approve the following systems established by WEPCo:

- 4.3.1 a quality management system for the purpose of ensuring and demonstrating that all aspects of the Partnering Services and all other matters for which WEPCo is responsible under the SPA are carried out fully in conformity with the relevant provisions of SPA and WEPCo's quality management policies and objectives;
- 4.3.2 an appropriate system for implementing WEPCo's occupational health and safety (**OH&S**) policies and objectives to enable it to control its OH&S risks and improve its OH&S performance over time; and
- 4.3.3 an appropriate system for achieving and demonstrating sound environmental performance by controlling the impacts of WEPCo's activities, products and services on the environment, consistent with its environmental policy and objectives.

4.4 The Partnering Services Costs Rates

- 4.4.1 WEPCo is required to provide report of the Partnering Services rates and prices by reference to:
 - a) other relevant local and national trends;
 - b) the rates and prices actually paid by WEPCo for similar services (where WEPCo has used Good Industry Practice to secure best value in respect of those services);

and taking account of value for money objectives set out in the Key Performance Indicators and the outcomes of the Partnering Services Supply Chain Refresh.

- 4.4.2 The SPB shall decide whether to approve any proposal of an increase or decrease of, or no change to the rates.

5 MANAGING WEPCO PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 The SPB will act as the primary mechanism for managing WEPCo's performance.
- 5.2 WEPCo will be required to regularly monitor and report to the SPB on its performance (and its Partnering Subcontractors) under the SPA, of the Project Service Providers and the Supply Chain Members under Project Agreements.
- 5.3 Within twenty (20) Business Days of each Review Date, WEPCo will issue to the SPB the WEPCo Performance Report, which will detail a review of whether each of the Key Performance Indicators has been met.
- 5.4 In less than one (1) month of the Review Date in that year, the SPB will hold a formal Annual Review of the operation of the SPA and WEPCo's performance in the context of the targets and objectives in the SDP and the Key Performance Indicators. As part of this review, the SPB (excluding for such purposes WEPCo's representative) will review WEPCo's progress against the partnership objectives in the SPA and the WEPCo Performance Report and the SPB and WEPCo shall agree any key findings from such review together with the implications relating to WEPCo's future activities.
- 5.5 The SPB shall be entitled to require information and/or clarification from WEPCo in relation to the WEPCo Performance Report including as to whether or not the Track Record Test has been passed and, whether any Significant Performance Failure has occurred.

6 APPROVAL PROCESS OF NEW PROJECTS

- 6.1 In respect of New Projects, the SPB will work with WEPCo and Participants to:
- 6.1.1 identify, analyse and discuss the Participants' collective and individual accommodation requirements;
 - 6.1.2 assist in the development of local delivery plans and review their applicability to the provision of Education Sector Services and Community Services in the Region;
 - 6.1.3 develop further the SDP, in particular to further refine the proposals contained in the SDP;
 - 6.1.4 decide the basis upon which New Projects are prioritised;
 - 6.1.5 identify and appraise available options for meeting the Participants' accommodation requirements and recommend (on the basis of best available value for money) which New Projects to progress;
 - 6.1.6 advise how best to bundle accommodation requirements within a New Project to ensure that the New Project is Affordable, offers value for money and provides a solution with an appropriate level of flexibility;
 - 6.1.7 take into consideration the views of relevant stakeholders in relation to the SDP and actual or potential New Projects;
 - 6.1.8 develop the Participants' requirements in relation to New Projects (which will be developed further during the Stage 2 Approval process) to enable it to form the basis for the agreement of the relevant Project Agreement;

- 6.1.9 analyse and discuss the range of potential funding options for New Projects including the feasibility of third party funding such as sponsorship when considering and developing a New Project;
- 6.1.10 assist in the preparation of outline business cases and obtaining all necessary approvals; and
- 6.1.11 for any New Project in respect of which such Participant(s) has/have indicated an intention to submit a New Project Request, agree:
 - a) the appropriate Comparator for purposes of determining any adjustments to the Project Development Fee Cap pursuant to paragraph 2 of Schedule 4 (Partnering Services Costs) in respect of such Comparator; and
 - b) each part of the Project Development Fee Cap for each stage.
- 6.2 Where the potential Relevant Participant(s) and WEPCo are unable to agree the matters referred to in paragraph 6.1.11 above within a period of three (3) months, the SPB shall determine such matters.
- 6.3 The SPB should be provided with copies of both the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Submissions and will provide a forum for discussion of whether the submissions meet the Approval Criteria. Approval of the New Projects is ultimately decided by the Relevant Participant(s).

7 EXTENDING THE SPA TERM

- 7.1 The term of the SPA may be extended for an additional five (5) years after the Initial ten year term. The SPB will meet twelve (12) months before the Initial Expiry Date to review:
 - 7.1.1 the performance of the Parties under the SPA and, in particular, the performance of WEPCo in delivering the Partnering Services to the performance standards set out in Clause 8.1 (*Services Obligations*);
 - 7.1.2 the Education Sector Services and Community Services needs of the population within the Region; and
 - 7.1.3 whether it would be beneficial to the provision of all or any of the Education Sector Services and/or Community Services in the Region to extend this Agreement for a further five (5) year period from the Initial Expiry Date.
- 7.2 It will then be decided by WEPCo and one or more of the Participants whether to extend the term of the SPA by five (5) years from the Initial Expiry Date.

8 DISPOSAL OF PROPERTIES AND/OR SHARES

- 8.1 SPB approval will be required in respect of any action, which would result in a loss of control (direct or indirect) by WEPCo of any Subsidiary of WEPCo, which is a Project Service Provider. The SPB is obliged to act reasonably and without undue delay, taking into account any proposals put forward. If the SPB does not approve the proposed action, WEPCo must use all reasonable endeavours to procure that its Subsidiary and/or the relevant Project Service Provider shall not proceed with that proposed action.
- 8.2 It will be deemed to constitute a material breach of the SPA by WEPCo if:
 - 8.2.1 any Project Service Provider takes any action under its Project Agreement, which under the terms of such agreement, requires the SPB's consent without such consent having first been obtained, or
 - 8.2.2 WEPCo or any Subsidiary of WEPCo takes any action, which requires the SPB's consent or agreement under the SPA without such consent or agreement having first been obtained.

9 INSURANCE

- 9.1 Where a Project Service Provider for a MIM Project has notified a Project Agreement Counterparty of a risk becoming an Uninsurable Risk (pursuant to the provisions of the relevant Project Agreement), the Participants and WEPCo must ensure that a meeting of the SPB is held as soon as is reasonably practicable (and in any event within seven (7) Business Days of receipt by the Project Agreement Counterparty of such notice).
- 9.2 At that meeting the SPB will consider the situation and the parties will work together to use all their respective reasonable endeavours to obtain an agreed position from the SPB in relation to the risk becoming an Uninsurable Risk within twenty (20) Business Days of the Project Service Provider notifying the Project Agreement Counterparty as described above.

10 CONCLUSION

The SPB will be the central forum in which the Participants can work together with WEPCo, Welsh Government and Stakeholder Representatives to ensure that the key principles of the SPA are met. The SPB's role will be to approve the SDP; ensure any New Project proposals are consistent with the SDP; monitor WEPCo's performance against agreed KPIs; approve any extension to the SPA term; and approve any proposed disposal of interest in share capital resulting in a loss of control by WEPCo (or subsidiary).

WEP STRATEGIC PARTNERING DELIVERY MODEL

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR NEW PROJECTS

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement (**SPA**) is the agreement entered into between the Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions (the **Participants**) and WEPCo (being the joint venture company established between the Private Sector Delivery Partner and a subsidiary of the Development Bank of Wales).
- 1.2 Schedule 5 of the SPA sets out the procedure by which WEPCo and the Participants will work together to agree which New Projects will be taken forward and approved for development by WEPCo and on what basis. Schedule 5 sets out a two stage Approval Process for such New Projects. The approval process (as discussed in more detail below) shall only apply in relation to Qualifying Projects regardless of whether the period of ten (10) years from the Commencement Date has expired.
- 1.3 The Parties may agree to utilise this process (amended as appropriate) in respect of other Project Services under Clause 9.3 but are not obliged to do so.
- 1.4 A flow diagram outlining the Approval Process for New Projects is appended to this guidance note at Appendix A.
- 1.5 Capitalised terms in this guidance note shall have the meaning given to them in the SPA unless otherwise defined in this guidance note.

2 OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTIES

How are New Projects identified at the outset?

- 2.1 WEPCo will work with Participants to develop local delivery plans (addressing Participants' requirements) which will form part of the annual Strategic Delivery Plan (**SDP**). WEPCo will then review the applicability of the SDP to the provision of education services in the Participant's Region to decide which New Projects should progress. The SPB shall ensure that WEPCo's proposals for New Projects are consistent with delivery of the latest SDP.

How far will WEPCo's role extend in developing New Projects and obtaining approval?

- 2.2 Paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of Schedule 5 lists WEPCo's general obligations in developing New Projects. WEPCo has a full set of obligations, including:
 - 2.2.1 identifying Participants' requirements for future New Projects;
 - 2.2.2 prioritising New Projects and advising on best timeframes for New Projects;
 - 2.2.3 engaging with stakeholders and advising on the preferred funding options;
 - 2.2.4 preparing outline business cases;
 - 2.2.5 obtaining all necessary approvals;
 - 2.2.6 agreeing an appropriate Comparator for determining adjustments to the Project Development Fee Cap; and
 - 2.2.7 agreeing each part of the Project Development Fee Estimate..
- 2.3 WEPCo shall (pursuant to Paragraph 2), without entitlement to specific or additional payment, work with the Participants and other members of the Strategic Partnering Board (**SPB**) to (including but not limited to) analyse and discuss the range of potential funding options for New Projects, as well as

develop the Participants' requirements in relation to New Projects (as more explicitly set out in Paragraphs 2.2.1 to 2.2.11).

What are the Participants expected to do by way of the Approval Process for New Projects?

- 2.4 Paragraph 2.3 of Schedule 5 sets out the Participants' obligations, which mainly includes obligations of co-operation with WEPCo, including providing necessary information; identifying its needs and funding opportunities (including benchmarks); and providing assistance in obtaining necessary Consents.
- 2.5 Each Participant will co-operate with WEPCo in its performance of its obligations (as set out in Paragraphs 2.2.1 to 2.2.11) in relation to any New Project or any potential New Project being developed by WEPCo. Where the potential Participant and WEPCo are unable to agree the matters referred to in paragraph 2.2.11 within a period of three (3) months, the SPB shall determine such matters.

3 NEW PROJECT REQUEST

- 3.1 Any Participant wishing to procure a New Project (**Relevant Participant**) shall first submit a New Project Request to WEPCo to produce a Stage 1 Submission (Paragraph 3.1). This New Project Request will need to set out matters, including but not limited to, the Affordability Cap, Specific Requirements, a clear detailed Project Brief and any requirements in relation to a New Project that must be satisfied as part of a Stage 1 Submission and/or Stage 2 Submission (as set out more explicitly in Paragraphs 3.1.1 to 3.1.3).
- 3.2 WEPCo shall be entitled (pursuant to paragraph 3.2) to raise any queries and request clarification from the Participant in relation to the New Project Request to enable it to fully assess the request and provide a meaningful response.
- 3.3 WEPCo shall then (in accordance with Paragraph 3.3) confirm in writing to the Participant, within twenty (20) Business Days of receipt of a New Project Request, whether it will submit a Stage 1 Submission to the Participant. If WEPCo confirms that it does not intend to do so, or fails to give the necessary confirmation, then the Participant shall be entitled to procure such New Project outside the terms of the SPA and shall not be in breach of the exclusivity provisions as set out in Clause 9 of the SPA (Exclusive Nature of this Agreement).
- 3.4 It is important to note that where the reason for WEPCo not proceeding is the Affordability Cap being unrealistically low, the parties shall (pursuant to Clause 3.3.1) work together in good faith to seek to agree an alternative Project Brief and/or Affordability Cap which will form the basis of a revised New Project.
- 3.5 If the parties fail to agree such terms within six (6) months of WEPCo's original confirmation, the Participant shall be entitled to procure the New Project outside the terms of the SPA and shall not be or be deemed to be in breach of the Clause 9 exclusivity provisions. If the New Project is a Qualifying Project and they commence to procure such New Project prior to the expiry of ten (10) years from the Commencement Date at a substantially greater cost than the Affordability Cap, the Clause 9 exclusivity provisions will still apply.

4 STAGE 1 SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

- 4.1 Upon WEPCo's confirmation of the New Project Request, WEPCo will (pursuant to Paragraph 4.1) produce outline proposals for New Projects, which develop and are consistent with the SDP where so requested. This is known as the Stage 1 Submission.
- 4.2 All Stage 1 Submissions will be produced within three (3) months (or such longer period up to a maximum of six (6) months where necessary) from the New Project Request. A Stage 1 Submission shall (as set out in Paragraph 4.2) be produced in accordance with the relevant Partnering Services Method Statement (to be incorporated into the SPA) and contain as a minimum (more expressly set out in Paragraphs 4.2.1 to 4.2.13):

- 4.2.1 a value for money assessment in respect of the New Project Request;
 - 4.2.2 a concept design (to RIBA Stage 2) of the New Project;
 - 4.2.3 a desktop study meeting the requirements of the Partnering Services Method Statements, site investigation studies and environmental impacts (as appropriate and as set out in Clause 4.2.3 more explicitly);
 - 4.2.4 confirmation as to whether the New Project requires the transfer of properties by the Participant to WEPCo, to a Project Service Provider, or to a wholly owned Subsidiary of WEPCo;
 - 4.2.5 the identity of the contractual structure and proposed corporate structure;
 - 4.2.6 a schedule of all material amendments required to the New Project Specific Project Agreement and template Project Agreement for MIM Projects taking into account the Approval Criteria;
 - 4.2.7 the identity of the Participant and/or other parties who will become Project Agreement Counterparties;
 - 4.2.8 an explanation as to how the New Project fits into the service delivery strategy as set out in the latest SDP;
 - 4.2.9 the effect (if any) on any employees of the Participant or relevant third party service providers;
 - 4.2.10 a planning brief;
 - 4.2.11 a maximum time period for submission of a Stage 2 Submission on the assumption that the New Tender Project achieves Stage 1 Approval;
 - 4.2.12 the proposed Project Development Fee Estimate; and
 - 4.2.13 a BIM Execution Plan.
- 4.3 The Stage 1 Submission must also be accompanied by a copy of the most recent WEPCo Performance Report and confirmation as to whether or not the Track Record Test has been passed at the date of submission of the Stage 1 Submission.
- 4.4 In developing a Stage 1 Submission, WEPCo shall (pursuant to Paragraph 4.3) liaise with the Participant and relevant end users as necessary to ensure the best available value for money is achieved through the appropriate consideration of all viable options and informed choices by WEPCo, stakeholders and the Relevant Participant(s). WEPCo shall also be obliged to enter into the Project BIM Agreement for the New Project and comply with its obligations thereunder. The Participant shall also (pursuant to Paragraph 4.4) without prejudice to the requirements of Schedule 6 of the SPA, provide WEPCo with such information as to its requirements and other inputs as WEPCo may reasonably require.
- 4.5 As part of its preparation for each Stage 1 Submission, WEPCo shall, save in respect of Pathfinder Projects, carry out a desktop study of the relevant site or sites and report to the Participant of such studies (in accordance with Paragraph 4.5).
- 4.6 Following receipt of a Stage 1 Submission by the Participant, (pursuant to Paragraph 4.6), the Participant shall have a period of two (2) months from the date of receipt of the Stage 1 Submission in which to notify WEPCo that it approves or rejects the Stage 1 Submission. If approved, this then becomes a Stage 1 Approved Project (Paragraph 4.6).

- 4.7 WEPCo's costs in relation to the preparation of a Stage 1 Submission that has been submitted in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Schedule 5 shall be borne by WEPCo unless in certain circumstances e.g. where the New Project subsequently becomes an Approved Project and the relevant costs are included as part of the Project Development Fee for such Approved Project (as more explicitly set out in Paragraphs 4.8.1 – 4.8.3).
- 4.8 It should be noted that if a Stage 1 Submission does not become a Stage 1 Approved Project, then in certain limited circumstances (as set out in detail in Paragraphs 4.9.1 – 4.9.3 including but not limited to where the New Project in question is not a Qualifying Project, then the Participant shall be entitled to procure the New Project outside the terms of the SPA and shall not be deemed to be in breach of the exclusivity provisions as set out in Clause 9 of the SPA, unless (in the case of Paragraph 4.9.1(a)) they seek to commence procurement of such New Project during any period when exclusivity in respect of the Participant has been reinstated pursuant to Clause 9.7, Clause 23.3 or Clause 23.10.1.
- 4.9 Finally, in relation to the Stage 1 Submission, where in respect of a New Project demolition of an existing facility is anticipated within the scope of a New Project and an Asbestos Management survey has not been carried out by the Participant and included within the New Project Request, WEPCo, shall then procure an Asbestos Management Survey with the support and guidance of the Participant, in accordance with the provisions as set out in Paragraphs 4.10.1 to 4.10.5.

5 STAGE 2 SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

- 5.1 Once the Stage 1 Submission becomes a Stage 1 Approved Project, WEPCo, will (pursuant to Paragraph 5.1) when requested to do so in writing by the Participant, provide further Project Development Partnering Services to proceed regularly and diligently to develop a Stage 1 Approved Project into a detailed submission. This is known as a Stage 2 Submission. This shall then be presented to the Participant as soon as reasonably practicable and in any case within the maximum period specified in the Stage 1 Submission.
- 5.2 WEPCo shall, in developing a Stage 2 Submission (pursuant to Paragraph 5.2) continue to liaise with the Participant and relevant end users (Paragraph 5.2.1) and WEPCo shall be obliged to comply with its BIM protocol obligations under the Project BIM Agreement and submit a BIM Execution plan to the Participant within one month of commencing Stage 2.
- 5.3 As part of the Stage 2 process, the Participant shall provide WEPCo with any such information as to its/their requirements (including the Specific Requirements) and other inputs as WEPCo may reasonably require and shall assist WEPCo in the review of any draft designs and proposals in relation to the Stage 2 Submission (Paragraph 5.3.1) and generally co-operate with WEPCo in relation to any Stage 2 Submission (Paragraph 5.3.2).
- 5.4 WEPCo shall produce each Stage 2 Submission in accordance with the relevant Partnering Services Method Statement and shall procure that the Stage 2 Submission shall address all issues that have a potential impact on risk and/or price in respect of the proposed New Project and shall include as a minimum (including but not limited to and as set out in more detail in Paragraphs 5.4.1 to 5.4.18):
- 5.4.1 a value for money assessment in respect of the option given Stage 1 Approval;
 - 5.4.2 terms for the transfer of properties agreed between WEPCo and the relevant Participants or third parties;
 - 5.4.3 a mark-up of the Project Specific Project Agreement with Project Co's proposals;
 - 5.4.4 detailed design work (to RIBA Stage 4) and submission of relevant building warrant applications;
 - 5.4.5 requirements for planning approvals and all associated costs;
 - 5.4.6 an explanation as to why the Stage 2 Submission meets the Approval Criteria (as set out below);

- 5.4.7 a timetable setting out the stages and timescales for the period between achieving Stage 2 Approval and the execution of the Project Agreement in relation to that New Project;
 - 5.4.8 commitment letters from any proposed tenants or sub-tenants of the Facilities;
 - 5.4.9 details of the competency assessments undertaken and the results of the same, in respect of the potential 'Principal' Contractor for purposes of the CDM Regulations;
 - 5.4.10 the Corporate Structure of the Project Service Provider;
 - 5.4.11 a draft Project Co Shareholders' Agreement relating to any New Project which is a MIM Project;
 - 5.4.12 fully developed sub-contracts for each of the Contractor and (in the case of MIM Projects) the Service Provider and any relevant [Key Sub-Contractors]¹;
 - 5.4.13 details of the proposed security package; and
 - 5.4.14 commitment letters from the senior funders confirming acceptance of the documents submitted by WEPCo (in the case of MIM Projects).
- 5.5 The Approval Criteria consists of the criteria against which any New Project is judged in determining whether it achieves Stage 2 Approval. The criteria are set out in Paragraphs 5.5.1 to 5.5.10 in more detail, but include (and are not limited to) a requirement that the cost of the New Project is within the Affordability Cap; that it has been demonstrated that the New Project provides value for money; and that the New Project meets the Specific Requirements.
- 5.6 After the above has been complied with, WEPCo shall then submit its Stage 2 Submission to the Participants, copied to SPB (Paragraph 5.6). It is then expected that the SPB will provide a forum for discussion of such Stage 2 Submission. If, acting reasonably, the Participant finds that any material aspects of the Stage 2 Submission are unsatisfactory to them, the Participant shall notify WEPCo of the same and offer reasonable assistance to WEPCo to address such deficiencies.
- 5.7 Within sixty (60) Business Days of the later of submission to the Participant of a Stage 2 Submission and the date on which WEPCo provides them with all reasonable further information that has been requested and provided, the Participant shall give written notice of whether they reject or approve the Stage 2 Submission (as per Paragraph 5.7). If approved, this becomes a Stage 2 Approved Project.
- 5.8 Alternatively, the Participant may give notice that they reject the New Project on the grounds set out in Paragraph 5.7.2. One of the grounds is that there has been a change to the Affordability Cap since the New Project Request which has rendered the New Project not Affordable. If WEPCo has not been notified of the Participant decision then they shall be deemed to have rejected the New Project (Paragraph 5.8). In certain limited circumstances, where the Participant has rejected the New Proposal, WEPCo may be entitled to recover its Incurred Project Development Fee and procure the New Project outside the terms of the SPA (Paragraph 5.10).
- 5.9 Where a New Project has been rejected by the Relevant Participant on the grounds that it did not meet the Approval Criteria (Paragraph 5.7.2(b)), WEPCo shall be entitled, should it wish to do so, to refer the matter for consideration under the Dispute Resolution Procedure within ten (10) Business Days after receiving notice of the Rejection by the Participant (Paragraph 5.11).
- 5.10 Where a New Project becomes an Approved Project, WEPCo shall (pursuant to Paragraph 5.14) carry out further work to develop appropriate Project Agreements to implement the Approved Project on the terms of the Stage 2 Submission. The Participant shall (as set out in Paragraph 5.15) notify WEPCo

¹ Where applicable.

in writing as soon as they become aware of any matter which may adversely affect the viability of any New Project.²

- 5.11 The Participant shall then provide all reasonable assistance to WEPCo in relation to the procurement by WEPCo of all relevant Consents and the entering into of the relevant Project Agreement (Paragraph 5.16) and WEPCo shall (pursuant to Paragraph 5.18) novate all of its past, present and future rights, obligations and liabilities under a Project BIM Agreement to the Project Service Provider on or prior to the date of execution of the Project Agreement for the Approved Project.

6 CHANGES TO THE RELEVANT PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 If there are any material variations to the Specific Requirements, Affordability Cap or Approval Criteria, in relation to a New Project by the Relevant Participant after a Stage 1 Submission has been submitted, then (pursuant to the provisions of Paragraph 6.1), WEPCo and the Relevant Participant shall negotiate in good faith as to the implications on the Stage 1 Submission and/or Stage 2 Submission (as appropriate) and shall seek to agree the changes to accommodate such variations.
- 6.2 The Participant may, (pursuant to Paragraph 6.2) at any time, give notice in writing to WEPCo that they propose to cancel a New Project without completing the Stage 1 Submission and Stage 2 Submission process (Paragraphs 3 to 5). This is known as a Cancellation Notice.
- 6.3 Where the Participant issues a Cancellation Notice to WEPCo, the Participant shall (pursuant to Paragraph 6.2) pay WEPCo the Incurred Project Development Fee in respect of the cancelled New Project. The relevant date for calculation being the date of the Cancellation Notice.
- 6.4 It is important to note that, unless the period of ten (10) years after the Commencement Date has expired then, to the extent the New Project in question is a Qualifying Project, the Participant shall not be entitled to procure the Required Facilities and/or the provision of the Project Services outside the terms of this Agreement without recommencing this New Project Approval Process.

7 SUSPENSION OF EXCLUSIVITY

- 7.1 Where the Participant exercises any right to suspend exclusivity in accordance with Clause 9.7, Clause 23.3 or 23.10.1 of the SPA, while WEPCo is preparing a Stage 1 Submission or a Stage 2 Submission in respect of any New Project, then (pursuant to Paragraph 7) the Participant may notify WEPCo at any time while such suspension subsists to cease work on producing the relevant Stage 1 Submission or Stage 2 Submission.
- 7.2 In such circumstances, WEPCo shall then cease work and the Participant shall pay WEPCo the Incurred Project Development Fee in respect of the relevant New Project with the relevant date for calculation being the date of the notice from the Participant.

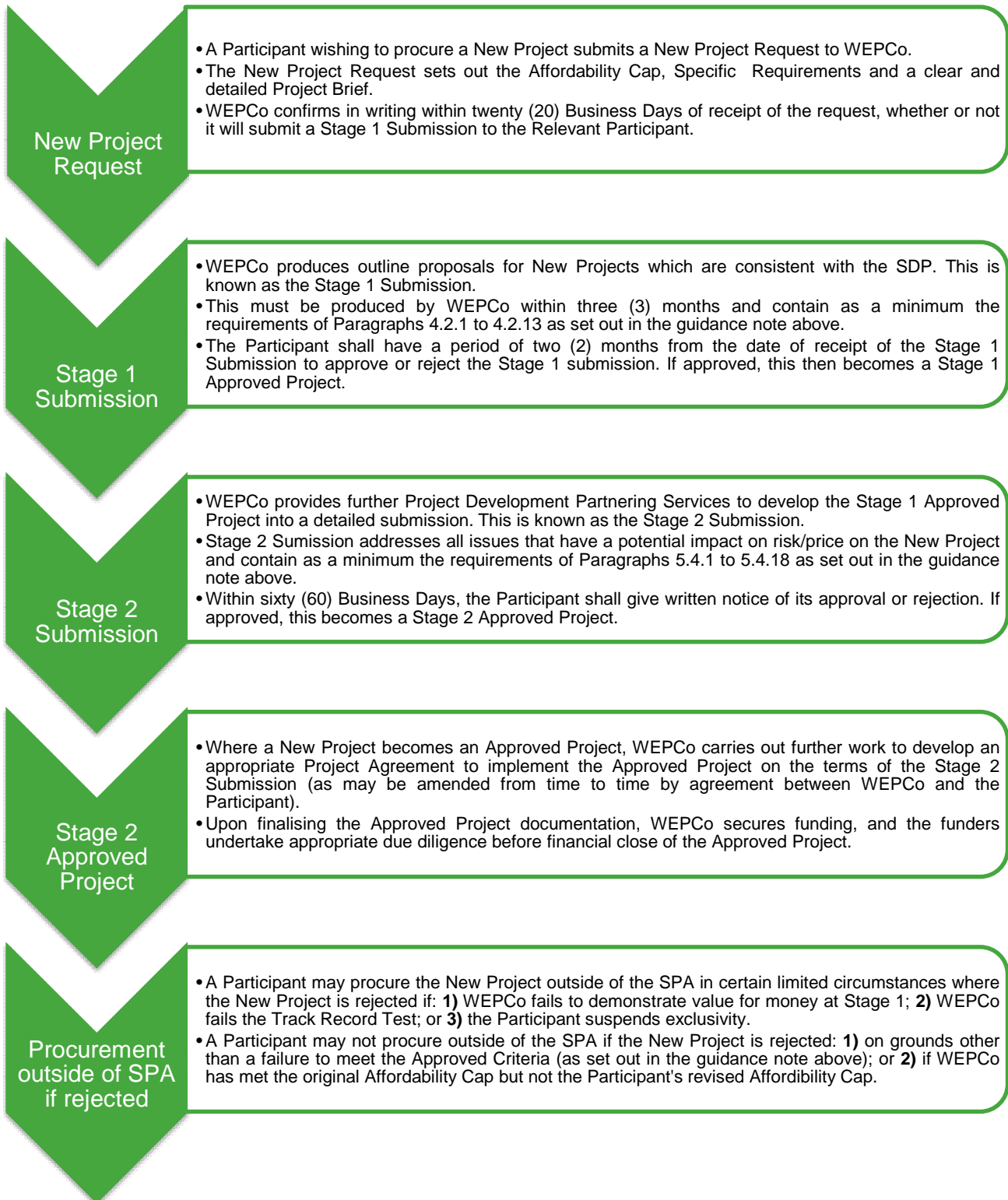
8 SURVEYS

- 8.1 Where WEPCo recommends that surveys, studies and/or investigations (other than desktop studies) are required for the purposes of a Stage 1 Submission, WEPCo will procure such surveys, studies and/or investigations on the terms and at prices agreed with the Participant.
- 8.2 The cost of the surveys, studies and/or investigations will be payable by the Participant to WEPCo within twenty five (25) Business Days of receipt of a valid invoice. This cost will not form part of the Project Development Fee unless the Participant and WEPCo agree to the contrary.

² The provisions of Paragraph 5.15 shall not apply to any Relevant Participant which is a Local Planning Authority exercising its functions as such.

APPENDIX A

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR NEW PROJECTS



DEED OF ADHERENCE

THIS AGREEMENT IS MADE ON [] 2021

AMONG:

- (1) **WEPCO LIMITED**, a company registered in England and Wales (Company Registration Number 12815179) whose registered office is at One Central Square, Cardiff, Wales, CF10 1FS ("**WEPCo**");
- (2) **ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL** of Isle of Anglesey County Council, Council Offices, Llangefni, Anglesey, LL77 7TW;
- (3) **BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** of Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB;
- (4) **CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** of Ty Penallta, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach CF82 7PG;
- (5) **THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF** of Cardiff County Hall, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff CF10 4UW;
- (6) **CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** of County Hall, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA31 1JP;
- (7) **CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL** of Penmorfa, Aberaeron, Ceredigion SA46 0PA
- (8) **CONWY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** of PO Box 1, Conwy LL30 9GN
- (9) **DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** of PO Box 62, Ruthin, LL15 9AZ
- (10) **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** of County Hall, Raikes Lane, Mold, Flintshire CH7 6ND
- (11) **MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** of County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, Monmouthshire NP15 1GA
- (12) **PEMBROKESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** of County Hall, Freeman's Way, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1TP
- (13) **POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL** of County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5LG
- (14) **RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** of The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypandy CF40 2XX
- (15) **THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA** of Civic Centre, Oystermouth Road, Swansea SA1 3SN
- (16) **VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL** of Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry CF63 4RU
- (17) **WREXHAM COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** of The Guildhall, Wrexham LL11 1AY
- (18) **CARDIFF AND VALE COLLEGE** of One Canal Parade, Dumballs Road, Cardiff CF10 5BF
- (19) **COLEG CEREDIGION** of Park Place, Cardigan, Ceredigion, SA43 1AB
- (20) **COLEG GWENT** of The Rhadyr, Usk NP15 1JX
- (21) **COLEG SIR GAR** of Sandy Road, Pwll, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire SA15 4DN

- (22) **COLEG Y CYMOEDD** of Nantgarw Campus, Heol y Coleg Parc Nantgarw Cardiff CF157QY
- (23) **GOWER COLLEGE SWANSEA** of Tycoch Road, Sketty, Swansea SA2 9EB
- (24) **GRŴP LLANDRILLO MENAI** of Llandudno Road, Rhos on Sea, Conwy LL28 4HZ
- (25) **NEATH PORT TALBOT COLLEGE (KNOWN AS “NPTC GROUP OF COLLEGES”)** of Dwr-y-Felin Road, Neath SA10 7RF
- (26) **THE WELSH MINISTERS** of Crown Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

each of (2) to (26) being the "**Continuing Participants**"; and

- (27) **BRIDGEND COLLEGE** of []
- (28) **BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** of []
- (29) **GWYNEDD COUNCIL** of []
- (30) **NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL** of []
- (31) **COLEG CAMBRIA** of []

each of (27) to (31) being the "**Joining Participants**"

IT IS AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

1. This Agreement is supplemental to the partnering agreement (the "**WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement**") dated 30 September 2020 between WEPCo and the Continuing Participants.
2. Words and expressions defined in the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement have the same meanings when used in this Agreement.
3. The Joining Participants hereby agree with each other person who is or who becomes a party to the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement at today's date that with effect on and from the date of its execution of this Agreement it is bound by the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement as a Participant.
4. The address and details for notices of the Joining Participants for the purposes of Clause 40 (*Notices*) of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement are:

Bridgend College, [NAME, POSITION, EMAIL ADDRESS, FULL ADDRESS]

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, [NAME, POSITION, EMAIL ADDRESS, FULL ADDRESS]

Gwynedd Council, [NAME, POSITION, EMAIL ADDRESS, FULL ADDRESS]

Newport City Council, [NAME, POSITION, EMAIL ADDRESS, FULL ADDRESS]

Coleg Cambria, [NAME, POSITION, EMAIL ADDRESS, FULL ADDRESS]

5. For the purpose of Clause 12.1 (*Parties' Representatives*) of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement, the respective Joining Participants' Representatives shall be:

Participant	Joining Participant's Representative (name and position)

Bridgend College	
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	
Gwynedd Council	
Newport City Council	
Coleg Cambria	

6. For the purpose of Clause 28.5.2 (*Assignment and Sub-Contracting*) of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement, the respective Joining Participants' representatives shall be:

Participant	Joining Participant's representative (name, position and address)
Bridgend College	
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	
Gwynedd Council	
Newport City Council	
Coleg Cambria	

7. For the purpose of Section 3.2 of Schedule 22 (Dispute Resolution) of the WEP Strategic Partnering Agreement, the respective Joining Participants' contact points for escalation shall be:

Participant	Position of Joining Participant's Escalation Contact
Bridgend College	
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	
Gwynedd Council	
Newport City Council	
Coleg Cambria	

This Agreement is subject to and shall be construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have executed this Agreement as a Deed the day and year first above written:

EXECUTED as a Deed but not delivered until)
the first date specified on page 1, by **WEPCO**)
LIMITED acting by its duly authorized)
signatory:)

.....
Director

In the presence of:

Witness Signature:

Name:

Address

EXECUTED as a **DEED**, but not)
delivered until the first date)
specified on page 1, by applying)
the seal of **THE WELSH**)
MINISTERS:)

SEAL

The application of the seal of The
Welsh Ministers is
AUTHENTICATED by:

Signature -----
Name (block
capitals) -----

who is duly authorised for that
purpose by authority of The Welsh
Ministers under section 90(2) of the
Government of Wales Act 2006

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

.....
Authorised Signatory

.....
Name in CAPITALS

.....
Position

.....
Authorised Signatory

.....
Name in CAPITALS

.....
Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of COLEG GWENT in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of COLEG Y CYMOEDD in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of GRŴP LLANDRILLO MENAI in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of NPTC GROUP OF COLLEGES in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

.....
Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of COUNTY COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Name in CAPITALS

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Position

DRAFT

Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

.....
Name in CAPITALS

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Position

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Authorised Signatory

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Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of CONWY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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COMMON SEAL

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COMMON SEAL

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COMMON SEAL

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COMMON SEAL

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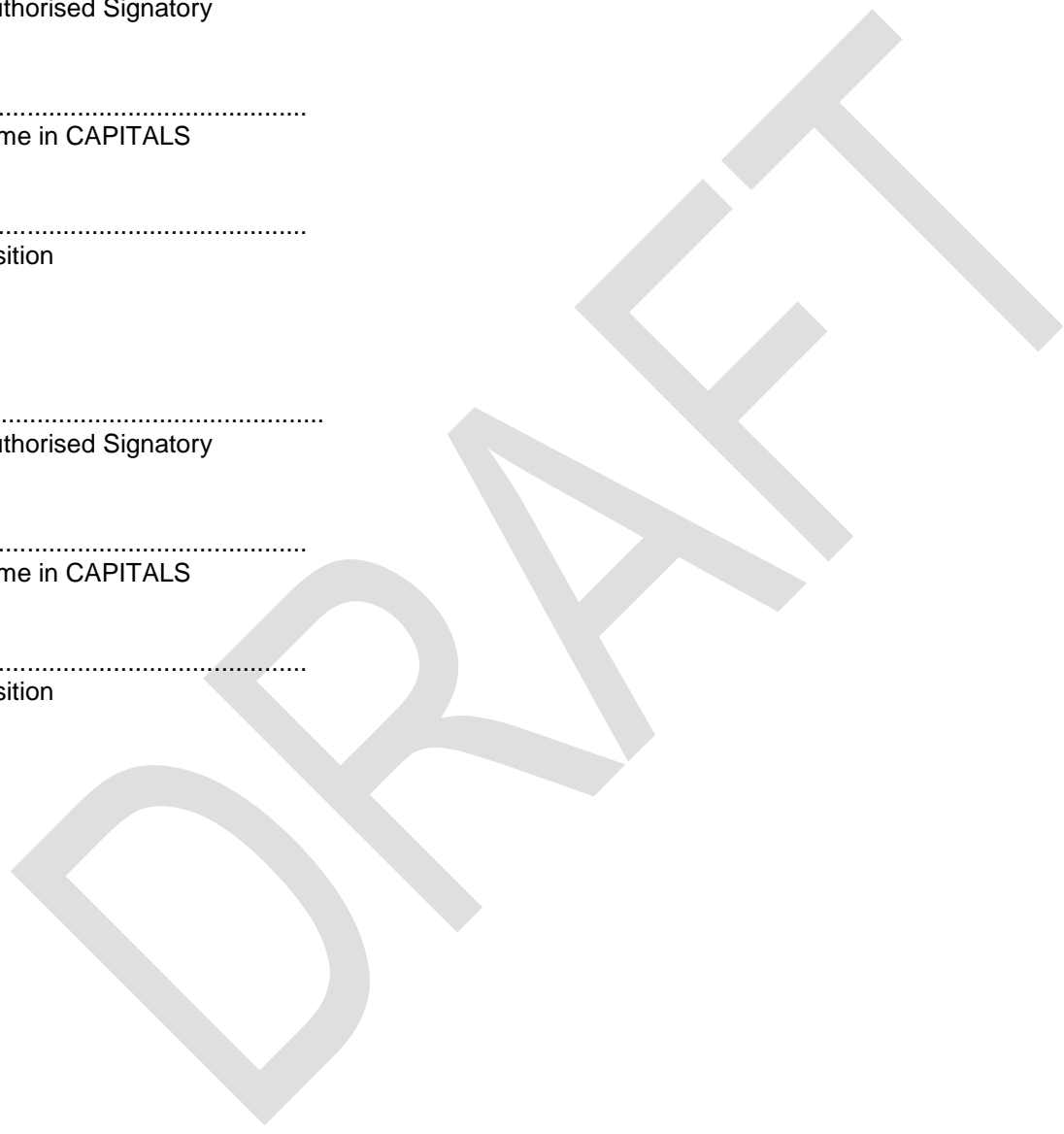
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Authorised Signatory

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Authorised Signatory

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COMMON SEAL

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COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Executed as a DEED, but not delivered until the first date specified on page 1, by affixing the common seal of BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL in the presence of:

COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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COMMON SEAL

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Authorised Signatory

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Agenda Item 11

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Community Services Performance Report 2020/21**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. J 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)
14-09-21	16/09/21	20.10.21			04/10/21	10.11.21		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
To provide the Members of the Executive Committee with an update of Community Services performance outcomes over the period 2020/21.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The report summarises the performance of Community Services over the period 2020/21 which includes the following key service areas:
 - Infrastructure Services
 - Neighbourhood Services; and
 - Property services.
 - 2.2 Community Services deliver projects and service areas which are aligned to 'Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities' which in turn form key elements within the Corporate Plan.
 - 2.3 Community Services performances over this time as been governed by the requirements to fully adhere to the regulations and guidelines set out in compliance with COVID19

Community Services Themes - 'Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities'

- 2.4 The following themes have been identified by Community Services in support of delivering 'Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities'.
 - Improving the Local Environment
 - Managing our Estate
 - Improving the Wellbeing & Resilience of our Communities
 - Healthy and Safe Communities and
 - Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure
- 2.5 Community Services performance against these themes is detailed in Appendix 1 – 'Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities' Performance Report 2020/21.

The report also includes a number of specific Case Studies on projects and initiatives that have been delivered and undertaken over the period and best illustrate the diversity, range and scope of works undertaken by Community Services.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Community Services Scrutiny Committee supported Option 1 at its meeting on 4th October 2021.
- 3.2 Option 1 to accept the information in the report.
- 3.3 Option 2 to consider the information contained within the report and provide challenge and/or further action for consideration to make improvements.

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

Priority Areas for Community Services identified in 'Corporate Plan 2020/22'

- To increase rates of recycling to enable us to achieve national targets;
- To re-invest in environmental services to address the issues created by fly-tipping, dog fouling, littering, grass cutting, street cleansing and pest control;
- To re-invest in highways maintenance particularly improvements to our residential roads, streets and pavements;
- To improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors;
- To build the relationships across the Council to support organisations and partners to deliver services in different ways (Community Asset Transfers)
- To take a strategic approach to the management of our land and property services in different ways (Community Asset Transfers)
- To improve the quality of our school buildings.
- To be carbon neutral by 2030.

Statutory Responsibilities

Community Services in the delivery of key services and projects align their requirements to all the statutory and regulatory requirements.

Well-being Plan

The purpose of the report is to present service activity over the period 2020/21, which highlights how we are contributing to the Council's overall aim towards a Globally responsible Wales, A Prosperous Wales, A resilient Wales and a Wales of more cohesive communities.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**
- 5.1 **Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)**
The delivery of all services and projects are predicated by revenue and capital funding streams. The challenge around saving targets and the availability of capital grants reflect directly on the ability to deliver outcomes.
- 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**
Failure to ensure that there is robust budget monitoring in the delivery of key services will directly impact on service outcomes.
- 5.3 **Legal**
Service delivery is implicit on adhering to all legal, statutory and regulatory processes.
- 5.4 **Human Resources**
There are minimum resource impacts in preparing the performance report which are met within existing staffing levels.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**
See **Appendix 1** – ‘Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities’ Performance Report 2020/21
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
Improved services and quality of Environment and Street Scene, both physical and natural.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
Community Services undertake bi-annual engagement with the public on public facing service activities.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
By ensuring that the environment and street scene, both physical and natural, are maintained and protected for the foreseeable future.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
Community Services will continue to ensure full participation of all stakeholders in delivery of these corporate objectives.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
Community Services will continue to work in collaboration with local partners, the public and neighbouring authorities in the delivery of its key objectives.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
Community Services will continue to ensure joint working across all areas of the local authority – employees, members, public and other public bodies.
- 6.8 **EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**
EqIA’s to be undertaken in line with statutory requirements.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1 The performance of Community Services will be monitored through Scrutiny on a quarterly and bi-annual basis, through Community Services Scrutiny Committee, Regeneration and Community Services Leadership Team, CLT and Executive.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – ‘Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities’ Performance Report 2020/21.

Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities

Performance Report

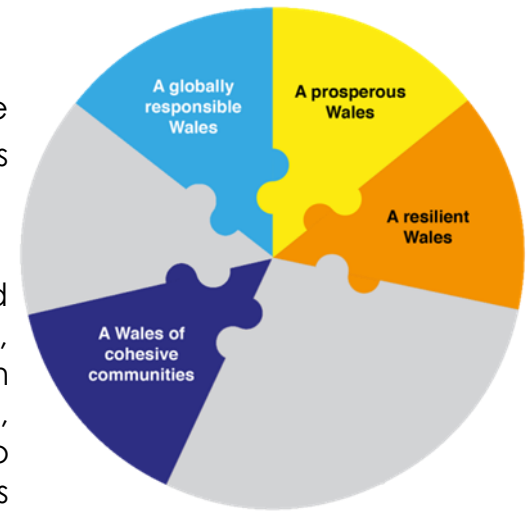


September 2021

Foreword

The purpose of this report is to present service activity which highlights how we are contributing to the Council's overall aim of delivering a globally responsible Wales, a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales and a Wales of more cohesive communities.

The following overview pages set out our performance for the period along with some associated achievements and challenges aligned to the priority areas identified in the Corporate Plan 2020/22, which are: ▶ To increase rates of recycling to enable us to achieve national targets, ▶ To re-invest in environmental services to address the issues created by fly-tipping, dog fouling, littering, grass cutting, street cleansing and pest control, ▶ To re-invest in highways maintenance particularly improvements to our residential roads, streets and pavements, ▶ To improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors, ▶ To develop a portfolio of potential energy opportunities to deliver economic, business and community benefits, ▶ To improve the quality of our school buildings to help learners achieve great outcomes ▶ To be a carbon neutral Council by 2030, and ▶ To build a collaborative culture between services, partners and communities working together and with people directly to shape and deliver services. i.e. (Community Asset Transfers).



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This report is broken down into the themes below which have been identified for the Community Services area and support delivery of the priority areas above:

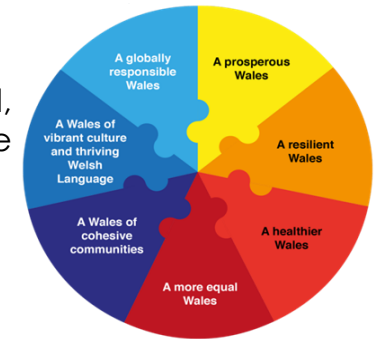
- Improving the Local Environment;
- Managing Our Estate;
- Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities;
- Healthy and Safe Communities; and
- Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure.

Blaenau Gwent has a rich heritage and our buildings and countryside are part of Blaenau Gwent's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. Our local environment should be used to help improve the health and well-being of our families and communities and be enhanced for future generations to continue to enjoy. There is also a real desire to see the communities where people live kept clean, tidy and useable, creating areas that people can be proud of.



Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is legislation which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The vision of this legislation is expressed in the seven National well-being goals.



The Act also puts a duty on public bodies to apply the sustainable development principle which states they 'must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The sustainable development principle is made up of the following five ways of working, pictured below:



Collaboration



Integration



Involvement



Long Term



Prevention

Throughout this report some areas of performance that meet these ways of working are demonstrated by the above images.

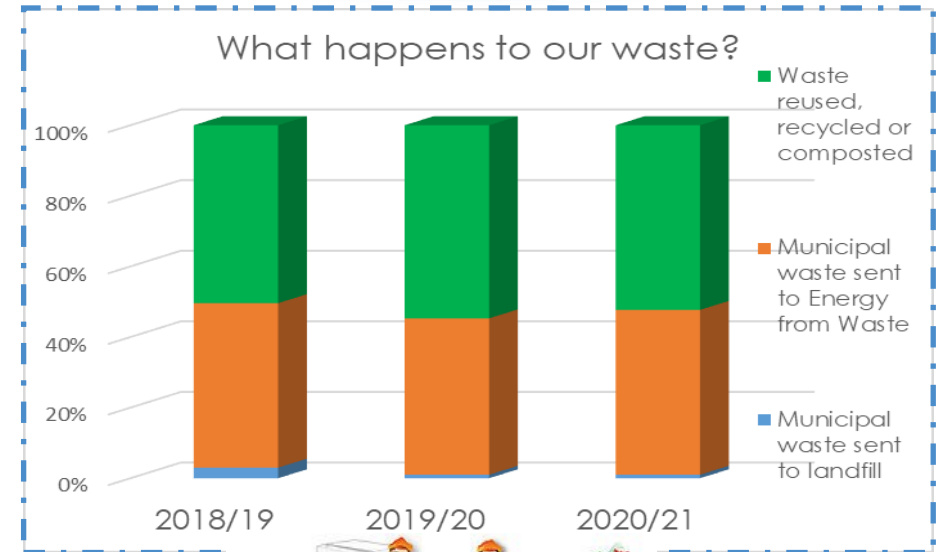
Improving the local Environment

Welsh Government set a statutory recycling target of recycling 70% by 2024-25, towards which Blaenau Gwent has made significant moves in the direction of achieving over the last few years.



66.7%
of waste produced was recycled in Quarter 1 of 2021/22. (Provisional figure)

Support to local community groups has continued, providing **litter champions** with materials, equipment, staff support and collection of waste following clean up and clearance work where COVID restrictions allowed. ✓



Page 174

Dry Recycling collected at the kerbside during Quarter 1 has **decreased** by **412.851 tonnes (12.42%)** when compared to the same period last year.

This is due to the Household Waste Recycling Centre being closed and more people at home during this period last year due to the pandemic- resulting in higher than normal amounts of recycling being collected at the kerbside.



Blaenau Gwent yn ailgylchu
Blaenau Gwent recycles

Are you keeping up with the Joneses?
If you're not recycling, then being the odd one out could cost you £100

Working together

Work continues monitoring areas in relation to the "Keeping up with the Joneses" campaign.

We continue to support when needed, to ensure that the Authority's Residents are maximising opportunities to recycle wherever possible.



The amount of recycling collected has **increased** by 520.55% to **1526.136 tonnes** during Quarter 1, compared to the same period last year.

Improving the local Environment

2.8 million has been invested to develop an **additional Household Waste Recycling Centre** in the Ebbw Fach Valley.

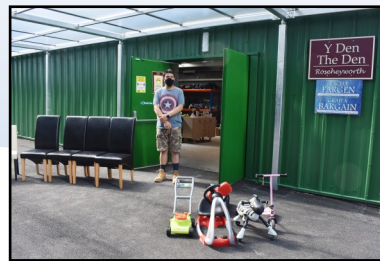
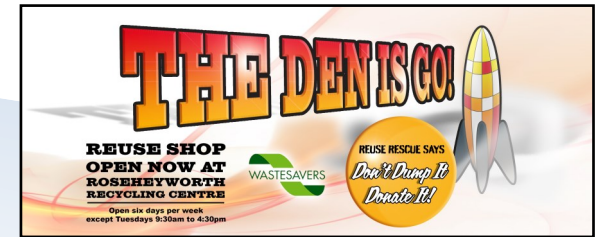
The new Recycling Centre in Roseheyworth was opened to the public in April 2021. The construction of the site is a significant achievement as the majority of the work was carried out at the height of the pandemic, through several lockdowns and the restrictions associated with them. The new site is large and spacious allowing residents to recycle a range of materials including wood, electrical items, garden waste and paint.

The site also features a reuse shop

'The Den' which is operated by the charity Wastesavers, which is dedicated to social, environmental, and economic sustainability.

Residents can donate items, such as books, toys, bikes, crockery, ornaments, DVDs and small furniture, that are in good condition and free from defect so that they can be bought and re-used by someone else. "The Den" is already proving popular with locals who want to get rid of reusable items they no longer want but want them to go to a new

home. It's also proving very popular with people looking for a bargain.

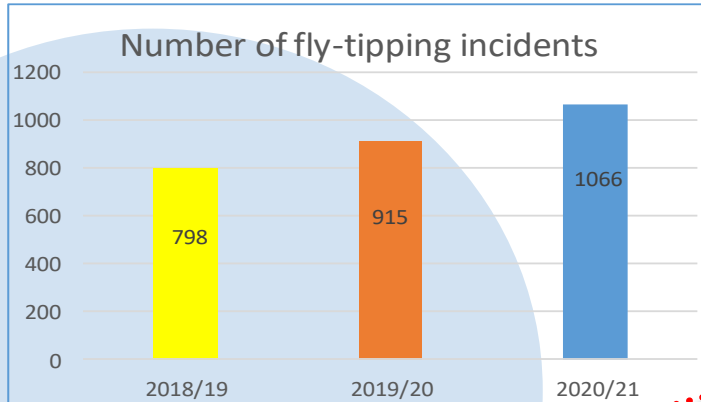


The new Trade Waste service

was rolled out in May 2021 with two bespoke vehicles funded by Welsh Government. These new vehicles allow for separate collections of materials from businesses and ensure the service is compliant with the requirements of the Environment Act (Wales). The service has been well received by many customers with the Trade Waste Officer on hand to help deal with any issues some local businesses may have.



Improving the local Environment



1125

Fly-tipping incidents were reported during Quarter 1 2021, the average number of days taken to clear was **4.26 days**

The numbers of fly-tipping incidents are increasing year on year



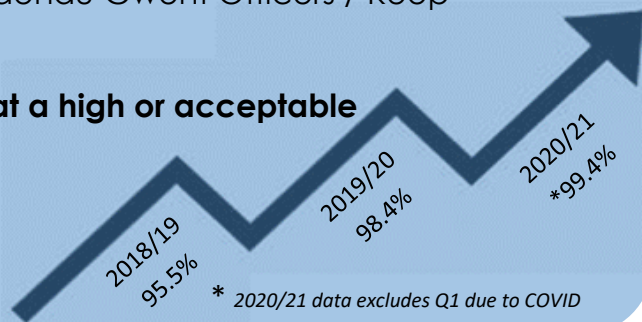
LONG TERM— Blaenau Gwent is one of the first councils in Wales to develop its own **litter and fly-tipping strategy**, which has been designed to reduce the problem of illegal littering.



During the first quarter 2021/22, 30 streets were inspected by Blaenau Gwent Officers / Keep Wales Tidy.

Of these **100%** were rated **at a high or acceptable standard on cleanliness.**

Based on the past 3 years data, street cleanliness is an improving picture.



Recycle your plastic bags and wrapping

Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil residents together already recycle more than 67% of their waste, but we want to help you recycle even more.

We're introducing a new 12-week trial to see how we can recycle your plastic bags and wrapping.

This trial aims to discover if what we collect from you can be recycled into new products, such as bags for life and bin bags.

What should I do?

- Place any empty plastic bags and wrapping you have in the sacks provided with this leaflet. (See the rear page for examples of what you should put in the sacks.)
- Tie the sacks securely then put one into each wheelie bin alongside your recycling containers on your usual collection day. (We may collect these sacks in a different vehicle to the one that collects your usual recycling.)

Enter our prize draw to win a £50 Gift Card

Tell us what you think about the trial by filling in our quick survey, and enter £5 every you into a prize draw to win a £50 LoveShop Gift Card. The survey is open from Monday 19 July and Sunday 8 August 2021.

To enter the prize draw, or for more information about the trial, visit www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/merthyr/wwa/recycling/recycling-plastic-bags

Working together

Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil, and Blaenau Gwent Council logos.

What should I put in the sacks?

✓ Plastic carrier bags, including bags for life	✓ Plastic bread bags (bake out crumbs)	✓ Plastic wrapping from cans/tins in metal goods	✓ Plastic wrapping from tins/tins/ kitchen foil packs
✓ Plastic freezer bags	✓ Plastic wrapping from magazines, that come in the post	✓ Thin plastic inner market fruit and veg air bag	✓ Bubble wrap
✓ Plastic salad bag	✓ Flat licensed tea towels	✓ Plastic frozen chip/vegetable bag	✓ Molar bag
✗ Clear film	✗ Food, drink and pet food packets	✗ Crisp packets	✗ Film lids from ready meals and food trays

Thank you for doing your bit for the environment and helping to protect our planet by recycling all that you can.

New trial - Recycling plastic bags and wrapping

The plastic film trial run for **12 weeks, 10th May 21—30th July 21** and Blaenau Gwent worked in collaboration with WRAP and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

10,685 properties across the Borough were **selected to take part**, a roll of bags and a leaflet was delivered to the properties outlining the initiative.

During the trial

28,994 bags totalling **16.6 tonnes of plastic film** was collected.

Following feedback via waste warden the trial **was well perceived by residents**, we await the full results from WRAP.

Pre planning application has been submitted and is awaiting approval to design and build an Education Centre located at the new Roseheyworth Household Waste Recycling Centre. Lead times have been extended due to delays for construction materials and build costs higher than expected.

Managing Our Estate

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council directly manages seven cemeteries, carrying out maintenance works as and when needed to ensure that families have good access to sites and comfort in the knowledge that the burial place of loved ones is secure.

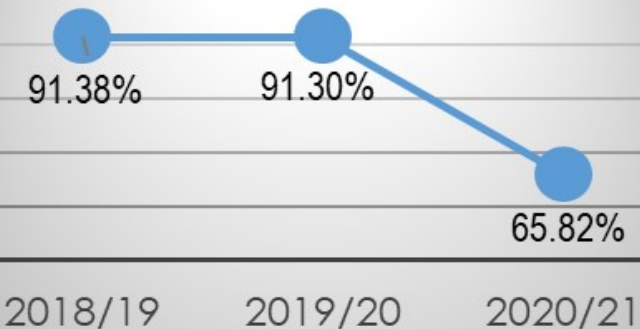
Cemetery works completed in 2020/21 included :-

- Approximately 8,094 m² of road and pathways improved;
- Boundary fences repaired / improved at all seven cemeteries;
- 6 cattle grids installed to prevent access to live stock;
- 2 cemetery properties improved - Sextons House Ebbw Vale, Cemetery and Chapel of rest building at Brynmawr Cemetery;
- 65 metres of stone wall repaired at St Peters Church cemetery, Blaina;
- 30 new waste Bins to be installed (on order); and
- Overgrown vegetation at all sites has been removed.

The funding allocation for 2021/22 financial year is £200,000 and further maintenance works have commenced.

There is just over two years before burial capacity will become a major issue for the area - Cemetery expansion works are in the process of being explored.

COVID / staffing issues has impacted upon the **percentage** of Blaenau Gwent **Bridges** that were compliant with statutory **inspections** in 2020/21.



The ReFit Scheme has been used to implement various energy improvement projects. Work is being undertaken to consider the downsizing of the Council's property portfolio in order to assist with reducing the energy costs across the estate.



Upgrading our street lighting to LED is key to us providing a more energy efficient, low carbon lighting network.

Following securement of funds the contract was awarded to E-ON, and works commenced.

5,410 LED lanterns were installed in Street Lights throughout the County Borough, the programme started in September 2020 and was completed by the end of April 2021. The energy savings achieved will intern pay back the Salix funding.

Managing Our Estate

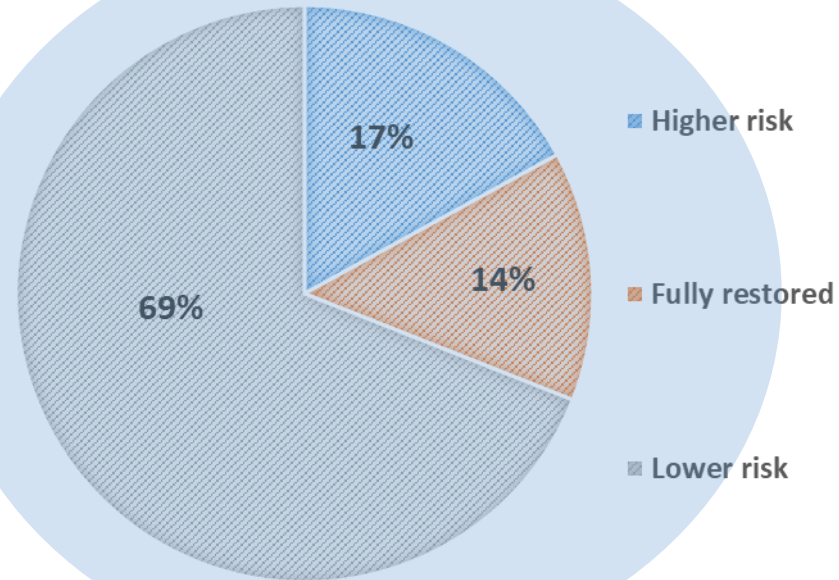
Disused Spoil Tips

The Authority continues to maintain a database of disused tip sites and to inspect and take action if needed to prevent danger to the public.

'Walk over' inspections of the highest risk sites have been undertaken and no signs of instability was identified.

Inspection of the lower risk sites is scheduled to be undertaken over the forthcoming months – subject to staff availability

Revised Preliminary Categorisation



Despite the increased frequency of storm events adding pressures on services

100%

of **emergency issues / complaints** regarding

falling trees

continue to be

dealt

with

within

1 day

LONG TERM - The current depot buildings and site requires major updating and investment to conform with modern working standards and future proofing to meet the new carbon reduction agenda. The physical restrictions together with the cost of the work to meet these modern standards now identifies the need to relocate to an alternative site in order to construct new modern facilities to meet future demands on services.

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process is nearing completion with only the following works ongoing:-

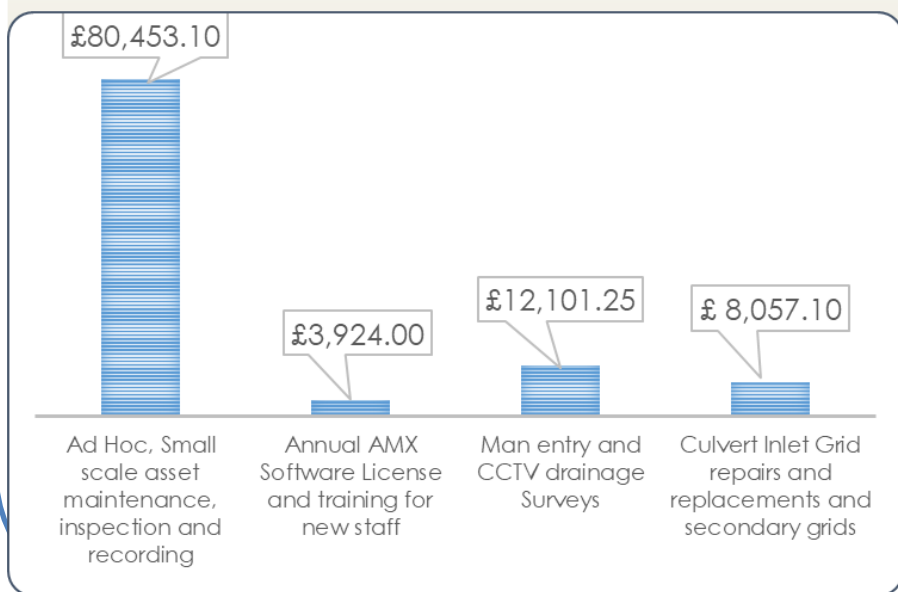
- External assistance commissioned to deal with legal standing of selection process for the Tredegar site.
- Works continuing in respect of gaining Charity Commission consent for Ebbw Vale and Cwm.
- Working closely with Brynithel Rugby Football Club and Llanhilleth Football Club to finalise transfer. Response now received and a position paper is currently being drafted by Estates for discussion at Council [as the Trustees].

Managing Our Estate

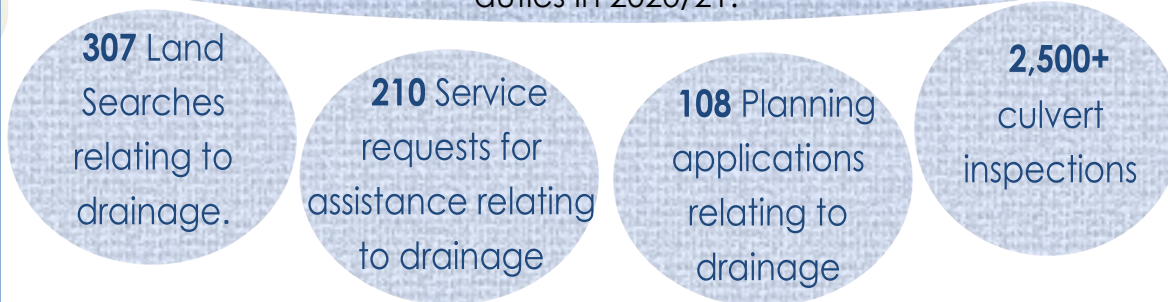
Progress continues to deliver the Councils **Flood Management Plan**, with the following works being undertaken:-

Undertook CCTV and Man Entry surveys of our culvert inlets to inspect their condition at numerous locations including:-	Undertook significant schemes to alleviate flooding at the following locations.	Smaller but no less urgent works were undertaken at the following locations:
Abertillery Old Ash Tip	Ladies Row and King Street Tredegar.	New trash screens to culvert inlets at various locations.
Abertillery Bowls Club	Culvert repairs at Victoria, Ebbw Vale.	Land drainage to stabilise landslip at Briery Hill.
HOV Culvert near Garnlydan.	Remedial works at Cwmtillery Culvert.	Temporary flood relief works at Market Street, Tredegar.
Melbourne Rd, Abertillery	Remedial works to the embankment at Railway Terrace Aberbeeg.	Holland Street, (School House) flood relief investigation and maintenance works.
		Melbourne Rd, Abertillery. Repairs to Drainage.
		Church Street additional drainage to relieve flooding.

A successful application for 100% funded Welsh Government Revenue Grants to the value of **£104,535** enabled us to also undertake the following works and objectives.



The following actions were undertaken as part of our statutory duties in 2020/21.



PREVENTION - Further Schemes have taken place across the borough to help store water and slow down surface run-off. These include tree planting, woodland management, green infrastructure and footpath repairs. This was funded by Welsh Government Access improvement grants of approximately £68,000.

Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



Bee Orchid

Grassland Management / Pollinators

Due to the changes made to the grass cutting regime at Rhos Y Fedwen Primary, Bee orchids have been found growing in the grassland this year. Discussions are ongoing in relation to the relaxation of cutting regime in other schools.

Funding for **access improvements** has been **delivered** to the value of

£34,000

to sites across the Borough .
Funding for 2021/22 has also been awarded in the value of £54,000.



Work continues to explore and develop the **Active Travel** routes and the Public rights of way network for walking and cycling whilst developing cross boundary links where opportunities exist with our neighbouring authorities.

Project work was **delivered** throughout **2020/21** in the value of **£240,000** and included projects at Parc Bryn Bach, Glyncoed and Brynmawr to Beaufort.

A further **£399,000 funding** has been **secured** for **2021/22** with potential projects to include:-

- Route Ebbw Vale - works site to station;
- Localised Active Travel route minor works;
- Bridge enhancement, Heathfield Roundabout, Tredegar;
- Glyncoed - Off-road route North to South; and
- Dingle, Brynmawr - Intermediate Road to Garnlydan.

INVOLVEMENT - We continue to work across the Borough with community groups and both internal and external partners to improve the quality of and access to our green spaces.



COLLABORATION - Working collaboratively across the five Gwent areas whilst funded by the Enabling of Natural Resources and the Well-being Grant, has allowed work on 'Resilient Gwent' to begin and remain on schedule.



PREVENTION - During COVID restrictions the green spaces and public rights of way network have been maintained and kept open for public use offering open green spaces which cater for social distancing, proving a valuable asset for the citizens of Blaenau Gwent in terms of maintaining health and well-being .



Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities



The funding application for the **Gwent Green Grid** has been approved allowing the delivery of various work programmes to progress.

The project will help deliver a range of environmental projects working with partners and organisations.

INVOLVEMENT - Currently in discussions with Education regarding a schools carbon project, which will link to the Council's Decarbonisation Plan.



Funded by the Green Recovery Fund, a consultant ecologist has been appointed to update the Ecological Management Plan into a more user friendly document.

This funding has allowed the recruitment of an access officer to begin to address the backlog of rights of way issues and ensure delivery of Welsh Government funding for access improvements.

(£96,000 for this financial year)

The Urban Diversity Project continues with members of the community helping hedgehogs in the neighbourhood. Some Tai Calon fencing has helped enable the animals to move safely through gardens feeding and finding mates, without being forced on to roads.



Hedgehog tracking tunnel and hog footprints from a community members garden

The Welsh

Government ENRAW funded **Resilient Greater Gwent project**

has made good progress despite some minor delivery issues. The project continues to deliver the agreed outputs and outcomes.



Through the Resilient Greater Gwent project, **The Greater Gwent State of Nature Report was launched**



COLLABORATION- Japanese Knotweed enquiries are being dealt with and a treatment programme will begin in Autumn 2021. As part of the Resilient Greater Gwent, tackling invasive species is one of the work streams that Local Authorities across Gwent are working collaboratively on.

Improving the Well-being and Resilience of our Communities

21 activities were delivered to schools regarding **Natural Resource Management**

School	No. of pupils	No. of events
Coed Y Garn	26	1
Blaen Y Cwm	40	2
Deighton	73	4
Georgetown	30	1
St Mary's RC	4	1
All Saints RC	10	2
Beaufort Hill	28	3
Pen Y Cwm	5	1
Willowtown	4	2
St Joseph's RC	4	2
Coed Y Garn	29	1
All Saints RC	102	1

with a total of **355 children** benefiting from these events

PREVENTION - A Bioblitz was undertaken to help celebrate 'Love Your Burials Grounds Week'. 4 children from Willowtown and 9 members of the public attended.



A late award of **£90,000** was made from Welsh Government for **Green recovery** which has been used for **biodiversity enhancement and woodland management**.



As part of the Green Recovery Fund the following groups received a native mix of perennial wildflower plug plants and native bluebells in the green. This is to help diversify the grasslands to help create better soil structure and diversity which will help with carbon sequestration and pollinators.

- Parc Nant y Waun Local Nature Reserve;
- Beaufort Ponds and Woodlands Local Nature Reserve;
- Cwmcelyn Local Nature Reserve;
- Cwmtillery Local Nature Reserve;
- Bryn Bach Park;
- Sirhowy Woodlands and Community Group;
- Six Bells;
- Trevor Rowson.

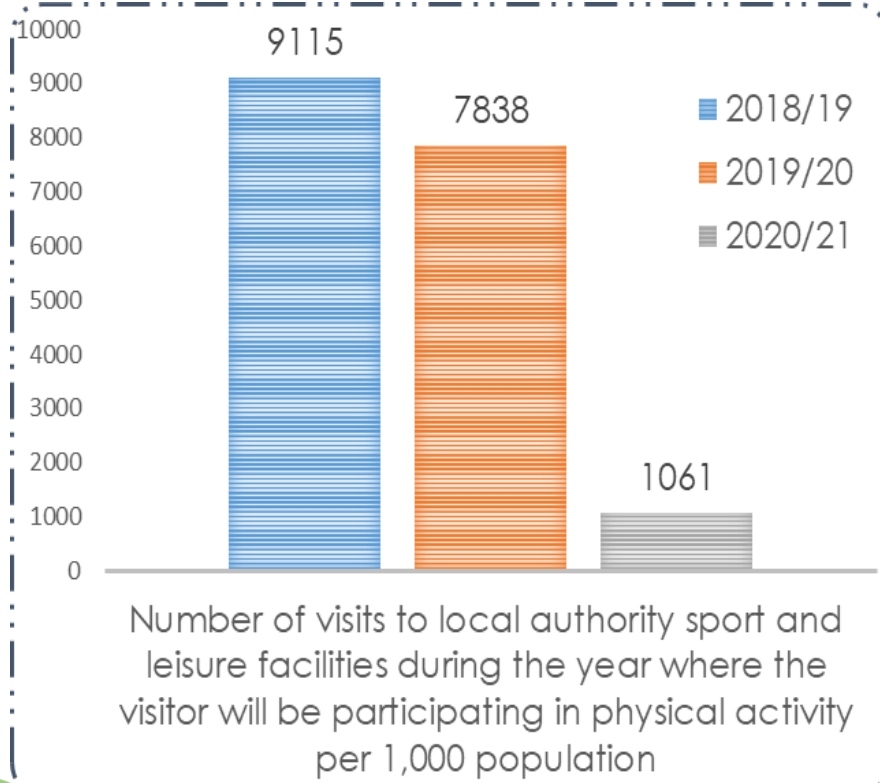


INVOLVEMENT - A Bioblitz was undertaken with the local community - in total there were Children from St Josephs Primary school attended along with another 11 attendees.



Healthy and Safe Communities

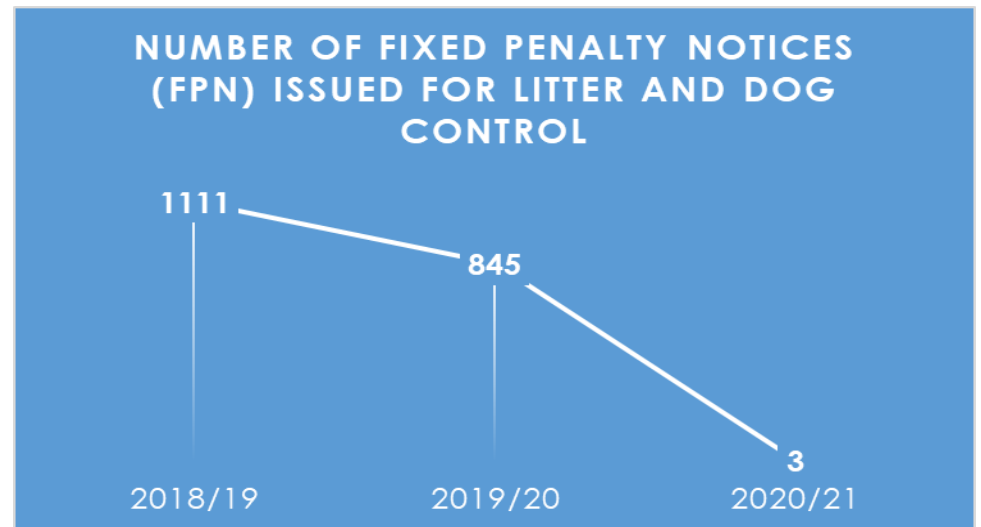
The chart below demonstrates how numbers of attendees at leisure facilities have been greatly impacted by the pandemic - subsequent closure and then restrictions on numbers. Online classes were delivered during lockdown but capacity was not available to record the number of participants.



COLLABORATION - Actions are being implemented to alleviate the issues arising involving straying Animals. These actions will involve working with local Farmers, Commoners, The Police, Natural Resource Wales and many internal service areas of the Council to ensure the effective containment and removal of animals from public areas / highways.

The **Fixed Penalty Enforcement Litter and Dog Control Service** was **suspended** in March 2020 due to the pandemic. Interaction with multiple clients needed to be avoided and also lockdown restrictions meant a reduction in littering. **The 2020/21 figure of 3 in the table below reflects this service suspension due to Covid 19.**

Service reinstatement 6th September 2021.



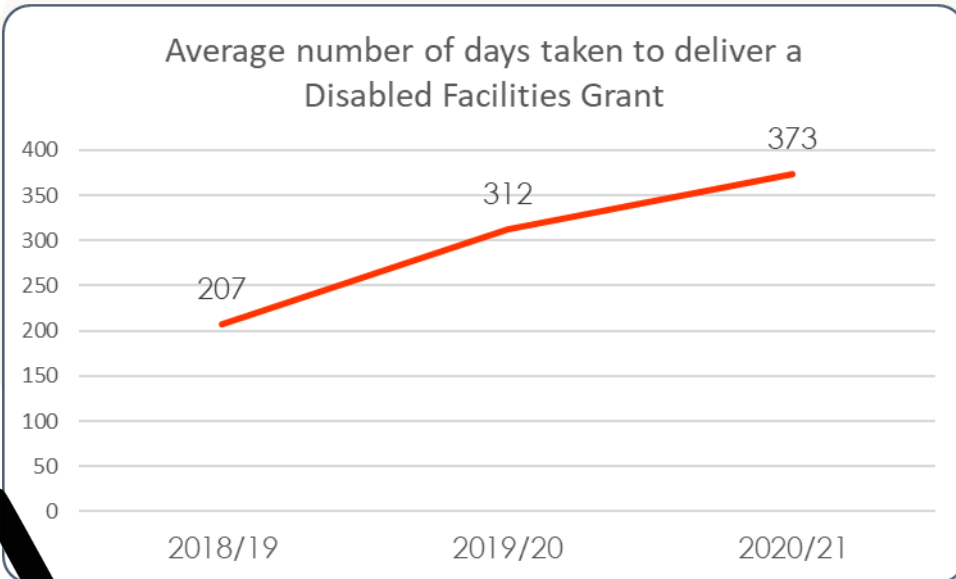
During the **Quarter 1** period (April to June 2021) there were

0 fixed penalty notices issued for litter and dog control.



Healthy and Safe Communities

We have seen a decline in the average number of days taken to deliver a disabled facilities grant . Due to capacity issues there has been a lack of capacity to deliver the grants.



Air quality monitoring is carried out at a variety of locations including domestic properties, schools and community buildings.

Air Quality in Blaenau Gwent continues to be generally good.

As in previous years, it is unlikely that any of the air quality objectives that the Council are required to have regard to, are being exceeded or will be exceeded within the Borough.



PREVENTION - The Authorities Pest Control Treatment Service continues to be outsourced and delivered by a private company, Rentokil. By proactively treating pest infestations in specific locations the Authority is preventing further spread and proliferation of infestations to other areas of the County Borough. This service provides improved public health through the free treatment of rat infestations in domestic premises and the prevention of the spread of infestations to third party land.



COLLABORATION - For its partnership working with Rentokil, the Authority was nominated for a National Pest Control Award and came second.



LONG TERM - The ability for the Council to operate a Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) function is critical for the safe and efficient management of the Borough's highway network. The Council would not be able to manage and enforce Traffic Regulation Orders within the Borough without an effective CPE service. Indeed, the introduction of CPE has allowed the Council to successfully monitor and target areas where complaints of illegal and dangerous parking are received. The Council receives a high volume of requests for consideration of parking enforcement.

Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure

The current gross replacement value of the Highway Network is estimated at £1.093 billion and is the Authority's most valuable material asset

2021/22 Highways Asset Management programme

investment of **£900K +**

will continue to pay due attention to high priority works to the Network whilst retaining a focus around improving the residential / unclassified network.



£320k of additional works to be spread across all 16 Wards [approx. 400m2 patching works per ward].



LONG TERM - Investment in the residential highway network is identified to ensure sustainability for the future, bringing our roads up to a good standard and improving our highway infrastructure to meet the service requirements of the future.

Un-classified roads make up 74% of the total Highway network [198 miles] and forms the majority of the local road network .

As a result of investment over the previous three years the

% of poor conditioned Un-classified roads has

reduced to 11.4%

from a previous 17%.

During 2020/21

Total resurfaced highway area

51,587m² / 6.0 miles

made up of the following:-

- 24 residential highways (40,937m² / 5.1 miles)
- Tafarnaubach Ind Est (7000m² / 0.6 miles)
- Llangynidr Road (3650m² / 0.3 miles)

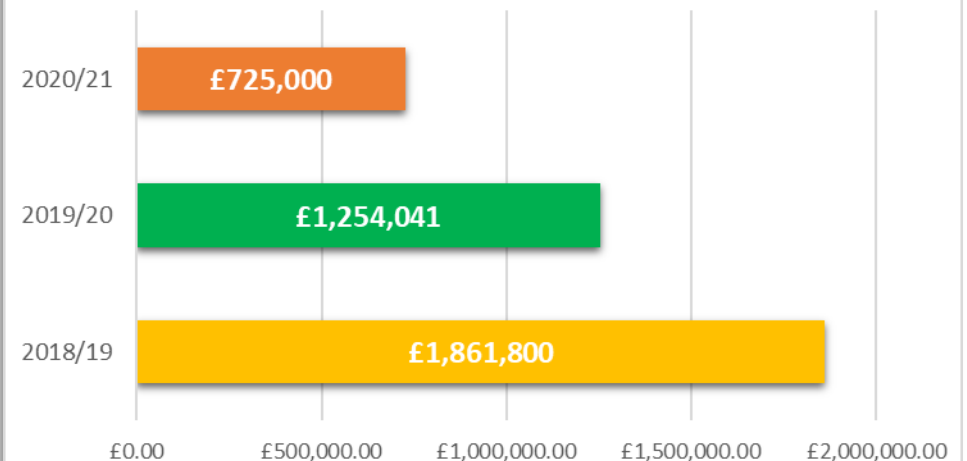


To date **82** residential highways have been resurfaced along with priority works to the A & B Classified Network.

Other related works included:

- Crash Barriers
- Illuminated Traffic Signs
- Traffic Management Features

Highway Capital Works Programme Spend



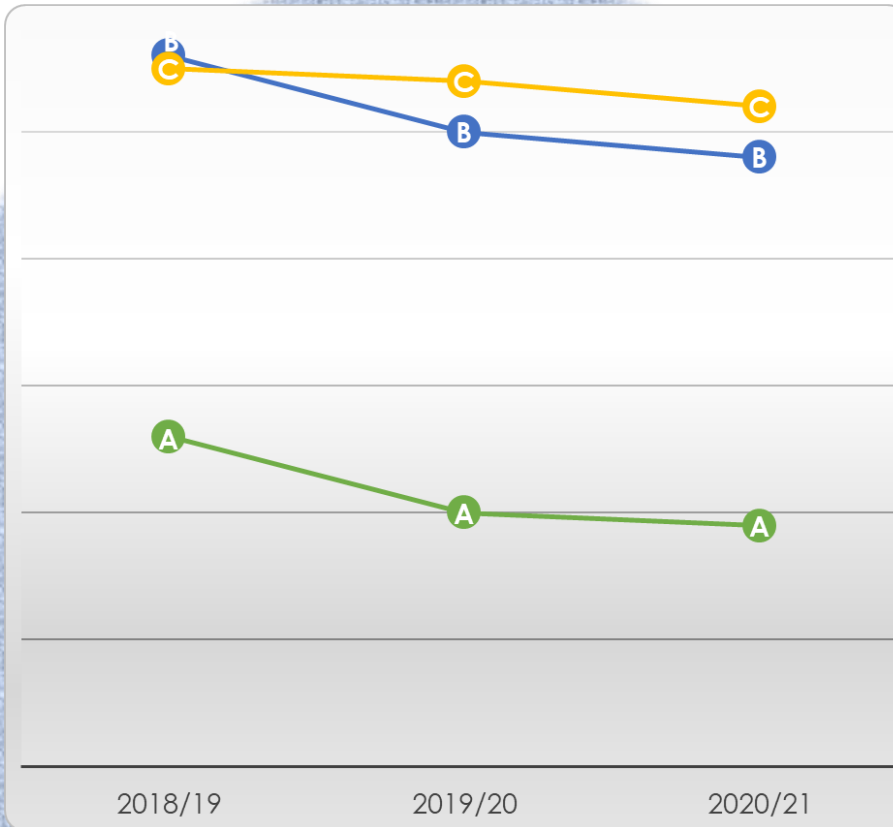
Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure

All schemes within the original highway surfacing programme are complete .



Following the Welsh Government Grant / Capital Allocation for 2021/22, the areas of A, B & C roads to be surfaced and other highway ancillary works to be undertaken are due to be confirmed shortly.

Percentage of A, B & C Roads In Poor Condition

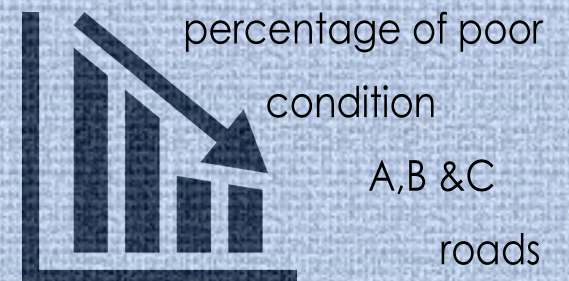


	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Percentage of A roads in poor condition	2.6%	2.0%	1.9%
Percentage of B roads in poor condition	5.6%	5.0%	4.8%
Percentage of C roads in poor condition	5.5%	5.4%	5.2%

Additional grants have also been received to improve our A roads:

- Local Transport Fund - **£990,000** to improve the junction on the A4048 at Bedwellty Pits, Tredegar
- Resilient Road Fund - **£300,000** to undertake a feasibility study of the condition of A4047 between Aberbeeg and Cwm Roundabouts - to identify its current issues / improvements to form the basis of future Welsh Government grant application.

Ongoing works over the past 3 years supports the positive downward trend of the



Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure



Piling works to support the proposed reinforced concrete carriageway

**Aberbeeg Road
Highway / Geotechnical
works to stabilise
the A4046 carriageway**
following
the server storms of
February 2020



Reinforced concrete carriageway



Big Arch, Ebbw Vale
**CADW approval received
due to its listed building status.**
Liaison with the specialist
contractor about the works
is now in progress and work
on site is intended to
commence later this year.



Case Study - New five-year council Litter and Fly-tipping Strategy

Blaenau Gwent Council is one of the first councils in Wales to develop its own litter and fly-tipping strategy, which has been designed to build on the successful work of its past schemes and to reduce the problem of illegal littering. The new strategy includes a comprehensive action plan to show how the council and its partners can work together and reduce the impact of waste crime throughout the borough.

There are a range of actions specifically for tackling this growing problem which include community engagement, enforcement and education and awareness. Overall the plan will ensure the borough's residents, landowners and businesses understand their waste responsibilities. For instance the council has recruited over 200 Litter Champions who are provided with equipment, whilst increased partnership work (through a multi-agency approach Police, Natural Resources Wales Agency) will help identify those responsible for enviro-crime, such as fly tipping Incidents.



At the heart of our ambitious and vital Strategy is the need to change behavior around litter and fly-tipping. We want to create a culture here in Blaenau Gwent where littering and fly-tipping is socially unacceptable.

Councillor Joanna Wilkins, Executive Member for the Environment says: *“Fly-tipping and littering is an awful stain on our beautiful landscape and towns. Not only is it an illegal eyesore but often adds to the risk of flooding by blocking water courses and drains. Our new litter and fly-tipping strategy will show our commitment to keeping Blaenau Gwent a clean and green environment, making it not only a great place to live and work but also to visit. As fly-tipping has been on the increase this new approach will help reduce the current yearly clean-up costs. Maintaining clean streets and our environment has been a high priority for the council for a number of years and the minority of illegal fly-tippers have a negative impact on the majority of our responsible residents. We are doing everything we can to try and stop it and I am sure the people of Blaenau Gwent will show the same commitment as we introduce this new strategy”.*

The five-year bespoke strategy has recently won the backing of the councillors and will now be adopted by the council. Overall, it aims to significantly reduce the existing litter and fly-tipping issues and adhere to the document's vision “to radically reduce litter and fly-tipping so we can improve our natural habitats as well as our wild and urban landscapes, increase pride and awareness of our local heritage and desire to keep it litter free”.

Case Study - Refurbishment Works

Advanced Engineering Centre



A full refurbishment
of the Former Monwell Building
located on Letchworth Road, Ebbw Vale
is underway to create

a State of the Art Education Facility

for Coleg Gwent designed to carry out their
Advanced Engineering Curriculum / Course.

Value in the region of

£8 Million

with an anticipated
completion approximately

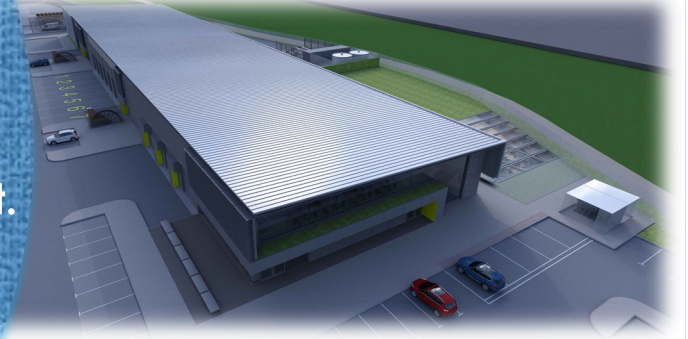
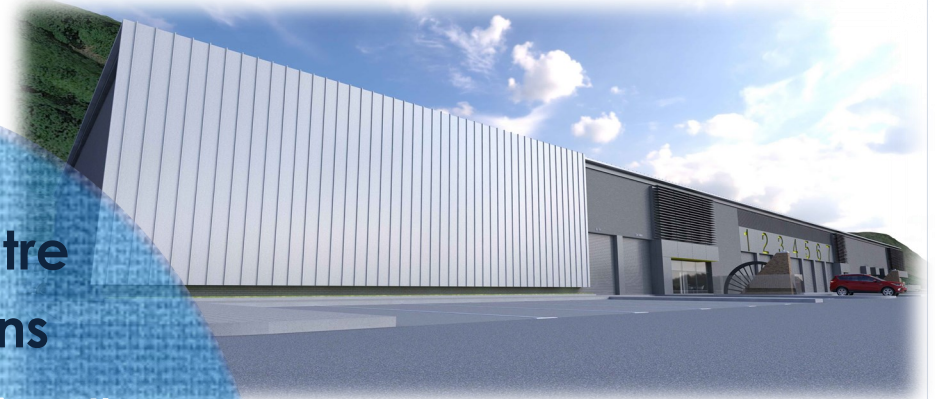
September 2023.

Case Study - New Council Centre of Operations

New Build - Council Centre of Operations

(New Central Depot) on the
old Marine Colliery Site, Cwm.
A State of the Art Central Depot
Facility to carry out the existing
functions of the existing Central Depot.

Value in the region of
£20 Million
Approximate
completion
June 2024.



Case Study - Resilient Uplands (SEWRU) Project

We are now in the final year of delivering the **regional South East Wales Resilient Uplands (SEWRU) project (2018-2021)**.

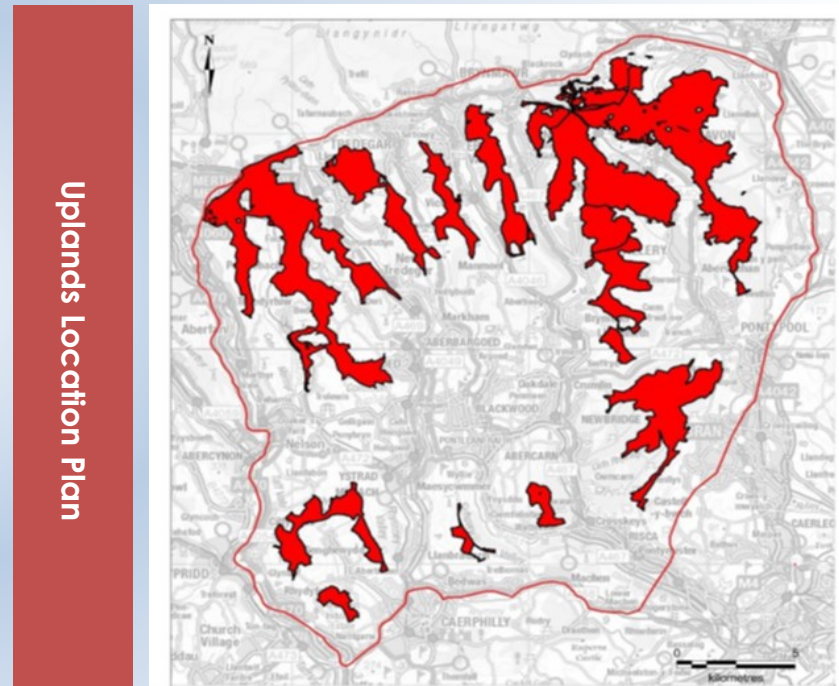
The SEWRU is a collaborative project arrangement, involving Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Councils, Natural Resources Wales, Police, Fire and Rescue Services, Gwent Wildlife Trust and the Brecon Beacons National Park. Torfaen County Borough Council is the project Lead for the collaboration.

This **£399,000** capital and revenue project covers an area of some 200sq km, on land which is over 200m in altitude within Torfaen, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent.

To date the project has identified and completed the following:-

- Several peatland restoration projects;
- Produced common land management plans (including a detailed management plan for Mynydd Llanhilleth);
- Restored many kilometres of commons boundary stock fencing;
- Installed physical barriers to reduce landscape crime on commons; and
- Managed important upland heathland to reduce fire risk and facilitate conservation grazing.

Ongoing work includes currently working with Gwent Police and other partners to update the Natural Resources Management Plan and produce upland-focused landscape crime management plans for each common within the project.



This project also supports the Carbon Reduction Strategy and includes enhancement of our Upland Heath and Bog habitats which are an excellent Carbon Sink. Enhancing these habitats will improve their performance in terms of carbon sequestration, making a positive contribution to the carbon reduction strategy.

Case Study - Silent Valley Wood Facility

The Welsh Government, through Local Partnerships, approached Blaenau Gwent to develop a regional facility for municipal wood waste reprocessing at Silent Valley. Following confirmation from Blaenau Gwent agreeing to be the Lead Authority on the project, the Welsh Government allocated funding to develop the project to an Outline Business Case (OBC).



The OBC introduces a viable opportunity for the public sector to set up and operate its own waste wood recycling facility. The OBC sets out the case for public sector capital investment into a public-owned, wood waste recycling facility in South East Wales, harnessing a configuration of advanced wood recycling machinery installed in a purpose-built processing building at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's (BGCBC) Silent Valley waste site. The five cases of the OBC (Strategic, Economic, Commercial, Financial and Management) explore how the proposed integrated wood recycling facility can realise significant cost savings, economic and environmental benefits for the public sector.

The Outline Business Case is currently being reviewed following the 1st Health Check carried out by Welsh Government. It is proposed that with government support in the form of capital funding, this project will enable Blaenau Gwent and participating Local Authorities to create an effective public sector investment model to create a more efficient and transparent approach to the management of its waste wood in South Wales.



The development of the regional wood recycling facility required support from Technical Services, Planning, Procurement, Legal and Finance. Also integration with Chief Commercial Officer to develop the asset as a commercial opportunity.

Case Study - New Commercial Development

Construction of the

Lime Avenue Business Units

continued throughout the pandemic with required and organised Covid restrictions in place and the project being supervised by our staff.

The 3 new commercial blocks were completed in August providing a little under

2350m² of hybrid office and workspace accommodation.

The project was funded by a combination of Welsh Government and Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) at a

cost of £5.7m

and leases for two of the three BREEAM very good buildings have been agreed with the multinational technology company Thales.

Currently occupying the REGAIN building on the Works site in Ebbw Vale, Thales are expanding their investment in Blaenau Gwent as part of the £12m National Digital Exploitation Centre (NDEC) initiative supported by Welsh Government.

This represents the first stage of the Thales's development on the site, which already has two more phases of construction planned for 2021-2022.



Case Study - Resilient Greater Gwent Project



A Resilient Greater Gwent

The Resilient Greater Gwent Project aims to reverse biodiversity decline and increase ecosystem resilience. There are two project work streams; Resilient Ecological Networks and Sustainable Communities. The Sustainable Communities work stream, being coordinated by Monmouthshire County Council, aims to encourage people to make changes in their behavior so they are more connected with nature, to support their physical and mental well-being.



Some of the activities being undertaken as part of the Sustainable Communities work are outlined below:-

- **Pollinator packs** have been **distributed** across the Gwent authorities. The packs contained insect houses, wildflower seeds and illustrated wildlife guides, and were distributed to schools, community groups and interested households in the community.
- **Wildlife cameras** have been purchased through the project and are currently **sited in school grounds and community spaces**. We hope to see some exciting footage captured by these cameras.
- The Resilient Greater Gwent Sustainable Communities project is **supporting the citizen science Bugs Matter survey**. Insects underpin our natural world and their numbers can help us to better understand what is happening in our environment.



Managing Churchyards for Wildlife - Community groups/volunteers currently managing the grounds of churchyards/burial sites for 'tidiness' and general maintenance were invited to apply for a 'package' of advice and equipment to help them look at their sites in a different way and create opportunities to provide a net benefit for biodiversity in the community.



'Love Your Burial Ground' Week ran from Saturday 5th to Sunday 13th June, and this year, the Council, along with partner organisations, led on several sub-projects under The Resilient Greater Gwent work programme, funded by Welsh Government's Enabling Natural Resources & Wellbeing Grant.

Now in its final year, work will be undertaken to meet outcomes within the Sustainable Communities sub-project. This project focusses on community action and engagement, behaviour change, and skills and capacity building.

Churchyards and burial sites are important historic sites that reveal evidence of the past, including people who have lived and worked in the parish. They can also be important sites for wildlife offering unique habitats for a significant variety of plants, animal and ancient trees.

Case Study - Blaenau Gwent help towards creating an ecologically resilient Gwent

The Gwent State of Nature Report has been produced by the Resilient Greater Gwent Partnership, which provides valuable information that will provide a baseline to assess the effectiveness of conservation work. For many of the 100 species included, this has been the first time that regional trends have been recorded.

The monitoring and collection of wildlife data is incredibly important and will help inform the Resilient Greater Gwent Partnership in going forward; directing further recording and monitoring. It demonstrates the need for awareness raising and education, as well as policy change and future conservation action.

One such example where the information and data has helped to direct action is through the **implementation of Blaenau Gwent Urban Hedgehog project**. Local residents have been creating hedgehog highways, providing nesting sites and recording our prickly friends' activity via hedgehog footprint tunnels.

Tai Calon has also supported the Urban Hedgehog project by also ensuring hedgehog passes have been installed in any new boundary fencing that they have been installing. This was later followed on by Tai Calon offering their tenants Urban Hedgehog packs.

In the Spring 2021 the urban hedgehog project expanded to several Blaenau Gwent schools, and with 8 schools taking part in a National pilot project with Hedgehog Friendly Campus. These schools are now all taking the extra steps to make their school grounds a better and safer place for these amazing animals.

The schools have already been running hedgehog footprint and wildlife camera surveys, litter picks, planting hedgehog friendly plants and doing their bit to raise awareness in their local community.

Both the Gwent State of Nature Report and the Urban Hedgehog project is part of the overarching project: 'Resilient Greater Gwent'. This is funded by the Welsh Government's Enabling of Natural Resources and Well-being Grant.

"This is a really interesting project for Blaenau Gwent, Gwent and partner agencies. The report provides us with vital information that will help inform the actions we need to take to help tackle biodiversity decline and increase ecosystem resilience. I really look forward to seeing how this progresses."- Cllr Joanna Wilkins

"This project is very exciting for the Borough of Blaenau Gwent and its neighbouring authorities and I wish it the best of luck, it shows a great collaboration of many local organisations and also provides the opportunity for citizen science!"- Cllr Lee Parsons, Blaenau Gwent Nature Champion

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Agenda Item 12

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Waste and Recycling Performance 2020-21**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. J. Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**
Report Submitted by: **Matthew Stent, Service Manager Neighbourhood Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
14/09/21	16/09/21	20.10.21			04/10/21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide the Members of the Executive Committee with an update of waste and recycling performance outcomes for 2020-21.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The report summarises the waste and recycling performance data for 2020-21 **[APPENDIX 1]**. In both 2018/19 and 2019/20 we exceeded the WG statutory recycling targets of 58% [achieving 59.26%] and 64% [achieving 65.31%] respectively, this year, we have maintained that success and exceeded the target of 64% once again, attaining 64.29%. This has been achieved through the hard work and dedication of the Waste Team as a whole [officers, wardens and the frontline staff], working in partnership with WRAP and with support from the Communications Team, Performance Team, Senior Management, the Elected Leadership and most importantly, the residents of Blaenau Gwent, in what has been one of the most difficult years in recent history. That being said, through careful prioritisation and engagement with our workforce, we have been able to maintain all Waste & Recycling collections throughout the Pandemic.

2.2 The current Pandemic has thrown up significant challenges throughout, and it is a testament to the Frontline Staff, who have continued to maintain services in such difficult circumstances. It has also meant we have seen a significant change in how many of our residents manage their waste, so a special thanks must go to them also. Through resolve and resilience, we have been able to overcome these challenges together and adapt the way we work to still achieve this success.

2.3 All local authorities are required to report their waste data to Welsh Government. The data reported is for all the waste which the Local Authority collects, known as municipal waste.

2.4 Waste data is collected via various methods (e.g. Contract monitoring, weighbridge tickets) on a monthly basis and is collated and validated internally by the Corporate Performance Team. All waste is reported where possible

until it has reached a compliant final destination through the various contractors and processes required.

2.5 Waste data is reported to Welsh Government quarterly via Waste Data Flow. Waste Data Flow is the web based system for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government.

2.6 Waste Data Flow is designed for local authorities:

- to allow faster and more accurate data collection of municipal waste statistics, more regularly and efficiently;
- to enhance their local data management for reporting and strategic planning purposes; and
- to offer them streamlined access to performance benchmarking with other authorities.

2.7 Waste Data Flow allows the Welsh Government:

- to monitor progress towards national and local targets;
- to produce National Statistics on municipal waste; and
- to provide an evidence base to guide government policy.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Community Services Scrutiny Committee supported Option 1 at its meeting on 4th October 2021.

3.2 Option 1 to accept the information in the report [**Preferred option**].

3.3 Option 2 to consider the information contained within the report and provide challenge and/or further action for consideration to make improvements.

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

Corporate Plan Priorities

The improvement of waste and recycling performance supports the Council Priority '*Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities*' in particular '*to increase rates of recycling to enable us to achieve national targets*'.

Statutory Responsibilities

Local Authorities in Wales have been set statutory recycling targets through the Wales Waste Measure 2010, and failure to meet the targets will result in a financial penalty from Welsh Government.

Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

Waste and recycling services support the Well-being objective '*Blaenau Gwent wants to look after and protect its natural environments*' by using our resources in a fair and sustainable way.

5. **Implications Against Each option**

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

The Local Authority may continue to face financial penalties from the Welsh Government if it fails to achieve the statutory recycling targets. These are currently £200 per tonne below the recycling tonnage required to achieve the target, 64% for 2019-20, rising to 70% in 2024-25.

The Local Authority currently pays for the treatment and disposal of black bag waste. The greatest disposal cost in the budget is for the black bag waste and the income we receive from the sale of recyclate helps to support the service but does not offset the cost. As residents recycle more of their waste, the money spent on waste treatment and disposal will reduce and the income gained from the sale of recyclate may increase, however, this is very much dependant on market forces [It should be noted that we only get income from the kerbside collected recyclate – for all other waste streams we have to pay for the collection, disposal and processing costs]. Any savings achieved against black bag disposal have been utilised to pay for the additional resources required to continue with the side waste enforcement at kerbside, additional Wardens, the black bag sorting at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and the continued implementation of the “Keeping up with the Jones’s” behaviour change campaign. These factors as well as our continued strong performance has created ongoing budget pressure/service demands that we have to resource, resulting in year on year over spends within the service area. Recycling habits have changed significantly throughout the Borough since 2015, yet the budget has not.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

There is a risk that the Local Authority will continue to face financial penalties from the Welsh Government if it fails to achieve the statutory recycling targets.

Failure to ensure that there is robust monitoring of Council services carries with it a number of significant risks:

- Undetected and unaddressed decline in service performance and the quality of provision; and
- Negative impact on the reputation of the Council.

Regular monitoring of waste and recycling performance is a key element in ensuring that the Council knows its services well and is able to support and intervene appropriately.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no Human Resources issues associated with this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

In direct comparison with 2019/20 data, 2020/21 data shows a slight drop in our performance with a decrease of 1.02 percentage points. The total municipal waste figure has slightly increased by 188.94 tonnes, this increase is due to an increase in composting tonnages and a reduction of reuse, recycling tonnage.

6.1.1 **Recycling Targets**

	2019/20	2020/21
Quarter 1	62.24%	62.17%
Quarter 2	64.95%	65.94%
Quarter 3	69.69%	63.06%
Quarter 4	63.66%	65.53%
Annual	65.31%	64.29%

6.1.2 In 2020/21 we saw a shift in tonnages of different waste streams as a result of the Pandemic. Certainly tonnages have increased at kerbside because of the stay at home orders issued during the pandemic and changing buying habits at home. These trends have created significant operational issues which we needed to overcome, cardboard in particular, was a problem and continues to be so. We saw a 36.66% increase in the amount of cardboard being collected at the kerbside; this was something our collection vehicles were not designed for. Yet, we expect this trend to continue, so will factor this into our collection rounds and future vehicle specifications.

6.1.3 The decrease in tonnages at the HWRC are as a result of closing the site during Lockdown 1 and residents have continued to recycle at kerbside.

6.1.4 Enforcement activity around our Side Waste Policy and “Keeping up with the Jones’s” behaviour change campaign not only relaxed, but stopped altogether from March 2020 – August 2020 due to safety and staffing issues as a result of the Pandemic.

6.1.5 **Residual Waste**

There has been an increase in residual waste collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

Kerbside

	2019/20	2020/21
	9799.549	11149.552

In comparison there has been an increase of 1350.003 tonnes (13.78%) of residual waste collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

HWRC (New Vale)

2019/20	2020/21
783.191	521.797

In comparison there has been a reduction of 261.394 tonnes (33.38%) of residual waste from New Vale HWRC in 2020/21.

Composting Recycling

There has been an increase in food and garden waste collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

Food

2019/20	2020/21
3225.45	3726.52

In comparison there has been an increase of 501.07 tonnes (15.53%) of food waste collected in 2020/21.

Garden Waste

2019/20	2020/21
1719.147	1739.161

In comparison there has been an increase of 20.014 tonnes (1.16%) of garden waste collected in 2020/21.

6.1.6

Dry Recycling

There has been an increase in kerbside dry recycling, noticeably a significant increase in the tonnages of absorbent hygiene products (AHP) collected in 2020/21.

Kerbside

2019/20	2020/21
5090.408	6564.174

In comparison there has been an increase of 1473.766 tonnes (28.95%) of dry recycling collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP)

2019/20	2020/21
553.24	655.24

In comparison there has been an increase of 102 tonnes (18.44%) of absorbent hygiene products (AHP) collected at the kerbside in 2020/21.

HWRC (Recycling)

2019/20	2020/21
3869.76	5661.068

In comparison there has been a decrease of 2628.502.31 tonnes (46.43%) of dry recycling from the HWRC.

HWRC (Reuse)

2019/20	2020/21
97.614	29.850

In comparison there has been a decrease of 67.764 tonnes (69.42%) of reuse from the HWRC.

6.1.7 **Welsh Local Authority Comparison**

2019/20 Overall

2020/21 Overall

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1			1		
2			2		
3			3		
4			4		
5			5		
6			6		
7			7		
8			8		
9			9		
10			10		
11	Blaenau Gwent CBC	65.31%	11		
12			12		
13			13		
14			14		
15			15		
16			16		
17			17		
18			18	Blaenau Gwent CBC	64.29%
19			19		
20			20		
21			21		
22			22		

6.1.8 2019/20 Dry Recycling Only

2020/21 Dry Recycling Only

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1			1		
2			2		
3	Blaenau Gwent	49.42%	3		
4			4		
5			5		
6			6		
7			7		
8			8	Blaenau Gwent CBC	46.98%
9			9		
10			10		
11			11		
12			12		
13			13		
14			14		
15			15		
16			16		
17			17		
18			18		
19			19		
20			20		
21			21		
22			22		

6.1.9 2019/20 Composting Only

2020/21 Composting Only

Rank	Local Authority	%	Rank	Local Authority	%
1			1		
2			2		
3			3		
4			4		
5			5		
6			6		
7			7		
8			8		
9			9		
10			10		
11			11		
12			12		
13			13		
14			14		
15			15		
16			16		
17			17		
18			18	Blaenau Gwent CBC	17.20%
19			19		
20	Blaenau Gwent	15.55%	20		
21			21		
22			22		

- 6.1.10 The statutory recycling target for all Welsh local authorities is set at 64% for the next 3 years. **The efforts of the residents of Blaenau Gwent have been instrumental in our improved recycling performance**, therefore, the continued support of residents and businesses is required to continue to reduce the amount of non-recyclable waste sent for disposal and increase the amount recycled in Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.1.11 It's important to recognise that even with all the difficulties this year has thrown at us, we have seen a cultural change in Blaenau Gwent. For years, we languished at the bottom of the League Table when it came to recycling, and yes, our performance had dropped slightly in 2020/21 due to changes in trends, HWRC site closures and relaxed enforcement, as a result of Covid, as mentioned above, but we have still exceeded the target set by Welsh Government.
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
Increased involvement from our communities as residents recycle in line with service requirements to achieve national targets.
- 6.3 **Involvement** (*consultation, engagement, participation*)
Through the public engagement sessions, the public have been consulted and their views have been sought regarding the impact of the side waste enforcement policy.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term** (*forward planning*)
In line with the Councils agreed Waste Management and Recycling Strategy 2018-2025, we will continue to seek to identify actions needed to ensure that not only are fines avoided but crucially that service users and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the aims of the service, the actual services to be provided by the Council, the education and engagement activities it can undertake to promote these, the Council's future plans to meet its aspirations and statutory requirements and how it will work together with residents, partners and neighbours to meet wider goals and agendas.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
Improved waste management at a local and national level can help reduce our Ecological footprint, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impact, therefore preventing problems from getting worse.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
Waste Services continue to work closely with the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) through the Collaborative Change Programme to further develop and improve the service to achieve future targets. WRAP and Welsh Government support the implementation of side waste restrictions and behaviour change campaigns.
- 6.7 **Integration**
Our Waste Collections service is made up of an Integrated Frontline Service, at the outset of the current Pandemic, all non-priority service staff were redeployed into our Priority 1 Service areas, this included Waste & Recycling collections, this has allowed us to maintain all of our collection services throughout the Pandemic.

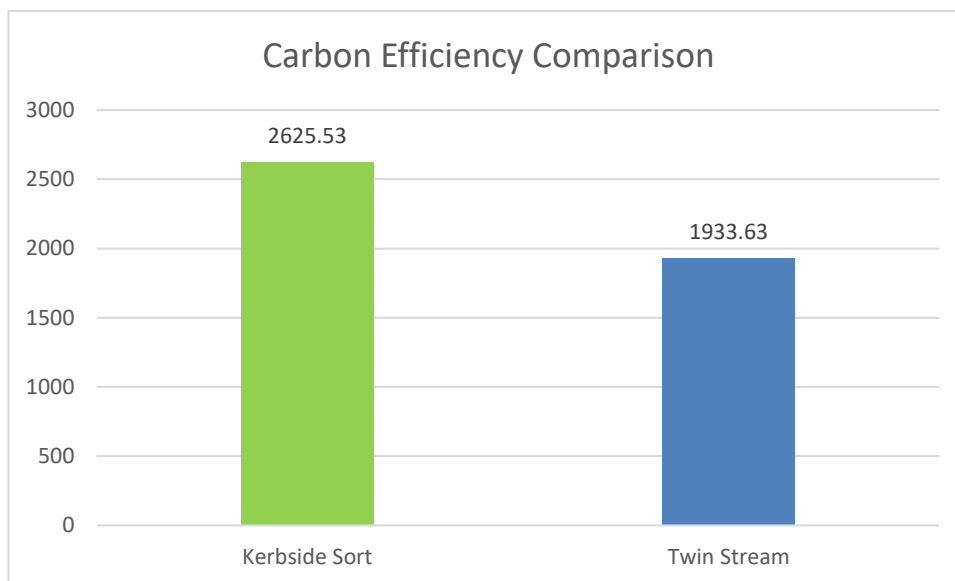
6.8 **Decarbonisation and reducing Carbon Emissions**

6.8.1 A WRAP issued report entitled “The Climate Change impacts of Recycling Services in Wales” documented the increased carbon benefit of a kerbside sort collection service when compared to a Twin Stream (Co-mingled) collection service.

The report produced the following assumptions;

- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Kerbside Sort = 2569 tonnes CO2e Carbon benefit
- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Twin Stream = 1892 tonnes CO2e Carbon benefit

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Collected recycling tonnage	2581.77	2455.868	2436.824	2745.572	10220.034
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Kerbside Sort	663.26	630.91	626.02	705.34	2625.53
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Twin Stream	488.47	464.65	461.05	519.46	1933.63
Difference	174.79	166.26	164.97	185.88	691.90



6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

The report does not include any ‘strategic decisions’ as defined by the Socio-economic Duty. Therefore, a Socio-Economic Duty Assessment was not required.

6.9b **Equality Impact Assessment**

EQIA's to be undertaken in line with statutory requirements.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The performance of the waste and recycling service will be monitored by the service on a monthly basis, including, but not limited to:

- Changes in residual waste tonnage collected;
- Changes in tonnage of recyclables and food waste collected;
- Recycling performance;
- Financial position;
- Number of residents presenting side waste;
- Number of residents issued with Section 46 notice;
- Number of residents issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice; and
- Survey results.

Highlight reports on progress will be provided through the internal CCP Board Meetings.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1 - Waste & recycling Performance Annual Report 2020/21*

Environment & Regeneration

Waste & Recycling

Performance Report

Annual 2020/21

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1. **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & TRENDS**
 - PAM/030 – Percentage of waste, reused, recycled or composted
 - PAM/043 – Kilograms of residual waste generated per person
 - Percentage of waste sent to landfill
 - Local Authority Comparison
 - Carbon Efficiency Comparison

2. **COLLECTED MATERIAL DATA ANALYSIS**
 - Residual Waste
 - Kerbside Dry Recycling
 - Kerbside Composting
 - HWRC Recycling / Reuse
 - Commercial & Industrial Recycling
 - Other Materials

3. **ROUND DATA**
 - Residual Round Data
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4. **DEMAND DATA**
 - Request Breakdown

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & TRENDS

Local Authorities within Wales have been set statutory recycling targets of 64% by 2019/20 and 70% by 2024/25. Failure to meet these targets may result in Blaenau Gwent being issued a fine from Welsh Government at the rate of £200 per tonne for every tonne reported below the target level.

PAM/030 – Percentage of waste, reused, recycled or composted

Please note: The following indicators are not the final version and may change following final validation by Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Dry Reuse	7.096	4.05	10.81	13.70	35.66
Dry Recycling	2838.928	3843.17	3598.77	4486.68	14767.55
Composting	1531.14	1618.55	1122.82	1133.50	5406.01
TMW	7041.17	8289.58	7504.56	8597.50	31432.81
Dry Reuse %	0.10%	0.05%	0.14%	0.16%	0.11%
Dry Recycling %	40.32%	46.36%	47.95%	52.19%	46.98%
Composting %	21.75%	19.53%	14.96%	13.18%	17.20%
Recycling Rate	62.17%	65.94%	63.06%	65.53%	64.29%
Wales Average	65.59%	68.39%	64.77%	65.87%	66.27%

Improvements were made during the year with the recycling rate increasing by 3.36 percentage points between Q1 and Q4, this was mainly due to an increase in dry recycling, a 1647.75 tonne difference between Q1 and Q4 (36.73% increase).

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Dry Reuse	107.14	35.66	-71.48
Dry Recycling	15439.53	14767.55	-671.98
Composting	4857.20	5406.01	548.81
TMW	31243.87	31432.81	188.94
Dry Reuse %	0.34%	0.11%	-0.23
Dry Recycling %	49.42%	46.98%	-2.44
Composting %	15.55%	17.20%	1.65
Recycling Rate	65.31%	64.29%	-1.02

The annual comparison shows a decrease of 1.02 percentage points. The total municipal waste (TMW) figure has increased by 188.94 tonnes.

PAM/043 – Kilograms of residual waste generated per person

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Total Residual Waste	2664.006	2823.81	2772.16	2963.62	11223.59
BGCBC Population*	69615	69615	69615	69615	69615
Kg per Person	38.27	40.56	39.82	42.57	161.22

*Sourced from Stats Wales 2018 based population projections

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Total Residual Waste	10839.83	11223.59	383.76
BGCBC Population*	69374	69615	241
Kg per Person	156.25	161.22	4.97

Residual Waste increased by 383.76 tonnes (3.42%) which has resulted in an increase of 4.97 kg's per person.

Percentage of waste sent to landfill

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Total Landfilled	27.57	118.00	24.88	32.18	202.64
TMW	7041.17	8289.58	7504.56	8597.50	31432.81
Landfill Rate	0.4%	1.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%

Annual Comparison

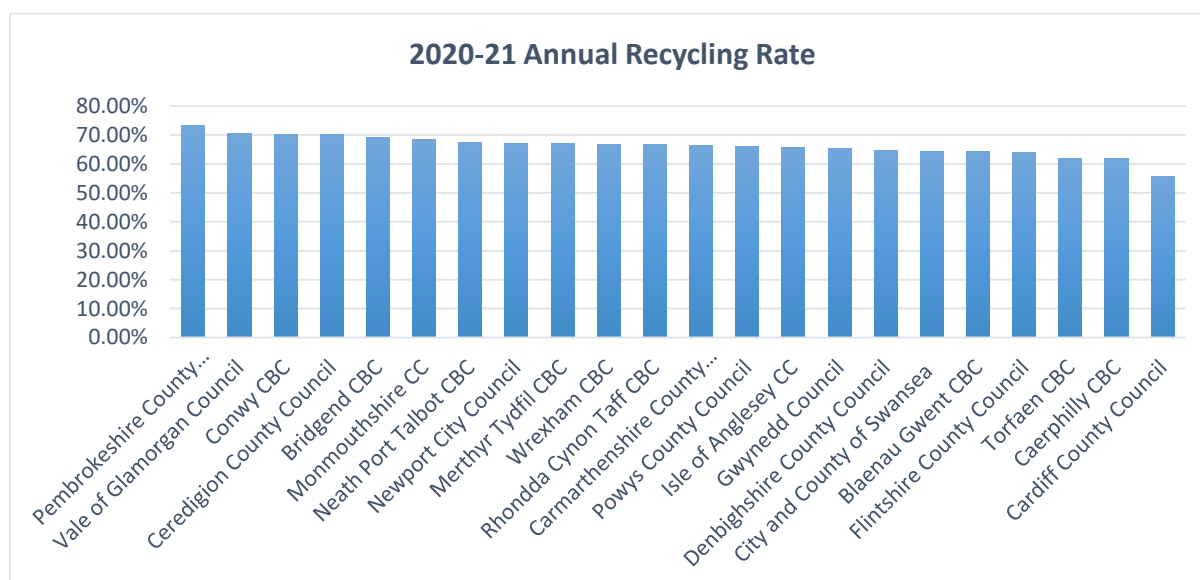
	19/20	20/21	Difference
Total Landfilled	102.44	202.64	100.2
TMW	31243.87	31432.81	188.94
Landfill Rate	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%

The amount of waste landfilled has increased by 100.20 (49.45%) tonnes since 2019/20, the reason for this is down to the material contractors as Blaenau Gwent doesn't send any waste direct to landfill.

Local Authority Comparison

Annual – 2020/21

Local Authority	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2020/21
1 Pembrokeshire County Council	73.29%	72.86%	73.09%	73.72%	73.22%
2 Vale of Glamorgan Council	70.01%	74.14%	67.62%	69.75%	70.59%
3 Conwy CBC	69.59%	73.93%	68.17%	68.36%	70.21%
4 Ceredigion County Council	67.36%	71.03%	69.05%	72.24%	70.21%
5 Bridgend CBC	67.59%	68.40%	66.63%	73.26%	69.15%
6 Monmouthshire CC	71.12%	67.75%	64.97%	70.25%	68.40%
7 Neath Port Talbot CBC	65.84%	68.26%	67.87%	68.10%	67.56%
8 Newport City Council	66.32%	68.92%	66.39%	67.12%	67.22%
9 Merthyr Tydfil CBC	65.92%	66.83%	67.29%	67.60%	66.95%
10 Wrexham CBC	68.89%	71.02%	60.59%	65.64%	66.86%
11 Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	66.34%	70.37%	70.01%	60.68%	66.74%
12 Carmarthenshire County Council	66.24%	66.71%	65.02%	66.99%	66.25%
13 Powys County Council	66.17%	64.97%	62.67%	70.73%	66.06%
14 Isle of Anglesey CC	67.07%	69.94%	63.44%	61.44%	65.71%
15 Gwynedd Council	67.25%	68.92%	62.84%	62.22%	65.47%
16 Denbighshire County Council	61.08%	69.89%	64.08%	62.89%	64.83%
17 City and County of Swansea	64.70%	66.57%	63.60%	62.90%	64.49%
18 Blaenau Gwent CBC	62.17%	65.94%	63.06%	65.53%	64.29%
19 Flintshire County Council	66.28%	68.69%	60.80%	59.37%	63.98%
20 Torfaen CBC	64.25%	65.49%	59.86%	58.03%	62.00%
21 Caerphilly CBC	61.86%	64.17%	59.53%	61.90%	61.92%
22 Cardiff County Council	43.67%	59.83%	58.36%	60.51%	55.79%



Local Authority Comparison

Annual Comparison – Dry Recycling Only

	Local Authority	Recycling Rate
1	Ceredigion County Council	51.77%
2	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	51.57%
3	Neath Port Talbot CBC	50.41%
4	Merthyr Tydfil CBC	49.67%
5	Caerphilly CBC	49.49%
6	Bridgend CBC	48.43%
7	Wrexham CBC	47.10%
8	Blaenau Gwent CBC	46.98%
9	Carmarthenshire County Council	45.23%
10	Newport City Council	45.21%
11	Pembrokeshire County Council	44.52%
12	Gwynedd Council	44.07%
13	Flintshire County Council	42.81%
14	Conwy CBC	42.42%
15	Torfaen CBC	42.28%
16	Vale of Glamorgan Council	41.97%
17	Monmouthshire CC	41.65%
18	Powys County Council	41.10%
19	Denbighshire County Council	40.78%
20	City and County of Swansea	40.57%
21	Isle of Anglesey CC	36.88%
22	Cardiff County Council	36.72%

Blaenau Gwent is ranked 8th out of the 22 local authorities when comparing dry recycling only across Wales for 20/21

Annual Comparison – Composting Only

	Local Authority	Recycling Rate
1	Isle of Anglesey CC	28.81%
2	Vale of Glamorgan Council	27.98%
3	Pembrokeshire County Council	27.96%
4	Conwy CBC	26.92%
5	Monmouthshire CC	25.36%
6	City and County of Swansea	23.92%
7	Denbighshire County Council	23.39%
8	Powys County Council	22.78%
9	Newport City Council	21.60%
10	Gwynedd Council	20.91%
11	Carmarthenshire County Council	20.61%
12	Flintshire County Council	20.47%
13	Bridgend CBC	19.94%
14	Wrexham CBC	19.32%
15	Torfaen CBC	19.16%
16	Cardiff County Council	18.77%
17	Ceredigion County Council	17.88%
18	Blaenau Gwent CBC	17.20%
19	Neath Port Talbot CBC	17.11%
20	Merthyr Tydfil CBC	16.39%
21	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	14.76%
22	Caerphilly CBC	12.28%

Blaenau Gwent is ranked 18th out of the 22 local authorities when comparing composting only across Wales for 20/21

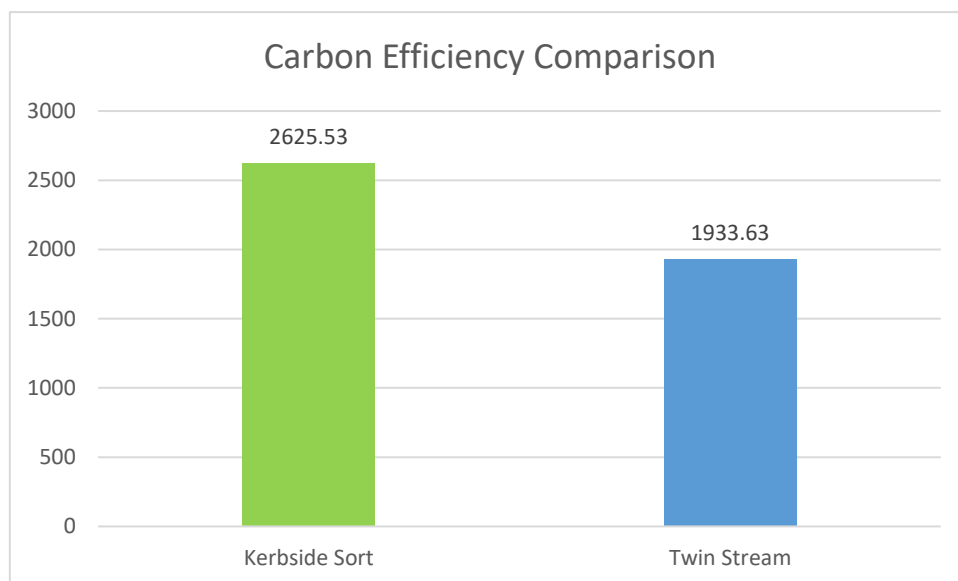
Carbon Efficiency Comparison

A WRAP issued report entitled “The Climate Change impacts of Recycling Services in Wales” documented the increased carbon benefit of a kerbside sort collection service when compared to a Twin Stream (Co-mingled) collection service.

The report produced the following assumptions;

- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Kerbside Sort = 2569 tonnes CO2e Carbon benefit
- 10,000 tonnes of material collected via Twin Stream = 1892 tonnes CO2e Carbon benefit

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	19/20
Collected recycling tonnage	2581.77	2455.868	2436.824	2745.572	10220.034
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Kerbside Sort	663.26	630.91	626.02	705.34	2625.53
CO2e Carbon Benefit – Twin Stream	488.47	464.65	461.05	519.46	1933.63
Difference	174.79	166.26	164.97	185.88	691.90



Collected Material Data Analysis

In October 2015, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council made a service change which included moving to a weekly kerbside sort recycling collection and a three-weekly residual collection.

A dedicated weekly Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) was also introduced in January 2017, which required residents to subscribe to the service.

Residual side waste enforcement and a strict black bag sorting policy at the HWRC were introduced during June 2018 to encourage residents to recycle more of their waste.

In September 2019 the “Keeping up with the Jones’s” campaign was rolled out across the borough to encourage residents to recycle more of their waste.

Residual Waste

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Kerbside	2921.741	2768.797	2684.745	2774.269	11149.552
HWRC	1.455	151.184	155.332	213.826	521.797
Cleansing	116.556	207.145	228.568	239.784	792.053
Commercial	182.651	167.998	162.903	169.626	683.178
Total	3222.403	3295.124	3231.548	3397.505	13146.580

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Kerbside	9799.549	11149.552	1350.003
HWRC	783.191	521.797	-261.394
Cleansing	699.738	792.053	92.315
Commercial	594.270	683.178	88.908
Total	11876.748	13146.580	1269.832

Overall Residual waste increased by 1269.832 tonnes (10.69%) individual service areas listed below

- Kerbside Residual Waste increased by 1350.003 tonnes (13.78%)
- HWRC Residual Waste decreased by 261.394 tonnes (33.38%)
- Cleansing Residual Waste increased by 92.315 tonnes (13.19%)
- Commercial Residual Waste increased by 88.908 tonnes (14.96%)

Kerbside Recycling

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Paper	173.680	181.160	179.994	173.612	708.446
Cardboard	419.720	450.280	467.180	595.160	1932.340
Mixed Glass	657.060	514.680	479.220	588.120	2239.080
Mixed Plastics	215.840	325.200	224.940	273.840	1039.820
Steel Cans	106.000	52.540	82.500	85.040	326.080
Aluminium Cans	76.000	58.888	62.760	64.620	262.268
Aerosols	7.980	9.500	10.080	10.480	38.040
SDA's	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Textiles	5.830	4.960	3.400	3.910	18.100
Total	1662.11	1597.208	1510.074	1794.782	6564.174

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Paper	841.630	708.446	-133.184
Cardboard	1413.960	1932.340	518.38
Mixed Glass	1538.460	2239.080	700.62
Mixed Plastics	788.720	1039.820	251.1
Steel Cans	242.630	326.080	83.45
Aluminium Cans	201.588	262.268	60.68
Aerosols	23.060	38.040	14.98
SDA's	30.700	0.000	-30.7
Textiles	9.660	18.100	8.44
Total	5090.408	6564.174	1473.766

Overall Kerbside recycling increased by 1473.766 tonnes (28.95%) individual streams listed below.

- Kerbside Paper recycling decreased by 133.184 tonnes (15.82%)
- Kerbside Cardboard recycling increased by 518.38 tonnes (36.66%)
- Kerbside Mixed Glass recycling increased by 700.62 tonnes (45.54%)
- Kerbside Mixed Plastics recycling increased by 251.10 tonnes (31.84%)
- Kerbside Steel Cans recycling increased by 83.45 tonnes (34.39%)
- Kerbside Aluminium Cans recycling increased by 60.68 tonnes (30.10%)
- Kerbside Aerosol recycling increased by 14.98 tonnes (64.96%)
- Kerbside Small Domestic Appliances (SDA's) decreased by 30.7 tonnes (100%)
- Kerbside Textiles increased by 8.44 tonnes (87.37%)

Kerbside Composting

Food Waste

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Food - Kerbside	919.660	858.660	926.750	950.790	3655.860
Food – Trade	6.420	18.040	28.740	17.460	70.660
Total	926.08	876.7	955.49	968.25	3726.52

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Food - Kerbside	3099.610	3655.860	556.25
Food – Trade	125.840	70.660	-55.18
Total	3225.45	3726.52	501.07

Overall Food waste increased by 501.07 tonnes (15.53%) individual service areas listed below

- Kerbside Food Waste increased by 556.25 tonnes (17.95%)
- **Commercial Food Waste decreased by 55.18 tonnes (43.85%)**

Garden Waste

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Garden – Kerbside	570.076	661.599	130.942	118.440	1481.057
Garden – HWRC	12.717	32.604	10.091	21.867	77.279
Garden – Commercial	23.181	47.331	34.927	33.110	138.549
Garden - Other	13.907	14.386	6.661	7.322	42.276
Total	619.881	755.92	182.621	180.739	1739.161

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Garden – Kerbside	1280.891	1481.057	200.166
Garden – HWRC	264.184	77.279	-186.905
Garden – Commercial	119.876	138.549	18.673
Garden - Other	54.196	42.276	-11.92
Total	1719.147	1739.161	20.014

Overall Garden waste increased by 20.014 tonnes (1.16%) individual service areas listed below

- Kerbside Garden Waste increased by 200.166 tonnes (15.63%)
- **HWRC Garden Waste decreased by 186.905 tonnes (70.75%)**
- Commercial Garden Waste increased by 18.673 tonnes (15.58%)
- **“Other” Garden Waste decreased by 11.92 tonnes (21.99%)**

HWRC Recycling / Reuse

HWRC Recycling

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Sheet Glass	4.540	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.540
Cardboard	0.000	13.560	13.000	26.760	53.320
Hard Plastics	18.380	29.220	17.780	22.860	88.240
Scrap Wood	81.360	266.300	290.760	300.280	938.700
Inert	83.160	264.750	164.710	803.710	1316.330
Plasterboard	0.000	0.000	12.940	29.660	42.600
Scrap Metal	10.500	48.340	21.770	48.380	128.990
Paint	0.000	10.850	8.750	9.100	28.700
UPVC	0.000	2.000	0.000	1.000	3.000
WEEE (Cold)	14.325	34.995	26.163	26.250	101.733
WEEE (SDA)	17.680	32.420	27.000	32.240	109.340
WEEE (LDA)	0.000	5.400	1.980	6.640	14.020
WEEE (CRT)	1.200	10.166	6.843	8.080	26.289
WEEE (Fluorescent Tubes)	0.369	0.000	0.000	0.220	0.589
WEEE (Batteries - Household)	0.120	2.140	0.246	0.169	2.675
WEEE (Batteries - Automotive)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Mattresses	0.000	13.640	18.300	37.260	69.200
Carpets	0.000	56.360	41.140	0.000	97.500
Cooking Oil	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.200
Tyres	1.580	2.500	0.000	2.520	6.600
Total	233.214	792.641	651.382	1355.329	3032.566

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Sheet Glass	18.340	4.540	-13.8
Cardboard	164.300	53.320	-110.98
Hard Plastics	202.900	88.240	-114.66
Scrap Wood	1314.104	938.700	-375.404
Inert	2913.870	1316.330	-1597.54
Plasterboard	112.860	42.600	-70.26
Scrap Metal	206.560	128.990	-77.57
Paint	13.650	28.700	15.05
UPVC	8.000	3.000	-5
WEEE (Cold)	108.590	101.733	-6.857
WEEE (SDA)	137.480	109.340	-28.14
WEEE (LDA)	39.300	14.020	-25.28
WEEE (CRT)	47.430	26.289	-21.141
WEEE (Fluorescent Tubes)	0.366	0.589	0.223
WEEE (Batteries - Household)	2.598	2.675	0.077
WEEE (Batteries - Automotive)	1.820	0.000	-1.82
Mattresses	88.680	69.200	-19.48
Carpets	268.180	97.500	-170.68
Cooking Oil	1.600	0.200	-1.4
Tyres	10.440	6.600	-3.84
Total	5661.068	3032.566	-2628.502

Overall HWRC Recycling has decreased by 2628.502 tonnes (46.43%) individual waste streams listed below

- Sheet Glass recycling decreased by 13.8 tonnes (75.25%)
- Cardboard recycling decreased by 110.98 tonnes (67.55%)
- Hard Plastics recycling decreased by 114.66 tonnes (56.51%)
- Scrap Wood recycling decreased by 375.404 tonnes (28.57%)
- Inert recycling decreased by 1597.54 tonnes (54.83%)
- Plasterboard recycling decreased by 70.26 tonnes (62.25%)
- Scrap metal recycling decreased by 77.57 tonnes (37.55%)
- Paint recycling increased by 15.05 tonnes (110.26%)
- UPVC recycling decreased by 5 tonnes (62.50%)
- WEEE (Cold) recycling decreased by 6.857 tonnes (6.31%)
- WEEE (SDA) recycling decreased by 28.14 tonnes (20.47%)
- WEEE (LDA) recycling decreased by 25.28 tonnes (64.33%)
- WEEE (Fluorescent tubes) recycling increased by 0.223 tonnes (60.93%)
- WEEE (Batteries Household) recycling increased by 0.077 tonnes (2.96%)
- WEEE (Batteries Automotive) recycling decreased by 1.82 tonnes (100%)
- Mattresses recycling decreased by 19.48 tonnes (21.97%)
- Carpets recycling decreased by 170.68 tonnes (63.64%)
- Cooking Oil decreased by 1.4 tonnes (87.50%)
- Tyres recycling decreased by 3.84 tonnes (36.78%)

HWRC Reuse

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Textiles	0.000	0.000	5.420	6.360	11.780
Media	1.266	3.810	2.595	3.670	11.341
Gas Bottles	0.000	0.240	2.807	3.682	6.729
Total	1.266	4.050	10.822	13.712	29.850

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Textiles	64.570	11.780	-52.79
Media	17.108	11.341	-5.767
Gas Bottles	15.936	6.729	-9.207
Total	97.614	29.850	-67.764

Overall HWRC reuse have decreased by 67.764 tonnes (69.42%) individual waste streams listed below

- Textiles reuse decreased by 52.79 tonnes (81.76%)
- Media reuse decreased by 5.767 tonnes (33.71%)
- Gas Bottles reuse decreased by 9.207 tonnes (57.77%)

Commercial & Industrial Recycling

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Highways Inert	100.000	300.000	320.000	160.000	880.000
Trade Recycling	47.360	73.760	82.720	65.540	269.380
Street Lighting Bulbs	0	0	0	22.55	22.55
Total	147.36	373.76	402.72	248.09	1171.93

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Highways Inert	1300.00	880.000	-420
Trade Recycling	399.58	269.380	-130.2
Street Lighting Bulbs	0	22.55	22.55
Total	1699.58	1171.93	-527.65

Overall Commercial & Recycling tonnages decreased by 527.65 tonnes (31.05%) individual service areas listed below

- Highways Inert decreased by 420 tonnes (32.31%)
- Trade Recycling decreased by 130.20 tonnes (32.58%)
- Street Lighting Bulbs increased by 22.55 tonnes

Other Materials

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
AHP	171.960	155.760	152.260	175.260	655.24
Road Sweepings	56.900	438.420	407.640	463.830	1366.79
Total	228.86	594.18	559.9	639.09	2022.03

Annual Comparison

	19/20	20/21	Difference
AHP	553.24	655.24	102
Road Sweepings	1341.5	1366.79	25.29
Total	1894.74	2022.03	127.29

Overall "Other Materials" tonnages have increased by 127.29 tonnes (6.72%) individual material breakdown listed below

- Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) tonnages have increased by 102 tonnes (18.44%)
- Road Sweeping tonnages have increased by 25.29 tonnes (1.89%)

Residual / Recycling Round Data

Residual Round Data

Round 1 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	162.86	154.88	203.20	219.80	740.74
Tuesday	163.52	192.54	175.26	243.98	775.30
Wednesday	174.72	173.36	220.70	227.338	796.118
Thursday	142.98	154	186.70	173.96	657.64
Total	644.08	674.78	785.86	865.078	2969.798

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	839.04	740.74	-98.3
Tuesday	826.78	775.30	-51.48
Wednesday	765.58	796.118	30.538
Thursday	685.62	657.64	-27.98
Total	3117.02	2969.798	-147.222

Overall the annual comparison shows Residual Round 1 has decreased by 147.222 tonnes (4.72%)

Round 2 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	147.5	166.22	145.16	169.66	628.54
Tuesday	171.84	164.22	161.02	153.06	650.14
Wednesday	181.60	167.18	135.48	197.51	681.77
Thursday	153.68	156.98	152.42	166.48	629.56
Total	654.62	654.6	594.08	686.71	2590.01

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	688.80	628.54	-60.26
Tuesday	704.64	650.14	-54.5
Wednesday	676.78	681.77	4.99
Thursday	649.62	629.56	-20.06
Total	2719.84	2590.01	-129.83

Overall the annual comparison shows Residual Round 2 has decreased by 129.83 tonnes (4.77%)

Round 3 (Included Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	147.76	131.40	148.576	166.27	594.006
Tuesday	190.44	181.12	161.20	177.36	710.12
Wednesday	143.54	168.70	146.74	168.60	627.58
Thursday	137.52	122.06	131.49	146.70	537.77
Total	619.26	603.28	588.006	658.93	2469.476

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	703.54	594.006	-109.534
Tuesday	797.96	710.12	-87.84
Wednesday	669.32	627.58	-41.74
Thursday	538.80	537.77	-1.03
Total	2709.62	2469.476	-240.144

Overall the annual comparison shows Residual Round 3 has decreased by 240.144 tonnes (8.86%)

Round 4 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	46.46	43.24	62.86	72.14	224.70
Tuesday	53.67	48.10	79.64	71.04	252.45
Wednesday	84.84	75.84	106.84	122.73	390.25
Thursday	79.58	75.80	134.98	110.328	400.688
Total	264.55	242.98	384.32	376.238	1268.088

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	253.67	224.70	-28.97
Tuesday	262.80	252.45	-10.35
Wednesday	408.26	390.25	-18.01
Thursday	393.50	400.688	7.188
Total	1318.23	1268.088	-50.142

Overall the annual comparison shows Residual Round 4 has decreased by 50.142 tonnes (3.80%)

Recycling Round Data

Recycling Round 1 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	28.78	29.28	33.04	47.50	138.60
Tuesday	46.70	42.04	46.44	54.68	189.86
Wednesday	29.08	34.24	40.82	45.72	149.86
Thursday	27.58	23.46	34.40	38.16	123.60
Friday	30.94	22.58	25.28	29.82	111.94
Total	163.08	151.6	179.98	215.88	713.86

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	135.88	138.60	2.72
Tuesday	183.64	189.86	6.22
Wednesday	139.94	149.86	9.92
Thursday	135.30	123.60	-11.7
Friday	118.36	111.94	-6.42
Total	713.12	713.86	0.74

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 1 has increased by 0.74 tonnes (0.10%)

Recycling Round 2 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	39.98	34.52	49.08	54.38	177.96
Tuesday	35.20	30.70	44.46	42.30	155.70
Wednesday	31.46	37.76	55.07	53.38	177.67
Thursday	34.16	31.40	42.88	37.92	146.36
Friday	34.84	30.66	36.44	46.92	148.86
Total	175.64	165.04	227.93	234.9	806.55

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	161.88	177.96	16.08
Tuesday	163.10	155.70	-7.4
Wednesday	168.06	177.67	9.61
Thursday	140.70	146.36	5.66
Friday	149.94	148.86	-1.08
Total	783.68	806.55	22.87

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 2 has increased by 22.87 tonnes (2.92%)

Recycling Round 3 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	30.30	26.86	49.72	49.87	156.75
Tuesday	43.86	34.28	40.52	47.62	166.28
Wednesday	39.72	27.02	35.82	40.92	143.48
Thursday	34.62	32.20	51.66	54.46	173.04
Friday	25.24	15.68	21.66	28.00	90.58
Total	173.74	136.04	199.38	220.87	730.13

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	144.04	156.75	12.71
Tuesday	177.34	166.28	-11.06
Wednesday	136.78	143.48	6.7
Thursday	156.92	173.04	16.12
Friday	120.52	90.58	-29.94
Total	735.60	730.13	-5.47

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 3 has decreased by 5.47 tonnes (0.74%)

Recycling Round 4 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	35.16	30.76	44.06	46.00	155.98
Tuesday	40.98	31.30	44.40	48.34	165.02
Wednesday	40.50	31.92	42.56	43.42	158.40
Thursday	33.2	30.06	46.42	38.74	148.42
Friday	28.30	24.58	28.60	31.62	113.10
Total	178.14	148.62	206.04	208.12	740.92

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	151.54	155.98	4.44
Tuesday	169.62	165.02	-4.6
Wednesday	120.30	158.40	38.1
Thursday	150.84	148.42	-2.42
Friday	131.30	113.10	-18.2
Total	723.60	740.92	17.32

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 4 has increased by 17.32 tonnes (2.39%)

Recycling Round 5 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	32.06	40.82	52.16	53.38	178.42
Tuesday	32.72	34.70	54.94	59.54	181.90
Wednesday	40.51	40.28	53.64	59.30	193.73
Thursday	28.46	40.68	47.06	43.78	159.98
Friday	30.66	21.78	32.86	40.42	125.72
Total	164.41	178.26	240.66	256.42	839.75

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	178.512	178.42	-0.092
Tuesday	193.60	181.90	-11.7
Wednesday	167.16	193.73	26.57
Thursday	152.50	159.98	7.48
Friday	143.12	125.72	-17.4
Total	834.892	839.75	4.858

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 5 has increased by 4.858 tonnes (0.58%)

Recycling Round 6 (Includes Support Vehicle) * Missing July Data

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	41.14	9.56	37.54	54.66	142.9
Tuesday	44.22	15.24	41.42	49.36	150.24
Wednesday	34.28	18.86	25.42	37.00	115.56
Thursday	34.04	16.20	34.32	39.44	124
Friday	29.82	26.02	28.82	42.54	127.2
Total	183.5	85.88	167.52	223	659.9

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	164.00	142.9	-21.1
Tuesday	171.86	150.24	-21.62
Wednesday	128.74	115.56	-13.18
Thursday	142.94	124	-18.94
Friday	148.14	127.2	-20.94
Total	755.68	659.9	-95.78

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 6 has decreased by 95.78 tonnes (12.67%)

Recycling Round 7 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	35.38	41.88	47.82	42.04	167.12
Tuesday	32.68	35.84	39.60	46.50	154.62
Wednesday	36.64	45.40	49.32	48.868	180.228
Thursday	37.72	35.82	49.26	48.642	171.442
Friday	24.42	17.94	31.14	33.88	107.38
Total	166.84	176.88	217.14	219.93	780.79

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	171.80	167.12	-4.68
Tuesday	163.76	154.62	-9.14
Wednesday	128.42	180.228	51.808
Thursday	153.90	171.442	17.542
Friday	123.39	107.38	-16.01
Total	741.27	780.79	39.52

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 7 has increased by 39.52 tonnes (5.33%)

Recycling Round 8 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	36.24	36.24	40.86	44.88	158.22
Tuesday	37.90	35.54	45.10	47.00	165.54
Wednesday	39.68	36.62	39.26	46.52	162.08
Thursday	27.16	31.10	50.16	44.34	152.76
Friday	28.38	29.52	27.86	36.74	122.50
Total	169.36	169.02	203.24	219.48	761.1

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	134.86	158.22	23.36
Tuesday	151.92	165.54	13.62
Wednesday	133.68	162.08	28.4
Thursday	140.90	152.76	11.86
Friday	128.84	122.50	-6.34
Total	690.20	761.1	70.9

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 8 has increased by 70.90 tonnes (10.27%)

Recycling Round 9 (Includes Support Vehicle)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	36.58	32.44	21.20	41.90	132.12
Tuesday	35.02	42.90	31.20	47.72	156.84
Wednesday	41.06	43.30	30.46	51.70	166.52
Thursday	25.34	29.66	17.64	37.622	110.262
Friday	28.36	27.22	30.68	40.26	126.52
Total	166.36	175.52	131.18	219.202	692.262

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	148.92	132.12	-16.8
Tuesday	155.48	156.84	1.36
Wednesday	164.98	166.52	1.54
Thursday	129.52	110.262	-19.258
Friday	137.02	126.52	-10.5
Total	735.92	692.262	-43.658

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 9 has decreased by 43.658 tonnes (5.93%)

Recycling Round 10 (Includes rounds 10 and 10a and support vehicles)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	26.5	27.22	31.26	49.95	134.93
Tuesday	40.12	29.98	43.06	56.42	169.58
Wednesday	30.96	29.84	38.10	56.40	155.30
Thursday	35.38	26.04	38.46	47.96	147.84
Friday	26.32	18.68	28.64	43.53	117.17
Total	159.28	131.76	179.52	254.26	724.82

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	92.94	134.93	41.99
Tuesday	114.22	169.58	55.36
Wednesday	102.20	155.30	53.1
Thursday	105.86	147.84	41.98
Friday	86.48	117.17	30.69
Total	501.70	724.82	223.12

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round 10 has increased by 223.12 tonnes (44.47%)

Recycling Round Rear (Includes support vehicles)

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	9.78	2.72	17.94	23.10	53.54
Tuesday	6.3	4.18	12.98	19.30	42.76
Wednesday	6.4	2.66	12.74	16.98	38.78
Thursday	6.22	1.64	14.92	16.98	39.76
Friday	7.4	1.88	10.08	15.86	35.22
Total	36.1	13.08	68.66	92.22	210.06

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	66.60	53.54	-13.06
Tuesday	68.74	42.76	-25.98
Wednesday	56.94	38.78	-18.16
Thursday	64.96	39.76	-25.2
Friday	51.38	35.22	-16.16
Total	308.62	210.06	-98.56

Overall the annual comparison shows Recycling Round Rear has decreased by 98.56 tonnes (31.94%)

Additional Recycling Rounds

Day	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Monday	164.32	138.24	93.88	23.04	419.48
Tuesday	139.99	155.88	102.48	29.50	427.85
Wednesday	120.24	139.66	97.60	18.64	376.14
Thursday	135.54	119.04	103.26	11.92	369.76
Friday	91.07	100.18	87.94	11.06	290.25
Total	651.16	653	485.16	94.16	1883.48

Annual Comparison

Day	19/20	20/21	Difference
Monday	173.16	419.48	246.32
Tuesday	193.85	427.85	234
Wednesday	186.88	376.14	189.26
Thursday	182.96	369.76	186.8
Friday	122.62	290.25	167.63
Total	859.47	1883.48	1024.01

Overall the annual comparison shows Additional Recycling Rounds has increased by 1024.01 tonnes (119.14%)

Demand Monitoring Data

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
No. of Requests	12014	19565	15152	20276	67007
Total	12014	19565	15152	20276	67007

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	20/21
Van Permit	3	1	0	6	10
Visit New Vale Recycling Centre	3986	11044	8162	10281	33473
Recycling Receptacles	2064	2038	1720	2822	8644
Garden Waste	1206	702	93	508	2509
Request Green Sacks	325	171	17	281	794
AHP	281	370	280	338	1269
Request AHP Sacks	950	1034	1044	1215	4243
Cancel AHP Collection	30	28	25	44	127
Missed Collection	1065	906	661	830	3462
Assisted Collection	49	68	52	82	251
Cancel Assisted	1	2	3	2	8
Request Wheelie Bin	401	496	468	575	1940
Warden Enquiry	77	158	110	119	464
General Enquiry	459	436	316	571	1782
Waste Presented Early	27	57	32	44	160
Commercial Waste	54	95	70	71	290
Christmas tree	0	0	365	354	719
Winter Green Waste	0	0	179	238	417
Bulky Waste	1036	1959	1555	1895	6445
Total	12014	19565	15152	20276	67007

	19/20	20/21	Difference
Van Permit	1539	10	-1529
Visit New Vale Recycling Centre	0	33473	33473
Recycling Receptacles	8497	8644	147
Garden Waste	2603	2509	-94
Request Green Sacks	460	794	334
AHP	1565	1269	-296
Request AHP Sacks	3904	4243	339
Cancel AHP Collection	103	127	24
Missed Collection	2900	3462	562
Assisted Collection	250	251	1
Cancel Assisted	5	8	3
Request Wheelie Bin	1435	1940	505
Warden Enquiry	900	464	-436
General Enquiry	1494	1782	288
Waste Presented Early	195	160	-35
Commercial Waste	471	290	-181
Christmas tree	507	719	212
Winter Green Waste	276	417	141
Bulky Waste	1764	6445	4681
Total	28868	67007	38139

Overall the annual comparison shows number of service requests has increased by 38,139 (132.12%)

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Agenda Item 13

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**

Report Subject: **The Annual Report of The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 2020/2021**

Portfolio Holder: **The Leader/ Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Andrea Jones Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
			02/11/2021			10/11/2021		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report is to inform Members and Officers of the Council's performance with regard to complaints to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) prepares an annual report which provides the number of service and code of conduct complaints for each Council in Wales, and compares the Council's performance with that of the average council in Wales.
- 2.2 In 2019, the National Assembly for Wales (now Senedd Cymru Welsh Parliament) passed the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019. The Ombudsman in Wales is now the first office in the UK to have full and operational powers to drive systemic improvement of public services through investigations on our 'own initiative' and the Complaints Standards role.
- 2.3 Since April 2019, Local Authorities have submitted data regarding complaints to the Complaints Standards Authority (CSA) and in the coming year they will publish data to the PSOW website.
- 2.4 The overall number of complaints received by the Ombudsman relating to local authorities across Wales has decreased by 12.5% during 2020/21. This reflects the reduction in complaints being reported by Local Authorities during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.5 The Ombudsman referred a higher proportion of Code of Conduct complaints to a Standards Committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales: 3.4% compared to 2% in the previous year. This higher referral rate was also accompanied by a sharp increase in the number of Code of Conduct complaints received.

2.6 The number of complaints to the Ombudsman for Blaenau Gwent during 2020/2021 was 15 with only 1 complaint requiring intervention. This is a reduction from 17 complaints received in 2019/2020.

2.7 The number of Code of Conduct Complaints made to the Ombudsman in relation to this Council is 3. This is an increase from 2 in 2019/2020.

2.8 The number of Code of Conduct Complaints made to the Ombudsman in relation to Town/Community Council is 5. This is a reduction from 6 in 2019/2020.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1**

Members to accept the report as provided.

3.2 **Option 2**

To seek further clarification on any areas within the report and/or to highlight any areas of interest or concern that need to be considered in future monitoring and reporting of complaints.

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

4.1 There is a legislative requirement to provide information on the number of complaints the Council received in order for the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales to prepare an annual report.

4.2 The monitoring of complaints and compliments is a key performance indicator within the Council's Corporate Plan, under the Well-being Theme, 'Efficient Council'.

4.3 From the Well-being Plan the monitoring of complaints links into 'A resilient Wales' as it provides an opportunity for citizens to take an active and empowered role. The Council is required to present the Annual Report to members.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

The Ombudsman in certain circumstances may award compensation to the complainant. In such circumstances, the compensation will be paid by the relevant department/service area.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Complaints are investigated in accordance with the Councils Corporate Complaints Policy.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no human resource implications associated with this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

See appendix 1:

Section A: Complaints received and investigated with the local authority average adjusted by population

Section B: Complaints received by subject

Section C: Complaint outcomes

Section D: Cases with PSOW intervention

Section E: Code of Conduct complaints.

Section F: Town/Community Council Code of Conduct complaints

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

This report is positive information to share with the public and is evidence that the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy is working effectively to resolve complaints at an early stage, and few complainants are seeking independent redress.

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

By providing a complaints process, the Council is enabling active participation of the public and partners to identify areas of concern that need to be addressed.

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

The Public Service Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019 has now been introduced giving the Ombudsman new powers aimed at:

- Improving access to their office
- Allowing the Ombudsman to undertake own initiative investigations when required in the public interest
- Ensuring that complaints data from across Wales may be used to drive improvement in public services for citizens in Wales

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The complaints process enables the Council to rectify processes that have been highlighted within a complaint. This in turn supports the Council to prevent similar complaints being provided.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

As part of the report prepared by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales comparisons are made across all Council's across Wales.

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

The Complaints process is undertaken across all sections of the Council in order to provide a full picture across the Council.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

N/A

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

N/A

6.9b. ***Equality Impact Assessment***

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required for the performance monitoring of complaints, however, if a complaint requires consideration of the Equalities Act an EqIA would be undertaken for the specific complaint.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The Public Service Ombudsman for Wales annual reports are presented to the Corporate Leadership Team, Governance and Audit Committee and Executive Committee on an annual basis.

Complaints monitoring is undertaken across the Council and a separate report will be presented to Governance and Audit Committee twice a year providing information on the number of stage 1 and 2 complaints received and their outcomes.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1

Factsheet

Appendix A - Complaints Received

Local Authority	Complaints Received	Received per 1000 residents
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	15	0.21
Bridgend County Borough Council	31	0.21
Caerphilly County Borough Council	46	0.25
Cardiff Council*	96	0.26
Carmarthenshire County Council	27	0.14
Ceredigion County Council	32	0.44
Conwy County Borough Council	32	0.27
Denbighshire County Council	32	0.33
Flintshire County Council	59	0.38
Gwynedd Council	30	0.24
Isle of Anglesey County Council	18	0.26
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	15	0.25
Monmouthshire County Council	20	0.21
Neath Port Talbot Council	19	0.13
Newport City Council	31	0.20
Pembrokeshire County Council	28	0.22
Powys County Council	38	0.29
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	40	0.17
Swansea Council	73	0.30
Torfaen County Borough Council	12	0.13
Vale of Glamorgan Council	39	0.29
Wrexham County Borough Council	43	0.32
Total	776	0.25

* inc 2 Rent Smart Wales

Appendix B - Received by Subject

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Complaints Received	% Share
Adult Social Services	0	0%
Benefits Administration	0	0%
Children's Social Services	5	33%
Community Facilities, Recreation and Leisure	1	7%
Complaints Handling	0	0%
Covid19	3	20%
Education	0	0%
Environment and Environmental Health	3	20%
Finance and Taxation	1	7%
Housing	0	0%
Licensing	0	0%
Planning and Building Control	1	7%
Roads and Transport	0	0%
Various Other	1	7%
Total	15	

Appendix C - Complaint Outcomes
 (* denotes intervention)

County/County Borough Councils	Out of Jurisdiction	Premature	Other cases closed after initial consideration	Early Resolution/voluntary settlement*	Discontinued	Other Reports- Not Upheld	Other Reports Upheld*	Public Interest Report*	Total
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	1 6%	6 35%	8 47%	1 6%	0 0%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	17
% Share									

Appendix D - Cases with PSOW Intervention

	No. of interventions	No. of closures	% of interventions
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	1	17	6%
Bridgend County Borough Council	2	30	7%
Caerphilly County Borough Council	3	45	7%
Cardiff Council	26	100	26%
Cardiff Council - Rent Smart Wales	0	2	0%
Carmarthenshire County Council	6	29	21%
Ceredigion County Council	4	31	13%
Conwy County Borough Council	5	31	16%
Denbighshire County Council	2	31	6%
Flintshire County Council	11	62	18%
Gwynedd Council	5	27	19%
Isle of Anglesey County Council	1	17	6%
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	0	14	0%
Monmouthshire County Council	1	19	5%
Neath Port Talbot Council	1	17	6%
Newport City Council	5	29	17%
Pembrokeshire County Council	3	26	12%
Powys County Council	4	47	9%
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	2	43	5%
Swansea Council	9	67	13%
Torfaen County Borough Council	0	11	0%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	5	38	13%
Wrexham County Borough Council	6	48	13%
Total	102	781	13%

Appendix E - Code of Conduct Complaints

County/County Borough Councils	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Refer to Standards Committee	Withdrawn	Total
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	0	3	0	0	0	0	3

Appendix F - Town/Community Council Code of Complaints

Town/Community Council	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Refer to Standards Committee	Withdrawn	Total
Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Brynmawr Town Council	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Information Sheet

Appendix A shows the number of complaints received by PSOW for all Local Authorities in 2020/2021. These complaints are contextualised by the number of people each health board reportedly serves.

Appendix B shows the categorisation of each complaint received, and what proportion of received complaints represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix C shows outcomes of the complaints which PSOW closed for the Local Authority in 2020/2021. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix D shows Intervention Rates for all Local Authorities in 2020/2021. An intervention is categorised by either an upheld complaint (either public interest or non-public interest), an early resolution, or a voluntary settlement.

Appendix E shows the outcomes of Code Of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Local Authority in 2020/2021. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix F shows the outcomes of Code of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Town and Community Councils in the Local Authority's area. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for each Town or Community Council.

Agenda Item 14

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**

Report Subject: **Revenue Budget Monitoring -2021/2022, Forecast
Outturn To 31 March 2022 (As At 30th June 2021)**

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

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	09/09/2021	20.10.21			27/9/2021	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide members with the forecast financial outturn position across all portfolios for the financial year 2021/2022 (as forecast at 30th June 2021).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:

- Forecast financial position to the end of March 2022 across all portfolios
- Budget Virements actioned during the period April to June 2021
- Forecast outturn for Fees & Charges

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

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members to consider and:

- provide appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report
- approve the virements detailed in paragraphs 5.1.4 to and 5.1.7.

3.2 Option 2

Members do not accept the report.

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

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

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget

5.1.1 The overall forecast outturn as at June 2021, is a favourable variance of £2.494m, after the application of Welsh Government Hardship Funding.

5.1.2 The forecast overall financial position across all portfolios at 30th June 2021 (and before the inclusion of Covid-19 related expenditure) is shown in the table below:

Table 1 – Portfolio Summary

Portfolio/ Committee	2021/2022 Revised Revenue Budget	2021/2022 Forecast Outturn @ 30 June 2021	Favourable/ (Adverse) To 31 March 2022	Append ref:
	£m	£m	£m	
Underspending Portfolios				
Corporate Services & Financial Management & Strategy	18.386	16.952	1.434	1a
Education & Leisure	63.868	63.646	0.222	1c
Social Services	46.366	45.194	1.172	1b
Planning	1.277	1.276	0.001	1f
Licensing	0.106	0.106	0.000	1f
Sub Total (1)	130.003	127.174	2.829	
Overspending Portfolios				
Economy	1.550	1.551	(0.001)	1d
Environment	26.479	26.802	(0.323)	1e
Sub Total (2)	28.029	28.353	(0.324)	

Total	<u>158.032</u>	<u>155.527</u>	<u>2.505</u>	
Covid-19 Costs				
Social Services		0.626	(0.626)	
Education		0.142	(0.142)	
Environment		0.597	(0.597)	
Sub Total – Covid19 spend		<u>1.365</u>	<u>(1.365)</u>	
WG Hardship funding			<u>0.728</u>	
WG SS Hardship funding			<u>0.626</u>	
Revised Total			<u>2.494</u>	

5.1.3 The forecast includes actual and estimated funding from the Hardship fund for April to June 2021 of £1.354m. A Claim has been submitted, in line with the set of principles issues by Welsh Government, for quarter 1 loss of income and £47,000 is included in the forecast for Social Services.

It has been confirmed that Welsh Government Hardship Funding will continue to March 2022.

5.1.4 **Budget Virements**

5.1.5 There have been a number of budget virements between and within Portfolios to realign budgets with forecast spend.

5.1.6 Social Services Portfolio: -

- £116,000 from Corporate Services to Children's Services for Legal Fees
- £379,000 from Adults Services (Learning Disabilities under 65) to Adult Services (Older People) (£172,000) and Children's Services for the Learning Disabilities Team restructure (£207,000). The Team has been disbanded and staff have transferred to other Teams within Adults and Children's.
- £143,000 from Business Management to Older People Adults for the newly created Safeguarding Team.

5.1.7 Education Portfolio: -

A virement between Active Living and the Environment Portfolio for £237,000 relating to the transfer of maintenance responsibilities from Aneurin Leisure Trust to the Corporate Landlord budget.

5.1.8 **PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS**

5.1.9 Within the total forecast favourable variance of £2.494m, the cross cutting budgets within Corporate Services account for 44% (£1.15m) of this forecast. The breakdown is as follows:-

- Transformation Fund - £0.16m
- Commercial & Contract Management - £0.5m
- Pay award contingency - £0.24m
- Contingency – Community Care - £0.25m

5.1.10 Portfolio summary pages can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1.11 Details of the variances greater than £50,000 within the Portfolios are included in the Portfolio Analysis section below.

5.1.12 Action plans to address cost pressures are attached at Appendix 3. A breakdown of the adverse variances contained within the action plans is summarised below:-

Table 2 – Significant Adverse Variances

Corporate Services	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	£82,000
Social Services	Legal Fees	£363,000
Environment	Waste Services	£334,000
Total		£779,000

5.1.13 **Portfolio Analysis**

5.1.14 **Corporate Services – £1,434,525 favourable variance**

5.1.15 There is one main adverse variance within the Portfolio:-

5.1.16 ***Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) - £82,041***

5.1.17 As previously reported, this is likely to be due to an increase in the number of claimants resulting from the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. As the information below illustrates the number of claims has now decreased when compared to the same period in 2020, however it is still higher than the same period in 2019:

- Quarter 1 2019 - 8,683
- Quarter 1 2020 - 9,341
- Quarter 1 2021 - 9,023

- 5.1.18 The full year effect remains uncertain as the Autumn / Winter period will see an end to the UK furlough scheme with the potential for further increases in claimant numbers.
- 5.1.19 This adverse variance has been offset by two main favourable variances:-
- 5.1.20 ***Cross Cutting Budgets - £1,149,085***
- 5.1.21 Commercial & Contract Management (£496,410) – This budget was created to fund contract price increases during the year, that cannot be managed within portfolio budgets. However, no requests for funding have been received to date.
- 5.1.22 Transformation Fund (£165,000) - committed spend of £327,000 has been included in relation to the proposed Revenue Contribution to the Agile Working Operating Model.
- 5.1.23 Contingency – Pay Award / Community Care (£487,675) - This budget (£1.2m) has been established to cover a potential pay award for 2021/2022 of up to 2.0% for Council staff and increased costs within Community Care. The forecast includes a commitment of a 1.5% pay award for staff. Local authority employers have subsequently offered a higher pay award of 1.75%, which is currently being considered by trade unions. If agreed this will increase costs and reduce the predicted favourable variance by £118,383 to £368,837
- 5.1.24 ***Departmental Budgets - £265,761***
- 5.1.25 The forecast favourable variance mainly relates to reduced employee related expenditure due to delays in filling vacant posts, maternity leave, staff on temporary reduced hours and the utilisation of one-off grant funding. In addition, there is an increased level of income provided by Welsh Government for an admin grant for providing COVID-19 related support.
- 5.1.26 **Social Services – £1,172,404 favourable variance**
- 5.1.27 The forecast is made up of the following main variances: -
- 5.1.28 ***Children’s Services – Favourable Variance of £541,000***
- 5.1.29 There is only one main adverse variance, Legal Fees of £363,000 which is mainly due to the continuing cost pressure in legal fees resulting from court proceedings in relation to Children Looked After.
- 5.1.30 This adverse variance has been completely offset mainly by two underspending areas:
- Residential Placements showing a favourable variance of £537,000 mainly due to the Sustainability Grant Funding and
 - Independent Fostering Agency Placements of £180,000 due to reducing placement numbers, with a number of placements being brought back in house.

5.1.31 ***Adult Services – Favourable Variance of £631,000***

5.1.32 The overall favourable variance of £631,000 is mainly due to the application of Sustainability Grant, ICF and Home First Grant funding for a number of established posts, a reduction in staffing cover costs within Provider Services and a reduction in the number of placements and packages of care.

5.1.33 **Education and Leisure – £222,738 favourable variance**

5.1.34 There are two main areas of favourable variances:-

- Strategic Management - £150,000 favourable variance – relating to lower pension contributions to the local government pension scheme for school based staff, and the delay in the appointment of the new Statutory ALN Officer.
- LEA Budget Supporting SEN £62,000 favourable variance, relating to income arising from the secondment of the Principal School Psychologist.

5.1.35 **Environment Portfolio – £322,931 adverse variance**

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

5.1.37 **Recycling Collection - £138,485 adverse variance**

This is mainly due to the ongoing cost of receptacles and food waste bags. External funding for the purchase of food waste bags has ceased and therefore this now presents a cost pressure within this budget. The budget for receptacles is not sufficient to meet demand particularly with the increase in house building throughout the borough, for example the forecast includes the cost for receptacles and food waste bags for a further 387 properties for the new development/builds that will be required towards the end of the financial year.

5.1.38 **Disposal of Waste - £60,449 adverse variance**

This is mainly due to an increase in residual waste tonnages. This could potentially be partly offset by Welsh Government Hardship Funding for Quarter 1 dependent upon the current eligibility criteria. Also the forecast cost of leachate disposal at the Silent Valley site exceed the budget. However, this is based on last year's outturn. The weather has an impact on costs, so there is the potential for the forecast to change later in the year.

5.1.39 **Recycling Disposal - £136,432 adverse variance**

This is mainly due to an increase in the volume of food waste recycling and increased cost of aerosols recycling. However, there is currently a high demand for steel, plastics and aluminium and therefore it is likely that income will increase for these recyclates throughout the remainder of the year, which could improve the financial position. The forecast will be reviewed and updated during quarter 2 when data is known with more certainty.

5.1.40 **Fees & Charges**

5.1.41 The 2021/2022 portfolio estimates include income budgets in relation to fees & charges (excluding Council Tax) of £15m across all portfolios. Attached at Appendix 2 is an analysis of income received against budget for the financial year for individual portfolios, and current forecast indicates an adverse variance against this target of £1.7m, primarily relating to lost income: -

- from the sale of recycle - £0.2m
- charges for Community Care & CHC income - £1.5m

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

5.1.43 **Reserves**

5.1.44 The 2020/21 draft outturn position, reported to the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee in July 2021, was a balance of £7.820m for the Council's General Reserve and should the forecast underspend continue to the end of the financial year, the General reserve will increase to:

<u>Table 3 - General Reserve</u>	£m
Balance at 1 April 2021 (Provisional as subject to External Audit)	7.820
Funding for Highways Improvements	(0.3)
Forecast Underspend @ 31 March 2022	2.494
Planned increase as per agreed 2021/22 budget	0.200
Forecast General Reserve @ 31 March 2022	10.214

5.1.45 The 2020/21 draft outturn position, reported to the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee in July 2021 for earmarked reserves was £20.781m (including School Balances). Significant elements of these earmarked sums relate to grant funding held in respect of specific projects or services that will be utilised in delivering the relevant service outcomes during the current and next financial year

5.1.46 At the quarter 1 position, there had been no use of the specific reserves.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

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

- 5.2.2 A grants register has been developed and is being maintained and will be considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 5.2.3 There is a risk that Action Plans will not address the cost pressures identified.
- 5.2.4 Action Plans have been developed, identifying actions to mitigate the forecast cost pressures. The Action Plans will be monitored as part of the Budget Monitoring and Reporting Framework and the impact reported to the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee, Executive Committee and the Cost Pressure Sub Group.
- 5.2.5 There is a risk that Covid-19 will continue into the medium/long term, impacting on Council services and budgets. This risk can be mitigated by the continuation of processes that the Council has introduced since March 2020 eg prioritising services, redeployment of staff, home working.
- 5.2.6 There is a risk that Welsh Government will not provide Hardship funding/loss of income funding for all cost pressures identified. This risk can be mitigated by a continuing dialogue and lobbying with Welsh Government, through the WLGA and the continuing development of action plans by budget holders.
- 5.2.7 There is a risk of increase costs for food, fuel and other essential goods and services as a result of the ongoing situation regarding the U.K. Exiting the E.U.
- 5.2.8 The UK Exiting the EU has been added as an organisational risk to the corporate risk register, whilst a separate, more detailed high level action plan has been developed and is being monitored by the Core Planning Group.
- 5.3 Legal
N/A
- 5.4 Human Resources
N/A
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**
- 6.1.1 A summary page for each portfolio is contained in Appendices 1a to 1g.
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
- 6.2.1 The report details the financial implications for the Council in providing services to the communities of Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
- 6.3.1 CLT have considered the forecast financial position for 2021/2022 (as 30th June 2021).

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

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

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

6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 Budget holders will continue to develop and monitor Action Plans for those services reporting forecast adverse variances which should address the cost pressure during the year

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

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

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

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

6.8.1 The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and the Bridging the Gap programme includes a Strategic Business Review, Low Carbon.

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***
N/A

6.9b **EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

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

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

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

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

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CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
SUMMARY			
<u>DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER RECHARGEABLE SERVICES</u>			
Corporate Services Department	(192,038)	(352,637)	160,599
Resources Department	0	(105,162)	105,162
Sub Total	(192,038)	(457,799)	265,761
<u>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</u>			
Archives	151,640	142,789	8,851
Festival Park	94,680	98,188	(3,508)
Housing Benefit	(117,130)	(115,893)	(1,237)
ICT Service	0	0	0
Cross Cutting	(50,000)	(50,000)	0
Community Hubs	104,940	104,940	0
Sub Total	184,130	180,024	4,106
<u>LEGAL & CORPORATE COMPLIANCE SERVICES</u>			
Registration of Electors	17,170	17,499	(329)
Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	41,370	43,951	(2,581)
Sub Total	58,540	61,450	(2,910)
<u>GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES</u>			
Corporate Management (inc Audit Fees)	107,370	106,428	942
Democratic Representation and Management	1,265,740	1,245,214	20,526
CCTV Cameras	79,000	77,643	1,357
Civil Contingencies	101,040	98,403	2,637
Sub Total	1,553,150	1,527,688	25,462
<u>RESOURCES SERVICES</u>			
Corporate Management	348,810	328,210	20,600
Non Distributed Costs	1,039,730	1,033,300	6,430
Apprenticeship Levy	351,400	349,819	1,581
Council Tax Collection	(1,315,620)	(1,356,025)	40,405
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	9,908,050	9,990,091	(82,041)
N.N.D.R. Collection	(107,040)	(113,086)	6,046
Grants and Subscriptions	57,270	57,270	0
Cross Cutting Budget	2,189,110	1,040,025	1,149,085
Sub Total	12,471,710	11,329,604	1,142,106
<u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u>			
Corporate Recharges	4,310,790	4,310,790	0
Sub Total	4,310,790	4,310,790	0
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	0	0
CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	18,386,282	16,951,757	1,434,525

SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
SUMMARY			
<u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u>			
Children's Services - Commissioning and Social Work	3,736,210	3,659,412	76,798
Looked After Children	7,462,360	7,094,707	367,653
Family Support Services	188,600	188,600	0
Youth Justice	232,920	228,118	4,802
Other Children's and Family Services	2,315,910	2,224,106	91,804
Older People Aged 65 or Over	6,490,930	6,143,443	347,487
Adults Aged Under 65 with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment	41,800	41,177	623
Adults Aged Under 65 with Learning Disabilities	3,306,890	3,234,881	72,009
Adults Aged Under 65 with Mental Health Needs	531,730	553,865	(22,135)
Other Adult Services	371,250	354,670	16,580
Community Care	15,594,320	15,423,187	171,133
Support Service and Management Costs	881,130	835,481	45,649
Corporate Recharges	5,212,400	5,212,400	0
Sub Total	46,366,450	45,194,047	1,172,403
Social Services COVID-19 Costs	0	625,733	(625,733)
Total Expenditure	46,366,450	45,819,780	546,670

EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
SUMMARY			
SCHOOLS BUDGET			
Individual Schools Budget	46,522,380	46,522,380	0
Education Improvement Grant	257,360	261,434	(4,074)
Other Costs	722,410	722,977	(567)
Supporting Special Education Needs	1,679,830	1,709,612	(29,782)
<i>Schools Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>49,181,980</u>	<u>49,216,403</u>	<u>(34,423)</u>
LEA BUDGET			
Strategic Management	2,432,410	2,281,940	150,470
Assuring Access to Schools	2,317,810	2,316,424	1,386
Facilitating School Improvement	419,760	418,480	1,280
Supporting Special Education Needs	342,970	280,793	62,177
<i>LEA Budget Total Expenditure</i>	<u>5,512,950</u>	<u>5,297,637</u>	<u>215,313</u>
OTHER EDUCATION SERVICES			
Further Education and Training	133,290	121,816	11,474
Youth Service	379,760	375,007	4,753
Other Expenditure	141,030	141,030	0
Education Departmental Budget	0	707	(707)
<i>Other Education Services Total Expenditure</i>	<u>654,080</u>	<u>638,560</u>	<u>15,520</u>
CORPORATE CHARGES			
Corporate Support Recharges	4,360,220	4,360,220	0
<i>Corporate Charges Total Expenditure</i>	<u>4,360,220</u>	<u>4,360,220</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Expenditure	<u><u>59,709,230</u></u>	<u><u>59,512,820</u></u>	<u><u>196,410</u></u>
LEISURE TRUSTS			
LEISURE TRUSTS			
Aneurin Leisure Trust	2,789,760	2,798,092	(8,332)
Awen Leisure Trust	205,000	200,507	4,493
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>2,994,760</u>	<u>2,998,599</u>	<u>(3,839)</u>
RETAINED SERVICES			
Corporate Recharges	1,164,340	1,134,173	30,167
General Reserve Funding Re: Staff Support	0	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,164,340</u>	<u>1,134,173</u>	<u>30,167</u>
LEISURE TRUSTS TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u><u>4,159,100</u></u>	<u><u>4,132,772</u></u>	<u><u>26,328</u></u>
Overall Portfolio Total	<u><u>63,868,330</u></u>	<u><u>63,645,592</u></u>	<u><u>222,738</u></u>
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	141,720	(141,720)
Revised Overall Portfolio Total	<u><u>63,868,330</u></u>	<u><u>63,787,312</u></u>	<u><u>81,018</u></u>

ECONOMY PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
SUMMARY			
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>			
Economic Strategy and Development - Departmental Budget	4	5,628	(5,624)
Estates Management - Rechargeable	(1)	23,303	(23,304)
<i>Sub Total</i>	3	28,931	(28,928)
<u>ECONOMY SERVICES</u>			
Affordable Housing	0	0	0
Aspire	0	0	0
Community Benefits Investment	0	0	0
CSCS	(10,200)	(581)	(9,619)
Destination Management	16,473	16,473	0
DRivE	0	0	0
Financial Support to Business	4,276	4,140	136
General Offices	(53,783)	(53,783)	0
Industrial Land	7,195	7,006	189
Inspire	0	0	0
Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	(694,037)	(739,037)	45,000
Pentagon	0	0	0
Regeneration Projects	4,998	6,179	(1,181)
Resilient Project	0	0	0
Estates Management Non Rechargeable	(94,781)	(87,625)	(7,156)
<i>Sub Total</i>	(819,859)	(847,228)	27,369
Corporate Recharges	2,369,375	2,369,375	0
Total Expenditure	1,549,519	1,551,078	(1,559)

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
SUMMARY			
<u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u>			
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>			
Environment Department - Corporate Division	0	(37,983)	37,983
Environmental Services Division	0	15	(15)
Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	0	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>0</u>	<u>(37,968)</u>	<u>37,968</u>
<u>WASTE SERVICES</u>			
Waste Services Team	0	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>WASTE COLLECTION</u>			
Household and Trade Waste Collection	616,930	616,665	265
Recycling Collection	2,088,970	2,227,455	(138,485)
Bulky Waste Collection	(2,440)	(4,560)	2,120
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>2,703,460</u>	<u>2,839,560</u>	<u>(136,100)</u>
<u>WASTE TRANSFER</u>			
Civic Amenity Sites	252,950	320,805	(67,855)
HWRC Roseheyworth	302,750	271,732	31,018
Transfer Station	630,940	631,022	(82)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,186,640</u>	<u>1,223,559</u>	<u>(36,919)</u>
<u>WASTE DISPOSAL</u>			
Disposal Of Waste	1,028,490	1,088,939	(60,449)
Recycling Disposal	31,250	167,682	(136,432)
Trade Waste Collection, Transfer & Disposal	(24,930)	(24,929)	(1)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,034,810</u>	<u>1,231,692</u>	<u>(196,882)</u>
<u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u>			
County Borough Cleansing	1,094,140	1,093,819	321
Cemeteries / Crematorium	(279,475)	(281,071)	1,596
Grounds Maintenance	959,000	958,983	17
Countryside Recreation Sites	36,690	35,205	1,485
General Entertainment	2,440	2,430	10
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,812,795</u>	<u>1,809,366</u>	<u>3,429</u>

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
<u>FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</u>			
Corporate Landlord	1,571,200	1,571,200	0
Corporate Property	11,720	11,720	0
Building Cleaning	120,860	120,860	0
Catering Account	158,300	158,300	0
Appetite For Life	43,710	43,710	0
School Breakfast Club	394,180	394,180	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>2,299,970</u>	<u>2,299,970</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>HIGHWAYS & ROADS SERVICES</u>			
Highways - Street Care Team	0	(315)	315
Non Operational Land	1,460	1,460	0
Licensing (Highway Permits)	(51,190)	(51,190)	0
Shopping Arcade, Abertillery	2,780	2,780	0
Road and Street Works Acts	(16,260)	(16,260)	0
Multi-Storey Car Parks	269,460	269,460	0
On Street Parking	1,100	1,100	0
Surface Car Parks	31,790	31,790	0
Public Transport Co-Ordination	910	910	0
Bridges	77,590	77,590	0
Structural Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	167,700	167,700	0
Environmental Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	19,440	19,440	0
Safety Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	71,590	71,578	12
Routine Repairs (Principal and Other Roads)	838,500	834,790	3,710
Street Lighting	1,191,780	1,191,780	0
Winter Maintenance	390,020	390,020	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>2,996,670</u>	<u>2,992,633</u>	<u>4,037</u>

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
<u>TRANSPORT SERVICES</u>			
Traffic Orders	(16,510)	(16,510)	0
Highways Adoptions	(9,750)	(9,750)	0
Traffic / Accident Research	15,690	15,690	0
Traffic Management	6,760	6,760	0
Civil Parking Enforcement	0	0	0
Road Safety Education	18,330	18,330	0
Crossing Patrols	151,540	150,004	1,536
Concessionary fares and Support to Operators	281,050	281,050	0
Local Transport Plans	2,620	2,620	0
Home to School Transport	0	0	0
Transport and Heavy Plant	79,780	79,780	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>529,510</u>	<u>527,974</u>	<u>1,536</u>
<u>CULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</u>			
General Administration and Markets	(25,950)	(25,950)	0
Countryside Programme and Management	1,710	1,710	0
Landscaping and Afforestation	20,290	20,290	0
Reservoirs, Tips, Quarries and Mines	10,130	10,130	0
Flood Defence And Land Drainage	55,380	55,380	0
ENRaW	0	0	0
City Deal	97,200	97,200	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>158,760</u>	<u>158,760</u>	<u>0</u>
COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL	<u><u>12,722,615</u></u>	<u><u>13,045,546</u></u>	<u><u>(322,931)</u></u>
<u>PUBLIC PROTECTION</u>			
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>			
Environmental Health	0	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>CARAVAN SITES</u>			
Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(42,710)	(42,710)	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(42,710)</u>	<u>(42,710)</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</u>			
Food Safety	6,270	6,270	0
Control of Pollution	9,390	9,390	0
Dog Wardens	1,470	1,470	0
Animal Health and Welfare	23,360	23,360	0

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
Pest Control	62,000	62,000	0
Littering and Dog Control Orders	0	0	0
Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem	1,510	1,510	0
Sub Total	104,000	104,000	0
<u>HOUSING SERVICES</u>			
Homelessness	244,680	244,680	0
20 Church Street	15,800	15,800	0
General Properties	(8,160)	(8,160)	0
Housing Access	50,960	50,960	0
Works in Default	(250)	(250)	0
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,040	1,040	0
Sub Total	304,070	304,070	0
<u>TRADING STANDARDS</u>			
Trading Standards	0	0	0
Inspection and Enforcement	4,350	4,350	0
Sub Total	4,350	4,350	0
PUBLIC PROTECTION TOTAL EXPENDITURE	369,710	369,710	0
<u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u>			
Fire Service	3,481,840	3,481,840	0
Coroner's Court	120,830	120,830	0
Corporate Recharges	9,783,955	9,783,955	0
CORPORATE CHARGES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13,386,625	13,386,625	0
Sub Total	26,478,950	26,801,881	(322,931)
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	597,467	(597,467)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	26,478,950	27,399,348	(920,398)

PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
	£	£	£
PLANNING COMMITTEE SUMMARY			
<u>BUILDING CONTROL</u>			
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>			
Building Control	0	0	0
<u>BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES</u>			
Building Regulations	10,840	10,840	0
Dangerous Structures	22,640	20,908	1,732
<i>Building Control Total Expenditure</i>	<u>33,480</u>	<u>31,748</u>	<u>1,732</u>
<u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT</u>			
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>			
Development Management	0	988	(988)
<u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES</u>			
Dealing with Applications	(202,530)	(202,530)	0
Planning Appeals	3,250	3,254	(4)
Enforcement	(10)	6	(16)
<i>Development Management Total Expenditure</i>	<u>(199,290)</u>	<u>(198,282)</u>	<u>(1,008)</u>
<u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u>			
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>			
Development Plans	133,000	132,998	2
<u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS SERVICES</u>			
Development Plans	34,760	34,762	(2)
<i>Development Plans Total Expenditure</i>	<u>167,760</u>	<u>167,760</u>	<u>0</u>
Corporate Recharges	1,275,250	1,275,250	0
Funding from General Reserves	0	0	0
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	0	0
Planning Committee Total Expenditure	<u><u>1,277,200</u></u>	<u><u>1,276,476</u></u>	<u><u>724</u></u>
LICENSING COMMITTEE SUMMARY			
Licensing	68,010	68,010	0
Internal Recharges	38,490	38,490	0
Funding from General Reserves	0	0	0
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	0	0
Licensing Committee Total Expenditure	<u><u>106,500</u></u>	<u><u>106,500</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>

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Fees and Charges Forecast 2021/2022 (As at June 2021)

Appendix 2

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	WG Hardship Grant	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£	£
Fees & Charges							
Corporate Services	Communications	Advertising	Fees & Charges	3,000		992	(2,008)
Corporate Services	Business Support	External Printing and photocopying charges.	Fees & Charges	8,000		2,036	(5,964)
Corporate Services	Legal Fees	Legal Charges	Fees & Charges	14,330		4,123	(10,207)
Corporate Services	Corporate Support	Land Charges	Fixed - Set Locally	32,150		34,614	2,464
Economy	General Offices	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	41,969		64,067	22,098
Economy	Departmental	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	SLA	69,087		35,538	(33,549)
Environment	Household and Trade Waste Collection		Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Environment	Recycling Collection	Recycling Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Environment	Trade Waste	Trade Waste Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	140,590		140,590	0
Environment	Bulky Waste Collection	Bulky Waste Collection	Fees & Charges	71,690		73,072	1,382
Environment	Recycling Disposal	Sale of Recyclate Materials	Fees & Charges	629,720		399,257	(230,463)
Environment	County Borough Cleansing	C&CR - External Cleansing Works	Fees & Charges	220		12,615	12,395
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Burial Fees	Fees & Charges	495,080		499,668	4,588
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	General Properties	Fees & Charges	2,680		3,000	320
Social Services	Meals On Wheels	Sale of Meals	Fees & Charges	175,280		147,512	(27,768)
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Income from Letting of Playing Fields, Ground Rent & Way Leaves	Fees & Charges	76,395		76,395	0
Environment	General Properties	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	8,164		8,164	0
Environment	Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	Rental	Fees & Charges	123,620		127,182	3,562
Environment	Dog Wards	Byelaw Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	2,030		2,030	0
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Civic Centre - Rental of Land	Miscellaneous	797		693	(104)
Environment	School Catering Service	Sale of Meals		861,898		876,021	14,123
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Administration charges for administering Appointeeships	Fees & Charges	26,030		18,772	(7,258)
Infrastructure	Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	Fees & Charges	418,938		430,119	11,181
Infrastructure	FEP - Increase in Income	Fees	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Infrastructure	Licensing (Highway Permits)	Skips & Scaffolding Permits	Fees & Charges	51,342		51,342	0
Infrastructure	General Administration and Markets	Rental income	Fees & Charges	30,351		27,855	(2,496)
Infrastructure	Traffic Orders	Income from contractors, Welsh Water etc. for road works	Fees & Charges	24,810		24,810	0
Infrastructure	Road and Street Works Acts	Inspection fees, section 74's, FPN, coring, Dropped kerbs etc.	Fees & Charges	51,814		70,541	18,727
Infrastructure	Highways Adoptions	Highway Searches	Fees & Charges	9,754		186,600	176,846
Infrastructure	Multi-storey Carparks	Charge to Coleg Gwent	Fees & Charges	30,000		30,000	0
Infrastructure	Civil Parking Enforcement	FPN's	Fees & Charges	105,000		105,000	0
Infrastructure	Public Transport Co-Ordination	Charge to bus companies for use of Brynmawr Bus Station	Fees & Charges	234		234	0
Licensing	Hackney Carriages	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	78,030		48,995	(29,035)
Licensing	Private Hire Vehicles	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	1,830		183	(1,647)
Licensing	Scrap Metal	Sale of Scrap Metal	Fees & Charges	600		424	(176)
Planning	Enforcement	Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	610		0	(610)
Planning	Development Plans	Heritage Officer Income	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Social Services	Other Children's and Family Services	Training Fees (Early Years tied in with expenditure which is set	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Cwrt Mytton, Home Care, Extra Care & Joint Day Care Unit)	Fees & Charges	594,380	7,550	397,479	(189,351)
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Augusta, Supported Living Bungalows & Community Options)	Fees & Charges	340,460	36,400	29,203	(274,857)
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Mental Health Needs	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Vision House & Ysbyty'r Tri Chwm)	Fees & Charges	25,420	2,700	900	(21,820)
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	Fees & Charges in respect of Piper Alarms (IAA)	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Sub - Total				4,546,303	46,650	3,930,026	(569,627)

Fees and Charges Forecast 2021/2022 (As at June 2021)

Appendix 2

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	WG Hardship Grant	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£	£
Fees & Charges - Set Nationally							
Corporate Services	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Fixed - Set Nationally	94,770		83,878	(10,892)
Environment	Food Safety	Hygiene ratings & Health Certificates	Fixed - Set Nationally	2,120		4,739	2,619
Environment	Control of Pollution	Environmental Permits	Fixed - Set Nationally	16,890		9,663	(7,227)
Environment	Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	Petroleum + Tattoo Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		150	150
Environment	Trading Standards	Explosives Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	790		185	(605)
Licensing	Licence Fees	Various (Gambling, Premises/ Clubs & Street Trading)	Fixed - Set Nationally	57,900		56,837	(1,063)
Planning	Dealing with Applications	Planning Application Fees	Fees & Charges	213,360		213,360	0
Planning	Building Regulations	Building Regulation Fees	Fixed - Set Nationally	95,620		(35,371)	(130,991)
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	CHC Income (Home Care)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		61,597	61,597
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	CHC Income (Augusta House; Supported Living Bungalows; Community Options)	Fixed - Set Nationally	50,000		60,864	10,864
Social Services	Community Care	Fees & Charges in respect of Care	Fixed - Set Nationally	3,493,660		2,870,087	(623,573)
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Sale of Property (Cwrt Mytton)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		45,703	45,703
Social Services	Community Care	Sale of Property	Fixed - Set Nationally	292,340		70,008	(222,332)
Social Services	Community Care	CHC Income	Fixed - Set Nationally	378,650		0	(378,650)
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	CHC Income (Adult Service Managers)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		0	0
		Sub - Total		4,696,100	0	3,441,700	(1,254,400)
Fees & Charges - In Line with Local Agreements							
Economy	Industrial Land	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,750		2,770	20
Economy	Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	Rental income for industrial units	Fixed - Set Locally	708,195		798,048	89,853
Economy	Estates - Non Rechargeable	Ground Rent	Fixed - Set Locally	143,358		117,734	(25,624)
Economy	Financial Support to Business	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,650		2,650	0
Economy	CSCS	Charges for Construction Skills Certificates	Fixed - Set Locally	10,200		1,666	(8,534)
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Little Stars Nursery - Rent (Recovery of costs)	Miscellaneous	8,496		12,464	3,968
Education	Inter Authority Recoupment	Charges to other Local Authorities for SEN placements within Blaenau Gwent Schools	Fixed - Set Locally	659,110		738,833	79,723
		Sub - Total		1,534,759	0	1,674,165	139,406
		Total - Fees & Charges		10,777,162	46,650	9,045,891	(1,684,621)
SLA							
Aneurin Leisure Trust	SLA Income	Provision of Support Services	SLA	243,600		243,600	0
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	SLA	SLA	168,220		168,220	0
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	181,840		181,840	0
Corporate Services	Organisational Development, Payroll & Health & Safety	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	313,350		313,350	0
Corporate Services	Legal Fees & GDPR	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	41,160		41,160	0
Corporate Services	Communications	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	3,190		3,190	0
Corporate Services	Performance (SIMS Support)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	75,750		75,750	0
Corporate Services	Business Support (Courier)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	5,660		5,660	0
Financial Management and Strategy	Creditors Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	6,350		6,350	0
Corporate Services	ICT	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	0		0	0
Environment	School Catering	SLA with Schools (excludes Corporate Landlord)	SLA	1,138,600		1,138,600	0
Environment	Cleaning Services	SLA with Schools	SLA	1,091,389		1,091,389	0
Infrastructure	CPM - Schools Biodiversity SLA	SLA with Schools	SLA	14,280		14,280	0
Infrastructure	Winter Maintenance	SLA with LA's for salt Storage	SLA	13,000		13,000	0
		Sub - Total		3,296,389	0	3,296,389	0

Fees and Charges Forecast 2021/2022 (As at June 2021)

Appendix 2

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	WG Hardship Grant	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£	£
Court Fees/Fixed Penalty Notices/Fines							
Corporate Services	Corporate Services and Strategy	Legal income and land charges. Advertising.	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	10,000		12,873	2,873
Education	Welfare Service	Fixed Penalty Notices	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	2,150		2,150	0
Environment	Littering and Dog Control Orders	Income in relation to FPNs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	50,000		52,255	2,255
Corporate Services	Payroll Division	Attachment Orders	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,020		0	(1,020)
Financial Management and Strategy	Council Tax Collection	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	162,680		75,643	(87,037)
Financial Management and Strategy	NNDR	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,800		979	(821)
Corporate Services	Housing Benefits Account	Admin Penalties	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	25,000		12,500	(12,500)
		Sub - Total		252,650	0	156,400	(96,250)
Consortium Arrangements							
Economy	General Offices	Annual Service & Rental Charge to Torfaen CBC in relation to Archives	Consortium Arrangements	77,967		85,021	7,054
Environment	Disposal Of Waste	Contribution from SVWS	Consortium Arrangements	110,000		110,000	0
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Crematorium Income - Reallocation of surplus at year end	Consortium Arrangements	131,925		137,537	5,612
Environment	20 Church Street	Housing Advice Centre Contribution	Consortium Arrangements	12,210		12,215	5
Environment	Housing Access	Income from Housing Associations in relation to Administration of the Common Housing Register	Consortium Arrangements	110,763		112,991	2,228
Environment	Environmental Health	Public Protection Collaboration with Torfaen CC	Consortium Arrangements	0		0	0
		Sub - Total		442,865	0	457,764	14,899
Miscellaneous							
Education	Supporting Special Educational Needs	Internal Income - Recovery of pupil lead funding from schools.	Internal Income	102,000		102,000	0
Corporate Services	Corporate Procurement Division	Rebates - Energy & Randstad	Miscellaneous	95,700		93,000	(2,700)
Corporate Services	Corporate Procurement Division	Purchase Card Income	Miscellaneous	5,140		0	(5,140)
Infrastructure	L&A - Invasive Weeds	Contribution from Caerphilly for Treatment of Knotweed	Miscellaneous	10,000		10,000	0
		Sub - Total		212,840	0	205,000	(7,840)
		TOTAL		14,981,906	46,650	13,161,444	(1,773,812)

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Action Plan

Corporate Services

2021/22 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2021)

Appendix 3a

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at June 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at Outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	(£82,041)	(£244,515)	<p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <p>This is due to the continuation of an increased number of claimants when compared to previous years:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Quarter 1 2019 - 8,683</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Quarter 1 2020 - 9,341</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Quarter 1 2021 - 9,023</p> <p>It has been assumed that this level of claimants will continue for the remainder of the financial year. The level of new claims has decreased by 318 (3.4%) from those processed in Quarter 1 of 2020, however it is still 340 claims higher (3.92%) than the same period in 2019.</p> <p>This cost pressure will be funded from underspends in other areas of the portfolio – a formal virement will be considered during Q3 & Q4 when the impact of the end of Furlough should become clearer.</p>	Unknown	Rhian Hayden

Action Plan

Social Services

2021/22 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 June 2021)

Appendix 3b

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at June 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at Outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Looked After Children	(362,739)	(718,039)	<p>Legal Services</p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an ongoing pressure in this area due to the number of looked after children, and the problems with retention and recruitment of staff has resulted in more services being outsourced to an external provider. It is anticipated that the Legal budget will be significantly overspent again this year. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A long term solution will need to be identified in conjunction with Legal Services to mitigate this cost pressure for future years and a collaborative arrangement for legal services is being considered with a neighbouring council. This cost pressure is currently being offset by favourable variances within other social services budgets. 		Tanya Evans/ Andrea Jones

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30th June 2021)

Appendix 3C

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at June 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Waste Services	(138,485)	(86,180)	<p><u>Recycling Collection</u></p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u> This is mainly due to the cost of receptacles and food waste bags. External funding for the purchase of food waste bags has ceased and therefore this now presents a cost pressure within this budget. In addition, the forecast also includes the cost for receptacles and food waste bags for 387 properties of new developments/builds that will be required towards the end of the financial year.</p> <p><u>Actions</u> The budget for receptacles is not sufficient to meet demand. A detailed review of the budget and expenditure for Waste Services is currently underway and outcome will be reported during quarter 2.</p> <p><u>Disposal of Waste</u></p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u> This is mainly due to an increase in residual waste tonnages.</p>		C Rogers / M Stent

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30th June 2021)

Appendix 3C

			<p><u>Actions</u> This could potentially be partly offset by Welsh Government Hardship Funding for Quarter 1 dependent upon the current eligibility criteria, a claim will be submitted for quarter 1. Also the disposal of leachate forecast costs exceed the budget. However, costs are dependent on the weather so the forecast could change later in the year.</p> <p>A detailed review of the budget and expenditure for Waste Services is currently underway and outcome will be reported during quarter 2.</p> <p>Recycling Disposal</p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u> This is mainly due to an increase in the volume of food waste recycling and also the increased cost of aerosols recycling.</p> <p><u>Actions</u> There is currently a high demand for steel, plastics and aluminium and therefore it is likely that income will increase for these recycles throughout the remainder of the year, which could reduce the adverse variance. The forecast will be reviewed and updated during quarter 2 when data is known with more certainty.</p>		
	(136,432)	(216,372)			

Agenda Item 15

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Capital Budget Monitoring, Forecast For 2021/2022 Financial Year (As At 30 June 2021)**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr N Daniels – Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**
Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	09/09/2021	20.10.21			27/09/2021	10/11/2021		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of each Portfolio's actual and forecast capital expenditure against funding approvals for the 2021/2022 financial year, as at 30th June 2021.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:

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

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

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members of the Executive accept the report and

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

3.2 Option 2

Do not accept the report.

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

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

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

5.1.1 The overall financial position as forecast at 30th June 2021 indicates an adverse variance of £287,017 against a total in year capital budget of £15.3m.

The overall position across all Portfolios is shown below: -

Total Approvals Q1 (Jun 2021)	Future funding	In year funding	Actual Expenditure to 30/06/2021 (Month 9)	Forecast Expenditure 2021/2022	Forecast Variance underspent / (overspent)
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
62,014	46,715	15,299	1,482	15,586	(287)

5.1.2 This report has identified significant overspends on the following projects:

- **Household Waste recycling Centre - £42,752**
The overspend relates to increased costs due to the Covid-19 pandemic & future proofing of the site. Discussions are ongoing with WRAP Cymru & Welsh Government regarding funding the additional expenditure.
- **Lime Avenue Business Park - £234,710**
The latest anticipated final account advises of a loss & expenses claim for items in relation to unforeseen issues caused by Covid-19 pandemic. Officers are in dialogue with Welsh Government & WEFO project officials to pursue additional funding to mitigate the overspend.

Discussions with funding bodies are currently positive, therefore, it is not proposed that funding for these schemes be built in from the Capital contingency at this stage.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

- 5.2.1 Expenditure against external funding approvals needs to be maximised in order to avoid loss of funding. If significant delays in capital expenditure are anticipated or contract costs rise due to the impact of Covid-19, liaison with funding bodies will be required at the earliest opportunity in order to secure approval for funding re-profile.
- 5.2.2 If funding re-profile cannot be agreed and capital schemes are not kept within budget, then capital reserves may be committed beyond affordable levels, with the consequence that projects that have not yet commenced may be deferred or not undertaken, so impacting upon future Capital Programmes.

- 5.2.3 If capital schemes do not achieve the required level of expenditure within the correct financial year and further peaks of the Covid-19 pandemic results in projects facing significant delay, funding may be lost to the Authority and be detrimental to the Authority's chances of securing future funding.
- 5.2.4 The aforementioned risks are mitigated as far as possible through close working relationship with Budget Holders, Technical Services and external funding bodies such as Welsh Government. This ensures that where possible, funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise
- 5.2.5 Where overall funding approvals are likely to be exceeded and additional compensatory funding sources cannot be identified, budget holders will initially report the consequences to the Corporate Leadership Team, including proposals to defer/delete other approved schemes.
- 5.2.6 There is a potential risk of increase in Constructions costs & services following the ongoing situation regarding the UK's Exit from the European Union.
- 5.2.7 The UK's Exit from the EU has been added as an organisational risk to the corporate risk register, whilst a separate, more detailed high level action plan has been developed and is being monitored by the Core Planning Group.

5.3 **Legal**
N/A

5.4 **Human Resources**
N/A

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.2 The Capital Expenditure Report is attached at Appendix 1.

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

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

All forecast overspends and underspends are managed in order that secured funding approvals are not lost and to mitigate any potential adverse impact upon future Capital investment in Blaenau Gwent.

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

The Capital Programme is developed to support the Council's strategic priorities and is considered and agreed by full Council. Joint Budget Scrutiny and Executive Committees consider the budget monitoring reports on a quarterly basis and provide challenge as appropriate.

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

It is essential that all forecast overspends and underspends are managed in order that secured funding approvals are not lost and to mitigate any potential adverse impact upon the future capital programme.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Capital Services Team will continue their close working relationship with budget holders and external funding bodies to ensure that funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured in future financial years.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The Capital Services Team works closely with budget holders in producing the financial forecast and with external funding bodies to ensure that where possible funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise.

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

N/A

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. The Capital Programme currently contains schemes which promote the reduction of carbon emissions such as ReFIT, Electric Vehicle Charge Points and the purchase of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles. New Council buildings should be designed to the latest energy efficiency standards.

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

N/A

6.9b. ***Equality Impact Assessment***

N/A

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Summary

<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure To: June 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Corporate Services Portfolio	2,472,896	717,736	1,755,160	11,886	705,850	717,736	0
Social Services Portfolio	5,137,332	862,154	4,275,178	53,096	810,819	863,915	(1,761)
Economy Portfolio	12,069,969	2,864,200	9,205,769	941,287	2,165,413	3,106,700	(242,500)
Education and Active Living	26,770,198	1,699,849	25,070,349	126,868	1,572,981	1,699,849	0
Environment Portfolio	8,802,860	4,114,203	4,688,657	333,017	3,823,942	4,156,959	(42,756)
Infrastructure Portfolio	4,813,728	3,295,495	1,518,233	16,068	3,279,427	3,295,495	0
All Portfolios	1,946,815	1,744,900	201,915	0	1,744,900	1,744,900	0
Total Capital Funding	62,013,798	15,298,537	46,715,261	1,482,222	14,103,332	15,585,554	(287,017)

End of Report

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Corporate Services Portfolio								
Corporate Services								
101385	Workplace Transformation	67,587	587	67,000	587	0	587	0
327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Wo	400,091	3,632	396,459	3,632	0	3,632	0
327103	Civic Centre Decommissioning	655,137	7,436	647,701	4,867	2,569	7,436	0
327104	Democratic Hub (GO)	180,000	180,000	0	0	180,000	180,000	0
327106	ICT Roadmap	805,000	161,000	644,000	0	161,000	161,000	0
327107	Data Centre Move	362,000	362,000	0	0	362,000	362,000	0
328090	CCTV Upgrade	3,081	3,081	0	2,800	281	3,081	0
Corporate Services		2,472,896	717,736	1,755,160	11,886	705,850	717,736	0
Corporate Services Portfolio		2,472,896	717,736	1,755,160	11,886	705,850	717,736	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Social Services Portfolio								
Childrens Services								
323152	Beaufort Road - Extension Training Flat	12,110	12,110	0	0	13,082	13,082	(972)
323153	Beaufort Road - Outdoor spaces and Exiti	560	560	0	560	0	560	0
324719	Flying Start - Cwm 2	30,000	30,000	0	0	30,000	30,000	0
324721	Flying Start - Ebbw Vale North	265,473	265,473	0	0	265,473	265,473	0
324724	Flying Start - Sirhowy Primary	12,000	12,000	0	0	12,000	12,000	0
324735	Flying Start Brynithel FS Centre	2,600	2,600	0	2,600	0	2,600	0
324736	Flying Start Additional Works	73,700	73,700	0	454	73,246	73,700	0
324770	Childcare Offer - Sixbells Scheme	1,482,230	0	1,482,230	0	0	0	0
324771	Childcare Offer - Badminton Scheme	1,500,000	50,000	1,450,000	0	50,000	50,000	0
324772	Childcare Offer - Blaina ICC Scheme	408,782	0	408,782	0	0	0	0
324773	Childcare Offer - Swfryd Scheme	484,965	420	484,545	420	0	420	0
Childrens Services		4,272,420	446,863	3,825,557	4,034	443,801	447,835	(972)
Adult Services								
323003	Health & Safety	336,483	0	336,483	0	0	0	0
323005	Tackling Food Poverty - WLGA	12,651	1,560	11,091	1,560	0	1,560	0
323141	ICF - Further Enhanced Digital & Mobile	0	0	0	(1,105)	1,105	0	0
323144	ICF Main Capital Programme	86,651	0	86,651	0	0	0	0
323147	Intermediate Care Fund	3,133	0	3,133	0	0	0	0
323148	ICF - Digital & Mobile Assistive Technol	38,825	38,825	0	39,614	0	39,614	(789)
323149	Better Care Capital Project	21,809	9,546	12,263	6,994	2,553	9,546	0

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Management Reports		Capital Programme Funding Estimates						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
323151	Augusta House - Enablement Pods	365,360	365,360	0	2,000	363,360	365,360	0
	Adult Services	864,912	415,291	449,621	49,062	367,018	416,080	(789)
	Social Services Portfolio	5,137,332	862,154	4,275,178	53,096	810,819	863,915	(1,761)

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Economy Portfolio								
Tredegar Regeneration								
326163	Tredegar HLF	674,415	674,415	0	80,760	593,655	674,415	0
	Tredegar Regeneration	674,415	674,415	0	80,760	593,655	674,415	0
Ebbw Vale Town Centre								
326191	TRI - Urban Centre Commercial Property I	265,315	265,315	0	166,200	99,115	265,315	0
326192	TRI- Urban Centre Residential Property E	123,024	123,024	0	0	123,024	123,024	0
	Ebbw Vale Town Centre	388,339	388,339	0	166,200	222,139	388,339	0
Valleys Regional Park								
326200	VRP Ebbw Fach Trail	899	0	899	0	0	0	0
326205	VRP - Discovery Gateway	30,180	30,180	0	0	30,180	30,180	0
326206	Local Places for Nature Capital Funding	0	0	0	(3,941)	3,941	0	0
326207	Parc Bryn Bach - Co Working Space	91,661	91,661	0	52,388	39,273	91,661	0
	Valleys Regional Park	122,740	121,841	899	48,447	73,394	121,841	0
The Works Site								
325097	Big Arch	1,008,986	0	1,008,986	0	0	0	0
325103	Learning Works	37,985	0	37,985	0	0	0	0
325220	Site Investigation Works	19,001	0	19,001	0	0	0	0
325225	Ebbw Valley Railway - Northern Extension	2,441	0	2,441	0	0	0	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
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Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
	The Works Site	1,068,413	0	1,068,413	0	0	0	0
	Other Regeneration							
326006	Tech Valley s Initiative	475,000	0	475,000	0	0	0	0
326180	Lime Avenue Business Park	287,883	287,883	0	279,488	243,105	522,593	(234,710)
326181	Lime Avenue Employment park	2,495,101	0	2,495,101	0	0	0	0
326182	Box Works	0	0	0	115	7,675	7,790	(7,790)
326183	Regain 2	4,005,153	0	4,005,153	(49,204)	49,204	0	0
326184	Brexit Schemes	369,465	0	369,465	0	0	0	0
326193	TRI - Town Centre COVID-19 recovery ad:	529,818	36,240	493,578	36,240	0	36,240	0
326225	Heat Networks Project	17,385	0	17,385	0	0	0	0
326226	Electric Vehicle Chargepoints	20,085	0	20,085	0	0	0	0
326252	Constrained Units - Roseheyworth	6,665	0	6,665	0	0	0	0
326265	Victoria Business Park - Development	39,251	0	39,251	0	0	0	0
326266	Brynmawr Retail Development	750,000	750,000	0	5,749	744,251	750,000	0
326267	Blaenau Gwent Digital	138,049	138,049	0	91,164	46,885	138,049	0
326268	Covid Recovery for Town Centres	392,464	267,433	125,031	267,433	0	267,433	0
326269	Future Skills Academy - Monwel	200,000	200,000	0	14,895	185,106	200,000	0
332332	Regeneration of Former Tinplate Ph 1	89,743	0	89,743	0	0	0	0
	Other Regeneration	9,816,062	1,679,605	8,136,457	645,879	1,276,226	1,922,105	(242,500)
	Economy Portfolio	12,069,969	2,864,200	9,205,769	941,287	2,165,413	3,106,700	(242,500)

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Education and Active Living								
Education Services								
324125	Education Minor Works	48,497	7,594	40,903	(7,506)	15,100	7,594	0
324138	Education Capital Maintenance	120,802	0	120,802	0	0	0	0
324139	Education Capital Maintenance 20/21	297,848	0	297,848	0	0	0	0
324142	Georgetown Windows & Boiler Replaceme	6,206	0	6,206	0	0	0	0
324143	Rhos-y-fedwyn - Refurbishment	3,945	0	3,945	0	0	0	0
324144	St Marys - Refurbishment	200,000	2,412	197,588	2,412	0	2,412	0
324145	Tredegar Comp - Food & Technology	30,070	0	30,070	0	0	0	0
324146	Deighton - Kitchen	639	0	639	0	0	0	0
324147	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Services and Ac	3,450	0	3,450	0	0	0	0
324148	Coed y Garn Roof & Remedial Works	26,638	10,890	15,748	10,890	0	10,890	0
324149	Brynbach Primary Disabled Adaptations	70,000	0	70,000	0	0	0	0
324150	Ebbw Fawr - Developing 3/4 classrooms, t	100,000	0	100,000	0	0	0	0
324152	Brynmawr Canopy	50,000	0	50,000	0	0	0	0
324155	Brynmawr Comp Lift	110,000	0	110,000	0	0	0	0
324156	River Centre Boiler	70,000	0	70,000	0	0	0	0
324157	Tredegar Comprehensive Kitchen Electric	1,455	1,455	0	1,455	0	1,455	0
324201	Class Size - Willowtown	69,557	0	69,557	0	0	0	0
324203	Period Poverty	5,028	0	5,028	0	0	0	0
324519	Digital 2030 Capital Grant - Post 16	4,621	0	4,621	0	0	0	0
324530	ALN	22,299	0	22,299	0	0	0	0
324532	Ebbw Fawr ASD	3,890	0	3,890	0	0	0	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
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Capital Programme Funding Estimates

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
324560	Schools IT Infrastructure	24,837	24,837	0	24,837	0	24,837	0
324561	IT Upgrades - Schools	21,318	21,318	0	21,318	0	21,318	0
324580	Brynmawr 3G Pitch	862,480	0	862,480	0	0	0	0
324590	Tredegar Comp 3G Pitch	79,359	0	79,359	0	0	0	0
324743	21st Century Schools Six Bells Project	50,295	50,295	0	7,371	42,924	50,295	0
324750	Band B - Welsh Medium New Build	5,962,761	100,000	5,862,761	43,292	56,708	100,000	0
324751	Band B - New Primary Ebbw Fawr Valley	8,002,596	580,000	7,422,596	21,750	558,250	580,000	0
324752	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Brynma	3,190,237	0	3,190,237	0	0	0	0
324753	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Abertille	3,198,691	0	3,198,691	0	0	0	0
324754	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Tredega	3,197,459	0	3,197,459	0	0	0	0
324755	Band B - Welsh Medium Remodelling Bro	900,000	900,000	0	0	900,000	900,000	0
Education Services		26,734,978	1,698,801	25,036,177	125,820	1,572,981	1,698,801	0
Active Living Services								
329089	Abertillery LC Demolition	1,048	1,048	0	1,048	1	1,048	0
329092	ALC - Changing Room Refurbishment	20,000	0	20,000	0	0	0	0
329095	AWPOG - Play Equipment 20-21	1,733	0	1,733	0	0	0	0
332368	Play Area Schemes - Boroughwide	12,439	0	12,439	0	0	0	0
Active Living Services		35,220	1,048	34,172	1,048	1	1,048	0
Education and Active Living		26,770,198	1,699,849	25,070,349	126,868	1,572,981	1,699,849	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

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Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Environment Portfolio								
Environmental Services								
327018	RCAF Long Term Organics Procurement	53,024	0	53,024	0	0	0	0
327039	Kerbside Collections	2,052	0	2,052	0	0	0	0
327042	Collaborative Change Programme 18-19	88,436	88,436	0	88,436	0	88,436	0
327043	Household Waste Recycling Centre	120,042	120,042	0	104,378	58,416	162,794	(42,752)
327044	AHP Waste Collections	52,380	52,380	0	0	52,380	52,380	0
327045	BRC Decommissioning Project	383,554	191,777	191,777	0	191,777	191,777	0
327046	Repair Cafe	1,066	0	1,066	0	0	0	0
327061	CATS	80,000	0	80,000	0	0	0	0
327065	Re:Fit	4,177,960	2,088,980	2,088,980	540	2,088,440	2,088,980	0
327067	Market Hall - Asbestos Removal	18,606	0	18,606	0	0	0	0
327068	Cemeteries Investment Programme	196,071	196,071	0	11,750	184,321	196,071	0
327069	Green Recovery	20,020	10,010	10,010	10,006	4	10,010	0
327070	WRAP Cymru Capital Funding	3,787	0	3,787	0	0	0	0
327071	Education Centre	400,000	200,000	200,000	920	199,080	200,000	0
327073	Kerbside Recycling Lorry	331,132	165,566	165,566	2,110	163,456	165,566	0
327074	New Vale HWRC Refurbishment Works	513,052	256,526	256,526	4,826	251,700	256,526	0
327076	Ultra Low Emission Vehicles	92,920	92,920	0	0	92,920	92,920	0
327080	Cemetery Capacity - Cefn Golau Tredegar	527,028	0	527,028	0	0	0	0
327081	Cemetery Capacity - Dukestown Tredegar	227,500	0	227,500	0	0	0	0
327082	Cemetery Capacity - Brynmawr	142,000	0	142,000	0	0	0	0
327083	Cemetery Capacity - Brynmawr	105,000	0	105,000	0	0	0	0

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Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
327090	Fly Tipping CCTV	14,000	14,000	0	0	14,004	14,004	(4)
327110	Allotment Support Grant	25,599	25,599	0	0	25,599	25,599	0
Environmental Services		7,575,229	3,502,307	4,072,922	222,966	3,322,097	3,545,063	(42,756)
Housing Environmental Health								
328221	Remediation of Contaminated Land/Dereli	154,269	2,470	151,799	2,470	0	2,470	0
350510	Improvement grants - new scheme	753,905	469,000	284,905	60,047	408,953	469,000	0
350550	Support for Independent Living	151,154	131,053	20,101	32,011	99,042	131,053	0
350560	Empty Property Grants	168,303	9,373	158,930	15,523	(6,150)	9,373	0
Housing Environmental Health		1,227,631	611,896	615,735	110,052	501,844	611,896	0
Environment Portfolio		8,802,860	4,114,203	4,688,657	333,017	3,823,942	4,156,959	(42,756)

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: June 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Infrastructure Portfolio								
Engineering Services								
328040	Cwm By Pass	13,970	0	13,970	0	0	0	0
328149	SRIC - Tredegar Footway Improvements	25,000	25,000	0	0	25,000	25,000	0
328310	Local Transport Fund	0	0	0	3,900	(3,900)	0	0
328312	Local Transport Fund 2020/21	191,487	174,702	16,785	88,242	86,460	174,702	0
328314	Local Transport Network Fund	2,319	2,319	0	0	2,319	2,319	0
328315	Local Transport Fund - Project Retention	16,020	0	16,020	0	0	0	0
328318	Active Travel Fund	399,000	399,000	0	8,621	390,379	399,000	0
328323	Resilient Roads Fund	300,000	300,000	0	0	300,000	300,000	0
328340	LTF Metro Plus	220,000	220,000	0	(186,209)	406,209	220,000	0
328342	LTF Bedwellty Pits	990,000	990,000	0	0	990,000	990,000	0
328344	LTF Bus Stop Infrastructure	405,000	405,000	0	0	405,000	405,000	0
Engineering Services		2,562,796	2,516,021	46,775	(85,447)	2,601,468	2,516,021	0
Highways Network Management								
328063	Bridge Strengthening Works	1,857	0	1,857	0	0	0	0
328269	Highways PB Imp. Works.	20,946	0	20,946	0	0	0	0
328270	Highways Improvement Works	1,692,700	381,078	1,311,622	96,551	284,527	381,078	0
328334	LGBI - Trinant Hall	59,747	45,805	13,942	45,805	0	45,805	0
328404	Flood Damage - Emergency Repairs	25,186	12,593	12,593	(32,775)	45,368	12,593	0
328405	Aberbeeg Road Repairs	220,996	110,498	110,498	(8,067)	118,565	110,498	0
328406	Small Scale Works Grant	229,500	229,500	0	0	229,500	229,500	0

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Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports		Capital Programme Funding Estimates						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	Highways Network Management	2,250,932	779,474	1,471,458	101,514	677,960	779,474	0
	Infrastructure Portfolio	4,813,728	3,295,495	1,518,233	16,068	3,279,427	3,295,495	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
All Portfolios								
All Portfolios								
300300	City Deal	1,220,900	1,220,900	0	0	1,220,900	1,220,900	0
303990	OS Capital Admin/Design & Supervision	524,000	524,000	0	0	524,000	524,000	0
321112	Disabled Access - Special Programme	4,951	0	4,951	0	0	0	0
324672	The Company Shop - Tred	196,964	0	196,964	0	0	0	0
All Portfolios		1,946,815	1,744,900	201,915	0	1,744,900	1,744,900	0
All Portfolios		1,946,815	1,744,900	201,915	0	1,744,900	1,744,900	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports		Capital Programme Funding Estimates						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/3</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: June 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	Total Capital Funding	62,013,798	15,298,537	46,715,261	1,482,222	14,103,332	15,585,554	(287,017)

End of Report

Agenda Item 16

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10 November 2021**

Report Subject: **Bridging The Gap (BTG) Programme 2021/2022 – Progress Update April to June 2021**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	9/9/2021	20.10.21			27/9/2021	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report is to provide Members with an update on the progress made with the Strategic Business Reviews during the period April to June 2021, and the latest assessment of the financial achievement for the current financial year.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) currently identifies budget gaps for 2022/23 to 2025/26 as:-

Table 1: Budget Gaps (surplus) per MTFS (March 2021)

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Prior to BtG Opportunities	(548)	4,241	7,048	9,854	12,658

- 2.2 In recognising the challenges that the Council faces in the short, medium and long term, a programme of Strategic Business Reviews have been developed to deal with the potential funding gaps identified in the MTFS (Table 1) and to improve the financial resilience of the Council.
- 2.4 The March 2021 assessment of the potential achievement of the BtG programme was estimated to be between £4m and £7.3m between 2021/2022 and 2025/2026. Table 2 provides the annual assessment of achievement at that time.

Table 2: Latest Estimated Achievement of BtG

Estimated Achievement:	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Low	755	1,473	764	846	846	4,029

- 2.5 In agreeing the budget for 2021/2022 the estimated achievement of BtG is £755,000 resulting in a surplus budget of £1.3m. For 2022/2023 onwards the forecast budget gaps based upon the estimated achievement above are:-

Table 3: Remaining Budget Gaps following application of BtG Opportunities

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Remaining Budget Gap	(1,303)	2,013	4,056	6,016	7,974

- 2.6 The Council's Corporate Leadership Team, supported by officers from all services are continuing to identify / develop additional BtG proposals to close the future years' budget gaps.
- 2.7 The budget gaps identified within the report are based upon the Medium Term Financial Strategy assumptions agreed earlier in the year. These assumptions include a cash flat settlement from Welsh Government, pay awards & price inflation of 2% per annum and annual cost pressures of £1m.
- 2.8 Variations to/from these assumptions will impact the budget gaps.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1 – (Recommended Option)**

Members of the Executive Committee consider the report and provide appropriate challenge to the Bridging the Gap programme.

3.2 **Option 2**

Members of Executive Committee do not accept the report.

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

- 4.1 The Bridging the Gap programme supports the achievement of the Outcome Statement of an ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities, supporting:

- The financial resilience of the Council

- Developing a more commercial organisation to generate income and deliver cost reductions to make local services sustainable and raise money to re-invest in our priorities

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

5.2 Financial Year 2021/2022 – Forecast Out-turn

5.3 Table 4 identifies the Strategic Business Reviews, the estimated achievement and the forecast actual achievement to be delivered in 2021/2022.

Table 4: Strategic Business Reviews Provisional Out-turn 2020/2021

Strategic Business Review	Estimated Achievement 2021/2022 £'000	Estimated Achievement 2021/2022 £'000	(Adverse) / Favourable Variance £'000
Industrial Units	0	0	0
Commercial Waste	0	0	0
Income Recovery	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	0	0	0
Commercial Activity	0	0	0
Third Party Spend	490	490	0
Assets & Property	35	127	92
Review of MRP	0	0	0
Future Workplace & Service Delivery	0	0	0
Growth Strategy	230	230	0
Low Carbon	0	0	0
TOTAL	755	847	92

5.4 Overall, the forecast achievement is expected to exceed the estimated achievement of £0.75m by £0.1m for the current financial year. This is due to the successful outcome of the appeals on the rateable values of the Council's property and assets, with the Council receiving a rates rebate, relating to previous years' charges, totalling £109,000. Further appeals are anticipated during the current financial year.

5.5 A number of Strategic Business Reviews have no financial achievement for 2021/2022, due to the impact the Covid-19 pandemic is having on the Council's ability to progress the Reviews including:

- Industrial Units service review was delayed due the impact of Covid-19 on the economy.
- Fees and Charges due the economic impact of the pandemic on the residents and local businesses
- Commercial Waste, there was a delay in implementing the new service change due to closure of businesses within the borough as a result of the national lockdown in March 2020.

5.6 In setting the budget for 2021/2022, cost pressure funding was built into the budget for Industrial Units (£133,000) and Commercial Waste (£23,000) to recognise the medium / long term impact of the pandemic and mitigate the resulting cost pressure for 2021/2022.

5.7 A progress update on the individual business reviews is attached at Appendix 1.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

5.2.1 Current assessment of achievement against the Strategic Business reviews do not identify sufficient financial benefits to Bridge the funding Gap identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy in the medium to long term. Additional / alternative proposals will therefore be required to ensure that the Council can set a balanced budget.

5.3 Legal

5.3.1 The Council must set a balanced budget on an annual basis and the Bridging the Gap programme will support this requirement.

5.4 Human Resources

5.4.1 The Strategic Business Review, Future Place and Service Delivery, will have an impact on staff as it will result in a variation to Terms and Conditions.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

6.1.1 The scope and outcome, including key activities for each of the Strategic Business Reviews is attached at Appendix 1.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

6.2.1 The Bridging the Gap Programme support the Council in the development of its annual budgets which in turn will allow the Council to deliver services to the public.

6.3 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

6.3.1 Officers & Members of the Council are involved in the development of the Bridging the Gap Strategic Business Reviews.

6.3.2 The proposals have/will be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

6.4 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

6.4.1 The Bridging the Gap programme supports the Council's medium term financial planning in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

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

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

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

6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

- 6.7.1 Bridging the Gap proposals have been developed across the Council and are crosscutting in nature.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

- 6.8.1 The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and the Bridging the Gap programme includes the strategic business review, Low Carbon.

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment*** N/A

6.9b **EqlA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

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

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1. Progress against predicted delivery of Bridging the Gap proposals form part of the budget monitoring arrangements and is monitored and reviewed by the Strategic Commercial and Commissioning Board, Scrutiny Committee & Executive.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1*

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Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio Holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022			
Industrial Portfolio	Ellie Fry	<p>To review the Council's Industrial Unit Portfolio to identify areas for improvement and opportunities to maximise income.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a long term sustainable income source for the Council. Explore and develop new income streams. Reduce reactive maintenance liabilities. Improve quality of portfolio to further support economic development. Get greater visibility of income and expenditure to support invest/divest decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed agents to undertake high value RR's. Appointed agents to manage service charge (SC) program Planned 1st phase of Capex/revenue investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up new accountancy structure Implement SC to pilot estate Completed handover of Lime Avenue units to portfolio Handover of BoxHyb units Completion of first lettings at Lime Av. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of rent review program Review of 1st phase SC program Begin targeted investment program on portfolio Recruitment of key estates role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further role out of SC. Continued investment in portfolio. Completion of 						
			Financial Management:-		Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)							
			Estimated Financial Achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 of the high value rent reviews are underway and initial valuations are showing a very positive reply due to positive market conditions. On target to roll out service charge program to pilot estate by end Q2. We have completed the letting of 5 of the 9 Lime Av hybrid units with a further 2 under offer and with solicitors. There has been strong interest in the remaining 2 which I would anticipate being let by the end of Q3. Awaiting rent review results to update figures. 							
			2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025					
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000								
0	0	0	0	50								
Risk Management:-												
Risks / Issues					Mitigating Actions							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departure of Team Manager Estates & Asset Management Lack of resource (legal, estates, tech services) Negative PR associated with actions End of year accounts affect finance resources required to manage portfolio budgets Covid-19 related rent arrears 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members briefings to forewarn about PR issues Recruitment underway for estates & legal role Communications Officer in post to support PR going forward Regular credit reviews to keep onto of debt and appropriate action being taken. 							
Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022			
Commercial Waste	Richard Crook	<p>To roll out a new Commercial Waste service borough wide. A successful capital bid secured £250,000 for Blaenau Gwent's Commercial Waste Service.</p> <p>During the financial year 2019/2020, the Trade Waste Service underwent a full revamp with a revised implementation date of 1st April 2021.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of Service [May 2021] Liaise with customers re. any teething issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidation of the new service Monthly budget monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin proactive marketing of new service to attract more customers, annual review of pricing strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of online contracts and Duty of Cares Implementation of revised pricing schedule 						
			Financial Management:-		Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)							
			Estimated Financial Achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Service was launched on Tuesday 4th May following delay [this was to allow businesses to reopen after relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions around non-essential businesses]. New Service continues to be consolidated, initial issues with vehicles, rounds and customer's containment requirements have settled. Budget being monitored with Portfolio Accountant 							
			2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025					
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000								
0	0	23	64	96								
Risk Management:-												
Risks / Issues					Mitigating Actions							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 3rd Covid-19 wave could see the reintroduction of restrictions meaning some customers would have to close and therefore suspend their service requirements. 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some customers would continue to operate, therefore minimising losses. 							

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables																										
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022																										
Income Recovery	Rhian Hayden	To review current income recovery activities to ensure best / efficient practices in place. Intended outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income recovery policies are appropriate and include early intervention actions agreed Fees & charges are implemented payment in advance of service delivery (where appropriate) thereby avoiding costs of issuing invoices easy access to various payment methods use of technology is maximised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current arrears levels Update debt analysis Implement agreed fees & charges for 2021/22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor debt levels & ongoing recovery rates Revisit recommendations of CIPFA review Identify services where payment in advance can be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor debt levels & ongoing recovery rates Consult with service areas identified where payment in advance could be implemented Recommend pilot scheme – attending community organised sessions, providing advice as appropriate (subject to lifting of restrictions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor debt levels & ongoing recovery rates Work with services where payment in advance can be implemented Review outcomes from the pilot scheme and continue attending community organised sessions (providing advice as appropriate) 																													
			Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)																													
Estimated Financial Achievement																																			
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025																															
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000																															
54	0	0	0	0																															
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Income Recovery review has been impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. 2020/21 Significant numbers of Blaenau Gwent residents have been affected by the economic impact of the pandemic and throughout 2020/21 the Council saw increasing daily contacts from residents indicating they were having difficulty paying their bills (including Council Tax, NNDR & other Council liabilities e.g. Industrial Unit rentals) – alternative payment arrangement have been agreed and are being monitored including payment holidays, smaller instalment payments over a longer period of time. Where appropriate individuals have been encouraged to apply for Council Tax Reduction Scheme (eligible applications have increased significantly compared to previous years) and signposted to other advice organisations. Limited formal recovery action has been undertaken (this is consistent with the agreed approach across all Welsh LA's) Unfortunately the planned attendance at community organised sessions to provide advice to the public was suspended in line with the government's coronavirus restrictions. Whilst many Direct Debits were cancelled there has been an increased take up overall from those who would previously have paid by cash or cheque (a consequence of the national lockdowns & restrictions) <p>The Council Tax portal is now online with approximately 950 registering to use the service – when registered Council Tax payers are able to receive / view their accounts on line, make payments, set up a direct debit. There is also the ability to report change of circumstances via the my Council Services app. The overall impact of the above is a £1.3m increase in the level of arrears as at 31 March 2021 when compared to 2020:-</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Arrears as at 31 March 2020 £000's</th> <th>Arrears as at 31 March 2021 £000's</th> <th>Increase / (Decrease) £000's</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Council Tax</td> <td>5,046</td> <td>7,069</td> <td>2,023</td> <td>Reduced collection rates have been identified across Wales, WG have acknowledged this pressure on LA budgets and provided a grant at the end of 2020/21 to help mitigate some of this (for BG this was £587k).</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sundry Accounts</td> <td>5,714</td> <td>5,191</td> <td>(523)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>HB Overpayments</td> <td>1,561</td> <td>1,372</td> <td>(189)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>12,321</td> <td>13,632</td> <td>1,311</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021/22 – Quarter 1 Current debt analysis has commenced 2021/22 Fees & charges have been implemented (as relevant) Court dates for formal recovery action have been arranged for September 2021 (lack of Court availability within Gwent for earlier); Bailiff visits to recommence in quarter 2/3 (subject to covid guidance and relevant risk assessments being undertaken). 									Arrears as at 31 March 2020 £000's	Arrears as at 31 March 2021 £000's	Increase / (Decrease) £000's		Council Tax	5,046	7,069	2,023	Reduced collection rates have been identified across Wales, WG have acknowledged this pressure on LA budgets and provided a grant at the end of 2020/21 to help mitigate some of this (for BG this was £587k).	Sundry Accounts	5,714	5,191	(523)		HB Overpayments	1,561	1,372	(189)		Total	12,321	13,632	1,311	
	Arrears as at 31 March 2020 £000's	Arrears as at 31 March 2021 £000's	Increase / (Decrease) £000's																																
Council Tax	5,046	7,069	2,023	Reduced collection rates have been identified across Wales, WG have acknowledged this pressure on LA budgets and provided a grant at the end of 2020/21 to help mitigate some of this (for BG this was £587k).																															
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Risk Management:-																																			
Risks / Issues				Mitigating Actions																															
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic impact of Covid 19 may have medium / long term implications 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor arrears levels & compliance with agreed payment arrangements 																															

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Fees and Charges	Rhian Hayden	<p>To review and develop an approach to the setting of fees and charges that reflects full cost recovery, and identifies further opportunities for raising income from discretionary services. Options to stretch targets on those budget lines that over achieving will be explored in future years.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <p>Fees and Charges are set at an appropriate level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review baseline income for 2020/21 - to assess underlying issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor Q1 forecast position Develop a priority matrix to determine which areas have potential to develop into full cost recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options appraisals for individual areas in line with agreed priority list Re-establish the Officer Working Group and commence review of Fees & Charges Register for 2022/2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options appraisals for individual areas in line with agreed priority list Complete Review of Fees & Charges Register for 2022/23 and report to Council 		
			Financial Management:-				Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)	
			Estimated Financial Achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees & charges for 2021/22 considered & agreed by Council in March 2021. Limited changes agreed as a consequence of impact of pandemic. Quarter 1 forecast Fees & Charges being analysed to identify cost pressure areas. 			
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025				
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000				
121	0	100	100	100				
Risk Management:-								
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political agreement to move to full cost recovery Reduced demand for Service as a consequence of Loss of custom with increased charges 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued monitoring of income collected through fees & charges Fees & Charges are set in consultation with relevant stakeholders 					

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022			
Commercial activity, investment and new income	Richard Crook	<p>This strategic review will focus on identifying additional commercial opportunities to supplement the current activities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees and charges Developing the Industrial Portfolio Current income from traded or shared services Property Investment inside the Borough and out of the Borough Investment in energy and low carbon activities Disposals or development of assets and property <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing for Exec around Wind Turbine opportunity Planning Feasibility work being undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of planning application for Turbine Review Investment Framework inc advice around ROI Identify Investment funds in MTFS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement exercise for Turbine Market review of potential property investments Finalise funding arrangement for the Turbine Review Gov Tech Opportunity Review Industrial estate Energy Challenge Consider LUF investment Complete SV Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign off Commercial arrangements with SV for the Turbine Report and agree on SV Options Agree Investment Fund in MTFS 			
			Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)			
			Estimated Financial Achievement						
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025					
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000					
0	0	0	50	50					
Risk Management:-									
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 						

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables																					
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Third party expenditure – commissioning, procurement and contract management	Bernadette Elias	<p>The Council commissions, procures and manages contracts with a wide range of third party suppliers across all its services spending circa. £80m +. This strategic business review seeks to identify for efficiencies and improved outcomes where possible.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <p>Through a combination of re-negotiated contract terms, consolidation of contracts competitive tendering and effective contract management, we are seeking to maximise cashable and non-cashable benefits comprising cost reductions, cost avoidance, efficiency savings (through alternative payment methodologies) and social and environmental benefits through the inclusion of community benefits and social value contract clauses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCCB Check and Challenge process agreed for Contracts above £75,000; Operational Board Terms of Reference (TOR) reviewed to provide Check & Challenge for Below £75,000 contracts; 2021/22 procurement programme has identified circa 320 recurring and/or planned contracts; Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 1 activities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report Quarter 1 Outcomes; Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 2 activities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report Quarter 2 Outcomes; Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 3 activities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report Quarter 3 Outcomes; Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 4 activities; Collate and Report 2022/23 Forward Procurement Programme; 																						
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550	490	250	250	250																								
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			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022			
Assets and Property	Richard Crook	<p>The Council has a range of property assets. This review will ascertain their value to the Council and identify how best to maximise these assets to strengthen our balance sheet. This review would include buildings and green spaces and will align with the growth strategy.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-operational buildings identified and programme of disposals agreed. Rating Agents appointed to review rates liability and identify potential savings. Leased in properties identified and discussions with service users ongoing. Area review of land holdings discussed and criteria for review agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target date to discuss rating appeals in respect of Abertillery properties set with VOA Ongoing inspections and appeals by Rating Agents Area Review Criteria and process agreed with Members Lease renewal terms agreed for 20 Church Street – Housing office Obtain external valuations of staff tenanted residential property Ongoing discussions with Landlords agent in respect of re-gearing Anvil Court lease Bring Bridge Street Health Centre lease to an end pending Social Services vacating team to Anvil Court. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal programme – Blaina toilets informal tender for sale Discussions/negotiations with staff on residential tenanted properties for subsequent sale as per non-operational disposal list Ongoing rating discussions and appeals between retained rating agents and VOA Rating review of Civic Centre once decommissioning is finalised Ongoing discussions with Landlords agent in respect of re-gearing Anvil Court lease Area Review Criteria and process agreed with Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal programme reviewed Ongoing review of rating liabilities Ongoing discussions with Landlords agent in respect of re-gearing Anvil Court lease 			
			Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)			
Estimated Financial Achievement			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In year savings achieved through back dated NNDR rebates against the 2021/22 target to date total £127,000. Rating Review – 4 appeals awarded to date for Milfraen View, which has generated a refund of NNDR of £17,000 (less fees) for the current year, and cost avoidance in future years of £9,095 per annum, Church St, which generated £5,790 rebate and the Rivercentre School (awaiting value) and the Mechanical Link which generated a rates rebate of £84,000 (before fees). Results of further appeals anticipated during the next two years. Application for 3 months' rates relief on the basement, ground, fourth and fifth floors of the Civic Centre has been submitted. Agreements and actual savings yet to be determined. Community Asset transfer agreed for Queen Street Primary. Legal completion pending (Budget savings applied to previous year). Abertillery Toilets sold, further sales being considered for 2021/22 from non-operational list. 						
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023						2023/2024	2024/2025
£'000	£'000	£'000						£'000	£'000
85	35	150	0	0					
Risk Management:-									
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex legal issues delaying/preventing sale Departmental or Ward member opposition to sales Operational issues with sale to retained land Level of rates reduction/liability may be challenged. Reduction in rental levels on lease renewal may be unsatisfactory Property Solicitor is about to commence maternity leave, potential difficulty in backfilling the post which could mean a delay in undertaking property transactions. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure adequate legal support to review documents/legal title in advance of sale Communication and consultation with stakeholders and area review criteria agreed in advance Provide option appraisal for alternatives to sale Specialist Rating Adviser appointed Property Advisor appointed to renegotiate lease terms/rental in respect of Anvil Court 						

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Review of the MRP Policy	Rhian Hayden	<p>To undertake a review of the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to determine options available for consideration when determining the optimum MRP strategy</p> <p>Intended outcome Identification of optimum MRP Strategy for Blaenau Gwent CBC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of current MRP policy Review of current methodology applied for supported & unsupported borrowing Identification of options to provide optimum MRP Strategy / comparison of MRP charges for options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to Council recommending change to MRP (subject to outcome of findings during Quarter1) Review & update of current asset lives in readiness for policy change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review & update of current asset lives in readiness for policy change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review & update of current asset lives in readiness for policy change cr 		
Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)					
Estimated Financial Achievement			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current MRP policy has been reviewed Alternative options for making prudent MRP have been identified & assessment of each option has been undertaken Proposals to amend MRP Policy considered & supported by Corporate Overview Scrutiny & Executive Committees during July 2021 Report has been provided to Audit Wales for their views Proposals to be considered by Council in September 2021 (rearranged due to number of agenda items on July Council agenda) 					
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025
£'000	£'000	£'000					£'000	£'000
0	0	755					0	0
Risk Management:-								
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions					
MRP Policy not compliant with guidance			Proposals will be developed with due regard to WG guidance					

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Future work place and service delivery	Michelle Morris	<p>This is a new Strategic Business Review that merges the previous business review on customer experience and the business review on workplace transformation.</p> <p>The impact of the pandemic has force the organisation to think radically about how and where it will deliver services to the communities in Blaenau Gwent. This Programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Operating Model; • Community Hubs to improve customer access to council services; • Democratic Hub at the General Offices for formal Council business; • Permanent vacation of Civic Centre and move to Agile Working Model based on remaining office accommodation; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Programme Governance • Open new Democratic Hub and pilot agile meeting model • Open new Community Hubs • Commence project to decommission Civic Centre • Agree new Agile Working Policy • Commence leadership development to support new working arrangements • Complete consultation with all staff moving to home or agile working and agree variation to contracts • Complete Communication Plan to support change programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence full Council Diary using new agile meeting arrangements (in line with relaxation of covid restrictions) • Continue to develop the Community Hubs to broaden the services delivered • Complete design and procurement of Anvil Court refurbishment • Commence return to the office (in line with relaxation of covid restrictions) • Review and approve HR Policies as required e.g. Mileage Allowances • Continue to progress decant of Civic Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete establishment of new Democratic Hub • Continue to develop the Community Hubs, expanding the services available and the hours of opening, as covid restrictions allow • Complete staff decant from Civic Centre • Progress with the refurbishment of Anvil Court in line with agreed plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Centre decanted and decommissioned, tender returned and awaiting award of contract • Masterplan for the redevelopment of the site completed and agreed • Community Hubs & Democratic operating BAU – within Covid restrictions • Progress with the refurbishment of Anvil Court in line with agreed plan • Achieve full financial savings to support 2022/23 Revenue Budget 					
			Financial Management:-		Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)						
		Estimated Financial Achievement									
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025							
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000							
50	0	400	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme on-target for Quarter 1 deliverables; Exception is the Democratic Hub which it has been agreed will open in Quarter 2. • Development of Community Hubs as the LA face to face contact provision, with soft launch of phase 1 delivery on 21 June 2021 • Change in Out of Hours service delivery to a local provider from 1 July 2021 • Continuation of Contact Centre Review, focussing on staffing and training • Commencement of the review of the Localities provision linking into the Community Hub Model • Creation and appointment of a digital apprentice, working with colleagues in Aspire programme to secure appointment • Presentation to Tech Valley Board on Waste project progress to date • Submission of bid to Welsh Government to continue with Gov.pay project which is a collaborative approach with Neath Port Talbot and Torfaen Local Authorities. 						
Risk Management:-											
Risks / Issues						Mitigating Actions					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays to the decant of civic centre due to the need to relocate IT Servers to new host • Impact on staff well-being from the return to the workplace 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with SRS to ensure delivery times are aligned to prevent achieve planned decant • Continue to comply with Covid restrictions in the workplace, ensure risk assessments are in place, leadership development and support to ensure managers understand their role in supporting staff, provision of support via occupational health 					

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Growth Strategy	Richard Crook	<p>Our Growth Strategy involves a programme of housing development that will see an impact on our revenue streams through increase Council Tax. This will contribute to the MTFS and is a critical element of building strong communities.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring back into use 5-10% of vacant properties per annum (circa 40) To support the delivery of circa 400 new houses by 2023 To increase the economic competitiveness of Blaenau Gwent in the 2022 UKCI To secure £548,000 pa into the local economy with 100 households attracted/retained in BG To implement water and wind turbines to generate 3.6 mW and £2.5m of investment To have commenced an investment portfolio for BG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote housing sites for private development Continue to administer loans and grants for vacant properties (post covid) Work through planning process on housing sites SAB issues - address (Davies, Works) Delivery programme for EV School site, to inform build out rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint new vacant property officer Begin 'investment portfolio' with Industrial Units review Silent Valley wind turbine scoping and planning Lovell's site 65% built 50% sold Persimmon site starts build SUDs scheme approved for Davies site Stage 2 decision on Ashvale Planning/SABS Northgate Delivery programme Northgate Development brief Civic Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal launch Energy Prospectus linked to COP26 CCR approval for Tredegar? Completion of Golwg Y Bryn Completion of Greenacres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 					
							Financial Management:-		Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)		
		Estimated Financial Achievement					21/22 Q1 and Q2 updates:				
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025							
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000							
184	230	300	100	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golwg Y Bryn - £16.8 million Lovell development of 100 homes (70 open market, 30 affordable). During Q1 12 OM and 9 SR units completed, which brings the number of units to date to 77 completed, 68 of which are open market. The development will be completed during Q2. Max Council Tax return associated with the development £142k. Carn Y Cefn – £29million Persimmon development of 277 homes (222 private, 55 affordable). The development is onsite, show home will open Q3, first homes occupied Q2 22/23. Annual build target 30 units (up to 50 depending on sales demand). 5 phase development. Max Council Tax return associated with the development £316k. Northgate – 56 homes (51 open market, 5 affordable). Anticipated start on site Q3 21/22. The first homes will be completed Q1/Q2 2022/23. Annual build rate 25 – 30 per/annum, 2 year build programme. Max Council Tax return associated with the development £108k. Ashvale – Circa 70 homes (63 open market, 7 affordable). Dependent on CCR funding (determination Q3) and subject to contract Max Council Tax return associated with the development £120k. <p>*max CT return does not make consideration to any applied discounts, working assumption is 80% paying full CT tax and relates to open market homes (not social rent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Centre framework being prepared by the Urbanists to inform the development brief to be developed in Q3 Nantyglo School Site; members briefing to be scheduled for Q3 to outline a proposed development programme to bring forward the site. 12 'Empty Property Grants' received approval in Q1, which amount to the value of £287,963.44 and 1 property was completed and brought back into use. 2 Houses to Homes applications were approved and amounted to a total of £50,000. 						
Risk Management:-											
Risks / Issues					Mitigating Actions						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SABS decisions causing delays on development Internal staff resources e.g. planning to make determination on applications Escalating material costs associated with development Increasing house prices/demand – potential stall to the upward trend Supply outstrips demand 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing discussions with the SAB approving body and developers Contingency with funding applications Positive uplift in Social Housing Grant to assist development where appropriate Monitoring activity and close liaison with developers Development programme considered alongside wider policy docs and strategies e.g. LDP/Empty Property 						

Review Title	Lead Officer/Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Low Carbon	Michelle Morris	Develop a Low Carbon Plan which sets out an ambitious vision and targets for BG to become a Low Carbon Borough and supports the corporate objectives of being a more Efficient Council and Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities. <u>Intended outcome</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readiness Assessment (RA) – Transport (Direct) complete Response to BG Climate Assembly findings complete Agree high level timeline for RA for all Transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring Report to Scrutiny Committee Monitor/Progress delivery of actions from RA – Transport (Direct) Complete 2nd RA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 3rd RA Annual Report to Council Monitor/Progress delivery of actions from completed RA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 4th RA Monitor/Progress delivery of actions from completed RA
Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)			
Estimated Financial Achievement			Quarter 1 –			
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA Transport Direct (complete) Response to CA – in progress Timeline – in progress 	
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
138	0	200	200	200		
Risk Management:-						
Risks / Issues				Mitigating Actions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New investment may be required to ensure that actions can be progressed to support transition to carbon neutral Need to ensure that policy development/service re-design is under-pinned by the principles of achieving carbon neutral council Capital Programme needs to support delivery through investment in the right designs and technology e.g. carbon neutral buildings 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA need to identify funding gaps/opportunities or where we need to change funding model to support this work All Committee Reports to identify impact on carbon emissions to ensure that the organisation builds a more sustainable future All investment decisions need to include impact on carbon emissions and ensure the Council only invests in low carbon or carbon free solutions 		

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables
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Use of external grants	Bernadette Elias	<p>Scope of the Review This strategic business review is concerned with deployment of additional grant funding that is available to the council and its partners. It is estimated that the organisation receives approximately £22m additional funding to support our priorities. This review will explore how the grants are utilised across the council to deliver outcomes for our residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start Review and update of the grants register with resource colleagues Initial scoping for review of Regeneration grants with service and finance colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated grants register on SCCB agenda and presented quarterly to keep organisational oversight Finalise and agree scope for Regen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings from review of Regen presented to SCCB Quarterly reporting of grants register ICF reporting through democratic process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly reporting of grants register Focus of next phase of review agreed
		<p>This review will also consider the impact of the removal of these grants and the risk placed on core funding.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better organisational oversight of how grants support our corporate priority areas. Clearer lines of accountability with identified leads to ensure delivery of intended outcomes and management of risk to core funding. 				
Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial work planning for updating the Grants Register to be progressed in Quarter 2 Initial work on scoping of Regeneration and Economy phase undertaken, with scoping meeting with the Service area is planned for September 2021. 						
Risk Management:-						
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 						

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables				
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Developing our customer experience and digital ambitions	Bernadette Elias	<p>This review supports the customer focus and use of technology themes in the Commercial strategy</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Customer Service experience for residents of the borough Creation of Community Hub model Delivery of 12-month Digital programme set out for Council Collaboration with NPT and Torfaen on Digital projects – best practice to be shared across Council Development of Leadership & Development opportunities Links into ICT investment roadmap 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Centre review commenced focussing on Customer Service delivery Working with community services, mapping process and understanding customer experience Development and introduction of service level standards, Review of answerphone message Review of out of hours' service Community Hubs model preparation and development <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital programme to support the new operating model Progression of externally supported digital projects, Adult Social Care, GovPay, Tech Valley and Democracy Planning for Leadership & Development opportunities to raise awareness and scope of digital Digital apprentice role developed 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development of Contact Centre review – focus on training / skills gap to support improved service delivery Local out of hours' service delivery from July 2021 Community hubs implementation <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital programme to support the new operating model, hybrid democratic meeting arrangements, service move to digital offer where this focus is most needed Leadership and Development awareness sessions– in progress Findings of Digital projects delivered with other Local Authorities, sharing learning Digital apprentice role recruited 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community hubs implementation and review to inform next phase of development Scoping of Customer Service Standards development <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> digital programme to support the new operating model, hybrid democratic meeting arrangements, service move to digital offer where this focus is most needed Leadership and Development awareness sessions– in progress Developing the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development of Community Hubs model Scoping of Working towards excellence in Customer Service delivery – charter mark for Customer Services across the Council <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> digital programme to support the new operating model, hybrid democratic meeting arrangements, service move to digital offer where this focus is most needed Leadership and Development awareness sessions– in progress Developing the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience 					
			Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)					
			Estimated Financial Achievement			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community services, mapping sessions held focusing on full end to end process Development of service level standards – setting residents expectations on delivery of services Review of answerphone message, findings were that it was very long and protracted. Queuing system introduced Review of out of hours' service, identified that the existing provider was not delivering great service from Customer perspective – resulting in change of providers from July 2021 (Q2) Community Hubs model preparation and development, phase 1 delivery commenced 21st June 2021 <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital programme to support the new operating model developed – attendance at DMT meetings to understand needs of services as we move into next phases of delivery Corporate road map developed – now, next, later setting out technical objectives Progression of externally supported digital projects, Adult Social Care, GovPay, Tech Valley and Democracy 					

- Planning for Leadership & Development opportunities to raise awareness and scope of digital – linking into offers from Centre for Digital Public Services and increasing knowledge of staff and members
- Digital apprentice role developed, appointed and inducted as part of Tech Valleys project focussing on waste and recycling services

£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
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Risk Management:-

Risks / Issues	Mitigating Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Prevention and early intervention services	Damien McCann / Lynn Phillips	<p>This review will focus on an evaluation of the long term impact of prevention and early intervention on reducing the requirement for high cost services and better outcomes for our most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>Approach potentially involves children and young people transitioning to adulthood to maximise the preventative benefits. Links to NEETs, Recovery/Renewal and Adult Social Care.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning meeting to take place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing Paper to SCCB Board for discussion regarding seeking external consultancy support. 		

Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes)

- CLT have had initial update and requested further information on overall strategic approach etc
- CLT agreed the corporate nature of this strand of work

Risk Management:-

Risks / Issues	Mitigating Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables	
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Using data and behaviour insight to help deliver better services	Bernadette Elias	<p>Becoming a 21st Century Council means using data and insight to drive decision making. This Strategic Business Review will identify opportunities for the sharing and use of data to design services around the customer.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <p>The insight from quantitative and qualitative data is recognised as a valuable asset across the organisation.</p> <p>Data is used insightfully and routinely in service re design, analytics and performance monitoring to support better outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build the data work streams supporting recovery Audit Wales data review- initial findings and scoping for next phase workshop. Nesta data maturity assessment framework. Behavioural science- early scoping of potential leadership session on applying the MINDSET methodology to service delivery Programme of WLGA funded sessions on user experience, content design and service re design delivered Cardiff University data science academy- summer MSc placement. Expression of interest and proposal submitted Assessment of Well Being planning for next round of Well Being plans in progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit Wales data review, next phases and findings Revisit Data application to BTgap reviews eg work done previously on income and debt testing Nesta data maturity assessment against a recovery theme-economic recovery Show and tell from digital projects Developing the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience. applying service re design to a prioritised programme of service areas including supporting the New Operating Model (NOM). Consideration of applying MINDSET to a pilot programme of service areas, potentially including the NOM Cardiff university placement progression Assessment of Well Being development through the regional sub group of GSWAG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience Testing Nesta data maturity assessment against a recovery theme Cardiff university MSc final product delivery Assessment of Well Being development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardiff university MSc --- exploring ways to use the product Assessment of Well Being mature product Development of a research and data programme for the organisational to include external opportunities, behavioural science potential and learning from Nesta assessment, intelligence hub and service re design work
			<p>Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery meetings have been taking place and there has been a performance and data presence at each one. Draft recovery indicators are being developed for discussion at the August meeting. These are at a population and performance level. Discussions have also taken place on the regional recovery PIs and how we can locally align to these. Council Tax data profiling has been re-established to support the bridging the gap project to provide the most up to date information. Audit Wales Review on Data agreed as part of their work programme which will support this Bridging the Gap project. Regional PSB is moving forward, the draft is progressing via a GSWAG sub group, the chapters are being split across Gwent. We are overseeing economic and consulting with NRW on environment. Initial draft due Autumn in readiness for professional consultation before sign off in May 2022. Cardiff University provided a student for a project on data and intelligence for community hubs, due to unforeseen circumstances the placement this year was not feasible, agreed to reconsider this next year. 			
Risk Management:-						
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 			

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Agenda Item 17

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**

Report Subject: **Education Directorate – Recovery and Renewal Plan**

Portfolio Holder: **Executive Member of Education, Cllr. Joanne Collins**

Report Submitted by: **Corporate Director of Education, Lynn Phillips,
Head of School Improvement and Inclusion, Luisa
Munro-Morris and Service Manager - Education
Transformation and Business Change, Claire Gardner**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
30.9.21	30.9.21	20.10.21			19.10.21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Executive Committee with an overview of the Education Directorate's identified priorities for recovery and renewal, as part of the response to the COVID-19 situation. Please note additions to this report include the areas of progress in the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan (Appendix 3) as well as the inclusion of an Education Recovery One Page Overview (Appendix 4)

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Executive Committee will be aware that the Corporate Director of Education provides a verbal update to Scrutiny Committee regarding the response to the COVID-19 emergency. In addition, Education has reported on key outcomes, challenges and implications at each stage of the response, including the repurposing and subsequent reopening of schools.
- 2.2 This report provides an overview of progress made during the planning phase of Education recovery, along with information on identified priorities for recovery and renewal. The draft recovery and renewal plan is in development and will be a working document, which outlines how the Council will continue to support schools, both during and beyond the pandemic. It is, however, highly likely that we will continue to move between alert levels and thus response and recovery throughout the remainder of this and the next academic year. Therefore, an effective approach to business continuity at each level is required. This is dealt with via the development and review of local COVID-19 Education Guidance document, operational plans and risk assessments. It is also a key feature of the aforementioned plan. An alert level information paper has been produced, which details the operational implications and changes at each stage (please refer to **Appendix 1** for more information).

2.3 **Impact Assessment**

Until the latter part of Spring-term, the Education Directorate was firmly focused on working with and supporting schools to continue to effectively adapt and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. A significant shift in practice, delivery and learning has occurred throughout the course of the pandemic, affecting every aspect of education and all associated provision. Therefore, in order to inform the development of a recovery and renewal plan, the Education Directorate undertook a detailed Impact Assessment to identify key impacts on education from the COVID-19 emergency. Each impact has been RAG rated to measure its seriousness. The following impacts have been identified (please refer to **Appendix 2** for more information):

- 2.4
- **Learners** - Education, social, emotional, physical and mental health implications (short and long-term).
 - **Vulnerable learners** - For those with disabilities and additional needs, provision and processes have been restricted.
 - **School staff** - Professional development, social, emotional, physical/mental health and general wellbeing in line with the need to adapt to blended learning. Staff childcare implications relating to school closure. LA's and schools have been required to establish and implement control and safety measures to support clinically vulnerable staff. This has impacted upon both staff and school operations.
 - **Childcare** - After school and pre-school provision which has been reduced and/or is not available due to COVID restrictions
 - **Education staff training** - Staff training needs aligned to operations are not all currently adapted to be delivered online e.g. first aid
 - **Education assets and site management** - Statutory functions, testing and inspection (Health and Safety, Fire Risk Assessment, maintenance and site management, ventilation), operations are regularly reviewed in line with the latest guidance and governed by risk assessments
 - **School operations** – Catering, cleaning and access to school sites, movement in and around the school, trips and visits, visitors, refuse, PPE and resources are all under continual review. These areas are subject to risk assessment and reduced operation in line with the COVID alert level implementation. Changes to the school day have been implemented throughout the school estate to support staggered start and finish times. Changes to statutory functions and regulations which affect school operation e.g. school admissions. ICT infrastructure, devices, access to resources, systems and software for both pupils and staff in line with digital exclusion and blended learning are continually reviewed to support inclusion. Home to school and post 16 transport operations, have been restricted, reconfigured and subject to detailed risk assessment.
 - **School support services** - School support service operation i.e. Educational Psychology, ALN, Social Services etc. has been prohibited on site due to lack of access, which has affected pupil and family engagement and progress. Transition at all phases has been affected by key support services having restricted/no access to schools. Human Resource management processes and engagement via OD are now online focused, but will require review to support effective school operations that were paused due to COVID. Wellbeing support services

require monitoring in terms of access and uptake. Additional insurance and financial implications for schools as a result of the pandemic. EAS support for schools has transitioned to online with a deficit to levels of engagement and to the brokerage of relevant support at all levels e.g. Learning Network Schools (LNS) arrangements.

- **School accountability services** - EAS Challenge Advisors have not been able to hold schools to account and school's data monitoring has been suspended. Estyn has suspended school inspections resulting in risks to school progress – particularly those in a category, who are in a category for longer than planned.
- **School leadership** - School governance has been adapted online, therefore, the evidence base is largely restricted to Headteacher report and narrative. Support for current and new school leaders has been limited to online, and school to school working opportunities have mainly focused on wellbeing and operational issues.
- **Poverty** - Family entitlement to benefits has increased across Blaenau Gwent and the region, including free school meals. Additional funding has been allocated to support these families, however, many schemes are not sustainable and so the ongoing impact will need to be assessed.
- **School community** - Limited face to face contact and the shift to online engagement has challenged communication and relationships.
- **School development** - School development plans have had to be largely adapted in order to react to COVID-19.
- **Safeguarding** - School closure has meant that children and young people have had limited access to on-site school support e.g. adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Service support intelligence and capability has been restricted. Vulnerable adults are more exposed to risk factors with limited access to support services.
- **Voluntary/Third Sector/ Charities work and engagement** - Opportunities to engage partners in school based education delivery and support activities have been restricted significantly due to operational implications associated with COVID-19. Members have both recognised the pressures and supported both education and schools throughout the pandemic, need to continue to develop this work.
- **Preventative health measures** - School-based preventative strategies to support healthcare needs of pupils have either been stopped or largely disrupted by COVID-19 i.e. vaccinations, growth and development checks, dental health, period equity etc.
- **COVID-19 control measures** - LA's and schools have implemented a series of control measures in order to manage community health i.e. vaccinations, Lateral flow tests, use of PPE, positive case management and risk assessment.
- **Improved school-to-school partnership working** – need to ensure this continues and is further developed.
- **Significant progress in professional development of staff, and upskilling of pupils e.g. IT/blended learning** – need to ensure this continues and is further developed.
- **Streamlining of services and operations in line with emergency response has been really positive and this has supported schools**

to provide continuity - need to ensure this continues and is further developed.

2.5 The impact assessment process provided the opportunity for reflection and review, learning from which has been taken forward to inform recovery and renewal priorities and planning.

2.6 The relationship between the Council and its schools is stronger than ever before. Our aim is to create a shared vision and associated plan to address key priorities for the future of Education within Blaenau Gwent.

2.7 **Recovery – Priorities**

The Education Directorate's Recovery and Renewal plans are in line with the corporate approach led by the Director of Regeneration and Community Services. It needs to be acknowledged that the impact of the last 18 months on all aspects of our school communities, and in particular the disruption to teaching and learning, is far reaching. Recovery will need to be planned in the short, medium and long term for learner development and progression. The Education Directorate's top priority in the EAS business plan is to:

2.8 *Minimise the impact of COVID-19 on learner development and progress, including improving the digital competency of all learners and staff in the wider Blaenau Gwent school community.*

2.9 **Renewal – Priorities**

Through schools having to adapt to new ways of working, a number of positive outcomes have been evidenced. The Education Directorate will work with relevant stakeholders, including schools and the EAS, to use these outcomes to shape new ways of working across the Education Directorate and throughout the school estate. The core purpose of all schools in Blaenau Gwent will be to provide excellent learning and teaching for all our learners, but this will not mean a return to doing things as they were pre-pandemic, but to use the experience of the pandemic to shape education provision as we move forward.

2.10 **Next Steps and Progress**

- Impact assessment completed
- Key measures to indicate progress identified (**Appendix 4**)
- Baseline and data collection on key measures, September 2021
- Recovery and Renewal targets set, September 2021
- Established protocol September 2021 to support schools under current Operational Guidance
- School Operations Management Group continues to meet (fortnightly/monthly)
- Curriculum Reform and Recovery and Renewal groups set up September 2021 to ensure a strategic approach to the delivery of the Recovery and Renewal Plan
- Detailed action plan for each impact area to be shared with relevant stakeholders by end of September 2021

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report has been discussed by Education DMT, CLT and Scrutiny Committee prior to submission to the Executive Committee. There are two options, namely:

- **Option 1** – Executive Committee considers and accepts the report, associated documentation and proposed course of action.
- **Option 2** – Executive Committee considers the report and provides comments in relation to improvements that can be made in relation to the associated documentation and proposed course of action.

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

4.1 Education is a strategic priority and key to facilitating effective delivery of the Corporate Plan.

4.2 One of the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan is for every child to have the best start in life. The Council seeks to ensure that provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people, so that their progress is in line with ambitious expectations. This is particularly pertinent in an emergency crisis situation.

4.3 There are both statutory and regulatory functions and responsibilities associated with Education. The recovery and renewal plan is an essential component in securing effective and compliant delivery.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report, however, it should be noted that the impact of the COVID-19 emergency response on both Council and school revenue budgets is being closely monitored. The school balances have increased and the overall Education portfolio had a favourable position at year-end for financial year 2020-21.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

There are two strategic risks associated with this report:

1. The impact of COVID-19 on learner progression and pupil regression. This is being mitigated through the Council, EAS and Schools working in collaboration to support learners across the board; and,
2. The risks associated with the provision of safe learning environments to minimise the potential transmission of COVID. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place to mitigate the risks, but the situation is constantly under review and appropriate remedial action is taken e.g. self-isolation protocols are implemented.

5.3 **Legal**

This report provides information relating to the emergency response requirements as well as the specific Education obligations set out in the School Standards and Organisation Act Wales (2013) to support strategic and operational activity to improve pupil outcomes and wellbeing.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

Education are in the process of mapping existing and required datasets (both qualitative and quantitative), analysis of which will inform planning and performance. The two lead officers are working closely with the Policy and Performance team and the Corporate Recovery Group, to develop performance indicators which will be used to monitor and report on progress.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

There is a commitment from the Council and its schools to provide quality education for our children and young people to improve their life chances, despite the challenges faced during the emergency crisis.

6.3 **Involvement**

There has been extensive involvement of key stakeholder both corporately and across the school estate. The planning groups for secondary, primary and special schools that are established, including Headteacher representation has secured a collaborative and corporate response. This collaborative approach will continue throughout the recovery and renewal period.

6.4 **Thinking for the Long term**

This report largely reflects on the emergency response to date, however, there are robust governance arrangements in place to support the next stages of the emergency for the foreseeable future.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

The Council's emergency response has facilitated a preventative approach to minimising the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The report outlines the significant amount of partnership working at a strategic and operational level. This has resulted in a strengthening of the working relationships between the Council, schools and other key partners.

6.7 **Integration**

The emergency response has been a 'One Council' approach.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

Any physical works planned and undertaken within education settings are planned in order to take account of decarbonisation and reducing carbon emissions.

6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**

The existing impact assessment and action plan was created prior to the socio-economic duty commencing. However, an assessment will be carried out in relation to each priority area during the autumn-term review process.

6.9b **EqIA**

The application of EqIA's to each priority has been considered as part of the Education impact assessment process. EqIA's will be undertaken in line with development and implementation of the recovery and renewal plan.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The report has been presented to the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee for monitoring purposes.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Alert Level Implications

Appendix 2 – Education Directorate Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 – Draft Recovery and Renewal Action Plan

Appendix 4 – Education Recovery One Page Overview

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Welsh Government Alert Level Response and Associated Implications for School

Alert Level One – Low Risk

- Schools will be fully operational in line with their COVID Secure Risk Assessment with limited impact upon overall business continuity
- Sports Centres will be open for use under an agreement with schools
- Individual risk assessments will be in place for vulnerable staff and pupils, to support them to continue to access school-sites
- Monitoring of school-based incidence rates will take place on a daily basis
- Sufficient staff will be in place to facilitate the delivery of education, along with all statutory and wider education functions
- School support functions including transport, will be fully operational under a COVID Secure Risk Assessment
- Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement will be carried out on a regular basis
- Local Authority Guidance documents will be in place in respect of both operations and human resources

Alert Level Two – Medium Risk

- Schools will be fully operational in line with their COVID Secure Risk Assessment, with the exception of breakfast and afterschool clubs which will cease operation, along with other associated recreational activity
- Overall business continuity is likely to be impacted, with a reduction in non-essential business
- Sports Centres will be open for use under an agreement with schools
- School operations including the management and use of resources throughout the school will be reviewed
- School site access restrictions will be in place
- Individual risk assessments will be in place for vulnerable staff and pupils
- Additional monitoring measures will be in place to establish and address COVID-19 incidence rates in both pupil and staff populations
- Staff and pupil numbers are likely to fluctuate aligned to self-isolation and increased incidence of COVID-19, with decreasing staff and pupil populations
- Classes and year groups (including associated school staff, support staff and visitor contacts) are likely to be required to self-isolate
- School support staff self-isolation is also more likely i.e. caretaking, catering, cleaning, transport, school crossing patrol staff etc. affecting the delivery of key support services
- Supply staff may be required to cover the delivery of education
- The delivery of education may be impacted, with the need to introduce partial remote learning measures within affected class and/or year groups
- School-based operations will require review on a school-by-school basis based in line with the findings of contact tracing, e.g. the schools COVID Secure Risk Assessment and associated mitigation measures are likely to require review
- Increased Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement may be required
- There is a potential for increased demand for both the Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programmes

- Local Authority guidance documents will be in place for both operations and staff, requiring review at regular intervals

Alert Level Three – High Risk

- School-based operation is likely to decrease in line with COVID Secure Risk Assessment. Breakfast and afterschool clubs, along other associated recreational activity will cease to operate
- Overall business continuity will be impacted with further reductions in services, provision and site-based work
- Sports Centres will be open for use under an agreement with schools, with restricted use likely to affect the delivery of physical education to varying degrees (on a school by school basis)
- School operations including the management and use of resources throughout the school will be reviewed and reduced accordingly
- School site access restrictions will be in place ensuring that only essential visitors are able to access school buildings
- Individual risk assessments for vulnerable staff and pupils are likely to require review
- Increased monitoring measures will be in place to identify and manage increased COVID-19 incidence rates in both pupil and staff populations
- Staff and pupil numbers are likely to decrease aligned to self-isolation and increased incidence of COVID-19
- There will be an increased need to address pupil/family support requirements outside of standard operating procedures, i.e. increased Social and other related service support, digital exclusion, entitlement to free school meals etc.
- Possible increase in staff absence linked to health and welfare
- Classes and Year Groups (including staff) are likely to be required to self-isolate, along with partial and/or full temporary school closures, where it is no longer viable to operate safely
- The school closure protocol will come into effect (i.e. consideration of the ability to fulfil first aid, emergency planning, supervision, support for ALN etc. and to carry out statutory functions)
- In the event of a school closure, consideration will be given to furloughing staff in line with the established criteria
- School support staff self-isolation is highly likely i.e. catering, cleaning, transport, school crossing patrol staff etc. affecting the delivery of key support services
- Higher numbers of supply staff are likely to be required to cover the delivery of education
- Delivery of education is highly likely to be impacted, with the need to move to partial and/or full remote learning
- School-based operations will require review on a school-by-school basis in line with the findings of contact tracing e.g. the schools COVID Secure Risk Assessment and mitigation measures will require review. The introduction of additional control measures is likely to be required, such as the habitual wearing of PPE in classrooms by staff (this falls outside of the WG School Operational Guidance)
- Increased Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement will be required more frequently
- There will be a higher level of demand and impact upon Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programmes

- Local Authority Guidance documents for both operations and staff will require frequent review

Alert Level Four – Very High Risk

- School-based operation is likely to decrease significantly in line with COVID Secure Risk Assessment and review processes. Breakfast and afterschool clubs, along other associated recreational activity, will cease operation
- Overall business continuity will be significantly impacted with services, provision and site-based work being focused on essential and statutory activity/requirements
- Sports Centres will be closed which will impact upon the availability of use by schools and ultimately the delivery of physical education to varying degrees
- School operations including the management and use of resources throughout the school will be reviewed and reduced
- School site access restrictions will be in place ensuring that only essential visitors are able to access school buildings
- Individual risk assessments for vulnerable staff and pupils will require review
- Significantly increased monitoring measures will be in place associated with pupil and staff numbers, including out of hours and duty arrangements
- Staff and pupil numbers will frequently fluctuate aligned to self-isolation and increased incidence of COVID-19, with significant impact expected upon both staff and pupil populations
- There will be an increased need to address pupil/family support requirements outside of standard operating procedure i.e. increased Social and other related service support, digital exclusion, entitlement to free school meals etc.
- There is likely to be an increase in staff absence linked to both health and welfare
- Classes and Year Groups (including staff) will be required to self-isolate, along with partial and/or full temporary school closures associated with a health and safety assessment and where it is no longer viable to operate safely
- School closure protocol comes into effect more frequently (i.e. first aid, emergency planning, supervision, support for ALN etc. along with the ability to carry out statutory functions)
- In the event of a school closure, consideration can be given to furloughing staff where applicable, in line with the established criteria
- School support staff self-isolation will be required i.e. caretaking, catering, cleaning, transport, school crossing patrol etc. affecting the delivery of key support services
- Higher numbers of supply staff will be required to cover the delivery of education (if available and if the school remains open)
- Delivery of education will be impacted, with the need to move to partially and/or fully remote learning
- School-based operations will require review on a school-by-school basis based on the findings of contact tracing e.g. the schools COVID Secure Risk Assessment and mitigation measures will require review with the introduction of additional control measures such as the habitual wearing of PPE in classrooms by staff (this falls outside of the WG School Operational Guidance).
- Increased Local Authority multi-departmental support and engagement will be required more frequently
- Full school closure may be required over a prolonged period, with the requirement to establish provision for vulnerable and key worker children

- Increased impact and demand upon Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programmes
- Local Authority Guidance documents in place for both operations and staff – reviewed more frequently

DRAFT

Education Impact Assessment

Impact Area	*RAG	Key Impacts	Identified Needs / Actions	Responsible
Learners	Amber	Impact of missed time in school – education, social, emotional, physical and mental health implications (short and long-term).	<p>Develop a recovery and renewal plan with a focus on education and wellbeing.</p> <p>Link with national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p>Partnership work with the EAS to broker support in line with the EAS Business Plan.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Vulnerable learners	Red	<p>Impact of missed time in school – education, social, emotional, physical and mental health.</p> <p>For those with disabilities and additional needs, provision and processes have been restricted.</p>	<p>Develop recovery and renewal plan with a focus on provision for vulnerable learners.</p> <p>Link with national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p>Partnership work with Social Services, Health and Safety and the EAS to broker support.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

School staff	Amber	<p>Impact of missed time in school – professional development, social, emotional, physical/mental health and general wellbeing in line with the need to adapt to blended learning.</p> <p>Staff childcare implications relating to school closure.</p> <p>LA's and schools have been required to establish and implement control and safety measures to support clinically vulnerable staff. This has impacted upon both staff and school operations.</p> <p>For those with disabilities and additional needs, provision and processes have been restricted.</p>	<p>Develop recovery and renewal plan</p> <p>Link with national and regional priorities.</p> <p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p>Partnership work with OD, Health & Safety and the EAS to broker support.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Childcare	Red	After school and pre-school provision which has been reduced and/or is not available due to COVID restrictions	Childcare operational plans and risk assessments to be reviewed and monitored by the Childcare Sub-group.	Service Manager - ET and BC
Staff training	Red	Staff training needs aligned to operations are not all currently adapted to be delivered online i.e. first aid and RPI	Training plan review in partnership with Health and Safety and OD colleagues.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager -ET and BC
Education assets and site management	Amber	Statutory functions, testing and inspection (Health and Safety, Fire Risk Assessment, maintenance and site management, ventilation), operations are regularly reviewed in line with the latest guidance and governed by risk assessments	<p>Review school operational plans and WG guidance to inform priorities and changes to local guidance and operations.</p> <p>Review guidance and associated policy, risk assessment and operational plan bi-monthly, in partnership</p>	Service Manager - ET and BC

*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

			with Health and Safety and the Technical Working Group.	
School operations	Red/Amber	<p>Catering, cleaning, access to school sites, movement in and around the school, trips and visits, visitors, refuse, PPE and resources are all under continual review. These areas are subject to risk assessment and reduced operation in line with the COVID alert level implementation. Changes to the school day have been implemented throughout the school estate to support staggered start and finish times.</p> <p>Changes to statutory functions and regulations which affect school operation e.g. school admissions.</p> <p>ICT infrastructure, devices, access to resources, systems and software for both pupils and staff in line with digital exclusion and blended learning are continually reviewed to support inclusion.</p> <p>Home to school and post 16 transport operations, have been restricted, reconfigured and subject to detailed risk assessment.</p>	<p>Operational plan to be monitored, provision, guidance and policy to be adapted accordingly.</p> <p>Regular monitoring required as above</p> <p>ICT Plan and associated strategy to be developed in partnership with SRS and the ICT Strategy Group.</p> <p>Monthly review in line with the latest regulations. Procurement and operations review</p>	Service Manager ET and BC
School support services	Red	<p>School support service operation i.e. Educational Psychology, ALN, Social Services etc. has been prohibited due to lack of access, which has affected pupil and family engagement and progress.</p> <p>Transition at all phases has been affected by key support services having restricted/no access to schools.</p> <p>Human Resource management processes and engagement via OD are now online focused, but will require review to support effective school operations that were paused due to COVID.</p>	<p>Inclusion Service review to be undertaken.</p> <p>Transition to be developed.</p> <p>Work with OD to undertake an impact associated and establish an operational plan around schools.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC

*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

		<p>Wellbeing support services require monitoring in terms of access and uptake.</p> <p>Additional insurance and financial implications for schools as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p>EAS support for schools has transitioned to online with a deficit to levels of engagement and to the brokerage of relevant support at all levels e.g. LNS Schools.</p>	<p>Working with Finance and Insurance colleagues to undertake an impact assessment, in order to inform future planning.</p>	
School accountability services	Red	<p>EAS Challenge Advisors have not been able to hold schools to account and school's data monitoring has been suspended.</p> <p>Esytyn has suspended inspection resulting in risks to school – particularly those in a category, who are in for longer than planned.</p>	<p>Review EAS Business Plan in line with WG regulations and guidance.</p> <p>Multi-agency partnership working with Estyn in order to support schools causing concern.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
School leadership	Amber	<p>School governance has been adapted online, therefore, the evidence base is largely restricted to Headteacher report and narrative.</p> <p>Support for current and new school leaders has been limited to online, and school to school working opportunities have mainly focused on wellbeing and operational issues.</p>	<p>Work with the EAS to review current practice for governance and school leadership.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Poverty	Red	<p>Family entitlement to benefits has increased across Blaenau Gwent and the region, including free school meals. Additional funding has been allocated to support these families, however, many schemes are not sustainable and so the ongoing impact will need to be assessed.</p>	<p>Working with Finance and Benefits colleagues to undertake an impact assessment, in order to inform future planning.</p>	Service Manager ET and BC/ Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
School community	Red	<p>Limited face to face contact and the shift to online engagement has challenged communication and relationships.</p>	<p>Provide support for individual schools to address barriers to parent engagement in partnership with the EAS.</p>	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

School development	Amber	School development plans have had to be largely adapted in order to react to COVID-19.	Provide support for individual schools to address barriers to parent engagement in partnership with the EAS.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Safeguarding - children	Red	School closure has meant that children and young people are at greater risk of harm e.g. adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Service support intelligence and capability has been restricted.	Supporting Schools to ensure that they are able to effectively identify and manage risks, via structure an effective multi-agency approach.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Safeguarding - adults	Red	Vulnerable adults are more exposed to risk factors with limited access to support services.	Supporting Schools to ensure that they are able to effectively identify and manage risks, via structure an effective multi-agency approach.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Voluntary/Third Sector/ Charities work and engagement	Red	Opportunities to engage partners have been restricted significantly due to operational implications associated with COVID-19.	Establish a stakeholder re-engagement and support plan for Education and schools.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Preventative health measures	Red	School-based preventative strategies to support healthcare needs of pupils have either been stopped or largely disrupted by COVID-19 i.e. vaccinations, growth and development checks, dental health, period equity etc.	Work closely with ABUHB, Public Health Wales and associated partners to review and develop a school health plan .	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/Service Manager ET and BC
COVID control measures	Amber	LA's and schools have implemented a series of control measures in order to manage community health i.e. vaccinations, Lateral flow tests, use of PPE, positive case management and risk assessment.	Review and evaluate existing control measures in line with the latest guidance, regulations and associated operational plans, in order to inform business continuity planning.	Service Manager ET and BC/Health and Safety

*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

Review of Implementation - Areas that have worked well				
Relationships and Engagement with headteachers	Green	Throughout the course of the pandemic relationships, communication and engagement with school leaders has improved significantly. School leaders have had the opportunity to work together with the Council, shaping provision and informing key developments throughout the response period. In addition, they have been empowered to share and seek solutions to issues which have emerged, whilst working closely with the Council to achieve consistency in delivery methods etc.	Continue with the current engagement format to aid recover and ensure effective engagement and participation opportunities are in place for/with school leaders	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion/ Service Manager ET and BC
Digital inclusion	Amber	Throughout the course of the pandemic both Welsh Government and the Council have worked to secure and invest in devices and connectivity to address digital disadvantage. As a result, there is now an improved understanding of the level of digital disadvantage throughout the school estate. In addition, there are established methods and solutions by which the impact of digital disadvantage can be addressed.	Ensure a full review of provision and requirements takes place, to aid device/provision sustainability plans in line with the Education ICT Strategy and blended learning developments.	Service Manager ET and BC/ Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Business continuity – service design and delivery	Amber	Both schools and associated Council services have established effective service design and delivery models, along with business continuity arrangements, ensuring effective response to the pandemic.	Continue to review operational and business continuity plans, to ensure that alert level response and associated delivery can be managed effectively.	Service Manager ET and BC
Learners	Amber	Many pupils have developed skills through engaging with distance learning e.g. resilience and time management.	Continue to build on these skills in a face-to-face setting, ensure schools provide catch up support for pupils who have not developed such skills/not engaged well with distance learning	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Teaching staff	Amber	Many teachers and teaching assistants have developed their use of ICT to deliver learning, many schools have used ICT in creative and engaging ways to encourage, motivate and support learning.	Continue to build on these skills in a face-to-face setting. Work with the EAS to ensure blended learning continues to	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion

*R – significant impact; A – moderate impact; G – no or limited impact

			be a key priority in school development planning	
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<p>HoSlal</p>	<p><u>Whole school wellbeing and mental health support</u> Evaluate current provision within inclusion team to support school's wellbeing and mental health. Exploration of different support strategies to provide a BG model e.g. Trauma Informed Schools</p>	<p>Meetings with all relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>October - ongoing</p>	<p>Schools have provision in place to support learner's wellbeing</p>	<p>Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive</p>	<p>Next meeting with Caroline Friend re TIS, November 3rd</p>
<p>HoSlal and SMETBC</p>	<p><u>Further develop partnership working and re-establish pre-Covid referral systems and interventions</u> e.g. healthy schools, Post-16 partnership, youth service, education transformation, social services</p>	<p>Attendance at relevant meetings</p>	<p>July 2021 - onwards</p>	<p>Partnership working developed to support pupil wellbeing across all educational settings. Develop cross partnership BG agreed ways of working</p>	<p>Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive. Share good practice across EAS.</p>	<p>Joint planning with healthy schools to provide training for schools on respect and tolerance</p>

Priority 2: Vulnerable Learners

Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
SMETBC	Digitally disadvantaged learners continue to access devices/MI-FI	Licensing and revenue costs funded by WG and LA. Going forward, these costs will be addressed via schools	Ongoing	All digitally disadvantaged learners in BG have access to devices/MI- FI as required	Weekly monitoring is in place coordinated by Education, in partnership with SRS and schools. An evaluation and review is currently underway, to inform plans and provision going forward.	All schools have sufficient devices to facilitate the provision. We currently have: 359 devices and 161 Mi-Fi
SMETBC	Continued support for pupils and families eligible for FSM via direct payments	WG funding	Ongoing	All eligible families receive payments for isolation and holidays	Half-term monitoring and fortnightly reporting via the SitRep	We currently provide payments in line with isolation and holiday periods. Presently, there are 2,785 pupils eligible for FSM, with application rounds re-opened once every half-term.
SMETBC	<u>Re-establishment of Breakfast Clubs with a pilot scheme until the end of October</u>	Time for meetings	March 21 – Summer 21	Pilot in place, with aim to reintroduce BC across BG and increase capacity	Review of BC provision with schools	
SMETBC	<u>Proposal to increase capacity of Pen y Cwm has been approved by Executive Committee, and first phase completed. Second phase</u>	Consultation process, meetings with architects, schools leaders etc.	Summer 21 – ongoing	Pen y Cwm able to meet the needs of learners in BG	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	Phase 1 works complete, Phase 2 work in development and long term planning processes have been initiated in partnership with Planning, Estates and Technical Services

	<u>to be completed by next Autumn term</u>					
HoSlal	<u>Realignment of ALN SLA and EP Service</u> Revised support offer to schools based on school-improving system. Schools to be provided with one offer to access whole school training to support vulnerable learners	Time for meeting with PyC staff	Summer 21 – ongoing	ALN SLA revised in line with new ALN Bill	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	Engagement with all relevant services – revised offer to schools to be sent October 21
HoSlal, Gill Smith, Finance	<u>Analysis of funding to support vulnerable learners</u>	Meeting with Finance and GS. Engagement with stakeholders	October 21	Schools able to best support ALN pupils, within budget	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	Meeting with finance set up for October 21
HoSlal	<u>Review of Inclusion Service</u>	Meetings with all relevant stakeholders	September 21 – August 22	Inclusion service able to meet needs of ALN Bill		
HoSlal	<u>ALN Reform</u>					
HoSlal and Lisa Adams	<u>Review of EHE Policy and practices</u>	Meetings with relevant stakeholders.	June 21 – August 22	Updated Policy to meet needs of EHE learners		
SMETBC	<u>Intimate Care Needs Policy – review Policy</u>	Support from Tredegar Comp				
SMETBC	<u>Accessibility Strategy</u>	Time to review policy/strategy	July 21 – Spring 22	Policy and strategy updated		Updated time line and action plan have been taken via the Council's

HoSlal	<u>Equalities training and support for schools</u>	Meetings to agree agenda and set up training	October 21	Schools able to support vulnerable learners	Monthly monitoring in place, via Accessibility Action plan	political processes with a review having commenced Training for all schools set up for October 20th
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Priority 3: Academic Progress

Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
HoSlal and SMETBC	<u>Curriculum Reform and Build Back Better Group</u>		October 21 – ongoing	School governors/leader are supported to implement school improvement and held to account	SCC meetings/action plans/ Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive EAS monthly CA reports	First meeting to be set up by Emma Jones
HoSlal	<u>Partnership work with the EAS to broker support in line with the EAS Business Plan.</u>	Time for meetings				Fortnightly update meetings with HoSlal and Principle Challenge Advisor
	Co-construction of MER cycle to hold EAS to account for services provided to BG schools		April 21 – September 21	HoSlal has clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of all school settings in BG	Visit notes – not for accountability purposes	
	Fortnightly meetings with PCA to monitor MER cycle and share information about schools	Time for meetings				
	<u>Engagement with STEM</u>		September 21 – December 21	Development of BG offer to support parents, initial pilot stage by December 21, roll out to all schools January 22	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive/ share good practice across EAS	
HoSlal and SMETBC , Richard Crook’s team	Increase opportunities for STEM links across BG schools	Time for meetings and visits				
	Work with Regeneration on the STEM activity					

HoSIal and SMETBC	Promote 5G classroom across BG schools					
HoSIal and SMETBC	<u>Develop a LA blended learning best practice policy</u>					
	Work with the EAS to review current practice for governance and school leadership in current context, to inform future ways of supporting leadership					
HoSIal and SMETBC	Review of support for families accessing Welsh Medium Education working with WG, schools and securing alignment with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	Education, WG and the WEF	2020 – January 2021	Draft WESP submitted wot Welsh Ministers January 2022	Monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis	
HoSIal and SMETBC	Work with Andrew Parker’s team to create Parnt Engagement Survey – to inform the Blended Learning Approach, and to develop engamenet/training					WG and WEF resources have been shared with Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg and parents. The WESP is scheduled for consultation w/c 11.10.21

Priority 4: School Operations

Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Monthly Updates
HoSlaI and SMETBC	<p><u>Survey of schools to identify where training is not up to date e.g. Safeguarding, first aid and Health and Safety -</u> Use information to support schools to access relevant training</p>	TBD	October 2021 – November 2021	Training programme developed aligned to the needs of schools	Termly monitoring with schools	Responsible Persons Training Programme in place for the autumn-term 2021
	<p>Engagement sessions with schools – new protocols in place to support schools to manage positive cases</p>	Education, Environmental Health, TTP and schools	September 2021 – ongoing (monitored fortnightly)	Early identification and monitoring of positive cases	Daily monitoring undertaken and reported via Education to all relevant stakeholders	New process and guidance in place. Daily support is provided via Education and Environmental Health. Comms and guidance in place
	<p>All schools have emergency contact information to support escalation procedures i.e. move to blended learning</p>	Education, Environmental Health and schools	July 2021 – ongoing	Schools are able to effectively respond to case escalation	Daily monitoring undertaken and reported via Education to all relevant stakeholders	One school has moved to blended learning for a year group thus far this term and 3 schools are currently on the watch list. This is monitored daily
	<p>BG updated schools based risk assessment and operational guidance, work with individual schools in order to assess individual operational plans and to advise accordingly.</p>	H&S, Education and Environmental Health	July 2021 – ongoing	Schools operate safely with sufficient measures and controls in place	Daily monitoring between Education, H&S, Environmental Health and Schools	All schools have up to date risk assessments in place

	<p>Review Home to School Transport Policy and established working group to address complex applications and policy and practices</p>	Education and Community Services	July 2021 - ongoing	All eligible pupils and students have access to transport	Fortnightly monitoring	Transport Policy for 2021/22 in place, with the policy agreed for 2022/23 via Executive Committee. The working group meeting on a fortnightly basis and have considered 6 cases to date. A procedural review is underway and will be completed by January 2022
	<p>Monitoring group established around national shortage of drivers – target to address capacity issues as a result of COVID and resource based issues with transport</p>	Education and Community Services	September 2020 – ongoing	Transport solutions are agreed where issues are identified. Meaning all pupils have access to education, without their transport needs presenting a barrier	Daily monitoring	Transport contingency plans are in places and being monitored
	<p>Fire Risk Assessment Review process in place</p>	H&S and Education	September – December 2021	All schools FRA documentation is up to date	Weekly in line with COVID Secure Risk Assessment	FRA reviews have commenced
	<p>Facilities Action Planning with individual schools re-established</p>	H&S and Education	October – December 2021	All schools have up to date Facilities Action Plans	Monthly monitoring is in place	Meetings have commenced with view to completing all action plan

	<p>Summer programme of works completed successfully</p> <p>Autumn works underway</p>	<p>Community Services and Education</p> <p>Community Services and Education</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>September – December 2021</p>	<p>All programmed minor works projects have now been completed</p> <p>All minor works projects complete</p>	<p>Monthly monitoring is in place</p> <p>Monthly monitoring is in place</p>	<p>reviews by October half-term 2021</p> <p>Works have been completed in 18 schools, with snagging undertaken and ongoing monitoring for defects</p> <p>A work programme has been established and is underway</p>
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Education Recovery Plan – Overview

Recovery and Renewal Focus - Education has developed a detailed impact assessment in collaboration with key partners including schools, in order to determine the key priorities for recovery and renewal. The 4 overarching priority areas of focus are as follows:

- **Priority 1 - Learner Wellbeing**
- **Priority 2 - Vulnerable Learners**
- **Priority 3 - Academic Progress**
- **Priority 4 – School Operations**

Present Position - Over the last academic session school operations have been negatively affected by the pandemic. The latest Welsh Government operational guidance seeks to resume normal school operations from the autumn-term 2021. During the 2020/21 academic session, data collection and school's data management was reconfigured and/or suspended, therefore, we are currently working to establish the baseline for the above priorities as at September 2021. However, current levels of COVID within the community are affecting the school's ability to resume normal practice. Therefore, the target for the autumn-term is to establish the baseline.

Implementation Plan - Education has worked to establish a detailed action plan for each impact area. The action plan details the work required with Council services, schools/headteachers, wider partners such as the Education Achievement Service, pupils and parents. In addition, stakeholder engagement and communication plans are in place, with 3 consultative groups having been established as follows:

- Recovery and Renewal Group
- Curriculum Reform Group
- School Operations Management Group

The aim of these groups is to ensure a strategic approach to effective delivery of the action plan, whilst also securing appropriate resources and expertise.

Key Measures to Determine Progress -The following data sets – both qualitative and quantitative, will be used to monitor and measure progress against each impact area:

- Qualitative surveys
- Early years and pre-school uptake
- Admissions data
- Free school meals data
- Attendance and exclusion data
- Referral data (i.e. Social Services)
- Digital Disadvantaged data

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Agenda Item 18

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee meeting: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**

Report Subject: **Improving Schools Programme 2021**

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

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
29.09.21	30.09.21	20.10.21			19.10.21	10.11.21		

1. **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of the report is to provide the Executive Committee with an overview on the BG Improving Schools Programme, in line with national changes to school evaluation, improvement and accountability. The report will also cover the pilot of the new regional approach 2021-2022, which reflects the national changes.

2. **Scope and Background**

The report covers all schools and settings within the County Borough identified by the Education Directorate, supported by the EAS and/or Estyn as needing to improve. The Blaenau Gwent Improving Schools Programme operates within the regional arrangements for supporting schools across South East Wales.

2.1 **Update on School Categorisation 2021-2022: What are the new arrangements for supporting schools?**

School categorisation was suspended during the academic year 2019-2020. In March 2021, Welsh Government consulted on its new draft school improvement guidance (*School Improvement Guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability*). Importantly, the new proposals aim to:

- Strengthen the importance and effectiveness of self-evaluation and improvement planning by schools, which draws on a broad range of evidence;
- Focus on schools' self-evaluations and improvement priorities as the starting point for work with local authorities and regional consortia;
- Consider school performance in its widest sense, with schools evaluated in their own context, supported by a broad range of evidence, bespoke improvement planning and support;
- Ensure that the school's self-evaluation processes identify areas of strengths and priorities for improvement, which are drawn together in a single, strategic school development plan;

- Build on schools' self-evaluations and development plans to work with local authorities and regional consortia to agree the additional support they need to improve; and,
- Identify where schools have strengths and capacity to collaborate with other schools to support them.

As a result of these changes, in 2021-22 all of BG's schools will undergo a Professional Discussion with the LA, EAS and other partners. The discussion will focus on the school's priorities for improvement, the support it requires and may identify practice that is worth sharing. Schools have received a series of briefing sessions across a range of forums, to enable them to prepare for the above new ways of working. During the delivery period of this pilot approach, the views of schools will be regularly gathered, to inform practice moving forward.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee supported Option 2 at its meeting on 19th October 2021.

3.2 **Option 1**

Executive Committee considers the information detailed within the report and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness.

3.3 **Option 2**

Accept the report as provided.

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

4.1 **Corporate Improvement Plan**

Education remains a priority in the Corporate Improvement Plan. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 consolidates, clarifies and reforms the law in relation to intervention in schools causing concern. The Welsh Government's statutory guidance for schools causing concern (February 2014) details the local authority powers of intervention in schools causing concern, the grounds on which those powers can be invoked and the procedures governing the intervention process. A further explanation of this is explained further in Appendix 1, which includes the LA powers of intervention.

4.2 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan Objectives**

Through our Education provision we seek to ensure that provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people so that their progress and performance is ambitious and raises aspirations levels.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget

There are no direct financial implications for this report. However, the Council allocates approximately £42.8 million to schools via the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) to provide high quality education and to improve pupil outcomes. Blaenau Gwent continues to make a financial contribution to the regional EAS arrangements of approximately £364,000 from the core Education Directorate Budget.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

Risk is associated with ineffective processes to ensure good progress against priorities in identified schools. Failure to raise standards is identified as a key risk to the Council, both in terms of reputation and pupil life chances. This is reflected in the Education Directorate and EAS risk registers. Mitigating actions include the routine monitoring of quantitative and qualitative information, regular Securing Improvement Partnership meetings between the Council and the EAS, regular quality assurance meetings within the Education Directorate and across teams and school inspection findings.

There is regular review of a school's progress towards its priorities. School attendance and exclusion figures are monitored on a fortnightly basis. School's safeguarding processes are also closely monitored. Holistic support packages are devised via regular intra Council services meetings between OD, finance, health and safety, education and school governor support services. The quality of provision i.e. the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms is monitored and supported via the EAS. The quality of school leadership is also supported extensively by the EAS via a range of programmes and school-to-school networks.

5.3 Legal

The Improving Schools Programme operates within the legal framework of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no direct staffing or workforce implications arising from this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information

6.1.1 Schools requiring higher levels of support that have made positive progress 2019-2021

Since March 2020, there have been limited opportunities for Council/EAS staff to visit the schools in Blaenau Gwent to work alongside school leaders to undertake self-evaluation activity due to the pandemic. However, in-person opportunities to see provision and practice first-hand resumed to a limited degree during the Summer term 2021 and this has informed the progress evaluation of this report.

Brynmawr Foundation School:

- The school was inspected in October 2019 and placed within the category of schools requiring Special Measures.
- The school continues to be subject to a LA statutory warning notice to improve and intervention is now in place. The LA is currently reviewing the notice during the Autumn term.
- Governance has significantly improved. There are now no additional LA governors on the governing body.
- The school has had several beneficial changes in senior leadership since the core inspection, with 3 new assistant headteachers now in post and key subject leadership changes.
- During the pandemic, the school has engaged very well with EAS support and professional learning.
- A strong support plan is currently in implementation as part of the EAS Learning Network School model, working closely with Cardiff High School, with the headteacher undertaking the role of School Improvement Partner. Coaching and mentoring of leaders forms the core of this support.
- The school is part of the national pilot for *multi-agency support for schools in special measures* national initiative, which involves a range of partners supporting the school and monitoring its progress in a systematic and responsive way, tailored to the specific needs of the school. The next LA led meeting is in early October 2021.
- Estyn will revisit the school to monitor its progress from 5th-8th October 2021.
- In addition to Learning Network School support, the school has engaged in a range of helpful programmes to support improvements in teaching and learning, preparing for curriculum reform, supporting wellbeing of learners and improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners.
- The school engaged very positively with the Celebrate, Share, Support and Refine initiative, which demonstrated that it had in place strong practice during the time of school closure in providing online learning for pupils, and good support for families within the community.

Progress update:

- From evidence seen in limited on-site visits during Summer 2021, there is still work to be done, but the school is making progress against its recommendations with good progress made in strengthening leadership.

Abertillery 3-16 Learning Community:

- The school was inspected in February 2018 and placed in the category of schools requiring significant improvement.
- The school is currently subject to an LA warning notice. The LA is currently reviewing this via the SCC meeting in the Autumn term.
- Governance has improved significantly. Governors have received a planned programme of EAS support and sub-committees are now working well.
- The Learning Community has had several changes in senior leadership since the inspection: a new substantive Headteacher was appointed in

January 2020; a Deputy Phase Lead at Primary was appointed in Spring 2021; a new substantive Secondary Phase Lead started at Easter 2021; a new Secondary Assistant Headteacher started at Easter. The impact of leadership consolidation can now be seen in more consistent provision and practice across the community, with standards in books overall broadly in line with age and stage.

- The school is engaging well with Tonyrefail School as its Learning Network School. On-site visits between the schools commenced in May 2021, and Tonyrefail supported with an EAS/LA verification visit in May 2021, which included the Head of School Improvement and Inclusion.
- In addition to Learning Network School support, the school has engaged in a range of helpful programmes to support improvements in teaching and learning, developing middle leadership, preparing for curriculum reform, supporting wellbeing of learners and improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners.
- The school engaged very positively with the Celebrate, Share, Support and Refine initiative, which demonstrated that it had in place strong practice during the time of school closure in providing online learning for pupils, and good support for families within the community.

Progress update:

- The May verification visit looked at a limited but useful range of first-hand evidence, supporting the view that the school has made satisfactory progress overall against its inspection recommendations.
- Some aspects of the school's progress were identified as strong (e.g. leadership development).
- Estyn will revisit the school to monitor its progress during the autumn or spring terms this year.

Sofrydd Primary School:

- The Local Authority commissioned a Leadership, Management, Teaching and Learning Review at the school, in February 2020. This review found significant shortcomings in the way the school was led and managed.
- A new substantive Headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The governing body is now carrying out all its statutory functions and governors report stronger engagement with the school.
- The school engaged very positively with the Celebrate, Share, Support and Refine initiative, which demonstrated that it had in place strong practice during the time of school closure in providing online learning for pupils, and good support for families within the community.
- The Headteacher worked quickly and effectively to put in place additional nurture provision to support vulnerable learners during their acting period in post. This was supported financially by the LA.
- The school has been supported by a Learning Network School (LNS) arrangement with both Cwrt Rawling Primary School and Blaen-y-Cwm Primary School, which has enabled improvements to be made in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. The school has also engaged well with fortnightly EAS mathematics and STEM in-school support, as

well as programmes to improve outcomes for disadvantaged youngsters and those who have had adverse childhood experiences.

Progress update:

- A formal review of progress against the recommendations of the review in 2020 will take place this term, with the new Headteacher and the leadership team working collaboratively together. This will inform the identification of priorities for improvement moving forward and the school's status under the SCC arrangements.

Schools Causing Concern

The River Centre Learning Community:

- The LA is concerned that the school does not engage with key statutory LA functions and services. The pre-warning letter of Spring 2021, which set out these concerns in detail, did not achieve the compliance required and the school was issued with a Statutory Warning Notice on 14.09.21.
- Schools Causing Concern meetings have not provided the LA or EAS with the assurance of the effectiveness of the school's blended learning provision.
- Staff at the school are now engaging in regional professional learning programmes including engagement with the Distance and Blended Learning training; Newly Qualified Teachers programme; Schools as Learning Organisations and wellbeing training.
- The EAS has supported the Governing Body with training in self-evaluation. Strengthening the Governing Body's effectiveness will continue to be a focus of support.
- Following the school's engagement in the Celebrate, Support, Share and Refine pilot, the EAS has supported with its review and development of distance and blended learning provision.
- The LNS school Ysgol Bryn Castell is supporting, with a focus on: developing an effective School Development Plan; reviewing the school's self-evaluation of teaching and learning, including distance and blended learning; mentoring of leaders; planning for the new curriculum and ALN reform. The school is engaging appropriately overall with this support.
- The school has also received increased support via additional School Improvement Partner (SIP) time, with a specific focus on self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Progress update:

- The LA and EAS will work alongside school leaders to undertake self-evaluation activity during the autumn term 2021 to evaluate provision and practice and agree priorities for improvement.
- From the outcome of the May SCC meeting, it should be noted that the engagement with the Schools Causing Concern process has been unsatisfactory.

6.3 **Expected outcome for the public**

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

The regional pilot of new ways of working to reflect the new national arrangements for school evaluation, improvement and accountability has been evolved through the engagement of a variety of stakeholders including schools and members of governing bodies. A range of Council services and external partners are involved in delivering programmes to support schools requiring improvement. Monitoring progress towards targets enables effective targeting of support.

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

Monitoring school progress against priorities facilitates support for schools to ensure that they achieve and maintain high quality outcomes in the long term.

6.3.3 **Preventative focus**

Through effective monitoring and evaluation of school performance, early identification of emerging areas for improvement can be achieved with consequent early intervention to secure improvement. The effectiveness of the LA's monitoring, evaluation and intervention programmes ensure that preventative action is taken early in order to minimise the escalation of concerns.

6.3.4 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The LA collaborates with neighbouring local authorities through the South East Wales Consortium for the provision of School Improvement services through the Education Achievement Service (EAS).

The LA also secures a range of pupil support services such as Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Speech and Language, and Ethnic Minority support services through regional collaboration. Within the LA, the school improvement and inclusion leadership teams ensure that there is a coordinated approach to supporting schools in the Education Directorate and across the Council as a whole.

6.3.5 **Integration (across service areas)**

The LA commissions its school improvement function on a regional basis.

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

There is no requirement for EQIA assessment since this is not a change of policy or practice. However, implementation of the LA's monitoring, evaluation and intervention practice in schools has a positive impact on children and young people and on staff within a particular school. By improving the quality of education, standards are improved for all children and young people. Through the LA's school improvement strategy, particular focus is given to vulnerable learners and those who are at risk of underachievement.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 Monitoring of improvement pathways is an important mechanism for ensuring that Executive Committee are sufficiently informed to enable them to hold the authority to account effectively for the quality of education provision and hence pupil outcomes.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Schools Causing Concern operational appendix



EAS

Education Achievement Service
for South East Wales
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru

Schools Causing Concern

Operational appendix for meetings of
Schools Causing Concern

Updated September 2020

Schools Causing Concern Meetings:

A Schools Causing Concern meeting can be requested by the local authority when a school is considered to be a 'school which causes concern' or is at risk of 'becoming a school which causes concern'. A School Causing Concern meeting will be arranged when a school:

- Is placed in a red or amber category;
- Has received a local authority warning notice;
- Is placed in an Estyn statutory category of requiring Significant Improvement or Special Measures;
- Evidences that enhanced support and challenge is required linked to grounds 1-6 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 for Schools Causing Concern.

Meetings may be arranged when a school;

- Is placed in a yellow or green category but its capacity to improve is not secure and / or the pace of improvement is too slow.
- Is in an Estyn review category.
- Is identified as a risk in relation to a review or audit, which has been conducted by the LA or EAS. This may include for example; Finance, Health & Safety and Safeguarding Audits or Leadership and ALN Reviews.
- Demonstrates evidences that enhanced support and challenge is required linked to grounds 1-6 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

Within the Welsh Government guidance on Schools Causing Concern, the six grounds for intervention are:

Ground 1	The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low.
Ground 2	There has been a breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed.
Ground 3	The behaviour of pupils at the school or any action taken by those pupils or their parents is severely prejudicing, or is likely to severely prejudice, the education of any pupils at the school.
Ground 4	The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise).
Ground 5	The governing body or head teacher has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a duty under the Education Acts.
Ground 6	The governing body or head teacher has acted or is proposing to act unreasonably in the exercise of any of its, his, or her functions under the Education Acts.

Terms of Reference

Membership of a Schools Causing Concern Meeting

A Schools Causing Concern meeting is a collaborative meeting between a school, the local authority and the EAS. Key individuals are essential to the meeting. Essential members are listed below:

Director of Education / Chief Education Officer (or representative of)
Head of School Standards (LA)
Head Teacher
Chair of Governing Body or Vice Chair (in exceptional circumstances)
EAS Representative

The following members will attend at the request of the Executive Member / Cabinet Member for Education, Chief Education Officer or Managing Director of the EAS:

Executive / Cabinet Member for Education
Managing Director / Director / Assistant Director EAS

On occasions, additional school, LA or EAS staff will be required to attend. Additional members may include:

Additional Senior Leaders or Heads of Department from schools
Additional EAS Representatives
Additional Senior Leaders, HR, Finance or Health and Safety Offices from the local authority.

Aims of a Schools Causing Concern Meeting

School Causing Concern meetings form part of a wider drive by SEWC LAs and EAS to improve educational outcomes for all children and young people. The local authority and EAS roles will be principally:

- To review and evaluate pace and progress in relation to identified School Development Plan priorities.
- To challenge the Headteacher and Governing Body on the rates of progress in their school.
- To recommend and monitor actions aimed at accelerating improvement.
- To consider the extent to which the school has been successful in achieving required improvement. This will determine future actions by the LA and EAS. This may encompass:

Schools Causing Concern Progress Judgements:

1. The school has made strong progress and will not be required to attend Schools Causing Concern meetings. *The support level of the school will be reduced.
2. The school has made *satisfactory/ *strong progress but will need to continue to attend Schools Causing Concern meetings to enable the impact of improvements to become consistent and embedded.
3. The school demonstrates limited progress. *It is advised that the local authority determine appropriate next steps of action agreed with the agreed Schools Causing Concern policy.

*delete as appropriate

Process

- The local authority will determine the venue for meetings*. Generally, meetings will be held in local authority offices unless there is a specific reason for holding the meeting at the school.
*Meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams where this is deemed appropriate for 2020-2021
- The Director of Education or Cabinet Member / Executive Member for Education will chair the meeting.
- The local authority will facilitate the meetings. The local authority will take minutes of the meeting.
- The agenda will be agreed at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting. The local authority should ensure that further notice is given whenever possible, enabling the school to fully prepare for the meeting. Ideally, the next agenda should be discussed at the end of a Schools Causing Concern meeting. This discussion will include details of specific areas the local authority and EAS wish to focus upon and those persons required to attend.
- Schools will be requested to present evidence to demonstrate progress linked to their School Development Plan / PIAP. Therefore, all reports presented at Schools Causing Concern meetings must practically align to the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. Local authorities reserve the right to request first hand evidence linked to specific reports. This may include pupil data, pupil books, minutes of departmental meetings, SLT meetings and reports to Governing Bodies. (This list is not intended to be exhaustive).
- Schools will prepare and submit progress reports or updates of their School Development Plan to the local authority 5 working days prior to the meetings. All documents to be distributed to all attendees at least 3 working days in advance of the meeting.
- School may use the meetings to discuss brokered support, their on-going challenges / barriers to improvement and any additional support requirements.
- The school will be expected to discuss its progress, obstacles to improvement, and any further planned actions.
- The LA and EAS will provide a view on a range of aspects relating to the school's key successes and barriers. These aspects may include the school's level of engagement, its pace and progress, its capacity to improve and required future support from the LA and EAS.
- Where a school is requested to attend a Schools Causing Concern meeting, the local authority may choose to discuss and focus on a range of issues, which can contribute to successful school performance and pupil outcomes. This should include a focus on pupil exclusions, attendance, wellbeing, vulnerable group data, performance management arrangement, parent engagement etc. (This list is not intended to be exhaustive).
- Confidential items will not be recorded within minutes. The nature of confidential discussion will be agreed between the school, local authority and the EAS. The local authority reserves the right to see either the Headteacher or Chair of Governors individually by request.
- The LA will provide a view of the schools' improvement and its need for further support using Schools Causing Progress Judgements 1-3 (indicated on page 3).
- Local authority and EAS staff will participate in a pre-briefing and debriefing session before and after a Schools Causing Concern meeting.

Schedule /Timings of Meetings

For schools requiring the highest levels of support, monthly meetings will be established. All Schools Causing Concern will be requested to attend a meeting every half term.

It is expected that a School Causing Concern meeting will last no longer than 1.5 hours.

The local authority will aim to agree and issue meeting dates at least 6 weeks in advance. The local authority will invite EAS representatives, the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors. The Head Teacher will invite any additional staff or Senior Leaders whose attendance has been requested.

The local authority will record and circulate minutes of meetings. All minutes should be circulated to the school, LA and EAS within 10 working days.

Agenda

The standing agenda for all Schools Causing Concern meetings is:

1. Welcome and apologies.
2. Specific actions or matters arising from the previous meeting.
3. Head teacher led discussion* based around the school's progress against the School Development Plan priorities (agreed prior to the meeting), including any reports verifying evidence of progress. Other Senior Leaders or Heads of Department may lead specific / appropriate reports by request. * This discussion should include any plans for managing the context of the school in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic and plans for blended / distance learning should this be required.
4. School led discussion* linked to the progress of all learners, including vulnerable groups. *This should include plans for intervention and support following the extended absence of many pupils from school during the Covid 19 pandemic and the progress this group are making.
5. EAS overview of support provided and commentary of progress made by the school.
6. Conclusions / next steps.
7. A.O.B / Future agenda items.
8. Confidential matters to be discussed in the presence of the local authority, EAS, the Head and/ or the Chair of Governors.
9. Meeting close.

A 15-minute LA and EAS pre-brief / debrief will take place before and after each meeting. The school will not be invited to participate.

Improvement Conferences:

It is recognised that a Schools Causing Concern meeting is time limited which can restrict the length of the agenda. On occasions an extended meeting will be required to consider:

- The pace of progress linked to School Development Plan priorities and the identified support required.
- Why a school is not improving and has become 'stuck'.
- The level and range of support a school has received and its impact.
- The use of local authority statutory powers.

An improvement Conference will act as an extended and focussed meeting. This could be considered as an escalation of concern. The meeting will be scheduled over at least half a day and will be chaired and by either:

- The Executive/ Cabinet Member for Education
- The Chief Education Officer
- A Chief Education Officer from within the region but not from within the LA
- The Managing Director / Director of the EAS

At this stage the local authority will determine the agenda in conjunction with the school with at least 3 weeks' notice. Minutes will be kept as a record of the meeting and shared with all in attendance.

Persons Present:
 Apologies:
 Date of meeting:

School Development Priorities
•
Local Targets
•

Actions completed since last Schools Causing Concern Meeting (School / LA / EAS)
•
Main issues arising from Meeting
•
Schools Causing Concern Progress Judgement (1-3):

Actions for the school (to include timescales):

Actions		Timescales
1.		
2.		

Actions for the LA (to include timescales):

Actions		Timescales
1.		
2.		

Actions for the EAS (to include timescales):

Actions		Timescales
1.		
2.		

Next Meeting: (Date)

Next Agenda Items: (Draft)

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Agenda Item 19

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Pupil Exclusions**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanne Collins, Executive Member for Education**
Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Corporate Director of Education**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
29.09.21	30.09.21	20.10.21			19.10.21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Executive Committee with an overview of the internal exclusion data for Blaenau Gwent in both the primary and secondary school sectors for the academic year 2020-21, as well as the regional exclusion data for the academic year 2019-20.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The key Exclusion Guidance is the Welsh Government Guidance entitled: 'Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units' (Updated November 2019).

2.2 By law (section 52(4) of the Education Act 2002), headteachers, governing bodies, LAs and independent appeal panels must have regard to this guidance when making decisions on exclusion and administering the exclusion procedures and appeals. There is a strong expectation that the guidance will be followed unless there is good reason to depart from it.

2.3 The guidance is very helpful and very prescriptive. For example, the guidance states that only the headteacher can exclude a learner and that unofficial exclusions – sending learners home unofficially – is unlawful. This approach means that the Education Directorate's guidance to schools, and the practice in place in schools, reflects the processes set out in the WG guidance.

2.4 The WG guidance includes template letters for informing parents following an exclusion, and at every stage of the exclusion disciplinary process.

2.5 The Council's Exclusion Guidance for schools, as well as including much of the WG guidance, provides additional local information such as process flowcharts, a standardised reporting format and a checklist for head teachers to ensure that the decision to exclude has been carefully considered and is being used as a last resort.

2.6 Section 6.1 of this report provides the performance information data relating to exclusions.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee supported Option 1 at its meeting on 19th October 2021.

3.2 **Option 1:** Executive Committee considers the information detailed within the report, thereby contributing to continuous self-evaluation.

3.3 **Option 2:** Accept the report as provided.

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

4.1 This work supports the Corporate Plan - Education priority one namely to improve pupil outcomes, progress and wellbeing. It also contributes to priority three regarding supporting school leaders to help our pupils achieve their ambitions.

4.2 This work also supports our strategic responsibilities with regard to Objective 2: to progress our Vision for Education (school led, self-improving system based on effective school to school collaboration), as well as Objective 4: the securing of effective, efficient and economical high quality provision for our vulnerable learners.

4.3 This focus also contributes to the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan, specifically to help support children and young people to have confidence and aspiration to develop their full potential and places a high value on education and development.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 *Impact on Budget*

5.1.1 The Council is required by the Education Act 1996 to ensure that pupils who have been permanently excluded are in receipt of an appropriate education after fifteen days. If an alternative mainstream school is not appropriate then it becomes necessary to arrange a placement in either an out of county special school or our SEBD (social, emotional and behaviour difficulties) school. There are of course significant cost implications with placing a pupil out of county. In terms of in county placement, which is always the preferred option, tuition costs may be incurred whilst placement is being facilitated. There are no budgetary implications in terms of fixed term exclusions although schools make provision to meet pupil need from within their own budgets to avoid or reduce the likelihood of fixed term exclusions.

5.2 **Risk**

5.2.1 There is an ongoing need to minimise exclusions so that pupils are attending school on a regular basis and are able to maximise their potential.

5.2.2 Failure to ensure that there is robust monitoring of exclusions in schools and of the quality of Council services to support school improvement carries with it a number of significant risks:

- 5.2.3
- Undetected and unaddressed decline in school performance and the quality of provision
 - Students do not achieve to acceptable levels
 - Lack of overall improvement in schools' performance
 - Negative impact on the reputation of the Council

5.2.4 Similarly, ineffective monitoring of Council Services also poses a range of risks including:

- Reducing standards and quality of provision in schools
- Poor value for money
- Ineffective support for schools which hinders their improvement
- Negative impact on the reputation of the Council

5.2.5 **Mitigating factors**

There is a need to introduce a number of measures to support schools to reduce exclusions. Please see section, **The Inclusion Service Priorities to Improve Exclusions**

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications for this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 Performance Information and Data

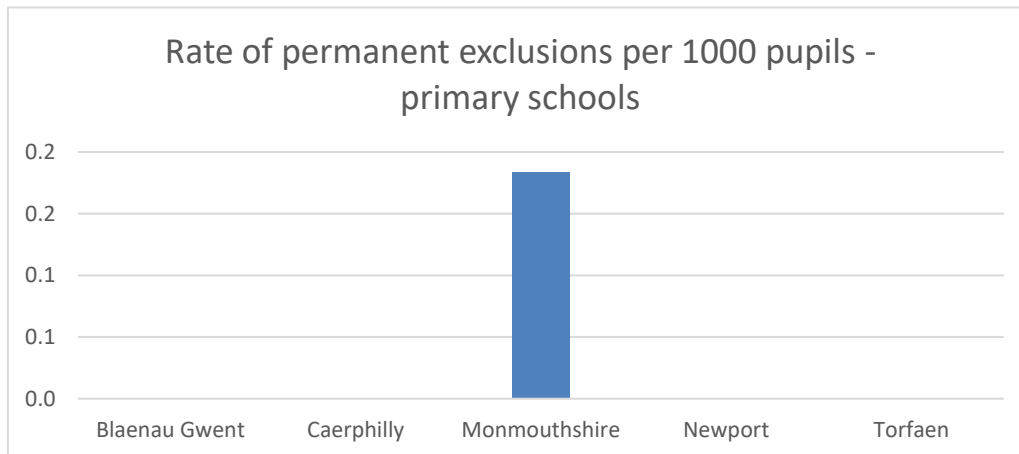
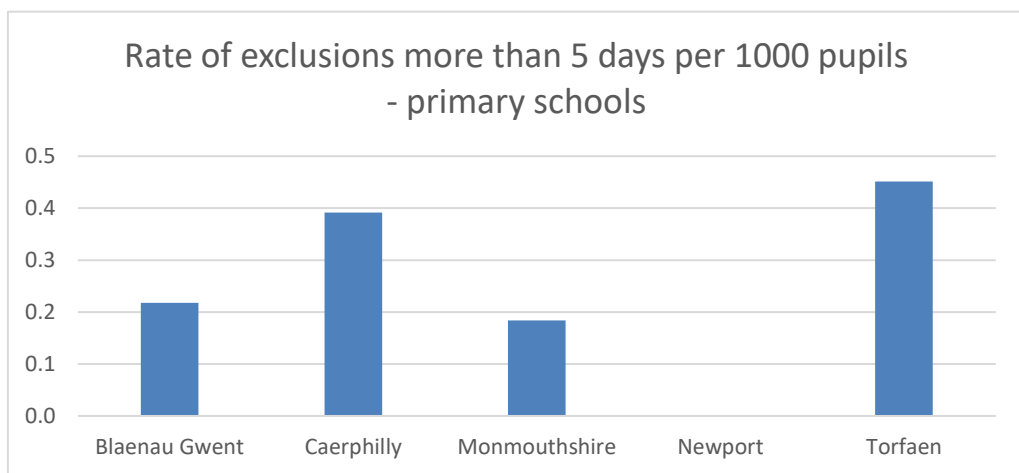
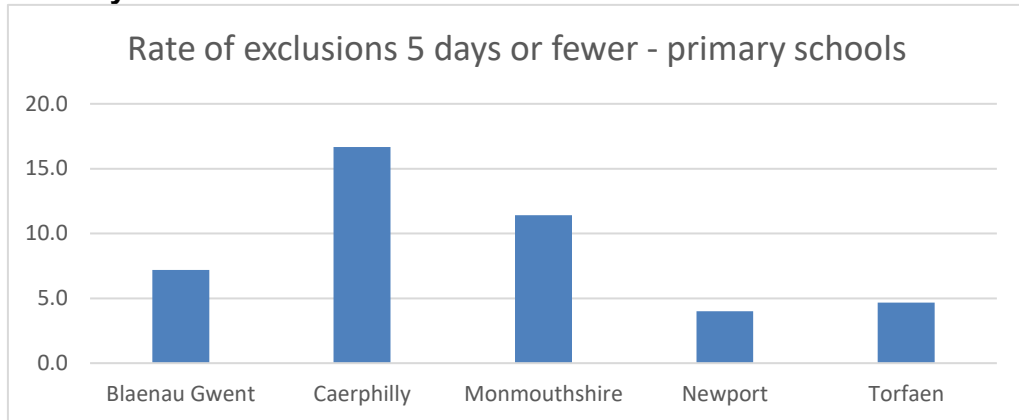
6.1.2 **The National Analysis**

The last Welsh Government data published in October 2020, reported on national 2018/19 data and this information has previously been presented to Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee.

6.1.3 **The SEWC Regional Analysis**

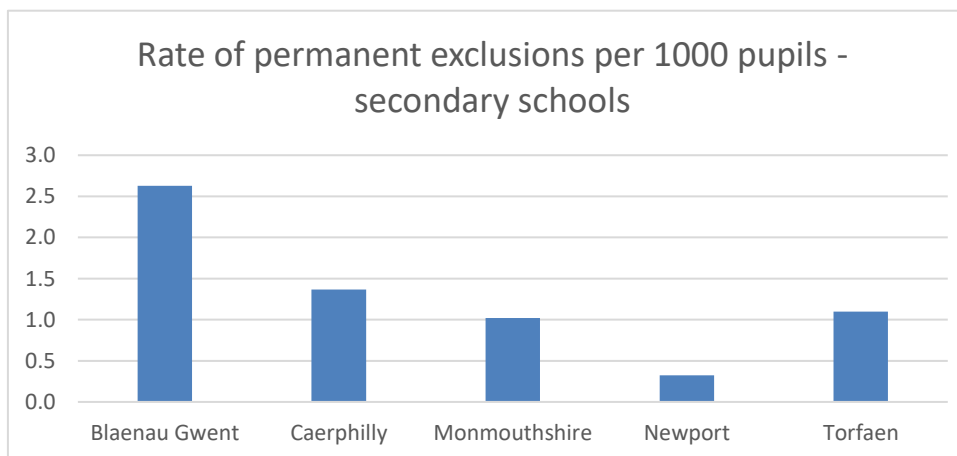
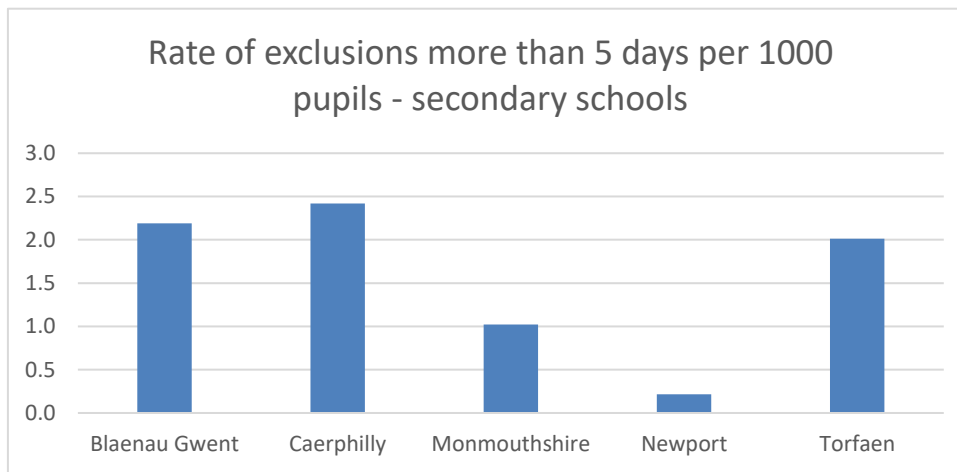
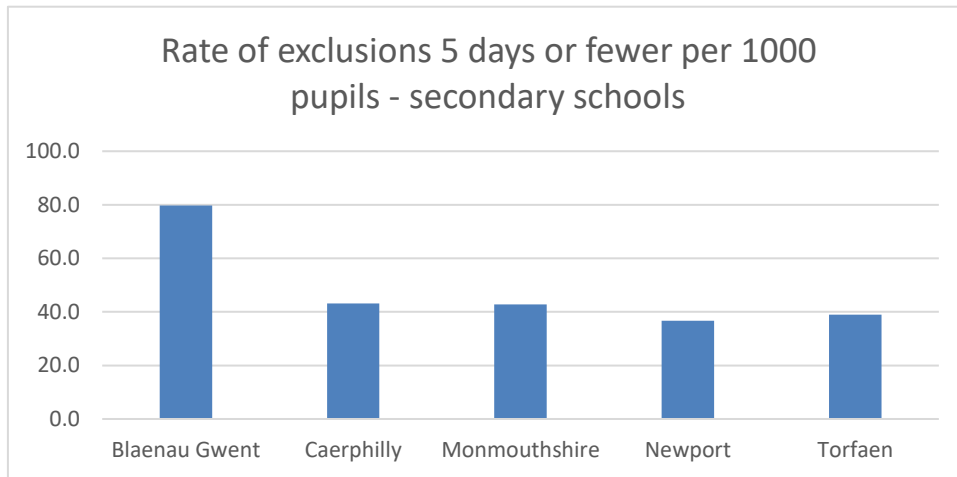
The SEWC regional comparisons are available for the 19/20 academic year as detailed overleaf

6.1.4 Primary Schools



6.1.5 For rate of 6 days or more and 5 days or less Blaenau Gwent was 3/5 (where 1 is the least excluding). The rate of exclusions per 1,000 pupils was 0.2 and 7.2 respectively. There were no primary permanent exclusions in Blaenau Gwent.

6.1.6 Secondary Schools



6.1.7 For rate of 6 days or more Blaenau Gwent was 4/5 and for 5 days or less Blaenau Gwent was 3/5 (where 1 is the least excluding). The rate of exclusions per 1,000 pupils was 2.2 and 79.7 respectively. The rate of secondary permanent exclusions in Blaenau Gwent was also the highest at a rate of 2.6 per 1,000 pupils.

6.1.8 Exclusion - Analysis Over 4 Years

The table below sets out Blaenau Gwent exclusion data for the last four years.

6.1.9 Number of Exclusions:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
KS3 & KS4	464	446	306	160
5 days or less	450	433	295	155
6 days or more	14	13	11	5
FP & KS2	52	68	67	33
5 days or less	52	64	63	33
6 days or more	0	4	4	0
Total	516	514	373	193

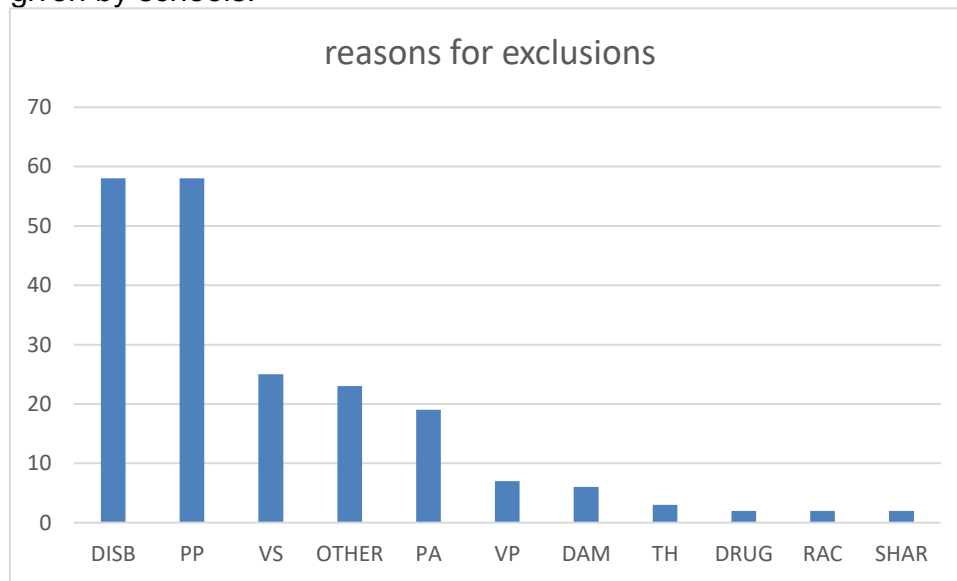
6.1.10 Number of Days:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
KS3 & KS4	872	763	544	259.5
5 days or less	766.5	628.5	430.5	225.5
6 days or more	105.5	134.5	113.5	34
FP & KS2	84.5	225.5	137	47.5
5 days or less	84.5	174.5	111.5	47.5
6 days or more	0	51	25.5	0
Total	956.5	988.5	681	307

6.1.11 Overall, BG have seen a decrease in exclusions in 2020/21 compared to the previous year. However, it is important to note that schools were not open for all pupils between December and March due to the COVID response.

6.1.12 Number of Exclusions by Reason

Below are the reasons given by schools for exclusion. Schools are able to use more than one reason but the data below represents the main reason given by schools.



KEY

DISB - Persistent disruptive behaviour

PP - Physical Assault against pupil

VS - Verbal abuse / threatening behaviour against an adult

OTHER – Other

PA - Physical assault against adult

VP - Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil

DAM – Damage

TH - Theft

DRUG – Drugs/Alcohol

BUL - Bullying

RAC - Racial abuse

SHAR – Sexual Harassment

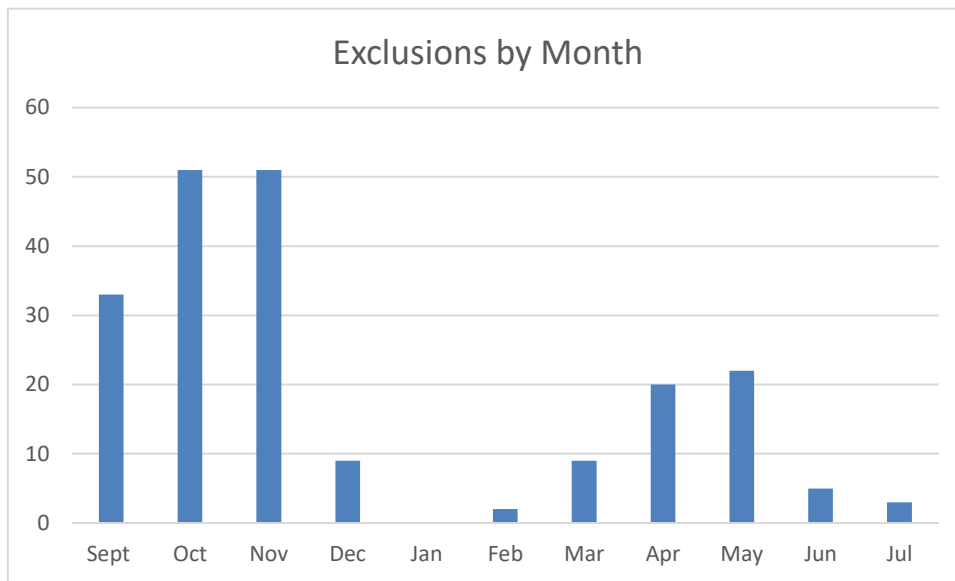
6.1.13 In terms of reasons for exclusion, the main reasons have remained largely unchanged and in line with national trends:

- persistent disruptive behaviour;
- physical assault on a pupil; and,
- verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult.

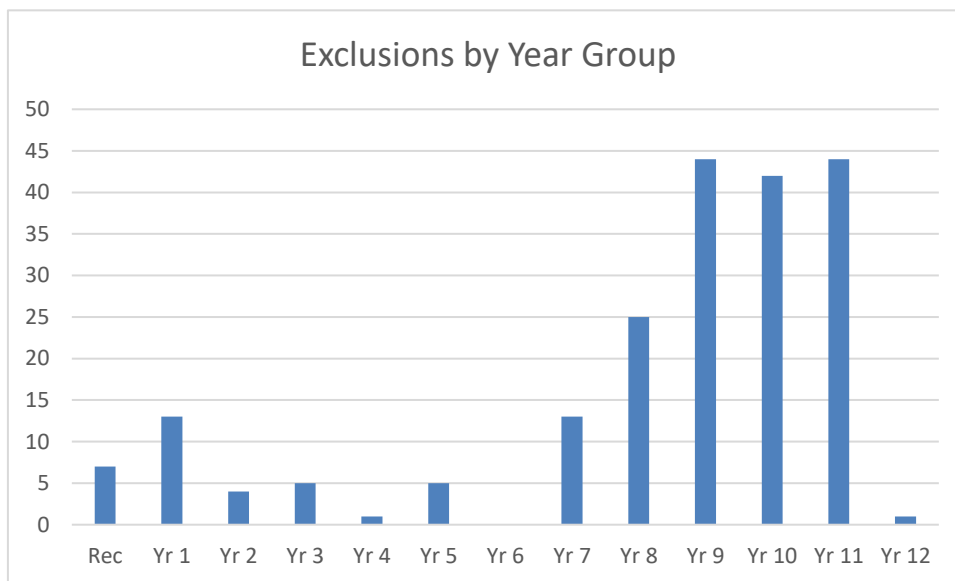
6.1.14 At Primary, the main reason for exclusion was physical assault against a pupil (PP), and accounted for 47% of exclusions.

6.1.15 At Secondary, the main reason for exclusion was persistent disruptive behaviour (DISB), and accounted for 33% of exclusions.

6.1.16 Exclusions by Month



6.1.17 Exclusions by Year Group



6.1.18 Permanent Exclusions

There were a total of six permanent exclusions in 2019/20 compared to three in 2018/19 and nine in 2017/18.

6.1.19 Evaluation of Data and Processes

The Inclusion team evaluation has identified the following considerations:

- Exclusions are too high and need to reduce and this has been identified in the Education Directorate's self-evaluation arrangements.
- Monitoring of pupil level exclusion data by all Inclusion teams has improved and is effective, informing EWS work and dialogue with schools.

- A regional approach to exclusions was under development but has not progressed due to COVID
- Joint working with the EAS has improved but requires further development, specifically relating to challenging schools on the use of exclusions.
- There is excellent behaviour management practice in some schools, however, this needs to be shared more readily.
- There is inconsistent use of exclusions across schools, illustrated by the varying rates of exclusions.
- The local authority arrangements for tuition need to be reviewed to ensure they fully meet need and that tuition is in place for all pupils by day 16.

6.1.20

The Inclusion Service Priorities to Improve Exclusions

- Developing closer working with the Principal Challenge Advisor and Challenge Advisors through the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Group and Wider Group regarding exclusion concerns in identified schools.
- Sharing data and best practice and including actions to reduce exclusions in school support plans.
- Using resources flexibly to support initiatives that help early intervention or reduce exclusions e.g. Positive Futures School provision.
- Developing regional working as part of the SEWC ALN/Inclusion Action Plan to share good practice and facilitate regional school to school working.
- Reviewing the exclusion guidance in the light of a more pupil focused approach.
- Supporting school to school work to improve the management of behaviour across all schools and share good practice in the appropriate use of exclusions.
- Working with the River Centre to further develop the revolving door approach to support reintegration back into mainstream provision.
- Challenging schools where exclusions are too high.
- Developing a Trauma Informed Schools approach model in schools so that schools can help support pupils as opposed to punitive measures being used
- Attempting to reduce exclusions in the Foundation Phase, especially in line with the Children's Commissioner's report and implement the recommendations in the analysis section.
- Issuing the 'building blocks' toolkit to schools.
- Implementing the recommendations from the Police and Crime Commissioner's report on 'Understanding the Triggers'

6.2

Expected outcome for the public

A reduction in exclusions will result in pupils being able to access more education, which will support them to achieve better outcomes, which also reduces the future financial implications on other services.

- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
Exclusion data is monitored regularly and forms a part of the evidence base for other teams' work within the Directorate, the EAS and other Services.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
A focus on reducing school exclusions aligns to the Directorate and Corporate Plan. Reduced exclusion levels will have a positive impact on the life chances of children and young people, better preparing them for their future beyond their time in school.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
Reduced exclusion rates reduces the likelihood of a pupil becoming NEET and increases the likelihood of a pupil achieving well and supports pupils to reach their potential.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
Reducing exclusions has an increasingly high regional profile and is supported through the work of the EAS. Strong links exist with neighbouring LAs as well as within Blaenau Gwent services such as with Children's Services. Working in partnership with other services is fundamental to providing a co-ordinated, effective service to children and young people as well as schools.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
A focus on exclusion impacts upon key objectives within Education as well as in work with Children's Services.
- 6.8 **EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**
There are no adverse equality impacts in relation to the data in this report.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 Exclusions are monitored fortnightly. Annual FADEs for exclusions are prepared and data is provided to Welsh Government.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Welsh Government Exclusion Guidance

<https://gov.wales/exclusion-schools-and-pupil-referral-units-pru>

[Permanent and fixed-term exclusions from schools in Wales, 2017/18 \(gov.wales\)](#)

List of Acronyms

EAS: Education Achievement Service
NEET: Young people not in education, employment or training
SEWC: South East Wales Consortium

Agenda Item 20

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**

Report Subject: **Hybrid Units and Hwb Bocs – Performance Monitoring**

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

Report Submitted by: **Owen Ashton, Service Manager Business & Regeneration**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
19.10.21	21.10.21	20.10.21			03.11.21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a Performance Monitoring update on the Hybrid Units and the Hwb Bocs developments at the Works Site, Ebbw Vale.

2. Scope and Background

Background - Hybrid Units

- 2.1 As part of the development of the Works site, Ebbw Vale, the Council has sought to provide an attractive range of business units to cater for demand within the County Borough itself and the wider south east Wales region. Within this context, a need was identified for a range of higher quality premises to appeal to a wider range of businesses.
- 2.2 To deliver this, the Council entered into a Joint Venture with the Welsh Government to develop Hybrid Units at Lime Avenue, creating high quality business space, comprising 3 separate buildings housing 9 units.
- 2.3 The funding secured includes contributions from the Council itself, the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) and the Welsh Government (WG) and is split as follows:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - £850,000

WEFO- £2,580,000

Welsh Government - £3,150,000

Current Position – Hybrid Units

- 2.4 The Council has taken possession of the Hybrid Units and has been working closely with the Welsh Government to market the site. Thales have taken occupation of two buildings and the Council is nearing completion on a further

lease for a business requiring space in the remaining building. This is an exciting development for Blaenau Gwent, continuing the regeneration of the strategic Works site and provides an excellent opportunity for business to establish, grow and develop within the area creating employment and helping to support local supply chains.

Background – Hwb Bocs

2.5

Like the Hybrid Units, the development of the Hwb Bocs forms an exciting part of the regeneration of the Works site with the aim of providing a range of premises for businesses and entrepreneurs. The project has taken inspiration from other similar developments elsewhere, with a focus on providing attractive premises, complemented by on site-business support from the Council's Regeneration staff and access to a range of other sources of support and inspiration.

2.6 The project was delivered in partnership with Welsh Government and has transformed shipping containers into 21 separate offices spaces alongside communal facilities and is located adjacent to the Coleg Gwent building.

2.7 The funding secured for the project comprises contributions from the Council itself and the Welsh Government (WG) and is split as follows:

Blaenau Gwent - £780,000
Welsh Government £490,000

Current Position

2.8 Like the Hybrid Units, the Council has taken possession of the Hwb Bocs units and is currently in the process undertaking the final internal fit-out works. Given the nature of the Units, the Council is working closely to identify suitable tech-based businesses and entrepreneurs as part of its marketing programme with significant interest being expressed.

2.9 Like the Hybrid Units, the project is an exciting development for Blaenau Gwent and provides a striking venue for a range of tech businesses and entrepreneurs to be based at the Works site. As well as working with the business community, the Council is also working with the College to encourage potential spin out projects to be based at its doorstep, providing an attractive proposition for students to test out business ideas.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option 1 – Members to accept the content of the report.

3.2 Option 2 – Members to not accept the content of the report

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

4.1 This project supports the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-22 Outcome Statements:

- Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities
- Support a fairer sustainable economy and community

4.2 The Council's Well-being Plan for 2018-23 includes 5 Objectives. This project directly supports the objectives of creating 'safe and friendly communities' and 'forge new pathways to prosperity'.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget***

The Council has secured funding from a range of sources for each of the projects.

5.2 The premises will form part of the Council's industrial portfolio and their ongoing maintenance and management has been factored into and will be covered through a mixture of requirements placed on tenants (for example via FRI leases) and income generated from the rentals.

5.3 ***Risk***

Officers will continue to work with Welsh Government on promoting both projects for potential tenants. As has been highlighted, there has been significant interest from businesses for both the Hybrid Units and the Hwb Bocs Units with the former almost fully let to suitable businesses already.

5.4 ***Legal***

Appropriate legal agreements have and will be entered into with each tenant and officers in Regeneration will continue to work closely with colleagues in Welsh Government.

5.5 ***Human Resources***

Staff within the Regeneration and Estates will continue work collaboratively with WG to promote the projects.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The projects have been based on a robust analysis of data and information which has established a demand for the projects.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The project provides an excellent opportunity for existing and new businesses within Blaenau Gwent to establish and grow on the Works Site and support local employment and training.

- 6.3 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
The project continues the regeneration at the Works site forming part of the Works Masterplan on a collaborative delivery model.
- 6.4 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
The projects have increased the range of premises available to local businesses and entrepreneurs and enhanced the pathway for growth in the area.
- 6.5 Preventative focus**
The project will ensure that a range of new premises are created for businesses and entrepreneurs in Blaenau Gwent and help support the conditions for sustainable economic growth.
- 6.6 Collaboration / partnership working**
The project can be seen as another excellent example of collaborative and partnership working between BGCBC, WEFO, Welsh Government and the private sector in delivering high quality premises that supports the regeneration of the county borough.
- 6.7 Integration (across service areas)**
Consultation has been undertaken across Planning and Regeneration and the design, development and contract management work has been completed by Technical Services.
- 6.8 Decarbonisation & Reducing Carbon Emissions**
The projects have been developed with an emphasis on reducing energy consumption and the need for by car. Both projects are located near to the Ebbw Vale train station, are accessible from the town centre, are on Active Travel routes and have bike storage facilities as well as EV charging points.
- 6.9 Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**
The projects contribute to and support the Council's Socio Economic Duty, by providing local employment opportunities for residents and opportunities for businesses and enterprises to establish and grow within the area.
- 6.10 EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**
An Equalities Impact Assessment screening is currently being undertaken.
- 7. Monitoring Arrangements**
To be confirmed.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Hwb Bocs



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HYBRID UNITS SCHEDULE:

Building 1:

- UNIT 01 - 3,000sqft / 278.7sqm
Ground = 2,273 sqft / 211sqm
First = 758 sqft / 70.5sqm
- UNIT 02 - 2,400sqft / 223sqm
Ground = 1,800 sqft / 167.3sqm
First = 600 sqft / 55.8sqm
- UNIT 03 - 2,400sqft / 223sqm
Ground = 1,800 sqft / 167.3sqm
First = 600 sqft / 55.8sqm
- UNIT 04 - 3,000sqft / 278.7sqm
Ground = 2,273 sqft / 211sqm
First = 758 sqft / 70.5sqm

Building 2:

- UNIT 05 - 3,000sqft / 278.7sqm
Ground = 2,273 sqft / 211sqm
First = 758 sqft / 70.5sqm
- UNIT 06 - 2,400sqft / 223sqm
Ground = 1,800 sqft / 167.3sqm
First = 600 sqft / 55.8sqm
- UNIT 07 - 2,400sqft / 223sqm
Ground = 1,800 sqft / 167.3sqm
First = 600 sqft / 55.8sqm
- UNIT 08 - 3,000sqft / 278.7sqm
Ground = 2,273 sqft / 211sqm
First = 758 sqft / 70.5sqm

Building 3:

- UNIT 09 - 3,600sqft / 334.5sqm

SITE BUS5
(Assumed Site Boundary)
5,661.8sqm
60,943.1sqft
0.56 Ha
1.4 Acre

SITE BUS1
(Assumed Site Boundary)
10,007sqm
107,714.5sqft
1.0 Ha
2.5 Acre

SITE BUS3 & BUS4
(Assumed Site Boundary)
9,968 sqm
107,294.6 sqft
1.0 Ha
2.46 Acre

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Agenda Item 21

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Children and Communities Grant**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**
Report Submitted by: **Tanya Evans, Head of Childrens 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)
2.9.21	09.09.21	20.10.21			7.10.21	10.11.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress of the Children and Communities Grant (CCG) which sits under the Flexible Funding Programme which came into being April 2019.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The Flexible Funding programme is the latest approach from Welsh Government (WG) to ensure different grants work together with the aim of providing greater local authority autonomy in service delivery, particularly around joint planning and commissioning of services to support better outcomes. This extra freedom aims to allow for a more strategic approach in delivering early intervention, prevention and support.

2.1.1 The seven programmes that sit under the Children and Communities Grant are:

1. Families First
2. Flying Start
3. Childcare and Play
4. Communities for Work Plus (CfW+)
5. Legacy Fund
6. Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People at Risk of Offending
7. St David's Day Fund

2.1.2 Welsh Government have issued clear Guidance for the delivery of each of the 7 programmes listed above. The budget allocation for each of the 7 programmes can be found under section 5.1 of this report.

2.1.3 In relation to the 7 programmes it is important to note that Communities for work plus (CfW+) is delivered by GAVO not the local authority. This situation is unique to Blaenau Gwent as the other 21 Local Authorities in Wales deliver this programme in house. That said GAVO have been an active part of the CCG steering group.

2.1.4 This is the third update report presented to scrutiny in relation to the CCG.

2.1.5 This report will focus on

- how services continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic
- and progress made in relation to the CCG delivery plan.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

- i. Consider the progress made to date on the Children and Communities grant
- ii. Note the CCG Steering Group continues to oversee and implement the delivery programme and provides an annual report on progress to scrutiny, executive and the new local arrangements to replace the Public Service Board.

Option 2

- i. Consider and **provide specific comments** on the progress made to date on the Children and Communities grant
- ii. Note the CCG Steering Group continues to oversee and implement the delivery programme and provides an annual report on progress to scrutiny, executive and the new local arrangements to replace the Public Service Board.

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

Council Priorities

4.1 The programmes under the CCG focuses on early intervention prevention and support. As such they will support the following priorities outlined under the corporate plan

- To work with people to make sure they have a say in achieving what matters to them
- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater
- To work with our partners including Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities
- To develop a partnership approach to reducing and alleviating the impacts of Poverty

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

Figure 1 below outlines the total grant money aligned to each grant for 21/22.

Figure 1

Programme	Budget
Flying Start	£2,234,096
Families First	£1,143,183
Communities 4 Work Plus	£862,600
Legacy Fund	£464,465
Promoting Positive Engagement for YP	£148,016
Childcare and Play	£75,391
St David's Day Fund	£29,428

The CCG steering group meets on a bimonthly basis and receives regular financial information which ensures the grant money is maximised.

5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

Risk 1 Grants stopping

As with all grant funded projects there is a risk of the grant stopping and services being withdrawn. If this occurred the early needs of children and families would not be met and inevitably escalate requiring statutory interventions.

To mitigate against this each of the programmes under the CCG are supporting families to become more self-determining, drawing on their own naturally occurring support networks. The programmes also work closely with the third sector who also offer preventative services.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal issues relating to this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

All Staff delivering the programmes under the CCG are on 12 month fixed term contracts. These are renewed each year. However many staff have been on fixed term contracts from many years and will have accrued employment rights. This will have a significant impact on the local authority if the CCG grant ended.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

6.1.1 **How services continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic**

The CCG steering group continued to meet regularly throughout the pandemic. During the early days of the pandemic Welsh Government helpfully issued guidance which stated that CCG programme staff could be used to ensure frontline services were supported and protected. This arrangement continued until September 2020.

6.1.2 **Families First**

At the start of the pandemic all families open to Families First were RAG rated. All those families that were deemed to be RED continued to have face to face visits following robust risk assessment and use of PPE. Virtual contact was maintained with all AMBER and GREEN cases. There is no doubt that this early proactive approach prevented needs from escalating during the pandemic and beyond. Some Families First staff were seconded to work alongside the statutory childcare teams working with children at risk of coming into care and children on the child protection register. All secondments have now ended and services have fully resumed including parenting groups.

6.1.3 **Flying start**

Flying Start also RAG rated their cases, however none of the Flying start health visitors undertook face to face visiting during the early stages of the pandemic as many of them were redeployed to hospitals. To counter this the flying start support workers supported extensive numbers of children and families via Social Media whereby over 1500 users were accessing information, advice and guidance through daily updates via their face book pages and website. Activity packs were also delivered to houses to support parents to continue to develop speech and language

skills which is one of the core aims of the flying start programme. The team also produced a number of webinaire on many aspects of parenting. A small number of Flying Start Staff were seconded to adult social services to support adults to remain in the community. These secondments have now ended and all services have now fully resumed.

6.1.4 Childcare and Play

The Childcare settings managed by the local authorities remained open throughout the pandemic and in the early stages provided child care to the most vulnerable children and children of key workers. Over all 63% of all child care settings remained open across the board this included local authority/private nurseries and child minders. WG issued many grants to support this sector to ensure they remained sustainable. These grants were expertly managed by the small child care support team. All settings are now fully open and functioning with only a very small number who did not reopen following the early stages of the pandemic.

6.1.5 Communities for Work Plus (CfW+)

This programme saw a huge impact on local communities due to a reduction in the numbers of people who were supported into work in the first wave of the pandemic for obvious reasons. However, services continued to be developed in particular the recruitment of a Mental Health Support Worker (MHSW). It has been reported 40 new referrals made to the MHSW and with the support of the MHSW 24 of those referrals have been referred back into employability support services. The MHSW has completed a total of 122 sessions.

6.1.6 Legacy Fund

Legacy funds a number of posts that sit in the other programmes under the CCCG, These include the Dads workers in Flying Start and the social workers in schools posts. Also it funds a contribution to the citizens advice beaurau. Importantly it also funded 2 workers to be seconded to the locality teams that were set up at the start of the pandemic with the aim of supporting the people of Blaenau Gwent with low level needs for example shopping, picking up medication and sign posting to other services. There is no doubt that the work of the locality teams dealt with very low level needs to prevent them from escalating.

6.1.7 Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People at Risk of Offending

This programme includes projects such as the Youth Offending Service REACH programme, the Children Looked After reparation worker and Phoenix Youth Respect Project (3rd Sector-led Young Person's Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Project). Throughout the pandemic service delivery was done virtually by remote ways of working. The main priority has been to support children's well-being; this has led to the delivery of well-being packs through the Positive Futures Programme.

6.1.8 **St David's Day Fund**

This fund is specifically used to support care leavers. During the pandemic the fund has been used to provide emergency finances for access to food and/or utilities, provide financial support to ensure tenancies are protected, access to the internet and an internet equipped devices, financial assistance for travel to visit family members. The 14 plus team who are responsible for managing this fund continued to visit all care leavers face to face during the pandemic to ensure their needs were met and they were safe.

6.1.9 **Progress made in relation to the CCG delivery plan.**

Each year the local authority has to send a delivery plan into Welsh Government. Within this is an action plan which the CCG steering group monitors to ensure progress throughout the year

The Action Plan with updates can be seen under **Appendix 1**. Good progress has been made on these actions considering we are still dealing with a pandemic.

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

The public can expect the programmes delivered under the CCG to meet the requirements as laid out from Welsh Government.

All of the programmes focus on early intervention. Prevention and support

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

The CCG guidance requires local authority to set out how they intend to engage with and involve local communities and use their responses to inform their long term vision and delivery plans. All of the programmes under the CCG have systems in place to gather feedback on services being delivered. Some programmes are also using social media to support with this from example flying Start have a face book to promote the service and receive feedback.

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

The CCG Steering group will ensure the delivery plan for 20/21 encompasses the five was of working under the future generation act which includes planning for the long term.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

One of the primary aims of the programmes delivered under the CCG is to prevent needs from escalating. This not only relates to preventing families requiring the interventions from Statutory Services but also working with families to support them of poverty via routes to employment.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

As part of the work going forward the Local authority will need to demonstrate how we ensure the programmes under the CCG grant is aligning with the well-being objectives of the Public Services Board and the aims of other key partners and how evidence from the well-being plans and needs assessments have been incorporated. It is important to demonstrate that this grant is providing additional support for the most disadvantaged.

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

The strategic use of grants review includes all service areas and the work undertaken to date aims to bring improved organisational sight of grant funding to maximise this funding stream.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

The workforce who deliver the programmes under the CCG have adopted the agile working policy of the council which will have a positive impact on car emissions as staff are now able to work from home to undertake paperwork and do not have to travel to the office.

6.9 ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

All programmes that sit under CCG work with families who are subject to socio economic disadvantages for example, low income, material and area deprivation. All programmes work towards addressing these disadvantages.

6.10 ***Equality Impact Assessment***

The CCG programmes work with many children and families who have protected characteristics.

The overarching vision of the CCG's seven core programmes is to support the needs of the most vulnerable children and adults in our communities through a range of early intervention, prevention and support mechanisms. With the aim of building resilient individuals, resilient families and resilient communities.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Welsh Government require quarterly reporting on progress. This will include reporting on outcomes from April 2020 under the new framework being developed by Welsh Government

In addition the CCG steering group will oversee the delivery of the programmes and provide an annual report to CLT scrutiny, executive and the PSB

Background Documents / Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

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CCG Action Plan 21/22

No	Action	How	Update
1	Ensure there is a common outcomes based approach to delivering interventions across families first and flying start	<p>All Teams to ensure they have a nominated mentor who will attend the 6 weekly mentors group</p> <p>Ensure families first and flying start have monthly reflective practice sessions to discuss how the outcomes approach has been embedded in practice.</p> <p>Demonstrate and take responsibility for embedding the outcomes based approach in practice</p>	<p>Flying Start and Families First staff have had training on the 3 elements of training</p> <p>Mentors have been appointed for both programmes</p> <p>Families First Team Manager has been attending the 6 weekly Mentors group facilitated by Loredana Moruz (Service Manager). Families First Team Leads have also been invited to and will be attending the Mentors groups as of 9th September.</p> <p>Families First hold mandatory reflective practice sessions on a monthly basis. These sessions are facilitated by Team Manager and Clinical Psychologist on an alternative basis whereby members of the Team are given the opportunity to bring cases to discuss, share ideas, reflect on what is working/isn't working/what is important to the family and how best to support the family to achieve their identified outcomes.</p> <p>Families First paperwork currently being reviewed to become strengths based.</p> <p>Supervision is used to help support workers reflect on their practice, to reinforce an outcomes based approach when discussing families including the</p>

			<p>'what matters question' . This is then reinforced during monthly reflective practice sessions.</p> <p>Team Managers are due to attend the Vanguard training this month.</p> <p>All staff within Families First have completed the Collaborative Communication training which is mandatory.</p>
2	<p>Ensure the administrative support across the programmes is efficient and proportionate</p>	<p>Complete phase 2 review of support to CCG programmes for Coordination, Finance, Performance and Contract Management</p>	<p>New model for coordinating administrative duties implemented in April 2021, which includes a streamlined approach to supporting all 6 internal CCG programmes.</p> <p>A review of structure for CCG support team has also been undertaken and the provision of a deputy manager role has been agreed as part of the existing staff's roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Contract management duties have been allocated to now include all Legacy and PPE funded projects.</p> <p>A full review for Families First and Flying Starts reporting requirements is scheduled in September. Recommendations and proposed developments will be taken to the CCG Board for sign off.</p>
4	<p>Ensure a consistent approach to the way in which all programmes under the CCG engage and participate with children and families</p>	<p>Developmental of a central engagement tool which will capture all engagement and participation activity across all the programmes</p> <p>Monitor the tool in terms of its usage and attached outcomes.</p>	<p>Engagement calendar has been developed and implemented. Monthly reminders are set for each programme to contribute into.</p>

	using the service to help shape it for the future		<p>Engagement and Participation has become a standard agenda item for the CCG Board which provides full updates on developments.</p> <p>Any new additions to the calendar are shared with the Corporate Engagement Calendar on a monthly basis.</p>
5	CCG and the HSG to work in a seamless fashion, providing integrated services where appropriate	Review the commissioning arrangements which exists between the CCG and HSG	Not started.
6	Implement the new outcomes framework provide by Welsh government	<p>Provide a workshop to ensure the CCG steering group and programme leads understand the new outcomes framework (once established)</p> <p>The programme leads to work with the central admin team to ensure systems are in place to capture the evidence to report on the outcomes framework to WG</p>	<p>Welsh Government have yet to provide outcomes framework.</p> <p>A Locally developed framework been implemented to measure and monitor progress linked to the programmes intended outcomes.</p>
7	Review of commissioned services to ensure value for money, no duplication and good outcomes provided	Report to CCG group	Full review of Legacy commissioned projects is currently underway. CCG board will agree services to be provided post April 2022 following CCG Board in September 2021.
8	Ensure flexibility within the CCG grant to support and promote joint planning and commissioning to make more effective use of the funding in pursuit of the constituent	<p>Continue to implement the CCG financial Management procedure to ensure any underspends are used in line with the CCG guidelines and supports the priorities within the CCG Delivery Plan and achieves value for money This could include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New demands on service - A new programme initiative - Identified gaps in service 	<p>Financial management procedure used as the basis for the review of the Legacy Fund, focusing on outcomes.</p> <p>No underspend has been identified at this point of the year which requires realigning, however there has been notification from WG that the CCG are to receive additional funds as part of the COVID</p>

	programmes' aims and objectives.	- Potential overspends within current service delivery	recovery, therefore this process will be fully adopted to ensure the intended flexibility of the grant is honoured.
9	Monitor the a high level performance framework to include indicators from the 7 programmes which will be used to monitor the success of the programmes in relation to the outcomes they achieve	All programmes to report Quarterly on the framework	<p>First set of reporting took place in April 2021 and 2020/21 full annual outturn was presented to the CCG Board in May 2021.</p> <p>Quarters 1 and 2/Term 1 (Flying Start) performance updates scheduled for October CCG Board.</p>
10	Review the new approaches to service delivery due to the re-provisioning of the legacy funding to ensure the new approaches are achieving the desired outcomes		<p>Findings from the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) have been reviewed in order to identify the needs and demands falling out of it and how they link to the Community element of the CCG.</p> <p>A Legacy Working Group has been established to take forward and lead on the development of the future of the Legacy Fund.</p> <p>The Strategic Lead for Legacy developed a survey which looked to link the Legacy projects to other CCG programmes and the work of the CIA.</p> <p>Full outcomes reports for existing projects to be presented in next CCG Board meeting scheduled for September 2021 and will inform the future delivery of the fund beyond March 2022.</p>

Agenda Item 22

Date signed off by Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **10th November 2021**
Report Subject: **Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Social Services**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member for Social Services**
Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Director of Social Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
23.6.21	17.6.21	20.10.21			22.07.21			

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance check summary as identified in their letter dated the 11th June 2021 (Appendix 1). The purpose of the assurance check was to review how well the local authority's social services continue to help and support adults and children with a focus on safety and well-being. This letter summarises the findings of CIW assurance check on 17 May to 21 May 2021.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 In March 2020, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) suspended its routine programme in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to enable local authorities and providers to focus fully on responding to the challenging circumstances. A revised programme with local authorities recommenced in September to provide assurance about how people are being safeguarded and well-being promoted during the pandemic. We considered safety and well-being of people who use or may need to use services, the safety of services they access and the safety and well-being of people who work in services.

2.2 We focused our key lines of enquiry within the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and have recorded our judgements and findings aligned to these: People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Partnerships and Integration, Well-being.

2.3 CIW asked the following two questions:

1. How well is the local authority discharging its statutory functions to keep people who need care and support and carers who need support, safe and promote their well-being during the pandemic?

2. What is the local authority doing to prevent the need for children to come into care; and are children returning home to their families quickly enough where safe to do so?

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Report has been considered by the Corporate Leadership Team and Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

3.2

Option 1

Executive are asked to note and accept the information detailed within the CIW Assurance letter.

Option 2

3.3

Executive agree not to accept the information detailed within the CIW Assurance letter.

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

4.1 The CIW Local Authority Assurance Check letter links to the following key priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater;
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities;
- To put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There are no impacts from this CIW Assurance letter on the directorate's budget.

5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

Social Services maintain a directorate risk register which is aligned to both service level and corporate risk. The risk register is reviewed as part of the business planning process and included within the performance reporting of the director of Social Services.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 The CIW letter of Assurance is included within Appendix 1.

6.2 Headline updates include: **People - voice and control – We asked:** How well is the local authority ensuring people, carers and practitioners are having their voices heard, making informed choices, and maintaining control over their lives.

- 6.3 The letter states 'People we spoke with told us how the local authority had maintained safe contact with them throughout the pandemic. Where needed, direct safe face-to-face contact has continued, subject to a COVID risk assessment. Many people spoke of staff going above and beyond; including where required 7 day a week contact aimed at managing risk to successfully maintaining children at home or supporting adults to remain within the community.'
- 6.4 It also highlighted how 'Senior managers with staff and partners have worked hard to embed strength based outcomes focussed practice. The authority's commitment to strength based outcome focused practice was evident in the files reviewed and staff spoke of how this underpinned their work in both adult and children's services.'
- 6.5 It goes on to say 'Evidence showed people's views were sought and their voices heard. Information gathering to represent people's circumstances was also informed by intelligence from a number of relevant partner agencies, notably during early stages of intervention.'
- 6.6 Further, 'Most practitioners who responded to our survey felt supported by colleagues and managers and regarded their workload as manageable. During the Assurance Check we found staff morale to be good and most practitioners were positive about their experience of working for the local authority. We heard how training opportunities had continued with a number of digital platforms used to enable staff and partners to access on-line training. Newly qualified staff told us they are supported in their first years of practice by regular supervision and mentoring arrangements. The recruitment and retention of staff is a recognised business critical priority. We found the local authority have adopted a proactive 'grow your own approach' through the secondment of staff to undertake their social work qualification.'
- 6.7 In relation to the second question asked by CIW, then the following was highlighted 'The local authority has successfully implemented its safe Children Looked After (CLA) strategy, leading to positive outcomes for children within the care system. Working with partners to deliver integrated responsive care, the number of looked after young people has not only stabilised, it is also continuing to decrease.' Also 'Staff spoke of the significance of the Support Change Team and My Support Team (MyST) who work intensively with families to prevent young people entering the care system, The Special Guardianship Order (SGO) Team have been vital in supporting the placements of Special Guardianship arrangements as an alternative to care supporting those families to prevent family breakdown and the return of children into the care system. The authority has been proactive in the revocation of a number of care orders into SGO's ensuring the best outcomes are achieved for young people.'
- 6.8 Two areas were identified requiring improvement, firstly '...we were not confident IRO's consulted with all children prior to their reviews and mid-point review. We found practice to be inconsistent particularly in relation to

younger children. The local authority must ensure IRO's actively support younger children to express their wishes and feelings and contribute towards the review process.' Secondly, they raised concerns about WCCIS, 'All staff and managers reported negatively about the constant issues with accessing and uploading information onto the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS). Staff told us of many instances of how they had lost information or been unable to access the system, often having to download work outside working hours to ensure people's information was recorded on the system. Senior managers were aware of these issues and are continually taking appropriate action to try to resolve the issues.'

- 6.9 **Prevention - We asked:** To what extent is the local authority successful in promoting prevention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies?
- 6.10 CIW stated 'Prevention is an integral part of the local authorities business. Within children's services we found the commitment to developing Early Help and Prevention services following our inspection of Children's Services in 2018. This approach is now fully evident across both children's and adult services. We found a positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention through joint working, supportive infrastructures and aligned delivery systems between social and health care.'
- 6.11 They further identified how 'From the front door Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) operating as business as usual during the pandemic, allowing people to access appropriate support including reablement provision. To the development of Critical Outreach Teams as alternative to respite and day activities, the authority has strived to promote independence and support people who require care and support.'
- 6.12 They were also pleased to see how 'Staff awareness and practice to establish whether people have mental capacity to make specific decisions and where necessary to make best interest decisions on their behalf was reflected in records and the sample of assessments seen were of a good quality.'
- 6.13 **Partnership and Integration: We asked:** To what extent is the local authority able to assure itself opportunities for partnership working are positively exploited to maximise person centred planning and ensure integrated service delivery and service sustainability?
- 6.14 It was highlighted how 'Strong partnership arrangements and a whole-council response has ensured the provision of support to the most vulnerable adults and children in Blaenau Gwent throughout the pandemic. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the service and have maintained a firm focus on doing the best for delivering services to adults and children who are in need of care and support, despite the disruption and financial strain caused by the continuing pandemic. Leaders and senior managers continue to keep under review new ways of working due to the pandemic, evaluating impact and/or lessons learnt in order to improve

future delivery of services.’

- 6.15 They identified how ‘We heard and saw positive examples of a multi-agency approach to risk management and of practitioners, and managers working together during the pandemic to share information/intelligence to ensure they meet the needs and manage the risk of people with the most complex needs. Providers told us about the good communication and positive meetings with local authority commissioners during the pandemic, with contract-monitoring staff maintaining daily welfare calls with independent providers.’
- 6.16 Feedback from partners also showed how ‘Providers of commissioned services told us of the support offered by the local authority in navigating the vast amount of information and guidance related to their service introducing new ways of safe COVID working. Working in partnership with Public Health Wales, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Environmental Health the prompt distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) and recently coordinating the roll out of Lateral Flow Devices.’
- 6.17 They also considered some of the good internal working ‘Communication between the authority’s education directorate and children’s services has been assisted through CLA education coordinator and mentors having access to WCCIS, allowing prompt action to any emerging issues for children who are most vulnerable.’
- 6.18 In addition, ‘We heard from partners how the Safeguarding Team worked well with people from across the sector. We found evidence of good collaboration between social services, the police, and the third sector working directly with people to meet their safety outcomes. We found positive examples of multi-agency approach to risk management and of practitioners, identifying and monitoring vulnerable children and adults at risk.’
- 6.19 They found ‘Strategically, the authority and its partners had responded to the pandemic through working together to support a shared approach. For example, adapting policy and procedures with health colleagues to support the safe discharge from hospital.’
- 6.20 **Well-being: We asked:** To what extent is the local authority promoting well-being, ensuring people maintain their safety and achieve positive outcomes that matter to them?
- 6.21 CIW identified how ‘Within both adult and children’s services we found safeguarding concerns were responded to promptly in line with statutory requirements. Review of case records and discussion with practitioners provided assurance of a timely and proportionate response to both adult and children’s safeguarding concerns. Strategy discussions and meetings were timely and well-supported by partner agencies; which led to effective enquiries.’

- 6.22 They were also complementary about ‘The Corporate Parenting board is an active advocate of young people’s needs. There is strong involvement and interest from council members and leaders, who often meet directly with young people and show real interest in their lives. They recognised the specific needs of the young people in their care and strive to do their best for them.’
- 6.23 In addition, they also indicated ‘Young people who had left care spoke positively about the support they had received from their personal advisors. All felt the commitment of their personal advisors had helped them feel value and supported them in their transition into adulthood. The authority has undertaken some considerable work with housing and housing providers to improve the priority and availability of accommodation for care leavers and this was reflected in the circumstances of the young people we interviewed.’
- 6.5 *Expected outcome for the public*
The report and letter provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Directorate and ensure accountability.
- 6.6 *Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)*
The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 looks to build and strengthen on existing arrangements by involving service users, carers and other key partners where possible in helping shape and influence future design of services.
- 6.7 *Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)*
The Report and letter enables the department to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future.
- 6.8 *Preventative focus*
The work undertaken by the department looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having an active rather than re active approach to service planning can also help with planning resources and not spending as much on services in the future.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The performance of the department is monitored via the business planning process and reported through the democratic process via various reporting mechanisms including the ACRF, the Finance and Performance Report, the Assessment of Performance and various performance monitoring reports.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Social Services

Damien McCann
Corporate Director of Social Services
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Dyddiad/Date: 11 June 2021

Dear Director,

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Social Services

This letter summarises the findings of our assurance check on 17 May to 21 May 2021. The purpose of the assurance check was to review how well the local authority's social services continue to help and support adults and children with a focus on safety and well-being.

Overview

In March 2020, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) suspended its routine programme in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to enable local authorities and providers to focus fully on responding to the challenging circumstances. A revised programme with local authorities recommenced in September to provide assurance about how people are being safeguarded and well-being promoted during the pandemic. We considered safety and well-being of people who use or may need to use services, the safety of services they access and the safety and well-being of people who work in services.

We focused our key lines of enquiry within the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and have recorded our judgements and findings aligned to these: People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Partnerships and Integration, Well-being.

We asked:

1. How well is the local authority discharging its statutory functions to keep people who need care and support and carers who need support, safe and promote their well-being during the pandemic?
2. What is the local authority doing to prevent the need for children to come into care; and are children returning home to their families quickly enough where safe to do so?

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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.

Summary of findings and priorities for improvement:

People - voice and control – We asked: How well is the local authority ensuring people, carers and practitioners are having their voices heard, making informed choices, and maintaining control over their lives. While also balancing the recommendations and requirements made by Public Health Wales and Welsh Government to limit the spread of COVID-19?

People we spoke with told us how the local authority had maintained safe contact with them throughout the pandemic. Where needed, direct safe face-to-face contact has continued, subject to a COVID risk assessment. Many people spoke of staff going above and beyond; including where required 7 day a week contact aimed at managing risk to successfully maintaining children at home or supporting adults to remain within the community. We saw examples of both services working together, for example Flying Start support workers redeployed to support with home care duties, to maintain services to those in need of care and support within the community.

Senior managers with staff and partners have worked hard to embed strength based outcomes focussed practice. The authority's commitment to strength based outcome focused practice was evident in the files reviewed and staff spoke of how this underpinned their work in both adult and children's services. The authority recognise the importance of gaining people's views to inform practice development and support service improvement. We saw evidence of mentoring groups and peer supervision to share and reflect on case issues and identify potential responses to learning.

Evidence showed people's views were sought and their voices heard. Information gathering to represent people's circumstances was also informed by intelligence from a number of relevant partner agencies, notably during early stages of intervention.

There is evidence of routine monitoring and challenge by child protection conference chairs and independent reviewing officers (IRO), although this is stronger in some areas of practice than others. When it works well, this provides important checks and balances to decisions about children's welfare. However we were not confident IRO's consulted with all children prior to their reviews and mid-point review. We found practice to be inconsistent particularly in relation to younger children. The local authority must ensure IRO's actively support younger children to express their wishes and feelings and contribute towards the review process.

The local authority has successfully implemented its safe Children Looked After (CLA) strategy, leading to positive outcomes for children within the care system. Working with partners to deliver integrated responsive care, the number of looked after young people has not only stabilised, it is also continuing to decrease. The CLA strategy is continuously supported by senior managers who regularly scrutinise practice to ensure everything has been done to prevent young people entering into care, and those who are in care can be exited as soon as possible if appropriate. Staff spoke of the significance of the Support Change Team and My Support Team (MyST) who work intensively with families to prevent young people entering the care system, The Special Guardianship Order (SGO) Team have been vital in supporting the placements of Special Guardianship arrangements as an alternative to care supporting those families to prevent family breakdown and the return of children into the care system. The authority have been proactive in the revocation of a

number of care orders into SGO's ensuring the best outcomes are achieved for young people.

Most practitioners who responded to our survey felt supported by colleagues and managers and regarded their workload as manageable. During the Assurance Check we found staff morale to be good and most practitioners were positive about their experience of working for the local authority. We heard how training opportunities had continued with a number of digital platforms used to enable staff and partners to access on-line training. Newly qualified staff told us they are supported in their first years of practice by regular supervision and mentoring arrangements. The recruitment and retention of staff is a recognised business critical priority. We found the local authority have adopted a proactive 'grow your own approach' through the secondment of staff to undertake their social work qualification.

All staff and managers reported negatively about the constant issues with accessing and uploading information onto the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS). Staff told us of many instances of how they had lost information or been unable to access the system, often having to download work outside working hours to ensure people's information was recorded on the system. Senior managers were aware of these issues and are continually taking appropriate action to try to resolve the issues.

Prevention - We asked: To what extent is the local authority successful in promoting prevention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies?

Prevention is an integral part of the local authorities business. Within children's services we found the commitment to developing Early Help and Prevention services following our inspection of Children's Services in 2018. This approach is now fully evident across both children's and adult services. We found a positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention through joint working, supportive infrastructures and aligned delivery systems between social and health care.

In children services we saw how the ethos of working has shifted towards outcome focused, strength based practice. Within files we found a greater emphasis on work being undertaken with families encouraging them to find their own solutions to achieve outcomes. The development of a number of prevention and early intervention services enabling an early response to those referrals not meeting the criteria for statutory intervention has been a significant development. Within files we found many examples of edge of care services such as Families First providing intensive support and managing risk through delivering interventions with young people and their families to prevent escalation of need. There has been significant progress in not only social work practice but how the service itself is supported; including the development of documentation which are outcome focused and require the family to be fully involved in completion.

Overall, in adult services we found an outcome-based approach was embedded in practice, this supported coproduction and identification of personal outcomes. We saw and heard of how various professionals within the adult integrated teams worked collaboratively to support people's well-being and safety. From the front door Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) operating as business as usual during the pandemic, allowing people to access appropriate support including reablement provision. To the development of Critical

Outreach Teams as alternative to respite and day activities, the authority has strived to promote independence and support people who require care and support.

We found how learning from the development of a 7-day hub service for both acute and community hospitals plus community referrals in response to the pandemic has improved areas of practice. Such as case management and administrative processes, enhanced performance data and streamlined assessment forms to better support the practice of staff. Providers and staff told us of the positive work undertaken by the Community Resource Team (CRT). We saw evidence within files of people accessing the relevant and appropriate rehabilitative opportunities both in the community and within care homes. With the service providing reablement support to those recovering from the impact of COVID to supporting with end of life care.

Staff awareness and practice to establish whether people have mental capacity to make specific decisions and where necessary to make best interest decisions on their behalf was reflected in records and the sample of assessments seen were of a good quality.

Partnership and Integration: We asked: To what extent is the local authority able to assure itself opportunities for partnership working are positively exploited to maximise person centred planning and ensure integrated service delivery and service sustainability?

Strong partnership arrangements and a whole-council response has ensured the provision of support to the most vulnerable adults and children in Blaenau Gwent throughout the pandemic. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the service and have maintained a firm focus on doing the best for delivering services to adults and children who are in need of care and support, despite the disruption and financial strain caused by the continuing pandemic. Leaders and senior managers continue to keep under review new ways of working due to the pandemic, evaluating impact and/or lessons learnt in order to improve future delivery of services.

We heard and saw positive examples of a multi-agency approach to risk management and of practitioners, and managers working together during the pandemic to share information/intelligence to ensure they meet the needs and manage the risk of people with the most complex needs. Providers told us about the good communication and positive meetings with local authority commissioners during the pandemic, with contract-monitoring staff maintaining daily welfare calls with independent providers.

We saw within files and through speaking with people the opportunities for partnership working with health colleagues being effective and successfully promoted to produce positive outcomes for people. Integrated services and posts have provided the foundations for joint working across health and social care. We found practitioners from different sectors and services working effectively together, with CRT staff deployed to Community Hospitals working alongside health staff to ensure safe and timely discharges of people. This is significant as effective partnership working contributes to strength based, person-centred plans and maximises potential for increased independence of people within the local authority.

Providers of commissioned services told us of the support offered by the local authority in navigating the vast amount of information and guidance related to their service introducing new ways of safe COVID working. Working in partnership with Public Health Wales, Aneurin

Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Environmental Health the prompt distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) and recently coordinating the roll out of Lateral Flow Devices.

Communication between the authority's education directorate and children's services has been assisted through CLA education coordinator and mentors having access to WCCIS, allowing prompt action to any emerging issues for children who are most vulnerable.

We heard from partners how the Safeguarding Team worked well with people from across the sector. We found evidence of good collaboration between social services, the police, and the third sector working directly with people to meet their safety outcomes. We found positive examples of multi-agency approach to risk management and of practitioners, identifying and monitoring vulnerable children and adults at risk. However, staff spoke of some agencies struggling with balancing risk management with family outcomes. The local authority is aware of the need to further work with partner agencies to ensure a strength based approach is instilled and better understood.

Strategically, the authority and its partners had responded to the pandemic through working together to support a shared approach. For example, adapting policy and procedures with health colleagues to support the safe discharge from hospital. The Regional Partnership Board, despite a pause in its activity during the initial stages of the pandemic, has continued to be influential in shaping health and social care services within the local authority.

Well-being: We asked: To what extent is the local authority promoting well-being, ensuring people maintain their safety and achieve positive outcomes that matter to them?

Within both adult and children's services we found safeguarding concerns were responded to promptly in line with statutory requirements. Review of case records and discussion with practitioners provided assurance of a timely and proportionate response to both adult and children's safeguarding concerns. Strategy discussions and meetings were timely and well-supported by partner agencies; which led to effective enquiries.

We found the voices and wishes of people at risk were embedded within the safeguarding documentation and in most of the cases we saw evidence of good information gathering, liaison with other professionals and analysis and determination clearly recorded. We identified good analysis of risk, decision making, protection plans in place, and appropriate action taken when necessary.

The Corporate Parenting board is an active advocate of young people's needs. There is strong involvement and interest from council members and leaders, who often meet directly with young people and show real interest in their lives. They recognise the specific needs of the young people in their care and strive to do their best for them.

Young people who had left care spoke positively about the support they had received from their personal advisors. All felt the commitment of their personal advisors had helped them feel value and supported them in their transition into adulthood. The authority has undertaken some considerable work with housing and housing providers to improve the priority and availability of accommodation for care leavers and this was reflected in the circumstances of the young people we interviewed.

Methods

- we reviewed documentation supplied in advance of our visit
- we spoke with carers and people who were receiving or had received care and support including young people who had left care
- we reviewed 25 files
- we held ten case tracking interviews with staff
- we administered a survey to people who had experience of care and support, providers, third sector organisations, staff, police, and healthcare professionals
- we attended a Resource and Complex Needs Panel
- we met with representatives from police, education department, health, and the third sector

Next Steps

We have identified strengths and areas for priority improvement and we will review the progress of these areas through our performance evaluation review meetings with the heads of service and director. We expect the areas of improvement we have identified to be included in the local authority's improvement plans. We would like to extend our thanks to all those who helped with the arrangements for this assurance check and to those people and staff who spoke with us.

Please see our Privacy Notice at <https://careinspectorate.wales/how-we-use-your-information>

Yours sincerely,



Lou Bushell-Bauers

Head of Local Authority Inspection

Care Inspectorate Wales

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