

T: 01495 355001

E: committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Blaenau Gwent

Our Ref./Ein Cyf.
Your Ref./Eich Cyf.
Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Gwasanaethau Democraidd

THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

Dydd Mercher, 23 Chwefror 2022 Dydd Mercher, 23 Chwefror 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

PWYLLGOR GWAITH

A meeting of the Pwyllgor Gwaith will be held in Ystafell y Weithrediaeth, Canolfan Ddinesig, Glynebwy on Dydd Mercher, 2ail Mawrth, 2022 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Damien McCann
Interim Chief Executive

AGENDA

Pages

1. CYFIEITHU AR Y PRYD

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

2. YMDDIHEURIADAU

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau.

3. DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU

Derbyn datganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

COFNODION

4. CYFARFOD ARBENIG O'R PWYLLGOR 7 - 12 GWEITHREDOL

Ystyried cofnodion y cyfarfod arbennig o'r Pwyllgor Gweithredol a gynhaliwyd ar 9 Chwefror 2022.

MATERION CYFFREDINOL

5. CYNADLEDDAU/CYRSIAU A GWAHODDIADAU 13 - 14

Cymeradwyo cynadleddau/cyrsiau a gwahoddiadau.

EITEMAU ER PENDERFYNIAD - MATERION GWASANAETHAU CORFFORAETHOL

6. BLAENRAGLEN GWAITH – 16 MAWRTH 2022 15 - 18

Derbyn yr adroddiad.

7. GRANTIAU I SEFYDLIADAU 19 - 24

Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau.

8. CYNLLUN ADFERIAD COVID 19 BLAENAU GWENT 25 - 58

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Adfywio a Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

9. CYMORTH ARDRETHI BUSNES – CYMORTH 59 - 72 ARDRETHI MANWERTHU, HAMDDEN A LLETYGARWCH – 2022/23

Ystyried adroddiad y Prif Swyddog Adnoddau..

EITEMAU ER PENDERFYNIAD - MATERION ADFYWIO A DATBLYGU ECONOMAIDD

10. STRATEGAETH CYRCHFAN ANEURIN BEVAN 73 - 92

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Adfywio a Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

11. CAIS AM GYLLID CODI'R GWASTAD 93 - 98

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Adfywio a Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

EITEMAU ER PENDERFYNIAD - MATERION ADDYSG

12. **DRAFFT ADRODDIAD YMGYNGHORI CYNLLUN STRATEGOL CYMRAEG MEWN ADDYSG 10-MLYNEDD BLAENAU GWENT** 99 - 246

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg.

13. **DIWYGIADAU I GYTUNDEB CYDWEITHREDU GWASANAETH CYFLAWNI ADDYSG DE DDWYRAIN CYMRU AC AELODAU (CAMA)** 247 - 252

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg.

EITEMAU MONITRO - GWASANAETHAU CORFFORAETHOL

14. **ADRODDIAD CYLLID A PHERFFORMIAD CHWARTERI 1 A 2 (EBRILL 2021 I MEDI 2021)** 253 - 314

Ystyried adroddiad y Rheolwr Gwasanaeth Perfformiad a Democrataidd.

EITEMAU MONITRO - ADFYWIO A DATBLYGU ECONOMAIDD

15. **RHAGLEN RHANNU PRENTISIAETH ANELU'N UCHEL** 315 - 322

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Adfywio a Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

EITEMAU MONITRO – ADDYSG

16. **CYNNYDD BAND B YSGOLION YR 21AI GANRIF** 323 - 358

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg.

17. **CYFARWYDDIAETH ADDYSG – CYNLLUN ADFER AC ADNEWYDDU** 359 - 392

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg.

18. **ADRODDIAD TYMHORAU GWANWYN A HAF 2021** 393 - 426
CYFARWYDDWR CORFFORAETHOL
GWASANAETHAU ADDYSG

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg.

19. **DIWEDDARIAD STRATEGAETH A PHROSIECT** 427 - 436
TGCH ADDYSG/YSGOLION BLAENAU GWENT

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg.

EITEMAU MONITRO - GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL

20. **ADRODDIAD BLYNYDDOL CYFARWYDDWR** 437 - 472
GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL 2021/2022
(CHWARTERI 1 A 2)

Ystyried adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol.

21. **GWYBODAETH DIOGELU PERFFORMIAD AR** 473 - 534
GYFER GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL AC
ADDYSG – 1 EBRILL I 30 MEDI 2021

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a'r Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg.

EITEM EITHRIEDIG

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

EITEM ER PENDERFYNIAD – MATERION ADFYWIO A DATBLYGU **ECONOMAIDD**

22. **CRONFA RHEOLI EIDDO GWAG TRAWSNEWID** 535 - 560
TREFI

Ystyried adroddiad y Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Adfywio a Gwasanaethau Cymunedol.

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

J. Wilkins

All other Members (for information)
Interim Chief Executive
Chief Officers

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE –
9TH FEBRUARY, 2022**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

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

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

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

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

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

**WITH: Managing Director
Corporate Director Education
Corporate Director Social Services
Chief Officer Resources
Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance
Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships
Press Officer**

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> An apology for absence was received from the Chief Officer Commercial and Customer.
No. 3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u> There were no declarations of interest and dispensations raised.
	<u>MINUTES</u>
No. 4	<u>EXECUTIVE</u> Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 th January, 2021. RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

DECISION ITEMS – CORPORATE SERVICES

No. 5 REVENUE BUDGET 2022/2023

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

The Chief Officer Resources advised that the report provided an update on the positive provisional local government settlement for 2022/23 and its impact upon the Council's budget. It also outlined the detailed revenue budget for 2022/23 and sought approval of the level of Council Tax increase for the 2022/2023 financial year.

The Chief Officer Resources added that the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy was agreed by Council in November 2021 and advised that this report updated Members with the latest financial position regarding the budget following the announcement of the provisional local government settlement for 2022/23.

The Chief Officer Resources further spoke the report and provided an overview of the areas covered in the report as follows:-

- National Aggregate External Finance (AEF) Position
- Blaenau Gwent AEF position
- Aggregated External Finance (AEF) funding compared to MTFS
- Cost Pressures and Growth
- Treatment of Grants transferring into the Settlement
- Individual Schools Budget
- Revised funding gap
- Bridging The Gap Programme
- Revenue Budget 2021/22
- General Revenue Reserves 2021/22

In conclusion, the Chief Officer Resources referred to discussions at the Joint Scrutiny Committee held on 8th February, 2022 and advised that Members accepted recommendations 3.1.1 to 3.1.6, however it was recommended by the Committee that a decision in relation to 3.1.7 and 3.1.8 be deferred until the Full Council meeting scheduled to be held on 17th February, 2022.

The Leader noted the report which detailed a positive final budget to be set by this administration. The Leader was pleased that this Authority was able to produce a balanced and legal budget. There had been no reason, again this year to take monies from reserves this had resulted in reserves levels held by this Council being built up to an appropriate level.

The Leader proposed that recommendations 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 be agreed and recommendations 3.1.7. and 3.1.8 be determined by Full Council on 17th February, 2022. This proposal was seconded.

The Executive Member for Education was delighted with the large amount of money to be passported to schools which would be extremely welcomed by head teachers and be of great benefit to the children and young people of Blaenau Gwent.

The Executive Member for Social Services also welcomed the support in the budget for Social Services.

The Leader added that both Executive Members for Social Services and Education had been great advocates in their respective areas and stated that the commitment given in 2017 to protect and support Education and Social Services had been demonstrated during this administrations term of office.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the following be agreed:-

3.1.1 the 2022/23 revenue budget be recommended to Council;

3.1.2 comment was provided on the outcomes within the overall provisional RSG Settlement and note the potential for further change in the Final RSG Settlement;

3.1.3 comment was provided on the outcomes within the BGCBC provisional RSG Settlement and its impact upon the Medium Term Financial Strategy;

3.1.4 the cost pressures and growth items (£4m in total) identified in Appendix 2 for inclusion in the budget be recommended to Council;

3.1.5 passporting the grants transferring into the Settlement of £265,000 to the relevant services be recommended to Council;

	<p>3.1.6 an uplift of £3.91m which equated to 8.4% increase to the ISB be recommended to Council;</p> <p>3.1.7 that any achievement of Bridging the Gap proposals which exceeded the in-year budget requirement be transferred into a contingency budget to support pay increases during 2022/23 over and above that provided in the Medium Term Financial Strategy of £0.95m and £1.5m to be transferred to the Financial Resilience Reserve be deferred for consideration at Council; and</p> <p>3.1.8 a Council Tax increase of 4% for 2022/23 as per the MTFS assumptions be deferred for consideration at Council.</p>
	<p><u>DECISION ITEM – SOCIAL SERVICES</u></p>
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>DEVELOPMENT OF A CAERPHILLY/BLAENAU GWENT COLLABORATION IN PROVIDING LEGAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN’S SOCIAL SERVICES</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Social Services and an overview was provided to the Executive.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information which contained details relating to the business/financial affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted (Option 1).</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 5

Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

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

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **2nd March, 2022**

Report Subject: **Conferences/Courses and Invitations**

Portfolio Holder: **General Matters**

Report Submitted by: **Democratic Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
X	x	X				02/03/2022		

1. Purpose of the Report

To present a list of conferences, courses, events and invitations for consideration and determination by the Executive.

2. Scope of the Report

2.1 2022 Royal Garden Parties

To nominate a representative to attend one of the Royal Garden Parties which will be held in London on the following dates:-

Wednesday 11th May, 2022;
Wednesday 18th May, 2022; or
Wednesday 25th May, 2022.

3. Options for Consideration

3.1 To seek approval for attendance at the above.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**

Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme – 16th March 2022**

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	15.02.22				02.03.22		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present the Executive Forward Work Programme for the Special Meeting on 16th March 2022.
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 Special Meeting on 16th March 2022.
 - 3.2 **Option 2**
To suggest any amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme.

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive Committee

SPECIAL Executive Meeting Date: Wednesday 16th March 2022

Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas: Tuesday 8th February 2022

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

Decision: 2 Items Monitoring: 0 Items Information: 0 Items
--

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
DECISION ITEMS				
Portfolio: Education				
Education Achievement Service (EAS) Business Plan 2022/23	Decision To consult Members on the draft EAS Business Plan for 2022/23.	Luisa Munro-Morris / Michelle Jones	Education and Learning – 15.03.22	N/A
School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education <small>Statutory deadline for the policy to be published by 15th April</small>	Decision To approve the draft School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2023/24.	Claire Gardner	Education and Learning – 15.03.22	N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REPORT SUBJECT: GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS – 2nd March 2022

REPORT AUTHOR: RHIAN HAYDEN

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

ABERTILLERY

Abertillery Ward – Councillor M. Cook

1.	Abertillery Bowls	6.75
----	-------------------	------

Cwmtillery Ward – Councillor M. Day

1.	Friends Of Blaenau Gwent Village	£100
2.	Salvation Army	£54.47
3.	Abertillery Town Band	£75
4.	Cwmtillery Coarse Fishing Club	£100
5.	Abertillery RFC	£75
6.	Old Tyleryan RFC	£50
7.	Abertillery Cricket Club	£75
8.	Abertillery Excelsiors AFC	£75
9.	Blaenau Gwent Baptist Church	£100
10.	Bishop Street Allotments	£100
11.	Abertillery Workmens Institute	£50
12.	Tillery Dragons Junior Netball	£50
13.	Ebbw Fach Choir	£50
14.	Royal British Legion Abertillery Branch	£75
15.	Abertillery Belles AFC	£75
16.	Abertillery Museum	£70
17.	Chillax	£100

Llanhilleth Ward – Councillor H. McCarthy

1.	Chillax	£350
2.	Aberbeeg Community Centre	£350
3.	Soffrydd Community Centre	£350
4.	Llanhilleth Miners Institute	£100
5.	Abertillery Foodbank	£250
6.	Llanhilleth & District Bowls Club	£100
7.	Friends of St Illtyds Church	£100
8.	Soffrydd Senior Citizens	£100
9.	Soffrydd Youth Club	£100
10.	Brynithel Welfare Community Centre	£100
11.	Abertillery Town Band	£77.04

Six Bells Ward – Councillor D. Hancock

1.	Six Bells Community Hall	£400
2.	Friends of Six Bells Park	£600
3.	Abertillery Excelsiors Junior AFC	£405
4.	Abertillery Excelsiors AFC	£300
5.	Old Tyleryan RFC	£100.20

Six Bells Ward – Councillor M. Holland

1.	Old Tyleryan RFC	£185
----	------------------	------

BRYNWAWR

Brynmawr Ward – Councillor J. Hill

1.	Noah's Ark Charity	£100
2.	Parc Nant y Waun Angling Club	£150
3.	Brynmawr Town Centre Partnership	£169.85

Brynmawr Ward – Councillor W. Hodgins

1.	Market Hall Cinema Trust	£250
2.	Brynmawr FC	£250
3.	Brynmawr RFC	£250
4.	Caerphilly Angling Club	£200
5.	St Mary's Roman Catholic School	£150

6.	Nantyglo RFC	£200
7.	Nantyglo Mini Rugby	£200
8.	Serving & Veterans Association of Blaenau Gwent	£200
9.	Brynmawr Musical Theatre Company	£200
10.	North Ebbw Fach Interact	£200
11.	Brynmawr Scouts	£100
12.	Blaen y Cwm CAST	£150

EBBW VALE

Badminton Ward – Councillor C. Meredith

1.	Blaenau Gwent Indoor Bowls	£50
----	----------------------------	-----

Badminton Ward – Councillor G. Paulsen

1.	RTB Junior 2018	£75
2.	BGfm	£75
3.	Blaenau Gwent Indoor Bowls	£50
4.	Chairs Appeal	£37.85

Beaufort Ward – Councillors G. Thomas & S. Healy

1.	Beaufort Tenants & Residents Association	£118.20
----	--	---------

Rassau Ward – Councillor G. Davies

1.	Blaenau Gwent Young Stars	£200
2.	Rhos y Fedwen Primary School	£200
3.	Acorns Nursery	£200
4.	Rassau AFC	£200
5.	Falcons Martial Arts	£50
6.	Ebbw Vale ATC	£50
7.	Blaenau Gwent Indoor Bowls	£100
8.	Blaenau Gwent National Autistic Society	£100
9.	Chairs Appeal	£280.60

Rassau Ward – Councillor D. Wilkshire

1.	Blaenau Gwent Indoor Bowls	£150
----	----------------------------	------

Ebbw Vale North Ward – Councillors D. Davies & P. Edwards & B. Summers

1.	Chairs Appeal	£152.13
----	---------------	---------

Ebbw Vale South Ward – Councillors J. Millard & K. Pritchard

1.	Tyllwyn Allotment Association	£200
2.	Briery Hill Allotment Association	£200
3.	Tyllwyn OAP's	£500
4.	Zion Baptist Chapel	£300
5.	Royal British Legion Ebbw Vale Branch	£200
6.	Tyllwyn Methodist Church	£200
7.	Ebbw Vale Xmas Lights Appeal	£3,875.70

Cwm Ward – Councillors D. Bevan & G. Davies

1.	Waunllwyd & Victoria Events Committee	£300
2.	Cwm Christmas Lighting Group	£314.05

NANTYGLO & BLAINA

Blaina Ward – Councillor G. Collier

1.	Blaina Sports Club	£500
2.	Blaina Mens Bowls	£200
3.	Blaina Ladies Bowls	£200
4.	Cwmcelyn Methodist Church	£300
5.	1 st Blaina Scout Group	£100
6.	Coed Cae Interact	£100
7.	Nantyglo & Blaina 275 Squadron ATC	£200
8.	Blaina Community Centre	£1000
9.	Nantyglo & Blaina Horticultural Society	£200
10.	Blaina Allotments	£309.10

TREDEGAR

Central & West Ward – Councillor M. Moore

1.	Cymru Creations	£1,200
2.	Bedwellty Park Bowls Club	£500
3.	Silurian Amateur Boxing Club	£200
4.	Tredegar Business Forum	£200
5.	Tredegar Netball	£200
6.	Tredegar Town AFC	£200
7.	Tredegar Ironsides RFC	£200
8.	Sirhowy Valley Woodlands	£100
9.	Saron Church	£200
10.	Friends of Bedwellty Park	£200
11.	Tredegar Miners Memorial Gates	£217.85
12.	Nantybwh Community Centre Waundeg Flat	£300

Sirhowy – Councillors M. Cross & T. Smith

1.	Trefil RFC	£100
----	------------	------

Sirhowy Ward – Councillor B. Thomas

1.	Ebenezer Church	£300
2.	St Georges Church	£300
3.	2167 Air Force Cadets	£100
4.	Sirhowy Valley Woodlands	£100
5.	Ystrad Deri Community Centre	£200
6.	Sirhowy Community Centre	£100
7.	Nantybwh Community Centre Waundeg Flat	£100
8.	Sirhowy Senior Citizens	£200

CHIEF OFFICER RESOURCES

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 8

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent Covid 19 Recovery Plan**
Portfolio Holder: **Nigel Daniels, Leader of the Council, Executive Member Corporate Services**
Report Submitted by: **Richard Crook, Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	Gold Recovery Group	15.02.22			23/02/22	02/03/22		Officer Recovery Group

1. **Purpose of the Report**
To set out and seek agreement of the Executive Committee on the approach to be adopted to monitor the Recovery from the Covid 19 Pandemic across Council Services and the wider community.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 Members will be aware that the approach to Emergency Planning adopted by the Council and across the Public Sector is via two stages.
 - 2.2 The first stage is response which the Council has been actively working within throughout the Covid 19 pandemic.
 - 2.3 The second stage is recovery. This approach is predicated on there being a clear point in a given situation where the emergency is effectively over and the recovery phase can be identified.
 - 2.4 We are all aware that, in relation to Covid 19, the Council has had to operate using a twin track approach with recovery running, at times, in parallel with response.
 - 2.5 This report sets out the approach that has been adopted and the high level measures which will be used to assess when services and the wider community have recovered to the position they were prior to the lockdown in 2020.
 - 2.6 The intention is not to prepare a specific recovery plan, but to ensure that the recovery actions are embedded into the Councils governance arrangements using the Business Planning and Performance Management processes, whilst providing a set of measures which can be used to measure recovery at a strategic level.

- 2.7 At the outset of the pandemic, the Council undertook a Community assessment which identified the parts of the Community most likely to be impacted by the pandemic and this has provided the context to the recovery themes covering:
- Economy;
 - Learners;
 - Social Services; and
 - Workforce.
- 2.8 The contribution of each of the recovery themes to the Community assessment is set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.9 The recovery themes have been reported to their respective Scrutiny Committees and through to the Executive and this reports pulls the reports and the measures contained in the reports into a single report to give a one council perspective for members.
- 2.10 In terms of the themes the following key measures have been identified which will provide a strategic overview to progress through scrutiny to the Executive on a bi annual basis. These measures have been included in a series of infographics which can be found at appendix 2:

Economy

- Unemployment count as a percentage of the economically active population aged 16+
- Town centre Footfall
- Gross Weekly Pay – All full time Workers

Workforce (please note, the infographic only contains information up to quarter 2)

- Absence – average days lost including COVID

Social Services

- Workforce Recruitment and Retention – numbers of staff leaving and starting within the Department
- Carers support and provision - total number of contacts to statutory services by adult carers or professionals contacting the service on their behalf received during the year and the number of adults receiving respite care
- Developing, piloting or scaling up/out of new models of service that improve good outcomes for people – qualitative information to be provided
- Market sustainability – number of Adults in residential and nursing placements
- Accessing the community – number of people who access Day Services and number of people whose needs have been met through the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance

- Improving Health and Wellbeing – number of referrals received by Adult Social Services
- Number of referrals received by Children’s Services both prevention and statutory
- Number of Children on Child Protection register
- Number of Children on Care and Support Plan
- Number of Children Looked After
- Staff: % vacant positions

Learners

- Applications
 - Nursery
 - Primary
 - Secondary
- Attendance
 - Primary
 - Secondary

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 This report will be considered by the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on 23rd February 2022 and any feedback will be provided verbally to the Executive Committee.
- 3.2 Option 1 (preferred Option) – The Executive Committee to agree the approach set out to manage recovery from the Covid 19 Pandemic across Council Services and the wider community is taken forward.
- 3.3 Option 2 – The Executive Committee to suggest amendment to the approach, including other measures to be included, prior to approval.

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

- 4.1 The recovery plans, as set out by the Council, will play a key role in supporting the objectives of the Corporate Plan and the Blaenau Gwent Well-Being Plan whilst ensuring the Council continues to meet statutory responsibilities.

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

There are no direct financial implications for either option

5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

The report sets out measures to monitor the recovery process and the risk is that the Council is not sighted on the process of recovery and is unable to take corrective action if required to support effective recovery. This will be

mitigated by monitoring through the Business Planning process and in bi annual reporting through the democratic process.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with the report

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct implications associated with this report, however, implications for the workforce is set out as part of the workforce recovery theme.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The range of measures to be monitored across each of the themes is set out in appendix 1

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The outcome for the public will be the positive impact on the Community as set out in the community assessment.

The infographics provide a visual representation of the recovery information in an easy read format.

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

A Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken to understand the key impacts of COVID-19 and consider the opportunities to build resilience and mitigate inequalities. Information has been obtained from various internal and external data and reports (for example, Welsh Government's Locked Out Report...), engagement with communities and intelligence from our service delivery.

Community impact assessments were undertaken for the following population groups:

- Young people aged 14-25 years;
- Young families with children aged 8 years and under;
- People with learning disabilities
- Armed forces community;
- Older people – 'New vulnerable' people aged 65+ years (20% of Blaenau Gwent population), including those deemed as being financially stretched;
- Older people – Those aged 50+ in need of social care support

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

The recovery process will have a range of timescales with certain measures achieving a pre pandemic level quickly whilst others will have a longer timescale, however, the long term implications of the impacts on the community will be tracked over time.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The tracking of the progress in recovering to pre pandemic levels will allow early corrective actions which will allow preventative measures to be implemented.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The report covers actions delivered by the Council but will be undertaken in conjunction with a range of partners and collaborations across the themes.

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

The Council has identified lead officers for each of the recovery themes and all have been involved in the development of the recovery plans.

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

The recovery process has produced a different way of working across the Council services and the way the council operates as well as the community with a reduction of travel contributing to carbon reductions.

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

As this is not a strategic decision for the Council, there is no requirement to complete a Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment.

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

The recovery themes should have no negative impacts on the protected characteristics. The community assessment, used to establish the response for the community considered the equalities agenda and any potential negative impacts.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The recovery themes will be monitored via the Council's business planning processes and reported bi-annually to Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee.

Progress updates with regards to specific service areas will be provided to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1 – Recovery Plans*
- *Appendix 2 - Infographics*

This page is intentionally left blank

Recovery – Community

‘Research and intelligence identifying community need or inequality of outcome for key population groups impacted by COVID-19 is used to inform strategic recovery and shapes service delivery’

Community Theme	Links to the Recovery Planning
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and families are identified with the Education Recovery and Renewal Plan. • Continuing to build workforce resilience forms a key part of our Recovery Action Plan through the delivery of initiatives such as a new operating model, staff survey, Care First and well-being initiatives as well as Mental Health Training for Managers. • Economy theme is working closely with JCP and Employment Support programmes as well as the Entrepreneurship programmes. • Work being undertaken at community resources, Community Hubs and Blaina ICC including programmes under the CCG (Flying start, Families First, Child care and Play, Promoting Positive Engagement for YP, Legacy, Communities for work, St David’s Day Fund)
Digital divide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools continue to be supported with digital devices to ensure all learners can access blended learning • An Agile Working Policy and Digital Roadmap has been designed to support and navigate the organisation through a successful digitalisation programme. • Working with businesses including those in town centres to maximise opportunities to embrace digital skills – this could run alongside work to support residents in improving their digital skills. • In Social Services Hybrid meeting structures will be established in practice.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education continues to meet with key stakeholders monthly to share relevant information re Covid and the Education Recovery and Renewal Plan. Meetings are also held more frequently when there is a need, i.e., when there has been a change to School’s Operational Guidance. • Staff Communications include regular MD message, Staff Facebook Group and Well-being Wednesday.
Holistic view of support (customers falling through service gaps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education to work closely with social services, the early years’ team, health, and Public Health Wales to ensure the needs of all learners are met • Social Services is currently developing an Implementation Plan for the Impact Assessment in collaboration with partners including ABUHB, Care Providers, people who use our services and the Third Sector. • A strategic approach will be taken in relation to recovery and this work will be overseen by the Happy Healthy Blaenau Gwent Integrated Partnership Board • Preventative services in place in Social Services.
Greater emphasis on community risk factors and vulnerabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education works with schools to provide messages for families, and with categories of learners e.g. those that are electively home educated. • Period Equity Project continues to off period products to pupils, families and the wider community. • Community Hubs have been established as a model for providing accessible in-person and digital services locally across the Borough. • Local businesses play a key role in sustaining the local economy and wider community through employment and income to support the economy. • Care Management process in place for: assessments; achieving outcomes; and safeguarding the most vulnerable
Sustainability of volunteering and community services critical to recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Hubs as a central place where people can access Council as well as wider community services at the right time. • During lockdown periods schools, and different community members, were instrumental in delivering food packages to learners. If schools were to enter a further period of lockdown, direct payments have been set up to be able to transfer money for food to families directly. • Restarting community groups in response to need • Respite services

Page 3

Community Recovery

'Research and intelligence identifying community need or inequality of outcome for key population groups impacted by COVID-19 is used to inform strategic recovery and shapes service delivery'

Social Services

To reach a position whereby capacity is at pre pandemic levels and staff are able undertake our preferred method of contact and engagement with adults, young people, families, wider communities and fellow professionals with unrestricted access to support services




Merged Adult and Children SS Recover

Education

All schools, education providers and support services are fully operational, with children and young people able to access a full range of provision and services both school and community based, in order to meet their: Educational; Social; Emotional; Behavioural; and Other relevant needs.


Blaenau Gwent children and young people are able to effectively transition from one stage of their education to another, with wellbeing as a primary focus, supporting them to achieve their potential.



Education Recovery Plan One Page Over

Economy


To provide a framework for the Council and its partners to work collaboratively, to deliver and support activities and interventions that help create the conditions for Blaenau Gwent to recover, prosper and develop sustainably in a post-pandemic economy. As a minimum, this will include reducing the unemployment rate to the Wales national average, returning footfall levels in each of our towns to pre-pandemic levels and increasing the gross weekly pay to that of the Welsh national average.



Economy Recovery Plan One Page Over

Workforce

The Council experiences a reduced absence rate, including absence from COVID and self-isolation, and agile working hubs are fully operational



Workforce Recovery Plan One Page Over

Social Services Recovery Plan – Overview

To reach a position whereby capacity is at pre pandemic levels and staff are able undertake our preferred method of contact and engagement with adults, young people, families, wider communities and fellow professionals with unrestricted access to support services

Recovery and Renewal Focus – An evaluation of Social Services has been undertaken and a detailed Impact Assessment developed in collaboration with key partners including ABUHB to identify the key priorities for recovery and renewal.

The priority areas are as follows:

- **Stability in the Workforce including Recruitment and Retention**
- **Developing, piloting or scaling up/out of new models of service that improve good outcomes for people**
- **Carer Support and Provision including care and support for children and families**
- **Market sustainability (domiciliary care and care home provision)**
- **Accessing the community**
- **Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities**
- **Children Looked After (CLA) by the Local Authority**

Present Position – Teams across Social Services have seen a dramatic decline in staff numbers, with staff leaving to work in other Authorities.

Welsh Government has recently announced an additional £1m funding for Blaenau Gwent through the Social Care Recovery Fund. Adult Social Services is currently in the process of submitting bids for the funding which will be based on the priority areas detailed in the Impact Assessment which are aligned to the strategic priorities of Welsh Government’s Improving Health and Social Care (COVID 19 Looking Forward) Social Care Recovery Framework and the Gwent Regional Partnership Board Recovery Plan. We are currently in the process of developing baseline data for each priority area.

Welsh Government have made available extra funding through CCG to reduce the effects of impact of COVID in children and young people 0-25. This funding has been used by Flying Start and Families First to create more family support worker roles and a responsive team to support vulnerable families and to prevent needs escalating.

Implementation Plan – Social Services is currently developing an Implementation Plan for the Impact Assessment in collaboration with partners including ABUHB, Care Providers, people who use our services and the Third Sector. The Implementation Plan will provide details on the Actions and the organisation(s) responsible for them and the timeframes set against them. A strategic approach will be taken in relation to recovery and this work will be overseen by the Happy Healthy Blaenau Gwent Integrated Partnership Board

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:

Priority Area	PI	19/20	20/21	21/22	Target (when will we know we have recovered)?
Children Looked After (CLA) by the Local Authority	Number of Children Looked After	208	200	190	Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID
Developing, piloting or scaling up/out of new models of service that improve good outcomes for people	Qualitative information to be provided e.g. case studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Carers Support and Provision	CA/001 The total number of contacts to statutory social services by adult carers or professionals contacting the service on their behalf received during the year	221	300	81	
	AS.0070 number of adults receiving respite care	88	88	42	
Market sustainability (domiciliary care and care home provision)	AS.0061 number of clients in residential placements aged 18+	171	144	152	
	AS.0062 number of clients in nursing placements aged 18+	66	55	57	
Accessing the community	Numbers accessing Day Services	200	39	51	
	AS.0026 needs met through the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance	251	280	97	
Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities	AS.0014 number of referrals received by Adult Services	3941	4572	2956	

Priority Area	PI	19/20	20/21	21/22	Target (when will we know we have recovered)?
Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities continued...	Number of referrals into Families First	547	358	227	Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID
	Number of Flying Start families under categories:				
	• Intensive	116	108	125	
	• Enhanced	117	124	152	
	• Universal	618	564	676	
	Number of children on Child Protection register	61	52	68	
	Number of Children on a Care and Support Plan	838 CIN Cases	695 CIN Cases 556 with a CASP	850 Cases	
Stability in the Workforce including Recruitment and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leavers • Starters • Total staff (Adults and Children's) * <p>*Please note this is for internal staff only and the impact on the external providers is being monitored by the Regional Partnership Board.</p>	103 67 781	77 49 761	66 36 745	Resilient workforce in place to meet demand

This page is intentionally left blank

Education Recovery Plan – Overview

All schools, education providers and support services are fully operational, with children and young people able to access a full range of provision and services both school and community based, in order to meet their: Educational; Social; Emotional; Behavioural; and Other relevant needs.

Blaenau Gwent children and young people are able to effectively transition from one stage of their education to another, with wellbeing as a primary focus, supporting them to achieve their potential.

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:

- **Learner Wellbeing**
- **Vulnerable Learners**
- **Academic Progress**
- **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

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:

Priority Area	PI	18/19	19/20	20/21	Target (when will we know we have recovered)?
Learner Wellbeing	Applications – Nursery	693	696	714	Applications are the same level or higher than pre-Covid levels. EHE numbers are the same or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Applications – Primary	739	731	701	
	Applications – Secondary	677	679	696	
		July 2019	July 2020	July 2021	
	Attendance – Primary	94.4	93.5	90.7	Attendance levels are consistently in line with or higher than Wales average.
	Attendance Secondary	93.3	91.7	84.8	
		April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April 21 - September 2021	
	Exclusions Primary	108	25	17	Exclusions are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Exclusions Secondary	459	135	183	
	Average Number of Primary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	9.8	3.6	3.4	
Average Number of Secondary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	41.7	19.3	36.6		
	2019	2020	2021		
Vulnerable Learners	Entitlement to FSM/Transitionally Protected (%)	21.1	24.6	30.4	FSM levels stabilise and support via schools enables learner progress
		April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April - September 2021	
	Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16)	2382	2260	1702	Referrals to social services are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Average Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16) per month (no. of months in brackets)	198.5 (12)	188.3 (12)	283.7 (6)	

		April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April - September 2021	
Vulnerable Learners	Digital Disadvantage	0	1,359 pupils with devices 161 pupils with MiFi Dongles	Under review	Need for blended learning is greatly reduced, meaning that schools have very few or no requests for devices of MiFi dongles.

This page is intentionally left blank

Economy Recovery Plan – Overview

‘To provide a framework for the Council and its partners to work collaboratively, to deliver and support activities and interventions that help create the conditions for Blaenau Gwent to recover, prosper and develop sustainably in a post-pandemic economy. As a minimum, this will include reducing the unemployment rate to the Wales national average, returning footfall levels in each of our towns to pre-pandemic levels and increasing the gross weekly pay to that of the Welsh national average.’

Recovery and Renewal Focus – The Regeneration section has developed a detailed Impact Assessment and Economic Recovery Plan in collaboration with key partners including JCP, GAVO, the BG Enterprise Board and Welsh Government. In addition, it is proposed institutions such as the Bevan Foundation and USW are also engaged to utilise their research and help shape the Actions supporting Economic Recovery.

The priority areas are as follows:

- **Unemployment**
- **Poverty**
- **Town Centres**
- **Business Estates – Council and Non-Council**

Other Themes for Consideration:

- **Robotics and Artificial Intelligence**
- **On-Shoring**
- **Business Space**
- **Homeworking and Agile Working**

Present Position – The Impact Assessment has is currently being consulted with partners to agree and endorse. The Impact Assessment contains a number of Actions which have already been endorsed via the Blaenau Gwent Enterprise Board and the Council’s own Scrutiny and Executive committees. Baseline data is currently being finalised and will be used to monitor and evaluate, and alongside qualitative case studies, will be used to drive decision making.

Implementation Plan – Regeneration is currently developing an Implementation Plan for the Impact Assessment in collaboration with partners. The Implementation Plan will provide details on the Actions and the organisation(s) responsible for them and the timeframes set against them.

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.

Priority Area	PI linked to the Priority Area	2018/19	20/21	21/22	Target (when will we know we have recovered)?
Unemployment	Unemployment count as a percentage of the economically active population aged 16+ (ONS model based estimates of unemployment)	4.5%	4.2%	N/A	In line with Wales' average
Town Centres* *No Data available 2020	Town centre Footfall	2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abertillery- 429,350 • Blaina – 187,736 • Brynmawr- 563,465 • Tredegar- 411,105 • Ebbw Vale- N/A 	2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abertillery- 280,570 • Blaina- 126,302 • Brynmawr- 336,879 • Tredegar- 309,892 • Ebbw Vale – N/A 	2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abertillery- 594,083 • Blaina- 197,271 • Brynmawr- 332,903 • Tredegar- 451,692 • Ebbw Vale- 756,266 	When each of the towns' footfall is up to pre-pandemic levels.
Poverty	Gross Weekly Pay – All full time Workers (Source Nomis) Blaenau Gwent Wales GB	£455.1 £540 £587	£478.3 £574.4 £587.4	£523.3 £570.6 £613	In line with the Wales' average

Workforce Recovery Plan – Overview

'The Council experiences a reduced absence rate, including absence from COVID and self isolation, and agile working hubs are fully operational'

Recovery and Renewal Focus - The Council's Organisational Development Section has developed a detailed Impact Assessment in collaboration with service areas across the Council to identify the key priorities for recovery and renewal including workforce capacity, responding to the COVID 19 pandemic and to implement the new Council Operating Model.

The priority areas are as follows:

- **Health, Safety, Welfare and Well-being**
- **Lateral Flow testing for the workforce**
- **Homeworking**
- **Capacity in the workforce**
- **Workforce communications**

Present Position – Workforce capacity, health, safety and welfare continue to be a priority in delivering Council services. Some areas of service are experiencing recruitment and retention issues and the Council has introduced a new operating model to include; Community Hubs, a Democratic hub and agile working for the workforce.

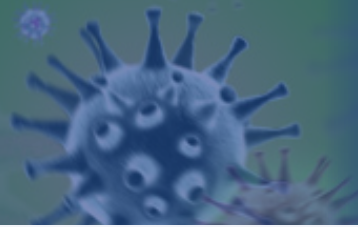
Implementation Plan – Organisational Development is currently developing an Implementation Plan for the Impact Assessment in collaboration with service areas across the Council. The Implementation Plan will provide details on the Actions and the areas responsible for them and the timeframes set against them.

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:

Priority Area	PI	19/20	20/21	21/22	Trend	Target
Health, Safety, Welfare and Well-being	Staff survey autumn 2022					
Homeworking <i>New Council Operating Model (as at 31.01.22)</i>	Agile workers			31.39% of total workforce		Workstyle identification complete
	Permanent homeworkers			11.22% of total workforce		
	Service based workers			56.70% of total workforce		
	workforce style incomplete			0.70% of total workforce		
Capacity in the workforce	Absence – average days lost including COVID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Services Regeneration and Community Services Social Services Corporate Education Schools Council Total 			Quarter 3 5.26 days 12.44 days 17.65 days 5.30 days 11.09 days 11.72 days		Average days lost per employee 10 days
	Absence – Average days lost excluding COVID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Services Regeneration and Community Services Social Services Corporate Education Schools Council Total 			Quarter 3 4.99 days 11.10 days 16.87 days 4.10 days 9.41 days 10.53 days		
	Average Days lost COVID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Services Regeneration and Community Services Social Services Corporate Education Schools Council Total 			Quarter 3 0.27 days 1.34 days 0.78 days 1.20 days 1.68 days 1.19 days		

	Detailed piece of work on recruitment and retention being developed and will be added					
	Temporary Workforce responding to COVID			TTP 95 positions Headcount of 83		TTP no longer required
		As at 30th Sept 2019		As at 30th Sept 2021		
	Labour Turnover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services • Regeneration and Community Services • Social Services • Corporate Education 	5.21% 6.20% 6.81% 0%		5.35% 8.25% 5.40% 18.33%		
	Percentage Vacant Posts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services • Regeneration and Community Services • Social Services • Corporate Education 	10% 8% 11% 9%		13% 11% 15% 29%		

This page is intentionally left blank

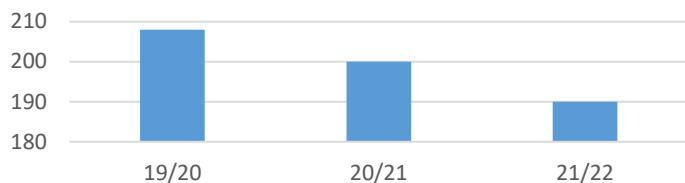


To reach a position whereby capacity is at pre pandemic levels and staff are able undertake our preferred method of contact and engagement with adults, young people, families, wider communities and fellow professionals with unrestricted access to support services.

The priority areas are as follows:

- 1** Children Looked After (CLA) by the Local Authority
- 2** Developing, piloting or scaling up/out of new models of service that improve good outcomes for people
- 3** Carer Support and Provision including care and support for children and families
- 4** Market sustainability (domiciliary care and care home provision)
- 5** Accessing the community
- 6** Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities
- 7** Stability in the Workforce including Recruitment and Retention

1 Children Looked After (CLA) by the Local Authority



Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
Number of Children Looked After	208	200	190

Not full year data.

2

Developing, piloting or scaling up/out of new models of service that improve good outcomes for people

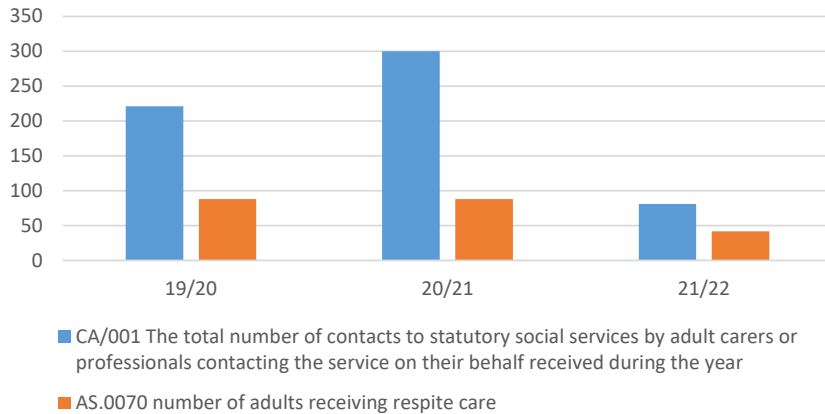
Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

Qualitative information to be provided e.g. case studies

Social Care Overview

3

Carers Support and Provision

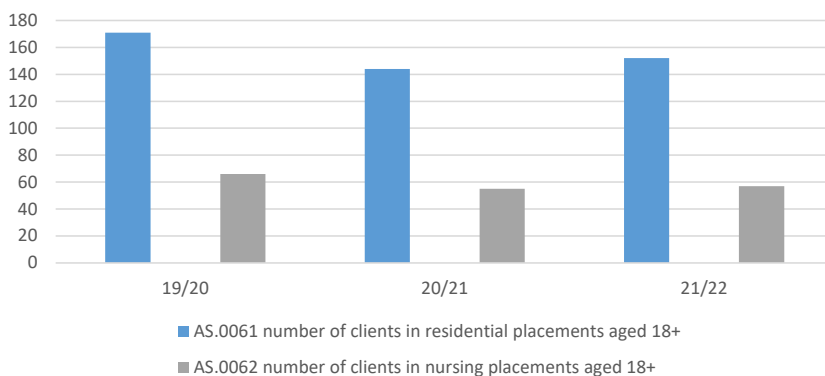


Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
CA/001 The total number of contacts to statutory social services by adult carers or professionals contacting the service on their behalf received during the year	221	300	81
AS.0070 number of adults receiving respite care	88	88	42

4

Market sustainability (domiciliary care and care home provision)

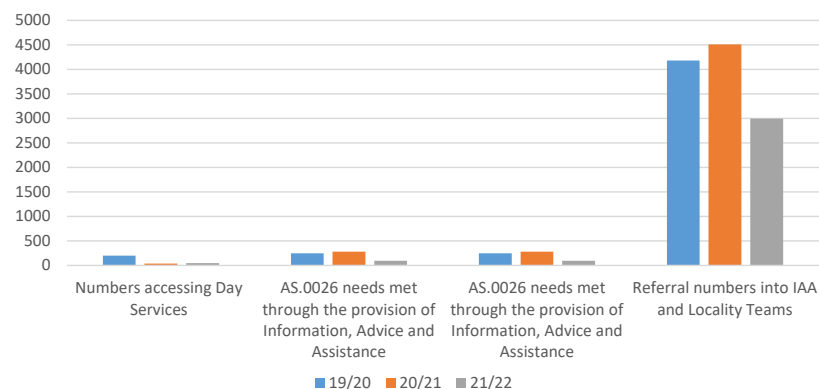


Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
AS.0061 number of clients in residential placements aged 18+	171	144	152
AS.0062 number of clients	66	55	57

5

Accessing the community



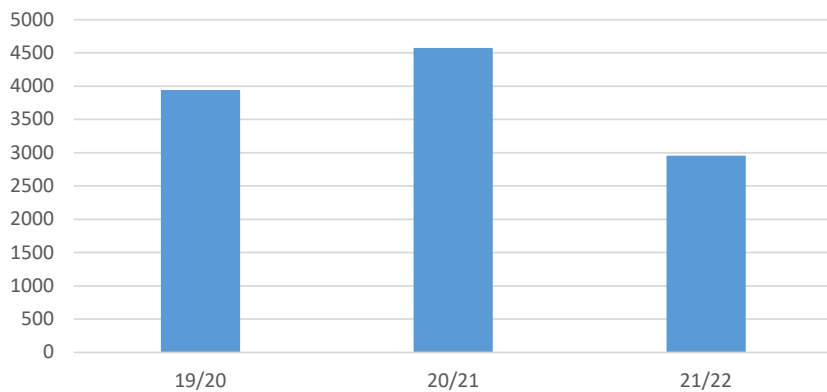
Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
Numbers accessing Day Services	200	39	51
AS.0026 needs met through the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance	251	280	97
AS.0026 needs met through the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance	251	280	97
Referral numbers into IAA and Locality Teams	4183	4512	2997

Social Care Overview

6

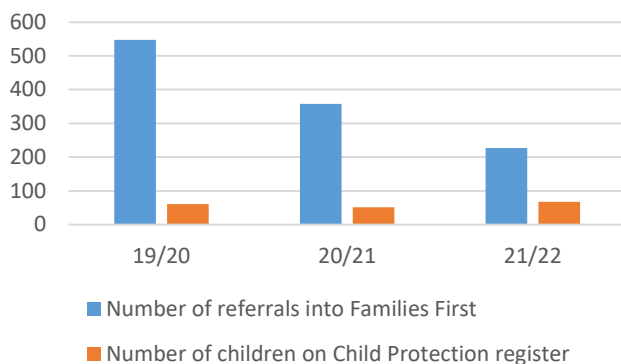
Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities



Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
AS.0014 number of referrals received by Adult Services	3941	4572	2956

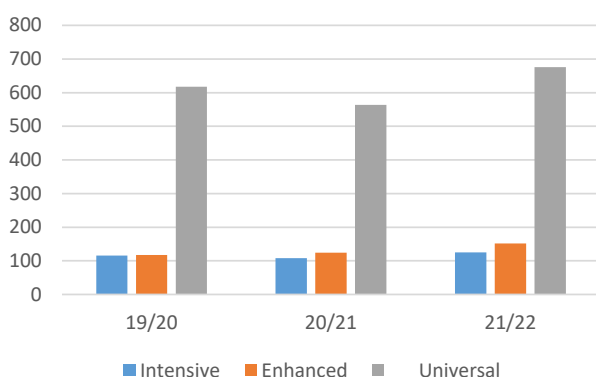
Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities continued...



Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
Number of referrals into Families First	547	358	227
Number of children on Child Protection register	61	52	68

Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities continued...



Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
Intensive	116	108	125
Enhanced	117	124	152
Universal	618	564	676

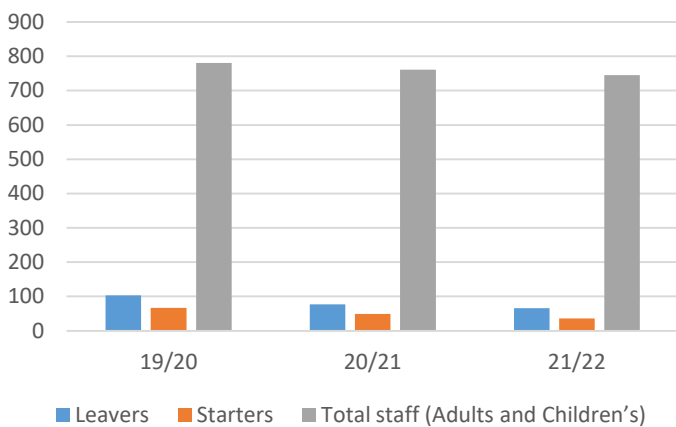
Social Care Overview

Improving Health and Wellbeing and promoting /maintain the independence of the vulnerable in our communities continued...

Target: Demand for statutory services has reduced to levels as per prior to COVID.

PI	19/20	20/21		21/22
Number of Children on a Care and Support Plan	838 CIN Cases	695 CIN Cases	556 with a CASP	850 Cases

7 Stability in the Workforce including Recruitment and Retention



Target: Resilient workforce in place to meet demand.

PI	19/20	20/21	21/22
Leavers	103	77	66
Starters	67	49	36
Total staff (Adults and Children's) *	781	761	745

*Please note this is for internal staff only and the impact on the external providers is being monitored by the Regional Partnership Board.

Education and Learners Recovery Plan

Overview

All schools, education providers and support services are fully operational.

Blaenau Gwent children and young people are able to effectively transition from one stage of their education to another, with wellbeing as a primary focus, supporting them to achieve their potential.

Priorities



Learner and Staff Wellbeing



Vulnerable Learners

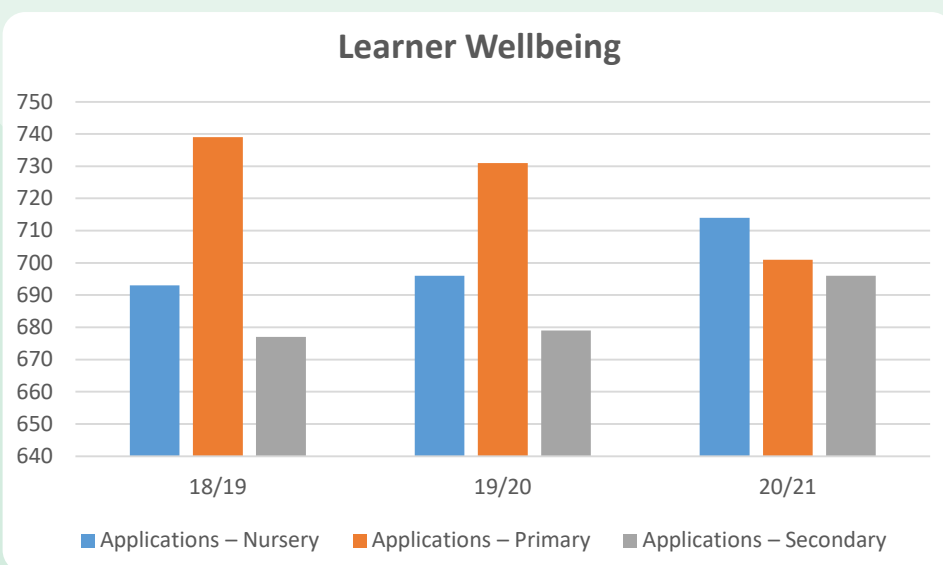


Academic Progress



School Operation

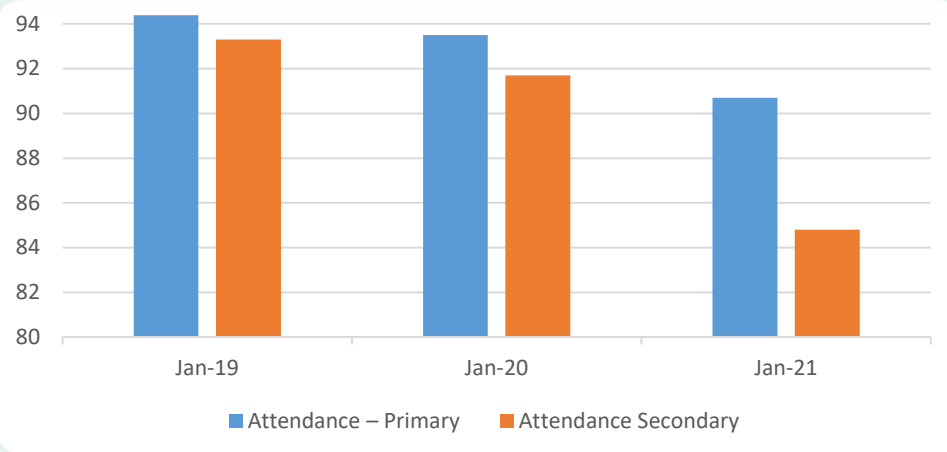
Learner Wellbeing



Target: Applications are the same level or higher than pre-Covid levels. EHE numbers are the same or lower than pre-Covid levels.

PI	18/19	19/20	20/21
Applications – Nursery	693	696	714
Applications – Primary	739	731	701
Applications – Secondary	677	679	696

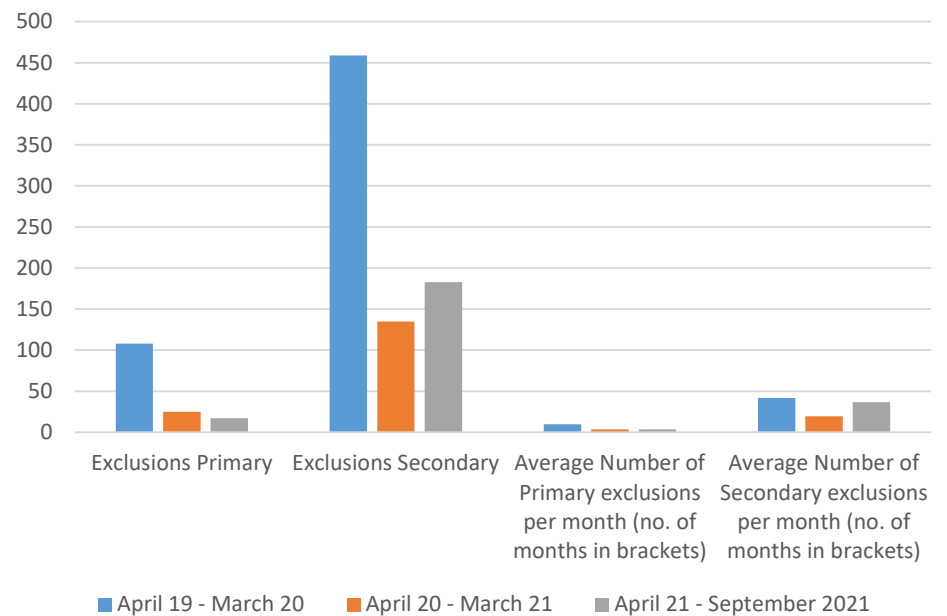
Learner Wellbeing



Target: Attendance levels are consistently in line with or higher than Wales average.

	Jul-19	Jul-20	Jul-21
Attendance – Primary	94.4	93.5	90.7
Attendance Secondary	93.3	91.7	84.8

Learner Wellbeing



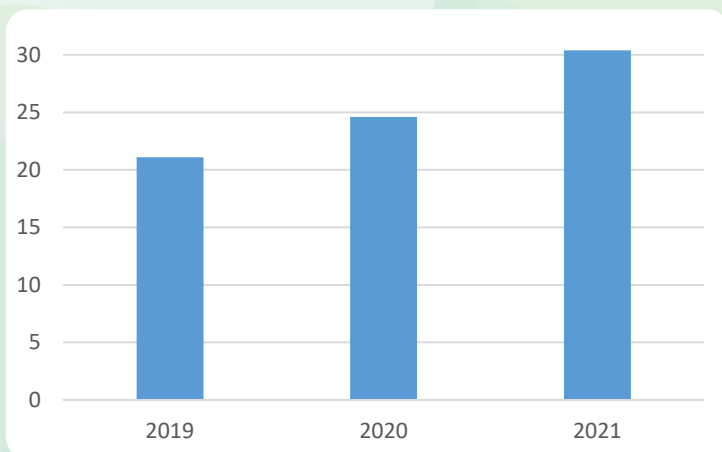
Target: Exclusions are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.

PI	April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April 21 - September 2021
Exclusions Primary	108	25	17
Exclusions Secondary	459	135	183
Average Number of Primary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	9.8	3.6	3.4
Average Number of Secondary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	41.7	19.3	36.6

Education and Learners Recovery Plan

Overview

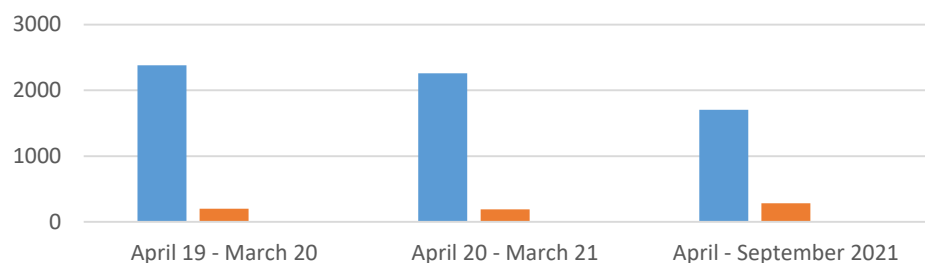
Vulnerable Learners



Target: FSM levels stabilise and support via schools enables learner progress.

	2019	2020	2021
Entitlement to FSM/Transitionally Protected (%)	21.1	24.6	30.4

Vulnerable Learners



Target: In line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.

- Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16)
- Average Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16) per month (no. of months in brackets)

	April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April - September 2021
Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16)	2382	2260	1702
Average Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16) per month (no. of months in brackets)	198.5 (12)	188.3 (12)	283.7 (6)

Vulnerable Learners

		April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April - September 2021
Vulnerable Learners	Digital Disadvantage	0	1,359 pupils with devices 161 pupils with Dongles	Under review

Target: Need for blended learning is greatly reduced, meaning that schools have very few or no requests for devices or MiFi devices.

This page is intentionally left blank

Economy Recovery Overview

Create conditions for Blaenau Gwent to recover, prosper and develop sustainably.

Priorities



Unemployment Reduction



Reduce Poverty



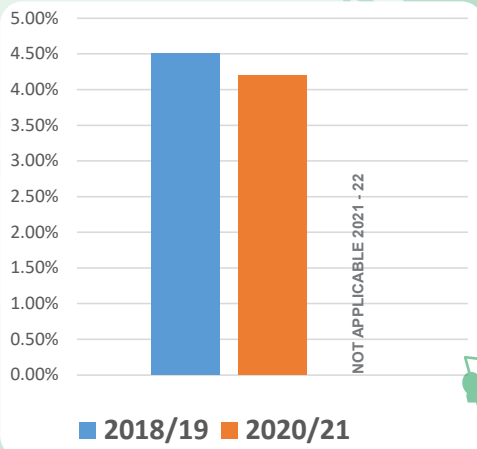
Increase Footfall In Town Centres



Attractive Business Estates

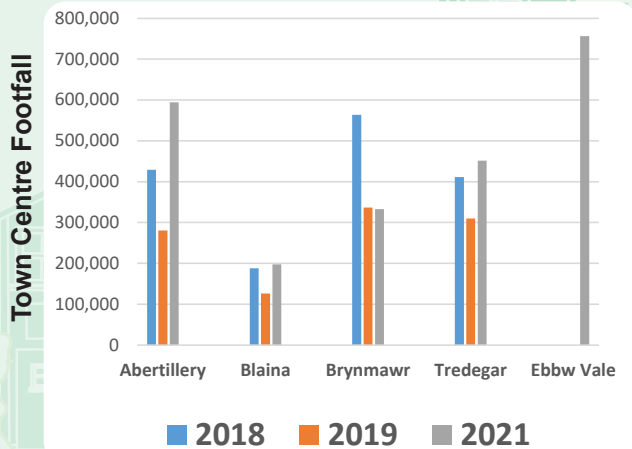
Unemployment

Unemployment count as a percentage of the economically active population aged 16+ (ONS model based estimates of unemployment)



Target: We know we have recovered when in line with Wales' average.

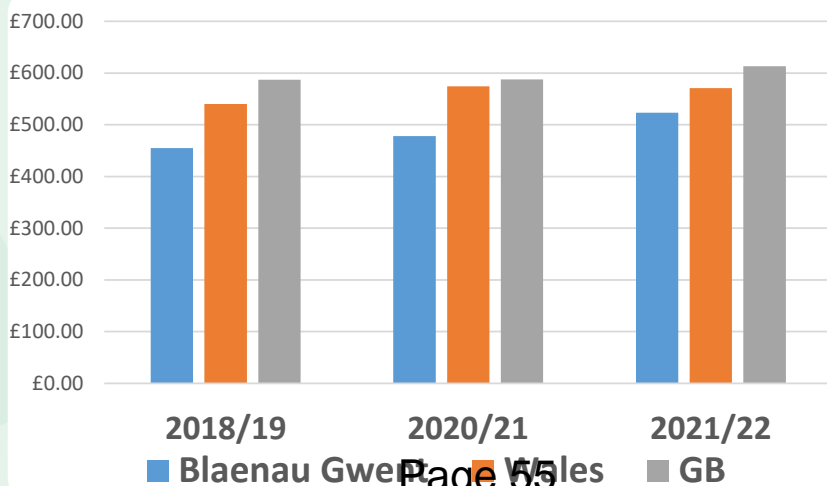
Town Centres



Target: We know we have recovered when each of the towns' footfall is up to pre-pandemic levels.

Poverty

Gross Weekly Pay - All full time Workers (Source Nomis)



Target

We know we have recovered when in line with Wales' average.

This page is intentionally left blank

Workforce Recovery Overview

The Council experiences a reduced absence rate, including absence from COVID and self-isolation, and agile working hubs are fully operational.

Priorities

- Health, Safety, Welfare and Well-being
- Lateral Flow testing for the workforce
- Homeworking
- Capacity in the workforce
- Workforce communications

Priority Area	PI	19/20	20/21	21/22	Target (when will we know we have recovered)?
Health, Safety, Welfare and Well-being	Staff survey autumn 2022				
Homeworking New Council Operating Model (as at 30.09.21)	Agile workers			34% of total workforce	Workstyle identification complete
	Permanent homeworkers			11.5% of total workforce	
	Service based workers			52% of total workforce	
	Workforce style incomplete			2.5% of total workforce	
Capacity in the workforce	Absence – average days lost including COVID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services • Regeneration and Community Services • Social Services • Corporate Education • Schools • Council Total 			Quarter 1 0.97 days 3.64 days 5.04 days 0.69 days 3.15 days 3.26 days	Average days lost per employee 10 days
	Absence – Average days lost excluding COVID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services • Regeneration and Community Services • Social Services • Corporate Education • Schools • Council Total 			Quarter 1 0.97 days 3.62 days 4.85 days 0.69 days 3.11 days 3.20 days	
	Average Days lost COVID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Services • Regeneration and Community Services • Social Services • Corporate Education • Schools • Council Total 			Quarter 1 0 days 0.02 days 0.19 days 0 days 0.04 days 0.06 days	

Workforce Recovery Overview

Priority Area	PI	19/20	20/21	21/22	Target (when will we know we have recovered)?
Capacity in the workforce	Temporary Workforce responding to COVID			TTP 79 positions Headcount of 70	TTP no longer required
		As at 30th Sept 2019		As at 30th Sept 2021	
	Labour Turnover:				
	• Corporate Services	5.21%		5.35%	
	• Regeneration and Community Services	6.20%		8.25%	
	• Social Services	6.81%		5.40%	
• Corporate Education	0%		18.33%		
Percentage Vacant Posts:					
• Corporate Services	10%			13%	
• Regeneration and Community Services	8%			11%	
• Social Services	11%			15%	
• Corporate Education	9%			29%	

Agenda Item 9

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 22.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 22.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Business Rates Relief – Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/23**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr N Daniels, Leader & Executive Member for 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)
21/02/22		22.02.22				02/03/22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for the Executive Committee to consider and adopt, on behalf of the Council, the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/23 scheme (RLHRR), as a section 47 discretionary rate relief for 2022/23.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 In recent years, the Welsh Government have provided grant funding to Local Authorities in order for them to consider delivering the Retail Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief schemes for certain businesses within their area.
- 2.2 Blaenau Gwent Council adopted these discretionary schemes.
- 2.3 As part of the Covid-19 response and recovery, Welsh Government have frozen business rates for 2022/23 at 2021/22 levels.
- 2.4 To assist businesses in the sectors most affected by the COVID pandemic, the Minister for Finance and Local Government announced the Welsh Government would extend grant funding to provide the RLHRR scheme for 2022/23, although the 2022-23 scheme will differ in the level of relief available.
- 2.5 Retail, leisure and hospitality ratepayers in Wales will receive 50% non-domestic rates relief for the duration of 2022-23. Like the scheme announced by the UK Government, the Welsh Government's Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme will be capped at £110,000 per business across Wales.

- 2.6 The full criteria and guidance for the operation and delivery of the scheme is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.7 Welsh Government have yet to formally confirm the actual funding allocation for Blaenau Gwent for the 2022/23 scheme, but have provided an estimated allocation of £1.17M to allow delivery of the scheme.
- 2.8 From analysis of current available data, it is anticipated that circa 300 business may benefit as a result of adoption of the RLHRR scheme, totalling around £1.3M of rate relief. We have had verbal acknowledgement from WG that our requirement will be 100% funded
- 2.9 In order that assistance may be given to ratepayers, the Council must resolve to adopt the Welsh Government prescribed scheme as a discretionary rate relief scheme in line with s47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
- 3.1 **Option 1**
That the Executive Committee resolves not to implement the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/23 scheme as set out in the guidance in appendix 1.
- 3.2 **Option 2(preferred option)**
That the Executive Committee adopts the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/23 scheme on behalf of the Council, to supplement the Council’s discretionary rate relief scheme.
4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 The adoption of the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/23 scheme would support the Council Priority, ‘*Economic Development and Regeneration*’, as it would offer financial support to businesses in the borough.
5. **Implications Against Each Option**
- 5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***
- 5.1.1 **Option 1**
There will be no financial implications for the Council.
- 5.1.2 **Option 2**
It is estimated that circa 300 business throughout Blaenau Gwent will be eligible for the RLHRR scheme if adopted. This will total approximately £1.3M of rate relief which will be repaid in full by Welsh Government as a section 31 grant.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.2.1 **Option 1**

Failure to adopt the scheme will result in an inability to award financial assistance under the RLHRR scheme to qualifying local business within Blaenau Gwent.

5.2.2 **Option 2**

Welsh Government withdraw their provisional funding offer.

5.3 ***Legal***

5.3.1 The Council must resolve to adopt a discretionary relief scheme in accordance with s47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

5.4.1 The administration of the scheme will be absorbed and delivered within existing staff resources.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.1 For 2021/22, 315 businesses have currently benefited from the rate relief scheme totalling circa £2.2m.

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

6.2.1 Adoption of the relief scheme will reduce financial burdens on qualifying businesses and aid their economic recovery from the pandemic.

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

6.3.1 Welsh Government have slightly changed the criteria for the 2022/23 scheme by stipulating that each business eligible for the relief, must make and application for the relief, and have provided an example application form as shown in appendix 2. Subject to acceptance of this report, it is intended that notification of the scheme will be issued with the 2022/23 Non-Domestic Rate demand notice, along with details of the qualifying criteria and application form.

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

6.4.1 The availability of the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme is dependent on Welsh Government decision to offer such a scheme in future years.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

6.5.1 Not applicable to this report

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

6.6.1 Each individual local authority in Wales must adopt this scheme in order to how application. Applications will then be assessed and awarded by the Revenues section.

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

6.7.1 Not applicable to this report

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

6.8.1 Not applicable to this report

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

Not applicable to this report

6.9b ***Equality Impact Assessment***

Not applicable to this report

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The Revenue section will monitor the potential for qualification for the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme during the financial year, and will notify and consider applications from ratepayers where appropriate.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

Appendix 1 Welsh Government Guidance for the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief in Wales – 2022-23

Appendix 2 Example Application Form

Non-Domestic Rates – Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief in Wales – 2022-23

Guidance

About this guidance

This guidance is intended to support county and county borough councils (local authorities) in administering the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme (the relief). On 20 December 2021, the Minister for Finance and Local Government announced the continuation of the relief on a temporary basis for 2022-23. This guidance applies to Wales only.

This guidance sets out the criteria which the Welsh Government will use to determine the funding for local authorities for relief provided to retail, leisure and hospitality properties. The guidance does not replace any existing non-domestic rates legislation or any other relief. Enquiries about the scheme should be sent to: localtaxationpolicy@gov.wales
The relief is being offered from 1 April 2022 and will be available until 31 March 2023.

Introduction

This relief is aimed at businesses and other ratepayers in Wales in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors, for example shops, pubs and restaurants, gyms, performance venues and hotels.

The Welsh Government will provide grant funding to all 22 local authorities in Wales to provide the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief scheme to eligible businesses for 2022-23. The scheme aims to provide support for eligible occupied properties by offering a discount of 50% on non-domestic rates bills for such properties. The scheme will apply to all eligible businesses, however the relief will be subject to a cap in the amount each business can claim across Wales. The total amount of relief available is £110,000 across all properties occupied by the same business. All businesses are required to make a declaration that the amount of relief they are seeking across Wales does not exceed this cap, when applying to individual local authorities. An example declaration form is at [Annex 1](#) for local authorities to utilise when developing their own forms to publish and issue to businesses. This document provides guidance on the operation and delivery of the scheme.

Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief How will the relief be provided?

As this is a temporary measure, we are providing the relief by reimbursing local authorities that use their discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. It will be for individual local authorities to adopt a scheme and decide in each individual case when to grant relief under section 47. The Welsh Government will reimburse local authorities for the relief that is provided in line with this guidance via a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 and section 58A of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

How will the scheme be administered?

It will be for local authorities to determine how they wish to administer the scheme to maximise take-up and minimise the administrative burden for ratepayers and for local authority staff.

Local authorities are responsible for providing businesses with clear and accessible information on the details and administration of the scheme. If, for any reason, an authority is unable to provide this relief to eligible businesses from 1 April 2022, consideration should be given to notifying eligible businesses that they qualify for the relief and that their bills will be recalculated.

Which properties will benefit from relief?

Properties that will benefit from this relief will be occupied retail, leisure and hospitality properties – such as shops, pubs and restaurants, gyms, performance venues and hotels across Wales. More detailed eligibility criteria and exceptions to the relief are set out below. Relief should be granted to each eligible business as a reduction to its rates bill based on occupation between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023. It is recognised that there may be some instances where a local authority is retrospectively notified of a change of occupier. In such cases, if it is clear that the business was in occupation on or after the 1 April 2022, the local authority may use its discretion in awarding relief.

It is intended that, for the purposes of this scheme, retail properties such as ‘shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments’ will mean the following (subject to the other criteria in this guidance).

Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public
Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public

- Shops (such as florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off-licences, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc)
- Charity shops
- Opticians
- Pharmacies
- Post offices
- Furnishing shops or display rooms (such as carpet shops, double-glazing, garage doors)
- Car or caravan showrooms
- Second hand car lots
- Markets
- Petrol stations
- Garden centres
- Art galleries (where art is for sale or hire)

Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public

- Hair and beauty services
- Shoe repairs or key cutting
- Travel agents
- Ticket offices (e.g. for theatre)
- Dry cleaners
- Launderettes
- PC, TV or domestic appliance repair

- Funeral directors
- Photo processing
- DVD or video rentals
- Tool hire
- Car hire
- Estate and letting agents

Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and / or drink to visiting members of the public

- Restaurants
- Drive-through or drive-in restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich shops
- Cafés
- Coffee shops
- Pubs
- Bars or Wine Bars

We consider assembly and leisure to mean the following.

Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of sport, leisure and facilities to visiting members of the public (including for the viewing of such activities) and for the assembly of visiting members of the public

- Sports grounds and clubs
- Sport and leisure facilities
- Gyms
- Tourist attractions
- Museums and art galleries
- Stately homes and historic houses
- Theatres
- Live Music Venues
- Cinemas
- Nightclubs

Hereditaments that are being used for the assembly of visiting members of the public

- Public halls
- Clubhouses, clubs and institutions

We consider hotels, guest and boarding premises, and self-catering accommodation to mean the following.

Hereditaments where the non-domestic part is being used for the provision of living accommodation as a business

- Hotels, Guest and Boarding Houses,
- Holiday homes,
- Caravan parks and sites

Other considerations

To qualify for the relief, the hereditament should be wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purposes. In a similar way to other reliefs, this is a test on use rather than occupation. Therefore, hereditaments that are occupied, but not wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purpose, will not qualify for the relief. For the avoidance of doubt, hereditaments which closed temporarily due to the government's advice on Covid-19 should be treated as occupied for the purposes of this relief.

The above list is not intended to be exhaustive as it would be impossible to list all the many and varied retail, leisure and hospitality uses that exist. There will also be mixed uses. However, it is intended to be a guide for local authorities as to the types of uses that the Welsh Government considers for this purpose to be eligible for relief. Local authorities should determine for themselves whether particular properties not listed are broadly similar in nature to those above and, if so, to consider them eligible for the relief. Conversely, properties that are not broadly similar in nature to those listed above should not be eligible for the relief.

The grant of the relief is discretionary. Should local authorities decide to exercise their discretion not to apply the relief to eligible businesses, they may wish to consider taking their own legal advice upon any potential consequential legal issues which might arise from such a decision and on a case by case basis.

Businesses may view that they have been able to continue trading at a substantial level during Coronavirus restrictions and as such may be inclined to not apply for the relief.

Types of hereditaments that are not considered to be eligible for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief

The following list sets out the types of uses that the Welsh Government does not consider to be retail, leisure or hospitality use for the purpose of this relief and which would not be deemed eligible for the relief. However, it will be for local authorities to determine if hereditaments are similar in nature to those listed and if they would not be eligible for relief under the scheme.

Hereditaments that are being used wholly or mainly for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public

- Financial services (eg banks, building societies, cash points, ATMs, bureaux de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawnbrokers)
- Medical services (eg vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
- Professional services (eg solicitors, accountants, insurance agents, financial advisers, tutors)
- Post Office sorting offices
- Day nurseries
- Kennels and catteries
- Casinos and gambling clubs
- Show homes and marketing suites
- Employment agencies

Hereditaments that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public

If a hereditament is not usually reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public, it will be ineligible for relief under the scheme, even if there is ancillary use of the hereditament

that might be considered to fall within the descriptions listed under *Which properties will benefit from relief?*

Hereditaments that are not occupied

Properties that are not occupied on 1 April 2022 should be excluded from this relief. However, under the mandatory Empty Property Rates Relief scheme, empty properties will receive a 100% reduction in rates for the first three months (and in certain cases, six months) of being empty.

Hereditaments that are owned, rented or managed by a local authority

Hereditaments owned, rented or managed by a local authority, such as visitor centres, tourist information shops and council-run coffee shops or gift shops attached to historic buildings, are exempt from this scheme.

How much relief will be available?

The total amount of government funded relief available for each property under this scheme for 2022-23 is 50% of the relevant bill. This is subject to a cap of £110,000 per business across all their properties in Wales. The relief should be applied to the net bill remaining after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs funded by section 31 grants have been applied (excluding those where local authorities have used their wider discretionary relief powers introduced by the Localism Act 2011, which are not funded by section 31 grants).

The eligibility for the relief and the relief itself will be assessed and calculated on a daily basis. The following formula should be used to determine the amount of relief to be granted for a particular hereditament in the financial year.

Amount of relief to be granted = $V/2$, where

V is the daily charge for the hereditament for the chargeable day after the application of any mandatory relief and any other discretionary reliefs (excluding those where local authorities have used their discretionary relief powers introduced by the Localism Act 2011, which are not funded by section 31 grants).

This should be calculated ignoring any prior-year adjustments in liabilities which fall to be liable on the day.

Businesses who occupy more than one property will be entitled to Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief for each of their eligible properties, within the cap of £110,000 per business across Wales.

A business with a single property with a remaining liability (after reliefs) greater than £220,000 can use the entire allocation of relief. No other properties owned by that business will be eligible for the scheme.

Retail, leisure and hospitality properties which are excluded from Small Business Rates Relief due to the multiple occupation rule are eligible for this relief scheme, subject to the cap being applied.

Changes to existing hereditaments, including change in occupier

Empty properties becoming occupied after 1 April 2022 will qualify for this relief from the time of occupation.

If there is a change in occupier part way through the financial year, after relief has already been provided to the hereditament, the new occupier will qualify for the relief if they operate in the retail, leisure or hospitality sectors, on a pro-rata basis. This will be calculated based on the remaining days of occupation using the formula used in the section titled *How much relief will be available?*

The discount should be applied on a day-to-day basis using the formula set out above. A new hereditament created as a result of a split or merger during the financial year, or where there is a change of use, should be considered afresh for the discount on that day.

State Aid / Subsidy Control Regime

Following the end of the transition period for the United Kingdom leaving the European Union on 31 December 2020, EU State Aid regulations only apply in limited circumstances. As the relief is not funded by EU residual funds, EU State Aid regulations no longer apply for this scheme. As of 1 January 2021, the UK Subsidy Regime came into force. The scheme is considered by the Welsh Government to be outside the scope of any international trade agreements as measures are focused locally within Wales.

Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief Scheme 2022-23

RETAIL, LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY RATES RELIEF - PURPOSE OF THE RELIEF

The Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief Scheme is available to qualifying businesses who operate in the retail, leisure, and hospitality sectors. Eligible business will receive a 50% reduction to their non-domestic rates net liability in 2022-23. The maximum cash value of the rates relief allowed, across all properties in Wales occupied by the same business, should not exceed £110,000.

Businesses are required to declare that they meet the eligibility criteria set out in this guidance document and state which properties they seek to claim relief on. Where 50% of liability across a business's properties exceeds £110,000, businesses are required to specify which properties they would like the relief to apply to. Businesses may choose which properties they seek relief for. Where the total relief allowed for other properties is close to the maximum amount of £110,000, an amount of relief of less than 50% may be allowed for a further eligible property.

An application form must be submitted to each local authority from which a business is seeking to claim relief for a property in that authority's area. Each form must include details of all properties for which relief is being sought throughout Wales. If an application is not made, then relief cannot be awarded.

Any attempt by a business to deliberately claim in excess of £110,000 relief will risk the withdrawal of relief granted under the scheme to that business by any local authority in Wales.. Information on relief claimed under the scheme will be shared with other local authorities and the Welsh Government, enabling any aggregate claims in excess of £110,000 to be identified and if necessary, acted upon.

The Welsh Government and [name of local authority] will not tolerate any business falsifying their records or providing false evidence to gain this discount, including claiming support above the £110,000 cap or the exemption threshold. A business who falsely applies for any relief, or provides false information or makes false representation in order to gain relief may be guilty of fraud under the Fraud Act 2006 and subject to legal action, in addition to having all Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief removed from all of their properties for the 2022-23 scheme.

[Local authorities to insert privacy statement into their forms as data controllers – allowing data to be shared with the Welsh Government and other local authorities]

All applicants will need to provide the following information

Are you making an application for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief in more than one local authority area?

If yes, please complete Parts 1 and 2

If no, please complete Part 1 only

Part 1: Applicable to all applicants in relation to properties for which Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief is being claimed from [name of local authority]

Business Name and Address:

Company Registration Number (if applicable):

Applicant's name:

Applicant's role in the business (eg owner / director / company secretary / accountant):

Applicant's email:

Applicant's telephone number:

If you are applying for relief in relation to more than one business premises, please list them in order of preference to which the relief should be applied, noting that the maximum relief that can be allowed to a business in Wales is £110,000. Relief will be granted in the order in which you list the premises.

The required details can be found on the Non-Domestic Rates bill issued to you in relation to each property you wish to claim relief for.

Address of Property	NDR (Business Rates) Account Number	Rateable Value*
[Property address]		£ [LAs may be able to auto-populate]

<p>Total amount of Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief sought in [name of local authority] (not to exceed £110,000 across Wales)</p> <p>You may leave this field blank if Part 2 of this application is not relevant to your business, or if the maximum relief entitlement for your business across Wales will be lower than £110,000. If you are required to claim a specific amount of relief from [name of local authority], to avoid your business exceeding the £110,000 cap across Wales, you must enter it here.</p>	<p>£ [LAs may be able to auto-calculate a maximum, but the applicant must be able to request a lower amount, to avoid exceeding £110,000 across Wales]</p>
--	---

*To find out your rateable value, you can enter details at the Valuation Office Agency's [online checker](#).

Part 2: Applicable only to businesses applying for relief from multiple local authorities in Wales. In such cases, a separate application should be made to each local authority.

Properties in other local authorities in Wales, for which Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief is being claimed for this business.

Address	Local authority
[Property address]	[Pick list could be used]

Declaration:

I understand that the total value of the relief claimed under the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief Scheme sought by [INSERT BUSINESS NAME] across the whole of Wales cannot exceed £110,000 and that deliberate attempts to claim relief over £110,000 risks all relief granted under the scheme being withdrawn. I accept responsibility for notifying my local authority of any change in circumstances, following my application for relief, which could result in the relief awarded to my business being incorrect or exceeding £110,000 across Wales (e.g. a change rateable value).

I understand that, should relief in excess of £110,000 be granted for any reason, a proportion of it will be reclaimed, in respect of one or more properties, to reduce the value of the relief awarded to £110,000 or below as appropriate. I also understand that, if relief in excess of £110,000 is granted as a result of a deliberate attempt to claim more than the maximum amount allowed, all the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief allowed for [INSERT BUSINESS NAME] across Wales may be removed, and the full amount of rates liability will become payable.

I acknowledge that my local authority, any other local authority in Wales and/or the Welsh Government will undertake any appropriate checks considered necessary to assess this application for rates relief, including cross checks of any information already held by the authority, any other local authority in Wales or Welsh Government. I understand the data I have provided will be shared with Welsh Government and if necessary any other local authority in Wales, for this purpose and to prevent fraud and error.

I declare that the information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my information, knowledge and belief, and I understand that making a false response to any of the questions in this application could be an act of fraud.

Signed [xxx]

Name [xxx]

Date [xx/xx/xxxx]

Agenda Item 10

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**

Report Subject: **Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy**

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

Report Submitted by: **Richard Crook, Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
18.01.2022	20.01.2022	15.02.22			09.02.2022	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Members endorsement of the Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy.
- 1.2 The report provides a summary of the Strategy's content, and the Themes around which a range of projects are based.

2. Background and Current Position

Context

- 2.1 Celebrating the life and legacy of Aneurin Bevan in an appropriate and meaningful way has been a priority for a number of years. In addition to the intrinsic value of celebrating 'the architect of the NHS', it has also been seen as a way to help support and promote the area, its heritage, and wider economic regeneration.
- 2.2 In 2018 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, working collaboratively with Visit Wales, commissioned a Strategy with the aim of:
 - Increasing visitor numbers to the area.
 - Raising the profile of the area.
 - Challenge and change perceptions of the area.
 - Encourage the growth and sustainability of existing product.
 - Increase footfall into our town centres.
 - Stimulate and support new regeneration projects.
 - Stimulate and support economic growth through inward investment and job creation.

The Strategy

- 2.3 Following a competitive procurement exercise, a collaborative bid was received from a consortium of consultants including comprising Can Do

Team, Letha Consultancy and Wye Knot Tourism who were awarded the commission.

2.4 The consortium co-produced a Strategy in consultation with a range of stakeholders including members of the public, community groups and identified a series of Themes around which projects could be developed. These Themes are:

- Bevan – Creator of the NHS
- Bevan the Politician
- Bevan – Son of Tredegar
- Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist
- Bevan the Inspiring Orator and Debater
- Bevan the Bibliophile and Author

2.5 A range of projects have been identified within the context of these themes and are included in the attached Executive Summary. Since the projects have been identified, due to a range of factors including time elapsed due to Covid-19 further work is needed to establish more up-to-date costs for the projects identified.

Current Position

2.6 The Strategy ties into and complements the Blaenau Gwent Destination Management Plan (DMP) and will provide a framework for delivering local projects under the strategic umbrella of the DMP.

2.7 Approval is being sought to endorse the proposals and enable officers to further develop the projects, including feasibility work and establish updated costs. Should this be endorsed, a further report will be presented in future updating on progress on the development and delivery of projects.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option one – The Executive Committee approve the Aneurin Bevan Strategy.

3.2 Option two – The Executive Committee suggest amendments to the Aneurin Bevan Strategy prior to approval.

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

4.1 Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board: Established in April 2016, and is currently working towards preparing a Well-being Plan for the area. Tourism will offer an opportunity in Blaenau Gwent to help the area contribute towards the long-term future of the area.

4.2 The Blaenau Gwent Local Plan 2018-2022

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Section 15), places a duty on all Local Authorities in Wales to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. As part of this, the Council is required to develop a Corporate Plan. The priorities developed for the Corporate Plan incorporate the previous Council Well-being Objectives and also represent our Improvement Objectives, as required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure.

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

- 5.1.1 The Strategy will be developed and delivered collaboratively with partners, with funding sought from a range of sources including internal budgets e.g. Destination Management and where necessary from external funders.
- 5.1.2 The Strategy will support the Authority in making funding applications to external funding bodies including Welsh Government, Visit Wales and others, to deliver projects.
- 5.1.3 Any priorities identified within the Strategy requiring additional funding will be reported as appropriate, identifying any potential impact on BGCBC resources.
- 5.1.4 Retention of the Destination Management budget is essential to supporting the five-year delivery of the Aneurin Bevan Strategy.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

- 5.2.1 The Strategy will form part of the wider DMP which is Blaenau Gwent's strategic document to support destination related activity. Without such a Strategy it will be difficult to ensure buy-in from stakeholder and secure funding to deliver projects.
- 5.2.2 Reduction in available staff resources will impact upon the Council's ability to implement activity contained within the action plan.
- 5.2.3 There is a risk of partner organisations not prioritising agreed actions which could negatively impact upon the implementation of the overall plan.
- 5.2.4 Failure of local tourism stakeholders to engage in the Destination Management Partnership will result in a weak monitoring of the Strategy. The Destination Management Officer will dedicate time to strengthening the partnership membership.

5.3 Legal

- 5.3.1 There are no legal implications to the development of the Strategy at this stage. Any activities arising as a result of the Strategy will be delivered within existing legal governance arrangements.

5.4 **Human Resources**

- 5.4.1 Delivery of the Strategy will be co-ordinated through the Council's Destination Management Officer and overseen by the Destination Management Partnership

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

- 6.1.1 Nationally - The Strategy will form part of the DMP which is referenced Welsh Government's / Visit Wales new tourism framework and The Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- 6.1.2 Regionally – South Wales Tourism Forum, South East Wales Destination Management Group and South East Wales Destination Implementation Group
- 6.1.3 Locally - Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board, the Blaenau Gwent Local Plan 2018-2022 and the Blaenau Gwent Corporate Plan.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

- 6.2.1 The Strategy could benefit local businesses, residents and visitors alike through developing a more prosperous economy, pleasant environment and inspiring pride in our heritage and the areas role in the establishment of the NHS.

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

The Destination Management Partnership meet quarterly at various venues across the County Borough. The group has increased membership and is a strong and cohesive voice for local tourism and will support and oversee the development and delivery of the Strategy.

- 6.3.1 The Destination Management Officer regularly engages with stakeholders and the community to ensure that their voices are heard and acted upon and ongoing consultation will be undertaken on the development and delivery of the Strategy.

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

- 6.4.1 The BGDMP lifetime has been extended from 3 years to 5 years to allow the partnership to take a long term vision for tourism. This will assist in providing continuity of oversight for the Strategy.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

- 6.5.1 Without a Strategy there will be no focus and monitoring of delivery nor a framework in place to secure funding for projects.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

6.6.1 The Local Authority works collaboratively with Welsh Government, other local authorities, local businesses, trusts, public bodies and the voluntary sector in delivering the Destination Management Plan of which the Strategy forms a part. Ongoing consultation with the community will ensure that projects are supported and are collaboratively delivered.

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

6.7.1 Prosperous - The Destination Management Plan aims to improve the profitability of business performance through building the capacity of the industry.

6.7.2 Healthier - walking and activities in the outdoors through the development of walking and cycling routes will benefit the physical and mental wellbeing of the community and visitors.

6.7.3 Equal- By making recreational activities accessible to all.

6.7.4 Culture & Language - Through the use of the Welsh language in all our promotional materials and on line and celebrating our heritage and culture.

6.7.5 Globally Responsible - By protecting and promoting our unique natural and built environment, encouraging use of sustainable transport and supporting businesses in securing the Green Dragon environmental standard awarded to organisations that are taking action to control their impacts on the environment.

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

6.8.1 The Strategy and the wider DMP embraces all residents and visitors. It has no adverse impact on people or groups from the nine protected characteristics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The delivery of the Strategy will be overseen and monitored quarterly through the Blaenau Gwent Destination Management Partnership.

7.2 Annual updates will be provided to Scrutiny Committee and Executive and on request.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 - Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy Executive Summary

This page is intentionally left blank

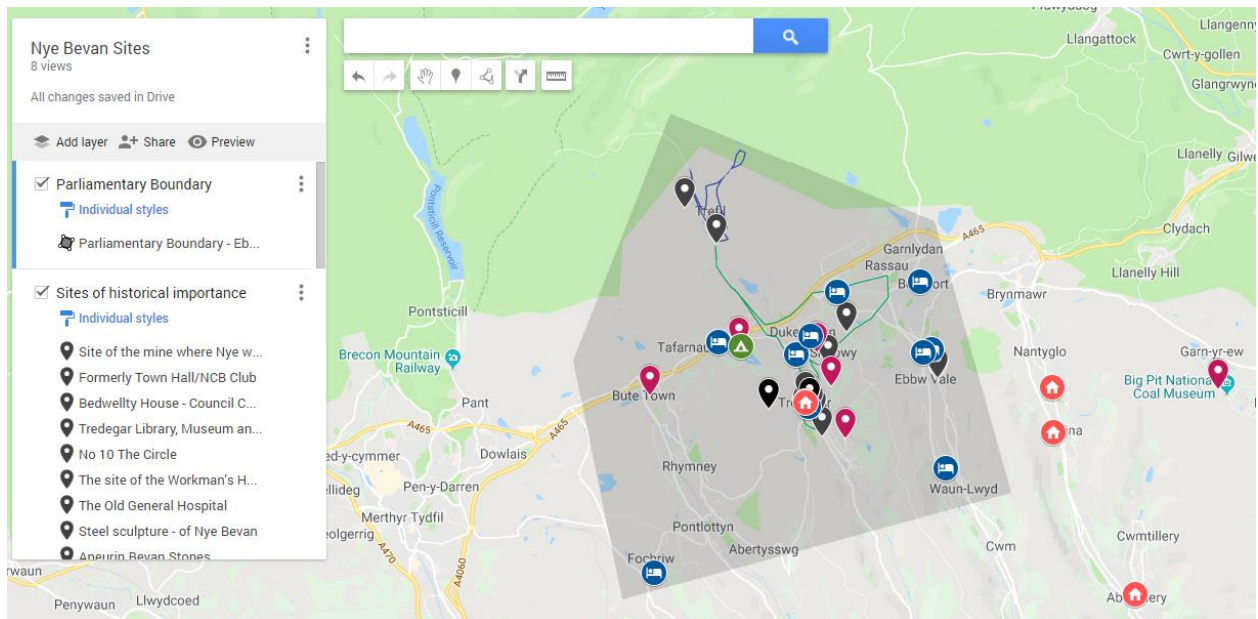
Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy

Executive Summary

This strategy has been commissioned by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Visit Wales (Welsh Government) specifically to examine how the legacy of Aneurin Bevan can be harnessed to develop and expand the tourism sector primarily within the area that he represented, as well as challenging and changing the perception of the area.

Review of the Current Situation

Across the area that Nye Bevan represented there are a range of memorials, buildings and collections that have a connection with him. There are also a few sites in other parts of Wales that add to the story.



There are currently a wide range of artworks and interpretation sources available about Aneurin Bevan and his connections to the area. However, most are:

- out of date
- poorly maintained
- and are not connected in their development or operation, leading to considerable duplication in the narrative, i.e. all saying about the NHS.

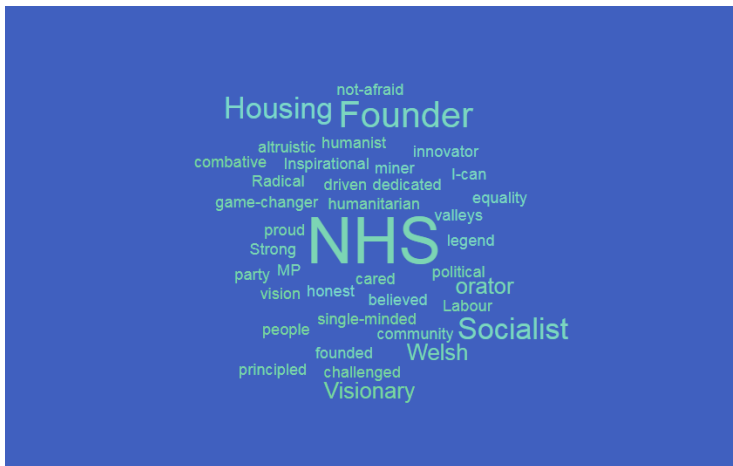
Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken through a number of channels:

- Face to face meetings – see Appendix 1
- Public consultation event promoted by posters, direct messages and via various social media channels (related to history and the area)
- Online survey for the general public, promoted by direct messages, as well as through social media posts on pages related to history and the area.
- A targeted online survey to tour guides who bring visitors to south Wales (WOTGA members)

Public Consultation

Public Consultation was undertaken to elicit the views of local people as well as some outside the area with a keen interest. The consultation took the form of a public meeting, survey monkey questionnaire and questionnaires left at Tredegar Museum. In total 20 responses were received.



Summarising Nye

Respondents were first asked to identify key words that they felt described Bevan. These words were then analysed using a word cloud programme. This generated the following graphic. The larger the word/phrase appears, the more often it was cited by respondents. Clearly the NHS (and his role as founder of it) are the key messages that people associate with Nye Bevan. It is interesting to also note that he is remembered for his work on social housing and that he is remembered as a socialist, a visionary and an orator – as well as being Welsh.

How Tredegar Shaped Nye

Respondents were asked “How do you think that Tredegar shaped Nye Bevan? What drove him and inspired him?”

People clearly thought that his experiences growing up and as a miner were very influential on him - in particular injustice, inequality, poverty/poor living conditions, ill-health and the exploitation of working people. Respondents also felt that he was influenced by the strong sense of community spirit he witnessed through things like the Medical Aid Society.

“Seeing Tredegar Medical Aid Society in action he wanted to Tredegarise Britain”

What aspects of Nye can be used to help engage, inspire and influence people today?

Respondents were given a series of ‘storylines’ and were asked to rank them.

- i. Bevan’s Achievements - Establishing the National Health Service and his ambitious programme of building over 800,000 homes after WW2.
- ii. Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist - Miner – miners’ agent – Trade Unions – helping miners on strike.
- iii. Charismatic Bevan – Part of the Query Club; securing power in council and parliamentary chambers; securing the BMA to establish the NHS. Also being an International Statesman – links to Soviet Union, USA, etc.
- iv. Bevan the Master Orator - Overcoming his stammer by reciting poetry and prose; learning a huge vocabulary; holding public meetings in village halls and open air meetings for election rallies to the huge gatherings in Trafalgar Square. His oratory is well documented.
- v. Bevan the Bibliophile - His love of reading, libraries, reciting poetry and prose to overcome his stammer.
- vi. Bevan the Politician - His journey from Trade Union representative to Tredegar Urban District Council then Monmouthshire County Council and ultimately to Parliament. His transition from representing miners to representing constituents.
- vii. Bevan’s personal life - His marriage to Jenny Lee. His love of walking. His love of music, plays, books – and good times. Overcoming adversity – his stammer, TICC, Mine owners, poverty etc.

As with the key words, it was the changes that Bevan made to the health and wellbeing of the nation – the NHS and Housing - that were felt to be the strongest storyline. What also became clear was that these storylines didn’t give the complete picture of the inter-related story of Bevan, Tredegar and the NHS, and as such, they were subsequently expanded upon to include:

- Bevan the Inspiration

Appendix 1

- How Tredegar shaped Nye
- Birthplace of the NHS
- Life before the NHS

Celebrating Bevan

There are already a number of sites that tell part of Bevan's story. Respondents were presented with a list and asked to rank them. They were also asked to say what they thought could be improved at each one. The combined results are shown below:

1st Bevan Stones:

- There were concerns over the condition and maintenance of the site. It was also felt that it needed better interpretation and perhaps an outdoor classroom space. Signage needed and explanatory material needed

Joint 2nd 10 the Circle:

- It was felt the site suffered from lack of profile. People were unaware of the existing plaque.

Joint 2nd NUM/Town Hall Building, Tredegar:

- People were unsure of the condition/ownership of the site, but felt it was important in the story of Bevan and should be interpreted.

Joint 2nd Bedwellty House:

- Respondents were complimentary about the site but felt that more could be done to emphasise the story of Bevan as a local politician.

Joint 3rd Aneurin Bevan Trail and the 'In the footsteps of Nye Bevan' walking route:

- People felt the routes could be enhanced/updated.

4th Tredegar Museum:

- People appreciated the role the museum plays but felt more could be done to help the story of Nye 'stand out'. They also felt it could be moved to bigger premises.

5th Gwent Archives:

- Most people appreciated the value of the collections held by the archive and felt they could be used to enhance the story.

6th Artwork:

- People felt it was of variable quality and sometimes needed explanation.

Participants also added the Bevan Festival.

Bevan's Legacy and project ideas

Respondents were asked "Where and how do you think Bevan's legacy should be celebrated"? The key ideas coming through included

- the creation of a multimedia experience/ National Museum of Health and Medicine/ new NHS heritage centre
- closer links to education and the curriculum
- setting up an annual Bevan award for achievement, aimed at young people
- development of the Bevan Festival
- Embedding the development of the NHS and the influence of the Medical Aid Society into courses for student nurses/doctors and health workers.
- Webpage
- Local guides/ambassadors
- An Ironbridge style tourist attraction pulling all the sites together
- Debating societies
- A statue.
- Innovation and technology centre linked to education
- To utilise the town and use the knowledge of the community

Conclusion re Public Consultation

Although based on a small sample, it was clear from the consultation that people felt passionately about Nye Bevan and his legacy, epitomised by the NHS. They were all positive about the potential to use his story to improve the area and to engage with people and from the ideas generated it was apparent that they supported an ambitious approach.

Overall Summary of Consultation

Across all the consultation strands it is very clear that there is pride and belief in Nye Bevan's legacy. Whilst people recognise his principles, skill as a visionary politician and as an orator, most define his legacy as the NHS, the first universal healthcare system in the world. In particular the key principles of the NHS, which separated what was delivered in 1948 from what had been talked about by all political parties beforehand,

- Universality, equality and quality of care.
- A comprehensive service.
- A centrally funded health service, free at the point of delivery.

It is also very clear that people see that the community in which he was born and brought up, made him the man he was; his experiences of hard work, poverty and unfairness left deep marks on him.

Appendix 1

There is a recognition that whilst there are numerous sites and resources that relate to Nye Bevan in and around Tredegar, most are in need to investment, reinterpretation and promotion. There is also a perceived need to link the sites and to integrate with other key facilities and projects across the Heads of the Valleys area.

Quality is defined as a key attribute that is essential to all elements of a visit to ensure that visitors have a good experience, comparable to other places that they might encounter in a 2 hour travel area.

Most of the people interviewed and who responded to the online survey have a great interest and enthusiasm in the area and in Nye. The comments from WOTGA are a bit of a reality check, that not everybody knows Nye, and that a visit to this area needs to be enjoyable as well as educational.

Exemplars - Key Observations

A range of personality and medical destinations were examined; here are the key observations.

Geographic focal point

A common thread in the most effective exemplars is that they all have a geographic/ physical focal point to hang their figure on and act as a base for their 'hero'. Some have a complete trail of locations, which can be a stately home, a family home, or a building repurposed because of its proximity to significant history related to the individual. Regeneration of an area is often a goal. The most effective product development work includes walking tours and 'discover X country' tours so that benefits are spread out from the focal point and visitor understanding of the context/setting is assisted.

Walking in their footsteps

The strongest 'offers' are where the attraction or museum relates directly to the life events of the individual – where they were born, lived, worked, died, and where you really feel you are walking in their footsteps. The Churchill Trail is a very strong example of this.

Associated collection

The strongest offers also have depth by having a 'collection'(s) associated with the hero/individual. This ranges from a ship (Brunel) to a library with 20,000 books (Gladstone). Artefacts and historical documents are common elements which help to back up learning opportunities.

Championing a cause

The strongest offers have an element of championing/ campaigning/ being a vehicle for modern day activism. Several of the locations are striving to create a place where like-minded

Appendix 1

people can step out of day to day concerns and find a place to think, challenge, solve problems and generally champion the cause of their hero. The Gladstone Library has a commitment to looking forward, as do international examples such as the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Martin Luther King & the National civil Rights Museum.

Status and Governance

Most are charitable trust / membership organisations with common activities such as annual dinners, wreath laying ceremonies at graves and public sculptures, competitions (art/literature/ ideas). Those offering a lively programme of events seem to be the strongest (e.g. Gladstone Library).

Support network

Each one has built a following of like-minded people who share admiration for or love the work of the public figure. Some form of society/ friends' organisation or association provides background impetus and energy, as well as a ready pool of volunteers and visitors.

Education

Education is integral to almost all these examples. It ranges from school and National Curriculum targeted resources and activities to continuing education and life-long learning.

Digital presence

Some of the best examples pay lots of attention to their digital presence. For example Gladstone's Library want to ensure that *'the online presence of the Library is as unique and distinctive as the physical institution'*. That's something to aspire to.

Overall Strategic Approach

The public consultation clearly shows that people principally link Nye with the NHS – that is his primary legacy.

When you read about Nye it is very clear that he created the NHS around principles that he had developed from very early childhood; those principles were created through his contact with people in his home town of Tredegar, how he saw other people being treated and the inequalities that he witnessed. His reading and the debates he engaged with in groups such as the Query Club sharpened his arguments and ways of expressing ideas, as well as his ability to persuade people to his point of view.

So, we see the overall Strategy as working around a simple theme:

“The place that made the man, who created the NHS”

Appendix 1

This emphasises the connection of Nye to the unique history of the area that he represented and recognises that we are made by the community in which we live and grow up (*it is not intended to be the branding tagline*). In Nye's life, his past culminated in the NHS with his key, ongoing principles of:

- Universality, equality and quality of care.
- A comprehensive service.
- A centrally funded health service, free at the point of delivery.

In recognising that Nye is a more complex character and has links much wider than the NHS which can be explored, we are proposing that different stories are told at different sites, which then link together, as you find if you visit Ironbridge, where different museums tell different stories. This will allow visitors to explore some or all of the overall story in ways that they choose, over long or short periods of time, in any order that they decide. It will give unique storylines for different sites, removing duplication – creating an “**Ironbridge**” approach across the area.

Interpretative Approach

Recognising that the NHS and Health have higher levels of recognition (than Nye) and that Nye Bevan is a more complex character than just the person who created the NHS, and that his views were influenced by the area in which he grew up, the people he met, the things that he witnessed, an overarching interpretative theme has been developed:

“The place that made the man, who created the NHS.”

This sits above a group of strong themes to be used under this overarching theme

“Home of the NHS” (across the wider area allowing all of his constituency – or Blaenau Gwent to be associated with the creation of the NHS)

“Tredegar – Home of the NHS” (in the town)

These sit above six sub themes which would be used to define the narrative at individual sites, create a rich narrative that is beyond simply linking Nye to the NHS.

1. **Bevan – Creator of the NHS**
2. **Bevan the Politician**
3. **Bevan – Son of Tredegar**
4. **Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist**
5. **Bevan the Inspiring Orator and Debater**

6. Bevan the Bibliophile and Author

These sub themes will also allow sites across Blaenau Gwent CBC and further afield to be linked to sites in and around the constituency that Nye represented:

	In Constituency	Across Blaenau Gwent	Wider Area
Bevan – Creator of the NHS	No 10 The Circle, Gwent Archives, New Tredegar Health Centre, Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan, Museum/Centre of NHS (Future), Bevan Festival.	A465 highest point (sculpture – Future). Bevan Play	Medical Museums (London and Worcester), Wellcome Collection, Peoples Museum Manchester, St Fagans. Bevan Play
Bevan the Politician	Council Chamber - Bedwellty House, Bevan Stones, Former Town Hall, Bevan Festival, Ebbw Vale Works Museum, Steel Figures located at key sites across his constituency Festival of History and Politics (General Offices, Gwent Archives, EVI, Coleg Gwent)	Festival of History and Politics Brynmawr Cinema	National Assembly for Wales, Parliament, St Fagans (housing), Peoples Museum Manchester,
Bevan – Son of Tredegar	Tredegar Museum, Gwent Archives (Records) Various sites in Tredegar, Aneurin Bevan Trail, In the footsteps of Nye.	In the Footsteps of the Iron Makers	
Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist	Sites where he was a miner, and where he served as a Union Rep including Ty Trist – Tredegar Comprehensive Tredegar Museum. Cwm Miners Memorial	Guardian, Ty Ebbw Fach, Six Bells Mining Memorial Mining exhibits in local museums – Abertillery and Blaina museums, Tyleri Trails, Mining sites in Cwmtillery, Llanhilleth	Big Pit, Rhondda Heritage Park, South Wales Miners Library, Senghenydd Memorial
Bevan the Inspiring Orator and Debater	Bevan Stones, Council Chamber, Guided walks, Bevan Festival (Future)	Debating Competition – Rotary (EV, Abertillery, Brynmawr) (Future) BG Schools and colleges	National Debating Competition (Future) Wales and UK schools, colleges and universities.
Bevan the Bibliophile and Author	Tredegar Library, poetry and reading events across area Gwent Archives	Poetry and reading events at libraries, theatres and other venues across Blaenau Gwent.	National Library of Wales, Archives with Bevan docs

Audiences

The NHS and Nye, as creator of this much-loved service are a strong subject to generate visits, if the quality, narrative and methods of delivery are attractive, engaging and enjoyable.

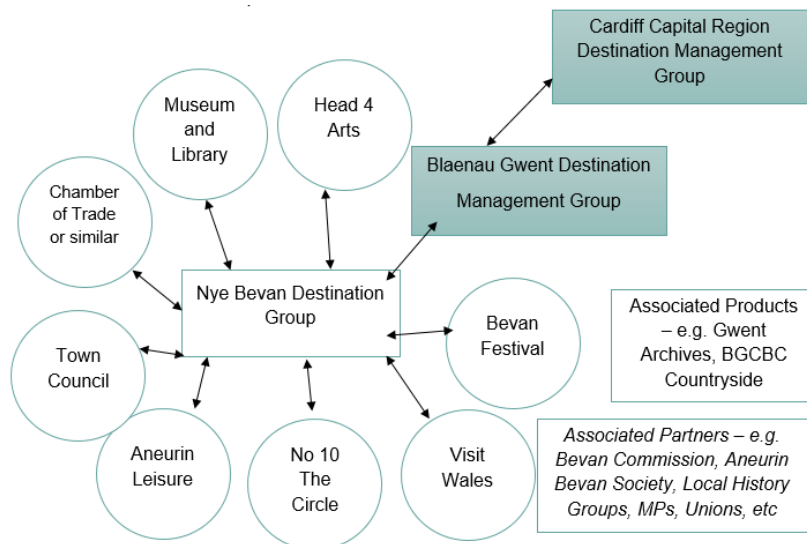
There is the potential, with the right product development to attract:

- General visitors – local, UK and overseas
- General Education visits – all age groups
- Specialist researchers re the history of the NHS and Nye

Another key potential audience is Business Tourism, in particular the health sector – the largest employment sector in Wales, and a significant sector across the UK. The potential to meet in the Home of the NHS is a unique draw for this sector. Even without product development, the Business Sector can be approached under a promotional campaign based around **“Meet in the Home of the NHS”**.

Implementation Organisation

To achieve this strategy coordination is essential, in developing products and interpretation, and in delivering joint marketing and publicity.



It is proposed that a Nye Bevan Destination Group be established, which will sit within the wider Destination Management Partnership and include representatives from the Tredegar THI group and other interested groups and individuals. It is also proposed that the Bevan festival is to be expanded and refocused then an expanded organising committee should be created, to bring a wider range of skills, contacts and experiences to the future development of the Festival.

Branding and Promotion

A key part of the Branding proposals is the creation of a suite of logos that can support the themes and sub themes – linking Nye to the NHS and in colours that are not party political.

A suite of logos were created with Nye, the beat of a heart to indicate the NHS and various words or symbols.



The logos can be used at sites, in promotional print and on commercial items.

Key in promoting the Nye Bevan narrative and the area will be the creation of a website to link all the sites and to show progress as the plan is implemented, as well as print.

New/Major Projects

To really capitalise of the legacy of Nye the area needs to do something radical and bold, as well as improving existing products.

Three New/Major projects are proposed:

- 1. Wales Museum of (Wales Centre for) the NHS – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**
This would be a hands on, fun experience, exploring the past but also the future. Using all sorts of displays and technology it would explore the creation of the NHS, as well as allowing visitors to find out about the NHS of today and the current research (Technique of Health). It would have meeting and conference facilities, as well as space for researchers and developers.

2. **Bevan Festival – Festival of Health and Well-Being**

This would be an expansion of the existing festival, allowing discussion and exploration of health and well-being issues; lots of things to have a go at, music and entertainment, the march to Bedwellty House and more. Throughout the year events would take place across Blaenau Gwent under the banner of the Bevan Festival, and a Festival shop in Tredegar would allow social activities to take place throughout the year.

3. **Art and Sculptures**

To create a different image for the area the use of art has great potential to challenge, to generate discussions and to champion issues that would have interested Nye. Several large-scale permanent installations or biennial/ triennial competitions are suggested.

Improvement/Enhancement Projects

Suggestions are made for all sites – these can be summarised as:

- **Aneurin Leisure Trust** – Linking Parc Bryn Bach and other sites to the theme through the naming of events, holding of walks, and promotion at Visitor Centre
- **Bedwellty House and Park** – Rebranding the café with a theme related to NHS or Nye, inclusion of Nye in future guidebooks and the addition of medicinal planting in the Park.
- **Bedwellty House – Council Chamber** – A working chamber that is listed – suggestions include sound track of debates, hanging banners on the doors, and simple interpretative paddles about other local politicians.
- **Bevan Stones** – Essential maintenance work is to commence shortly. Interpretation around Nye the Orator with sound posts, benches with text, walk routes, new panels and a local group to keep an eye on the area.
- **Big Pit National Coal Museum** - Find artefacts for a cabinet entry about Nye the Miner and Union Representative.
- **Cefn Golau Cholera Cemetery** – Reminder of what life was like – needs cleaning and if possible, steps to make it easier for visitors to visit.
- **Debating** – A national debating contest for young adults on themes related to Nye Bevan, Health and NHS, in partnership with an organisation such as Rotary.
- **5DCinema – General Office** – Commission a film combining original footage and animation/layering to create an entertaining narrative that showing Bevan with his contemporaries.

- **Ebbw Vale Works Museum** – Discover the images and narrative that links Nye to the Works as the areas MP.
- **Events and Performances** – A range of small and regular events primarily to link the local population to the theme, but some have the potential to attract visitors when established, for instance performances of Owen Sheers *“To Provide All People”* or a Hill Runners Marathon along the Sirhowy Valley Trail.
- **Gwent Archives** – Research, digitisation and annotation projects.
- **Tredegar Library and Local History Research Centre** – Highlight Nye’s love of books and Nye the author.
- **NCB Club/Town Hall** – Opportunity to integrate interpretation about Nye the Politician within the planned uses for the building.
- **No 10 The Circle** – The building restoration seems to be ready to start. There is a need for the interpretation plan and funding to be identified for integration into the restoration.
- **Physics Garden – Medicinal Planting** – Building on the age-old use of plants in medicine.
- **Roundels around the Clock** – Integrate into updated walks and place copies in sites that can be easily seen by all.
- **Sense of Place** – Develop a Sense of Place handbook for businesses and organisations to use the logo and to develop other associations with the Nye Bevan themes.
- **Steel Figures** – Install a series of Nye Steel Figures at key sites and with key people across Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney – promote as a trail.
- **The General Hospital (Closed)/New Health Centre** – Ensure that the Art Strategy supports the Nye themes.
- **Training for:**
 - **Teachers**
 - **Welsh Guides**
 - **Local People/Guides**
- **Tredegar Museum** – Develop panels that link Nye to the history of the area – Nye – Son of Tredegar
- **Tredegar Town Centre** -Work to making the town look more alive.
- **Walks** – Update and reprint the 2 existing walks.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 11

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Levelling Up Funding (LUF) Bid Request**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr David Davies, Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development**
Report Submitted by: **Owen Ashton, Service Manager Business and 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)
11.01.22	13.01.22	15.02.22			23.02.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To request authority to submit Levelling Up Funding (LUF) bids during the second call in line with the UK Govt LUF timetable.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The LUF is a UK Govt fund of £800 M for the devolved nations over the next four years (up to 2024-25). Bids for the first round of funding had to demonstrate investment or delivery could begin on the ground in that financial year. The funds are administered on a competitive basis.
- 2.2 The second call for bids is expected to open in April/May 2022 and close in June/July 2022; exact dates will be reported when they have been confirmed. We are anticipating that the call will be focussed around capital works and towns with money having to be spent by 2024/25. This could provide an opportunity to secure funds to implement projects that are emerging out of the Master Plan/Place making Work undertaken in Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale.
- 2.3 The Regeneration and Development Team have been working on Placemaking Plans for Blaenau Gwent's towns to prepare for funding applications to UK and Welsh Government. The detail of the deliverability and sequencing of projects in these plans is still being developed.
- 2.4 In preparation for the expected announcement in the Spring it is prudent that the Council agrees that a bid for the LUF can be developed. Some of the key principles around the regeneration of towns post pandemic are set out below. The combined
- Facilitating towns as multi-purpose locations with a variety of uses, such as residential, education, healthcare, cultural, technology, community and purpose-focussed retail and hospitality;
 - New purposes for sites and town buildings to encourage more uses in the town centre;
 - Working with the changes in retail to encourage business start-up in our towns;

- Working with towns/communities to encourage more sustainable buildings, landscape and infrastructure as part of the decarbonisation agenda.
- 2.5 An adequate lead in time will be required as HM Treasury Green Book applications will need to be worked up which are very detailed and require a lot of technical input which means that if the Council wishes to submit a bid or bids preparation may need to begin before there is a Council structure to make decisions. However, this work has begun with the Placemaking plans which will form part of the background evidence for the bids, but there is still a large amount of work to be done.
- 2.6 The LUF Town Centre criteria from the current guidance sets out the following:
“Regeneration and town centre investment, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction, and bring public services and safe community spaces into town and city centres.”
- 2.7 Currently the projects that meet the current LUF criteria and more developed are the Ebbw Vale Multi Storey Car Park, and/or possibly the police station; and the Brynmawr Bus Depot site. There may also be an opportunity to bid for monies for Blaenau Gwent Town centres to decarbonise all the town centres through buildings improvements; and green and blue infrastructure critical to the future of sustainable development, health and wellbeing. Further details of these will be brought back to Members during the new Council session.

However, UK Government could change the criteria for the next round and so previously mentioned projects may no longer be suitable which would mean we would be unlikely to submit any application in round two.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 Option 1: (Preferred) To prepare applications for the next LUF round of bidding for the schemes identified in the report in paragraph 2.7.
- 3.2 Option 2: not to support the report and miss the next round for the LUF UK Govt funding.

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

- 4.1 **Corporate Plan** – Blaenau Gwent towns can play a part in a number of the Corporate Priorities. The Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities does not mention towns specifically but it is embodied in the aims of the priority. Similarly, the Education and Social Services priorities can fit into the new vision for towns and link to the new Town Hubs that have already been developed.

Finally, the Economic Development and Regeneration priority sets out the main areas of work that we would associate with facilitating improvements in our town centres.

4.2 **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act** - There are a number of goals that town centres touch in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; one could argue that towns actually impact all of them. However, the main goals are:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A globally responsible Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A Wales of cohesive communities

4.3 **Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan** -Town centres do not feature as an objective in themselves but they are intrinsic in a number of the objectives in the BG Wellbeing Plan:

- Safe and friendly communities
- Look after and protect its natural environment
- Forge new pathways to prosperity
- Encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places that they live, learn, work and play.

4.4 **Social Services and Wellbeing Act** - Town centres can play a part in the main principles of the Act through provision of a place that is suitable to provide social and economic wellbeing, and where individuals are able to participate and contribute to society.

4.5 **Environment Act (specifically the Section 6 Duty)** - Section 6 of the Environment Act is to do with our responsibility as a Council in maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, and promoting the resilience of ecosystems.

4.6 The bid for LUF will need to address both decarbonisation and biodiversity of town centres. Providing access to open and green space is strongly associated with wellbeing and successful, sustainable and attractive town centres.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Submitting the bids to UK Govt will not have an immediate effect on the Council budget. A further report setting out what match funding will be expected will be brought to Council in the Summer.

5.2 If the report is not agreed and no applications are submitted there will be no immediate budget implications however this could have future negative consequences for the towns in Blaenau Gwent.

- 5.3 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***
The risks around submitting a bid, and the bid content will be dealt with through the project development/LUF bid.
- 5.4 The risks around not submitting a bid are both reputational and the potential loss of capital investment into the town centres in BG.
- 5.5 ***Legal***
There are no legal implications associated with the content of this report.
- 5.6 ***Human Resources***
Additional technical expertise will be required to work on the bids. There is separate funding identified by UK Govt for this work to assist local authorities with development costs.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***
There is currently no PI or data to support this report.
- 6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***
There are no outcomes associated with this report; the outcomes will be linked to the bid for LUF.
- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
Involvement through consultation and engagement will be part of the bid process.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
There are no implications to consider as part of this report.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
The bids for LUF are aimed at improvements to towns in Blaenau Gwent and as such should have a preventative focus in terms of the built environment. Not submitting a bid may have a detrimental effect.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
The Regeneration team will be working in partnership to develop and deliver the bids to LUF.
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
Integration will be achieved across service areas through formal and informal arrangements.
- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
Decarbonisation will be a key consideration in the LUF bid.
- 6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***
Not applicable for this report, although the project will be subject of this assessment.

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

Not applicable for the bid process.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Monitoring of the bid, if successful will be through a dedicated Project Board with town groups involved in individual projects.

Formal evaluation will be through UK Govt following the project implementation.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 12

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **Wednesday 2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent Draft 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Consultation Report**
Portfolio Holder: **Education and Learning Portfolio – Cllr. Joanne Collins**
Report Submitted by: **Corporate Director of Education – Lynn Phillips
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)
11.02.22	14.02.22	15.02.22				2.03.22		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
The purpose of the report is to provide the Executive Committee with an overview of the draft Blaenau Gwent 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, providing views, comments and responses in line with the consultation process.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 Section 84 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, requires each Council to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The purpose of the WESP is to set out the Council's strategic approach and direction in the development and delivery of Welsh-medium provision and Welsh education.
 - 2.2 **Blaenau Gwent 10-year Plan**
In 2017, Welsh Government carried out a rapid review of the proposed Local Authority plans. The review acknowledged the need for change, not only in terms of individual plans' ambitions, but also in terms of the legislative framework set out by Welsh Government. The review highlighted a need to change the regulations and guidelines, along with a significant change in the Welsh Government and Local Authority approach to planning. Consequently, Welsh Government reviewed the legislative framework associated with the WESP, with the key focus being the creation of a framework which enables Local Authorities to develop long-term strategic plans.
 - 2.3 Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Welsh Government required Local Authorities to submit their first draft 10-year plan to the Welsh Ministers by 31 January 2021; however, in light of the pandemic and associated emergency response requirements, the submission timeline has been updated. Following the drafting and subsequent consultation period, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019, along with the draft guidance were laid on 5 December 2019 and came into effect on 1st January 2020. Local Authorities must submit their first draft 10-year plan

to the Welsh Ministers on 31st January 2022, with the plan operational from September 2022. The current BG WESP will remain in force until that date.

- 2.4 The Welsh Government expects Local Authority 10-year plans to encompass the following:
- A clear and concise vision based on the target agreed;
 - Local education profile (numbers of school age learners, the number of each school under each category, and the number of learners within each school category);
 - Key data for each outcome (current baseline and projections);
 - Any high level plans or factors which impact education in the county
 - Clear aims and objectives under the 7 outcomes;
 - A clear link between how each aspect of the plan contributes to the vision and the overarching target; and,
 - A clear link between the plan and other Local Authorities strategies and relevant policy areas.

- 2.5 Blaenau Gwent Council's Vision for Welsh-medium Education is as follows:

'To build upon the strong progress made to date, by creating a sustainable education system which enhances provision, uptake and use of the Welsh language; creating skilled and empowered citizens who are proud to live and work both within and outside of Wales'.

- 2.6 The strategic aim of which will be to create:

A community who embrace the Welsh language and culture with confidence and pride.

- 2.7 We will seek to achieve our vision by promoting, developing and enhancing Welsh-medium education provision and services. We will do so by working closely with the Welsh in Education Forum (WEF), along with other key strategic partners including Welsh Government, and other Local Authorities. Our strategic objectives include:

- To raise the profile of Welsh medium Education, along with the benefits of being bi-lingual;
- To create high quality, thriving learning establishments which support effective pupil, staff, community and partner engagement;
- To support integration of services and create an immersive experience for learners;
- To secure improved school to school and partnership work, facilitating wider use and development of the Welsh language;
- To create a skilled and sustainable workforce, committed to continuing professional development;
- To ensure inclusive teaching and learning environments and opportunities for all learners; and,
- To improve progression opportunities by reviewing and implementing a curriculum which is firmly aligned to further and higher education.

- 2.8 The Council seeks to achieve the following outcomes as set out by Welsh Government, which reflect the learner's education journey, and are consistent with the policy areas of Cymraeg 2050 and Education in Wales: Our National Mission:
- Outcome 1 – More nursery children/three year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
 - Outcome 2 – More reception class children/five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
 - Outcome 3 – More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.
 - Outcome 4 – More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.
 - Outcome 5 – More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
 - Outcome 6 – An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
 - Outcome 7 – Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.
- 2.9 In order to ensure that we achieve the aforementioned vision and objectives, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council are committed to working towards the ambitious Welsh Government target, to increase the Year 1 cohort taught via the medium of Welsh to 75 pupils. When compared with the 2019/20 baseline data used by Welsh Government, this would equate to 10% (an increase of 6 percentage points increase) of the total Year 1 cohort being taught via the medium of Welsh by 2032.
- 2.10 The Education Transformation team established an engagement plan/strategy to ensure that, key stakeholders and partners, effectively contributed to and informed development of the 10-year plan. This included:
- Developing and regularly reviewing a stakeholder map and engagement plan
 - Undertaking reflection sessions with WEF members and key partners, with the aim of reviewing the development and implementation of the BG WESP (2017-2020) including an appraisal of: outcomes, achievements, targets, barriers, challenges, progression opportunities, partners/stakeholders and data
 - Establishing a sub-group of the WEF to agree a timeline and approach to drafting and reviewing the 10-year plan, whilst also monitoring progress aligned to it's development
 - Working with neighbouring authorities via the Regional WEF Planning and School Places and Demand Group, to ensure alignment whilst also identifying and exploiting opportunities
- 2.11 Working closely with BG Welsh Education Forum, along with other key stakeholders e.g. Health and neighbouring Authorities, the Education

Transformation team produced a draft 10-year WESP. The document was developed in accordance with Welsh Government regulations and guidance. The team then initiated a formal consultation process, whereby the document was issued to all consultees identified within the Welsh Government WESP Guidance, whilst also being made available on the Council's Webpage. A Communications plan was drafted, which included Corporate Communications regularly promoting the consultation via the Council's social media pages, and Education doing so via schools and key partners. The consultation period commenced on Friday 5th November 2021 and concluded on Monday 3rd January 2022.

2.12 **Consultation Out-turn**

The outcome of the consultation processes was reflective of the effective engagement undertaken by both the Welsh Education Forum and the Education Transformation team, in ensuring that stakeholder views were captured and incorporated within the final draft. During the 8-week consultation process:

- 6 written Responses were received, including one out of time (for more information please refer to **Appendix 1**)
- 6 survey responses, of which 5 strongly supported the plan (for more information please refer to **Appendix 2**).

2.13 A number of respondents referenced the positive progress made to date, whilst also recognising the commitment of the Council in line with the development and growth of both Welsh Education and the Welsh language. All responses were considered, including areas whereby consultees had suggested that the draft plan could be strengthened, and the document was updated accordingly (please refer to **Appendix 3** – with additions reflected post consultation in red). Education, along with the WEF also plan to take account of the comments in line with development of the WESP delivery plan.

2.14 The draft document was submitted on Monday 31st January to Welsh Government, subject to Executive Committee approval. The final version will be submitted in March, post Executive consideration.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** Executive Committee accepts the draft 10-year WESP; or,

3.2 **Option 2:** Executive Committee provides comments and/or revisions to the 10-year WESP.

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

4.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to produce a WESP document in line with Section 84 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. For more information, please refer to the strategic context set out within the plan (Page 3 and 4 of **Appendix 1**),

4.2 The WESP is instrumental in securing continued access to and development of the Welsh language in line with Welsh Government's aim of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. Education is also a major contributor to the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan in that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which requires public bodies to work towards seven well-being goals, one of which is 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'. The Council has a duty to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh and work towards the well-being goals. The process for planning Welsh-medium education also has a statutory basis under Section 84 of the 2013 Act.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

In line with effective implementation of the BG Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, we will be seeking to deliver a series of projects to enhance the provision of Welsh medium education. One such proposal being the new 210 place Welsh medium primary school, which is planned for implementation from the autumn-term 2023. Capital funding for this project (at an intervention rate of 100%), has been secured via the Welsh Government Welsh Medium Capital Grant. In addition, the Executive Committee has approved the revenue funding to support implementation.

5.1.1 Capital funding for future schemes will be sought via the Welsh Government Welsh Medium Capital Grant and/or 21st Century Schools Programme. There will also be revenue implications for future project proposals. We will apply for short-term revenue funding for these proposals via Welsh Govt. Should the revenue funding not be forthcoming, any additional revenue costs (both in the short-term and long-term), will be met from within the Individual Schools Budget (ISB). Proposals will be reported via the Council's political processes in line with invitations for the submission of each business case.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

The following implications are relevant to the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan:

- Failure to achieve the outcomes and targets established within the plan – this is mitigated by the extensive monitoring arrangements that are in place. The ET team review progress on a monthly basis, which is then reported to the WEF on a termly basis, taken via the Council's political processes and reported to Welsh Government annually.
- Compliance with statutory duty and legislative obligations - this is managed in line with policy and guidance review and development; along with renewal of the WESP and annual reporting.
- Sustainability issues within the school estate in relation to Welsh-medium education – this is managed and mitigated against by annual promotion drives, demand-based assessments, school capacity and projection calculations. The proposed seedling model also provides the opportunity to address latent demand, whilst eliciting further growth.

- 5.3 **Legal**
There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.
- 5.4 **Human Resources**
There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**
The ET team reviewed progress in line with the current Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (2017-2020), the outcome of which was reported via the Council's political processes in December 2020. Blaenau Gwent 2019/20 self-assessment was based upon key progress in line with each priority area. The self-assessment was Amber, with the rate of completion against the 2019/20 action plan as follows:
- 84% (or 49 actions) are complete;
 - 7% (or 4 actions) ongoing; and,
 - 9% (5 actions) actions in development
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
The WESP aims to secure, facilitate, develop and improve Welsh medium education, along with access to associated provision locally.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
Stakeholder and end user needs and engagement are of paramount importance, and a key focus of the WESP, its implementation and monitoring. The plan is subject to consultation during the production phase, and reviewed on an annual basis. In addition, public and partner consultation processes are used to inform development, progression and learning relating to delivery of the plan.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
The WESP serves to provide a strategic approach and underpins the direction and delivery of Welsh-medium provision and education in Blaenau Gwent over the next 10-years.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
The WESP aims to establish clear targets, shape, inform and improve the delivery of Welsh-medium provision and education. The plan also serves to address issues and gaps that exist, improving delivery, engagement and cohesion.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
The BG Welsh in Education Strategic Plan requires a collaborative approach in terms development, implementation, monitoring and progression. This is carried out via the Welsh in Education Forum, which has wide ranging representation from partner organisations and stakeholder groups; and is assured via the Council's political processes and reporting to Welsh Government.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
The Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is aligned to early year's childcare, education and play; pupil place planning, school organisation, 21st Century Schools, the work of Social Services and the Environment and Regeneration Directorates. Service integration is essential to ensure effective implementation, whilst also securing appropriate access to Welsh medium education and associated provision. The plan is monitored by the Welsh in Education Forum, whilst also feeding into other

key forums i.e. School Admissions, 21st Century Schools Programme Board etc.

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.

6.8.1 The Minister for Education and Welsh Language Jeremy Miles, announced on November 2nd 2021 that all new school and college buildings, major refurbishments and extension projects, will be required to meet Net Zero Carbon targets from January 1st 2022. The Council are committed to and have begun working with Welsh Government in planning implementation of this agenda.

6.9a Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment

A Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment will be carried out on the final draft of the plan prior to approval. Having undertaken an assessment of the draft, the impact overall is neutral. The WESP seeks to improve equality of access to Welsh-medium education.

6.9b. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Screening Assessment (EQIA) has been completed in line with the WESP, which determined that there is no negative impact upon the protected characteristics. EqIA screening and impact assessments are also carried out in line with each project associated with the WESP.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 The Welsh Government expects an annual update on the progress made against the WESP. Consequently, the ET team review and monitor the WESP monthly; providing termly reports to the WEF and annual reports to Welsh Government. In addition, WEF development and progress reports are taken via the Council's political processes annually. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is also a key focus of the 21st Century Schools Programme Board and Admissions Forum.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 - Written Responses

Appendix 2 - Survey Responses

Appendix 3 – Blaenau Gwent Draft 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

This page is intentionally left blank

Blaenau Gwent 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Consultation: 5th November 2021 – 3rd January 2022

No	Name and Contact Details	Description of Correspondence
1.	<p>From: PACEY Cymru</p> <p>Sent: 03 December 2021 16:26</p>	<p>PACEY Cymru Outcome 1 PACEY Cymru strongly agree that it is important to strengthen and expand Welsh medium childcare provision. It is important to recognise that the decisions that families make about language in relation to childcare prior to early education also has an important role to play in supporting the journey towards bilingual / Welsh medium education. This journey begins prior to the funded non-maintained education and includes a wider range of provision such as registered childminders.</p> <p>PACEY Cymru welcome the training that is available for childcare, early years and play settings and work with Cwlwm partners to promote Camau training through the National Centre for Learning Welsh to increase the use of Welsh within childcare, early years and play settings. There is some information on our website about our work at PACEY Cymru to support Welsh language development and the promotion of Camau, we would be happy to provide more information about our work in relation to this.</p> <p>PACEY Cymru are currently working with local authorities and other partners to promote childminding as a career and support recruitment to the sector, there is further information about this on our website at Local Authorities in Wales.</p> <p>Outcome 3 PACEY Cymru understand that the main considerations within this outcome relate to maintained education, however some of the key messages are relevant to support those working in childcare, early years and play. For example, the importance of upskilling the workforce, which as highlighted within our response under outcome 1 this is available through Camau for the childcare, early years and play sector. Also, where there are references to the importance of good communication links between schools, this is equally important to support the earlier transitions between childcare and early year's settings and between settings and schools, it may be beneficial for these transitions to be included either within this outcome or included within outcome 1.</p> <p>Outcome 4 PACEY Cymru welcome the recognition of the importance of working with schools and colleges to support the accessibility of Welsh and bilingual courses that will further support the Cymraeg 2050 strategy. For example, the availability of childcare qualifications and training through the medium of Welsh or bilingually within the local area could help to address the need for more Welsh speakers within the childcare, early years and play sector, which in turn could support the aims of outcome 1.</p>

2.	Mudiad Meithrin 17.12.21	<p>Mudiad Meithrin response to the Welsh Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 Blaenau Gwent County Council</p> <p>Mudiad Meithrin appreciates the opportunity to respond to the consultation of Blaenau Gwent County Council Welsh Education Strategic Plan 2022-2027.</p> <p>Mudiad Meithrin's vision is that every child in Wales should have the opportunity to play, learn and grow through the medium of Welsh. Wherever there are small children in Wales then Mudiad Meithrin (and therefore the Welsh language) should also be present.</p> <p>We have reflected on the Education Plan which has been prepared by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council for the next 10 years 2022-2032 and would like to make the following comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We agree with your objectives and want to support you in achieving these. 2. We appreciate the work that was done during the course of the last plan in partnership with key stakeholders to develop a strong marketing communication plan and we look forward to continuing with this work. 3. We welcome the opportunity to work with you further to develop childcare settings, Cylchoedd meithrin and Ti a Fi, throughout Blaenau Gwent that are convenient to families and in their local community to ensure Welsh medium childcare is accessible to all. 4. It's worth noting here the importance of working with the local Health Board and the Health Visitors as well as with Officers that have direct contact with families. <p>Outcome 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for providing detailed data with the current position of the childcare and nursery places available in Blaenau Gwent. • It would be useful to clarify what is meant by the term bilingual childcare setting so that parents are clear when they are making a choice what this means. • To help with providing opportunities to families to be able to choose Welsh medium childcare close to their home consideration needs to be given to provide Welsh Medium Flying Start places in all areas of the county particularly if there are morning and afternoon sessions running at a location where one of these sessions could be Welsh Medium or adopting the model established in the county through supporting groups through the Croesi'r Bont project. • We are pleased that a Welsh Medium Seedling Primary school is opening in Tredegar as Mudiad Meithrin are advanced in their plans to develop a new Cylch Meithrin through the Welsh Government Setup and Succeed Project to generate interest before the school opens. Children from the cylch meithrin will be able to feed directly to the seedling school. • We welcome the opportunity to work with you to establish the 2 new childcare settings planned. • Its difficult/problematic to include the total registered places at Non- Maintained settings in the numbers of spaces available for nursery children as a % of these places will be taken up by Flying Start or fee paying 2 years old children. It might be worth considering explaining this. • Mudiad Meithrin would welcome the opportunities to work with the local authority and other partners on promotional work and would be happy to share work already carried out through speaking to parents Podcasts 'Baby Steps to Welsh' as well as other resources such as the video 'What is a Cylch Meithrin? Beth yw Cylch Meithrin?' and resources available on the Mudiad Meithrin web Site and You Tube channel. It would also be
----	-----------------------------	---

beneficial to promote the work carried out through Clwb Cwtsh (Page 28 of document) and Clwb Cylch (Page 28 of document).

- Mudiad Meithrin believes that the work carried out with parents through our Ti a Fi groups is really important. We welcome the opportunities to work with the local authority to develop Ti a Fi Groups and would welcome any funding available to support this work.
- To help achieve the targets for transition rates further analysis of Mudiad Meithrin data will be beneficial to understand the reasons for the transition rates from Cylchoedd meithrin to Welsh Medium Schools and the challenges that are faced by parents.

Outcome 2

- There is no clear plan for developing any further schools. We know from experience is that the schools need to be convenient to families and in their local community to ensure Welsh medium Education is accessible to all. We know that Welsh Medium Education is off putting to families when they have to put young children on buses.
- Once the school is open in Tredegar consideration needs to be given to enable older children to transfer into the school. Families that may not have sent their children on the bus to Bro Helyg because they felt it was too far may want Welsh Medium Education and will now reconsider because the school is on their doorstep. Consider promotion of Immersion. Welsh Government has indicated that money will be available for every Local Authority.

Outcome 3

- It pleasing to note that a regional secondary school is being considered on the Heads of the Valley this will help stimulate demand with the secondary education being more local.

Outcome 5




- Details the work carried out by Mudiad Meithrin with regard to engaging with parents prior to the child starting school and we feel that this information would be best place with outcome 1 which refers to work being carried out for this age group.

Outcome 6

- We are keen to see references to Early Years under this outcome to enable children of all abilities whatever their needs to access Welsh-medium childcare. If the support is not available to children at this stage, we cannot envisage that these children will enter Welsh-medium Education.


Outcome 7

- It's worth noting the lack of Childcare workers in the Early Years sector in this outcome. With the vision to open further Cylchoedd Meithrin a challenge we will face is finding Welsh speaking qualified staff. We would be happy to work in partnership on any campaigns to recruit staff and promote the work.
- Mudiad Meithrin's Cam wrth Gam for Schools scheme is currently supporting pupils who are attending Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.
- Mudiad Meithrin's Apprenticeship Scheme is also available to give individuals the opportunity to undertake a Childcare qualification although at present there is no uptake within Blaenau Gwent.
- Mudiad Merithrin Academi scheme aims to offer a wide range of development and training opportunities for all staff and volunteers that form part of the Mudiad Meithrin community. This training is provided in various formats, combining traditional face-to-face and online contact, enabling learners to study at times convenient to them.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Croesi'r Bont also introduces language immersion methodology within Cylchoedd Meithrin and securing linguistic transition from Cylchoedd to Welsh-medium schools.
3.	Welsh Language Commissioner 21.12.21	 3. 20211221 LI S Ymateb Blaenau Gw
4.	Estyn 22.12.21	 03.01.22 - Response re Blaenau Gwent W
5.	Governors of Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw 3.1.22 11.18am	 5. CYNLLUN STRATEGOL CYMRAE

The Consultation closed at 12pm on the 3rd January 2022, the below response was received after the consultation closed, however, the response was considered and addressed within the draft 10-year WESP

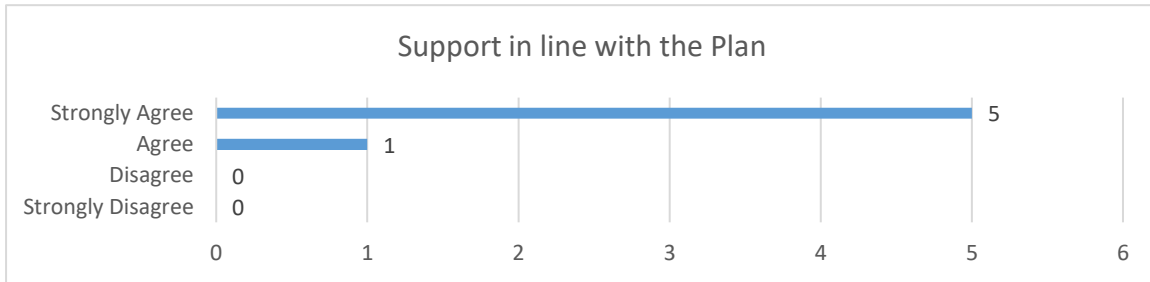
Page 110

No	Name and Contact Details	Description of Correspondence
6.	RhAG 3.1.22 23.55	 6. Sylwadau ar Gynllun Strategol C _y

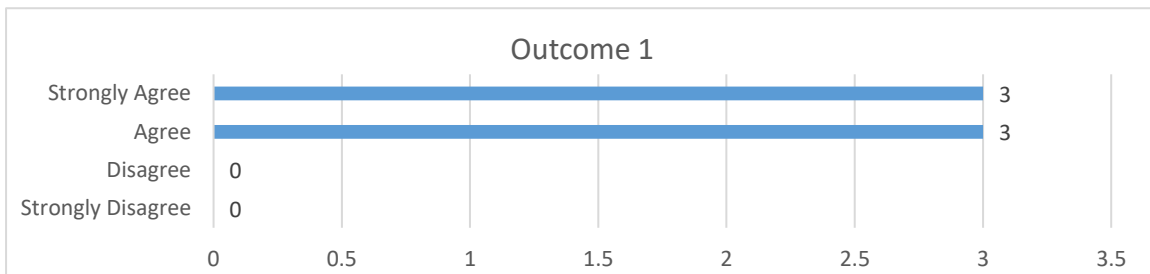
Summary of the Online Survey responses for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032

The consultation ran for 8 Weeks and concluded Monday 3rd January 2022, the Council received 6 responses which can be found below.

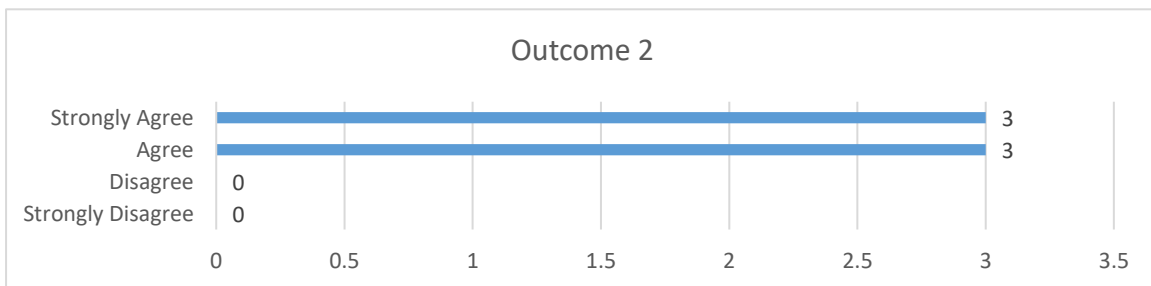
Do you support the adoption of Blaenau Gwent’s draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, 2022-2032?



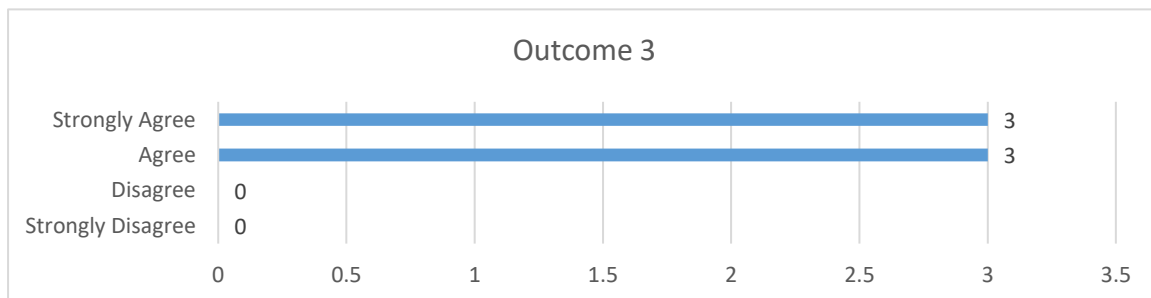
Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh



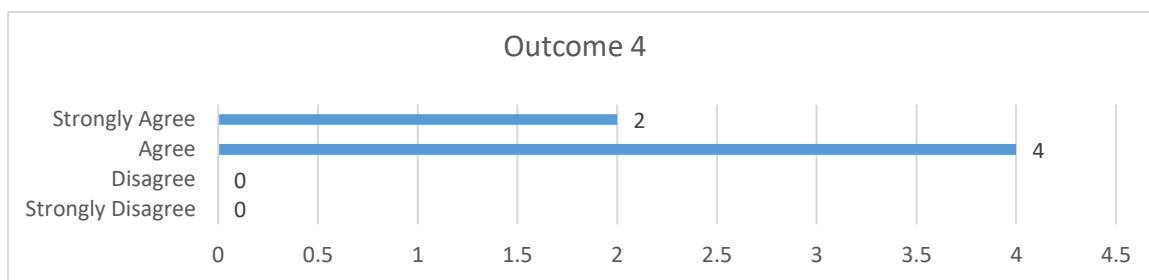
Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh



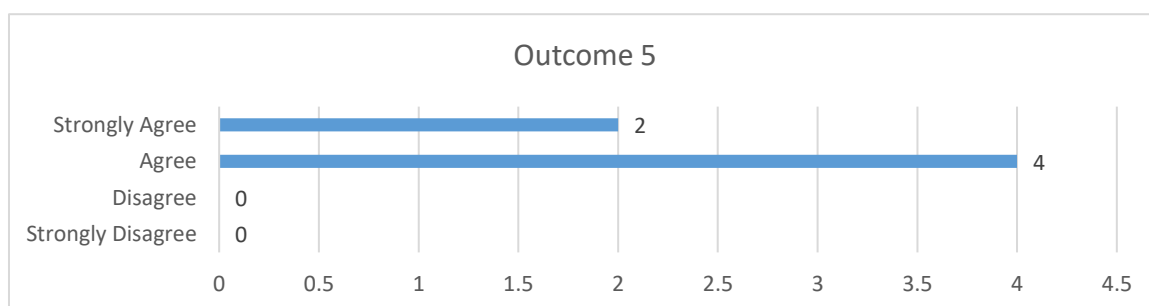
Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another



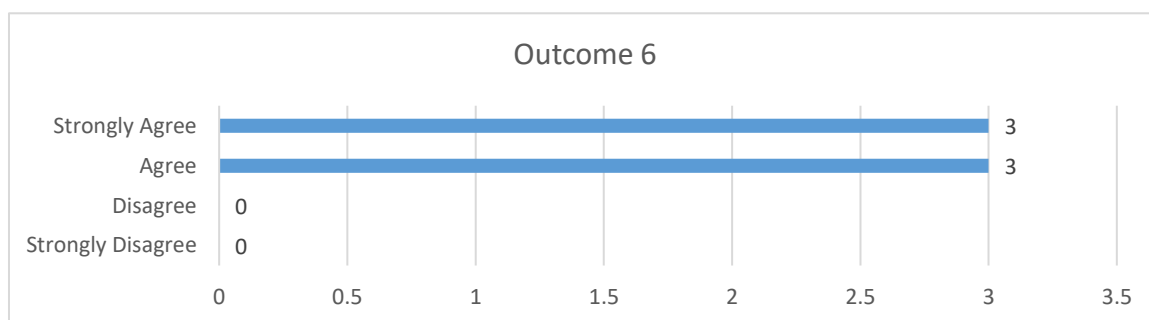
Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh



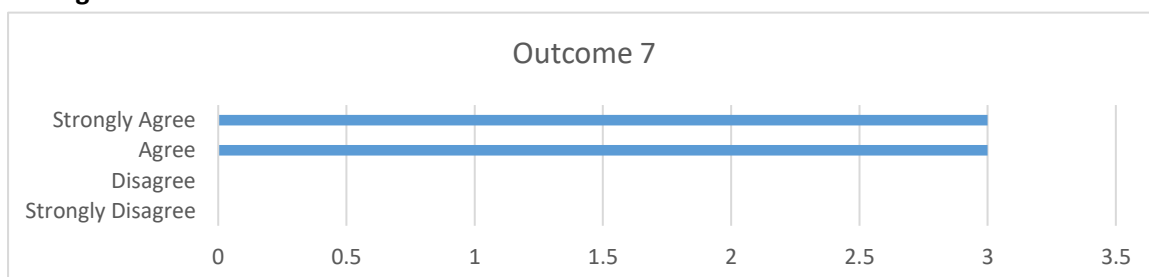
Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school



Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018)



Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

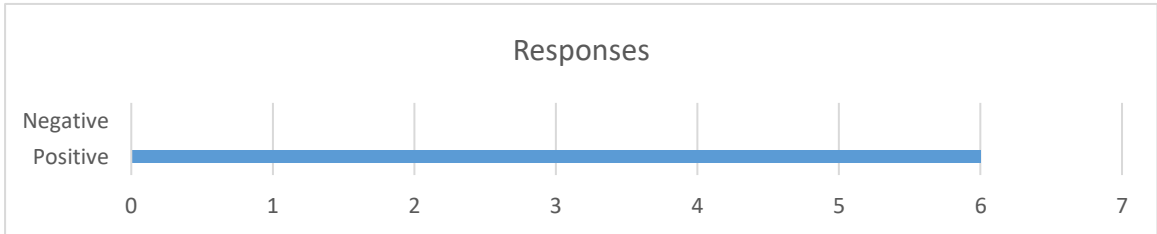


Please use the box below to provide comments and explain any elements of the plan that you feel need improvement:

Out of 6 respondents only 3 made comments, see below for information

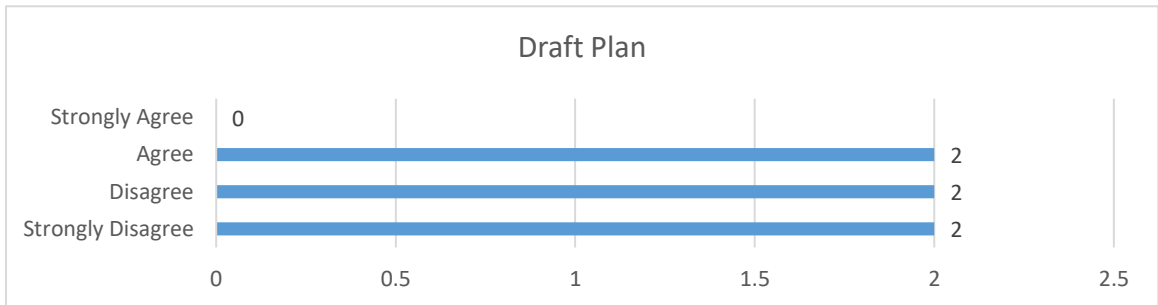
- I think the plan covers everything.
- Blaenau Gwent has a clear vision, targets and ambition, which is great to see in such a small Local Authority.
- There should be a greater emphasis and focus on establishing a third Welsh Medium Primary School in Blaenau Gwent in the Ebbw Fawr Valley so that there is a Welsh Medium Primary School in all three Valleys in Blaenau Gwent and the pupils attending do not have to travel far outside of their community to receive/attend a Welsh Medium school/education.

Do you believe that the draft plan will have a positive Effect?

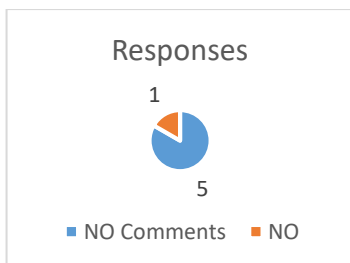


There were no negative responses received

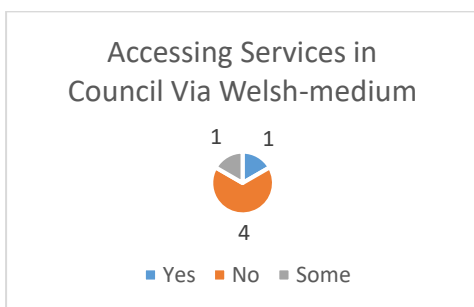
Do you believe that the proposal will treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language?



Do you have any comments to improve/strengthen the existing Welsh in Education Forum?



Do you access Council services in Welsh?



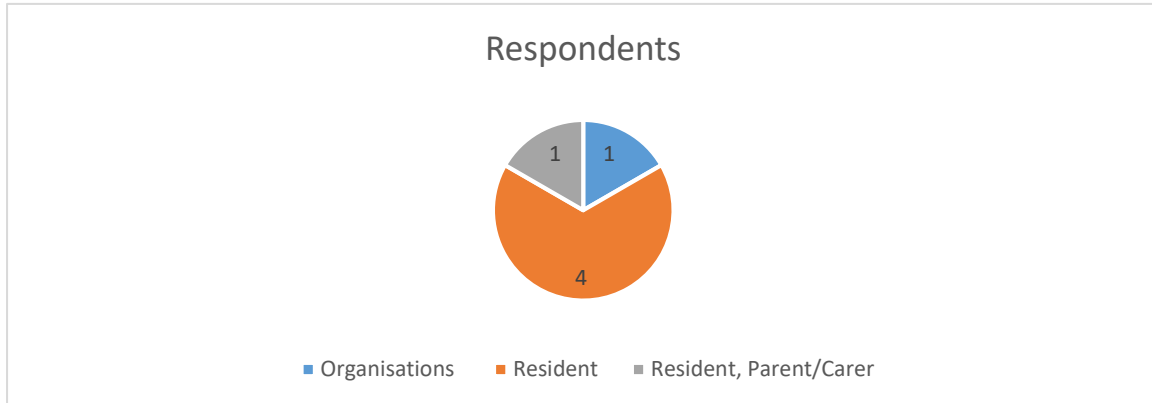
If some, why?

There were no responses received

If no, why?

- I cannot speak Welsh.
- Because I, as a resident of BG all my life, never had the opportunity to learn as a child. Plus my language skills are not great, I've tried but find it difficult for any language.

Please tell us if you are responding as





Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Period of this plan:
September 2022 – September 2032

Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif
21st Century Schools



WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN



Name of Local Authority

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Period of this Plan

September 2022 – September 2032

This Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is made under Section 84 of *The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013* and the content complies with the *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019*¹⁻². We have given due regard to the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Ministers when setting our targets.

Signed: **Date:**

(This Plan needs to be signed by the Chief Education officer within your local authority)

¹ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

² [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education 10-year Plan 2022 - 2032

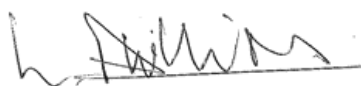
Foreword

Corporate Director of Education

Blaenau Gwent is a relatively small Local Authority area, but with big ambitions for our schools and learners. We are determined to play our part in Wales being a bilingual nation with a clear ambition to increase the use of Welsh across the County Borough. We fully support and are committed to the Welsh Government's national strategy for the Welsh Language Cymraeg 2050: a million Welsh speakers. Welsh medium education in the County Borough has been growing in recent years. This growth played a key part in increasing the number of people regularly using Welsh across the County Borough. Blaenau Gwent's strategic aim that is advocated in our Welsh Education Strategic Plan is to realise;

'A Blaenau Gwent community who embrace the Welsh language and culture with confidence and pride'.

One of the key components in ensuring the successful delivery of our strategic aim for the Welsh language is the realisation of a new and ambitious Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for 2022-32. I look forward to working with all of our partners in the true spirit of collaboration to deliver against the WESP's priorities and aspirations over the coming years.



Lynn Phillips
Corporate Director of Education
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Executive Member for Education

This is an exciting time for Blaenau Gwent Council. We are committed and have the opportunity to further enhance our education system, and are in a strong position to facilitate continued growth and development of both Welsh language and education, in working towards Cymraeg 2050. We have a clear vision, aim and goals which are ambitious and will secure the standards of provision which our learners and families deserve. We also have a very strong partnership in the Welsh Education Forum, along with neighbouring authorities. Working together we can and will build upon the successes of the Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20.



Councillor Joanne Collins
Executive Member for Education

Consultation Overview

Blaenau Gwent Council has developed a draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, which is set to run for a 10-year period from September 2022 until September 2032. The following plan includes an overview of where we are now, where we plan to be in 5 years' time and where we intend to be by 2032, along with how we plan on getting there.

We will be consulting with key stakeholders in order to ensure that our plan is fit for purpose and reflects the needs of our families, staff and partners.

This consultation is an opportunity for you to provide your views, comments and opinions on the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. All responses will be considered, along with the associated implications –including any changes to the plan resulting from the consultation. We will then look to produce a final version for approval by the Council's Executive Committee, prior to submission to Welsh Government Ministers for their consideration and approval. Once agreed, the plan will come into effect from September 2022.

The consultation period will commence on Friday 5th November 2021, concluding on Monday 3rd January 2022 at 12pm.

Background and Context

Section 84 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, requires each Council to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The purpose of the WESP is to set out the Council's strategic approach and direction, in relation to the development and delivery of Welsh medium education. The following plan has been developed in accordance with the statutory guidance issued under section 87 (5) of the *School Standards and Organisation Wales Act 2013*.

Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Development

The development of Blaenau Gwent Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, has been coordinated by the Education Directorate, working in partnership with the Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Forum, along with other relevant partners. The purpose of which has been to establish the current position, whilst also informing plans and targets for the next 10 years. The plan details the localised strategic approach, along with the Council's aspirations for Welsh-medium education between 2022 and 2032.

Discussions have also taken place with counterparts responsible for their WESPs in neighbouring authorities, including: Caerphilly County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport City Council and Torfaen County Borough Council. We aim to continue to engage and work closely with neighbouring authorities, to ensure that as Councils, we work collaboratively in order to continue to embed and strengthen our approach to the delivery of Welsh Education throughout the region.

Strategic Context

National

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is firmly aligned to and will facilitate effective delivery of the following Welsh Government strategies and policies:

Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers (2017), sets out Welsh Government's (WG) long-term vision for the Welsh language. The WG aim to increase the number of Welsh speakers to 1 million by 2050, also increasing use of the Welsh language and creating favourable conditions; including infrastructure and context, to support this growth. The Education sector will play a vital role in facilitating Cymraeg 2050, through the Welsh in Education Strategic planning process, which seeks to increase the number of learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh language skills in school and also as part of their everyday life. In addition, each Council's WESP will contribute to changing the way in which Welsh is taught, in turn seeking to improve language acquisition and use, and by working with key partners to increase the teaching workforce, both in terms of those able to teach via the medium of Welsh, along with those teaching Welsh as a language.

Each WESP will also contribute to implementation of **The Welsh in Education, Action Plan 2017-21** which sets the direction for Welsh-medium education.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, details seven well-being goals, which public bodies must work towards, including '*A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language*'. The Blaenau Gwent WESP via its vision, aims and targets; will seek to facilitate Welsh language and cultural developments in line with this goal, in turn improving the well-being of pupils, staff and communities.

Prosperity for All: the national strategy and the programme for Government, Taking Wales Forward 2016 – 2021 for which one of the wellbeing goals is to '*Build resilient communities, culture and language*'. The WESP seeks to create a suitable and sustainable Welsh-medium education system, to support effective implementation of this goal.

Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan (2017 -21) details plans for the education system in Wales, to ensure effective implementation of the new curriculum. This includes a desire for learners to become increasingly bilingual, Welsh education promotion and growth, along with workforce Welsh language use and skill development, whilst also contributing to effective recruitment and retention of staff. The key aspects of this action plan associated with bilingualism, are inextricably linked to all 7 of the outcome areas within the Blaenau Gwent WESP. The WESP seeks to:

- Improve and increase access to and uptake of Welsh medium education
- Secure high standards in terms of education standards and delivery
- Develop and create opportunities for informal – as well as formal use of the Welsh language
- Secure workforce development and sustainability

Local

The WESP is firmly aligned to the Council's vision for education, which is:

“To secure excellent achievement and wellbeing through a partnership, school-led, self-improving school to school, system approach”.

The WESP is key to securing successful delivery of the vision for education, as it establishes a framework through which these aspirations can be achieved, in partnership with the Welsh in Education Forum and local schools.

Education is key to achieving the vision and outcomes established within the Blaenau Gwent Council Corporate Plan 2020/22 including: 'Proud heritage, strong communities and brighter future'. Access to quality Welsh-medium education, the development of the language, culture, provision and workforce are all essential components of the WESP.

Education is also a major contributor to the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan 2018 -23, and fulfilling the associated objectives. The Council has a duty to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh in working towards the well-being goals.

The Blaenau Gwent WESP will inform the review and development processes associated with the Blaenau Gwent Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, which will be consulted upon and published prior to March 2022.

Our ten year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in our area

Blaenau Gwent Council's Vision for Welsh-medium Education:

'To build upon the strong progress made to date, by creating a sustainable education system which enhances provision, uptake and use of the Welsh language; creating skilled and empowered citizens who are proud to live and work both within and outside of Wales'.

The strategic aim of which will be to create:

A community who embrace the Welsh language and culture with confidence and pride.

We will seek achieve our vision by promoting, developing and enhancing Welsh-medium education provision and services. We will do so by working closely with the Welsh in Education Forum, along with other key strategic partners including Welsh Government, and other local authorities.

Our objectives include:

- To raise the profile of Welsh medium Education, along with the benefits of being bi-lingual
- To create high quality, thriving learning establishments which support effective pupil, staff, community and partner engagement
- To support integration of services and create an immersive experience for learners
- To secure improved school to school and partnership work, facilitating wider use and development of the Welsh language

- To create a skilled and sustainable workforce, committed to continuing professional development
- To ensure inclusive teaching and learning environments and opportunities for all learners
- To improve progression opportunities by reviewing and implementing a curriculum which is firmly aligned to further and higher education

Key achievements over the course of the 2017-20 Plan, include:

- Numbers of pupils on roll, along with those applying for a place at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg continues to increase, with a positive trend noted over the last 3 years in relation to both nursery and reception numbers. The Council has committed to the delivery of free home to school transport for nursery pupils accessing Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, in order to support improved access to Welsh medium education.
- Standards have improved at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, which has positively influenced both uptake and delivery.
- Transition rates between Welsh medium primary and secondary education continues to be high with 100% of pupils transferring to Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.
- Blaenau Gwent Council successfully secured capital funding via the 21st Century Schools Band B Programme, to remodel both internal and external teaching and learning environments at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, in turn improving delivery.
- Blaenau Gwent Council has developed a strong marketing and communication plan, targeting and promoting the benefits of being bilingual, working collaboratively with partners throughout the region to do so; whilst also establishing effective methods of engagement and consultation with stakeholders, in order to inform key strategic priorities.
- Blaenau Gwent has successfully coordinated a regional planning of schools places and demand South East Wales Consortia (SEWC) sub-group over the last 2 years. This has resulted in effective partnership working and join up between neighbouring authorities, who continue to learn from one another, whilst exploring opportunities for regional development that will benefit all.
- Representation, attendance and frequency of WEF meetings has increased, with partners firmly committed to and recognising the effectiveness of the Blaenau Gwent Forum.
- The Council secured Welsh Government funding via the Welsh Medium Capital Grant, to develop and implement a new 210 place Welsh Seedling Medium Primary School in the Tredegar/Sirhowy Valley, which is planned for implementation via seedling growth model from the autumn 2023. In addition, the Council has secured funding via the Childcare Capital Grant to provide 2 additional Welsh-medium childcare facilities, supporting the growth of primary provision.

Welsh Government have established targets for Councils, in order to achieve their vision for one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The targets are based on Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) data, relating to the percentage of the Year 1 cohort who are taught via the medium of Welsh. In order to contribute to the achieving vision,

Blaenau Gwent needs to ensure that **at least 10%** of the Year 1 cohort are taught via the medium of Welsh by 2032.

Figure 1: Baseline Data/Current Position

PLASC (2019/20)	Year 1 Cohort	Year 1 Welsh-medium Baseline 2021
Number of Year 1 pupils	728	29 (4%)

In order to ensure that we achieve the aforementioned vision and objectives, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council are committed to working towards the ambitious Welsh Government target, to increase the Year 1 cohort taught via the medium of Welsh to 75 pupils. When compared with the 2019/20 baseline data used by Welsh Government, this would equate to 10% (an increase of 6 percentage points increase) of the total Year 1 cohort being taught via the medium of Welsh by 2032. **The Council will assess the feasibility of achieving the upper limit Welsh Government target of 105 Year 1 pupils by 2032. The plan will be reviewed accordingly upon completion of the feasibility study. However, the Council are committed to and will coordinate an effective continuum of learning by securing increased Welsh Medium childcare, primary, secondary and post 16 provision working with key partners to do so.**

This will be achieved via:

- Strengthening the Welsh Education Forum, to build upon existing partnerships, and develop a clear accountability structure in line with implementation and monitoring of the 10-year plan;
- Development of a Blaenau Gwent Welsh Education Policy, to embed the WESP and associated developments within wider **Education and Local Authority strategic and operational planning, policy and practice**;
- Development of a Promotion and Engagement Strategy and associated communications plan, to ensure clear and consistent messages are delivered throughout the Council and its services, in line with the implementation of the WESP. The strategy will also seek to improve engagement methods;
- The development of an effective promotion and engagement strategy, which highlights the benefits of being bi-lingual, dispels myths and creates opportunities for increased participation;
- Increasing the capacity within existing childcare and early years (Welsh-medium sector, along number of childcare and early years' education provision) by at least 2 settings, in order to feed school-based nursery and Welsh-medium statutory education provision;
- Increasing both the capacity and uptake at of pupil places further Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg;
- Promoting, opening and meeting the proposed capacity of the Council's second Welsh-medium primary school;
- Developing immersion provision for latecomers, in order to increase opportunities for engagement in Welsh-medium education within primary phase;
- Committing to a workforce development plan in partnership with the EAS, and Coleg Gwent, along with other key partners;
- Undertake a feasibility study in line with the development of a Welsh-medium Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB);

- Work with neighbouring authorities to secure a second secondary school within the Heads of the Valleys region for Blaenau Gwent pupils; and,
- Undertaking a feasibility study in line with the potential for increased capacity within the primary sector between 2027 and 2032, using the seedling growth model adopted by Blaenau Gwent.

The Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) is currently under review. Education are a key stakeholder engaged as part of this review, which will be informed by both the WESP and associated feasibility studies, undertaken in order to secure appropriate additionally. In addition, as part of Education's Planning Obligations, we will seek to ensure that population growth is accounted for from an education perspective.

Key to the success of the WESP, is the implementation of an effective Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, which is currently under review. **The Council are working with Menter Iaith, in order establish initial consultation sessions, which will be informed by the 2021 Census data review. Two consultation events are planned for the Spring-term 2022. The aim of these events will be to engage key stakeholders including Education, the WEF and local community groups in the development of the strategy. The plan is to retain these groups to oversee and inform implementation. The new strategy will be in place by March 31st 2022.**

The existing Blaenau Gwent Welsh Language Promotion Strategy runs until 2022 (for more information please visit:

[Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2017-2022.pdf \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/welsh-language-promotion-strategy-2017-2022.pdf)).

The aims set out within the current strategy, include:

- Improve the services Welsh-speakers can expect to receive from specified organisations in Welsh.
- Increase the use people make of Welsh-language services.
- Make it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language.
- Ensure that there is an appropriate degree of consistency in terms of the duties placed on bodies in the same sectors.

In addition, Blaenau Gwent Council identifies the following three Welsh language promotion objectives:

1. To promote and encourage the use of the Welsh language within families and the community.
2. To increase the provision of Welsh language education and informal activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language.
3. To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace, including:
 - More people engage with the Welsh language;
 - More people attain fluency in the Welsh language; and,
 - More Council employees are able to use Welsh Language.

The current Blaenau Gwent target is to achieve 70 additional Welsh speakers per annum (3% of approx. 2,400), in order to achieve the vision of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. Effective implementation of the WESP will be key to ensuring that the Council achieve their target. **Education has been heavily involved in the review of the Welsh Language Strategy to date, and will continue to have significant**

involvement in order to ensure alignment between the Strategy and the 10-year WESP. In addition, the Policy and Partnerships team who are responsible for leading the review, are heavily involved in both the WEF and drafting of the WESP.

Outcome 1:

More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

It is important to recognise that the decisions that families make about language prior to starting school, has a role to play in supporting their child's journey. This journey begins prior to the funded non-maintained education.

The Role of the Health Visitor

Health Visitors currently do not have any quantitative targets regarding for the contribution for the health sector to promote education through the medium of Welsh. It is the role of the Health Visitors to provide all information via the medium of English and Welsh, they also provide information regarding Family Information Services to all families (FIS).

Health Visitors have access to develop their Welsh through on-line modules available through our Aneurin University Health Board provision. Welsh language awareness training delivered internally upon request. There are free Welsh language courses available to all staff.

The Family Information Service (FIS), provide parents with information regarding local education provision which includes Welsh medium education options, promotion of Cymraeg i Blant services, and the offer of Welsh language baby and toddler groups. They also provide Welsh book start bags, and correspondence through Flying Start is translated and provided in both English and Welsh.

Family Information Service information is distributed to families regularly through early years and Healthy Child Wales contacts. Bookstart Book bags are available, which include a Welsh Language book.

Flying Start Health Visitors work in areas of deprivation as designated by Welsh Government, they encourage children to attend Flying Start childcare and inform parents of the availability of Flying Start childcare through the medium of Welsh. As a service they offer a wide range of choices for parents via the following:

- promote and support welsh speaking opportunities.
- refer into our Welsh speaking Speech and Language Therapist.
- Speech and Language groups set up across the County Borough, which are bi-lingual

Childminders

All 32 childminders in Blaenau Gwent report the main language of their setting is English. However, 7 identify that they also use Welsh within their setting. All childminders are offered full access to the Local Authority training programme, which has previously included Welsh courses. In addition, they have been encouraged to complete the Camau Welsh language checker, and Camau course information has been shared with all providers. For those childminders who engage in the Local Authority Quality Assurance Programme, use of Welsh is encouraged in daily practice. This will continue to be encouraged, supported and developed going forward.

Blaenau Gwent currently only has one Welsh-medium primary school, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, which offers full-time nursery places. The nursery capacity has been set at 60 places for the last 4 years.

Maintained Nursery

Figure 2 below shows the number and percentage of Welsh-medium nursery pupils in relation to the overall nursery cohort. The following data is based upon January 2021 PLASC data:

Figure 2: Welsh-medium Nursery Place Availability 5-year Trend

	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
3-year Old Cohort	732		769		729		696		683	
Admission no./ and as a % of the total nursery-age cohort	41	5%	60	8%	60	8%	60	9%	60	9%
Places filled/ and as a % of the total cohort	22	3%	30	4%	40	5%	34	5%	40	6%
Places available/ and as a % of the total cohort	19	3%	30	4%	20	3%	26	3%	20	3%

At present, there is sufficient capacity to meet demand within maintained nursery provision at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Nursery pupil numbers have risen over the last 3 years, for September 2021, 45 pupils have been allocated a place at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. This does not include the spring-term 2022 rising 3 figures, which will be determined as a result of the 2022/23 nursery admission round (scheduled to close on 15th October 2021).

The Blaenau Gwent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is currently in development with anticipated completion of the final draft by March 2022, for consultation from April 2022. The 5-year assessment will be finalised in 2022, and subject to annual review. This will be conducted in line with the WESP annual review and associated reporting processes. The previous CSA identified a gap in terms of availability of Welsh-medium provision in the Ebbw Fawr Valley, which is being addressed via Childcare Offer Capital Grant, with a new Welsh-medium setting

programmed for implementation from 2023. The outcome of the planned CSA (2022) will inform the geographical priorities in terms of gaps, which will be addressed going forward. This will be captured and developed as part of the WESP 10-year Plan annual review process and associated delivery plan.

Welsh Medium Childcare Provision

For the full CSA (2017), which presents full findings in relation to Welsh medium childcare in 2016/17, please click on the following link [Blaenau Gwent CBC: Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan 2017 \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](https://blaenau-gwent.gov.uk). The 2017 assessment noted a gap in Welsh medium provision in the Ebbw Fawr community planning area, with the other three community planning areas (Sirhowy, North Ebbw Fach and South Ebbw Fach), each being served by Welsh Medium provision at that time.

The parental survey conducted indicated that, whilst the majority of parents did not identify barriers to accessing Welsh medium childcare, some parents did identify that not having provision locally as a barrier. As such, an action to address the gap in the Ebbw Fawr area was agreed, and subsequent plans to establish Welsh language provision in the area are being progressed as detailed below.

The Childcare Offer Capital Programme has been utilised to establish a Welsh medium Full Day Care Centre co-located on the site of Glyncoed Primary new build in Ebbw Vale, the design for the facility has been agreed and is currently in the planning process. Subsequent to the last assessment, the Welsh medium childcare provider in the Sirhowy community planning area has re-categorised themselves as English and Welsh medium. Therefore, a gap was identified in that area for Welsh medium provision. Plans for this gap to be addressed have been aligned with the Welsh Medium Capital Grant Programme, this also links with the 21st Century Schools Band B Ebbw Fawr Redevelopment Programme and a Cylch Meithrin forms part of the plans for the new Welsh medium seedling school in Tredegar.

A new Cylch Meithrin has been planned for Tredegar, post implementation of the Ti a Fi. The provision was established during 2019 and registered in 2020, with a staff recruitment exercise currently underway. The setting is scheduled to open during the autumn-term 2021 and will also offer Flying Start places.

An existing Day Nursery in Ebbw Vale has committed to provide daily Cylch Meithrin sessions (one-hour session in both the morning and afternoon). The setting has been receiving Croesi'r Bont support since mid-January 2020. They have been assigned a dedicated Croesi'r Bont Officer, who works closely with them to establish a timetable for the sessions, which is updated on a fortnightly basis. The children's Welsh language development is then monitored via assessments, which are carried out four times per annum. The feedback from the nursery thus far has been positive, with future potential for increased Welsh-medium childcare provision.

Non-Maintained Nursery Places (Including Mudiad Meithrin Provision)

Currently, there are 2 Cylchoedd Meithrin groups in the Ebbw Fach Valley, one of which is run by a Management Committee, with the other being managed by Mudiad Meithrin. The group details are as follows:

- Helyg Bychan, has been registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) since September 2010. It is co-located with Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, and operates full day care provision for 38 children (19 am and 19 pm), aged two to five years. The setting currently has 50 children on their register, requiring provision on different days, and at different times. Therefore, although they have not exceeded their place availability, they do not currently have any available places.
- Gwdihw (Brynithel), was registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in December 2015, to provide day care for up to 38 children at Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw. The setting works in partnership with Blaenau Gwent Flying Start team and is located in a modern, purpose built Flying Start building, on the Penrhiw Estate in Brynithel. In 2020, Gwdihw (Brynithel) registered to become an early year's education provider from September 2021. The setting currently has 28 children in attendance, with 10 places available. **In line with pupil projections, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg will have sufficient capacity to support pupil transition from this provision for at least the next 5 years. This will be subject to continued monitoring.**

Both provisions feed into Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Childcare places are available throughout the year for children aged 2-4 years. They offer both full and part-time places. **However, it is problematic to include the total number of registered places at non-maintained settings in that the number of spaces available for nursery children, as a % of these places, will already be taken up by Flying Start and/or fee paying 2 years old children.**

Pobl Bach is an English and Welsh childcare setting, meaning both Welsh and English are used within the setting. Welsh and English are used as languages of communication with the children and young people and both languages are used for activities. In addition, both languages are used for the setting's administration. The setting communicates with parents either in Welsh or English according to parental preference. The setting currently provide full day care for 25 children aged 2-5 years. They offer a morning and afternoon session. The provision works in partnership with Blaenau Gwent Flying Start team and offers places to children either funded privately, or via Flying Start. The setting can accommodate up to 50 children, with 49 children currently taking up places, and 1 place available.

Transition

During 2019/20, there were 45 children attending Mudiad Meithrin provision, of which 14 (31%) progressed into Welsh-medium education. **Transition rates from Helyg Bychan are higher than Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw. A small number of parents have highlighted concerns around nursery age children travelling on the school bus. However, it is hoped that with Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw becoming an early years' education provider, which children can attend until reception, preparatory work can be undertaken with parents and children aligned to transport with the aim of increasing transition rates to Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.**

It is the intention in order to help the Council to achieve our targets for transition rates, further in-depth analysis of Mudiad Meithrin data will be undertaken, to understand the reasoning behind parent choice, and to enable us to work more closely with parents

addressing any considerations or issues they may have. In addition, this will contribute to the development of an effective promotion and engagement plan, which recognises and seeks to address the challenges that are faced by parents.

Childcare Offer

Figure 3 below shows the number of children who took up a place via the 30hr Childcare offer at a Welsh-medium childcare setting.

Figure 3: Childcare Offer WM Place Allocation

Setting	2019	2020	2021
GwdiHw (Welsh Medium)	1	1	1
Helyg Bychan (Welsh Medium)	1	0	0
Pobl Bach (Bilingual)	11	4	4

Flying Start

Blaenau Gwent currently have 11 Flying Start settings across the County Borough,

- 3 are Local Authority run (Cefn Golau, **Swfrydd Sunflowers** and **Twinkle Tots** (Garnlydan)
- 5 are English medium commissioned provisions (**Tweenie** Tots, Buds to Blossom, Jack & Jills, Mini Me's and **Flowering Shrubs**)
- 2 are Welsh-medium commissioned provisions (Clych Meithrin Gwdihw and Helyg Bychan); and
- 1 which is registered as bilingual (Pobl Bach)

Figure 4: Flying Start Provision Overview

Flying Start Childcare Provider – Name and Address	Local Authority or Commissioned setting	Number of childcare places available per AM session	Number of childcare places available per PM session	Total number of childcare places available per/ day
First Friends	LA	20	20	40
Pobl Bach	Commissioned	25	25	50
Tweenie Tots	Commissioned	28	28	56
Twinkle Tots	LA	28	0	28
Buds to Blossoms	Commissioned	26	26	52
Cylch Meithrin Helyg Bychan	Commissioned	19	19	38
Flowering Shrubs	Commissioned	48	48	134
Mini Me's	Commissioned	20	20	40
Jack and Jill	Commissioned	24	24	48
Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw	Commissioned	19	19	38
Sunflowers	LA	26	0	26

All English medium settings use incidental Welsh as part of their practice, in order to introduce the use of the Welsh language to all Flying Start children supporting and promoting the benefits of being bilingual throughout application and transition processes.

Mudiad Meithrin

Cymraeg for Kids is a Mudiad Meithrin project which supports prospective and new parents, when opting for Welsh medium child care and education. The Cymraeg for Kids Officer works 4 days a week, which are split between Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Councils. The local Cymraeg for Kids Officer runs weekly support sessions for parents and baby across the county such as:

- Welsh rhyme time & Sign
- Baby massage and yoga,
- Cuppa & Chat Cymraeg (online)
- Me and my baby sessions for prospective and new parents on the advantages of being bilingual (online)

Figure 5 provides an overview of the groups held in Blaenau Gwent, along with the number of parents who attended them. These groups include: Welsh rhyme time & sign, baby massage and baby yoga (Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, Aberbeeg, Blaina). 2020 onwards saw the development of online groups (including Me and My Baby, Cuppa & Chat Cymraeg, Baby Massage, Welsh rhyme time & Sign).

Figure 5: Group Data Overview

	Number of Groups	Number of Attendees
2018-2019	65	332
2019-2020	124	750
2020-2021	** 214 online	296

The Cymraeg i Blant Officer works closely with local Midwifery and Health Visiting teams, signposting parents to the groups, and maintaining regular contact with them, to provide updates on local opportunities available for new parents. Information is shared about the benefits of early bilingualism, how to access bilingual resources to use at home and online, and along with support to increase parent and carer confidence in using or in learning Welsh, by registering on a Clwb Cwtsh course, or for practise sessions.

Clwb Cwtsh is an eight-week taster programme focusing on speaking Welsh with young children. It's aimed at parents to be, parents/carers and extended family members. You don't need to be able to speak or understand any Welsh to join. This project is managed by Mudiad Meithrin

Clwb Cylch During the pandemic, Mudiad Meithrin launched a Welsh language activity in the home by providing open sessions under the banner of 'Clwb Cylch' (#ClwbCylch) for children of nursery age and their parents via digital platforms. Particular emphasis is placed on children from families where Welsh is not spoken at home.

Mudiad Meithrin's 'Set Up and Succeed' (SAS) programme, seeks to establish 40 new Cylchoedd Meithrin with a Cylch Ti a Fi by 2021 in specific areas of Wales where there isn't a Cylch Meithrin at present. Blaenau Gwent developments include:

- 1 Cylch Meithrin is currently being developed in the Tredegar area, with a Ti a Fi already having been established in the area.
- 1 Day Nursery provides Cylch Meithrin sessions daily with the support of Welsh Language programme Croesi'r Bont – with the aim of introducing Welsh language immersion methodology within Cylchoedd Meithrin and securing linguistic transition from the Cylch to Welsh-medium schools.

Promotional Material

The following literature is available through Mudiad Meithrin to support with information to parents about Welsh medium childcare that addresses frequently asked questions:

- Podcasts 'Baby Steps into Welsh' is a new and exciting podcast series. Presented by Welsh TV Presenter Nia Parry, the podcast provides an opportunity for well-known parents to openly discuss and share their real-life experiences around Welsh-medium education. [Podcast \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)
- Mudiad Meithrin You tube Channel [Mudiad Meithrin - YouTube](#)
- Multi lingual Pamphlet in 8 Languages describing options for childcare
- [taflen_amlieithog_cyflawn_9.9.19.pdf \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)
- [Why choose Welsh-medium education \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)
- [Frequently asked questions and answers \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)

Menter Iaith (BGM) have a dedicated Development Officer who is a member of the Blaenau Gwent WEF and assists in targeting prospective parents. The Officer provides information about the advantages of raising children bilingually and using Welsh in the family home, as well as promoting Welsh-medium education in general, by organising a timetable of family events in strategic geographic areas.

PACEY Cymru work with local authorities and other partners, to promote childminding as a career and support recruitment to the sector. PACEY have now been engaged within the WEF and will work closely with Blaenau Gwent moving forward to support the development of Outcome 1 and 7.

Numbers of Nursery and Reception Pupils & Overall Cohort

Figure 6 details the last 3 years' nursery and reception cohort (PLASC) data, along with the number of allocated Nursery and Reception places in Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Applications for January and April rising 3's 2022 were live from 1st September 2021.

Figure 6: Nursery and Reception Cohort number, Places Allocated at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg and as a Percentage of the Cohort

	Nursery			Reception		
	Total Cohort	No in Bro Helyg	%	Total Cohort	No in Bro Helyg	%
2019/20	709	34	5%	728	40	5%
2020/21	676	42	6%	710	38	5%
2021/22	749	45	6%	683	42	6%

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

In September 2023, Blaenau Gwent will open a 210 place Welsh Medium Seedling Primary School on the Chartist Way Site, in the Tredegar/Sirhowy Valley. The school will be developed via a seedling growth model. In its first year, the school will admit up to 24 Nursery, and Reception children.

We aim to secure increased Welsh medium childcare within the northern area of the Ebbw Fawr Valley, along with Tredegar/Sirhowy Valley area, to create increased demand and improved transition into Welsh medium education. Therefore, two additional Welsh Medium Childcare settings are also programmed for implementation from the autumn-term 2023 as follows:

- A 28 place pre-school setting co-located in the same building the new Welsh Primary School in Tredegar, which will also be considered for Flying Start registration; and,
- A Full Day Care setting offering places across its range of services (babies, toddlers, pre-school wraparound, after-school, holiday club). The setting be registered for 58 children, so no more than 58 children would be in at any one time. The provision will be located in the Glyncoed area of Ebbw Vale. The provision is being developed in line with the gaps identified as part of the CSA (2017).

The Council recognises that the number of children initially applying to attend both early-years settings will grow year on year, as the settings become established. Education and Social Services will work closely in order to monitor growth in line with pupil projections, pupil place planning and future feasibility studies aligned to the growth of Welsh medium education. This will be reported annually in line with the review of the 10-year WESP.

Blaenau Gwent Council aim to successfully implement our second Welsh medium primary school, alongside our Welsh medium promotion growth strategy, which will be complemented and enhanced by additional childcare provision. We will continue work closely with our colleagues in the early year's sector, to enhance transition rates between early years childcare and education providers, and statutory education.

In achieving our aims, we will:

- Formally, review and strengthen our Promotion and Engagement Strategy and associated communication action plan, in partnership with the WEF Communications sub-group, along with relevant key health professionals e.g. Health Visitors. In turn, enhancing and securing appropriate levels of resource to develop effective consultation processes, communication and marketing materials. Alongside this, working on a dedicated engagement action plan, with a focus on mapping and securing the involvement of key stakeholders.
- Develop guidance, tools and resources, along with an awareness raising programme for key partners to complement the aforementioned strategy. The aim of which, will be to support families to make informed early years and education decisions, whilst promoting the benefits of being bilingual, dispelling myths and addressing parent/carer concerns at an early stage.

- Support parents to access Welsh language skills and tools, by working closely in partnership with schools, adult education, further education and training providers. Also, raising awareness of and promoting existing resources for parents. This includes RhAG's parent engagement website, which is aimed at offering both support and information: www.welsh4parents.cymru.
- In partnership with the early year's sector, continue to review data and provision to plan and inform our Welsh medium growth strategy. The Council will work towards ensuring accessible Welsh medium childcare options are available throughout the borough, including Flying Start. The Council will use the 2022 CSA data in order to inform and direct development, along with subsequent reviews.
- Ensure effective project management of the of both childcare and school developments, to ensure that they are delivered on programme and profile, whilst employing the Promotion and Engagement Strategy to support increased uptake of Welsh medium pupil places.
- Develop an Immersion Strategy and provision for latecomers, whilst building in the capacity for this provision to develop and grow. Establish a best practice model to ensure consistency of application, improving opportunities for transition, by working in partnership with schools and councils throughout the South East Wales region.
- Ensure effective development and review of the Curriculum for Wales and associated pedagogy throughout the Welsh medium early years and education sectors. Contributing to effective pupil transition, engagement and outcomes at each stage of the learner journey.
- Undertake a feasibility study in line with the potential for increased capacity within the primary sector between 2027 and 2028, using the seedling growth model adopted by Blaenau Gwent to deliver on this strand of work. The feasibility study will be carried out by a dedicated project group and informed by key data sets, research and assessments including:
 - the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
 - a parent/carer demand survey
 - a catchment area review, and subsequent review of the Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy (the latter is subject to annual review)
 - school admission and pupil projection data
 - immersion provision mapping
 - secondary demand and planning data
 - a provision access audits (which will also take account of the distance from home to school)

A detailed options appraisal including site assessments, will be undertaken by Education in partnership with Planning, Community Services, Estates and Schools, and developed for consideration via the Council's political processes in 2028/29. The aim of this piece of work, will be to assess options in increasing the capacity beyond the target of 75, working towards the higher range target of 105.
- Work closely with school leaders to identify opportunities for application of the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Categorisation Guidance (with particular reference to Categories 2 and 3), throughout the school estate. In turn, increasing opportunities, and improving the standard of Welsh medium education within the local education system. The Council will work with the Education Achievement Service and other key partners in the Blaenau Gwent

WEF, to develop a needs assessment and associated implementation plan, in order to support relevant schools to develop within the above categories.

- Work closely with the Health sector in order to inform the monitoring process aligned to achieving this outcome.
- Working closely with key partners to secure effective workforce development planning, in line with the recruitment of teaching and other relevant school staff to facilitate increased provision.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

At the end of the 10-year plan, Blaenau Gwent aim to ensure that 100% of children accessing Welsh medium early years childcare and education, transition into statutory Welsh medium education.

We will successfully implement 2 additional childcare settings, along with our second Welsh Medium Primary School, whilst also growing the capacity at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

The Council will have undertaken a feasibility study in line with the increased demand realised as a result of effective implementation of our Promotion and Engagement Strategy; informing our plan for further increased capacity within the childcare and primary sectors between 2028 and 2032.

Key Data 2022

The following data has been calculated based on achieving admitting pupils up to the maximum capacity at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg (51 full-time nursery places), the new 210 Place Seedling School (30 full-time nursery places). The percentages are calculated on the cohort of the 728 pupils.

Numbers and % of 3-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
45	6%	69	10%	71	10%	73	10%	81	11%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
81	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%

Outcome 2

More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

There is robust pupil population planning, management and monitoring processes in place via the Council, which fall within the remit of the Education Transformation team. Pupil projections are undertaken twice annually taking account of live birth data, 3-year

trend data, housing developments, current pupil numbers on roll, along with inward and outward migration. Figure are projected for a 5-year period with projection accuracy at 98% for primary and 100% for secondary.

Current pupil projection data demonstrates there is a need for the Council to increase the number of places available at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

The capacity and associated admission number within the school was previously decreased, in order to address surplus places prior to the commencement, and during the initial phase of the 2017-20 WESP. Since this time, pupil numbers have begun to increase.

The January 2021 pupil projections highlight an upward trend in terms of pupil numbers at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg between 2022 and 2025, resulting in sufficiency issues, with more pupils than places available.

There is a projected deficit of between -2 to -4 places, which is likely to increase based upon trend data, and would mean that unless the capacity is increased, the Council will be unable to meet the increased demand.

School capacity is subject to annual review as per the Welsh Government Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales Guidance (2011). School capacities are determined in line with number of pupils on roll and room usage, with the aim of reducing surplus places, and securing sustainable growth as required in line with pupil projections/demand. The Council aim to sustain a healthy surplus in order to aid the latter. Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg capacity has been adapted annually in order to reduce the surplus noted in recent years, however, this has been managed via a self-help approach. This approach has supported the school to grow in line with demand. The number of pupils projected for Welsh medium primary education within Blaenau Gwent is increasing, which supports the need for a second primary provision, along with the reconfiguration of the teaching and learning environment at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

Figure 7 below, provides an overview of the overall Reception cohort for Blaenau Gwent, along with available reception places, uptake and available capacity to admit addition pupils, between 2017 and 2021.

Figure 7: Welsh Reception Cohort Data

	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Cohort of Reception pupils	740		790		780		731		718	
Reception Places available in Welsh-medium	51	7%	36	5%	34	4%	30	4%	30	4%
Reception Places Filled in Welsh - medium provision/ % of total cohort	24	2%	25	3%	30	4%	39	5%	36	5%
Reception places capacity available in Welsh -Medium/ %	27	4%	11	1%	4	1%	-9	-1%	-6	-1%

In September 2023, the Council will open a second Welsh Medium Primary School in the Tredegar/Sirhowy Valley, which will be developed via a seedling growth model. The new school will address the latent demand identified within the Tredegar/Sirhowy Valley. **As part of the Immersion Project being funded by Welsh Government, the Council are scoping the development of a satellite provision at the new school, in order to initiate immersion in line with demand upon opening of the provision in 2023. Further plans for which will be finalised by the start of the new financial year, upon conclusion of the initial phase of the project.** The new school will also play a key role in increasing Welsh medium education places in line with the Blaenau Gwent target of increasing the number of Year 1 pupil's education via the medium of Welsh by 6%.

In-year transfers request for a place at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg over the last 3 years, post commencement of education in English medium education are as follows:

- 2018/19 – 10 pupils (6 Year 1, 1 Year 2, 1 Year 3 1 Year 4, and 1 Year 6 pupil)
- 2019/20 – 9 pupils (2 Nursery, 2 Year 1, 3 Year 2, 1 Year 5 and 1 Year 6 pupil)
- 2020/21 – 6 pupils (3 Nursery, 1 Reception, 1 Year 2 and 1 Year 5 pupil)

These pupils have been supported by existing staff, with limited capacity to fully address their second language Welsh needs in an immersive way, whilst ensuring that that these pupils are in a position to fully integrate with their already immersed peers.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

The Council has used current school capacity data along with projected pupil numbers, in order to model the required incremental increase in capacity required at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. **This will be carried out in line with the development of the Promotion and Engagement Strategy which will target prospective parents. The growth at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, will enable the Council to meet increased demand and reach the overarching target for Year 1 pupils.**

In addition, modelling has also been undertaken in respect of the growth plan from the 210 place Primary School scheduled to open in Tredegar in 2023. Please refer to figure 8 below, which details the planned growth. **The capacity will be increased annually in line with the Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education, supporting increased access via the admissions process, and in consideration of pupil projections and demand. The Council will work with the school in order to reconfigure the teaching and learning environment accordingly, addressing any maintenance and minor works issues to support this process.**

Figure 8: School Capacities and Projected Numbers

Academic Years	Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg	New Tredegar School	Projected No. of Reception places available
2021/22	30	0	30
2022/23	30	0	30
2023/24	34	24	58
2024/25	36	24	60
2025/26	40	26	66
2026/27	44	28	72

The Council aim to secure maximum growth and capacity within the two primary provisions, by aligning the growth plan to the Promotion and Engagement Strategy. The Council aim to develop a single phase immersion unit at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, with capacity to grow into a split phase immersion provision in line with potential future demand. In order to inform the development of this provision, we will seek to secure and use Welsh Government immersion funding to procure a qualified education professional to:

- scope out and develop immersion resources i.e. age specific packages and for Years 2 - 6;
- **develop and implement** a staff training programme to embed the principles and practices and effectively use resources to facilitate immersion provision;
- plan the development of a short-term transitional pilot programme using existing facilities, to run between 2022 and 2025;
- **scope a satellite provision for implementation at the new Welsh medium Primary School in Tredegar;**
- secure education resources to support the delivery of teaching and learning in an immersive way; and,
- support the development of a schedule of accommodation to inform capital project development.

We will ensure that this professional works closely with neighbouring authorities in order to compare models for immersion provision, identify and address any gaps, whilst also gauging and developing best practice. In addition, this development will be firmly aligned to and inform the Promotion and Engagement Strategy.

Once developed, the resources would be used in order to support WM pupils at the school, whose language acquisition has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Working with the Headteacher and ALNCo at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg in order to assess the impact of the pandemic, we have established that, there are groups in each class from Year 2 - Year 6, who would benefit from the type of immersive language intervention. The resource packs and interventions would be piloted with these groups in the first instance. These pupils would realise immediate benefits as a result of the immersion project.

A formal pilot will then take place in line with in-year transfer demand from September 2021, until the dedicated immersion unit has been constructed, which is anticipated by September 2025. The latter will ensure that the school are able to accommodate and promote immersion alongside the benefits of being bi-lingual.

In achieving our aims, we will:

- Cymraeg 2050 advocates that full Welsh language immersion is a key factor associated with successful growth of the Welsh language, meaning predominantly Welsh-medium and/or Welsh-medium settings are the most reliable way of creating language growth where the skills and confidence to use Welsh is used by pupils in their daily lives. Therefore, through consultation and engagement with key stakeholders, we will seek to develop more linguistic choice for pupils throughout the school estate.
- Secure further development of Welsh language progression by working with the EAS to promote and develop Ysgolion Cymraeg Campus Schools. Cymraeg Campus is a Language Charter that is used to promote the use of the

Welsh language throughout the school, across the curriculum and in all areas of school life. Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg have established a 'Cryw Cymraeg', who are a pupil voice set-up to encourage and promote the Welsh language both inside and outside the classroom, will we work with this group in developing our Promotion and Engagement Strategy with a view to increasing pupil voice and engagement.

- Ensure the successful implementation and subsequent growth of the new 210 place welsh-medium seedling primary school in the Tredegar/Sirhowy area.
- Review the catchment areas and home to school transport requirements in order to improve Welsh medium school organisation, access and associated policy development.
- Blaenau Gwent has excellent collaborative working arrangements with the South East Wales Region (Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Caerphilly, Newport), as well as Merthyr Tydfil/Powys. Council officers are working with their regional counter parts to develop secondary provision within the Heads of the Valleys region in line with the 21st Century School Band C Programme. This development will secure enhanced and sustainable progression opportunities for Welsh medium learners, and an increasing the capacity of the existing continuum of learning.
- Undertake a feasibility study in line with the potential for increased capacity within the primary sector between 2027 and 2032, using the seedling growth model adopted by Blaenau Gwent to deliver against the target of 75 Year 1 pupils education via the medium of Welsh by 2032.
- Develop a Blaenau Gwent Welsh Education Policy, to embed the WESP and associated developments within wider education planning and practice, also securing the required level of resource and investment to deliver the priorities detailed within the WESP (Please refer to page 6 for more information).
- Develop a delivery plan aligned to the WESP, for which progress monitored on a termly basis by the WEF, in order to effectively assess progress against our targets for each outcome. Outcome leads will be agreed, along with priority actions for each year, all of which will be subject to annual review. A dedicated action planning sub-group will be developed and meet on a bi-monthly basis, in order to review progress against the action plan and prepare quarterly reports/updates for the WEF. All actions will be agreed in a dedicated workshop with the WEF, and reviewed annually in the same way.
- Ensure the planning and review of Welsh medium education with other relevant Council policies and strategies, including but not limited to:
 - BG School Organisation Policy – ensuring that the right schools are the right size, in the right place at the right time;
 - BG Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy – scoping additional capacity to support improved access to Welsh medium education;
 - BG Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education (along with associated processes) – ensuring that the annual capacity review accounts for growth and demand, which is reflected within the admission number and associated policy review process. In addition, we will continue to work with colleagues throughout the region to secure the growth of secondary provision;
 - BG Local Development Plan – ensuring continued effective planning and alignment with pupil place management; enabling the Council to maintain, and where possible, improve the current level of projection

accuracy (98%) whilst also contributing development of the Promotion and Engagement Strategy. Finally, we will continue to work with Planning and other key stakeholders, to secure further opportunities for the development of Welsh Medium provision; and,

- o BG Medium Term Financial Strategy – ensuring that resource allocation is appropriate in line with the targets and action plan.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

The Council plan to secure a continuum of accessible Welsh medium education provision, along with opportunities for improved Welsh language acquisition and use throughout the school estate.

Figure 9: Projected Reception Capacity (2028 – 2031)

Academic Year	Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg	New WM Seedling Primary School	Projected Reception Place Availability
2028/29	51	30	81
2029/30	51	30	81
2030/31	51	30	81
2031/32	51	30	81

Key Data

Figure 10: Projected Pupil Numbers Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg

PROJECTED PUPIL NUMBERS:		Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Totals
January 2022		30	33	38	26	26	22	38	213
January 2023		30	30	33	38	26	26	22	205
January 2024	241 cap	34	30	30	33	38	26	26	217
January 2025	250 cap	36	34	30	30	33	38	26	227
January 2026	280 cap	40	36	34	30	30	33	38	241
January 2027	310 cap	44	40	36	34	30	30	33	247
January 2028	330 cap	47	44	40	36	34	30	30	261
January 2029	360 cap	51	47	44	40	36	34	30	282

Figure 11: Seedling Primary School (Tredegar) Opening Sept 2023

PROJECTED PUPIL NUMBERS:		Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Totals
January 2024	210 cap	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
January 2025	210 cap	24	24	0	0	0	0	0	48
January 2026	210 cap	26	24	24	0	0	0	0	74
January 2027	210 cap	28	26	24	24	0	0	0	102
January 2028	210 cap	30	28	26	24	24	0	0	132
January 2029	210 cap	30	30	28	26	24	24	0	162

Numbers and % of 5-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
30	4%	58	8%	60	8%	66	9%	74	10%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
77	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%

Outcome 3

More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Where are we now?

Welsh as a First Language

There is presently a regional partnership agreement in place, along with associated pupil place planning processes, whereby the Welsh medium primary school in Blaenau Gwent forms part of the Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw cluster.

Figure 12 below details the number and percentage of pupils in the Year 6 cohort, along with the number of Year 6 pupils in Blaenau Gwent and transition rate for the last 3 academic sessions.

Figure 12: Transition Rates – Year 6 pupils

Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw				
	Total Cohort	No.'s in to Gwynllyw	%	Transition Rate
2019/20	788	37	5%	100%
2020/21	799	22	3%	100%
2021/22	790	31	4%	100%

Whilst Year 6 pupil numbers remain low in comparison to other feeder schools, Blaenau Gwent's transition rate between primary and secondary education is excellent, with 100% of pupils transferring from KS2 to KS3 over the last 3 years.

The pandemic did not negatively affect transition rates. However, staff at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg have noted that there has been a negative impact upon oracy standards, acquisition and use of the Welsh language among pupils. It has been identified that there are approximately 40-50 pupils in need of additional immersive intervention.

Transition activities between 2020 and 2021 were conducted virtually. Blaenau Gwent Youth Service run a one-day fun day for year 6 pupils at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, which supports Year 6 pupils and focuses on transition. Figure 13 below, provides the number and percentage of pupils in Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg assessed through the medium of Welsh between 2017/18 and 2020/21 as a total and percentage of all KS2 pupils.

Figure 13: Number and % of Pupils Assessed via the Medium of Welsh

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
No of WM 187 (out of 4,567) = 4%	No of WM 182 (out of 3,923) = 5%	No of WM 169 (out of 4,636) = 4%	No of WM 184 (out of 4,566) = 4%

Figure 14 below, presents the number and percentage of Year 1 - 6 pupils attending Welsh-medium and English-medium schools (inclusive of faith and special school provision) in based on the September 2020 PLASC.

Figure 14: Number and % of Pupils in Welsh and English Medium schools

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Welsh Medium	43	6	23	3	26	3	23	3	38	5	31	4
English Medium	694	94	747	97	758	97	708	97	723	95	752	96

The EAS support cluster literacy standards. From September 2021 onwards, there will be more emphasis on the voice oracy strategy, with collaborative practices in line with the Curriculum for Wales and cross progression phases. All schools are revisiting and planning their journey, as expectations have been raised around linguistic skills.

The EAS has an Early Years Lead and appointed a Welsh speaker to the team to support its delivery to Welsh-medium provision. Professional learning for language immersion approaches is provided by the Welsh team who are research informed in

language acquisition, and are supporting and facilitating networking across lead schools for language immersion to develop approaches. There is transfer of language teaching pedagogy across specialism within the EAS, and across the Welsh language continuum with Welsh curriculum partners actively sharing approaches to language teaching with both Welsh and English medium schools. The team are providing support for the Council with the emerging immersion project referenced in Outcome 2. This project is currently under development, with a dedicated specialist having been recruited to oversee the implementation process. The Immersion Project will target pupils in Years 2-6, supporting increased and continued opportunities for engagement within Welsh Medium education.

The Early Years Childcare and Play team offer opportunities for upskilling of the workforce and also promotes courses and resources available through Camau. They have a transition policy and processes in place for children moving from pre-school to Foundation Phase Nursery provision in Blaenau Gwent schools. There is good engagement with transition meetings facilitated for settings and schools, to share documentation and information about children transitioning from one phase to the other. The offer is also available to childminders re: the transition process, but with limited success due to the timings of the meetings. Childminders are encouraged as good practice, to facilitate transition and share information with the schools which the children are planning to attend. This process is subject to continued review in order to incorporate learning into future practice.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Torfaen County Borough Council, currently have an arrangement, whereby places have been secured for Blaenau Gwent learners at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. Pupil projections for the next ten years indicate that the arrangements we have in place with Torfaen will be sufficient to meet demand until the turn of the decade (2030), when additional provision will be required. Pupil projections and associated demand is reviewed twice annually in order to inform place planning and allocation.

Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Powys have agreed to work collaboratively to deliver a new secondary provision in Band C of the 21st Century Schools Programme. Directors of Education have commissioned the regional Planning School Places Group to review the demand for the school and this will lead to a strategic outline plan being concluded in 2024, with a progression into the full business planning process aligned to the Welsh Government programme. We will aim to open in 2028/29 recognising the potential pressures within existing settings.

Transition rates are likely to increase from September 2030, when the first cohort of Year 6 pupils from the second primary school will transition from KS2 to KS3. We aim to maintain the high transition rate as detailed within figure 15 below.

Figure 15: % of Welsh learners moving from KS2 to KS3

	Y6 cohort	Numbers of Learners Transitioning from KS2 to KS3	% of learners	Target transition rate
September 2022	764	38	5%	100%
September 2023	731	22	3%	100%
September 2024	789	26	3%	100%
September 2025	778	26	3%	100%
September 2026	728	38	5%	100%
September 2027	718	33	5%	100%
September 2028	683	30	4%	100%
September 2029	(728)	30	4%	100%
September 2030	(728)	54**	7%	100%
September 2031	(728)	58	8%	100%
September 2032	(728)	60	8%	100%

** 1st cohort from Tredegar to go into secondary provision

The increase in the availability of Welsh medium places within the primary sector, will inevitably impact upon the number of Welsh-medium places required in the secondary sector. In addition, Torfaen Council's school reorganisation proposal to extend provision on the current Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw site to establish a 3-18 Welsh-medium School, will likely impact upon the number of places available for Blaenau Gwent learners from 2029/30 onwards. The two Councils will continue to work closely together to plan pupil place allocation for the first 5-10 years of this plan.

In achieving our aims, we will:

- Continue to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities including Monmouthshire, Powys and Merthyr Tydfil, in order to secure a regional secondary school within the Heads of the Valleys region to create a sustainable a continuum of learning for all pupils. Plans are currently in development, and will be a key priority for delivery in line with the 21st Century Schools Band C Programme. **Pupils places for Blaenau Gwent have been secured at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw until the turn of the decade. Annual planning and monitoring processes are in place between Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Council's in order to monitor places in line with demand. BG's pupil projections indicate that we will have sufficient places in the interim. In addition, Blaenau Gwent Council facilitates the Regional Planning of School Places and Demand Group for Welsh Medium Education. This group are working on a plan aligned to the regional secondary provision, and will consider all transition planning requirements in line with the development of the new school, mapping and provisioning accordingly.**
- Work with the EAS to map current education provision according to the Welsh language teaching and learning continuum, in line with the Welsh Government guidance 'Schools categories according to Welsh-medium provision'. Using baseline data from the PLASC surveys, a mapping exercise will be developed in 2022, to determine where and how schools are placed in line with the guidance. Further work will be undertaken to determine the opportunities for school categorisation moving forward.
- The Council will support schools in order for them to meet the relevant and expected educational/ linguistic outcomes. Also, identifying and working with schools who wish to consider re-categorisation in line with the Cymraeg Campus network.

- Work with English-medium schools to support linguistic developments and skills of school staff to transition from English-medium to Welsh-medium or Bilingual settings. Offering them further choice in the future.
- Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg would like to continue to support transition from primary to secondary, especially around Mathematics and Science ensuring early engagement at Year 5 are planned.
- Continue to work in partnership with schools and Youth Service to provide support around transition and emotional wellbeing.
- Monitor and increase linguistic progression in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council and Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.
- Consult with relevant stakeholders in order to plan the linguistic development and progression in K2 and K3, whilst reviewing the rates of progression for Blaenau Gwent learners.
- Provide support for pupils who have presented with issues across all age groups – especially those transitioning from primary to secondary.
- Undertake a mapping exercise on the Curriculum for Wales progression data.
- Review school capacity and demand in line with admission and in-year transfer requests.
- **Continue to work in partnership with the Early Years Childcare and Play team to provide support around transition and emotional wellbeing for pre-school Children.**

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten-year Plan?

The Council plan work with neighbouring authorities to secure a regional secondary school solution within the Head of the Valleys area by **2028/29 (as detailed above)**, in order to create a sustainable continuum of provision for Welsh medium learners.

We will work to sustain the current transition rate of 100%, whilst ensuring that relevant policy reviews continue to support and improves access to Welsh medium education.

Key Data

Figure 16: Transition to Secondary School

	Y6 pupils will transition to Ysgol Gwynllyw Torfaen				Secondary Places Required from 2026 onwards						
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Year 6 Pupil Places	38	22	26	26	38	33	30	30	30	34	36
New WM Primary School Year 6 Pupil Places	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	24	24
Totals:	38	22	26	26	38	33	30	30	54	58	60

Numbers and % of learners continuing to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another									
2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
38	100%	22	100%	26	100%	26	100%	38	100%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
33	100%	30	100%	30	100%	54	100%	58	100%

Outcome 4

More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

Pupils attending Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg in Blaenau Gwent, receive their secondary education at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw in Torfaen. Figure 16 below, highlights the numbers of Blaenau Gwent learners in each year group at the aforementioned secondary school during the 2020/21 academic session.

Figure 17: Numbers on roll at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw 2020/21

Year Group	Numbers on roll							
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw Torfaen	136	144	132	112	114	48	61	8
Blaenau Gwent Learner no.'s at YGG	18	31	29	32	18	7	9	1

Number and percentages of pupils studying the first language specification in 2020/21

- KS4 – In the Summer of 2020, the number of Blaenau Gwent learners studying for a **First** language GCSE qualification at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw was 19.
- KS5 - In the Summer of 2020, the number of Blaenau Gwent learners studying for an A Level subject (who had previously studied Welsh as a first Language) at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw was 7 pupils in Year 13, and 2 pupils in Year 14.

Number and percentages of pupils studying the second language specification in 2020/21

- KS3 – GCSE Welsh (second language) is offered within all English-medium secondary schools in Blaenau Gwent.
- KS4 – In the Summer of 2020 (the 2019/20 academic session), the number of Blaenau Gwent learners studying for a **Second** language GCSE in Year 11 was (522 Pupils) 84.6% of the cohort.

Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw 3-16 School Options

Key Stage 4 - Pupils study all subjects through the medium of Welsh (with the exception of English). The vast majority will study either 10 or 12 subjects according to

ability. This equates to either 90% (10 subjects) or 92% (12 subjects). The curriculum is comprised of 25 subjects as follows:

Core subjects include: Welsh Language, Welsh Literature, English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Numeracy, Science (suite of qualifications) and Welsh Baccalaureate is compulsory.

Figure 18 Pupil Options (pupils can choose 4 option choices from the following):

(GCSE and Vocational Qualifications)				
GCSE	Food and Nutrition	Health, Social and Child Care	Drama	Spanish
	Geography	Religious Studies	Music	Sociology
	Physical Education	ICT	Art	History
	Design Technology	Computer Science	Digital Technology	Travel and Tourism
Vocational	Business	BTEC Sweet Level 2	Construction	

Key Stage 5 – 30 subjects are offered at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw as shown in Figure 19 below. The vast majority study 3 A Levels or Level 3 Qualifications, and the Welsh Baccalaureate is compulsory. A minority of pupils will opt for 4 A Levels and the Welsh Baccalaureate. On the whole 100% of their curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh (with the exception of those who study English). In those cases, 75% of their curriculum is taught through Welsh and 80% for those studying 4 A Levels and Welsh Baccalaureate.

Figure 19 The curriculum offer is as follows:

Subject Choices						
Art	Biology	Business	Chemistry	Childcare	Computer Science	Criminology
Design and Technology	Drama	Economics	English	Further Mathematics	Geography	Health and Social Care
History	Hospitality	Information Technology	Mathematics	Media Studies	Medical Science	Music
Music Technology	Physical Education	Physics	Politics	Psychology	Religious Studies	Sociology
		Spanish	Travel and Tourism	Welsh		

Students either study at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw or Coleg Gwent at KS5. Blaenau Gwent secondary schools do not have sixth form provision. Figure 20 below provides an overview of second and first language Welsh learners in KS4 and KS5.

Figure 20: Number of Learners Studying Welsh

	GCSE Welsh First Language** in Ysgol Gwynllyw Torfaen	GCSE Welsh Second Language in Blaenau Gwent	AS/A-Level Welsh as a First Language ** in Ysgol Gwynllyw Torfaen	Coleg Gwent Provision
2020/21	228 learners	478 learners	116 learners	10 learners (5 of which are BG)

Welsh as a Second Language in Blaenau Gwent

Figure 21 below, provides a comparative overview of learners (including as a percentage of the cohort) who took Welsh as a second language (sourced from the WJEC results summary and candidate report data). Numbers have fluctuated over the last 5 years, with 2021 being the lowest in terms of the number of learners undertaking Welsh as second Language; however, the percentages remain relatively stable over the 5-year analysis.

Figure 21: Welsh as Second Language- Learner Data

Academic Year end	Cohort	Welsh as a Second Language	% of Cohort
2017	607	503	83%
2018	586	499	85%
2019	532	479	90%
2020	617	522	85%
2021	559	478	86%

The Urdd and the Youth Service seek to offer opportunities for learners to use Welsh both inside and outside of their school/college setting. The Youth Service promote an accredited Welsh Culture Unit.

Number and Percentage of Learners at Coleg Gwent

Coleg Gwent language of learning and assessment using the following categories as per the Lifelong Learning Wales Record:

- B3 = a small amount of Welsh medium Learning
- B2 = a significant amount of Welsh medium Learning
- B1 = learning completed in a bilingual context
- C1 = learning completed in a Welsh medium context

There has been a significant decline in the number of learners who wish to undertake A Levels via the medium of Welsh over the last few years, this is a regional trend at present. Coleg Gwent currently has under 10 learners studying their A Levels via the medium of Welsh.

Coleg Gwent have had some success in recent years in increasing the number of learners who fall into the B1 and B2 categories, in particular. However, the numbers

are still relatively low and the college is ambitious in its vision to increase these numbers over the next 10 years. The latest data (number of learners in 2020-2021) is as follows:

Figure 22: number of Welsh learners KS5

B3: A small amount of Welsh-medium learning;	B2: A significant amount of Welsh-medium learning	B1: Learning completed in a bilingual context	C1: Learning completed in a Welsh-medium context
276	93	144	0

More subjects/courses have included sections to promote learning via the medium of Welsh. Currently, Coleg Gwent don't offer fully Welsh medium courses. However, childcare, health and social care, public services, engineering, land based and music are offered partly in Welsh. This will be extended in the following academic year. There are clear interdependencies between the success of the Coleg Gwent vision, and securing an appropriately qualified workforce and staffing levels to deliver the curriculum via the medium of Welsh.

A significant number of learners who reside in Blaenau Gwent study on a campus in neighbouring Local Authorities and the opposite is also the case. Coleg Gwent do not have the same provision on all campuses, therefore, obtaining specific targets would be very difficult and would not be meaningful. However, there is an expectation that all campuses to contribute towards the coleg's target for all subject areas.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Therefore, the Council plan to increase the capacity and uptake within the primary sector, whilst ensuring that transition from KS2 to KS3 remains at 100%. This in turn will increase the number of learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh and via the medium of Welsh.

In achieving our aims, we will:

- Provide support to English-medium secondary schools in line with the bilingual learner journey, to ensure Welsh language delivery is of the highest possible standard in English medium schools. The EAS provides support for schools and clusters to consider, plan for, and develop progression in language skills across phases. The EAS provides specialist support from Welsh in Education Advisors. It facilitates school to school working, develops of sabbatical champions in their roles, and works with cluster strategic leads for Welsh to provide training share exemplification materials and supports planning against the progression steps and descriptions for learning across the age range and in line Curriculum for Wales. For example, progression steps 1-5 for Welsh in English medium schools. <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/languages-literacy-and-communication/descriptions-of-learning/> The EAS also supports schools to implement and quality assure Cymraeg Campus Bronze/Silver/Gold targets and outcomes;
- Work with Coleg Gwent and English-medium schools to promote and increase the uptake of A Level Welsh, this can be achieved by working together as a Council, EAS and School to consider an effective provision and pathway to A

Levels. Coleg Gwent can support the progression of English medium pupils from schools to A Level Welsh, positively promoting and recruiting students for Welsh as an A Level;

- Work with the EAS to provide training and workforce development opportunities for teaching staff, enhancing both their skills and delivery;
- Work closely with Torfaen County Borough Council, to provide support and ensure that the Welsh medium secondary school accessed by Blaenau Gwent pupils, is fully compliant with the new Curriculum for Wales;
- Ensure that English medium secondary schools comply with the regulatory and curriculum based requirements in line with the delivery of Welsh as a second language;
- Work with the EAS and schools in order to assess and implement required changes and recommendation in line with the Qualifications Wales consultation;
- Create stronger partnerships with English-medium secondary schools in Blaenau Gwent and Coleg Gwent, ensuring effective collaboration with Heads of Departments in identifying learners to continue their Welsh second language journey, whilst also promoting A Level Welsh;
- Review and further develop ‘Being Bilingual’ marketing and communication materials and resources, in order to inform transitional options and engagement with pupils, parents and carers;
- Work cross border to encourage and elicit demand for Welsh-medium primary and secondary education, whilst ensuring that the continuum of learning for pupils is clearly mapped out understood by pupils, parents and carers.
- Ensure that for Post 16 learning, the EAS, Coleg Gwent, Careers Wales and Coleg Cymraeg are fully engaged in securing and enhancing career progression through the medium of Welsh;
- Following the steer from Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Coleg Gwent will continue to focus on embedding full bilingual units into the main qualifications in priority bilingual curriculum areas. In the first 5 years, the focus will be on childcare, health and social care and public services. The College will employ new staff (or upskill existing staff) to deliver bilingual units in these three curriculum areas. This will contribute to achieving the following Coleg Gwent targets:

Figure 23: Coleg Gwent 5-year Targets

B3: A small amount of Welsh-medium learning;	B2: A significant amount of Welsh-medium learning	B1: Learning completed in a bilingual context	C1: Learning completed in a Welsh-medium context
2000*	400	600	***

***The college will develop a digital package that will enable most full-time vocational learners to achieve at least B3**

***** Coleg Gwent will focus on embedding Welsh and bilingual units into main programmes as opposed to delivering fully Welsh medium courses.**

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

It is expected that at the end of this 10-year plan, there will be more Blaenau Gwent learners studying through the medium of Welsh in a Welsh-medium secondary setting.

Through the existing partnership and collaboration with Monmouthshire, Powys and Merthyr Tydfil, a secondary school will be developed in the Heads of the Valley's region, increasing both Welsh medium secondary options and provision for Blaenau Gwent learners.

We will see an increase in the uptake of learners studying Welsh as a second language in English-medium secondary schools in Blaenau Gwent. In addition, the percentage of qualifications studied through the medium of Welsh will also increase.

Via the development of an effective Promotion and Engagement strategy, we will seek to:

- Alleviate any concerns that parents and carers have in relation to their child/children attending Welsh-medium education settings;
- Dispel myths and ensure that there is clear and concise information available for pupils, parents and carers on their education options and the benefits of being bi-lingual;
- Develop parent, carer and learner confidence in the linguistic journey; and,
- Ensure that learners, parents and carers are fully informed as to the progression and career routes available for Welsh learners/speakers.

The College will continue to develop bilingual modules across all remaining priority areas (7 curriculum areas in total). This will include developing resources in addition to recruiting skilled staff.

Coleg Gwent have established 10-year targets as per figure 24 which the Council are committed to supporting.

Figure 24: targets for bilingual delivery

B3: A small amount of Welsh-medium learning;	B2: A significant amount of Welsh-medium learning	B1: Learning completed in a bilingual context	C1: Learning completed in a Welsh-medium context
3000	500	1000	***

*** The college will focus on embedding Welsh and bilingual units into main programmes as opposed to delivering fully Welsh medium courses, unless a new opportunity arises. This will be evaluated on an annual basis.

Key Data

The targets below for KS3 learners have been based on Blaenau Gwent's transition rates from Y6 – Y7 (PLASC Jan 2021).

Figure 25: cohort and transition numbers

	Overall cohort Year 6 Learners	Numbers of Welsh Learners Transitioning from KS2 to KS3	% of learners
September 2022	764	38	5%
September 2023	731	22	3%
September 2024	789	26	3%
September 2025	778	26	3%
September 2026	728	38	5%
September 2027	718	33	5%
September 2028	683	30	4%
September 2029	(728)	30	4%
September 2030	(728)	54**	7%
September 2031	(728)	58	8%
September 2032	(728)	60	8%

** 1st cohort from Tredegar to go into secondary **Welsh Medium** provision

Figure 26: Projected number of year 11 learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh as a subject (GCSE)

Year 11	2032/33	2031/32	2030/31	2029/30	2028/29	2027/28	2026/27	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Total Cohort Size	627	663	674	736	744	685	706	743	646	682	568
Adjusted Cohort (85.5%) Entries	536	567	576	629	636	586	604	635	552	583	486

Numbers and % of learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
38	5%	22	3%	26	3%	26	3%	38	5%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
26	5%	64	10%	64	9%	68	9%	71	10%

Numbers and % of learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) at GCSE

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
568	85%	682	85%	646	85%	635	85%	604	85%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
86	85%	636	85%	629	85%	576	85%	567	85%

Numbers of learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and Subjects through the medium of Welsh at Coleg Gwent (B1)				
2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027
141	300	450	600	650
2027 - 2028	2028 - 2029	2029 - 2030	2030 - 2031	2031 - 2032
700	750	800	900	1000

Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Where are we now?

Blaenau Gwent collaborate with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to lead on the work of the 'Siarter Iaith', the primary and secondary language charter:

- Siarter Iaith Primary: 100% Silver (Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg).
- Siarter Iaith Secondary: Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw are implementing the Siarter framework (Step 1 of 5: EAS Siarter evaluation framework for secondary schools).
- Cymraeg Campus English-medium Primary: 35% of Blaenau Gwent schools have achieved Bronze award status, 20% have achieved Silver, and 45% are working towards Bronze.

In line with the Ysgolion Cymraeg Campus School initiative in Blaenau Gwent:

- 100% of our primary schools/campuses have engaged with the Cymraeg Campus framework baseline questionnaire.
- In 35% or 7 of our primary schools/campuses Bronze award has been achieved and verified.
- In 20% or 4 of our primary schools/campuses Silver award engagement and the baseline questionnaire has been undertaken.
- No schools have achieved and had the Silver award verified.

Blaenau Gwent: Bilingualism Secondary

Brynawr Foundation School, Tredegar Comprehensive School and Ebbw Fawr Learning Community Secondary Phase are developing bilingualism initiatives with support from the EAS. In addition, these schools are engaging with the Urdd Cymraeg Bob Dydd programme.

Menter Iaith

Prior to the pandemic, Menter Iaith delivered after school club in Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, which re-opened in September 2021. Menter Iaith have a Community Development Officer who supports delivery of activities in partnership with Youth Service and Urdd.

Menter Iaith also run events and virtual sessions for younger children and families. During 2019/20 22 events were held in Blaenau Gwent, with over 346 children and families in attendance. In 2020/21 there were 2 family events and 55 online events delivered during lockdown, with approximately 26 attendees at the family events and 43 children engaged in online events.

For the Menter Iaith activities, emphasis is placed on giving opportunities to children and young people to speak Welsh in informal settings, although the majority of these activities have historically taken place at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Further venues will be explored as part of the development of Promotion and Engagement Strategy, and associated WESP delivery planning work.

The range of activities has been mapped in the past, but due to the pandemic, staffing structure changes at the Urdd and turnover of staff in Menter Iaith, the number and nature of activities has changed significantly. This work will be revisited once again and mapped regularly in order to identify gaps in provision, and inform the development of a plan to address these gaps.

Prior to the pandemic, Menter Iaith were able to provide at least one weekly club for primary schools and would liaise with teachers to ensure that the objectives of these clubs e.g. ukulele clubs or arts & crafts sessions reflected the educational needs of children. Outcomes relating to language use and were monitored on a six-monthly basis and reported Welsh Government - this will be included in the WESP Planning process going forward.

Youth Service

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service works towards an existing business plan which includes the development of Welsh Language and Culture opportunities. This is underpinned by a workforce development programme including development of Welsh language skills across the workforce and a focus on upskilling through recruitment. An annual plan is agreed between the Youth Service and the Urdd, and this is in part led by the views gathered from young people through consultation but is also bound by the grant funding requirements and timescales. More recently, the funding received has moved to a 3-year indicative allocation and this will allow for a longer term plan of activity. It makes sense to develop a longer term strategy for young people's Welsh language provision in the community, as the short to medium term can be measured against the long term plan. Young people's involvement in this provision is voluntary as it is not compulsory nor in school time, and therefore, success is measured by the numbers of young people accessing the opportunities over a consistent period and the number of opportunities available, rather than capturing whether or not Welsh language skills have improved. Other outcomes, such as accredited outcomes for courses, are also captured.

The Youth Service has a Service Level Agreement with the Urdd to secure and deliver activities through the medium of Welsh for young people. The Youth Service in Blaenau Gwent work with young people between the ages of 11 and 25 years. Where possible – they have introduced Welsh language into youth club settings, ensuring bilingual engagement opportunities for Welsh speakers.

The Youth Service works in partnership with the Urdd to either fund or directly provide the following opportunities for young people to meet together and to socialise in Welsh and/or to provide support through the medium of Welsh:

- Year 6 after school transition club in Bro Helyg (to support transition from Bro Helyg to Gwynllyw) approximately 20 young people supported, BG youth worker and Urdd youth worker support activities
- Weekly after school Welsh language club Tredegar (approximately 20 young people supported, Urdd youth worker during term time, BG youth workers in the evenings throughout the year)
- Volunteering programme delivered with Blaenau Gwent pupils in Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw (approximately 10 young people, Urdd youth worker)
- Welsh Language Youth Forum facilitated in Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw – Blaenau Gwent pupils then represent on the Blaenau Gwent Council Youth Forum (Urdd youth worker)
- Volunteering opportunities provided for an additional 10 young people from Blaenau Gwent in the Urdd through Eisteddfod, residential trips and activities
- Arts based activities provided during school holidays through Welsh (Urdd youth worker)
- Welsh Language and Culture focussed activities held across all Blaenau Gwent youth clubs. Planning towards next Eisteddfod competitions. (BG youth workers)
- Welsh Language and Culture focussed activities are delivered by all full time youth workers based in every secondary school in BG. (BG youth workers)
- Welsh language D of E group provided (BG youth worker)
- Welsh language lead on young people's information group (BG youth worker)

The Urdd provides a small part of the Youth Service activity – and the Youth Service funds the Urdd to provide this activity as this ensures that young people accessing this opportunity are also able to access the wider Urdd opportunities such as the Eisteddfod and residential activities. The two direct clubs (at Tredegar Comprehensive School and Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg), are supported at various times by 1 Urdd member of staff and 1 Youth Service member of staff. It is the Youth Service that continues this provision if and when the Urdd are not able to support. Additionally, all youth clubs in Blaenau Gwent, and all secondary schools have Welsh language and culture and focussed activities facilitated by Blaenau Gwent youth workers. However, it is timely to review the existing provision, and to open up opportunities to work in partnership with a wider range of organisations with this focus.

The Youth Service already sets itself targets on an annual basis and also agrees targets with the Urdd. This is part of a 5 year planning process and feeds into an annual Welsh Government audit. The Council would support setting a baseline using these historic figures.

The Youth Service facilitates a strategic multi-agency partnership which oversees provision for young people but also facilitates a Youth Support Service network. Youth Service provision is also led and developed by the views of young people, which are gathered through a bi-annual County Borough wide consultation, annual survey with Youth Service members, project focussed consultation and design and individual

discussions with young people. Young people in this context are considered our most valid partner. This information is then fed into the Welsh in Education Forum, to support planning and development of the WESP.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Urdd Gobaith Cymru is a voluntary national movement for children and young people that provides various opportunities to use the Welsh language, and gain experiences in the language, outside of the classroom, and in their local communities. The Urdd offer the following:

Community

- Officials that provide community arts opportunities throughout the year
- Departments, households, youth clubs and community clubs for children and young people to enjoy and use the Welsh language
- Digital provision for all ages

Sports

- Community clubs
- County, regional and national sports competitions
- Regional and national sports festivals
- Digital activities
- Physical literacy education provision for schools

Urdd Camps

- Llangrannog, Glan-llyn, Cardiff and Pentre Ifan
- Residential experiences providing learning experiences, fun and positive memories of using Welsh

The Eisteddfod and the Arts

- Area and County Eisteddfodau that offer opportunities for schools and pupils to experience arts, develop self-confidence and learn more about Welsh culture and literature
- The Urdd National Eisteddfod and being a part of a national festival
- Digital arts, music, theatre, art and backstage provision

Welsh-medium apprenticeships

- Educational and employment progression for young people who wish to gain qualifications and experience in Welsh

International

- Peace and Goodwill Message – extending the hand of friendship and discussing subjects of importance to young people on a world-wide basis
- Specific projects with partners in Ireland, America and Japan
- Opportunities for international volunteering and exchange visits

Resources

- The Urdd's digital magazines
- A collection of educational resources to support the new Curriculum.

Figure 27: Youth Engagement Activities and Events via the Urdd

2018 - 2019	No. of children Primary age	No. of children Secondary	Total	Location
Residential trips	60	40	100	Urdd Centres - Llangrannog, Glan-Llyn and Cardiff
Eisteddfod	30	0	30	Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni- Caerphilly & Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw
Welsh Club	0	20	20	Tredegar
Sporting tournaments	30	25	55	Various locations across Gwent
Jambori	50	0	50	Pontypool
Adran	15	0	15	Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg
Totals	185	85	270	

The Urdd community officer works across Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Mynwy, Caerffili and Newport, meaning that there is no dedicated officer for Blaenau Gwent. The targets agreed as part of the Blaenau Gwent Service Level Agreements are detailed within Figure 28 below:

Figure 28 - Youth Work in Blaenau Gwent

Task	Description
Task 1	1 weekly Welsh Club at Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar staffed by Urdd member of staff
Task 2	Accredit 10 young people from Blaenau Gwent – Volunteering and Engaging with the community credit – 20 hours of volunteering – Pupils at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw
Task 3	Transition work with Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg – work closer with Year 6 at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg
Task 4	Ensure representatives from Blaenau Gwent on Youth Forum – Make sure they are part of the Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw Youth forum and link in with the Blaenau Gwent forum
Task 5	Work in partnership with Blaenau Gwent Council – Raise the profile of the Welsh Language.
Task 6	Volunteering opportunities for 10 young people from Blaenau Gwent – including at the Eisteddfod, in clubs
Task 7	Offer a range of art activities for Young People in Blaenau Gwent - School holiday activities.

Welsh afterschool club at Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar offers the pupils an opportunity to practice their Welsh. Eisteddfodau includes competitions for Welsh speakers and learners, Sporting activities for Welsh speakers and learners. All these groups etc. offer the opportunity for Welsh speakers and learner to use their Welsh in an informal setting.

Coleg Gwent

All learners with Welsh language enrichment opportunities by Coleg Gwent. In line with the Coleg Gwent partnership with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, 5 Welsh Ambassadors are appointed each academic session. Their role being to promote, encourage and

facilitate Welsh language provision throughout each campus, working with key partners such as the Urdd in doing so.

Participation and engagement differs at each campus and across departments. However, approximately 8-12 learners engage with Welsh medium extra-curricular activity. During the 2020/21 academic session, 142 learners engaged with Welsh and bilingual activities. The pandemic has negatively affected engagement levels.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Working closely with the EAS to continue promoting and developing the Siarter Iaith throughout the school estate, we aim to achieve the following targets:

- **Siarter Iaith Primary Target** Blaenau Gwent: 100% Gold (Bro Helyg)
- **Siarter Iaith Secondary** Torfaen: Maintaining (Step 4 of 5: EAS Siarter evaluation framework for secondary schools)

Blaenau Gwent's target to achieve Bronze, Silver and Gold

Figure 29: Cymraeg Campus Cynradd: English Medium Primary

	2021		Target 2026		Target 2032	
Cymraeg Campus Cynradd Achieved or working towards						
Primary : Bronze	7/20	35%	20/20	100%	20/20	100%
Primary : Silver	4/20	20%	10/20	50%	20/20	100%
Primary: Gold	0/20	0%	7/20	35%	10/20	50%

Coleg Gwent plan to expand and develop Welsh Language enrichment provision, establishing a vibrant, diverse and inclusive Welsh community. Continuing to adapt to the needs of learners, it is expected that learner participation levels for Welsh language activities will increase to 70% over the next 5 years.

In achieving our aims, we will:

- Work with the EAS to provide professional learning opportunities for senior leadership, including a focus on strategic development of Cymraeg Campus in English medium schools;
- Develop networks for coordinators (Welsh and English-medium schools) and drop-in meetings every half term;
- Offer bespoke support for schools in line with the Regional School Improvement approach;
- Support schools to consider the development of Cymraeg Campus as part of their wider self-evaluation, with the latter informing the verification process;
- Raise the profile of and promote Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus;
- Promote effective cluster working and celebrate successes at school, cluster, local and regional levels;
- Ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for schools to share good practice, and develop school to school working initiatives, ensuring increased engagement;

- Promote the work of, and create opportunities for learners and families to engage with Mudiad Meithrin, Blaenau Gwent Youth Services, Urdd Gobat Cymru and Menter Iaith;
- Develop a baseline questionnaire to be completed by English-medium secondary settings about pupil's perception and confidence in using Welsh as a second language. Use this data to target the development of opportunities, whilst continuing to measure confidence and progression;
- Work with the lead for the Welsh Language Charter in Blaenau Gwent, to support engagement capturing views through a series of qualitative questionnaire, used to determine linguistic tendencies, barriers and opportunities;
- Continue and strengthen the current Welsh in Education Forum, supporting the vision to grow the Welsh language and associated opportunities;
- Review the structure and membership of the WEF, including sub-groups and outcome themed leads, to ensure effective monitoring and implementation of the WESP 10-year plan;
- Collaborate with key partners to secure resources to further develop extra-curricular opportunities for Blaenau Gwent learners;
- Develop an effective communication plan to ensure that learners and parents are aware of and engage with opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school;
- Support language progression in English-medium primary schools;
- Highlight the importance of the Urdd's residential opportunities, that offer totally Welsh 24 hour experiences, creating positive and long-term memories of Welsh amongst pupils;
- Increasing school participation in the Urdd Eisteddfod to foster self-confidence, experience the arts and an understanding of Welsh literature, music and art; and,
- Ensure effective joint planning for youth work (11-25) via the medium of Welsh.
- **Map provision on a six-monthly basis with representatives from Menter Iaith BGTM, the Urdd and Youth Service. This could be achieved via the Blaenau Gwent Welsh Language Forum facilitated by Menter Iaith BGTM, who are currently working to offer ideas feedback on the new Welsh Language Promotional Strategy.**
- **Increase Urdd and Youth Service provision within English medium primary and secondary schools, to provide more Welsh language community work such as clubs, holiday provision etc.**

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

Cymraeg Campus Cynradd: English medium primary targets for 2032 are as follows:

- 50% gold
- 100% silver
- 100% bronze

At the end of the 5-year review, Welsh-medium schools who have achieved the gold award, will have full confidence to robustly self-evaluate their provision for implementing the Siarter Iaith, and will be responsible for independently sharing their good practice in developing the Charter with others.

All schools established between the 5-year review, and the end of the 10-year cycle, will implement the Starter Iaith and aim to achieve an award that reflects appropriate progress according to the school's establishment date.

For Cymraeg Campus, maintaining gold award expectations and high standards in schools that have achieved the award, including ensuring an effective process to evaluate, monitor and plan for maintaining or improving standards. To ensure that this take place, there will be extensive sharing of best practice, between and across schools, with schools independently supporting each other with their evaluation of the programme's delivery. The Council will work with the EAS to ensure systematic and effective monitoring processes are in place, to ensure that high standards are maintained.

Over the next 10 years, Coleg Gwent's objective is to grow and expand Welsh Language enrichment provision, striving towards doubling engagement levels by 2032, which equates to 284 learners or 90%.

Finally, we aim to increase extra-curricular activities and associated engagement, through an effective partnership approach which is informed and monitored by the work of the WEF.

Key Data

Increasing opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
0	0%	2	10%	4	20%	6	30%	7	35%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
8	40%	9	45%	9	45%	10	50%	10	50%

Outcome 6

An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018)

Where are we now?

In September 2021/January 2022 the ALNET Bill came into force and the focus has now changed on how data is recorded in Local Authorities and schools. The focus is now on schools meeting the needs of pupils under the universal and targeted provision. PLASC data has changed with the removal of general learning difficulties.

The Local Authority has planned for a review of all provision for children with ALN across the County Borough. It is expected that this review will take place during the Spring/Summer-term 2022, to ensure that the Local Authority is compliant with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. The expectation is that a Welsh-speaking Educational Psychologists will form part of the Review team. The findings of the review and scoping visits will also provide intelligence to shape planning, in readiness for the opening of the second Welsh medium provision.

A revised plan, with updated timescales, will be produced as soon as possible. In addition, a working party of headteachers representing all clusters, phases and settings from across Blaenau Gwent was established in January 2022, with a ALN Reform implementation remit. It is the expectation that the working party will also inform future planning for supporting all learners with an additional learning need, including Welsh medium settings.

Blaenau Gwent does not currently have a Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB) for children with complex additional learning needs. Therefore, parents and carers of pupils with ALN access SNRB provision for their children at English-medium schools, due to the fact that the provision does not exist within the Welsh-medium primary. As such, the 'perception' is that the demand for such provision is low. As at 2021, there is only one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Need. However, the school has identified a cohort of pupils either pending or having received a diagnosis, who would benefit from SNRB provision. Figure 27 details the ALN pupil profile of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

Further work is required in order to analysis and understand the level and complexity of need within the Welsh medium sector in Blaenau Gwent. The term 'complex additional learning needs' can be used to describe children and adults with multiple barriers to learning and co-existing learning difficulties such as communication, cognition, sensory (vision & hearing) and physical.

Figure 30: ALN Pupil Profile at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg

	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Behaviour Emotional Social Disorder	Dyslexia	Global Developmental Delay	Hearing Impaired	Speech Learning and Communication Difficulties	Visual Impaired	Moderate Learning Difficulties	Total
2017	1	5	8	6	1	11	1	1	34
2018		6	2	11	3	12	1	1	36
2019		5	2	8	2	9	1	1	28
2020		5		5	2	5	1		18
2021		10	1	5	1	4	1		22

Currently, there are 8 pupils who have ASD/ADHD traits at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. As yet, not all of the aforementioned pupils have received a formal diagnosis, however, all except 2, are in receipt of Educational Psychology engagement with referrals having been made. Nursery provision at the school is offered on a full-time basis, therefore, the pupils needs tend to be identified relatively early on. Currently, in Key Stage 2, there are a number of pupils who would benefit from small-class teaching. It is also

recognised that the provision of a resource base would not only provide tailored support to the pupils who have been identified as needing this consistent level of intervention and support; but would also free up teacher time to focus on pupils requiring additional support e.g. pupils with a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD). As of September 2021, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg released the Specialist Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), from teaching 4 days per week, in order to concentrate on interventions with pupils.

Blaenau Gwent currently has 3 members of staff in the Education Psychology team who are able to speak fluently and deliver via the medium of Welsh. However, 1 of these staff members is presently on secondment to Welsh Government. A cross-consortia working group has been established. **In addition, tools and resources are now available on Hwb for all staff in schools to access as well as relevant local authority staff across Wales in both English and Welsh.**

As a special school Pen y Cwm have 6 Welsh speaking staff at school. Different levels of Welsh are employed depending upon the needs of the learners, with incidental Welsh being the primary use. In addition, the School has a Welsh Co-ordinator, and they recognise and reward the Welsh speaker of the week.

From a Local Authority perspective, any child presenting with additional learning needs in any childcare setting would be subject to the same assessment/referral process and the same support would be offered regardless of the language of the setting. Language would not be a barrier to the school receiving specialist advice and guidance from Welsh speaking Educational Psychologist.

There are inter-county arrangements and planning processes in place for Welsh medium secondary pupils with ALN, who's needs are met in Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. Blaenau Gwent Council funds pupils with ALN on a needs (individual pupil) basis. This process is managed via the Council's ALN Panel, in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg remodelling project, is a 21st Century Schools Band B Project the objectives of which are to:

- secure growth of the pupil population;
- address current gaps in provision i.e. the school is not currently able to offer outdoor learning or nurture provision, and does not have suitable spaces to support pupils with behavioural and additional learning needs – which make up a significant proportion of the pupil population;
- transform unusable spaces which are deteriorating in condition and not suitable for use in line with Health and Safety;
- create flexibility to support growth;
- secure improved standards of teaching and learning, along **with** improved pupil outcomes; and,
- secure improved suitability in line with the new curriculum, along with the condition of the facility.

Blaenau Gwent Council are committed to the development of a Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB) at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg **by 2025**. The SNRB would initially cater for up to 10 ALN pupils, with the capacity to grow to a split phase provision. **Plans to secure a satellite provision at the new seedling school are also under development, with associated design development having been considered. An Expression of Interest was submitted to Welsh Government in November 2021, in line with the Welsh Medium Capital Grant.**

In achieving our aims, we will:

- **Ensure effective early identification processes are in place working closely with the early years and childcare sector, to facilitate effective transitional support packages and processes from pre-school into education settings.**
- Audit ALN needs throughout the Welsh-medium sector and review annually, in order to inform and develop effective transition and provision for learners;
- Ensure that the statutory duty of school(s) to ensure ALN provision can be offered bilingually, by committing to the development and recruitment of Welsh language practitioners;
- Ensure that the right level of support is provided throughout the Welsh-medium early years and primary sectors, ensuring that provisions have the required facilities and resources to effectively support learners presenting with ALN;
- Review the research undertaken via the consortia, and use it to develop a training and intervention plan for staff and pupils;
- Review, adapt and use resources which are tailored to the specific needs of learners, engaging with and understanding best practice i.e. North Wales assessment tools such as reading machines for SPLD children;
- Ensure early identification processes are in place, by ensuring an effective partnership approach, informing and developing provision for ALN pupils prior to statutory schooling;
- Work with the Inclusion team to support implementation of the Additional Learning Needs Reform for Wales (2021);
- Ensure the capability to engage with parents in the language of their preference;
- Work with the Inclusion Services to effectively implement and monitor Individual Development Plans (IDP's) for all pupils aged 0-25 with Additional Learning Needs; and,
- Ensure effective alignment with the Promotion and Engagement Strategy, to inform parents of the support available for children and young people with additional learning needs throughout the secondary sector.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

- Regional working collaboration to continue supporting the demand for immersion and Welsh-medium education.
- Ensure that the Inclusion Service continues to offer a wide range of specialist services through the medium of Welsh within the primary sector.
- Continue to support schools with the development of Welsh language provision, and work more collaboratively with them to deliver against and ensure compliance with the ALN Code.

- Undertake a full review for Special Education Needs Resource Bases in both Welsh and English-medium schools.
- Ensure effective implementation of provision for ALN learners, securing growth and development.

Outcome 7

Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Workforce

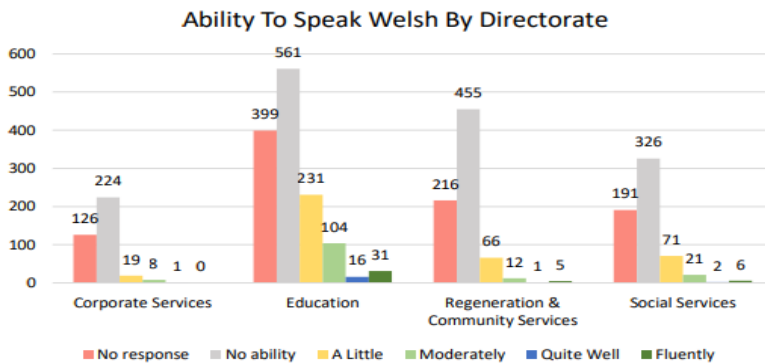
The number of employees who have Welsh language speaking skills as at 31st March 2021 (as per the [Welsh Language Annual Report 2020-21.pdf](#) ([blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](#))), amounts to 594 (19%) staff; these staff can speak ‘fluently’, ‘quite well’, ‘moderately’, or ‘a little’. However, just over half of the total number of staff declared that they have no Welsh speaking ability, which is a slight decrease compared with the last reporting period (2019-20). The number and percentage of staff that can understand, speak, write and read Welsh varies slightly between each comparator.

Figure 31 shows there is a total of 42 staff who declare fluency, with no significant change in comparison to the previous reporting period (43, 2019/20). The Education Directorate has the most fluent Welsh Speakers (31).

Figure 31 Fluent Welsh Speakers by Directorate and Contract Type

The following graphs and tables reflect the total number of Fluent Welsh Speakers by Directorate and Contract Type across the organisation.

Directorate	Ability to Speak Welsh						Total
	No response	No ability	A Little	Moderately	Quite Well	Fluently	
Corporate Services	126	224	19	8	1	0	378
Education	399	561	231	104	16	31	1,342
Regeneration & Community Services	216	455	66	12	1	5	755
Social Services	191	326	71	21	2	6	617



Education Workforce Capacity / Language Skills (Schools) (SWAC 2019 baseline)

Nearly all Blaenau Gwent schools at present, are English-medium schools. Staff with the highest levels of proficiency work in the Welsh-medium sector with the Welsh language skills of staff in English-medium schools requiring considerable development.

A number English-medium primary and secondary school practitioners identify as having no entry, or foundation level Welsh language skills. Very few identify as having higher language skills or as being proficient. **The 2019 School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) data has been reviewed and presented below, detailing the current skill levels throughout the English medium sector in Blaenau Gwent.**

English-Medium Primary Schools

Figure 32: Overview English-medium Education Staff Welsh Medium Skill Levels

No Skills	Entry Level	Foundation Level	Intermediate Level	Advanced Level	Proficient Level	The information was not obtained	Total
1	104	98	6	4	4	0	217
0.5%	48%	45%	3%	2%	2%	0.0%	99.5%

English-medium Secondary Schools

Figure 33: Overview English-medium Education Staff Welsh Medium Skill Levels

No Skills	Entry Level	Foundation Level	Intermediate Level	Advanced Level	Proficient Level	The information was not obtained	Total
52	15	6	2	0	7	0	82
63%	18%	7%	2%	0%	8%	0%	98%

Ability to Teach Through the Medium of Welsh

Very few staff working in Blaenau Gwent English-medium primary or secondary schools, are able to teach via the medium of Welsh.

Primary

Figure 34: Number of Staff able to Teach or Work Through the Medium of Welsh

Teaching / working through the medium of Welsh		
Can teach / work through the medium of Welsh	Total	Can teach / work through the medium of Welsh
27	228	12%

Secondary

Figure 35: Number of Staff able to Teach or Work Through the Medium of Welsh

Teaching / working through the medium of Welsh		
Can teach / work through the medium of Welsh	Total	Can teach / work through the medium of Welsh
3	82	4%

The role of the EAS in delivering and promoting Professional Learning for Welsh is to:

- Work with school leaders, cluster Professional Learning leads for Welsh and Welsh language coordinators to support accurate assessment of Welsh language needs in line with the Welsh Language Competence Framework and to identify cluster and school level training needs.
- Direct schools to a range of regional, online and Welsh for Adults training options in support of the development of the Welsh language.
- Collaborate with Welsh Government to identify Sabbatical training needs.
- Deliver language training, particularly to the English medium sector to support their ability to deliver of Welsh along the Welsh language continuum.
- Provide professional learning on the pedagogical and methodological approaches to teaching Welsh to support Welsh language acquisition and immersion.
- Work in partnership with schools to develop and share resources and planning in support of the delivery of Welsh.
- Provide networking opportunities to support delivery of key messaging and to enable the sharing of best practice in the delivery and development of Welsh.

Welsh Sabbatical Scheme Uptake Data

Figure 36: Schools Engaged with the Sabbatical Scheme (2018 -2021)

Year	Course Type	School
2018-19	Welsh in a Year	Cwm Primary School
2018-19	Welsh in a Year	Blaen y Cwm Primary School
2019-20	Welsh in a Year	Deighton Primary School
2020-21	Welsh in a Year	St Mary's Church in Wales Primary School
2020-21	Welsh in a Year	Abertillery Learning Community

All staff who have participated in the scheme are invited to participate in a Regional Sabbatical Network. Figure 37 below, highlights other courses beyond Welsh in a year, which Blaenau Gwent Schools have engaged with, along with the level at which they have engaged:

Figure 37 Blaenau Gwent School Engagement:

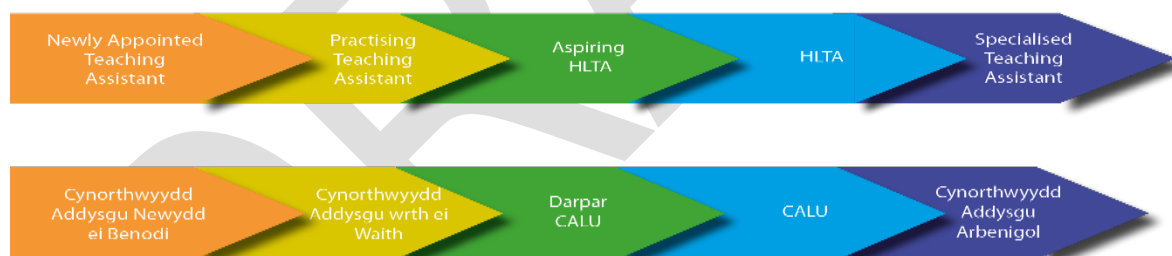
Academic Year	Level of Engagement	Schools Participated
2018-19	Mynediad / Entry level	Pen y Cwm
2018-19	Mynediad / Entry level	Pen y Cwm
2018-19	Mynediad / Entry level	Pen y Cwm
2018-19	Sylfaen / Foundation	Glyncoed
2018-19	Sylfaen / Foundation	Blaen y Cwm
2018-19	Sylfaen / Foundation	Sofrydd

The Education Achievement Service (EAS) support Welsh in a Year graduates post programme. Staff are supported to implement school and cluster level projects, including development of exemplification materials and approaches to the delivery of Curriculum for Wales, enabling practitioners to maintain their language skills, and develop their expertise. Participant are also encouraged to develop the language skills of colleagues, particularly TA's within their school and cluster.

The EAS will continue to recruit to the Sabbatical Scheme utilising SWAC data to support schools/cluster to identify needs and practitioners that would benefit from the programmes and lead on Welsh following their secondments.

The EAS are working with clusters to strategically plan for participation of teachers in the Welsh in a Year scheme. Each cluster has a strategic lead for Welsh, who is encouraged to identify suitable staff members to attend courses. They are also encouraged to work in partnership with Welsh in a Year graduates to share expertise across the cluster. All 4 clusters have at least one EAS Sabbatical Champion and part of their EAS defined brief is to support staff in their schools and clusters with professional learning in support of language development, sharing resources and pedagogical approaches.

All Welsh medium schools have access to support across the professional learning pathway. The EAS Professional Learning (PL) team working collaboratively with the cross regional Professional Learning group, with Welsh Government, **Education Workforce Council (EWC)**, **National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL)** and **Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)** to develop provision for all staff, including provision through the medium of Welsh, along the Professional learning pathway.

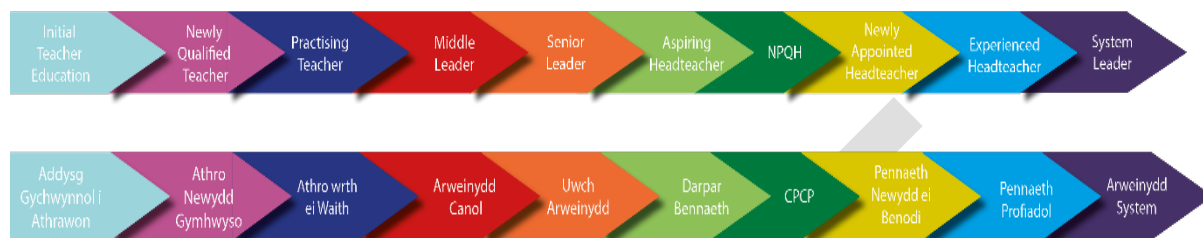


Delivery of National Professional Learning programmes to support progression of staff, including Welsh medium provision for Welsh medium schools, along the national professional learning pathway, thus supporting development of a skilled Welsh medium workforce and capacity for leadership. For example:

- Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway (TALP) - A fully bilingual National professional learning offer for Teaching Assistant TAS including: Induction for newly appointed TAs, Practising TA programme, Aspiring Higher Learning Teacher Assistants (HTLA) programme and HLTA assessment.
- Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) – National induction professional learning offer for NQTs, Induction Mentors and External Verifiers (fully bilingual offer)
- National Leadership Development Pathway – that includes a fully bilingual offer for MLDP (Middle leaders development programmes), Senior Leadership etc., Asping Headteacher development programme- preparation for National

Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), New & Acting Headteachers and Experienced Headteachers development programmes.

- Strategic Initial Teacher Education Partnership working with Higher Education Institutes (HIEs) to ensure Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students and NQTs have positive experiences of teaching in local Welsh medium schools to support local recruitment. e.g. EAS partnership for the primary phase with University South Wales.



The EAS support Welsh in a Year graduates to implement school and cluster level projects, including development of exemplification materials and approaches to the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales, enabling practitioners to maintain their language skills and develop their expertise.

EAS Staff

The EAS have a dedicated regional Welsh language team including:

- Lead for Languages Literacy and Communication
- Curriculum Partner Welsh and Literacy (1st language)
- Curriculum Partner Welsh in English medium and International Languages
- Associate Curriculum Partner, Welsh in English-medium (secondary)
- Associate Curriculum Partners, Welsh in English-medium (primary)

The EAS provides dedicated Welsh medium Challenge Adviser support to schools and draws headteachers from within the EAS and across regions to ensure Welsh medium expertise at both primary and secondary level. School to school support for the Welsh-medium sector is drawn from best practice within and across regions. There are individuals within the organisation that have Welsh language skills, including within the Professional Learning team, however, it is recognised that the wider workforce need to be supported to develop their language skills. Over the next 5 years, the EAS plan to develop and embed professional learning for Welsh (informal and formal as appropriate) as part of the EAS staff's professional learning entitlement.

Coleg Gwent Post 16 Provision:

Figure 38: Welsh language skills of Coleg Gwent academic staff (June 2021)

Fluent	Advanced	Intermediate	None
6 (1%)	14 (2%)	23 (4%)	553 (93%)

The number of staff with Welsh language skills at a level where they can confidently deliver curriculum in Welsh, is far below the levels we need in order to significantly expand our Welsh medium and bilingual curriculum offer. Historical and continuing issues around the recruitment of Welsh speaking lecturing staff with relevant subject specialism is also an issue within the SEWC region.

The College has had some success over the last few years in upskilling staff with basic Welsh skills, up to intermediate level (via Work Welsh and other Welsh for Adults provision), but this organic approach alone will not have a significant impact on Welsh medium delivery and the curriculum offer in the medium to long-term.

Childcare and Early Years

Mudiad Meithrin's Cam wrth Gam for Schools scheme is currently supporting pupils who are attending Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.

Mudiad Meithrin's Apprenticeship Scheme is also available to give individuals the opportunity to undertake a childcare qualification although, at present, there is no uptake within Blaenau Gwent.

Mudiad Merithrin Academi scheme aims to offer a wide range of development and training opportunities for all staff and volunteers that form part of the Mudiad Meithrin community. This training is provided in various formats, combining traditional face-to-face and online contact, enabling learners to study at times convenient to them.

Croesi'r Bont also introduces language immersion methodology within Cylchoedd Meithrin and securing linguistic transition from Cylchoedd to Welsh-medium schools.

School Workforce Needs

In line with the growth planned throughout the primary sector (including the seedling, immersion and SNRB developments), our current workforce needs assessment highlights that we will need to recruit an additional 32 staff to facilitate this provision. Project transition planning process are in place for each project, which including a human resource workstream, are in place in order to identify, programme and monitor key activities such as recruitment.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Blaenau Gwent Council

The Council plan to recruit a dedicated Welsh Language Support Officer in the Corporate team to oversee the Welsh Language Strategy and Action Plan, whilst ensuring alignment with the 10-year WESP.

Blaenau Gwent Council will continue to respond positively to the Welsh Language Standards, and is committed to meeting its duties under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. As a Council, there is recognition that there is still further work to be done around reinforcing the requirements and seeking to continually improve the quality and availability of services through the medium of Welsh.

As part of our work in the forthcoming year we intend to take forward the following key actions:

- Promotion of the use of Welsh in the workplace and increased training opportunities for staff; particularly staff who are key in supporting the upholding of our operational delivery standards;
- Continue to take forward our Welsh Language Internal Audit Action Plan, which includes key actions such as a review of our internal verification processes;

- Support the delivery of our policy making standards through the review and development of a new Integrated Impact Assessment, which will consider how we ensure the Welsh language is not treated less favourably.

Over the forthcoming period the Council aim to continue our progress, in relation to meeting our Welsh language duties, and make any necessary improvements to ensure we deliver the best possible services for our staff, residents, partners and stakeholders.

Childcare and Early Years

We will work with partners including RhAG and Mudiad Meithrin to **undertake** a skills analysis for staff within the early years and childcare sector, to plan and inform how the sector is able to contribute to the overarching target. Promoting training and development opportunities within the sector, to enhance and develop Welsh language skills.

Recruitment in the childcare sector in Blaenau Gwent has become challenging in the last 18 months. It is understood that this is a national issue, specifically in respect of Welsh medium practitioners. The EYCP Team will be working on plans to attract more people to undertake Childcare training at a local level. In addition, they will be working with Welsh Government and other Local Authorities, to consider what could be done on a national and regional level to support all childcare settings with the recruitment of high quality, well trained practitioners.

Teaching and Specialist Education Staff

Within the first 5 years of our plan, we aim work with key partners in order to undertake a workforce needs analysis, to ensure that we are able to effectively map, train and recruit staff to deliver against the priorities identified within this plan.

We **will** ensure that our Welsh-medium schools and provision are appropriately staffed, with suitably qualified **staff who are** able to deliver to the highest standard possible in terms of education. In addition, we aim to promote and develop opportunities for the education workforce to improve and develop their Welsh language skills.

The education workforce is ever changing. Therefore, we will work with key partners including the EAS to continue to provide and direct schools to a range of professional learning opportunities, supporting staff to maintain and develop skills. We will continue to recruit to the Sabbatical Scheme, utilising SWAC data to support schools/clusters, to identify training needs and practitioners that would benefit from the programmes and lead on Welsh following their secondments. Over the next 5 years, EAS are to develop and embed professional learning for Welsh (informal and formal as appropriate) as part of the EAS staff's professional learning entitlement. That staff make progress in their ability to speak Welsh in their roles.

We will support schools and clusters to grow, and capitalise on language expertise within the education system, including the support of Sabbatical Graduates who have undertaken the Welsh in a Year programme.

There is also a 2021/22 programme that has been launched in relation to the secondary postgraduate ITE programme enabling them to teach through the medium of Welsh and initial teacher education (ITE) providers in Wales.

In line with the Promotion and Engagement strategy, we will explore the development of resources to promote opportunities for training and employment in the education sector.

Develop Governor training and engagement programmes, to support awareness raising and shared accountability in successfully achieving the established vision, aims and targets set out within the WESP, whilst also securing effective training and recruitment processes.

Coleg Gwent

In the first 5 years, targets will be a 50% increase in the number of academic staff with fluent Welsh skills, and 50% increase in the number of academic staff with advanced level Welsh skills. These targets are as follows:

	Fluent	Advanced
5 Year Target:	9	21

This increase will enable the College to expand its current Welsh-medium and bilingual provision to other priority Welsh medium curriculum areas (as set by Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol).

The college will focus on the following areas in order to facilitate this increase:

- Continue to deliver the Work Welsh programme in Coleg Gwent with the primary aim of upskilling Intermediate level staff to Advanced level;
- Participate in the Sgiliaith mentoring scheme in order to support staff with Welsh medium and bilingual delivery;
- Seek opportunities to incentivise and attract Welsh speaking staff from all over the country; and,
- Look at options to relax PGCE requirements in some situations in order to attract more applicants. These individuals will be sponsored to complete our in-house PGCE in their first 2 years of employment.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

Blaenau Gwent Council

The Council will look to recruit a dedicated Welsh Language Support Officer in the Corporate team to oversee the Welsh Language Strategy and Action Plan, whilst also ensuring effective alignment with the 10-year WESP. Education also aim to increase the Education Transformation team's capacity over the next year, including a member of the team who would be dedicated to the WESP action plan.

Over the next 10 years, we will work with the EAS to develop and embed professional learning for Welsh (informal and formal as appropriate) as part of the EAS professional learning entitlement.

Blaenau Gwent has an increased education workforce able to teach and work via the medium of Welsh, whilst also increasing the number of staff able to teach Welsh as a subject.

Blaenau Gwent has an established workforce development plan, which enables the Council and its partners to secure appropriately qualified and experienced teaching and

other specialist school staff, to successfully deliver the curriculum via the medium of Welsh and bilingually, in achieving the Blaenau Gwent target for Year 1 pupils.

By the end of the 10-year plan, Coleg Gwent will aim to achieve a 100% increase in the number of both fluent and advanced Welsh speaking academic staff (from the current levels in June 2021). The 10-year targets are as follows:

	Fluent	Advanced
10 Year Target:	12	28

This increase will enable the college to offer Welsh medium and bilingual modules in all curriculum priority areas as set by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. The priority areas are as follows:

- Childcare
- Health & Social Care
- Public Services
- Sports
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Land based
- Business, IT and Media

The actions identified in order to achieve the 5-year targets will be extended into the second phase to support the progress against Coleg Gwent's 10-year targets.

Increasing the number of staff able to deliver in Welsh is critical if we are to meet our ambitious targets for increasing Welsh medium and bilingual provision in the college.

How we will work with others to achieve our vision

The Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Forum (WEF) will be the strategic driving force behind the 10-year WESP. The purpose of the WEF is to contribute towards strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of Blaenau Gwent 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The WEF will meet on a termly basis, with dedicated sub-groups taking place in and around meetings, to focus on specific themes.

The Forum provide a formal channel of communication between key partners and stakeholders, who work collectively towards achieving the vision, aims, objectives strategic priorities and targets set out within the plan.

The Forum act as a consultative group, contributing towards the development, monitoring and implementation of the WESP by:

- contributing towards the development of, and monitoring the WESP;
- monitoring Welsh medium demand, along with the uptake and provision of Welsh-medium education, determining as a group key strategic priorities; and,
- supporting the development of an annual report to the Welsh Government describing progress in terms of implementing the WESP's targets against the approved timetable.

In addition, WESP progress reports are taken via the Council's political processes annually. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is also a key focus of the 21st Century Schools Programme Board and Admissions Forum, with updates reported accordingly.

WEF Membership
Executive Member for Education
BGCBC Education Transformation and Business Change Services
Coleg Gwent
Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG) – Parents for Welsh Medium Education
BGCBC Early Years Childcare and Play team
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw
Education Achievement Service
BGCBC School Improvement and Inclusion Services
BGCBC Youth Service
Headteacher - Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg
BGCBC Organisational Development
Mudiad Meithrin
BGCBC Policy and Partnerships team
BGCBC Transport team
Menter Iaith
Urdd Gobiath Cymru
Welsh Government - Welsh Language Division
BGCBC Corporate Communications
Public Health Wales and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
English-medium Headteacher

Consultation Information

The statutory consultation period will run from Friday 5th November 2021 for 8 weeks, concluding on Monday 3rd January 2022. Please ensure to provide your feedback and responses prior to the closure of the consultation.

A copy of the draft WESP is available to download at the bottom of this page.

You can give your views on the draft WESP by either completing the questionnaire (link below) or by contacting us via one of the following:

Survey: <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/179rj>

Email: 21centuryschool@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Mail: 21st Century Schools, Education Department, Anvil Court, Abertillery, Blaenau Gwent. NP13 3DB.

All forms of communication and/or questionnaires must be completed by Monday 3rd January 2022 at 12pm.

What happens next?

At the end of the consultation period, all responses received will inform any updates and/or changes that need to be made to the plan. In January 2022, the plan will be taken via the Council's Executive Committee for, prior to being submitted to Welsh Ministers for consideration and approval by 31st January 2022.

Following submission of the plan, Welsh Ministers may:

- approve the plan as submitted,
- approve the plan with modifications, or
- reject the plan and prepare another plan which will then be treated as the authority's approved plan.

The approved plan will run from September 2022 until August 2032.

For queries email 21centuryschools@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk or call 01495 357704

DRAFT

Pwyllgor: **Pwyllgor Gweithredol**
 Dyddiad y cyfarfod: **Dydd Mercher 2 Mawrth 2022**
 Pwnc yr Adroddiad: **Drafft Adroddiad Ymgynghori Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mllynedd Blaenau Gwent**
 Deiliad Portffolio: **Portffolio Addysg a Dysgu – Cyng. Joanne Collins**
 Cyflwynir yr **Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg – Lynn Phillips**
 Adroddiad gan: **Rheolwr Gwasanaeth Trawsnewid Addysg a Newid Busnes – Claire Gardner**

Llwybr Adrodd								
Tim Rheoli Cyfarwyddiaeth	Tim Arweinyddiaeth Gorfforaethol	Deiliad Portffolio/Cadeirydd	Pwyllgor Archwilio	Pwyllgor Gwas. Democrataidd	Pwyllgor Craffu	Pwyllgor Gweithredol	Cyngor	Arall (noder)
11.02.22	14.02.22	15.02.22				2.03.22		

1. Diben yr Adroddiad

Diben yr adroddiad yw rhoi trosolwg i'r Pwyllgor Gweithredol o ddrafft Gynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mllynedd Blaenau Gwent, gan roi barn, sylwadau ac ymatebion yn unol â'r broses ymgynghori.

2. Cwmpas a Chefnidir

2.1 Mae Adran 84 Deddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013 yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i bob Cyngor baratoi Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg (WESP). Diben y cynllun hwn yw nodi dull gweithredu strategol a chyfeiriad y Cyngor ar gyfer datblygu a chyflenwi darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg ac addysg Gymraeg.

2.2 Cynllun 10-mllynedd Blaenau Gwent

Yn 2017, cynhaliodd Llywodraeth Cymru adolygiad cyflym o gynlluniau arfaethedig awdurdodau lleol. Cydnabu'r adolygiad yr angen am newid, nid yn unig yn nhermau uchelgeisiau cynlluniau unigol, ond hefyd o ran y fframwaith ddeddfwriaethol a nodwyd gan Lywodraeth Cymru. Dangosodd yr adolygiad angen i newid y rheoliadau a'r canllawiau, ynghyd â newid sylweddol yn nulliau gweithredu Llywodraeth Cymru ac awdurdodau lleol ynghylch cynllunio. Fel canlyniad, adolygodd Llywodraeth Cymru y fframwaith ddeddfwriaethol yn gysylltiedig gyda'r WESP, gyda'r ffocws allweddol ar greu fframwaith sy'n galluogi awdurdodau lleol i ddatblygu cynlluniau strategol hirdymor.

2.3 Cyn pandemig COVID-19, roedd Llywodraeth Cymru yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i awdurdodau lleol gyflwyno drafft cyntaf eu cynllun 10-mllynedd i Weinidogion Cymru erbyn 31 Ionawr 2021; fodd bynnag, oherwydd y pandemig a'r gofynion ymateb argyfwng, cafodd yr amserlen cyflwyno ei diweddarau. Yn dilyn y cyfnod drafftio a'r ymgynghoriad dilynol, cyflwynwyd Rheoliadau Cynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg (Cymru) 2019, ynghyd â drafft ganllawiau ar 5 Rhagfyr 2019 a daethant i rym ar 1 Ionawr 2020. Roedd gofyn i awdurdodau lleol gyflwyno drafft cyntaf eu cynllun deng mlynedd i Weinidogion Cymru ar 31 Ionawr 2022, gyda'r cynllun i fod yn weithredol o fis Medi 2022. Bydd WESP cyfredol Llywodraeth Cymru yn parhau mewn grym

tan y diwrnod hwnnw.

2.4 Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn disgwyl i gynlluniau 10-mllynedd awdurdodau lleol gynnwys y dilynol:

- Gweledigaeth glir a chryno yn seiliedig ar y targed a gytunwyd;
- Proffil addysg lleol (nifer dysgwyr oedran ysgol, nifer yr ysgolion ym mhob categori, a nifer y dysgwyr o fewn pob categori ysgol);
- Data allweddol ar gyfer pob deiliant (llynell sylfaen bresennol ac amcanestyniadau)
- Unrhyw gynlluniau neu ffactorau lefel uchel sy'n effeithio ar addysg yn y sir;
- Nodau ac amcanion clir dan y 7 deiliant;
- Cysylltiad clir rhwng sut mae pob agwedd o'r cynllun yn cyfrannu at y weledigaeth a'r prif darged; a
- Chysylltiad clir rhwng y cynllun a strategaethau a meysydd polisi perthnasol eraill awdurdodau lleol.

2.5 Gweledigaeth Cyngor Blaenau Gwent ar gyfer addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yw:
“Adeiladu ar y cynnydd cryf a wnaed hyd yma drwy greu system addysg gynaliadwy sy'n cynyddu'r ddarpariaeth, y galw a'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg; creu dinasyddion medrus ac wedi eu grymuso sy'n falch i fyw a gweithio o fewn a hefyd tu allan i Gymru’.

2.6 Nod strategol hyn fydd creu:
Cymuned sy'n cofleidio'r iaith Gymraeg a'i diwylliant yn hyderus a gyda balchder.

2.7 Byddwn yn anelu i gyflawni ein gweledigaeth drwy hyrwyddo, datblygu a chyfoethogi darpariaeth a gwasanaethau Cymraeg. Gwnawn hynny drwy gydweithio'n agos gyda'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, ynghyd â phartneriaid strategol allweddol eraill yn cynnwys Llywodraeth Cymru ac awdurdodau lleol eraill. Mae ein hamcanion strategol yn cynnwys:

- Codi proffil addysg Gymraeg ynghyd â manteision bod yn ddwyieithog;
- Creu sefydliadau dysgu ansawdd uchel ffyniannus sy'n cefnogi ymgysylltu effeithlon rhwng disgyblion, staff, y gymuned a phartneriaid;
- Cefnogi integreiddio gwasanaethau a chreu profiad cynnwys trochi ar gyfer dysgwyr;
- Sicrhau gwella gwaith rhwng ysgolion a phartneriaeth, gan hwyluso defnydd a datblygiad ehangach o'r Gymraeg;
- Creu gweithlu medrus a chynaliadwy, sy'n ymroddedig i ddatblygiad proffesiynol parhaus;
- Sicrhau amgylcheddau addysgu a dysgu cynhwysol a chyfleoedd i bob dysgwr; a
- Gwella cyfleoedd dilyniant drwy adolygu a gweithredu cwricwlwm sydd wedi ei alinio'n gadarn i addysg bellach ac addysg uwch.

2.8 Bydd y Cyngor yn anelu i gyflawni'r deilliannau dilynol a nodir gan Lywodraeth Cymru, sy'n adlewyrchu taith addysg y dysgwr ac sy'n gydnaws gyda meysydd polisi Cymraeg 2050 ac Addysg yng Nghymru: Ein Cenhadaeth

Genedlaethol:

- Deilliant 1 – Mwy o blant meithrin/tair oed yn cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.
- Deilliant 2 – Mwy o blant dosbarth derbyn/pump oed yn cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.
- Deilliant 3 – Mwy o blant yn parhau i wella eu sgiliau Cymraeg wrth drosglwyddo o un cyfnod o'u haddysg statudol i un arall.
- Deilliant 4 - Mwy o ddysgwyr yn astudio ar gyfer cymwysterau Cymraeg (fel pwnc) a phynciau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.
- Deilliant 5 - Mwy o gyfleoedd i ddysgwyr ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg mewn cyd destunau gwahanol yn yr ysgol.
- Deilliant 6 – Cynnydd yn y ddarpariaeth addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg i ddisgyblion ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol (ADY) yn unol â'r dyletswyddau a bennir gan y Ddeddf Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru) 2018.
- Deilliant 7 – Cynnydd yn nifer y staff sy'n gallu addysgu Cymraeg (fel pwnc) a thrwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

2.9 Er mwyn sicrhau ein bod yn cyflawni'r weledigaeth ac amcanion a nodir uchod, mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent yn ymroddedig i weithio tuag at darged uchelgeisiol Llywodraeth Cymru, i gynyddu cohort Blwyddyn 1 a addysgir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg i 75 o ddisgyblion. O gymharu gyda data llinell sylfaen 2019/20 a ddefnyddir gan Lywodraeth Cymru, byddai hyn yn gyfartal â 10% (cynnydd o 6 pwynt canran) yng nghyfanswm y cohort Blwyddyn 1 a addysgir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg erbyn 2032.

2.10 Sefydlodd y tîm Trawsnewid Addysg gynllun/strategaeth ymgysylltu i sicrhau fod rhanddeiliaid a phartneriaid allweddol yn cyfrannu'n effeithlon at ac yn llywio datblygiad y cynllun 10-mllynedd. Roedd hyn yn cynnwys:

- Datblygu ac adolygu map rhanddeiliaid ac ymgysylltu yn rheolaidd
- Cynnal sesiynau ystyried gydag aelodau'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg a phartneriaid allweddol, gyda'r nod o adolygu datblygiad a gweithredu Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent (2017-2020) yn cynnwys gwerthusiad o: deiliannau, llwyddiannau, targedau, rhwystrau, heriau, cyfleoedd dilyniant, partneriaid/rhanddeiliaid a data
- Sefydlu is-grŵp i'r Fforwm i gytuno ar amserlen a dull llunio ac adolygu'r cynllun 10-mllynedd, gan hefyd fonitro cynnydd yn gysylltiedig â'i ddatblygu
- Gweithio gydag awdurdodau cyfagos drwy Grŵp Cynllunio Rhanbarthol y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg a Lleoedd Ysgol a Galw Ysgolion i sicrhau aliniad gan hefyd yn dynodi a manteisio ar gyfleoedd.

2.11 Gan weithio'n agos gyda Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent ynghyd â rhanddeiliaid allweddol eraill e.e. Iechyd ac Awdurdodau cyfagos, fe wnaeth y tîm Trawsnewid Addysg gynhyrchu drafft Gynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mllynedd. Datblygwyd y ddogfen yn unol â rheoliadau a chanllawiau Llywodraeth Cymru. Fe wnaeth y tîm wedyn ddechrau proses ymgynghori ffurfiol, lle cyhoeddwyd y ddogfen i'r holl ymgynghoreion a ddynodwyd o fewn Canllawiau Llywodraeth Cymru ar Gynlluniau Strategol

Cymraeg mewn Addysg, oedd hefyd ar gael ar wefan y Cyngor. Lluniwyd cynllun Cyfathrebu, oedd yn cynnwys Cyfathrebu Corfforaethol yn hyrwyddo'r ymgynghoriad yn rheolaidd drwy dudalennau cyfryngau cymdeithasol y Cyngor ac Addysg yn gwneud hynny drwy ysgolion a phartneriaid allweddol. Dechreuodd y cyfnod ymgynghori ddydd Gwener 5 Tachwedd 2021 a daeth i ben ddydd Llun 3 Ionawr 2022.

2.12 **Canlyniad yr Ymgynghoriad**

Roedd canlyniad y prosesau ymgynghori yn dangos yr ymgysylltu effeithlon gan y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg a hefyd y tîm Trawsnewid Addysg, wrth sicrhau fod barn rhanddeiliaid yn cael eu dangos a'u cynnwys yn y drafft terfynol. Yn ystod y broses ymgynghori 8-wythnos:

- Derbyniwyd 6 ymateb ysgrifenedig, yn cynnwys un hwyr (mwy o wybodaeth yn **Atodiad 1**)
- 6 ymateb i'r arolwg, gyda 5 ohonynt yn gryf o blaid y cynllun (mwy o wybodaeth yn **Atodiad 2**).

2.13 Cyfeiriodd nifer o ymatebwyr at y cynnydd cadarnhaol a wnaed hyd yma, gan hefyd gydnabod ymrwymiad y Cyngor yn unol â datbglygiad a thwf Addysg Gymraeg a hefyd yr iaith Gymraeg. Cafodd pob ymateb eu hystyried, yn cynnwys meysydd lle awgrymodd ymgynghoreion y gellid cryfhau'r drafft gynllun, a chafodd y ddogfen ei diweddarau yn unol â hynny (gweler **Atodiad 3** – gydag ychwanegiadau yn dilyn yr ymgynghoriad mewn coch). Mae Addysg, ynghyd â'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, hefyd yn bwriadu rhoi ystyriaeth i'r sylwadsau yn unol â datblygu cynllun cyflenwi'r Fforwrwm.

2.14 Cyflwynwyd y ddrafft ddogfen ddydd Llun 31 Mawrth i Lywodraeth Cymru, yn amodol ar gymeradwyaeth y Pwyllgor Gweithredol. Cyflwynir y fersiwn terfynol ym mis Mawrth ar ôl i'r Pwyllgor Gweithredol ei hystyried.

3. **Opsionau ar gyfer Argymhelliad**

3.1 **Opsion 1:** Y Pwyllgor Gweithredol yn derbyn y drafft WESP 10-mlynedd; neu

3.2 **Opsion 2:** Y Pwyllgor Gweithredol yn ystyried sylwadau a/neu ddiwygiadau i'r WESP 10-mlynedd.

4. **Tystiolaeth o sut mae'r pwnc hwn yn cefnogi cyflawni'r Cynllun Corfforaethol / Cyfrifoldebau Statudol / Cynllun Llesiant Blaenau Gwent**

4.1 Mae'n ddyletswydd statudol ar y Cyngor i gynhyrchu dogfen WESP yn unol ag Adran 84 Deddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013. I gael mwy o wybodaeth, gweler y cyd-destun strategol a nodir yn y cynllun (Tudalen 3 a 4 **Atodiad 1**).

4.2 Mae'r WESP yn ganolog wrth sicrhau mynediad parhaus i a datblygiad y Gymraeg yn unol gyda nod Llywodraeth Cymru o filiwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050. Mae Addysg hefyd yn cyfrannu'n sylweddol at Gynllun Llesiant Blaenau Gwent gan fod Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol (Cymru) 2015

yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i gyrff cyhoeddus weithio tuag at saith nod llesiant, gyda 'Cymru â diwylliant bywiog lle mae'r Gymraeg yn ffynnu' yn un ohonynt. Mae'n ddyletswydd ar y Cyngor i hyrwyddo a hwyluso'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg a gweithio tuag at y nodau llesiant. Mae gan y broses ar gyfer cynllunio addysg cyfrwng Gymraeg hefyd sail statudol dan Adran 84 Deddf 2013.

5. **Goblygiadau pob Opsiwn**

5.1 **Effaith ar y Gyllideb (effaith tymor byr a thymor hir)**

Yn unol â gweithrediad effeithlon WESP Blaenau Gwent, byddwn yn anelu i gyflwyno cyfres o brosiectau i hybu darpariaeth addysg cyfrwng Gymraeg. Un cynnig o'r fath yw'r ysgol gynradd Gymraeg newydd 210 lle y bwriedir ei gweithredu o dymor yr Hydref 2023. Cafodd cyllid cyfalaf ar gyfer y prosiect hwn (ar gyfradd ymyriad o 100%) ei sicrhau drwy Grant Cyfalaf Cyfrwng Gymraeg Llywodraeth Cymru. Yn ychwanegol mae'r Pwyllgor Gweithredol wedi cymeradwyo'r cyllid refeniw i gefnogi gweithrediad.

Ceisir cyllid cyfalaf ar gyfer cynlluniau'r dyfodol drwy Grant Cyfalaf Cyfrwng Gymraeg Llywodraeth Cymru a/neu Raglen Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif. Bydd hefyd oblygiadau refeniw ar gyfer cynigion prosiect y dyfodol. Byddwn yn gwneud cais am gyllid refeniw tymor byr ar gyfer y cynigion hyn drwy Lywodraeth Cymru. Os na fydd cyllid refeniw ar gael, caiff unrhyw gostau refeniw ychwanegol (tymor byr a thymor hir) eu sicrhau o Gyllideb Ysgolion Unigol. Rhoddir adroddiad ar gynigion drwy brosesau gwleidyddol y Cyngor yn unol â gwahoddiadau ar gyfer cyflwyno pob achos busnes.

5.2 **Risg yn cynnwys camau lliniaru**

Mae'r goblygiadau dilynol yn berthnasol i'r Cynllun Strategol Gymraeg mewn Addysg:

- Methiant i gyflawni'r deilliannau a thargedau a sefydlwyd o fewn y cynllun – caiff hyn ei liniaru gan y trefniadau monitro helaeth sydd ar waith. Mae'r tîm Trawsnewid Addysg yn adolygu cynnydd yn fisol, a rhoddir adroddiad i'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg bob tymor, aiff drwy brosesau gwleidyddol y Cyngor a rhoddir adroddiad yn flynyddol i Lywodraeth Cymru.
- Cydymffurfiaeth gyda dyletswydd statudol a goblygiadau deddfwriaethol – caiff hyn ei reoli yn unol ag adolygiad polisi ac arweiniad a datblygiadau ynghyd ag adnewyddu'r WESP ac adroddiadau blynyddol.
- Materion cynaliadwyedd o fewn y stad ysgolion yng nghyswllt addysg cyfrwng Gymraeg – caiff hyn ei reoli a'i liniaru gan ymgyrchoedd hyrwyddo blynyddol, asesiadau seiliedig ar alw, capasiti ysgolion ac amcanestyniadau. Mae'r model egin a gynigir hefyd yn rhoi cyfle i fynd i'r afael â galw cudd, gan hybu twf pellach.

5.3 **Cyfreithiol**

Nid oes unrhyw oblygiadau cyfreithiol uniongyrchol yn gysylltiedig gyda'r adroddiad hwn.

5.4 **Adnoddau Dynol**

Nid oes unrhyw oblygiadau cyfreithiol uniongyrchol yn gysylltiedig gyda'r adroddiad hwn.

6. Tystiolaeth Gefnogi

6.1 Gwybodaeth Perfformiad a Data

Fe adolygodd y tîm Trawsnewid Addysg y cynnydd yn unol â'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg presennol (2017-2020), ac adroddwyd canlyniad hynny drwy brosesau gwleidyddol y Cyngor ym mis Rhagfyr 2020. Roedd hunanasesiad 2019/20 Blaenau Gwent yn seiliedig ar gynnydd allweddol yn unol â phob maes blaenoriaeth. Roedd yr hunanasesiad yn Oren, gyda'r gyfradd cwblhau ar gynllun gweithredu 2019/20 fel sy'n dilyn:

- 84% (neu 49 cam gweithredu) wedi eu cwblhau;
- 7% (neu 4 cam gweithredu) ar y gweill; a
- 9% (5 cam gweithredu) yn cael eu datblygu.

6.2 Canlyniad a ddisgwylir i'r cyhoedd

Mae'r WESP yn anelu i sicrhau, hwyluso, datblygu a gwella addysg Gymraeg, ynghyd â mynediad i ddarpariaeth gysylltiedig yn lleol.

6.3 Ymgynghoriad (ymgyngori, ymgysylltu, cyfranogiad)

Mae anghenion ac ymgysylltu rhanddeiliaid a defnyddwyr yn hollbwysig, ac fel ffocws allweddol o'r WESP, ei weithredu a'i fonitro. Mae'r cynllun yn destun ymgynghoriad yn ystod y cyfnod cynhyrchu a chaiff ei adolygu'n flynyddol. Yn ychwanegol, defnyddir prosesau ymgynghori cyhoeddus a phartner i lywio datblygu, cynnydd a dysgu yn gysylltiedig â chyflenwi'r cynllun.

6.4 Meddwl am yr hirdymor (blaengynllunio)

Mae gan y WESP ddull gweithredu strategol ac mae'n sylfaen i gyfeiriad a chyflenwi darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg ac addysg ym Mlaenau Gwent dros y 10 mlynedd nesaf.

6.5 Ffocws ataliol

Nod WESP yw sefydlu targedau clir, llunio, hysbysu a gwella cyflenwi darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg ac addysg. Mae'r cynllun hefyd yn mynd i'r afael â materion a bylchau sy'n bodoli, gan wella darpariaeth, ymgysylltu a chydlyniaeth.

6.6 Cydweithio/Gweithio Partneriaeth

Mae Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent angen dull cydweithio o ran datblygu, gweithredu, monitro a chynnydd. Caiff hyn ei gynnal drwy'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg sydd â chynrychiolaeth eang o sefydliadau partner a grwpiau rhanddeiliaid, a chaiff ei warantu drwy brosesau gwleidyddol y Cyngor ac adroddiadau i Lywodraeth Cymru.

6.7 Integreiddio (ar draws meysydd gwasanaeth)

Mae Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent wedi'i alinio gyda gofal plant, addysg a chwarae blynyddoedd cynnar; cynllunio lleoedd disgyblion, trefniadaeth ysgolion, Ysgolion y 21ain Ganrif a gwaith y

Cyfarwyddiaethau Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol ac Amgylchedd ac Adfywio. Mae integreiddio gwasanaeth yn hanfodol i sicrhau gweithrediad effeithlon tra hefyd yn sicrhau mynediad priodol i addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg a darpariaeth gysylltiedig. Caiff y cynllun ei fonitro gan y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg ac mae hefyd yn bwydo i fforymau allweddol eraill h.y. Derbyn i Ysgolion, Bwrdd Rhaglen Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif ac yn y blaen.

6.8 **Datgarboneiddio a Gostwng Allyriadau Carbon**

Caiff unrhyw waith ffisegol a gynlluniwyd ac a gynhaliwyd o fewn gosodiadau addysg eu cynllunio er mwyn rhoi ystyriaeth i ddatgarboneiddio a gostwng allyriadau carbon.

6.8.1 Ar 2 Tachwedd 2021 cyhoeddodd Jeremy Miles, Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg, y bydd angen i bob adeilad ysgol a choleg newydd, gwaith adnewyddu mawr a phrosiectau ehangu, gyrraedd targedau Carbon Sero Net o 1 Ionawr 2022. Mae'r Cyngor yn ymroddedig i ac wedi dechrau gweithio gyda Llywodraeth Cymru i gynllunio rhoi'r agenda yma ar waith.

6.9a **Asesiad Effaith Dyletswydd Economaidd-Gymdeithasol**

Cynhelir Asesiad o'r Effaith Dyletswydd Economaidd-Gymdeithasol ar ddrafft terfynol y cynllun cyn ei gymeradwyo. Ar ôl cynnal asesiad o'r drafft, mae'r effaith gyffredinol yn niwtral. Mae WESP yn anelu i wella mynediad cyfartal i addysg Gymraeg.

6.9b. **Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb**

Cynhaliwyd Asesiad Sgrinio Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb yn unol gyda'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg, a benderfynodd nad oes unrhyw effaith negyddol ar y nodweddion gwarchoddedig. Cynhelir sgrinio ac asesiadau effaith hefyd yn unol â phob prosiect yn gysylltiedig gyda'r WESP.

7. **Trefniadau Monitro**

7.1 Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn disgwyl diweddariad blynyddol ar y cynnydd ar y WESP. Felly, mae'r tîm Trawsnewid Addysg yn adolygu ac yn monitro'r WESP yn fisol, gan roi adroddiadau bob tymor i'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg ac adroddiadau blynyddol i Lywodraeth Cymru. Yn ychwanegol, aiff adroddiadau datblygu a chynnydd y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg drwy brosesau gwleidyddol y Cyngor yn flynyddol. Mae'r WESP hefyd yn ffocws allweddol o Fwrdd a Fforwm Derbyn Rhaglen Ysgolion y 21ain Ganrif.

Dogfennau Cefndir/Dolenni Electronig

Atodiad 1 – Ymatebion Ysgrifenedig

Atodiad 2 – Ymatebion i'r Arolwg

Atodiad 3 - Drafft Gynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent

This page is intentionally left blank

Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg 5 Tachwedd 2021 – 3 Ionawr 2022

Rhif	Enw a Manylion Cyswllt	Disgrifiad o'r Ohebiaeth
1.	<p>Gan: Ymateb PACEY Cymru</p> <p>Anfonwyd: 03 Rhagryf 2021 16:26</p>	<p>Ymateb PACEY Cymru</p> <p>Deilliant 1 Mae PACEY Cymru yn cytuno'n gryf ei bod yn bwysig cryfhau ac ehangu darpariaeth gofal plant drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Mae'n bwysig cydnabod fod gan y penderfyniadau a wnaiff teuluoedd am iaith yng nghyswllt gofal plant cyn addysg gynnar hefyd rôl bwysig wrth gefnogi'r daith tuag at addysg ddwyieithog/cyfrwng Cymraeg. Mae'r daith hon yn dechrau cyn addysg nas cynhelir a gyllidir ac mae'n cynnwys ystod ehangach o ddarpariaeth tebyg i ofalwyr plant cofrestredig.</p> <p>Mae PACEY Cymru yn croesawu'r hyfforddiant sydd ar gael ar gyfer gofal plant, blynyddoedd chwarae a safleoedd chwarae ac yn gweithio gyda partneriaid Cwllwm i hyrwyddo hyfforddiant Camau drwy'r Ganolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol i gynyddu'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg o fewn gofal plant, blynyddoedd cynnar a safleoedd chwarae. Mae peth gwybodaeth ar ein gwefan am waith PACEY Cymru i gefnogi datblygu'r Gymraeg a hyrwyddo Camau, byddem yn hapus i roi mwy o wybodaeth am ein gwaith yn gysylltiedig â hyn.</p> <p>Mae PACEY Cymru yn gweithio ar hyn o bryd gydag awdurdodau lleol a phartneriaid i hyrwyddo gofal plant fel gyrfarfa ac i gefnogi recriwtio i'r sector, mae mwy o wybodaeth am hyn ar ein gwefan yn Awdurdodau Lleol yng Nghymru.</p> <p>Deilliant 3 Mae PACEY Cymru yn deall fod y prif ystyriaethau o fewn y deilliant hwn yn ymwneud ag addysg a gynhelir, fodd bynnag mae rhai o'r negeseuon allweddol yn berthnasol i gefnogi'r rhai sy'n gweithio mewn gofal plant, blynyddoedd cynnar a chwarae. Er enghraifft, pwysigrwydd cynyddu sgiliau'r gweithlu, a amlygir yn ein hymateb dan deilliant 1. Mae hyn ar gael drwy Camau ar gyfer y sector gofal plant, blynyddoedd cynnar a chwarae. Hefyd, lle mae cyfeiriadau at bwysigrwydd cysylltiadau cyfathrebu da rhwng ysgolion, mae hyn yr un mor bwysig i gefnogi'r pontio cynharach rhwng gofal plant a safleoedd blynyddoedd cynnar a rhwng safleoedd a ysgolion, gall fod yn fuddiol cynnwys y pontio hyn naill ai o fewn y deilliant hwn neu ei gynnwys o fewn deilliant 1.</p> <p>Deilliant 4 Mae PACEY Cymru yn croesawu cydnabyddiaeth pwysigrwydd gweithio gydag ysgolion a cholegau i gefnogi hygyrchedd cyrsiau Cymraeg a dwyieithog a fydd yn rhoi cefnogaeth bellach i strategaeth Cymraeg 2050. Er enghraifft, gallai argaeledd cymwysterau gofal plant a hyfforddiant drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog o fewn yr ardal leol helpu i fynd i'r afael â'r angen am fwy o siaradwyr Cymraeg o fewn y sector gofal plant, blynyddoedd cynnar a chwarae, a allai yn ei dro gefnogi amcanion deilliant 1.</p>

2.

**Mudiad
Meithrin**
17.12.21

Ymateb Mudiad Meithrin i Gynllun Strategol y Gymraeg Mewn Addysg 2022-2032
Cyngor Sir Blaenau Gwent

Gwerthfawroga Mudiad Meithrin y cyfle i ymateb i ymgynghoriad Cyngor Sir Blaenau Gwent ar Gynllun Strategol y Gymraeg Mewn Addysg 2022-2027

Gweledigaeth Mudiad Meithrin yw dylai bob plentyn yng Nghymru gael y cyfle i chwarae, dysgu a thyfu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Ble bynnag mae 'na blant bach yng Nghymru, yna dylai Mudiad Meithrin (ac felly'r Gymraeg) hefyd fod yn bresennol.

Rydym wedi myfyrio ar y Cynllun Addysg a pharatowyd gan Gyngor Sir Blaenau Gwent am y deng mlynedd nesaf (2022-2032) a hoffem wneud y sylwadau canlynol:

1. Rydym yn cytuno â'ch amcanion ac rydym am eich cefnogi i gyflawni'r rhain.
2. Rydym yn gwerthfawrogi'r gwaith a wnaed yn ystod y cynllun diwethaf mewn partneriaeth â rhanddeiliaid allweddol i ddatblygu cynllun cyfathrebu marchnata cryf ac edrychwn ymlaen at barhau â'r gwaith hwn.
3. Rydym yn croesawu'r cyfle i weithio gyda chi ymhellach i ddatblygu lleoliadau gofal plant, Cylchoedd meithrin a Ti a Fi, ledled Blaenau Gwent sy'n gyfleus i deuluoedd ac yn eu cymuned leol i sicrhau bod gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg yn hygyrch i bawb.
4. Mae'n werth nodi yma bwysigrwydd gweithio gyda'r Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol a'r Ymwelwyr Iechyd yn ogystal â swyddogion sydd â chysylltiad uniongyrchol â theuluoedd.

Deilliant 1

- Diolch am ddarparu data manwl gyda sefyllfa bresennol y lleoedd gofal plant a meithrin sydd ar gael ym Mlaenau Gwent.
- Byddai'n ddefnyddiol egluro ystyr y term lleoliad gofal plant dwyieithog fel bod rhieni'n glir pan fyddant yn gwneud dewis beth mae hyn yn ei olygu.
- Er mwyn helpu i ddarparu cyfleoedd i deuluoedd allu dewis gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg yn agos at eu cartref, mae angen ystyried darparu lleoedd Dechrau'n Deg Cyfrwng Cymraeg ym mhob rhan o'r sir, yn enwedig os oes sesiynau bore a phrynhawn yn rhedeg mewn lleoliad lle gallai un o'r sesiynau hyn fod yn un Cyfrwng Cymraeg neu fabwysiadu'r model a sefydlwyd yn y sir drwy gefnogi grwpiau drwy brosiect Croesi'r Bont.
- Rydym yn falch bod ysgol Gynradd Cyfrwng Cymraeg yn agor yn Nhredegar gan bod Mudiad Meithrin gyda cynlluniau i ddatblygu Cylch Meithrin newydd drwy Brosiect Sefydlu a Llwyddo Llywodraeth Cymru i ennyn diddordeb cyn i'r ysgol agor. Bydd plant o'r cylch meithrin yn gallu bwydo'n uniongyrchol i'r ysgol.
- Rydym yn croesawu'r cyfle i weithio gyda chi i sefydlu'r 2 leoliad gofal plant newydd a gynlluniwyd.
- Mae'n anodd/broblemus i gynnwys cyfanswm y llefydd mewn lleoliadau nas cynhelir a Dechrau'n Deg yn rhan o'r cyfanswm llefydd sydd ar gael i blant oed meithrin, gan fydd canran o'r rhain yn cael eu llenwi gan Dechrau'n Deg neu blant sy'n talu ffioedd i fynychu. Byddai'n werth ystyried cynnwys eglurhad.
- Mudiad Meithrin yn croesawu'r cyfleoedd i weithio gyda'r awdurdod lleol a phartneriaid eraill ar waith hyrwyddo a byddai'n hapus i rannu gwaith a wnaed eisoes drwy siarad â rhieni Podlediadau 'Baby Steps to Welsh' yn ogystal ag adnoddau eraill fel y fideo 'Beth yw Cylch Meithrin? Beth yw Cylch Meithrin?' ac adnoddau ar gael ar wefan Mudiad Meithrin a sianel You Tube. Byddai hefyd yn fuddiol hyrwyddo'r gwaith a wneir drwy Glwb Cwtsh (Tudalen 28 y ddogfen) a Chlwb Cylch (Tudalen 28 y ddogfen).
- Mae Mudiad Meithrin yn credu bod y gwaith a wneir gyda rhieni drwy ein grwpiau Ti a Fi yn bwysig iawn. Rydym yn croesawu'r cyfleoedd i weithio gyda'r awdurdod lleol i ddatblygu Grwpiau Ti a Fi a byddem yn croesawu unrhyw gyllid sydd ar gael i gefnogi'r gwaith hwn. Er mwyn helpu i gyflawni'r targedau ar gyfer cyfraddau pontio, bydd dadansoddiad pellach o

ddata Mudiad Meithrin yn fuddiol i ddeall y rhesymau dros y cyfraddau pontio o Gylchoedd meithrin i Ysgolion Cyfrwng Cymraeg a'r heriau sy'n wynebu rhieni.

Deilliant 2

- Nid oes cynllun clir ar gyfer datblygu unrhyw ysgolion pellach, yr hyn a wyddom o brofiad yw bod angen i'r ysgolion fod yn gyfleus i deuluoedd ac yn eu cymuned leol i sicrhau bod Addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn hygyrch i bawb. Gwyddom nad yw Addysg Cyfrwng Cymraeg yn cael ei ystyried gan deuluoedd pan fydd yn rhaid iddynt roi plant ifanc ar fysiau.
- Unwaith y bydd yr ysgol ar agor yn Nhredgar, mae angen ystyried galluogi plant hŷn i drosglwyddo i'r ysgol. Falle fydd teuluoedd heb anfon eu plant ar y bws i Bro Helyg am eu bod yn teimlo ei bod yn rhy bell yn awr yn ailystyried Addysg Cyfrwng Cymraeg oherwydd bod yr ysgol ar garreg eu drws.

Deilliant 3

- Mae'n braf nodi bod ysgol uwchradd ranbarthol yn cael ei hystyried ar Blaenau'r Cwm a fydd yn helpu i ysgogi'r galw gyda'r addysg uwchradd yn fwy lleol.

Deilliant 5

- Mae Deilliant 5 yn nodi'r gwaith a wneir gan Mudiad Meithrin wrth ymgysylltu â rhieni cyn i'r plentyn gychwyn yn yr ysgol, a theimlwn y byddai'n well gosod y wybodaeth hon efo Deilliant 1, sy'n cyfeirio at y gwaith a wneir ar gyfer y grŵp oedran yma.

Deilliant 6

- Rydym yn awyddus i weld cyfeiriad at y Blynyddoedd Cynnar o dan y deilliant hwn i alluogi plant, waeth fo'u galluoedd, i gael mynediad at addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Os nad yw'r gefnogaeth ar gael i blant ar y pwynt hwn, ni aent ymlaen i addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.




Deilliant 7

- Mae'n werth nodi diffyg gweithwyr Gofal Plant yn y sector Blynyddoedd Cynnar yn y Deilliant hwn. Gyda'r weledigaeth i agor cylchoedd Meithrin pellach yr her y byddwn yn ei hwynebu yw dod o hyd i staff cymwys sy'n siarad Cymraeg. Byddem yn hapus i weithio mewn partneriaeth ar unrhyw ymgyrchoedd i recriwtio staff a hyrwyddo'r gwaith.
- Ar hyn o bryd mae cynllun Cam wrth Gam i Ysgolion Mudiad Meithrin yn cefnogi disgyblion sy'n mynychu Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.
- Mae Cynllun Prentisiaeth Mudiad Meithrin hefyd ar gael i roi cyfle i unigolion ymgymryd â chymhwyster Gofal Plant er nad oes neb yn manteisio arno ym Mlaenau Gwent ar hyn o bryd.
- Nod cynllun Academi Mudiad Merithrin yw cynnig ystod eang o gyfleoedd datblygu a hyfforddi i'r holl staff a gwirfoddolwyr sy'n rhan o gymuned Mudiad Meithrin. Darperir yr hyfforddiant hwn mewn gwahanol fformatau, gan gyfuno cyswllt traddodiadol wyneb yn wyneb ac ar-lein, gan alluogi dysgwyr i astudio ar adegau sy'n gyfleus iddynt.
- Mae Croesi'r Bont hefyd yn cyflwyno methodoleg trochi iaith o fewn Cylchoedd Meithrin ac yn sicrhau pontio ieithyddol o Gylchoedd i ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg.


Nia Parker

Dirprwy Rheolwr Mudaid Meithrin Talaith Y De Ddwyrain

Deputy Regional Manager Mudaid Meithrin South East Region

3.	Welsh Language Commissioner 21.12.21	 3. 20211221 C LL Ymateb Blaenau Gw
4.	Rebecca Good Rebecca.Good@estyn.gov.wales 22.12.21	 4. - ESTYN Response re Blaenau Gwent V
5.	Llywodraeth wyr Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw 3.1.22 11.18am	 CYNLLUN STRATEGOL CYMRAE

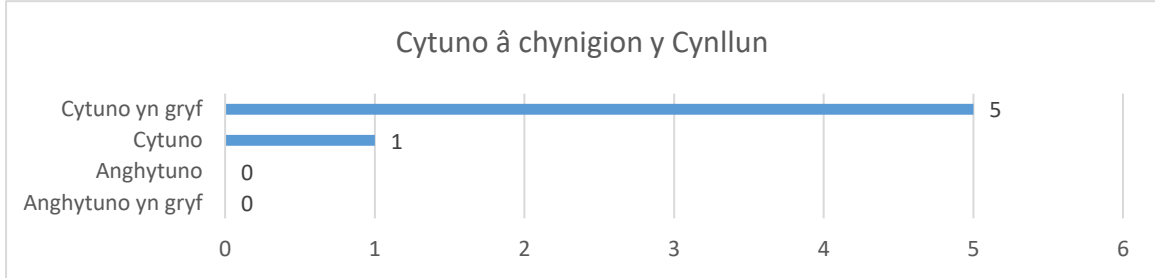
Daeth yr Ymgynghoriad i ben am 12pm ar 3 Ionawr 2022, a derbyniwyd yr ymateb isod ar ôl i'r ymgynghoriad gau, fodd bynnag, ystyriwyd yr ymateb a rhoddwyd sylw iddo o fewn y Cynllun Gweithredu 10 mlynedd drafft

Rhif	Enw a Manylion Cyswllt	Disgrifiad o'r Ohebiaeth	Cam Gweithredu/Ymateb sydd ei angen
6.	RhAG 3.1.22 23.55	 5. Sylwadau ar Gynllun Strategol C ₃	

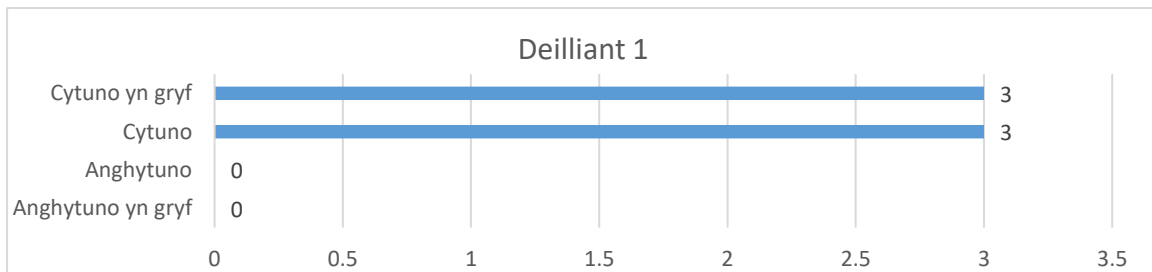
Crynodeb o ymatebion yr Arolwg Ar-lein ar gyfer Cynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg 2022-2032

Cynhaliwyd yr ymgynghoriad am 8 wythnos a daeth i ben ddydd Llun 3 Ionawr 2022. Derbyniodd y Cyngor 6 ymateb sydd i'w gweld isod.

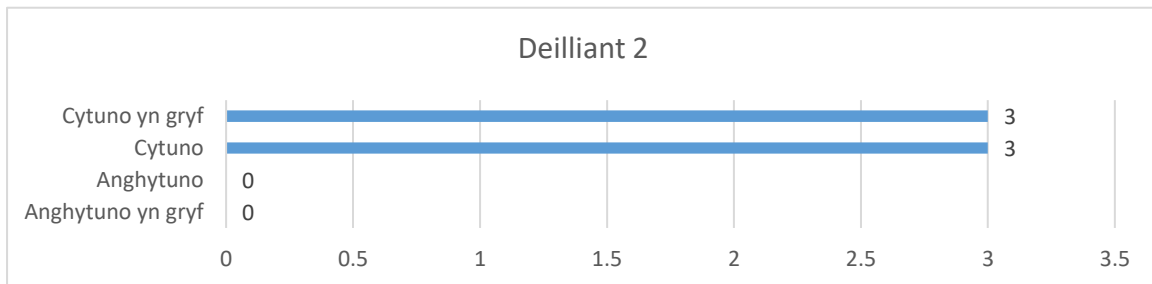
Ydych chi'n cefnogi mabwysiadu ddrafft Gynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent, 2022-2032?



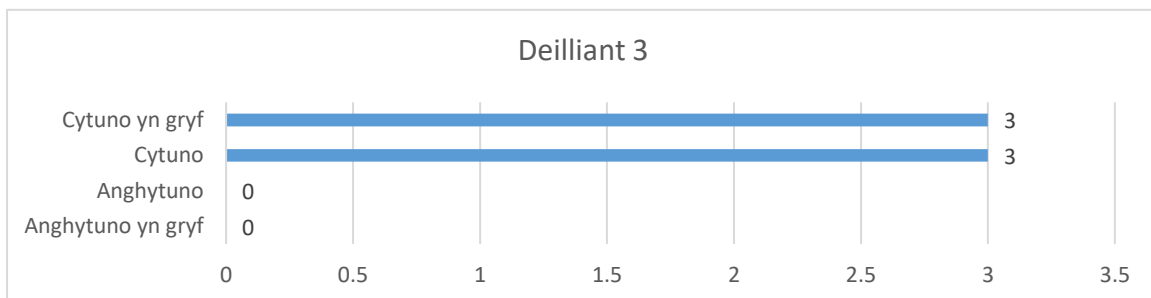
Deilliant 1: Mwy o blant meithrin/tair oed yn cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.



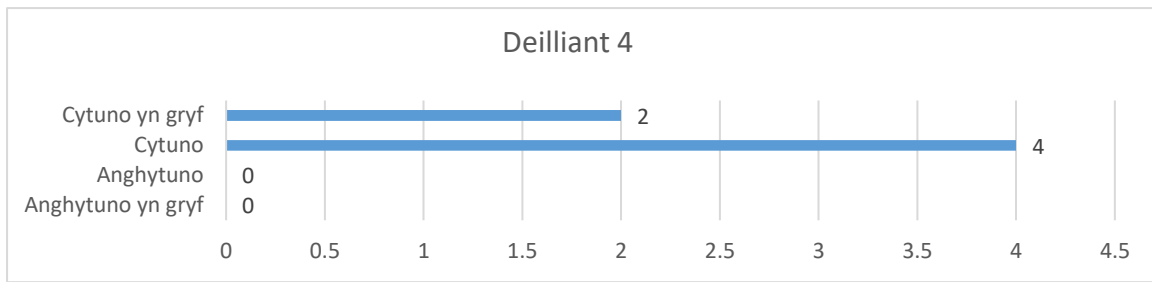
Deilliant 2 Mwy o blant dosbarth derbyn/pump oed yn cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.



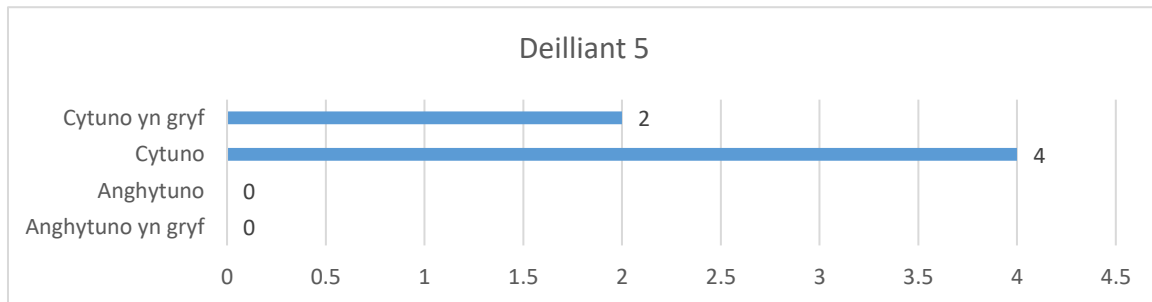
Deilliant 3 Mwy o blant yn parhau i wella eu sgiliau Cymraeg wrth drosglwyddo o un cyfnod o'u haddysg statudol i un arall.



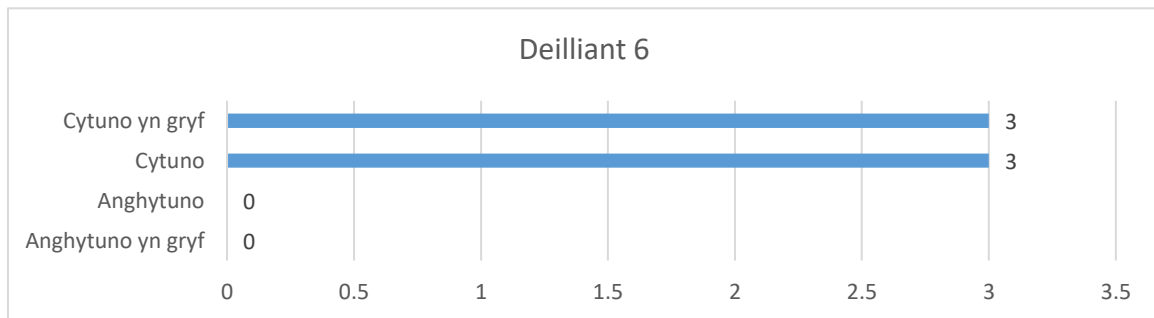
Deilliant 4 Mwy o ddysgwyr yn astudio ar gyfer cymwysterau Cymraeg (fel pwnc) a phynciau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.



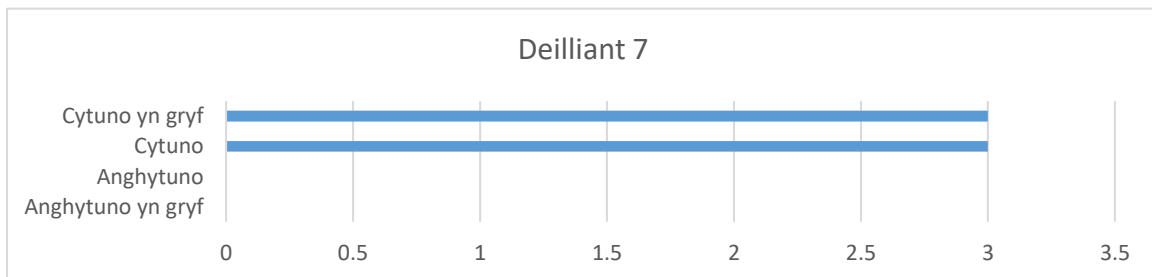
Deilliant 5 Mwy o gyfleoedd i ddysgwyr ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg mewn cyd-destunau gwahanol yn yr Ysgol.



Deilliant 6 Cynnydd yn y ddarpariaeth addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg i ddisgyblion ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol ("ADY"), yn unol â'r dyletswyddau a bennir gan y Ddeddf Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru) 2018.



Deilliant 7 Cynnydd yn nifer y staff addysgu sy'n gallu addysgu Cymraeg (fel pwnc) a thrwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

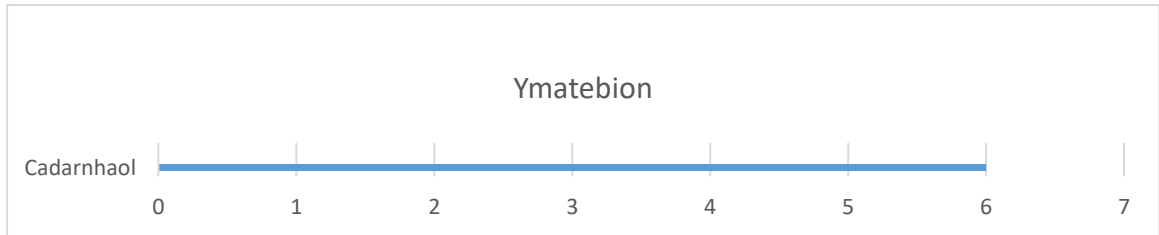


Defnyddiwch y blwch isod i roi sylwadau ac egluro unrhyw elfennau o'r cynllun y teimlwch fod angen eu gwella:

Dim ond 3 o'r 6 ymatebydd a wnaeth sylwadau, gweler yr wybodaeth isod

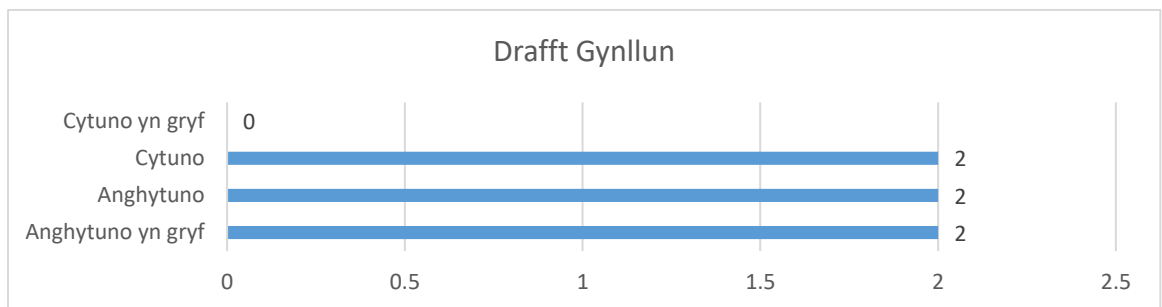
- Rwy'n credu fod y cynllun yn cynnwys popeth
- Mae gan Blaenau Gwent weledigaeth, targedau ac uchelgais clir, sy'n wych eu gweld mewn awdurdod lleol mor fach
- Dylai fod mwy o bwyslais a ffocws ar sefydlu trydydd ysgol gynradd Gymraeg ym Mlaenau Gwent yng Nghwm Ebwy Fawr fel bod ysgol gynradd Gymraeg ym mhob un o dri chwm Blaenau Gwent ac nad yw'n rhaid i ddisgyblion sy'n mynychu deithio ymhell tu allan i'w cymuned i dderbyn./mynychu ysgol/addysg Gymraeg.

Ydych chi'n credu y caiff y drafft gynllun effaith gadarnhaol?

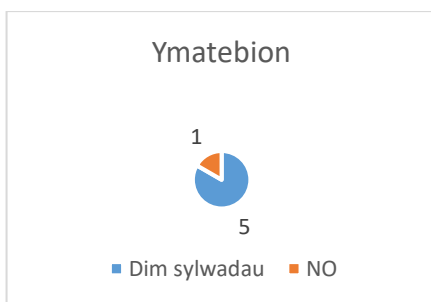


Ni chafwyd unrhyw ymatebion negyddol.

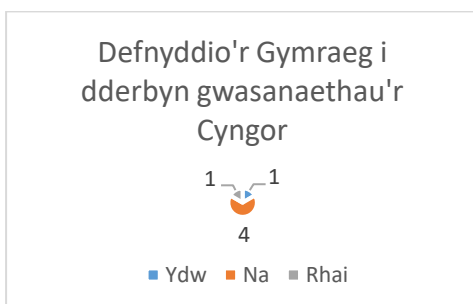
Ydych chi'n credu y bydd y cynnig yn trin y Gymraeg yn llai ffafriol na'r Saesneg?



A oes gennych unrhyw sylwadau i wella/cryfhau'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg bresennol?



Ydych chi'n defnyddio'r Gymraeg i dderbyn gwasanaethau'r Cyngor?



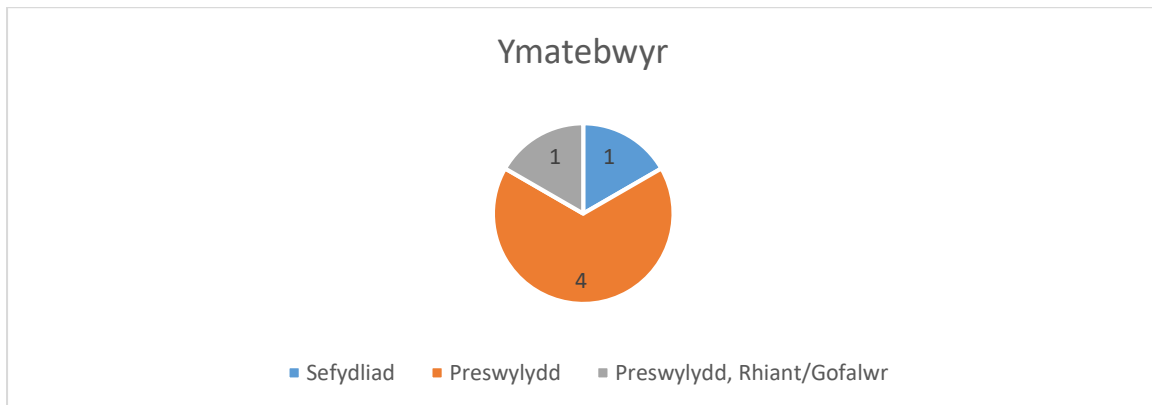
Os rhai, pam?

Ni dderbyniwyd unrhyw ymatebion.

Os na, pam?

- Nid wyf yn siarad Cymraeg.
- Oherwydd na chefais i, fel rhywun a fu'n byw ym Mlaenau Gwent ar hyd fy oes, erioed gyfle i ddysgu fel plentyn. Hefyd nid yw fy sgiliau ieithyddol yn wych. Rwyf wedi rhoi cynnig arni ond yn ei chael yn anodd i unrhyw iaith.

Dywedwch wrthym os ydych yn ymateb fel





Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Blaenau Gwent

Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg Mewn Addysg

CYNLLUN STRATEGOL CYMRAEG MEWN ADDYSG



Enw'r Awdurdod Lleol

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Blaenau Gwent

Cyfnod y Cynllun hwn

Medi 2022 – Medi 2032

Gwnaed y Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg hwn dan Adran 84 *Deddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013* ac mae'r cynnwys yn cydymffurfio gyda *Rheoliadau Cynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg (Cymru) 2019¹⁻²*. Yr ydym wedi rhoi sylw dyledus i'r canllawiau statudol a gyhoeddwyd gan Weinidogion Cymru wrth osod ein targedau.

Llofnod: Dyddiad:

(Dylai'r Cynllun hwn gael ei lofnodi gan Brif Swyddog Gweithredol eich awdurdod lleol)

¹ [Rheoliadau Cynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg \(Cymru\) 2019](#)

² [Rheoliadau Cynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg \(Diwygiad\) \(Coronafeirws\) 2020](#)

Cynllun 10-mlynedd Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent 2022 - 2032

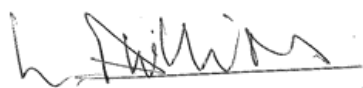
Rhagair

Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg

Mae Blaenau Gwent yn ardal awdurdod lleol cymharol fach, ond un sydd ag uchelgais fawr ar gyfer ein hysgolion a'n dysgwyr. Rydym yn benderfynol i chwarae ein rhan i sicrhau fod Cymru yn genedl ddwyieithog gydag uchelgais glir i gynyddu'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg ar draws y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Rydym yn llwyr gefnogi ac ymroddedig i Cymraeg 2050: miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg, strategaeth genedlaethol Llywodraeth Cymru. Bu addysg Gymraeg yn tyfu yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol mewn blynyddoedd diweddar. Bu gan y twf hwn ran allweddol wrth gynyddu'r nifer o bobl sy'n defnyddio'r Gymraeg yn gyson yn ein Bwrdeistref Sirol. Nod strategol Blaenau Gwent a gaiff ei hyrwyddo yn ein Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg yw sicrhau:

'Cymuned Blaenau Gwent sy'n cofleidio'r Gymraeg a'i diwylliant yn hyderus a gyda balchder'.

Un o'r elfennau allweddol wrth sicrhau y caiff ein nod strategol ar gyfer y Gymraeg ei chyflawni'n llwyddiannus yw gwireddu Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg newydd ac uchelgeisiol ar gyfer 2022-32. Edrychaf ymlaen at weithio gyda'n holl bartneriaid yng ngwir ysbryd cydweithredu i gyflawni blaenoriaethau a dyheadau'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg dros y blynyddoedd i ddod.



Lynn Phillips

Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Addysg

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Blaenau Gwent

Aelod Gweithredol dros Addysg

Mae hwn yn gyfnod cyffrous i Gyngor Blaenau Gwent. Rydym yn ymroddedig ac mae gennym gyfle i hybu ein system addysg ymhellach ac mewn sefyllfa gref i hwyluso twf a datblygiad parhaus y Gymraeg ac addysg, wrth weithio tuag at Cymraeg 2050. Mae gennym weledigaeth a nodau clir sy'n uchelgeisiol ac a fydd yn sicrhau'r safonau darpariaeth y mae ein dysgwyr a theuluoedd yn eu haeddu. Mae gennym hefyd bartneriaeth gref iawn yn y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, ynghyd ag awdurdodau cyfagos. Gan gydweithio, gallwn a byddwn yn adeiladu ar lwyddiannau Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent 2017-20.



Cynghorydd Joanne Collins

Aelod Gweithredol dros Addysg

Trosolwg o'r Ymgynghoriad

Mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent wedi datblygu drafft Gynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg, sydd i redeg am gyfnod o 10-mllynedd o fis Medi 2022 tan fis Medi 2032. Mae'r cynllun dilynol yn cynnwys trosolwg o lle'r ydym arni yn awr, lle bwriadwn fod mewn 5 mlynedd a lle bwriadwn fod erbyn 2032, ynghyd â sut y bwriadwn gyrraedd yno.

Byddwn yn ymgynghori gyda rhanddeiliaid allweddol er mwyn sicrhau fod ein cynllun yn addas i'r diben ac yn adlewyrchu anghenion ein teuluoedd, staff a phartneriaid.

Mae'r ymgynghoriad hwn yn gyfle i chi roi eich barn a'ch sylwadau ar y drafft Gynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg. Caiff pob ymateb eu hystyried ynghyd â'r goblygiadau cysylltiedig – yn cynnwys unrhyw newidiadau i'r cynllun sy'n dilyn o'r ymgynghoriad. Byddwn wedyn yn mynd ati i gynhyrchu fersiwn terfynol i'w gymeradwyo gan Bwyllgor Gweithredol y Cyngor, cyn ei gyflwyno i Weinidogion Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer eu hystyriaeth a'u cymeradwyaeth. Unwaith y'i cytunwyd, daw'r cynllun i rym o fis Medi 2022.

Bydd y cyfnod ymgynghori yn dechrau ddydd Gwener 5 Tachwedd 2021, gan ddod i ben ddydd Llun 3 Ionawr 2022 am 12pm.

Cefndir a Chyd-destun

Mae Adran 84 Deddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013 yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i bob Cyngor baratoi Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg. Diben y Cynllun hwn yw gosod dull gweithredu a chyfeiriad strategol y Cyngor, yng nghyswllt datblygu a chyflwyno addysg Gymraeg. Datblygwyd y cynllun dilynol yn unol â'r canllawiau statudol a gyhoeddwyd dan adran 87 (5) *Deddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion Cymru 2013*.

Datblygu Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent

Cafodd datblygiad Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Cyngor Blaenau Gwent ei gydlynu gan y Gyfarwyddiaeth Addysg, gan weithio mewn partneriaeth gyda Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent, ynghyd â phartneriaid eraill perthnasol. Diben hyn fu canfod y sefyllfa bresennol, tra hefyd yn llywio cynlluniau a thargedau am y 10 mlynedd nesaf. Mae'r cynllun yn rhoi manylion y dull gweithredu strategol lleol, ynghyd â dyheadau'r Cyngor am addysg Gymraeg rhwng 2022 a 2032.

Cynhaliwyd trafodaethau hefyd gyda chydweithwyr yn gyfrifol am eu Cynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg mewn awdurdodau cyfagos, yn cynnwys: Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Merthyr Tudful, Cyngor Sir Fynwy, Cyngor Dinas Casnewydd a Chyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen. Anelwn barhau i gysylltu a gweithio'n agos gydag awdurdodau cyfagos, i sicrhau ein bod fel Cynghorau yn cydweithio er mwyn parhau i ymwreiddio a chryfhau ein dull gweithredu at gyflwyno addysg Gymraeg ledled y rhanbarth.

Cyd-destun Strategol

Cenedlaethol

Mae'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg yn hollol gydnaws â strategaethau a pholisïau dilynol Llywodraeth Cymru a bydd yn hwyluso eu cyflawni yn effeithlon:

Mae Cymraeg 2050: Miliwn o Siaradwyr Cymraeg (2017), yn nodi gweledigaeth hirdymor Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer y Gymraeg. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn anelu i gynyddu nifer y siaradwyr Cymraeg i 1 filiwn erbyn 2050, a hefyd gynyddu'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg a chreu amodau ffafriol, yn cynnwys seilwaith a chyd-destun, i gefnogi'r twf hwn. Bydd gan y sector Addysg rôl hollbwysig wrth hwyluso Cymraeg 2050, drwy broses gynllunio strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg sy'n anelu i gynyddu nifer y dysgwyr sydd â'r cyfle i ddatblygu sgiliau yn y Gymraeg yn yr ysgol a hefyd fel rhan o'u bywyd bob dydd. Yn ychwanegol, bydd Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg pob Cyngor yn cyfrannu at newid y ffordd y caiff y Gymraeg ei haddysgu, yn ei dro yn anelu i gynyddu gwella caffael a defnydd iaith, a thrwy weithio gyda phartneriaid allweddol i gynyddu'r gweithlu addysgu, yn nhermau'r rhai a all addysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, ynghyd â'r rhai sy'n addysgu'r Gymraeg fel pwnc.

Bydd pob Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg hefyd yn cyfrannu at weithredu **Cynllun Gweithredu 2017-21 Cymraeg mewn Addysg** sy'n gosod y cyfeiriad ar gyfer addysg Gymraeg.

Mae **Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol (Cymru) 2015** yn rhoi manylion saith nod llesiant y mae'n rhaid i gyrff cyhoeddus weithio atynt yn cynnwys '*Cymru â diwylliant bywiog lle mae'r Gymraeg yn ffynnu*'. Bydd Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent, drwy ei weledigaeth, nodau a thargedau, yn anelu i hwyluso datblygiadau yn y Gymraeg a datblygiadau diwylliannol yn unol â'r nod hon, ac yn ei dro wella llesiant disgyblion, staff a chymunedau.

Ffyniant i Bawb: y strategaeth genedlaethol a rhaglen lywodraethu Symud Cymru Ymlaen 2016-2021 sydd ag un o'r nodau llesiant o '*Datblygu cymunedau, diwylliant ac iaith sy'n gydnerth*'. Mae'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg yn anelu i greu system addysg Gymraeg addas a chynaliadwy i gefnogi gweithredu'r nod hon mewn ffordd effeithlon.

Mae Addysg yng Nghymru: Cenhadaeth ein Cenedl, Cynllun Gweithredu (2017-21) yn rhoi manylion cynlluniau ar gyfer y system addysg yng Nghymru, i sicrhau y caiff y cwricwlwm newydd ei weithredu'n effeithlon. Mae hyn yn cynnwys dymuniad i ddysgwyr ddod yn gynyddol ddwyieithog, hybu a gweld twf mewn addysg Gymraeg, ynghyd â defnydd o'r Gymraeg gan y gweithlu a datblygu sgiliau, tra hefyd yn cyfrannu at recriwtio a chadw staff yn effeithlon. Mae cysylltiad annatod rhwng agweddau allweddol y cynllun gweithredu hwn sy'n ymwneud â dwyieithrwydd â phob un o'r 7 o'r meysydd deiliant o fewn Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent. Mae'r Cynllun hwn yn anelu i:

- Wella a chynyddu mynediad i a'r galw am addysg Gymraeg
- Sicrhau safonau uchel yn nhermau safonau a darpariaeth addysg
- Datblygu a chreu cyfleoedd ar defnydd anffurfiol yn ogystal â ffurfiol o'r Gymraeg
- Sicrhau datblygu a chynaliadwyedd y gweithlu

Lleol

Mae'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg yn hollol gydnaws gyda gweledigaeth y Cyngor ar gyfer addysg, sef:

"Sicrhau cyflawniad a llesiant rhagorol drwy system partneriaeth, dan arweiniad ysgolion, hunan-wella ysgol i ysgol"

Mae'r Cynllun yn allweddol i sicrhau y caiff y weledigaeth ar gyfer addysg ei chyflawni'n llwyddiannus, gan ei fod yn sefydlu fframwaith ar gyfer cyflawni'r dyheadau hyn, mewn partneriaeth gyda'r Fforwm Cymraeg mewn Addysg ac ysgolion lleol.

Mae addysg yn allweddol i gyflawni'r weledigaeth a'r deilliannau a sefydlwyd o fewn Cynllun Corfforaethol Cyngor Blaenau Gwent 2020/22 yn cynnwys: 'Trefnadaeth falch, cymunedau cryf a dyfodol disgleiriach'. Mae mynediad i addysg Gymraeg ansawdd uchel, datblygu'r iaith, diwylliant, darpariaeth a gweithlu i gyd yn rhan hanfodol o'r Cynllun hwn.

Mae addysg hefyd yn cyfrannu'n sylweddol at Gynllun Llesiant 2018-23 Blaenau Gwent, a chyflawni'r amcanion cysylltiedig. Mae gan y Cyngor ddyletswydd i hyrwyddo a hwyluso'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg wrth weithio at y nodau llesiant.

Bydd Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent yn llywio'r prosesau adolygu a datblygu sy'n gysylltiedig gyda Strategaeth Blaenau Gwent ar Hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg, yr ymgynghorir arni a'i chyhoeddi cyn mis Mawrth 2022.

Ein gweledigaeth ddeng mlynedd ar gyfer cynyddu a gwella cynllunio darpariaeth addysg Gymraeg yn ein hardal

Gweledigaeth Cyngor Blaenau Gwent ar gyfer Addysg Gymraeg:

'Adeiladu ar y cynnydd cryf a wnaed hyd yma drwy greu system addysg gynaliadwy sy'n cynyddu'r ddarpariaeth, y galw a'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg; creu dinasyddion medrus ac wedi eu grymuso sy'n falch i fyw a gweithio o fewn a hefyd tu allan i Gymru'.

Nod strategol hynny fydd creu:

Cymuned sy'n cofleidio'r iaith Gymraeg a'i diwylliant yn hyderus a gyda balchder.

Byddwn yn anelu i gyflawni ein gweledigaeth drwy hyrwyddo, datblygu a chyfoethogi darpariaeth a gwasanaethau Cymraeg. Gwnawn hynny drwy gydweithio'n agos gyda'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, ynghyd â phartneriaid strategol allweddol eraill yn cynnwys Llywodraeth Cymru ac awdurdodau lleol eraill.

Mae ein hamcanion yn cynnwys:

- Codi proffil addysg Gymraeg ynghyd â manteision bod yn ddwyieithog
- Creu sefydliadau dysgu ansawdd uchel ffyniannus sy'n cefnogi ymgysylltu effeithlon rhwng disgyblion, staff, y gymuned a phartneriaid
- Cefnogi integreiddio gwasanaethau a chreu profiad cynnwys trochi ar gyfer dysgwyr
- Sicrhau gwella gwaith rhwng ysgolion a phartneriaeth, gan hwyluso defnydd a datblygiad ehangach o'r Gymraeg

- Creu gweithlu medrus a chynaliadwy, sy'n ymroddedig i ddatblygiad proffesiynol parhaus
- Sicrhau amgylcheddau addysgu a dysgu cynhwysol a chyfleoedd i bob dysgwr
- Gwella cyfleoedd dilyniant drwy adolygu a gweithredu cwricwlwm sydd wedi ei alinio'n gadarn i addysg bellach ac addysg uwch.

Mae cyflawniadau allweddol yn ystod Cynllun 2017-20 yn cynnwys:

- Mae nifer y disgyblion ar y gofrestr, ynghyd â'r rhai sy'n gwneud cais am le yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg yn parhau i gynyddu, gyda thueddiad cadarnhaol dros y 3 blynedd ddiwethaf yng nghyswllt niferoedd meithrin a dosbarth derbyn. Mae'r Cyngor wedi ymrwymo i ddarparu cludiant am ddim rhwng y cartref a'r ysgol ar gyfer disgyblion meithrin sy'n mynd i Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, er mwyn cefnogi gwell mynediad i addysg Gymraeg.
- Mae safonau wedi gwella yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, a chafodd hynny ddylanwad cadarnhaol ar y galw a'r ddarpariaeth.
- Mae cyfraddau pontio rhwng addysg gynradd ac uwchradd Gymraeg yn parhau'n uchel gyda 100% o ddisgyblion yn trosglwyddo i Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.
- Sicrhodd Cyngor Blaenau Gwent gyllid cyfalaf drwy Raglen Band B Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif i ailfodelu amgylcheddau addysgu mewnol ac allanol yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, gan yn ei dro wella darpariaeth.
- Mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent wedi datblygu cynllun marchnata a chyfathrebu cryf, sy'n targedu ac yn hyrwyddo manteision bod yn ddwyieithog, gan gydweithio gyda phartneriaid ledled y rhanbarth i wneud hynny; tra hefyd yn sefydlu dulliau effeithlon o ymgysylltu ac ymgynghori gyda rhanddeiliaid, er mwyn llywio blaenoriaethau strategol allweddol.
- Mae Blaenau Gwent wedi bod yn llwyddiannus wrth gydlynu is-grŵp Consortia De Ddwyrain Cymru (SEWC) ar gynllunio lleoedd a galw rhanbarthol dros y 2 flynedd ddiwethaf. Mae hyn wedi arwain at weithio partneriaeth effeithlon a chydlynu rhwng awdurdodau cyfagos, sy'n parhau i ddysgu gan ei gilydd tra'n ymchwilio cyfleoedd ar gyfer datblygiadau rhanbarthol o fudd i bawb.
- Mae cynrychiolaeth, presenoldeb ac amllder cyfarfodydd y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg wedi cynyddu, gyda phartneriaid wedi ymrwymo'n gadarn i effeithlonrwydd Fforwm Blaenau Gwent a gan gydnabod hynny.
- Sicrhodd y Cyngor gyllid o Grant Cyfalaf Cyfrwng Cymraeg Llywodraeth Cymru i ddatblygu a gweithredu Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg egin newydd gyda 210 lle yn Nhredgar/Cwm Sirhywi, lle bwriedir gweithredu drwy fodel twf egin o hydref 2023. Yn ychwanegol, mae'r Cyngor wedi sicrhau cyllid drwy'r Grant Cyfalaf Gofal Plant i ddarparu dau safle gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg ychwanegol, gan gefnogi twf darpariaeth gynradd.

Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi sefydlu targedau ar gyfer cynghorau er mwyn cyflawni eu gweledigaeth ar gyfer miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050. Mae'r targedau yn seiliedig ar ddata Cyfrifiad Ysgol Blyneddol Lefel Disgybl (CYBLD), yn gysylltiedig â'r ganran o gohort Blwyddyn 1 a gaiff eu haddysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Er mwyn

cyfrannu at gyflawni'r weledigaeth, mae angen i Blaenau Gwent sicrhau fod **o leiaf 10%** o'r cohort Blwyddyn 1 yn cael eu haddysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg erbyn 2032.

Ffigur 1: Data Llinell Sylfaen/Sefyllfa Bresennol

CYBLD (2019/20)	Cohort Blwyddyn 1	Llinell Sylfaen Cyfrwng Cymraeg Blwyddyn 1 2021
Nifer disgyblion Blwyddyn 1	728	29 (4%)

Er mwyn sicrhau ein bod yn cyflawni'r weledigaeth ac amcanion a nodir uchod, mae Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Blaenau Gwent yn ymroddedig i weithio tuag at darged uchelgeisiol Llywodraeth Cymru, i gynyddu cohort Blwyddyn 1 a addysgir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg i 75 o ddisgyblion. O gymharu gyda data llinell sylfaen 2019/20 a ddefnyddir gan Lywodraeth Cymru, byddai hyn yn gyfartal â 10% (cynnydd o 6 pwynt canran) yng nghyfanswm y cohort Blwyddyn 1 a addysgir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg erbyn 2032. Bydd y Cyngor yn asesu dichonoldeb cyflawni terfyn uchaf targed Llywodraeth Cymru o 105 o ddisgyblion Blwyddyn 1 erbyn 2032. Caiff y cynllun ei adolygu yn unol â hynny pan gwblheir yr astudiaeth ddichonoldeb. Fodd bynnag, mae'r Cyngor yn ymroddedig i a bydd yn cydlynu continwwm effeithlon o ddysgu drwy sicrhau mwy o ofal plant a darpariaeth gynradd, uwchradd ac ôl 16 cyfrwng Cymraeg drwy weithio gyda phartneriaid allweddol i wneud hynny.

Cyflawnir hyn drwy:

- Cryfhau'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, i adeiladu ar bartneriaethau presennol a datblygu strwythur atebolrwydd cryf yn unol â gweithredu a monitro'r cynllun 10-mlynedd.
- Datblygu Polisi Addysg Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent, i sefydlu'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg a datblygiadau cysylltiedig o fewn cynllunio, polisi ac ymarfer Addysg a'r Awdurdod Lleol yn ehangach.
- Datblygu Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu a chynllun cyfathrebu cysylltiedig i sicrhau y caiff negeseuon clir a chyson eu cyflwyno ledled y Cyngor a'i wasanaethau, yn unol â gweithredu'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg. Bydd y strategaeth hefyd yn mynd ati i wella dulliau ymgysylltu.
- Datblygu strategaeth hyrwyddo ac ymgysylltu effeithlon, sy'n rhoi sylw i fanteision bod yn ddwyieithog, chwalu chwedlau a chreu cyfleoedd ar gyfer cynyddu cyfranogiad.
- Cynyddu'r capasiti o fewn y sector gofal plant a blynyddoedd cynnar presennol (sector cyfrwng Cymraeg, ynghyd â nifer darparwyr gofal plant ac addysg blynyddoedd cynnar) gan o leiaf 2 leoliad, er mwyn bwydo darpariaeth feithrin mewn ysgolion a darpariaeth addysg statudol cyfrwng Cymraeg.
- Cynyddu capasiti a hefyd y galw am leoedd disgyblion ymhellach yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.
- Hyrwyddo, agor a chyflawni capasiti arfaethedig ail ysgol gynradd Gymraeg y Cyngor.
- Datblygu darpariaeth trochi ar gyfer hwyrdydfodiaid, er mwyn cynyddu cyfleoedd ar gyfer cymryd rhan mewn addysg Gymraeg o fewn y cyfnod cynradd.
- Ymrwymo i gynllun datblygu gweithlu mewn partneriaeth gyda EAS, a Choleg Gwent, ynghyd â phartneriaid allweddol eraill.
- Cynnal astudiaeth dichonolrwydd yn unol â datblygu Canolfan Adnoddau Anghenion Arbennig cyfrwng Cymraeg.

- Gweithio gydag awdurdodau cyfagos i sicrhau ail ysgol uwchradd yn ardal Blaenau'r Cymoedd ar gyfer disgyblion Blaenau Gwent; a,
- Chynnal astudiaeth ddichonoldeb yn unol â'r potensial ar gyfer cynyddu capasiti o fewn y sector cynradd rhwng 2027 a 2032, yn defnyddio'r model twf egin a fabwysiadwyd gan Flaenau Gwent.

Mae Cynllun Datblygu Lleol y Cyngor yn cael ei adolygu ar hyn o bryd. Mae Addysg yn rhanddeiliad allweddol yn yr adolygiad hwn, a gaiff ei lywio gan y Cynllun Addysg Cymraeg mewn Ysgolion a hefyd astudiaethau dichonoldeb cysylltiedig, a gynhelir er mwyn sicrhau ychwanegedd priodol. Hefyd, fel rhan o Oblygiadau Cynllunio Addysg, byddwn yn anelu i sicrhau y rhoddir ystyriaeth i dwf poblogaeth o safbwynt addysg.

Mae gweithredu strategaeth effeithlon ar gyfer hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg yn allweddol i lwyddiant y Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg, ac mae hynny'n cael ei adolygu ar hyn o bryd. Mae'r Cyngor yn gweithio gyda'r Fenter Iaith er mwyn sefydlu sesiynau ymgynghori dechreuol, a gaiff ei lywio gan yr adolygiad o ddata Cyfrifiad 2021. Mae dau ddiwyddiad ymgynghori ar y gweill ar gyfer tymor y Gwanwyn 2022. Nod y digwyddiadau hyn fydd ymgysylltu rhanddeiliaid allweddol yn cynnwys Addysg, y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg a grwpiau cymunedol lleol wrth ddatblygu'r strategaeth. Y bwriad yw cadw'r grwpiau hyn i oruchwylio a llywio gweithredu. Bydd y strategaeth newydd yn ei lle erbyn 31 Mawrth 2022.

Mae Strategaeth Hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg bresennol Blaenau Gwent yn rhedeg tan 2022 (mae mwy o wybodaeth ar gael yn:

[Strategaeth Hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg 2017-2022.pdf \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](#)).

Mae nodau'r strategaeth bresennol yn cynnwys:

- Gwella'r gwasanaethau Cymraeg y gall siaradwyr Cymraeg ddisgwyl eu derbyn gan sefydliadau penodol.
- Cynyddu'r defnydd a wnaiff pobl o wasanaethau Cymraeg.
- Ei gwneud yn glir i sefydliadau beth sydd angen iddynt ei wneud o ran y Gymraeg.
- Sicrhau fod cysondeb priodol o ran y dyletswyddau a roddir ar gyrff yn yr un sectorau.

Yn ychwanegol mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent yn dynodi'r tair amcan ddilynol ar gyfer hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg:

1. Hyrwyddo ac annog y defnydd o'r Gymraeg o fewn teuluoedd a'r gymuned.
2. Cynyddu darpariaeth addysg Gymraeg a gweithgareddau anffurfiol drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc a chynyddu eu hymwybyddiaeth o werth y Gymraeg.
3. Cynyddu'r cyfleoedd i bobl o ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y gweithle yn cynnwys:
 - Ennyn diddordeb mwy o bobl yn y Gymraeg;
 - Mwy o bobl yn dod yn rhugl yn y Gymraeg; a
 - Mwy o weithwyr y Cyngor yn medru defnyddio'r Gymraeg.

Targed presennol Blaenau Gwent yw sicrhau 70 o siaradwyr Cymraeg ychwanegol bob blwyddyn (3% o tua 2,400), er mwyn cyflawni'r weledigaeth o filiwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050. Bydd gweithredu'r Cynllun Strategol ar y Gymraeg mewn Addysg yn effeithlon yn allweddol wrth sicrhau fod y Cyngor yn cyflawni eu targed. Mae Addysg wedi ymwneud yn helaeth â'r adolygiad o Strategaeth y Gymraeg hyd yma, a bydd yn

parhau i gymryd rhan helaeth er mwyn sicrhau alinio rhwng y Strategaeth a'r WESP 10-mllynedd. Yn ychwanegol, mae'r tîm Polisi a Phartneriaeth sy'n gyfrifol am arwain yr adolygiad, yn ymwneud â helaeth gyda'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg a hefyd lunio'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg.

Deilliant 1:

Mwy o blant meithrin/tair oed yn cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

Ble'r ydym arni yn awr?

Mae'n bwysig cydnabod bod gan benderfyniadau teuluoedd am iaith cyn dechrau yn yr ysgol rôl wrth gefnogi taith eu plentyn. Mae'r daith hon yn dechrau cyn addysg nas cynhelir a gyllidir.

Rôl yr Ymwelydd Iechyd

Ar hyn o bryd nid oes gan Ymwelwyr Iechyd unrhyw dargedau meintiol yn ymwneud â chyfraniad y sector iechyd i hyrwyddo addysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Rôl yr Ymwelwyr Iechyd yw darparu'r holl wybodaeth drwy gyfrwng y Saesneg a'r Gymraeg, maent hefyd yn darparu gwybodaeth i bob teulu am y Gwasanaethau Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd.

Mae gan Ymwelwyr Iechyd fynediad i ddatblygu eu Cymraeg drwy fodiwlau ar-lein sydd ar gael drwy ddarpariaeth Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan a chaiff hyfforddiant ymwybyddiaeth o'r Gymraeg ei chyflwyno'n fewnol os gwneir cais. Mae cyrsiau Cymraeg am ddim ar gael i'r holl staff.

Mae'r Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd yn rhoi gwybodaeth i aelodau am ddarpariaeth addysg leol sy'n cynnwys opsiynau addysg Gymraeg, hyrwyddo gwasanaethau Cymraeg i Blant a chynnig grwpiau Cymraeg ar gyfer babanod a phlant bach. Maent hefyd yn darparu bagiau Dechrau Da o lyfrau Cymraeg a chaiff gohebiaeth drwy Dechrau'n Deg ei chyfieithu ac mae ar gael yn Saesneg ac yn Gymraeg.

Caiff gwybodaeth y Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluol ei dosbarthu'n rheolaidd i deuluoedd drwy gysylltiadau Blynnyddoedd Cynnar a Phlentyn Iach Cymru. Mae bagiau Dechrau Da ar gael, sy'n cynnwys llyfr Cymraeg.

Mae Ymwelwyr Iechyd Dechrau'n Deg yn gweithio mewn ardaloedd o amddifadedd a ddynodwyd gan Lywodraeth Cymru, yn annog plant i fynychu gofal plant Dechrau'n Deg a hysbysu rhieni fod gofal plant Dechrau'n Deg ar gael yn y Gymraeg. Fel gwasanaeth cynigiant ystod eang o ddewisiadau i rieni drwy'r dilynol:

- hyrwyddo a chefnogi cyfleoedd i siarad Cymraeg
- atgyfeirio at ein Therapydd Lleferydd ac Iaith sy'n medru'r Gymraeg
- sefydlu grwpiau dwyieithog Lleferydd ac Iaith ar draws y Fwrdeistref Sirol.

Gofalwyr Plant

Dywed pob un o'r 32 o ofalwyr plant ym Mlaenau Gwent mai Saesneg yw prif iaith eu lleoliad. Fodd bynnag, mae 7 yn dweud eu bod hefyd yn defnyddio'r Gymraeg yn eu lleoliad. Caiff pob gofalwr plant gynnig mynediad llawn i raglen hyfforddiant yr Awdurdod Lleol, sydd yn flaenrol wedi cynnwys cyrsiau Cymraeg. Yn ychwanegol cawsant eu hannog i lenwi gwiriwr Cymraeg Camau a rhannwyd gwybodaeth am gyrsiau Camau gyda phob darpariwydd. Caiff y defnydd o'r Gymraeg ei annog mewn ymarfer bob dydd ar gyfer y gofalwyr plant hynny sy'n cymryd rhan yn Rhaglen Sicrwydd Ansawdd yr Awdurdod Lleol. Bydd hyn yn parhau i gael ei annog, ei gefnogi a'i ddatblygu wrth symud ymlaen.

Dim ond un ysgol gynradd Gymraeg, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, sydd gan Blaenau Gwent ar hyn o bryd sy'n cynnig lleoedd meithrin llawn-amser. Gosodwyd y capasiti meithrin ar 60 lle am y 4 blynedd ddiwethaf.

Darpariaeth Feithrin a Gynhelir

Mae Ffigur 2 isod yn dangos nifer a canran yr ysgolion meithrin cyfrwng Cymraeg yng nghyswllt cyfanswm y cohort meithrin. Mae'r data dilynol yn seiliedig ar ddata CYBLD:

Ffigur 2: Argaeledd Lleoedd Meithrin Cyfrwng Cymraeg Tueddiadau 5-mllynedd

	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Cohort plant 3 oed	732		769		729		696		683	
Nifer derbyn / ac fel % o'r cyfanswm cohort oedran meithrin	41	5%	60	8%	60	8%	60	9%	60	9%
Lleoedd a lenwyd/ac fel % o'r cyfanswm cohort	22	3%	30	4%	40	5%	34	5%	40	6%
Lleoedd sydd ar gael fel % o'r cyfanswm cohort	19	3%	30	4%	20	3%	26	3%	20	3%

Ar hyn o bryd, mae capasiti digonol i ateb y galw o fewn y ddarpariaeth feithrin a gynhelir yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Mae nifer disgyblion meithrin wedi codi dros y 3 blynedd ddiwethaf. Dyranwyd lleoedd i 45 disgybl yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg ar gyfer mis Medi 2021. Nid yw hyn yn cynnwys ffigurau codi'n 3 Tymor y Gwanwyn 2022, a benderfynir fel canlyniad i gylch derbyn meithrin 2022/23 (dyddiad cau 15 Hydref 2021).

Mae Asesiad Digonolrwydd Gofal Plant Blaenau Gwent yn cael ei ddatblygu ar hyn o bryd a disgwylir y caiff y drafft terfynol ei gwblhau erbyn mis Mawrth 2022, ar gyfer ymgynghoriad o fis Ebrill 2022. Caiff yr asesiad 5 mlynedd ei gwblhau yn 2022, gydag adolygiad blynyddol. Cynhelir hyn yn unol â phrosesau adolygiad blynyddol y Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg ac adroddiadau cysylltiedig. Dynododd yr Asesiad blaenorol fwch mewn argaeledd darpariaeth Gymraeg yng Nghwm Ebwy Fawr, sy'n cael ei drin drwy Grant Cyfalaf Cynnig Gofal Plant, gyda lleoliad cyfrwng Cymraeg

newydd ar y rhaglen i'w weithredu o 2023. Bydd canlyniad yr Asesiad Digonolrwydd sydd ar y gweill (2022) yn llywio'r blaenoriaethau daearyddol yn nhermau bylchau, a gaiff eu cyfarch wrth symud ymlaen. Caiff hyn ei gasglu a'i ddatblygu fel rhan o broses adolygu Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mllynedd a'r cynllun cyflenwi cysylltiedig.

Darpariaeth Gofal Plant Cyfrwng Cymraeg

Ar gyfer yr Asesiad Digonolrwydd Gofal Plant llawn (2017), sy'n cyflwyno canfyddiadau llawn yng nghyswllt gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg yn 2016/17, cliciwch ar y ddolen ddilynol [CBS Blaenau Gwent: Asesiad a Chynllun Gweithredu Digonolrwydd Gofal Plant 2017 \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) Nododd asesiad 2017 fwlch mewn darpariaeth Gymraeg yn ardal cynllunio cymunedol Ebwy Fawr gyda thair ardal cynllunio cymunedol arall (Sirhywi, Gogledd Ebwy Fach a De Ebwy Fach), bob un yn cael eu gwasanaethu gan ddarpariaeth Gymraeg bryd hynny.

Dangosodd arolwg a gynhaliwyd o rieni, er nad oedd mwyafrif y rhieni yn dynodi rhwystrau i gael mynediad i ofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg, bod rhai rhieni yn dynodi bod peidio cael darpariaeth yn lleol yn rhwystr. Felly, cytunwyd ar weithredu i lenwi'r bwlch yn ardal Ebwy Fawr ac mae cynlluniau dilynol i sefydlu darpariaeth Gymraeg yn cael eu datblygu'n fanwl fel y nodir islaw.

Defnyddiwyd Rhaglen Cyfalaf Cynnig Gofal Plant i sefydlu Canolfan Gofal Dydd lawn cyfrwng Cymraeg ar yr un lleoliad â safle adeilad newydd Ysgol Gynradd Glynceod yng Nglynebwy. Cafodd dyluniad y safle ei gytuno ac mae yn y broses gynllunio ar hyn o bryd. Yn dilyn yr asesiad diwethaf, mae'r darpariaeth gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg yn ardal cynllunio cymunedol Sirhywi wedi ailgategoreiddio eu hunain fel cyfrwng Saesneg a Chymreig. Felly, dynodwyd bwlch yn yr ardal honno ar gyfer darpariaeth Gymraeg. Cafodd cynlluniau i lenwi'r bwlch hwn eu halinio gyda'r Rhaglen Grant Cyfalaf Cyfrwng Cymraeg. Mae hyn hefyd yn cysylltu gyda Rhaglen Ailddatblygu Ebwy Fawr Band B Ysgolion 21ain Ganrif ac mae Cylch Meithrin yn ffurfio rhan o'r cynlluniau ar gyfer ysgol egin cyfrwng Cymraeg newydd yn Nhredegar,

Mae Cylch Meithrin newydd ar y gweill ar gyfer Tredegar, yn dilyn cyflwyno Ti a Fi. Sefydlwyd y ddarpariaeth yn ystod 2019 a'i gofrestru yn 2020, ac mae recriwtio staff yn mynd rhagddo ar hyn o bryd. Disgwylir i'r lleoliad agor yn ystod tymor yr hydref 2021 a bydd hefyd yn cynnig lleoedd Dechrau'n Deg.

Mae meithrinfa ddydd bresennol yng Nglynebwy wedi ymrwmo i ddarparu sesiynau Cylch Meithrin dyddiol (sesiwn un awr yn y bore a hefyd y prynhawn). Mae'r lleoliad wedi derbyn cymorth Croesi'r Bont ers canol Ionawr 2020. Dynodwyd Swyddog Croesi'r Bont neilltuol iddynt, sy'n gweithio'n agos gyda nhw i sefydlu amserlen ar gyfer y sesiynau, a ddiweddarir bob bythefnos. Caiff datblygiad y plant yn y Gymraeg wedyn ei fonitro drwy asesiadau a gynhelir bedair gwaith y flwyddyn. Bu'r adborth o'r feithrinfa yn gadarnhaol hyd yma, gyda photensial ar gyfer cynyddu darpariaeth gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y dyfodol.

Lleoedd Meithrin nas cynhelir (yn cynnwys darpariaeth Mudiad Meithrin)

Ar hyn o bryd mae 2 grŵp Cylch Meithrin yng Nghwm Ebwy Fach, un ohonynt yn cael ei redeg gan Bwyllgor Rheoli a'r llall gan Mudiad Meithrin. Manylion y grwpiau yw:

- Helyg Bychan, sydd wedi cofrestru gydag Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru ers mis Medi 2010. Mae ar yr un safle ag Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg ac mae'n gweithredu darpariaeth gofal dydd llawn ar gyfer 38 o blant (19 yn y bore a 19 yn y prynhawn), rhwng dwy a phump oed. Mae gan y lleoliad 50 o blant ar eu cofrestr ar hyn o bryd, sydd angen darpariaeth ar wahanol ddyddiau ac ar wahanol adegau. Felly, er nad ydynt wedi mynd dros eu hargaeledd lleoedd, nid oes ganddynt unrhyw leoedd ar gael ar hyn o bryd.
- Gwdihw (Brynithel), sydd wedi cofrestru gydag Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru ym mis Rhagfyr 2015 i ddarparu gofal dydd ar gyfer hyd at 38 o blant yng Nghylch Meithrin Gwdihw. Mae'r lleoliad yn gweithio mewn partneriaeth gyda thîm Dechrau'n Deg Blaenau Gwent ac mae mewn adeilad modern, pwrpasol Dechrau'n Deg ar Stad Penrhwi ym Mrynithel. Yn 2020, cofrestrodd Gwdihw (Brynithel) i ddod yn ddarparydd addysg blynyddoedd cynnar o fis Medi 2021. Mae 28 o blant yn mynychu'r lleoliad ar hyn o bryd, gyda 10 lle ar gael. Yn unol ag amcanestyniadau disgyblion, bydd gan Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg gapasiti digonol i gefnogi pontio plant o'r ddarpariaeth hon i o leiaf 5 mlynedd nesaf. Caiff hyn ei fonitro'n barhaus.

Mae'r ddwy ddarpariaeth yn bwydo i Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Mae lleoedd gofal plant ar gael drwy gydol y flwyddyn ar gyfer plant 2-4 oed. Maent yn cynnig lleoedd llawn-amser a hefyd ran-amser. Fodd bynnag, mae'n broblemus i gynnwys cyfanswm nifer y lleoedd cofrestredig mewn lleoliadau nas cynhelir gan y bydd y nifer o ofodau sydd ar gael ar gyfer plant meithrin, fel % o'r lleoedd hyn, eisoes wedi eu cymryd gan blant Dechrau'n Deg a/neu blant 2 oed sy'n talu ffi.

Mae Pobl Bach yn leoliad gofal plant Cymraeg a Saenseg gan olygu y caiff y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg eu defnyddio o fewn y lleoliad. Defnyddir y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg fel ieithoedd cyfathrebu gyda phlant a phobl ifanc a defnyddir y ddwy iaith ar gyfer gweithgareddau. Caiff y ddwy iaith hefyd eu defnyddio ar gyfer gweinyddiaeth y lleoliad. Mae'r lleoliad yn cyfathrebu gyda rhieni naill ai yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg yn union â dewis rhieni. Mae'r lleoliad ar hyn o bryd yn darparu gofal dydd llawn ar gyfer 25 o blant 2-5 oed. Maent yn cynnig sesiynau bore a phrynhawn. Mae'r ddarpariaeth yn gweithio mewn partneriaeth gyda thîm Dechrau'n Deg Blaenau Gwent ac yn cynnig lleoedd i blant a gaiff naill ai eu hariannu'n breifat neu drwy Dechrau'n Deg. Gall y lleoliad ddarparu ar gyfer hyd at 50 o blant, gyda 49 o blant wedi cymryd lleoedd ar hyn o bryd, ac 1 lle ar gael.

Pontio

Yn ystod 2019/20, roedd 45 o blant yn mynychu darpariaeth Mudiad Meithrin, a symudodd 14 (31%) ohonynt ymlaen i addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Mae cyfraddau pontio o Helyg Bychan yn uwch nag ar gyfer Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw. Soniodd nifer fach o rieni am bryderon am blant oed meithrin yn teithio ar fws ysgol. Fodd bynnag, gobeithir gyda Chylch Meithrin Gwdihw yn dod yn ddarparydd addysg blynyddoedd cynnar, y gall plant ei fynychu tan y dosbarth derbyn, y gellir gwneud gwaith paratoi gyda rhieni a phlant yn gysylltiedig gyda chludiant gyda'r nod o gynyddu cyfraddau pontio i Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

Y bwriad yw helpu'r Cyngor i gyflawni ein targedau ar gyfer cyfraddau pontio, cynhelir dadansoddiad manwl pellach o ddata Mudiad Meithrin. I ddeall y rhesymeg am ddewis rhieni, a'n galluogi i symud i weithio'n fwy agos gyda rhieni yn trin unrhyw ystyriaethau

neu broblemau a all fod ganddynt. Yn ychwanegol, bydd hyn yn cyfrannu at ddatblygu cynllun hyrwyddo ac ymgysylltu effeithlon, sy'n cydnabod ac yn anelu i fynd i'r afael â'r heriau a wynebir gan rieni.

Cynnig Gofal Plant

Mae Ffigur 3 isod yn dangos nifer y plant a gymerodd le drwy'r cynnig Gofal Plant 30 awr mewn lleoliad gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Ffigur 3: Dyranriad Lleoedd Cyfrwng Cymraeg Cynnig Gofal Plant

Lleoliad	2019	2020	2021
Gwdihw (cyfrwng Cymraeg)	1	1	1
Helyg Bychan (cyfrwng Cymraeg)	1	0	0
Pobl Bach (dwyieithog)	11	4	4

Dechrau'n Deg

Mae gan Blaenau Gwent 11 lleoliad Dechrau'n Deg ar draws y Fwrdeistref Sirol ar hyn o bryd:

- Caiff 3 eu rhedeg gan yr Awdurdod Lleol (Cefn Golau, Swfrydd Sunflowers a Twinkle Tots Garnlydan).
- Mae 5 yn ddarpariaethau cyfrwng Saesneg a gomisiynwyd (Tweenie Tots, Buds to Blossom, Jack & Jills, Mini Me's a Flowering Shrubs).
- Mae 2 yn ddarpariaethau cyfrwng Cymraeg a gomisiynwyd (Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw a Helyg Bychan); ac
- 1 wedi ei gofrestru fel dwyieithog (Pobl Bach).

Ffigur 4: Trosolwg Darpariaeth Dechrau'n Deg

Darparydd Gofal Plant Dechrau'n Deg – Enw a Chyfeiriad	Awdurdod Lleol neu leoliad a gomisiynwyd	Nifer lleoedd gofal plant sydd ar gael ym mhob sesiwn bore	Nifer lleoedd gofal plant sydd ar gael ym mhob sesiwn prynhawn	Cyfanswm nifer lleoedd gofal plant sydd ar gael fesul diwrnod
First Friends	Awdurdod Lleol	20	20	40
Pobl Bach	Comisiynwyd	25	25	50
Tweenie Tots	Comisiynwyd	28	28	56
Twinkle Tots	Awdurdod Lleol	28	0	28
Buds to Blossoms	Comisiynwyd	26	26	52
Cylch Meithrin Helyg Bychan	Comisiynwyd	19	19	38
Flowering Shrubs	Comisiynwyd	48	48	134
Mini Me's	Comisiynwyd	20	20	40
Jack and Jill	Comisiynwyd	24	24	48
Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw	Comisiynwyd	19	19	38
Sunflowers	Awdurdod Lleol	26	0	26

Mae pob lleoliad cyfrwng Saesneg yn defnyddio'r Gymraeg yn achlysurol fel rhan o'u hymarfer, er mwyn cyflwyno'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg i holl blant Dechrau'n Deg a hyrwyddo manteision bod yn ddwyieithog drwy'r holl broses gais a phontio.

Mudiad Meithrin

Mae Cymraeg i Blant yn brosiect Mudiad Meithrin sy'n cefnogi darpar rieni a rhieni newydd i ddewis gofal plant ac addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Mae'r Swyddog Cymraeg i Blant yn gweithio 4 diwrnod yr wythnos, a gaiff eu rhannu rhwng Cynghorau Blaenau Gwent a Thorfaen, ac mae'n cynnal sesiynau cymorth wythnosol ar gyfer rhieni a baban ar draws y sir tebyg i:

- Arwyddo stori a chân
- Tylino a yoga i fabanod
- Cuppa & Chat Cymraeg (ar-lein)
- Sesiynau fi a fy maban ar gyfer darpar rieni a rhieni newydd ar fanteision bod yn ddwyieithog (ar-lein)

Mae Ffigur 5 yn rhoi trosolwg o'r grwpiau a gynhaliwyd ym Mlaenau Gwent, ynghyd â'r nifer o rieni a wnaeth eu mynychu. Mae'r grwpiau hyn yn cynnwys: Arwyddo stori a chân, tylino babanod a yoga babanod (Glynebwy, Tredegar, Aber-bîg, Blaenau). O 2020 ymlaen cafodd grwpiau ar-lein eu datblygu (yn cynnwys (Fi a Fy Maban, Cuppa & Chat Cymraeg, Tylino Baban, Arwyddo Stori a Chân).

Ffigur 5: Trosolwg Data Grŵp

	Nifer Grwpiau	Nifer a Fynychodd
2018-2019	65	332
2019-2020	124	750
2020-2021	** 214 ar-lein	296

Mae'r Swyddog Cymraeg i Blant yn gweithio'n agos gyda'r timau Bydwagedd ac Ymwelwyr lechyd lleol, gan gyfeirio rhieni at y grwpiau a chadw cysylltiad rheolaidd gyda nhw i roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf ar y cyfleoedd lleol sydd ar gael i rieni newydd. Caiff gwybodaeth ei rhannu am fanteision dwyieithrwydd cynnar, sut i gael mynediad i adnoddau dwyieithog i'w defnyddio gartref ac ar-lein a chefnogaeth i gynyddu hyder rhieni a gofalwyr mewn defnyddio'r Gymraeg neu ei dysgu drwy gofrestru ar gwrs Clwb Cwtsh neu ar gyfer sesiynau ymarfer.

Mae **Clwb Cwtsh** yn rhaglen flasu wyth-wythnos yn canolbwyntio ar siarad Cymraeg gyda phlant ifanc. Fe'i hanelwyd at ddarpar rieni, rhieni/gofalwyr ac aelodau o'u teuluoedd estynedig. Nid yw'n rhaid medru siarad na deall unrhyw Gymraeg i ymuno. Caiff y prosiect ei reoli gan y Mudiad Meithrin.

Clwb Cylch Yn ystod y pandemig, lansiodd Mudiad Meithrin weithgaredd Cymraeg yn y cartref drwy ddarparu sesiynau agored dan faner 'Clwb Cylch' (#ClwbCylch) ar gyfer plant oed meithrin a'u rhieni drwy lwyfannau digidol. Rhoddir pwyslais neilltuoel ar blant o deuluoedd lle na chaiff y Gymraeg ei siarad gartref.

Mae rhaglen Sefydlu a Symud (SAS) Mudiad Meithrin yn anelu i sefydlu 40 Cylch Meithrin newydd gyda Cylch Ti a Fi erbyn 2021 mewn ardaloedd penodol o Gymru lle nad oes Cylch Meithrin ar hyn o bryd. Mae'r datblygiadau ym Mlaenau Gwent yn cynnwys:

- 1 Cylch Meithrin yn cael ei ddatblygu yn ardal Tredegar, gyda Ti a Fi eisoes wedi ei sefydlu yn yr ardal.
- 1 Feithrinfa Ddydd yn darparu sesiynau Cylch Meithrin dyddiol gyda chefnogaeth rhaglen Croesi'r Bont – gyda'r nod o gyflwyno methodoleg trochi yn y Gymraeg o fewn Cylchoedd Meithrin a sicrhau pontio ieithyddol o'r Cylch i ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Deunydd Hyrwyddo

Mae'r llenyddiaeth ddilynol ar gael drwy Mudiad Meithrin i gefnogi gyda gwybodaeth i rieni am ofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg sy'n ateb cwestiynau cyffredin:

- Mae 'Baby Steps into Welsh' yn gyfres newydd o bodlediadau. Wedi'u cyflwyno gan Nia Parry, mae'r podlediadau yn rhoi cyfle i rieni adnabyddus i drafod a rhannu eu profiadau go iawn am addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg [Podcast \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)
- Sianel YouTube Mudiad Meithrin [Mudiad Meithrin - YouTube](#)
- Pamffledyn amlieithog mewn 8 iaith yn disgrifio opsiynau gofal plant [taflen amlieithog cyflawn 9.9.19.pdf \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)
- [Pam dewis addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)
- [Cwestiynau cyffredin ac atebion \(meithrin.cymru\)](#)

Mae gan Fenter Iaith (BGMT) Swyddog Datblygu sy'n aelod o Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent ac yn cynorthwyo wrth dargedu darpar rieni. Mae'r Swyddog yn rhoi gwybodaeth am fanteision magu plant yn ddwyieithog a defnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y cartref yn ogystal â hyrwyddo addysg Gymraeg yn gyffredinol, drwy drefnu amserlen o ddigwyddiadau teuluol mewn ardaloedd daearyddol strategol.

Mae PACEY Cymru yn gweithio gydag awdurdodau lleol a phartneriaid eraill i hyrwyddo gwarchod plant fel gyrfa ac yn cefnogi recriwtio i'r sector. Mae PACEY yn awr wedi ei gynnwys o fewn y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg a bydd yn gweithio'n agos gyda Blaenau Gwent o hyn ymlaen i gefnogi datblygiad Deilliant 1 a 7.

Niferoedd Disgyblion Meithrin a Derbyn a'r Cohort Cyffredinol

Mae Ffigur 6 yn rhoi manylion data (CYBLD) y cohort meithrin a dosbarth derbyn dros y 3 blynedd ddiwethaf, ynghyd â'r nifer o lleoedd Meithrin a Dosbarth Derbyn a ddyrannwyd yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Roedd ceisiadau ar gyfer plant codi'n 3 ym mis Ionawr a mis Ebrill 2022 yn fyw o 1 Medi 2021.

Ffigur 6: Nifer Cohort Meithrin a Dosbarth Derbyn, lleoedd a ddyrannwyd yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg ac fel canran o'r cohort

	Meithrin			Derbyn		
	Cyfanswm Cohort	Nifer ym Mro Helyg	%	Cyfanswm Cohort	Nifer ym Mro Helyg	%
2019/20	709	34	5%	728	40	5%
2020/21	676	42	6%	710	38	5%
2021/22	749	45	6%	683	42	6%

Ble'r ydym yn anelu bod o fewn 5 mlynedd cyntaf y Cynllun hwn a sut y bwriadwn gyrraedd yno?

Ym mis Medi 2023 bydd Blaenau Gwent yn agor Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg egin 210 lle ar safle Chartist Way yn Nhredegar/Cwm Sirhywi. Datblygir yr ysgol drwy fodel twf egin. Yn ei blwyddyn gyntaf, bydd yr ysgol yn derbyn hyd at 24 o blant Meithrin a Dosbarth Derbyn.

Anelwn sicrhau mwy o ofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg yn ardal ogleddol Ebwy Fawr ynghyd ag ardal Tredegar/Cwm Sirhywi er mwyn sicrhau continwmm blynyddoedd cynnar effeithlon yn ogystal â chreu galw cynyddol a gwell pontio i addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Felly mae dau leoliad gofal plant cyfrwng Cymraeg ychwanegol ar y rhaglen i'w gweithredu o dymor yr Hydref 2023 fel sy'n dilyn:

- Darpariaeth lleoliad cyn-ysgol 28 lle yn yr un adeilad â'r ysgol gynradd Gymraeg newydd yn Nhredegar, a gaiff hefyd ei ystyried ar gyfer cofrestru Dechrau'n Deg; a
- Lleoliad gofal dydd llawn yn cynnig lleoedd ar draws ei ystod gwasanaethau (babanod, plant bach, gofal amlap cyn-ysgol, ar ôl ysgol, clwb gwyliau). Caiff y lleoliad hwn ei ddarparu ar gyfer 58 o blant, felly dim mwy na 58 o blant ar unrhyw un amser. Byddai'r ddarpariaeth yn ardal Glyncoed yng Nglynebwy. Caiff y ddarpariaeth ei datlbygu yn unol â'r bylchau a dynodir fel rhan o'r Asesiad Digonolrwydd Gofal Plant (2017).

Mae'r Cyngor yn cydnabod y bydd nifer y plant sy'n gwneud cais dechreuol i fynychu'r ddau leoliad blynyddoedd cynnar yn tyfu flwyddyn ar flwyddyn, wrth i'r lleoliadau sefydlu. Bydd Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol yn cydweithio'n agos er mwyn monitro yn unol ag amcanestyniadau disgyblion, cynllunio lleoedd disgyblion ac astudiaethau dichonoldeb y dyfodol wedi alinio gyda thwf addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Caiff hyn ei adrodd yn fewnol yn unol gyda'r adolygiad o'r Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mlynedd.

Mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent yn anelu i weithredu ein hail ysgol gynradd Gymraeg yn llwyddiannus, wrth ochr ein strategaeth hyrwyddo twf addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg, a gaiff ei ategu a'i gyfoethogi gan ddarpariaeth gofal plant ychwanegol. Byddwn yn parhau i weithio'n agos gyda'n cydweithwyr yn y sector blynyddoedd cynnar i wella cyfraddau pontio rhwng gofal plant blynyddoedd cynnar a darparwyr addysg ac addysg statudol.

Wrth gyflawni ein nodau, byddwn yn:

- Adolygu'n ffurfiol a chryfhau ein Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu a'r cynllun gweithredu cyfathrebu cysylltiedig, mewn partneriaeth gydag is-grŵp Cyfathrebu y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, ynghyd â gweithwyr iechyd proffesiynol allweddol perthnasol e.e. Ymwelwyr Iechyd. Yn ei dro, bydd hyn yn cynyddu a sicrhau lefelau addas o adnoddau i ddatblygu prosesau ymgynghori a deunyddiau cyfathrebu a marchnata effeithlon. Wrth ochr hyn, byddwn yn gweithio ar gynllun gweithredu ymgysylltu neilltuol gyda ffocws ar fapio a sicrhau ymgyfraniad rhanddeiliaid allweddol.
- Datblygu canllawiau, offerynnau ac adnoddau, ynghyd â rhaglen codi ymwybyddiaeth ar gyfer partneriaid allweddol i ategu'r strategaeth a nodir uchod. Nod hyn fydd cefnogi teuluoedd i wneud penderfyniadau gwybodus am

y blynyddoedd cynnar ac addysg, tra'n hyrwyddo manteision bod yn ddwyieithog, chwalu chwedlau a thrin pryderon rhieni/gofalwyr ar gam cynnar.

- Cefnogi rhieni i gael mynediad i sgiliau a dulliau yn y Gymraeg, drwy weithio'n agos mewn partneriaeth gydag ysgolion, addysg oedolion, addysg bellach a darparwyr hyfforddiant. Hefyd, codi ymwybyddiaeth o a hyrwyddo adnoddau presennol ar gyfer rhieni. Mae hyn yn cynnwys gwefan rhieni RhAG sy'n anelu i gynnig cefnogaeth a hefyd wybodaeth: www.welsh4parents.cymu
- Mewn partneriaeth gyda'r sector blynyddoedd cynnar, parhau i adolygu data a darpariaeth i gynllunio a llywio ein strategaeth twf cyfrwng Cymraeg. Bydd y Cyngor yn gweithio i sicrhau fod opsiynau gofal plant hygyrch drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg ar gael ledled y fwrdeistref, yn cynnwys Dechrau'n Deg. Bydd y Cyngor yn defnyddio data Asesiad Digonolrwydd Gofal Plant 2022 i lywio a chyfeirio datblygiad, ynghyd ag adolygiadau dilynol.
- Sicrhau rheoli prosiect effeithlon ar ddatblygiadau gofal plant a hefyd ysgolion i sicrhau y cânt eu cyflawni i'r rhaglen a'r proffil, tra'n defnyddio'r Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu i gefnogi'r galw cynyddol am leoedd cyfrwng Cymraeg i ddisgyblion.
- Datblygu Strategaeth Trochi a darpariaeth ar gyfer hwyrddyfodiaid, gan feithrin y capasiti i'r ddarpariaeth hon ddatblygu a thyfu. Sefydlu model arfer gorau i sicrhau cysondeb gweithredu, gwella cyfleoedd ar gyfer pontio, drwy weithio mewn partneriaeth gydag ysgolion a chynghorau ym mhob rhan o ranbarth De Ddwyrain Cymru.
- Sicrhau datblygiad ac adolygiad effeithlon o'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru ac addysgeg gysylltiedig ym mhob rhan o'r sectorau blynyddoedd cynnar ac addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Cyfrannu at bontio disgyblion yn effeithlon, ymgysylltu a deilliannau ar bob cam o'r daith dysgwyr.
- Cynnal astudiaeth dichonoldeb yn unol â'r potensial i gynyddu capasiti o fewn y sector cynradd rhwng 2027 a 2028, yn defnyddio'r model twf egin a fabwysiadwyd gan Flaenau Gwent i gyflawni'r maes hwn o waith. Caiff yr astudiaeth dichonoldeb ei chynnal gan grŵp prosiect neilltuol a'i llywio gan setiau data allweddol, ymchwil ac asesiadau yn cynnwys:
 - yr Asesiad Digonolrwydd Gofal Plant
 - arolwg galw rhiant/gofalwyr
 - adolygiad dalgylch ac adolygiad dilynol o'r Polisi Trafnidiaeth Rhwng y Cartref ac Ysgol ac Ôl 16 (caiff y diwethaf hwn ei adolygu'n flynyddol)
 - data derbyn i ysgolion ac amcanestyniadau disgyblion
 - mapio darpariaeth trochi
 - galw uwchradd a data cynllunio
 - archwiliadau mynediad darpariaeth (fydd hefyd yn rhoi ystyriaeth i'r pellter rhwng y cartref a'r ysgol)

Bydd Addysg yn cynnal gwerthusiad opsiynau manwl mewn partneriaeth gyda Cynllunio, Gwasanaethau Cymunedol, Stadau ac Ysgolion a'u datblygu i'w hystyried drwy brosesau gwleidyddol y Cyngor yn 2028/29. Nod y darn hwn o waith fydd asesu opsiynau wrth gynyddu'r capasiti tu hwnt i'r targed o 75, gan weithio at y targed ystod uwch o 105.

- Gweithio'n agos gydag arweinwyr ysgolion i ddynodi cyfleoedd ar gyfer gweithredu Canllawiau Categoriaddio'r Gymraeg Llywodraeth Cymru (gyda chyfeiriad neilltuol at Gategorïau 2 a 3) ym mhob rhan o'r stad ysgolion. Yn ei dro, cynyddu cyfleoedd a gwella safon addysg Gymraeg o fewn y system addysg lleol. Bydd y Cyngor yn gweithio gyda'r Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg a

phartneriaid allweddol eraill yn Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent i ddatblygu asesiad anghenion a chynllun gweithredu cysylltiedig, er mwyn cefnogi ysgolion perthnasol i ddatblygu o fewn y categorïau uchod.

- Gweithio'n agos gyda'r sector lechyd er mwyn llywio'r broses fonitro wedi'i halinio i gyflawni'r deiliant hwn.
- Gweithio'n agos gyda phartneriaid allweddol i sicrhau cynllunio datblygu gweithlu effeithlon, yn unol â recriwtio staff addysgu a staff ysgol perthnasol eraill i hwyluso cynyddu darpariaeth.

Ble'r ydym ni'n disgwyl bod ar ddiwedd ein Cynllun deng mlynedd?

Ar ddiwedd y cynllun 10-mlynedd, mae Blaenau Gwent yn anelu i sicrhau fod 100% o'r plant sy'n derbyn gofal plant ac addysg blynnyddoedd cynnar yn pontio i addysg statudol cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Byddwn yn gweithredu 2 leoliad gofal plant ychwanegol yn llwyddiannus, ynghyd â'n hail Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg, gan hefyd gynyddu capasiti Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

Bydd y Cyngor wedi cynnal astudiaeth dichonoldeb yn unol â'r galw cynyddol a welir fel canlyniad i weithredu llwyddiannus ein Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu, gan fod yn sail i'n cynllun ar gyfer capasiti ymhellach o fewn y sectorau gofal plant a chynradd rhwng 2027 a 2032.

Data Allweddol 2022

Cafodd y data dilynol ei gyfrif yn seiliedig ar sicrhau derbyn disgyblion hyd at uchaswm y capasiti yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg (51 lle meithrin llawn-amser), yr Ysgol Egin newydd 210 lle (30 lle meithrin llawn-amser). Caiff y canrannau eu cyfrif ar y cohort o 728 disgybl

Nifer a % plant 3 oed yn derbyn eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
45	6%	69	10%	71	10%	73	10%	81	11%
2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028	
81	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%

Deiliant 2

Mwy o blant dosbarth derbyn/pump oed yn cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

Ble'r ydym arni yn awr?

Mae prosesau cadarn ar gyfer prosesau cynllunio, rheoli a monitro poblogaeth disgyblion yn eu lle drwy'r Cyngor a ddaw o fewn cylch gorchwyl y tîm Trawsnewid Addysg. Caiff amcanestyniadau disgyblion eu cynnal ddwywaith y flwyddyn gan roi ystyriaeth i ddata genedigaethau byw, data tueddiadau 3-blynedd,

datblygiadau tai, nifer bresennol disgyblion ar y gyflogres, ynghyd â mewnfudo ac allfudo. Caiff ffigurau eu hamcanestyn am gyfnod o 5 mlynedd gyda chywirdeb amcanestyniadau o 98% ar gyfer cynradd a 100% ar gyfer uwchradd.

Mae data presennol amcanestyn nifer disgyblion yn dangos fod angen i'r Cyngor gynyddu'r nifer o leoedd sydd ar gael yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

Cafodd y capasiti a'r nifer derbyn cysylltiedig o fewn yr ysgol eu gostwng yn flaenorol, er mwyn mynd i'r afael â lleoedd gwag cyn dechrau ac yn ystod cam dechreuol Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg 2017-20. Mae nifer disgyblion wedi dechrau cynyddu ers yr amser hwnnw.

Mae amcanestyniadau nifer disgyblion Ionawr 2021 yn dangos tueddiad ar i fyny yn nhermau nifer disgyblion yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg rhwng 2022 a 2025, gan arwain at faterion digonolrwydd, gyda mwy o ddisgyblion nag o leoedd ar gael.

Mae amcanestyniad diffyg o rhwng -2 i -4 lle, sy'n debygol o gynyddu yn seiliedig ar ddata tueddiadau, a byddai'n golygu na all y Cyngor ateb y galw cynyddol os na chynyddir y capasiti.

Caiff capasiti ysgolion ei adolygu'n flynyddol yn unol â Chanllawiau Mesur Capasiti Ysgolion yng Nghymru Llywodraeth Cymru (2011). Caiff capasiti ysgolion ei benderfynu yn unol â nifer y disgyblion ar y gyflogres a defnydd ystafelloedd, gyda'r nod o ostwng lleoedd gwag a sicrhau twf cynaliadwy fel sydd angen yn unol ag amcanestyniadau/galw disgyblion. Mae'r Cyngor yn anelu i gadw gwared iach er mwyn cynorthwyo'r galw. Cafodd capasiti Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg ei addasu'n flynyddol er mwyn gostwng y gwared a nodwyd mewn blynyddoedd diweddar, fodd bynnag cafodd hyn ei reoli drwy ddull hunan-gymorth. Mae'r dull hwn wedi cefnogi'r ysgol i dyfu yn unol â'r galw. Mae cynnydd yn yr amcanestyniad o ddisgyblion mewn addysg gynradd Gymraeg ym Mlaenau Gwent, sy'n cefnogi'r angen am ail ddarpariaeth cynradd, ynghyd gydag ailgyfunio'r amgylchedd addysgu a dysgu yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

Mae Ffigur 7 islaw yn rhoi trosolwg o'r cohort Dosbarth Derbyn cyffredinol ar gyfer Blaenau Gwent, ynghyd â'r lleoedd sydd ar gael, y galw a'r capasiti sydd ar gael mewn dosbarthiadau derbyn ar gyfer disgyblion ychwanegol rhwng 2017 a 2021.

Ffigur 7: Data Cohort Dosbarth

	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Cohort disgyblion Dosbarth Derbyn	740		790		780		731		718	
Lleoedd Derbyn ar gael mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg	51	7%	36	5%	34	4%	30	4%	30	4%
Lleoedd dosbarth derbyn a lanwyd mewn darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg/% o'r holl gohort	24	2%	25	3%	30	4%	39	5%	36	5%
Capasiti lleoedd dosbarth derbyn ar gael mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg %	27	4%	11	1%	4	1%	-9	-1%	-6	-1%

Bydd y Cyngor yn agor ail Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg yn Nhredegar/Cwm Sirhywi ym mis Medi 2023, a gaiff ei datblygu drwy fodel twf egin. Bydd yr ysgol newydd yn mynd i'r afael â'r galw cudd a ddynodwyd o fewn Tredegar/Cwm Sirhywi. Fel rhan o'r Prosiect Trochi a gyllidir gan Lywodraeth Cymru, mae'r Cyngor yn cwmpasu datblygiad darpariaeth ategol yn yr ysgol newydd, er mwyn dechrau trochi yn unol â'r galw pan agorir y ddarpariaeth yn 2023. Caiff cynlluniau pellach ar gyfer hynny eu cwblhau erbyn dechrau'r flwyddyn ariannol newydd, pan gwblheir cyfnod dechreuol y prosiect. Bydd gan yr ysgol newydd hefyd ran allweddol wrth gynyddu lleoedd addysg Gymraeg yn unol â tharged Blaenau Gwent o gynyddu nifer addysg disgyblion Blwyddyn 1 drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg gan 6%.

Mae ceisiadau am drosglwyddo o fewn y flwyddyn ar gyfer lle yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg dros y 3 blynedd ddiwethaf ar ôl dechrau addysg mewn addysg cyfrwng Saesneg fel sy'n dilyn:

- 2018/19 – 10 disgybl (6 disgybl Blwyddyn 1, 1 Blwyddyn 2, 1 Blwyddyn 3, 1 Blwyddyn 4, ac 1 Blwyddyn 6)
- 2019/20 – 9 disgybl (2 disgybl Meithrin, 2 Blwyddyn 1, 3 Blwyddyn 2, 1 Blwyddyn 5 ac 1 Blwyddyn 6)
- 2020/21 – 6 disgybl (3 disgybl Meithrin, 1 Dosbarth Derbyn, 1 Blwyddyn 2 ac 1 Blwyddyn 5)

Cafodd y disgyblion hyn eu cefnogi gan y staff presennol, gyda chapasiti cyfyngedig i fynd i'r afael yn llawn â'u hanghenion Cymraeg ail iaith mewn darpariaeth trochi, gan sicrhau fod y disgyblion hyn mewn sefyllfa i integreiddio'n llawn gyda'u cyfoedion sydd eisoes wedi cael darpariaeth trochi.

Ble'r ydym yn anelu bod o fewn 5 mlynedd gyntaf y Cynllun a sut ydym yn bwriadu cyrraedd yno?

Mae'r Cyngor wedi defnyddio data cyfredol ar gapasiti ysgolion ynghyd ag amcanestyniad nifer disgyblion er mwyn modelu'r cynnydd cronus mewn capasiti sydd ei angen yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Cynhelir yn hyn yn unol â datblygu'r Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu fydd yn targedu darpar rieni. Bydd y twf yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg yn galluogi'r Cyngor i ateb y galw cynyddol a chyrraedd y targed troswäol ar gyfer disgyblion Blwyddyn 1.

Yn ychwanegol, cynhaliwyd modelu eisoes yng nghyswllt y cynllun twf o'r Ysgol Gynradd 210 lle sydd i agor yn Nhredegar yn 2023. Mae Ffigur 8 islaw yn rhoi manylion y twf a fwriedir. Caiff y capasiti ei gynyddu'n flynyddol yn unol â'r Polisi Derbyn ar gyfer Addysg Feithrin a Statudol, gan gefnogi mwy o fynediad drwy'r broses dderbyn a gan ystyried amcanestyniadau a galw disgyblion. Bydd y Cyngor yn gweithio gyda'r ysgol er mwyn ailgyflunio'r amgylchedd addysgu a dysgu wrth drin unrhyw faterion yn ymwneud â chynnal a chadw a mân weithiau i gefnogi'r broses hon.

Ffigur 8: Capasiti ysgolion ac amcanestyniad niferoedd

Blynyddoedd Academiaidd	Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg	Ysgol newydd Tredegar	Amcanestyniad nifer lleoedd dosbarth derbyn fydd ar gael
2021/22	30	0	30
2022/23	30	0	30
2023/24	34	24	58
2024/25	36	24	60
2025/26	40	26	66
2026/27	44	28	72

Mae'r Cyngor yn anelu i sicrhau'r twf a'r capasiti mwyaf o fewn y ddwy ysgol gynradd drwy alinio'r cynllun twf gyda'r Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu. Mae'r Cyngor yn anelu i ddatblygu uned drochi un cyfnod yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg gyda chapasiti i dyfu yn ddarpariaeth trochi cyfnod hollt yn unol â galw posibl yn y dyfodol. Er mwyn llywio datblygiad y ddarpariaeth, byddwn yn anelu i sicrhau a defnyddio cyllid trochi Llywodraeth Cymru i sicrhau gweithiwr proffesiynol addysg gyda chymwysterau i:

- gwmpasu a datblygu adnoddau trochi h.y. pecynnau penodol o ran oedran ac ar gyfer Blynyddoedd 2- 6;
- datblygu a gweithredu rhaglen hyfforddiant staff i ymwreiddio egwyddorion ac arferion a defnyddio adnoddau yn effeithlon i hwyluso darpariaeth trochi;
- cynllunio datblygu rhaglen beilot pontio tymor byr yn defnyddio'r cyfleusterau presennol, i redeg rhwng 2022 a 2025;
- cwmpasu darpariaeth ategol ar gyfer weithredu'r ysgol gynradd Gymraeg newydd yn Nhredegar;
- sicrhau adnoddau addysg i gefnogi darparu addysgu a dysgu yn defnyddio dulliau trochi; a
- chefnogi datblygu rhestr adeiladau i lywio datblygu prosiect cyfalaf.

Byddwn yn sicrhau fod y gweithiwr proffesiynol yma yn gweithio'n agos gydag awdurdodau cyfagos er mwyn cymharu modelau ar gyfer darpariaeth trochi, dynodi a thrin unrhyw fylchau, tra hefyd yn mesur a datblygu arfer gorau. Yn ychwanegol, bydd y datblygiad hwn wedi'i alinio'n gadarn gyda ac yn llywio'r Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu.

Unwaith y bydd wedi'i ddatblygu, defnyddir yr adnoddau er mwyn cefnogi disgyblion cyfrwng Cymraeg yn yr ysgol y mae pandemig COVID-19 wedi effeithio'n negyddol ar eu caffaeliad iaith. Gan weithio gyda Phennaeth a Chydlynedd Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg er mwyn asesu effaith y pandemig, rydym wedi sefydlu bod grwpiau ym mhob dosbarth o Flwyddyn 2 – Blwyddyn 6 a fyddai'n cael budd o'r math hwn o ddarpariaeth trochi iaith. Byddai'r pecynnau adnoddau ac ymyriadau yn cael eu peilota gyda'r grwpiau hyn yn y lle cyntaf. Byddai'r disgyblion hyn yn gweld buddion ar unwaith fel canlyniad i'r prosiect trochi.

Cynhelir cynllun peilot ffurfiol wedyn yn unol gyda galw trosglwyddo yn ystod y flwyddyn o fis Medi 2021 nes y caiff uned darpariaeth trochi arbennig ei hadeiladu, y rhagwelir fyddai erbyn mis Medi 2025. Byddai'r uned honno yn sicrhau y gall yr ysgol dderbyn a hyrwyddo darpariaeth trochi wrth ochr manteision bod yn ddwyieithog.

Wrth gyflawni ein hamcanion:

- Mae Cymraeg 2050 yn dweud y bydd trochi'n llawn yn y Gymraeg yn ffactor allweddol yn gysylltiedig gyda thwf llwyddiannus y Gymraeg, gan olygu mai lleoliadau cyfrwng Cymraeg yn bennaf a/neu gyfrwng Cymraeg yw'r ffordd fwyaf dibynadwy o greu twf iaith lle mae gan y disgyblion y sgiliau a'r hyder i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn eu bywydau bob dydd. Felly, drwy ymgynghori ac ymgysylltu gyda rhanddeiliaid allweddol, byddwn yn anelu i ddatblygu mwy o ddewis ieithyddol ar gyfer pobl ym mhob rhan o'r stad ysgolion.
- Sicrhau datblygiad pellach ar gynnydd yn y Gymraeg drwy weithio gyda EAS i hyrwyddo a datblygu Ysgolion Cymraeg Campus. Mae Cymraeg Campus yn siarter iaith a ddefnyddir i hyrwyddo'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg ledled yr ysgol, ar draws y cwricwlwm ac ym mhob maes o fywyd ysgol. Mae Ysgol Gymraeg Bro

Helyg wedi sefydlu 'Cryw Cymraeg', sy'n llais i ddisgyblion a sefydlwyd i annog a hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg tu mewn a'r tu allan i'r ystafell ddosbarth. Byddwn yn gweithio gyda'r grŵp hwn i ddatblygu ein Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu gyda golwg ar gynyddu llais ac ennyn diddordeb disgyblion.

- Sicrhau bod yr ysgol gynradd egin cyfrwng Cymraeg 210 lle newydd yn Nhredegar/Cwm Sirhywi a'i thwf yn llwyddiannus
- Adolygu'r dalgylchoedd a gofynion cludiant rhwng y cartref a'r ysgol er mwyn gwella trefniadaeth ysgolion Cymraeg, mynediad a datblygu polisi cysylltiedig.
- Mae gan Flaenau Gwent drefniadau cydweithio rhagorol gyda Rhanbarth De Ddwyrain Cymru (Sir Fynwy, Torfaen, Caerffili, Casnewydd) yn ogystal â Merthyr Tudful/Powys. Mae swyddogion y cyngor yn gweithio gyda'u cyd swyddogion yn rhanbarthol i ddatblygu darpariaeth uwchradd o fewn ardal Blaenau'r Cymoedd yn unol â Rhaglen Band C Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif. Bydd y datblygiad hwn yn sicrhau cyfleoedd dilyniant gwell a chynaliadwy ar gyfer dysgwyr cyfrwng Cymraeg a chynyddu capasiti y continwrm dysgu presennol.
- Cynnal astudiaeth dichonoldeb yn unol â'r potensial am gynyddu capasiti o fewn y sector cynradd rhwng 2027 a 2032, gan ddefnyddio'r model twf egin a fabwysiadwyd gan Flaenau Gwent i gyflawni ar y targed o 75 o addysg disgyblion Blwyddyn 1 drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg erbyn 2032.
- Datblygu Polisi Cymraeg mewn Addysg Blaenau Gwent i ymwreiddio'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg a datblygiadau cysylltiedig o fewn cynllunio ac ymarfer addysg ehangach, a hefyd sicrhau'r lefel ofynnol o adnoddau a buddsoddiad i gyflawni'r blaenoriaethau a fanylir o fewn Cynllun hwnnw (gweler tudalen 6 i gael mwy o wybodaeth).
- Datblygu cynllun cyflenwi yn gydnaws â'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg, a gaiff ei fonitro bob tymor gan y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, er mwyn asesu cynnydd yn effeithiol a'r camau gweithredu sydd eu hangen er mwyn cyflawni ein targedau ar gyfer pob deilliant. Caiff arweinwyr deilliannau eu cytuno, ynghyd â chamau gweithredu blaenoriaeth ar gyfer pob blwyddyn, a chânt i gyd eu hadolygu'n flynyddol. Datblygir is-grŵp penodol ar gynllunio gweithredu a bydd yn cwrdd bob yn eilfis, er mwyn adolygu'r cynnydd ar y cynllun gweithredu a pharatoi adroddiadau/diweddariadau chwarterol ar gyfer y Fforwm. Caiff pob cam gweithredu eu cytuno mewn gweithdy arbennig gyda'r Fforwm a'u hadolygu'n flynyddol yn yr un ffordd.
- Sicrhau cynllunio ac adolygu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg gyda pholisïau a strategaethau eraill perthnasol y Cyngor, yn cynnwys ond heb ei gyfyngu i:
 - Polisi Trefniadaeth Ysgolion Blaenau Gwent – sicrhau fod yr ysgolion cywir o'r maint cywir, yn y lle cywir ar yr amser cywir;
 - Polisi Cludiant Rhwng y Cartref a'r Ysgol a Thrafnidiaeth Ôl-16 Blaenau Gwent – cwmpasu capasiti ychwanegol i gefnogi gwella mynediad i addysg Gymraeg;
 - Polisi Derbyn ar gyfer Addysg Feithrin a Statudol (ynghyd â phrosesau cysylltiedig) Blaenau Gwent – sicrhau fod yr adolygiad capasiti blynyddol yn cyfrif am dwf a galw, ac y caiff hynny ei adlewyrchu o fewn y nifer derbyn a'r broses adolygu polisi gysylltiedig. Yn ychwanegol, byddwn yn parhau i weithio gyda chydweithiwy'r ym mhob rhan o'r rhanbarth i sicrhau twf darpariaeth uwchradd;
 - Cynllun Datblygu Lleol Blaenau Gwent – sicrhau cynllunio effeithlon ac aliniad parhaus gyda rheoli lleoedd disgyblion, gan alluogi'r Cyngor i gynnal, a lle'n bosibl, wella lefel bresennol cywirdeb amcanestyniadau

(98%) tra hefyd yn cyfrannu at ddatblygu'r Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu. Yn olaf, byddwn yn parhau i weithio gyda Cynllunio a rhanddeiliaid eraill i sicrhau cyfleoedd pellach i ddatblygu darpariaeth Gymraeg; a

- Strategaeth Ariannol Tymor Canol Blaenau Gwent – sicrhau fod dyraniad adnoddau yn addas yn unol â'r targedau a'r cynllun gweithredu.

Ble'r ydym ni'n disgwyl bod ar ddiwedd ein Cynllun deng mlynedd?

Mae'r Cyngor yn bwriadu sicrhau continwwm o ddarpariaeth addysg Gymraeg hygyrch, ynghyd â chyfleoedd ar gyfer gwella caffael a defnydd y Gymraeg ym mhob rhan o'r stad ysgolion.

Ffigur 9: Amcanestyniad Capasiti Dosbarthiadau Derbyn (2028 – 2031)

Blwyddyn Academaidd	Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg	Ysgol Gynradd Egin Cyfrwng Cymraeg newydd	Amcanestyniad y Lleoedd Dosbarth Derbyn fydd ar gael
2028/29	51	30	81
2029/30	51	30	81
2030/31	51	30	81
2031/32	51	30	81

Data Allweddol.

Ffigur 10: Amcanestyniad Nifer Disgyblion Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg

AMCAN-ESTYNIAD NIFER DISGYBLION:		Der	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	Cyfan
Ionawr 2022		30	33	38	26	26	22	38	213
Ionawr 2023		30	30	33	38	26	26	22	205
Ionawr 2024	241 cap	34	30	30	33	38	26	26	217
Ionawr 2025	250 cap	36	34	30	30	33	38	26	227
Ionawr 2026	280 cap	40	36	34	30	30	33	38	241
Ionawr 2027	310 cap	44	40	36	34	30	30	33	247
Ionawr 2028	330 cap	47	44	40	36	34	30	30	261
Ionawr 2029	360 cap	51	47	44	40	36	34	30	282

Ffigur 11: Ysgol Gynradd Egin (Tredegar) Agor Medi 2023

AMCAN-ESTYNIAD NIFER DISGYBLION:		Der	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	Cyfan
Ionawr 2024	210 cap	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
Ionawr 2025	210 cap	24	24	0	0	0	0	0	48
Ionawr 2026	210 cap	26	24	24	0	0	0	0	74
Ionawr 2027	210 cap	28	26	24	24	0	0	0	102
Ionawr 2028	210 cap	30	28	26	24	24	0	0	132
Ionawr 2029	210 cap	30	30	28	26	24	24	0	162

Nifer a % plant 5 oed yn derbyn eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
30	4%	58	8%	58	8%	60	9%	74	10%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
77	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%	81	11%

Deilliant 3

Mwy o blant yn parhau i wella eu sgiliau Cymraeg wrth drosglwyddo o un cyfnod o'u haddysg statudol i un arall

Ble'r ydym ni arni yn awr?

Y Gymraeg fel iaith gyntaf

Ar hyn o bryd mae cytundeb partneriaeth rhanbarthol yn ei le, ynghyd â phrosesau cysylltiedig ar gyfer cynllunio lleoedd disgyblion, lle mae'r ysgol gynradd Gymraeg ym Mlaenau Gwent yn ffurfio rhan o glwstwr Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.

Mae Ffigur 12 islaw yn rhoi manylion a chanran y disgyblion yn y cohort blwyddyn 6, ynghyd â'r nifer o ddisgyblion Blwyddyn 6 ym Mlaenau Gwent a'r gyfradd pontio ar gyfer y 3 sesiwn academaidd ddiwethaf.

Ffigur 12: Cyfraddau Pontio – disgyblion BI 6

	Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw			
	Cyfanswm Cohort	Nifer i Gwynllyw	%	Cyfradd Pontio
2019/20	788	37	5%	100%
2020/21	799	22	3%	100%
2021/22	790	31	4%	100%

Er bod nifer disgyblion Blwyddyn 6 yn parhau'n isel o gymharu â'r ysgolion bwydo eraill, mae cyfradd pontio Blaenau Gwent rhwng addysg gynradd ac uwchradd yn rhagorol, gyda 100% o ddisgyblion yn trosglwyddo i CA2 i CA3 dros y 3 blynedd ddiwethaf.

Ni chafodd y pandemig effaith negyddol ar gyfraddau pontio. Fodd bynnag, mae staff Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg wedi nodi y bu effaith negyddol ar safonau llafar, caffael a defnydd o'r Gymraeg ymysg disgyblion. Dynodwyd fod tua 40-50 disgybl angen ymyriad darpariaeth trochi ychwanegol.

Cynhaliwyd gweithgareddau pontio rhwng 2020 a 2021 yn rhithiol. Mae Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid Blaenau Gwent yn cynnal diwrnod hwyl un diwrnod ar gyfer disgyblion blwyddyn 6 yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg sy'n cefnogi disgyblion Blwyddyn 6 ac yn canolbwyntio ar bontio. Mae Ffigur 13 isod yn rhoi nifer a chanran y disgyblion yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg a gafodd eu hasesu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg rhwng 2017/18 a 2020/21 fel cyfanswm ac fel canran o'r holl ddisgyblion CA2.

Ffigur 13: Nifer a % y disgyblion a aseswyd drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Nifer cyfrwng Cymraeg 187 (allan o 4,567) = 4%	Nifer cyfrwng Cymraeg 182 (allan o 3,923) = 5%	Nifer cyfrwng Cymraeg 169 (allan o 4,636) = 4%	Nifer cyfrwng Cymraeg 184 (allan o 4,566) = 4%

Mae Ffigur 14 isod yn cyflwyno nifer a chanran disgyblion Blwyddyn 1 – 6 sy'n mynychu ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg a chyfrwng Saesneg (yn cynnwys darpariaeth ffydd ac ysgolion arbennig) yn CYBLD Medi 2020.

Ffigur 14: Nifer a % disgyblion mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg a Saesneg

	Blwyddyn 1		Blwyddyn 2		Blwyddyn 3		Blwyddyn 4		Blwyddyn 5		Blwyddyn 6	
	Nifer	%	Nifer	%	Nifer	%	Nifer	%	Nifer	%	Nifer	%
Cyfrwng Cymraeg	43	6	23	3	26	3	23	3	38	5	31	4
Cyfrwng Saesneg	694	94	747	97	758	97	708	97	723	95	752	96

Mae EAS yn cefnogi safonau llythrennedd clystyrau. O fis Medi 2021 ymlaen, bydd mwy o bwyslais ar strategaeth lafar, gydag arferion ar y cyd yn unol â'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru a chyfnodau traws-ddilyniant. Mae pob ysgol yn ailedrych ac yn cynllunio eu taith, gan y codwyd disgwyliadau am sgiliau ieithyddol.

Mae gan EAS Arweinydd Blynnyddoedd Cynnar a phenodwyd siaradwr Cymraeg i'r tîm i gefnogi ei ddarpariaeth yn y Gymraeg. Caiff dysgu proffesiynol ar gyfer dulliau trochi iaith ei ddarparu gan y tîm Cymraeg sydd â gwybodaeth ymchwil am gaffael iaith, ac

sy'n cefnogi a hwyluso rhwydweithio ar draws ysgolion arweiniol ar gyfer trochi iaith i ddatblygu dulliau gweithredu. Mae trosglwyddo addysgeg iaith ar draws arbenigeddau o fewn EAS ac ar draws y continwmm Cymraeg gyda phartneriaid cwricwlwm Cymraeg yn rhannu dulliau o addysgu iaith gydag ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg a hefyd Saesneg. Mae'r tîm yn cefnogi'r Cyngor gyda'r prosiect trochi sy'n datblygu y cyfeirir ato yn Neilliant 2. Mae'r prosiect yn cael ei ddatblygu ar hyn o bryd gydag arbenigedd penodol wedi'i recriwtio i oruchwylio'r broses gweithredu. Bydd y Prosiect Trochi yn targedu disgyblion ym Mlynnyddoedd 2-6, gan gefnogi cynyddu cyfleoedd parhaus ar gyfer ymgysylltu gydag addysg Gymraeg.

Mae'r tîm Blynnyddoedd Cynnar, Gofal Plant a Chwarae yn cynnig cyfleoedd ar gyfer cynyddu sgiliau'r gweithlu a hefyd yn hyrwyddo'r cyrsiau a'r adnoddau sydd ar gael drwy Camau. Mae ganddynt bolisi a phrosesau pontio yn eu lle ar gyfer disgyblion sy'n symud o ddarpariaeth cyn-ysgol i ddarpariaeth feithrin Cyfnod Sylfaen yn ysgolion Blaenau Gwent. Mae ymgysylltu da gyda chyfarfodydd pontio wedi'u hwyluso ar gyfer lleoliadau ac ysgolion i rannu dogfennau a gwybodaeth am blant sy'n pontio o un cyfnod i'r llall. Mae'r cynnig hefyd ar gael i ofalwyr plant parthed y broses pontio, ond gyda llwyddiant cyfyngedig oherwydd amseriad y cyfarfodydd. Caiff gwarchodwyr plant eu hannog fel arfer da er mwyn hwyluso pontio a rhannu gwybodaeth gyda'r ysgolion y mae'r plant yn bwriadu eu mynychu. Caiff y broses hon ei hadolygu'n barhaus er mwyn cynnwys dysgu mewn ymarfer yn y dyfodol.

Ble'r ydym ni'n anelu bod o fewn y 5 mlynedd gyntaf o'r Cynllun hwn a sut ydym ni'n bwriadu cyrraedd yno?

Mae gan Gyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Blaenau Gwent a Chyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen drefniant ar hyn o bryd, lle cafodd lleoedd i ddisgyblion Blaenau Gwent eu sicrhau yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. Dengys amcanestyniadau disgyblion ar gyfer y deng mlynedd nesaf y bydd y trefniadau sydd gennym gyda Thorfaen yn ddigon i ateb y galw tan ddiwedd y degawd (2030), pan fydd angen darpariaeth ychwanegol. Caiff amcanestyniadau disgyblion a galw cysylltiedig ei adolygu ddwywaith y flwyddyn er mwyn bod yn sail i gynllunio a dyrannu lleoedd.

Mae Blaenau Gwent, Sir Fynwy a Phowys wedi cytuno i gydweithio i gyflenwi darpariaeth uwchradd newydd ym Mand C Rhaglen Ysgolion 21ain Ganrif. Mae Cyfarwyddwyr Addysg wedi comisiynu'r Grŵp Cynllunio Lleoedd Ysgol rhanbarthol i adolygu'r galw am yr ysgol a bydd hyn yn arwain at gwblhau cynllun amlinellol strategol yn 2024, gan symud ymlaen i'r broses cynllunio busnes llawn wedi'i alinio gyda rhaglen Llywodraeth Cymru. Byddwn yn anelu i agor yn 2028/29 gan gydnabod y pwysau posibl o fewn gosodiadau presennol.

Mae cyfraddau pontio yn debyg o gynyddu o fis Medi 2030, pan fydd y cohort cyntaf o ddisgyblion Blwyddyn 6 o'r ail ysgol gynradd yn pontio o CA2 i CA3. Anelwn gynnal y gyfradd pontio uchel a fanylir yn ffigur 15 islaw.

Ffigur 15: % dysgwyr Cymraeg yn symud o CA2 i CA3

	Cohort BI 6	Nifer dysgwyr yn pontio o CA2 i CA3	% dysgwyr	Cyfradd pontio targed
Medi 2022	764	38	5%	100%
Medi 2023	731	22	3%	100%
Medi 2024	789	26	3%	100%
Medi 2025	778	26	3%	100%
Medi 2026	728	38	5%	100%
Medi 2027	718	33	5%	100%
Medi 2028	683	30	4%	100%
Medi 2029	(728)	30	4%	100%
Medi 2030	(728)	54**	7%	100%
Medi 2031	(728)	58	8%	100%
Medi 2032	(728)	60	8%	100%

**** Cohort 1^{af} o Dredegar i fynd i ddarpariaeth uwchradd**

Mae'n anochel y bydd y cynnydd yn nifer y lleoedd cyfrwng Cymraeg o fewn y sector cynradd yn effeithio ar nifer y lleoedd cyfrwng Cymraeg sydd eu hangen yn y sector uwchradd. Yn ychwanegol, mae'n debyg y bydd cynnig aildrefnu ysgolion Cyngor Torfaen i ymestyn darpariaeth ar safle bresennol Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw i sefydlu ysgol Gymraeg 3-18 oed yn effeithio ar nifer y lleoedd fydd ar gael i ddysgwyr Blaenau Gwent o 2028 ymlaen. Bydd y ddau Gyngor yn parhau i gydweithio'n agos i gynllunio dyraniad lleoedd disgyblion am 5 mlynedd gyntaf y cynllun hwn.

Wrth gyflawni ein nodau, byddwn yn:

- Parhau i gydweithio gydag awdurdodau cyfagos yn cynnwys Sir Fynwy, Powys a Merthyr Tudful er mwyn sicrhau ysgol uwchradd ranbarthol o fewn ardal Blaenau'r Cymoedd i greu continwwm dysgu cynaliadwy ar gyfer pob disgybl. Mae cynlluniau wrthi'n cael eu datblygu a byddant yn flaenoriaeth allweddol ar gyfer eu cyflawni yn unol â Rhaglen Band C Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif. Sicrhawyd lleoedd disgyblion ar gyfer Blaenau Gwent yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw tan ddiwedd y degawd. Mae prosesau cynllunio a monitro blynyddol yn eu lle rhwng Cynghorau Torfaen a Blaenau Gwent er mwyn monitro lleoedd yn unol â'r galw. Dengys amcanestyniadau disgyblion Blaenau Gwent y bydd gennym nifer ddigonol o leoedd yn y cyfamser. Yn ychwanegol, mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent yn hwyluso Grŵp Rhanbarthol Cynllunio Lleoedd Ysgol a'r Galw Addysg Gymraeg. Mae'r grŵp yn gweithio ar gynllun sydd wedi'i alinio gyda'r ddarpariaeth uwchradd ranbarthol, a bydd yn ystyried yr holl ofynion cynllunio pontio yn unol â datblygu'r ysgol newydd, gan fapio a chyflenwi yn unol â hynny.
- Gweithio gyda EAS i fapio darpariaeth addysg gyfredol yn ôl continwwm addysgu a dysgu Cymraeg, yn unol â chanllawiau Llywodraeth Cymru 'Categoriâu ysgolion yn ôl darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg'. Gan ddefnyddio data llinell sylfaen o arolygon CYBLD, datblygir gwaith mapio yn 2022 i benderfynu ble a sut y caiff ysgolion eu lleoli yn unol â'r canllawiau. Gwneir mwy o waith i benderfynu'r cyfleoedd ar gyfer categorïddio ysgolion yn y dyfodol.
- Bydd y Cyngor yn cefnogi ysgolion er mwyn iddynt ateb y deilliannau addysgol/ieithyddol a ddisgwylir. Hefyd, ddynodi a gweithio gydag ysgolion sy'n dymuno ystyried ailgategoreiddio yn unol â'r rhwydwaith Cymraeg Campus.

- Gweithio gydag ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg i gefnogi datblygiadau ieithyddol a sgiliau staff ysgol i symud o leoliadau Saesneg i rai Cymraeg neu ddwyieithog, gan gynnig mwy o ddewis iddynt y dyfodol.
- Hoffai Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg barhau i gefnogi pontio o cynradd i uwchradd, yn arbennig o amgylch Mathemateg a Gwyddoniaeth gan sicrhau ymgysylltu cynnar ym Mlwyddyn 5.
- Parhau i weithio mewn partneriaeth gydag ysgolion a'r Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid i roi cefnogaeth ynghylch pontio a llesiant emosiynol.
- Monitro a chynyddu dilyniant ieithyddol mewn partneriaeth gyda Chyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen ac Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.
- Ymgynghori gyda rhanddeiliaid perthnasol er mwyn cynllunio datblygiad a dilyniant ieithyddol yn CA2 a CA3 gan adolygu cyfraddau dilyniant ar gyfer dysgwyr Blaenau Gwent.
- Rhoi cefnogaeth i ddisgyblion sydd wedi cyflwyno gyda phroblemau ar draws pob grŵp oedran – yn arbennig y rhai sy'n pontio o cynradd i uwchradd.
- Cynnal gwaith mapio ar ddata dilyniant Cwricwlwm i Gymru.
- Adolygu capasiti a'r galw am ysgolion yn unol â cheisiadau derbyn a throsglwyddo yn ystod y flwyddyn.
- Parhau i weithio mewn partneriaeth gyda'r tîm Blynyddoedd Cynnar, Gofal Plant a Chwarae i ddarparu cymorth o amgylch pontio a llesiant emosiynol ar gyfer plant dan oedran ysgol.

Ble'r ydym ni'n disgwyl bod ar ddiwedd ein Cynllun deng mlynedd?

Mae'r Cyngor yn bwriadu gweithio gydag awdurdodau cyfagos i sicrhau datrysiad ysgol uwchradd o fewn ardal Blaenau'r Cymoedd erbyn 2028/2029 (fel y manylir uchod) er mwyn creu continwwm cynaliadwy o ddarpariaeth ar gyfer dysgwyr cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Byddwn yn gweithio i gynnal y gyfradd pontio bresennol o 100%, gan sicrhau fod yr adolygiadau polisi perthnasol yn parhau i gefnogi a gwella mynediad i addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg

Data Allweddol

Ffigur 16: Pontio i Ysgol Uwchradd

	Bydd disgyblion BI6 yn pontio i Ysgol Gwynllyw Torfaen				Lleoedd Uwchradd fydd eu hangen o 2026 ymlaen						
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Lleoedd Disgyblion BI 6	38	22	26	26	38	33	30	30	30	34	36
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg newydd Lleoedd Disgyblion BI 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	24	24
Cyfanswm	38	22	26	26	38	33	30	30	54	58	60

Nifer a % dysgwyr yn parhau i wella eu sgiliau yn y Gymraeg wrth drosglwyddo o un cyfnod o'u haddysg statudol i un arall.

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
38	100%	22	100%	26	100%	26	100%	38	100%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
33	100%	30	100%	30	100%	54	100%	58	100%

Deiliant 4

Mwy o ddysgwyr yn astudio ar gyfer cymwysterau Cymraeg (fel pwnc) a phynciau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

Ble'r ydym arni yn awr?

Mae disgyblion sy'n mynychu Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg ym Mlaenau Gwent yn derbyn eu haddysg uwchradd yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw yn Nhorfaen. Mae Ffigur 17 isod yn dangos y nifer o ddysgwyr Blaenau Gwent ym mhob grŵp blwyddyn yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw yn ystod blwyddyn academaidd 2020/21.

Ffigur 17: Nifer ar y gofrestr yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw 2020/21

Grŵp Blwyddyn	Nifer ar y gofrestr							
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw Torfaen	136	144	132	112	114	48	61	8
Nifer dysgwyr o Flaenau Gwent yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw	18	31	29	32	18	7	9	1

Nifer a chanrannau disgyblion yn astudio eu manyleb iaith gyntaf yn 2020/21

- CA4 – Yn haf 2020, roedd 19 o ddysgwyr o Flaenau Gwent yn astudio am gymhwyster TGAU iaith **gyntaf** yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.
- CA5 – Yn haf 2020, roedd nifer y dysgwyr o Flaenau Gwent yn astudio am bwnc Lefel A (oedd yn flaenorol wedi astudio'r Gymraeg fel iaith gyntaf) yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw yn 7 disgybl ym Mlwyddyn 13, a 2 ddisgybl ym Mlwyddyn 14.

Nifer a chanrannau disgyblion yn astudio'r fanyleb ail iaith yn 2020/21

- CA3 – cynigir TGAU Cymraeg (ail iaith) o fewn bob ysgol uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg ym Mlaenau Gwent
- CA4 – yn haf 2020 (sesiwn academaidd 2019/20), roedd nifer dysgwyr Blaenau Gwent yn astudio am TGAU **ail** iaith ym Mlwyddyn 11 yn 522 disgybl, 84.6% o'r cohort.

Opsionau Ysgol 3-16 Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw

Cyfnod Allweddol 4 – Mae disgyblion yn astudio pob pwnc drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg (ac eithrio Saesneg). Bydd y mwyafrif helaeth yn astudio naill ai 10 neu 12 pwnc yn ôl

gallu. Mae hyn yn gyfystyr â naill ai 90% (10 pwnc) neu 92% (12 pwnc). Mae'r cwricwlwm yn cynnwys 25 pwnc fel sy'n dilyn:

Pynciau craidd yn cynnwys: Mae Iaith Gymraeg, Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg, Iaith Saesneg, Llenyddiaeth Saesneg, Mathemateg, Rhifedd, Gwyddoniaeth (cyfres o gymwysterau) a Bagloriaeth Cymru yn hanfodol.

Ffigur 18 Opsiynau Disgyblion (gall disgyblion ddewis 4 dewis opsiwn o'r dilynol):

TGAU a Chymwysterau Galwedigaethol				
TGAU	Bwyd a Maeth	Iechyd, Cymdeithasol a Gofal Plant	Drama	Sbaeneg
	Daearyddiaeth	Astudiaethau Crefyddol	Cerddoriaeth	Cymdeithaseg
	Addysg Gorfforol	TGCh	Celf	Hanes
	Technoleg Dylunio	Gwyddoniaeth Gyfrifiadurol	Technoleg Ddigidol	Teithio a Thwristiaeth
Galwedig-aethol	Busnes	BTEC Lefel 2	Adeiladu	

Cyfnod Allweddol 5 – Caiff 30 pwnc eu cynnig yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw fel y dangosir yn Ffigur 19 islaw. Mae'r mwyafrif yn astudio 3 Lefel A neu Gymwysterau Lefel 3, ac mae Bagloriaeth Cymru yn orfodol. Bydd lleiafrif o ddisgyblion yn dewis 4 Lefel 4 a Bagloriaeth Cymru. Ar y cyfan caiff 100% o'u cwricwlwm ei gyflenwi drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg (ac eithrio'r rhai sy'n astudio Saesneg). Yn yr achosion hynny caiff 75% o'u cwricwlwm ei addysgu drwy'r Gymraeg a 80% ar gyfer y rhai sy'n astudio 4 Lefel A a Bagloriaeth Cymru.

Ffigur 19 Mae'r cynnig cwricwlwm fel sy'n dilyn:

Dewisiadau Pwnc						
Celf	Bioleg	Busnes	Cemeg	Gofal Plant	Gwyddoniaeth Gyfrifiadurol	Troseddeg
Dylunio a Thechnoleg	Drama	Economeg	Saesneg	Mathemateg Bellach	Daearyddiaeth	Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Hanes	Lletygarwch	Technoleg Gwybodaeth	Mathemateg	Astudiaethau Cyfryngau	Gwyddor Feddygol	Cerddoriaeth
Technoleg Cerdd	Addysg Gorfforol	Ffiseg	Gwleidyddiaeth	Seicoleg	Astudiaethau Crefyddol	Cymdeithaseg
		Sbaeneg	Teithio a Thwristiaeth	Cymraeg		

Mae myfyrwyr naill ai'n astudio yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw neu Goleg Gwent ar CA5. Nid oes darpariaeth chweched dosbarth yn ysgolion uwchradd Blaenau Gwent. Mae Ffigur 20 isod yn rhoi trosolwg o ddysgwyr Cymraeg fel ail iaith a Chymraeg iaith gyntaf yn CA4 a CA5

Ffigur 20: Nifer dysgwyr yn astudio'r Gymraeg

	TGAU Cymraeg Iaith Gyntaf ** yn Ysgol Gwynllyw Torfaen	TGAU Cymraeg Ail Iaith ym Mlaenau Gwent	Lefel AS/A Cymraeg fel iaith Gyntaf** yn Ysgol Gwynllyw Torfaen	Darpariaeth Coleg Gwent
2020/21	228 dysgwr	478 dysgwr	116 dysgwr	10 dysgwr (5 ohonynt o Flaenau Gwent)

Y Gymraeg fel ail iaith ym Mlaenau Gwent

Mae Ffigur 21 isod yn rhoi trosolwg cymharol o ddysgwyr (yn cynnwys fel canran o'r cohort) fu'n astudio'r Gymraeg fel ail iaith (y ffynhonnell yw crynodeb canlyniadau CBAC a data adroddiad ymgeisydd). Mae'r niferoedd wedi amrywio dros y 5 mlynedd ddiwethaf gyda 2021 yr isaf yn nhermau'r dysgwyr yn astudio'r Gymraeg fel ail iaith; fodd bynnag, mae'r canrannau'n barhau'n gymharol sefydlog dros y dadansoddiad 5-mlynedd.

Ffigur 21: Y Gymraeg fel ail iaith – data dysgwyr

Diwedd Blwyddyn Academaidd	Cohort	Y Gymraeg fel ail iaith	% o'r Cohort
2017	607	503	83%
2018	586	499	85%
2019	532	479	90%
2020	617	522	85%
2021	559	478	86%

Mae'r Urdd a'r Gwasanaeth Ieuencid yn anelu i gynnig cyfleoedd i ddysgwyr ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg y tu mewn a'r tu allan i'r ysgol/coleg. Mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuencid yn hyrwyddo Uned Diwylliant Cymraeg gydag achrediad.

Nifer a Chanran Dysgwyr yng Ngholeg Gwent

Iaith dysgu ac asesu Coleg Gwent yn defnyddio'r categorïau dilynol yn unol â Chofnod Dysgu Gydol Oes Cymru:

- B3 = ychydig o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg
- B2 = cryn dipyn o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg
- B1 = dysgu wedi ei gwblhau mewn cyd-destun dwyieithog
- C1 = dysgu wedi ei gwblhau mewn cyd-destun cyfrwng Cymraeg

Bu gostyngiad sylweddol yn nifer y dysgwyr sy'n dymuno cymryd arholiadau Lefel A drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg dros yr ychydig flynyddoedd diwethaf, mae hyn yn dueddiad rhanbarthol ar hyn o bryd. Mae gan Goleg Gwent lai na 10 o ddysgwyr ar hyn o bryd sy'n astudio eu Lefel A drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

Cafodd Coleg Gwent beth llwyddiant mewn blynyddoedd diweddar wrth gynyddu nifer y dysgwyr o fewn categorïau B1 a B2, yn neilltuol. Fodd bynnag, mae'r niferoedd yn dal yn gymharol isel ac mae gan y coleg weledigaeth uchelgeisiol i gynyddu eu niferoedd

dros y 10 mlynedd nesaf. Mae'r data diweddaraf (nifer dysgwyr yn 2020-2021) fel sy'n dilyn:

Ffigur 22: nifer o ddysgwyr Cymraeg CA5

B3: Ychydig o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg	B2: Cryn dipyn o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg	B1: Dysgu wedi ei gwblhau mewn cyd-destun dwyieithog	C1: Dysgu wedi ei cwblhau mewn cyd-destun cyfrwng Cymraeg
276	93	144	0

Mae mwy o bynciau/cyrsiau wedi cynnwys adrannau i hyrwyddo dysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Nid yw Coleg Gwent yn cynnig cyrsiau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn unig ar hyn o bryd. Fodd bynnag, caiff gofal plant, iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol, gwasanaethau cyhoeddus, peirianeg, tir-seiliedig a cherddoriaeth eu cynnig yn rhannol yn y Gymraeg. Caiff hyn ei ymestyn yn y flwyddyn academaidd ddilynol. Mae rhyngddibyniaeth glir rhwng llwyddiant gweledigaeth Coleg Gwent a sicrhau gweithlu gyda chymwysterau addas a lefelau staffio i gyflwyno'r cwricwlwm drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

Mae nifer sylweddol o ddysgwyr sy'n byw ym Mlaenau Gwent yn astudio ar gampws mewn awdurdodau lleol cyfagos ac mae'r gwrthwyneb hefyd yn wir. Nid oes gan Goleg Gwent yr un ddarpariaeth ar bob campws felly byddai'n anodd iawn cael targedau penodol ac ni fyddent yn ystyrlon. Fodd bynnag, mae disgwyliad y bydd pob campws yn cyfrannu tuag at darged y coleg ar gyfer pob maes pwnc.

Ble'r ydym ni'n anelu bod o fewn 5 mlynedd gyntaf y Cynllun hwn a sut ydym ni'n bwriadu cyrraedd yno?

Felly mae'r Cyngor yn bwriadu cynyddu capasiti a galw o fewn y sector cynradd, gan sicrhau fod pontio o CA2 i CA3 yn parhau ar 100%. Bydd hyn yn ei dro yn cynyddu nifer y dysgwyr sy'n astudio am gymwysterau Cymraeg a phynciau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

Wrth gyflawni ein nodau, byddwn yn:

- Rhoi cefnogaeth i ysgolion uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg yn unol â thaith dysgwr dwyieithog, i sicrhau fod y ddarpariaeth Gymraeg o'r safon uchaf bosibl. Mae EAS yn darparu cefnogaeth i ysgolion a chlystyrau i ystyried, cynllunio ar gyfer a datblygu dilyniant mewn sgiliau iaith ar draws cyfnodau. Mae'r EAS yn darparu cefnogaeth arbenigol gan gynghorwyr Cymraeg mewn Addysg. Mae'n hwyluso gweithio rhwng ysgolion, datblygu hyrwyddwyr sabothol yn eu rolau ac yn gweithio gydag arweinwyr strategol clwstwr ar gyfer y Gymraeg i ddarparu hyfforddiant, rhannu deunyddiau enghraifft a chefnogi cynllunio ar y camau dilyniant a disgrifiadau ar draws yr ystod oedran ac yn unol â'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru. Er enghraifft, camau dilyniant 1-5 ar gyfer y Gymraeg mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg. <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/languages-literacy-and-communication/descriptions-of-learning/> Mae'r EAS hefyd yn cefnogi ysgolion gyda gweithredu a sicrwydd ansawdd targedau a deiliannau Efydd/Arian/Aur Cymraeg Campus.
- Gweithio gyda Choleg Gwent ac ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg i hyrwyddo a chynyddu'r nifer sy'n dilyn Cymraeg Lefel A. Gellir cyflawni hyn drwy gydweithio fel Cyngor, EAS ac ysgol i ystyried darpariaeth a llwybr effeithlon i Lefelau A.

Gall Coleg Gwent gefnogi dilyniant disgyblion cyfrwng Saesneg o ysgolion i Lefel A Cymraeg, gan hyrwyddo a recriwtio myfyrwyr ar gyfer Cymraeg fel Lefel A;

- Gweithio gyda EAS i ddarparu hyfforddiant a chyfleoedd datblygu gweithlu ar gyfer staff addysgu, gan hybu eu sgiliau a'u darpariaeth;
- Gweithio'n agos gyda Chyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen i roi cefnogaeth a sicrhau fod yr ysgol uwchradd cyfrwng Cymraeg a ddefnyddir gan ddisgyblion Blaenau Gwent yn cydymffurfio'n llwyr gyda'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru;
- Sicrhau fod ysgolion uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg yn cydymffurfio gyda'r gofynion rheoleiddiol a seiliedig ar y cwricwlwm yn unol â chyflwyno'r Gymraeg fel ail iaith;
- Gweithio gyda EAS ac ysgolion er mwyn asesu a gweithredu'r newidiadau ac argymhellion sydd eu hangen yn unol ag ymgynghoriad Cymwysterau Cymru;
- Creu partneriaethau cryfach gydag ysgolion uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg ym Mlaenau Gwent a Choleg Gwent, gan sicrhau cydweithio effeithlon gyda phenaethiaid adrannau wrth ddynodi dysgwyr i barhau â'u taith Cymraeg ail iaith, tra hefyd yn hyrwyddo Lefel A Cymraeg;
- Adolygu a datblygu ymhellach y deunyddiau ac adnoddau marchnata a chyfathrebu 'Bod yn Ddwyieithog' er mwyn llywio opsiynau pontio a chyswllt gyda disgyblion, rhieni a gofalwyr;
- Gweithio ar draws ffiniau i annog galw am addysg gynradd ac uwchradd Gymraeg, gan sicrhau y caiff y continwwm dysgu ar gyfer disgyblion ei fapio'n glir a'i ddeall gan ddisgyblion, rhieni a gofalwyr;
- Ar gyfer dysgu Ôl 16, sicrhau fod EAS, Coleg Gwent, Gyrfa Cymru a'r Coleg Cymraeg yn ymwneud yn llawn â sicrhau a hybu cynnydd gyrfa drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg;
- Yn dilyn y llyw gan y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, bydd Coleg Gwent yn parhau i ganolbwyntio ar ymwreiddio unedau dwyieithog llawn i'r prif gymwysterau mewn meysydd cwricwlwm dwyieithog blaenoriaeth. Yn y 5 mlynedd gyntaf bydd y ffocws ar ofal plant, iechyd a gofal cymdeithasol a gwasanaethau cyhoeddus. Bydd y Coleg yn cyflogi staff newydd (neu gynyddu sgiliau staff presennol) i gyflwyno unedau dwyieithog yn y tri maes cwricwlwm yma. Bydd hyn yn cyfrannu at gyflawni targedau dilynol Coleg Gwent:

Ffigur 23: Targedau 5-mlynedd Coleg Gwent

B3: Ychydig o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg	B2: Llawer o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg	B1: Dysgu wedi'i gwblhau mewn cyd-destun dwyieithog	C1: Dysgu wedi'i gwblhau mewn cyd-destun cyfrwng Cymraeg
2000*	400	600	***

***Bydd y coleg yn datblygu pecyn digidol fydd yn galluogi'r rhan fwyaf o ddysgwyr galwedigaethol i gyflawni o leiaf B3.**

***** Bydd Coleg Gwent yn canolbwyntio ar ymwreiddio unedau Cymraeg a dwyieithog i'r prif raglenni yn hytrach na chyflwyno cyrsiau llawn drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.**

Ble'r ydym ni'n disgwyl bod ar ddiwedd ein Cynllun deng mlynedd?

Ar ddiwedd y cynllun 10-mlynedd hwn, disgwylir y bydd mwy o ddysgwyr Blaenau Gwent yn astudio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg mewn lleoliad uwchradd cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Drwy'r bartneriaeth a'r cydweithio presennol gyda Sir Fynwy, Powys a Merthyr Tudful, sefydlir ysgol uwchradd yn ardal Blaenau'r Cymoedd, gan gynyddu opsiynau uwchradd cyfrwng Cymraeg a hefyd ddarpariaeth ar gyfer dysgwyr Blaenau Gwent.

Byddwn yn gweld cynnydd yn y galw gan ddysgwyr i astudio'r Gymraeg fel ail iaith yn ysgolion uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg ym Mlaenau Gwent. Yn ychwanegol, bydd y canran o gymwysterau a astudir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg hefyd yn cynyddu.

Drwy ddatblygu strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu effeithlon, byddwn yn anelu i:

- Liniaru unrhyw bryderon sydd gan rieni a gofalwyr yng nghyswllt eu plentyn/plant yn mynychu lleoliadau addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.
- Chwalu chwedlau a sicrhau fod gwybodaeth glir a chryno ar gael ar gyfer disgyblion, rhieni a gofalwyr ar eu hopsiynau addysg a manteision bod yn ddwyieithog.
- Datblygu hyder rhieni, gofalwyr a dysgwyr yn y daith ieithyddol; a
- Sicrhau y caiff dysgwyr, rhieni a gofalwyr wybodaeth lawn am y llwybrau dilyniant a gyrfa sydd ar gael ar gyfer dysgwyr/siaradwyr Cymraeg.

Bydd y Coleg yn parhau i ddatblygu modiwlau dwyieithog ar draws yr holl feysydd blaenoriaeth gweddilliol (cyfanswm o 7 maes cwricwlwm). Bydd hyn yn cynnwys datblygu adnoddau yn ogystal â recriwtio staff medrus.

Mae Coleg Gwent wedi sefydlu targedau 10-mlynedd yn unol â ffigur 22 islaw, ac mae'r Cyngor yn ymroddedig i gefnogi hynny.

Ffigur 24: Targedau ar gyfer darpariaeth ddwyieithog

B3: Ychydig o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg	B2: Llawer o ddysgu cyfrwng Cymraeg	B1: Dysgu wedi'i gwblhau mewn cyd-destun dwyieithog	C1: Dysgu wedi'i gwblhau mewn cyd-destun cyfrwng Cymraeg
3000	500	1000	***

*** Bydd y coleg yn canolbwyntio ar ymwreiddio unedau Cymraeg a dwyieithog i'r prif unedau yn hytrach na chyflwyno cyrsiau llawn cyfrwng Cymraeg, os nad oes cyfle newydd yn codi. Caiff hyn ei werthuso ar sail flynyddol.

Data Allweddol

Cafodd y targedau isod ar gyfer dysgwyr CA3 eu seilio ar gyfraddau pontio Blaenau Gwent o B6 – B7 (CYBLD Ionawr 2021).

Ffigur 25: Niferoedd cohort a phontio

	Cyfanswm cohort dysgwyr Blwyddyn 6	Nifer dysgwyr Cymraeg yn pontio o CA2 i CA3	% dysgwyr
Medi 2022	764	38	5%
Medi 2023	731	22	3%
Medi 2024	789	26	3%
Medi 2025	778	26	3%
Medi 2026	728	38	5%
Medi 2027	718	33	5%
Medi 2028	683	30	4%
Medi 2029	(728)	30	4%
Medi 2030	(728)	54**	7%
Medi 2031	(728)	58	8%
Medi 2032	(728)	60	8%

** Cohort 1^{af} o Dredegar i fynd i ddarpariaeth uwchradd

Ffigur 26: Amcanestyniad nifer o ddysgwyr blwyddyn 11 yn astudio am gymwysterau Cymraeg fel pwnc (TGAU)

Blwyddyn 11	2032/33	2031/32	2030/31	2029/30	2028/29	2027/28	2026/27	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022-23
Cyfanswm Maint Cohort	627	663	674	736	744	685	706	743	646	682	568
Cynigion Cohort wedi'i addasu (85.5%)	536	567	576	629	636	586	604	635	552	583	486

Nifer a % dysgwyr yn astudio am gymwysterau Cymraeg (fel pwnc) a phynciau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
38	5%	22	3%	26	3%	26	3%	38	5%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
26	5%	64	10%	64	9%	68	9%	71	10%

Nifer a % o ddysgwyr yn astudio am gymwysterau Cymraeg (fel pwnc) yn TGAU

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
568	85%	682	85%	646	85%	635	85%	604	85%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
86	85%	636	85%	629	85%	576	85%	567	85%

Nifer dysgwyr yn astudio am gymwysterau Cymraeg (fel pwnc) neu bynciau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yng Ngholeg Gwent (B1)				
2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025	2025 - 2026	2026 - 2027
141	300	450	600	650
2027 - 2028	2028 - 2029	2029 - 2030	2030 - 2031	2031 - 2032
700	750	800	900	1000

Deilliant 5

Mwy o gyfleoedd i ddysgwyr ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg mewn cyd-destunau gwahanol yn yr ysgol

Ble'r ydym ni arni yn awr?

Mae Blaenau Gwent yn cydweithio gyda'r Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg (EAS) i arwain ar waith 'Siarter Iaith', siarter iaith cynradd ac uwchradd:

- Siarter Iaith Cynradd: 100% Arian (Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg).
- Siarter Iaith Uwchradd: mae Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw yn gweithredu fframwaith y Siarter (Cam 1 o 5: Fframwaith gwerthuso Siarter EAS ar gyfer ysgolion uwchradd)
- Cymraeg Campus Cynradd Cyfrwng Saesneg: mae 35% o ysgolion Blaenau Gwent wedi cael dyfarniad Efydd, 20% wedi cael Arian a 45% yn gweithio at Efydd.

Yn unol â chynllun Ysgolion Cymraeg Campus ym Mlaenau Gwent:

- Mae 100% o'n hysgolion cynradd/campysau wedi cymryd rhan yn holiadur llinell sylfaen fframwaith Cymraeg Campus.
- Cafodd dyfarniad Efydd ei sicrhau a'i wirio mewn 35% neu 7 o'n hysgolion cynradd/campysau.
- Roedd 20% neu 4 o'n hysgolion cynradd/campysau wedi cymryd rhan yn y dyfarniad Arian ac atebwyd yr holiadur llinell sylfaen.
- Nid oes unrhyw ysgol wedi cyflawni ac wedi dilysu dyfarniad Arian.

Blaenau Gwent: Dwyieithrwydd Uwchradd – Mae Ysgol Sefydliadol Brynmawr, Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar a Chyfnod Uwchradd Cymuned Ddysgu Ebwy Fawr yn datblygu cynlluniau dwyieithrwydd gyda chefnogaeth gan EAS. Yn ychwanegol mae'r ysgolion hyn yn cymryd rhan yn rhaglen Cymraeg Bob Dydd yr Urdd.

Menter Iaith

Cyn y pandemig, roedd y Fenter Iaith yn darparu clwb ar ôl ysgol yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, a ailagorodd ym mis Medi 2021. Mae Swyddog Datblygu Cymunedol gan y Fenter Iaith sy'n cefnogi cyflwyno gweithgareddau mewn partneriaeth gyda'r Gwasanaeth Ieuentid a'r Urdd.

Mae'r Fenter Iaith hefyd yn cynnal digwyddiadau a sesiynau rhithiol ar gyfer plant iau a theuluoedd. Cynhaliwyd 22 digwyddiad ym Mlaenau Gwent yn 2019/20, gyda dros 346 o blant a theuluoedd yn bresennol. Yn 2020/21 bu 2 ddigwyddiad teuluol a 55 digwyddiad ar-lein a gyflwynwyd yn ystod y cyfnodau clo, gyda thua 26 yn bresennol yn y digwyddiadau teuluol a 43 o blant yn cymryd rhan mewn digwyddiadau ar-lein.

Mae pwyslais gweithgareddau'r Fenter Iaith ar roi cyfleoedd i blant a phobl ifanc i siarad Cymraeg mewn lleoliadau anffurfiol, er y cafodd y rhan fwyaf o'r gweithgareddau eu cynnal hyd yma yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Ymchwilir lleoliadau pellach fel rhan o ddatblygu Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu a gwaith cysylltiedig wrth gynllunio cyflenwi'r Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg.

Cafodd yr ystod gweithgareddau ei fapio yn y gorffennol ond oherwydd y pandemig, newidiadau yn strwythur staffio yr Urdd a newid staff yn y Fenter Iaith, bu newid sylweddol yn nifer a natur y gweithgareddau. Ailedrychir ar y gwaith unwaith eto a'i fapio'n rheolaidd er mwyn dynodi bylchau mewn darpariaeth a llywio datblygiad cynllun i lenwi'r bylchau hyn.

Cyn y pandemig, roedd y Fenter Iaith yn medru darparu o leiaf un clwb wythnosol ar gyfer ysgolion cynradd a byddent yn cydlynu gydag athrawon i sicrhau fod amcanion y clybiau hyn e.e. clybiau ukulele neu sesiynau celf a chreffft yn adlewyrchu anghenion addysgol plant. Roedd deilliannau yn ymwneud â defnydd iaith yn cael eu monitro ar sail chwe-misol ac yn cael eu rhoi i Lywodraeth Cymru – caiff hyn ei gynnwys ym mhroses gynllunio y Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg o hyn ymlaen.

Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid

Mae Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid Blaenau Gwent yn gweithio i gynllun busnes presennol syn cynnwys datblygu cyfleoedd yn ymwneud â'r Gymraeg a diwylliant. Cafodd hyn ei seilio ar raglen datblygu gweithlu yn cynnwys datblygu sgiliau Cymraeg ar draws y gweithlu a ffocws ar gynyddu sgiliau drwy recriwtio. Mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid a'r Urdd yn cytuno ar gynllun blynyddol, a gaiff ei arwain yn rhannol gan farn pobl ifanc a gafwyd drwy ymgynghoriad ond a gaiff hefyd ei rwymo gan gofynion cyllid grant ac amserlenni. Yn fwy diweddar, mae'r cyllid a dderbyniwyd wedi symud i ddyraniad dangosol 3-blynedd a bydd hyn yn galluogi cynllun gweithgaredd tymor hirach. Mae'n gwneud synnwyr i ddatblygu strategaeth tymor hirach ar gyfer darpariaeth Gymraeg i bobl ifanc yn y gymuned, gan y gallir mesur y tymor byr i'r tymor canolig o gymharu â'r cynllun hirdymor. Mae ymgyfraniad pobl ifanc yn y ddarpariaeth yn wirfoddol gan nad yw'n orfodol nac yn amser yr ysgol ac felly caiff llwyddiant ei fesur gan nifer y bobl ifanc sy'n defnyddio'r cyfleoedd dros gyfnod cyson a'r nifer o gyfleoedd sydd ar gael, yn hytrach na dangos os yw sgiliau yn y Gymraeg wedi gwella ai peidio. Caiff deilliannau eraill, tebyg deilliannau gydag achrediad ar gyfer cyrsiau, hefyd eu casglu.

Mae gan y Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid Gytundeb Lefel Gwasanaeth gyda'r Urdd i sicrhau a chyflwyno gweithgareddau Cymraeg ar gyfer pobl ifanc. Mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid ym Mlaenau Gwent yn gweithio gyda phobl ifanc rhwng 11 a 25 oed. Lle'n bosibl maent wedi cyflwyno'r Gymraeg mewn clybiau ieuenctid, gan sicrhau cyfleoedd ymgysylltu dwyieithog ar gyfer siaradwyr Cymraeg.

Mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuentid yn gweithio mewn partneriaeth gyda'r Urdd i naill ai gyllido cyfleoedd neu ddarparu cyfleoedd yn unioingyrchol ar gyfer pobl ifanc i gwrdd ac i gymdeithasu yn y Gymraeg a/neu i ddarparu cefnogaeth drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg:

- Clwb pontio Blwyddyn 6 ar ôl ysgol ym Mro Helyg (i gefnogi pontio o Fro Helyg i Gwynllyw); cefnogi tua 20 o bobl ifanc. Gweithiwr Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent a gweithiwr Ieuentid yr Urdd yn cefnogi gweithgareddau
- Clwb Cymraeg wythnosol ar ôl ysgol yn Nhredeggar (cefnogi tua 20 o bobl ifanc, gweithiwr Ieuentid yr Urdd yn ystod y tymor, gweithwyr Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent gyda'r nos drwy gydol y flwyddyn)
- Rhaglen wirfoddoli gyda disgyblion Blaenau Gwent yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw (tua 10 o bobl ifanc, gweithiwr Ieuentid yr Urdd)
- Fforwm Cymraeg i Ieuentid a hwylusir yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw – mae disgyblion Blaenau Gwent wedyn yn gynrychiolwyr ar Fforwm Ieuentid Cyngor Blaenau Gwent (gweithiwr Ieuentid yr Urdd)
- Cyfleoedd gwirfoddoli ar gyfer 10 o bobl ifanc ychwanegol o Flaenau Gwent yn yr Urdd drwy'r Eisteddfod, tripliau preswyl a gweithgareddau
- Gweithgareddau celf yn y Gymraeg yn ystod gwyliau'r Ieuentid (gweithiwr Ieuentid yr Urdd)
- Gweithgareddau gyda ffocws ar y Gymraeg a diwylliant ym mhob un o glybiau Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent. Cynllunio tuag at gystadlaethau'r Eisteddfod nesaf (gweithwyr Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent)
- Gweithgareddau gyda ffocws ar y Gymraeg a diwylliant yn cael eu cyflwyno gan bob gweithiwr Ieuentid llawn-amser ym mhob ysgol uwchradd ym Mlaenau Gwent (gweithwyr Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent)
- Grŵp Cymraeg Gwobr Dug Caeredin (gweithiwr Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent)
- Arweinydd y Gymraeg ar grŵp gwybodaeth pobl ifanc (gweithiwr Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent)

Mae'r Urdd yn darparu rhan fach o weithgaredd y Gwasanaeth Ieuentid – ac mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuentid yn talu i'r Urdd am ddarparu'r gweithgaredd hwn gan fod hyn yn sicrhau fod pobl ifanc sy'n manteisio ar y cyfle hwn hefyd yn gallu cael mynediad i gyfleoedd ehangach yr Urdd tebyg i'r Eisteddfod a gweithgareddau preswyl. Caiff y ddau glwb uniongyrchol (yn Ysgol Gyfun Tredeggar ac Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg) eu cefnogi ar wahanol adegau gan un aelod o staff yr Urdd ac un aelod o staff y Gwasanaeth Ieuentid. Mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuentid yn parhau â'r ddarpariaeth hon os a phryd na all yr Urdd gefnogi. Yn ychwanegol, mae gan bob clwb Ieuentid ym Mlaenau Gwent a'r holl ysgolion uwchradd weithgareddau Cymraeg a diwylliannol a hwylusir gan weithwyr Ieuentid Blaenau Gwent. Fodd bynnag, mae'n amserol adolygu'r ddarpariaeth bresenol ac i agor cyfleoedd i weithio mewn partneriaeth gydag ystod ehangach o sefydliadau gyda'r ffocws hwn.

Mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuentid eisoes yn gosod targedau blynyddol iddo ei hun a hefyd yn cytuno gyda'r Urdd ar dargedau. Mae hyn yn rhan o broses cynllunio 5 mlynedd ac mae'n bwydo i archwiliad blynyddol Llywodraeth Cymru. Byddai'r Cyngor yn cefnogi gosod llinell sylfaen yn defnyddio'r ffigurau hanesyddol hyn.

Mae'r Gwasanaeth Ieuentid yn hwyluso partneriaeth strategol aml-asantiaeth sy'n goruchwyllo darpariaeth ar gyfer pobl ifanc a hefyd yn hwyluso rhwydwaith Gwasanaeth

Cymorth leuenctid,. Caiff darpariaeth y Gwasanaeth leuenctid hefyd ei arwain a'i ddatblygu gan farn pobl ifanc, a gesglir drwy ymgynghoriad ddwywaith y flwyddyn ar draws y Fwrdeistref Sirol, arolwg blynyddol gydag aelodau'r Gwasanaeth leuenctid, ymgynghoriad a dylunio gyda ffovws ar brosiect a thrafodaethau unigol gyda phobl ifanc. Yn y cyd-destun hwn ystyrir mai pobl ifanc yw ein partner mwyaf dilys. Caiff yr wybodaeth wedyn ei bwydo i'r Fforwm Cymreg mewn Addysg i gefnogi cynllunio a datblygu'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Mae Urdd Gobaith Cymru yn fudiad cenedlaethol gwirfoddol ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc sy'n rhoi gwahanol gyfleoedd i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg a chael profiadau yn yr iaith tu allan i'r ystafell ddosbarth ac yn eu cymunedau lleol. Mae'r Urdd yn cynnig y dilynol:

Cymunedol

- Swyddogion sy'n darparu cyfleoedd celfyddydau cymunedol drwy gydol y flwyddyn
- Adrannau, aelwydydd, clybiau ieuenctid a chlybiau cymunedol ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc i fwynhau a defnyddio'r Gymraeg
- Darpariaeth ddigidol ar gyfer pob oed

Chwaraeon

- Clybiau cymunedol
- Cystadlaethau chwaraeon sirol, rhanbarthol a chenedlaethol
- Gwylliau chwaraeon rhanbarthol a chenedlaethol
- Gweithgareddau digidol
- Darpariaeth addysg llythrennedd corfforol ar gyfer ysgolion

Gwersylloedd yr Urdd

- Llangrannog, Glan-llyn, Caerdydd a Phentre Ifan
- Profiadau preswyl yn rhoi profiadau dysgu, hwyl ac atgofion cadarnhaol o ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg

Yr Eisteddfod a'r Celfyddydau

- Eisteddfodau Cylch a Sir sy'n cynnig cyfleoedd ar gyfer ysgolion a disgyblion i brofi'r celfyddydau, datblygu hunanhyder a dysgu mwy am ddiwylliant a llenyddiaeth Cymru
- Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yr Urdd a bod yn rhan o ŵyl genedlaethol
- Celfyddydau digidol, cerddoriaeth, theatr, celf a darpariaeth cefn llwyfan

Prentisiaethau cyfrwng Cymraeg

- Dilyniant addysgol a chyflogaeth ar gyfer pobl ifanc sy'n dymuno cael cymwysterau a phrofiad yn y Gymraeg

Rhyngwladol

- Neges Heddwch ac Ewyllys Da – ymestyn llaw cyfeillgarwch a thrafod materion o bwys i bobl ifanc ar sail fyd-eang
- Prosiectau penodol gyda phartneriaid yn Iwerddon, America a Japan
- Cyfleoedd ar gyfer gwirfoddoli rhyngwladol ac ymweliadau cyfnewid

Adnoddau

- Cylchgronau digidol yr Urdd
- Casgliad o adnoddau ychwanegol i gefnogi'r Cwricwlwm newydd.

Ffigur 27: Gweithgareddau a digwyddiadau ymgysylltu ieuenctid drwy'r Urdd

2018 - 2019	Nifer plant oedran cynradd	Nifer plant oedran uwchradd	Cyfanswm	Lleoliad
Tripliau preswyl	60	40	100	Canolfannau yr Urdd - Llangrannog, Glan-Ilyn a Chaerdydd
Eisteddfod	30	0	30	Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Caerffili ac Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw
Clwb Cymraeg	0	20	20	Tredegar
Twrnameintiau chwaraeon	30	25	55	Gwahanol safleoedd ledled Gwent
Jambori	50	0	50	Pont-y-pŵl
Adran	15	0	15	Bro Helyg
Cyfanswm	185	85	270	

Mae swyddog cymundol yr Urdd yn gweithio ar draws Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Mynwy, Caerffili a Chasnewydd, gan olygu nad oes swyddog ar gyfer Blaenau Gwent yn unig. Caiff y targedau a gytunwyd fel rhan o Gytundebau Lefel Gwasanaeth Blaenau Gwent eu manylu yn Ffigur 28 islaw.

Ffigur 28 – Gwaith ieuenctid ym Mlaenau Gwent

Tasg	Disgrifiad
Tasg 1	1 Clwb Cymraeg wythnosol yn Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar yng ngofal aelod staff yr Urdd
Tasg 2	Achredu 10 o bobl ifanc o Blaenau Gwent – Credyd Gwirfoddoli ac Ymgysylltu gyda'r Gymuned – 20 awr o wirfoddoli – Disgyblion yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw
Tasg 3	Gwaith pontio gydag Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg – gweithio'n agosach gyda Blwyddyn 6 Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg
Tasg 4	Sicrhau cynrychiolaeth o Flaenau Gwent ar y Fforwm Ieuenctid – Gwneud yn siŵr eu bod yn rhan o Fforwm Ieuenctid Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw ac yn cysylltu gyda fforwm Blaenau Gwent
Tasg 5	Gweithio mewn partneriaeth gyda Chyngor Blaenau Gwent – codi proffil y Gymraeg
Tasg 6	Cyfleoedd gwirfoddoli ar gyfer 10 o bobl ifanc o Flaenau Gwent – yn cynnwys yn yr Eisteddfod, mewn clybiau
Tasg 7	Cynnig amrywiaeth o weithgareddau celf ar gyfer pobl ifanc ym Mlaenau Gwent – gweithgareddau yn ystod gwyliau'r ysgol.

Mae clwb Cymraeg ar ôl yr ysgol yn Ysgol Gyfun Tredegar yn rhoi cyfle i ddisgyblion ymarfer eu Cymraeg. Cynhelir Eisteddfodau yn cynnwys cystadlaethau a gweithgareddau chwaraeon ar gyfer siaradwyr Cymraeg a dysgwyr. Mae'r holl grwpiau hyn yn cynnig cyfle i siaradwyr a dysgwyr Cymraeg i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg mewn lleoliad anffurfiol.

Coleg Gwent

Mae Coleg Gwent yn darparu cyfleoedd ymglyfoethogi Cymraeg ar gyfer pob dysgwr. Yn unol â phartneriaeth Coleg Gwent gyda'r Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, penodir 5

Llysgennad Cymraeg ar gyfer pob sesiwn academaidd. Eu rôl yw hyrwyddo annog a hwyluso darpariaeth Gymraeg ym mhob campws, gan weithio gyda phartneriaid allweddol fel yr Urdd i wneud hynny.

Mae cyfranogiad ac ymgysylltu'n wahanol ym mhob campws ac ar draws adrannau. Fodd bynnag, mae tua 8-12 o ddysgwyr yn cymryd rhan mewn gweithgaredd allgyrsiol cyfrwng Cymraeg. Yn ystod sesiwn academaidd 2020/21, cymerodd 142 o ddysgwyr ran mewn gweithgareddau Cymraeg a dwyieithog. Cafodd y pandemig effaith negyddol ar lefelau cymryd rhan.

Ble'r ydym ni'n anelu bod o fewn 5 mlynedd gyntaf y Cynllun hwn a sut ydym ni'n bwriadu cyrraedd yno?

Gan weithio'n agos gyda EAS i barhau i hyrwyddo a datblygu'r Siarter Iaith ym mhob rhan o'r stad ysgolion, anelwn gyflawni'r targedau dilynol:

- **Targed Siarter Iaith Cynradd** Blaenau Gwent: 100% Aur (Bro Helyg)
- **Siarter Iaith Uwchradd** Torfaen: (Cam 4 o 5: Fframwaith gwerthuso siarter ar gyfer ysgolion uwchradd)

Targed Blaenau Gwent i gyflawni Efydd, Arian ac Aur.

Ffigur 29: Cymraeg Campus Cynradd: Cynradd Cyfrwng Saesneg

	2021		Targed 2026		Targed 2032	
Cymraeg Campus Cynradd Cyflawnwyd neu'n gweithio at hynny						
Cynradd : Efydd	7/20	35%	20/20	100%	20/20	100%
Cynradd: Arian	4/20	20%	10/20	50%	20/20	100%
Cynradd: Aur	0/20	0%	7/20	35%	10/20	50%

Mae'n fwrriad gan Goleg Gwent i ehangu a datblygu darpariaeth cyfoethogi Cymraeg, gan sefydlu cymuned Gymraeg fywiog, amrywiol a chynhwysol. Gan barhau i addasu i anghenion dysgwyr, disgwylir y bydd lefelau cyfranogiad dysgwyr ar gyfer gweithgareddau Cymraeg yn cynyddu i 70% dros y 5 mlynedd nesaf.

Wrth gyflawni ei nodau, byddwn yn:

- Gweithio gyda EAS i ddarparu cyfleoedd dysgu proffesiynol ar gyfer arweinwyr uwch, yn cynnwys ffocws ar ddatblygiad strategol Cymraeg Campus mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg.
- Datblygu rhwydweithiau ar gyfer cydlynwyr (ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg a Saesneg) a chyfarfodydd galw heibio bob hanner tymor.
- Cynnig cefnogaeth bwrpasol arall ar gyfer ysgolion yn unol â dull Gwella Ysgolion Rhanbarthol.
- Cefnogi ysgolion i ystyried datblygiad Cymraeg Campus fel rhan o'u hunanwerthusiad ehangach, gyda'r diwethaf yn sail i'r broses ddilysu.
- Codi proffil a hyrwyddo Siarter Iaith a Cymraeg Campus.
- Hyrwyddo gweithio clwstwr effeithlon a dathlu llwyddiannau ar lefel ysgol, clwstwr, lleol a rhanbarthol.
- Sicrhau fod cyfleoedd digonol i ysgolion rannu arfer da, a datblygu cynlluniau gweithio ysgol i ysgol, gan sicrhau mwy o ymgysylltu.

- Hyrwyddo gwaith a chreu cyfleoedd i ddysgwyr a theuluoedd ymgysylltu gyda Mudiad Meithrin, Gwasanaethau Ieuenctid Blaenau Gwent, Urdd Gobaith Cymru a'r Fenter Iaith.
- Datblygu holiadur llinell sylfaen i'w llenwi gan ysgolion uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg am ganfyddiad a hyder defnyddwyr mewn defnyddio'r Gymraeg fel ail iaith. Defnyddio'r data hwn i dargedu datblygu cyfleoedd, gan barhau i fesur hyder a chynnydd.
- Gweithio gyda'r arweinydd Siarter y Gymraeg ym Mlaenau Gwent i gefnogi ymgysylltu gan gasglu sylwadau drwy gyfres o holiaduron ansoddol, a ddefnyddir i benderfynu tueddiadau ieithyddol, rhwystrau a chyfleoedd.
- Parhau a chryfhau'r Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, gan gefnogi'r weledigaeth i dyfu'r Gymraeg a chyfleoedd cysylltiedig.
- Adolygu strwythur ac aelodaeth y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg, yn cynnwys is-grwpiau ac arweinwyr thema deilliant, i sicrhau y caiff y Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mllynedd ei fonitro a'i weithredu'n effeithlon.
- Cydweithio gyda phartneriaid allweddol i sicrhau adnoddau i ddatblygu cyfleoedd allgyrsiol ymhellach ar gyfer dysgwyr Blaenau Gwent.
- Datblygu cynllun cyfathrebu effeithlon i sicrhau fod dysgwyr a rhieni yn gwybod am ac yn ymgysylltu gyda chyfleoedd i ddysgwyr ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg mewn gwahanol gyd-destunau yn yr ysgol.
- Cefnogi dilyniant iaith mewn ysgolion cynradd cyfrwng Saesneg.
- Rhoi sylw i bwysigrwydd cyfleoedd preswyl yr Urdd sy'n cynnig profiadau 24 awr hollol Gymraeg, gan greu atgofion cadarnhaol a hirdymor o'r Gymraeg ymysg disgyblion.
- Cynyddu cyfranogiad ysgolion yn Eisteddfod yr Urdd i feithrin hunanhyder, profi'r celfyddydau a dealltwriaeth o lenyddiaeth, cerddoriaeth a chelf Cymru.
- Sicrhau cyd-gynllunio effeithlon ar gyfer gwaith ieuenctid (11-25 oed) drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.
- Mapio darpariaeth ar sail chwe misol gyda chynrychiolwyr Menter Iaith BGTM, yr Urdd a'r Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid. Gellid cyflawni hyn drwy Fforwm Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent a hwylusir gan Menter Iaith GBTM, sy'n gweithio ar hyn o bryd i gynnig syniadau ac adborth ar y strategaeth newydd i hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg.
- Cynyddu darpariaeth yr Urdd a'r Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid o fewn ysgolion cynradd ac uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg i ddarparu mwy o waith cymunedol yn y Gymraeg tebyg i glybiau, darpariaeth gwyliau ac yn y blaen.

Ble ydym ni'n disgwyl bod ar ddiwedd ein Cynllun deng-mllynedd?

Cymraeg Campus Cynradd: Y targedau ar gyfer ysgolion cynradd cyfrwng Saesneg ar gyfer 2032 yw:

- 50% aur
- 100% arian
- 100% efydd

Ar ddiwedd yr adolygiad 5-mllynedd, bydd gan ysgolion Cymraeg a enillodd ddyfarniad aur hyder llawn i hunanarfarnu eu darpariaeth yn gadarn ar gyfer gweithredu'r Siarter Iaith a byddant yn gyfrifol am rannu eu harfer da wrth ddatblygu'r Siarter yn annibynnol gydag eraill.

Bydd pob ysgol a sefydlwyd rhwng yr adolygiad 5-mlynedd a diwedd y cylch 10-mlynedd yn gweithredu'r Siarter Iaith ac yn anelu i ennill dyfarniad sy'n adlewyrchu cynnydd priodol yn ôl dyddiad sefydlu yr ysgol.

Ar gyfer Cymraeg Campus, rhaid cynnal disgwyliadau dyfarniad aur a safonau uchel mewn ysgolion a enillodd y dyfarniad, yn cynnwys sicrhau proses effeithlon i werthuso, monitro a chynllunio ar gyfer cynnal neu wella safonau. I sicrhau fod hyn yn digwydd, bydd rhannu helaeth ar arfer da rhwng ac ar draws ysgolion, gydag ysgolion yn rhoi cefnogaeth annibynnol i'w gilydd wrth werthuso cyflwyno'r rhaglen. Bydd y Cyngor yn gweithio gyda EAS i sicrhau fod prosesau monitro systematig ac effeithlon yn eu lle, i sicrhau y cedwir safonau uchel.

Dros y 10 mlynedd nesaf, amcan Coleg Gwent yw thyfu ac ehangu darpariaeth cyfoethogi yn y Gymraeg, gan ymdrechu at ddyblu y nifer sy'n cymryd rhan erbyn 2032, sy'n gyfwerth â 284 dysgwr neu 90%.

Yn olaf, anelwn gynyddu gweithgareddau allgyrsiol ac ymgysylltu cysylltiedig drwy ddull gweithredu partneriaeth effeithlon a gaiff ei lywio a'i fonitro gan waith y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg.

Data Allweddol

Cynyddu cyfleoedd i ddysgwyr i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg mewn gwahanol gyd-destunau yn yr ysgol

2022 – 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
0	0%	2	10%	4	20%	6	30%	7	35%
2027 – 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
8	40%	9	45%	9	45%	10	50%	10	50%

Deilliant 6

Cynydd yn y ddarpariaeth addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg i ddisgyblion ag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol (“ADY”), yn unol â'r dyletswyddau a bennir gan y Ddeddf Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru) 2018.

Ble'r ydym arni yn awr?

Daeth Bil Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg i rym ym mis Medi 2021/Ionawr 2022 ac mae'r ffocws yn awr wedi newid ar sut y mae awdurdodau lleol ac ysgolion yn cofnodi data. Mae'r ffocws yn awr ar i ysgolion ddiwallu anghenion disgyblion dan y ddarpariaeth gyffredinol ac wedi'i thargedu. Newidiodd data CYBLD gyda thynnu anawsterau dysgu cyffredinol.

Mae'r awdurdod lleol wedi cynllunio adolygiad o'r holl ddarpariaeth ar gyfer plant gydag ADY ar draws y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Disgwylir y cynhelir yr adolygiad hwn yn ystod tymor Gwanwyn/Haf 2022 i sicrhau bod yr Awdurdod Lleol yn cydymffurfio gyda Deddf Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru) 2018. Disgwylir y bydd Seicolegwyr Addysgol sy'n medru'r Gymraeg yn rhan o dîm yr adolygiad. Bydd canfyddiadau'r adolygiad ac ymweliadau cwmpasu hefyd yn rhoi gwybodaeth i lunio cynllunio, yn barod ar gyfer agor yr ail ysgol gyfrwng Cymraeg.

Caiff cynllun diwygiedig, gydag amserlenni wedi eu diweddarau, ei gynhyrchu cyn gynted ag sy'n bosibl. Yn ychwanegol, sefydlwyd gweithgor yn cynnwys penaethiaid ysgol yn cynrychioli pob clwstwr, cyfnod a lleoliad ar draws Blaenau Gwent ym mis Ionawr 2022 gyda chylch gorchwyl gweithredu diwygio ADY. Disgwylir y bydd y gweithgor hefyd yn llywio cynllunio'r dyfodol ar gyfer cefnogi pob dysgwr gydag angen dysgu ychwanegol yn cynnwys lleoliadau cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Nid oes gan Flaenau Gwent Ganolfan Adnoddau Anghenion Arbennig ar hyn o bryd ar gyfer plant gydag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol cymhleth. Felly, mae rhieni a gofalwyr disgyblion gyda ADY yn cael mynediad i Ganolfan ar gyfer eu plant mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg, oherwydd nad oes darpariaeth ar gael o fewn yr ysgol gynradd Gymraeg. Felly y 'canfyddiad' yw fod y galw am ddarpariaeth o'r fath yn isel. Fel yn 2021, dim ond un disgybl oedd â Datganiad o Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig. Fodd bynnag, mae'r ysgol wedi dynodi cohort o ddisgyblion sydd naill ai'n disgwyl am ddiagnosis neu wedi cael diagnosis a fyddai'n manteisio o ddarpariaeth Canolfan Adnoddau Anghenion Arbennig. Mae Ffigur 27 yn rhoi manylion proffil disgyblion ADY Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

Mae angen mwy o waith i ddadansoddi a deall lefel a chymhlethdod angen o fewn y sector cyfrwng Cymraeg ym Mlaenau Gwent. Gellir defnyddio'r term 'anghenion dysgu ychwanegol cymhleth' i ddisgrifio plant ac oedolion sydd â rhwystrau lluosog i ddysgu ac anawsterau dysgu sy'n cydfodoli tebyg i gyfathrebu, gwybyddiaeth, synhwyraidd (golwg a chlyw) a chorfforol.

Ffigur 30: Proffil disgyblion ADY yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg

	Anhwylder ar y Sbectrwm Awtistig	Anhwylder Ymddygiad Emosiynol Cymdeithasol	Dyslecsia	Oedi Datblygiadol Cyffredinol	Nam ar y Clyw	Anawsterau Lleferydd Dysgu a Chyfathrebu	Nam ar y Golwg	Anawsterau Dysgu Cymedrol	Cyfan
2017	1	5	8	6	1	11	1	1	34
2018		6	2	11	3	12	1	1	36
2019		5	2	8	2	9	1	1	28
2020		5		5	2	5	1		18
2021		10	1	5	1	4	1		22

Ar hyn o bryd, mae 8 disgybl gyda nodweddion ASD/ADHD yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Hyd yma, nid yw'r cyfan o'r disgyblion a nodwyd wedi cael diagnosis ffurfiol, fodd bynnag mae pob un heblaw 2 yn derbyn cyswllt gyda Seicolegydd Addysgol gydag atgyfeiriadau wedi eu gwneud. Cynigir darpariaeth feithrin yn yr ysgol ar sail lawn-

amser, felly mae anghenion disgyblion yn tueddu i gael eu hadnabod yn weddol gynnar. Ar hyn o bryd, yng Nghyfnod Allweddol 2, mae nifer o ddisgyblion a fyddai'n manteisio o addysgu dosbarth bach. Sylweddolir hefyd y byddai darparu canolfan adnoddau yn rhoi cefnogaeth bwrpasol ar gyfer y disgyblion y dynodwyd eu bod angen y lefel gyson yma o ymyriad a chymorth a hefyd yn rhyddhau amser athrawon i ganolbwyntio ar ddisgyblion sydd angen cymorth ychwanegol e.e. disgyblion gydag Anhawster Dysgu Penodol. Fel ym mis Medi 2021, roedd Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg wedi rhyddhau'r Cydlynnydd Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig rhag addysgu am 4 diwrnod yr wythnos er mwyn canolbwyntio ar ymyriadau gyda disgyblion.

Ar hyn o bryd mae gan Flaenau Gwent 3 aelod o staff yn y tîm Seicoleg Addysg sy'n rhugl yn eu Cymraeg. Fodd bynnag, mae un ohonynt ar secondiad i Lywodraeth Cymru ar hyn o bryd. Sefydlwyd gweithgor traws-gonsortia. Hefyd mae dulliau ac adnoddau Cymraeg a Saesneg yn awr ar gael ar Hwb ar gyfer holl staff ysgolion i gael mynediad iddynt yn ogystal â staff perthnasol awdurdodau lleol ar draws Cymru.

Fel ysgol arbennig, mae gan Pen y Cwm 6 aelod o staff sy'n medru'r Gymraeg. Defnyddir gwahanol lefelau o Gymraeg yn dibynnu ar anghenion y dysgwyr gyda Chymraeg yn bennaf yn cael ei defnyddio'n achlysurol. Yn ychwanegol, mae gan yr ysgol Gydlynnydd y Gymraeg ac maent yn cydnabod a gwobrwyo siaradwr Cymraeg yr wythnos.

O safbwynt awdurdod lleol, byddai unrhyw blentyn sy'n cyflwyno gydag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol mewn unrhyw leoliad gofal plant yn cael yr un broses asesu/atgyfeirio a chynigid yr un cymorth beth bynnag yw iaith y lleoliad. Ni fyddai iaith yn rhwystr i ysgol rhag derbyn cyngor ac arweiniad arbenigol gan seicolegydd addysgol sy'n medru'r Gymraeg.

Mae trefniadau a phrosesau rhyng-sirol yn eu lle ar gyfer disgyblion uwchradd Cymraeg gydag ADY y caiff eu hanghenion eu diwallu yn Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. Mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent yn cyllido disgyblion gyda ADY ar sail anghenion (disgybl unigol). Caiff y broses hon ei rheoli drwy Banel ADY y Cyngor, mewn partneriaeth gyda Chyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen.

Ble'r ydym ni'n anelu bod o fewn 5 mlynedd gyntaf y Cynllun hwn a sut ydym ni'n bwriadu cyrraedd yno?

Mae prosiect ailfodelu Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg yn Brosiect Band B Ysgolion y 21ain Ganrif gyda'r amcanion dilynol:

- sicrhau twf y boblogaeth disgyblion;
- mynd i'r afael â bylchau presennol mewn darpariaeth h.y. ni all yr ysgol gynnig dysgu awyr agored ac nid oes ganddi ofodau addas i gefnogi disgyblion gydag anghenion ymddygiad ac anghenion dysgu ychwanegol – sy'n ffurfio cyfran sylweddol o'r boblogaeth disgyblion;
- trawsnewid gofodau na fedrir eu defnyddio sydd â'u cyflwr yn gwaethygu ac sy'n anaddas i'w defnyddio yn unol â lechyd a Diogelwch;
- creu hyblygrwydd i gefnogi twf;
- sicrhau gwell safonau addysgu a dysgu, ynghyd â gwella deilliannau disgyblion; a
- sicrhau gwell addasrwydd yn unol â'r cwricwlwm newydd, ynghyd â chyflwr y cyfleuster.

Mae Cyngor Blaenau Gwent yn ymroddedig i ddatblygu Canolfan Adnoddau Anghenion Arbennig yn Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Byddai'r Ganolfan honno yn darparu ar gyfer hyd at 10 disgybl ADY i ddechrau, gyda'r capasiti i dyfu i ddarpariaeth cyfnod hollt. Mae cynlluniau i sicrhau darpariaeth ategol yn yr ysgol egin newydd hefyd yn cael eu datblygu ac mae datblygiad dylunio cysylltiedig wedi ei ystyried. Cyflwynwyd Datganiad Diddordeb i Lywodraeth Cymru ym mis Tachwedd 2021, yn unol â'r Grant Cyfalaf Cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Wrth gyflawni ein nodau, byddwn yn:

- Sicrhau fod prosesau adnabod cynnar effeithlon yn eu lle gan weithio'n agos gyda'r sector blynyddoedd cynnar a gofal plant i hwyluso pecynnau cymorth pontio effeithlon o leoliadau cyn-ysgol i addysg;
- Archwilio anghenion ADY drwy gydol y sector cyfrwng Cymraeg ac adolygu'n flynyddol, er mwyn llywio a datblygu pontio a darpariaeth effeithlon ar gyfer dysgwyr;
- Sicrhau y gall dyletswydd statudol ysgol(ion) i sicrhau y gellir cynnig darpariaeth ADY yn ddwyieithog, drwy ymrwmo i ddatblygiad a recriwtio ymarferwyr yn y Gymraeg;
- Sicrhau bod y lefel iawn o gymorth ar gael ledled y sectorau blynyddoedd cynnar a chynradd cyfrwng Cymraeg, gan sicrhau fod gan ddarpariaethau y cyfleusterau a'r adnoddau sydd eu hangen i roi cefnogaeth effeithlon i ddysgwyr sydd ag ADY;
- Adolygu'r ymchwil a gynhelir drwy'r consortia, a'i ddefnyddio i ddatblygu cynllun hyfforddiant ac ymyrryd ar gyfer staff a disgyblion;
- Adolygu, addasu a defnyddio adnoddau a gafodd eu teilwra i anghenion penodol dysgwyr, gan ymgysylltu gyda a deall arfer gorau h.y. dulliau asesu Gogledd Cymru tebyg i beiriannau darllen ar gyfer dysgwyr gydag Anawsterau Dysgu Penodol;
- Sicrhau fod prosesau adnabyddiaeth gynnar yn eu lle, drwy sicrhau dull partneriaeth effeithlon, gan lywio a datblygu darpariaeth ar gyfer disgyblion ADY cyn ysgol statudol;
- Gweithio gyda'r tîm Cynhwysiant i gefnogi gweithredu Diwygio Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol ar gyfer Cymru (2021);
- Sicrhau'r gallu i ymgysylltu gyda rhieni yn eu dewis iaith;
- Gweithio gyda'r Gwasanaethau Cynhwysiant i weithredu a monitro Cynlluniau Datblygu Unigol yn effeithlon ar gyfer pob disgybl 0-25 oed gydag Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol; a
- Sicrhau aliniad effeithlon gyda'r Strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu i hysbysu rhieni am y cymorth sydd ar gael ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc gydag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol ym mhob rhan o'r sector uwchradd.

Ble'r ydym ni'n disgwyl bod ar ddiwedd ein Cynllun deng mlynedd?

- Cydweithio rhanbarthol i barhau i gefnogi'r galw am addysg drochi ac addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.
- Sicrhau fod y Gwasanaeth Cynhwysiant yn parhau i gynnig ystod eang o wasanaethau arbenigol drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg o fewn y sector cynradd.
- Parhau i gefnogi ysgolion gyda datblygu darpariaeth yn y Gymraeg a chydweithio mwy gyda nhw i gyflawni ar a sicrhau cydymffurfiaeth gyda'r Cod Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol.

- Cynnal adolygiad llawn ar gyfer Canolfannau Adnoddau Anghenion Addysgol Arbennig mewn ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg ac ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg..
- Sicrhau y caiff darpariaeth ar gyfer dysgwyr ADY ei weithredu'n effeithlon, gan sicrhau twf a datblygiad.

Deilliant 7

Cynnydd yn nifer y staff addysgu sy'n gallu addysgu Cymraeg (fel pwnc) a thrwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

Ble ydyn ni arni yn awr?

Gweithlu Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Blaenau Gwent

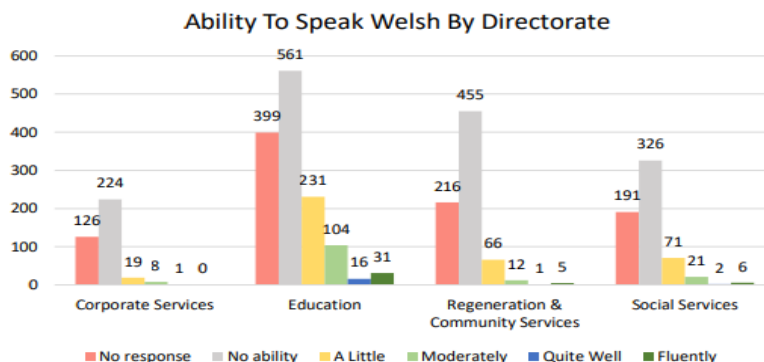
Ar 31 Mawrth 2021 roedd gan 594 (19%) o staff sgiliau yn y Gymraeg (gweler Adroddiad Blynyddol Iaith Gymraeg 2020-21.pdf (blaenau-gwent.gov.uk); gall y staff hyn siarad 'yn rhugl', 'eithaf da', 'gweddol' neu 'ychydig'. Fodd bynnag dywedodd ychydig dros hanner yr holl staff nad oes ganddynt unrhyw allu i siarad Cymraeg, sy'n ostyngiad bach o gymharu â'r cyfnod adrodd diwethaf (2019-20). Mae'r nifer a'r canran o staff a all ddeall, siarad, ysgrifennu a darllen Cymraeg yn amrywio ychydig rhwng pob cymharlydd.

Dengys Ffigur 31 fod cyfanswm o 42 o staff yn dweud eu bod yn rhugl, heb unrhyw newid sylweddol o gymharu â'r cyfnod adrodd blaenorol (43, 2019/20). Yn y Gyfarwyddiaeth Addysg mae'r nifer fwyaf o siaradwyr Cymraeg rhugl (31).

Ffigur 31 Siaradwyr Cymraeg rhugl yn ôl Cyfarwyddiaeth a Math Contract

The following graphs and tables reflect the total number of Fluent Welsh Speakers by Directorate and Contract Type across the organisation.

Directorate	Ability to Speak Welsh						Total
	No response	No ability	A Little	Moderately	Quite Well	Fluently	
Corporate Services	126	224	19	8	1	0	378
Education	399	561	231	104	16	31	1,342
Regeneration & Community Services	216	455	66	12	1	5	755
Social Services	191	326	71	21	2	6	617



Capasiti/Sgiliau Iaith y Gweithlu Addysg (Ysgolion) (Llinell sylfaen 2019 SWAC)

Mae bron holl ysgolion Blaenau Gwent yn ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg ar hyn o bryd. Mae staff gyda'r lefelau uchaf o hyfedredd yn gweithio yn y sector cyfrwng Cymraeg gydag angen datblygiad sylweddol ar sgiliau Cymraeg y staff yn yr ysgolion cyfrwng Saesneg.

Mae'r rhan fwyaf o ymarferwyr mewn ysgolion cynradd ac uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg yn nodi nad oes ganddynt ddim sgiliau lefel mynediad na sylfaen yn y Gymraeg. Ychydig iawn sy'n nodi fod ganddynt sgiliau iaith uwch neu â hyfedredd. Cafodd data Cyfrifiad Blynyddol Gweithlu Ysgolion ei adolygu a'i gyflwyno islaw, yn rhoi manylion y lefelau sgil presennol drwy gydol y sector cyfrwng Cymraeg ym Mlaenau Gwent.

Ysgolion Cynradd Cyfrwng Saesneg

Figur 32: Trosolwg o lefelau sgiliau Cymraeg staff mewn addysg cyfrwng Saesneg.

Dim Sgiliau	Lefel Mynediad	Lefel Sylfaen	Lefel Canolradd	Lefel Uwch	Lefel Hyfedredd	Ni chafwyd yr wybodaeth hon	Cyfan
1	104	98	6	4	4	0	217
0.5%	48%	45%	3%	2%	2%	0.0%	99.5%

Ysgolion Cynradd Cyfrwng Saesneg

Ffigur 33: Trosolwg lefelau sgiliau Cymraeg staff addysg cyfrwng Saesneg

Dim Sgiliau	Lefel Mynediad	Lefel Sylfaen	Lefel Canolradd	Lefel Uwch	Lefel Hyfedredd	Ni chafwyd yr wybodaeth hon	Cyfan
52	15	6	2	0	7	0	82
63%	18%	7%	2%	0%	8%	0%	98%

Gallu i addysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

Ychydig iawn o staff sy'n gweithio yn ysgolion cynradd neu uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg a all ddysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

Cynradd

Ffigur 34: Nifer staff a all addysgu neu weithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

Addysgu/gweithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg		
Gallu addysgu/gweithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg	Cyfanswm	Gallu addysg/gweithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg
27	228	12%

Uwchradd

Ffigur 35: Nifer staff a all addysgu neu weithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

Addysgu/gweithio trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg		
Gallu addysgu/gweithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg	Cyfanswm	Gallu addysg/gweithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg
3	82	4%

Rôl yr EAS wrth gyflwyno a hyrwyddo dysgu proffesiynol ar gyfer y Gymraeg yw:

- Gweithio gydag arweinwyr ysgolion, arweinwyr dysgu proffesiynol clwstwr ar gyfer y Gymraeg a chydlynwyr y Gymraeg i gefnogi asesiad cywir o anghenion y Gymraeg yn unol â Fframwaith Cymhwysedd yn y Gymraeg a dynodi anghenion hyfforddiant ar lefel clwstwr ac ysgolion.
- Cyfeirio ysgolion at amrywiaeth o opsiynau hyfforddiant rhanbarthol, ar-lein a Chymraeg i Oedolion i gefnogi datblygu'r Gymraeg.
- Cydweithio gyda Llywodraeth Cymru i ddynodi anghenion hyfforddiant Sabothol.
- Cyflwyno hyfforddiant iaith, yn arbennig i'r sector cyfrwng Saesneg i gefnogi eu gallu i gyflwyno'r Gymraeg ar hyd y continiwm Cymraeg.
- Darparu dysgu proffesiynol ar y dulliau addysgol a methodolegol o addysgu Cymraeg i gefnogi caffael a throchi yn y Gymraeg.
- Gweithio mewn partneriaeth gydag ysgolion i ddatblygu a rhannu adnoddau a chynllunio i gefnogi cyflwyno'r Gymraeg.
- Darparu cyfleoedd rhwydweithio i gefnogi cyflenwi negeseuon allweddol a galluogi rhannu arfer gorau i gyflwyno a datblygu'r Gymraeg.

Data Galw am y Cynllun Sabothol Cymraeg

Ffigur 36: Ysgolion a gymerodd ran yn y Cynllun Sabothol (2018 -2021)

Blwyddyn	Math Cwrs	Ysgol
2018-19	Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn	Ysgol Gynradd Cwm
2018-19	Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn	Ysgol Gynradd Blaen y Cwm
2019-20	Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn	Ysgol Gynradd Deighton
2020-21	Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn	Ysgol Gynradd Eglwys yng Nghymru Santes Fair
2020-21	Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn	Cymuned Ddysgu Abertyleri

Caiff yr holl staff a gymerodd ran yn y rhaglen eu gwahodd i gymryd rhan mewn Rhwydwaith Sabothol Rhanbarthol. Mae Ffigur 37 islaw yn dangos cyrsiau eraill mae ysgolion Blaenau Gwent wedi cymryd rhan ynddynt yn ystod y flwyddyn ac ar ba lefel.

Ffigur 37: Ymgysylltu Ysgol Blaenau Gwent

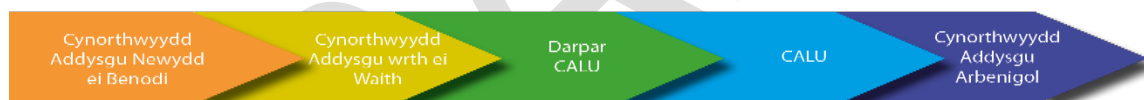
Blwyddyn academaidd	Lefel ymgysylltu	Ysgolion a gymerodd ran
2018-19	Mynediad	Pen y Cwm
2018-19	Mynediad	Pen y Cwm
2018-19	Mynediad	Pen y Cwm
2018-19	Sylfaen	Glyncoed
2018-19	Sylfaen	Blaen y Cwm
2018-19	Sylfaen	Sofrydd

Mae EAS yn cefnogi graddedigion Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn ar ôl y rhaglen. Caiff staff eu cefnogi i weithredu prosiectau ar lefel ysgol a chwstwr, yn cynnwys datblygu deunyddiau enghreifftiol a dulliau i gyflwyno'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru, gan alluogi ymarferwyr i gynnal eu sgiliau iaith a datblygu eu harbenigedd. Caiff cyfranogwyr hefyd eu hannog i ddatlbygu sgiliau Cymraeg cydweithwyr, yn neilltuoel gynorthwywyr addysgu o fewn eu hysgol a'u clwstwr.

Bydd EAS yn parhau i recriwtio i'r Cynllun Sabothol yn defnyddio data Consortiwm Addysg De Cymru i gefnogi ysgolion/clystyrau i ddynodi anghenion ac ymarferwyr a fyddai'n cael budd o'r rhaglennu ac arwain ar y Gymraeg yn dilyn eu secondiadau.

Mae'r EAS yn gweithio gyda chlystyrau i gynllunio'n strategol ar gyfer cyfranogiad athrawon yn y cynllun Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn. Mae gan bob clwstwr arweinydd strategol ar y Gymraeg a gaiff ei annog i ddynodi aelodau addas o staff i fynychu cyrsiau. Cânt hefyd eu hannog i weithio mewn partneriaeth gyda graddedigion Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn i rannu arbenigedd ar draws y clwstwr. Mae gan bob un o'r 4 clwstwr o leiaf un Hyrwyddwr Sabothol EAS a rhan o'r brif a ddiffiniwyd gan EAS yw cefnogi staff yn eu hysgolion a chlystyrau gyda dysgu proffesiynol i gefnogi datblygiad iaith, rhannu adnoddau a dulliau pedagogiaid.

Mae gan bob ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg fynediad i gefnogaeth ar draws y llwybr dysgu proffesiynol. Mae tîm Dysgu Proffesiynol EAS yn cydweithio gyda'r grŵp Dysgu Proffesiynol traws-ranbarthol, gyda Llywodraeth Cymru, **Cyngor Gweithlu Addysg, Academi Genedlaethol Arweinyddiaeth Addysgol a Sefydliadau Addysg Uwch** i ddatblygu darpariaeth ar gyfer yr holl staff yn cynnwys darpariaeth drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, ynghyd â'r llwybr dysgu proffesiynol.



Cyflwyno rhaglenni dysgu proffesiynol cenedlaethol i gefnogi dilyniant staff, yn cynnwys darpariaeth Gymraeg ar gyfer ysgolion cyfrwng Cymru, ar hyd y llwybr dysgu proffesiynol cenedlaethol, gan felly gefnogi datlbygu gweithlu medrus yn y Gymraeg a chapasiti ar gyfer arweinyddiaeth. Er enghraifft:

- Llwybr Dysgu Cynorthwywyr Addysgu – Cynnig dysgu proffesiynol cenedlaethol hollol ddwyieithog ar gyfer cynorthwywyr addysgu yn cynnwys: Cynefino ar gyfer cynorthwywyr addysgu newydd eu penodi, rhaglen cynorthwywyr addysgu presennol, rhaglen ac asesiad cynorthwywyr addysgu Dysgu Anelu'n Uchaf.
- Athro Newydd Gymhwyso – Cynnig dysgu proffesiynol cynefino cenedlaethol ar gyfer athrawon newydd gymhwyso, mentoriaid cynefino a dilyswyr allanol (cynnig hollol ddwyieithog)
- Llwybr Datblygu Arweinyddiaeth Genedlaethol – sy'n cynnwys cynnig hollol ddwyieithog ar gyfer Rhaglen Datblygu Arweinwyr Canol, m Uwch Arweinyddiaeth ac yn y blaen, rhaglen datblygu darpar benaethiaid - paratoi ar gyfer Cymhwyster Proffesiynol Cenedlaethol ar gyfer Penaethiaid, rhaglen datblygu Penaethiaid Newydd a Gweithredol a Phenaethiaid Profiadol.
- Partneriaeth Strategol Addysg Athrawon Dechreuol yn gweithio gyda sefydliadau addysg uwch i gael profiad cadarnhaol o addysgu mewn ysgolion

cyfrwng Cymraeg i gefnogi recriwtio lleol e.e. partneriaeth EAS ar gyfer y cyfnod cynradd gyda phrifysgol De Cymru.



Mae EAS yn cefnogi graddedigion Cymraeg mewn blwyddyn i weithredu prosiectau ar lefel ysgol a chlwestwr, yn cynnwys datblygu deunyddiau enghreifftiol a dulliau o gyflwyno'r Cwricwlwm i Gymru, gan alluogi ymarferwyr i gynnal eu sgiliau iaith a datblygu eu harbenigedd.

Staff EAS

Mae gan EAS dîm Cymraeg rhanbarthol neilltuol yn cynnwys:

- Arweinydd Ieithoedd, Llythrennedd a Chyfathrebu
- Partner Cwricwlwm Cymraeg a Llythrennedd (iaith 1^{af})
- Partner Cwricwlwm Cymraeg mewn Ysgolion Cyfrwng Saesneg ac Ieithoedd Rhyngwladol
- Partner Cwricwlwm Cyswllt, Cymraeg mewn Ysgolion Cyfrwng Saesneg (Uwchradd)
- Partneriaid Cwricwlwm Cyswllt Cymraeg mewn Ysgolion Cyfrwng Saesneg (Cynradd)

Mae EAS yn darparu cefnogaeth Cynghorydd Her Cyfrwng Cymraeg neilltuol i ysgolion ac yn tynnu penaethiaid ysgol i mewn o bob rhan o EAS ac ar draws rhanbarthau i sicrhau arbenigedd yn y Gymraeg ar lefel gynradd ac uwchradd. Daw cefnogaeth ysgol i ysgol ar gyfer y sector cyfrwng Saesneg o arfer gorau o fewn ac ar draws rhanbarthau. Mae unigolion o fewn y sefydliad sydd â sgiliau yn y Gymraeg, yn cynnwys o fewn y tîm Dysgu Proffesiynol, fodd bynnag sylweddolir fod angen cefnogi'r gweithlu ehangach i ddatblygu eu sgiliau iaith. Dros y 5 mlynedd nesaf, mae EAS yn bwriadu datblygu ac ymwreiddio dysgu proffesiynol ar gyfer y Gymraeg (anffurfiol a ffurfiol fel sy'n addas) fel rhan o hawl dysgu proffesiynol staff EAS.

Coleg Gwent Darpariaeth Ôl 16:

Ffigur 38: Sgiliau yn y Gymraeg staff academaidd Coleg Gwent (Mehefin 2021)

Rhugl	Uwch	Canolradd	Dim
6 (1%)	14 (2%)	23 (4%)	553 (93%)

Mae nifer y staff gyda sgiliau yn y Gymraeg ar lefel lle gallant gyflwyno'r cwricwlwm yn hyderus yn y Gymraeg ymhell dan y lefelau rydym eu hangen i ehangu'n sylweddol ein cynnig cwricwlwm cyfrwng Cymraeg a dwyieithog. Mae problemau hanesyddol a pharhaus o amgylch recriwtio darlithwyr sy'n siarad Cymraeg gydag arbenigedd pwnc rhanbarthol hefyd yn broblem o fewn rhanbarth Consortiwm De Ddwyrain Cymru.

Cafodd y Coleg beth llwyddiant yn ystod yr ychydig flynyddoedd diwethaf yn cynyddu sgiliau Cymraeg sylfaenol staff, hyd at lefel ganolradd (drwy Cymraeg Gwaith a darpariaeth arall Cymraeg i Oedolion), ond ni fydd y dull organig hwn ar ben ei hun yn cael effaith sylweddol ar ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg a'r cynnig cwricwlwm yn y tymor canol i'r tymor hir.

Gofal Plant a Blynyddoedd Cynnar

Mae cynllun Cam wrth Gam Mudiad Meithrin yn cefnogi disgyblion sy'n mynychu Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw.

Mae Cynllun Prentisiaeth Mudiad Meithrin hefyd ar gael i roi cyfle i unigolion i ddilyn cymhwyster gofal plant er nad oes neb yn ei ddilyn ym Mlaenau Gwent ar hyn ó bryd.

Mae cynllun Academi Mudiad Meithrin yn anelu i gynnig ystod eang o gyfleoedd datblygu a hyfforddi ar gyfer yr holl staff a gwirfoddolwyr sy'n ffurfio rhan o gymuned Mudiad Meithrin. Darperir yr hyfforddiant mewn gwahanol fformatau, yn cyfuno cyswllt traddodiadol wyneb-i-wyneb a chyswllt ar-lein, gan alluogi dysgwyr i astudio ar amserau sy'n gyfleus iddynt.

Mae Croesi'r Bont hefyd yn cyflwyno methodoleg trochi iaith o fewn Cylchoedd Meithrin a sicrhau pontio ieithyddol o'r Cylchoedd i ysgolion cyfrwng Cymraeg

Anghenion Gweithlu Ysgolion

Yn unol â'r twf a gynlluniwyd drwy'r sector cynradd (yn cynnwys datblygiadau egin, trochi a Chanolfan Adnoddau Anghenion Arbennig), mae ein hasesiad anghenion gweithlu presennol yn amlygu y bydd angen i ni recriwtio 32 o staff ychwanegol i hwyluso'r ddarpariaeth hon. Mae proses cynllunio pontio prosiect yn eu lle ar gyfer pob prosiect, sy'n cynnwys ffrwd gwaith adnoddau dynol yn eu lle i ddynodi, rhaglennu a monitro gweithgareddau allweddol tebyg i recriwtio.

Ble'r ydym ni'n anelu bod o fewn 5 mlynedd gyntaf y Cynllun hwn a sut ydym ni'n bwriadu cyrraedd yno?

Cyngor Blaenau Gwent

Mae'r Cyngor yn bwriadu recriwtio Swyddog Cymorth y Gymraeg yn y tîm Corfforaethol i oruchwylio Strategaeth a Chynllun Gweithredu y Gymraeg, gan sicrhau aliniad gyda'r Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mlynedd.

Bydd Cyngor Blaenau Gwent yn parhau i ymateb mewn modd cadarnhaol i Safonau'r Gymraeg ac yn ymroddedig i gyflawni ei ddyletswyddau dan Fesur y Gymraeg (Cymru) 2011. Fel cyngor, mae cydnabyddiaeth bod mwy o waith i gael ei wneud am gyfnerthu'r gofynion a cheisio gwella'n barhaus ansawdd ac argaeledd gwasanaethau drwy gydol y Gymraeg.

Fel rhan o'n gwaith yn y flwyddyn i ddod bwriadwn symud ymlaen gyda'r camau gweithredu allweddol:

- Hyrwodd ein defnydd o'r Gymraeg yn y gweithlu a chynyddu cyfleoedd hyfforddiant ar gyfer staff, yn neilltuol staff sy'n allweddol i gefnogi gweithredu y safonau cyflenwi gweithredol
- Parhau i symud ymlaen gyda'n Cynllun Gweithredu Archwilio Mewnol y Gymraeg, sy'n cynnwys camau gweithredu allweddol megis adolygiad o'n prosesau dilysu mewnol;
- Cefnogi cyflenwi ein safonau gwneud polisi drwy'r adolygiad a datblygu Asesiad Effaith Integredig newydd, fydd yn ystyried sut mae sicrhau na chaiff y Gymraeg ei thrin yn llai ffafriol.

Dros y cyfnod nesaf, mae'r Cyngor yn anelu i barhau ein cynnydd yng nghyswllt cyflawni ein dyletswyddau ynghylch y Gymraeg a gwneud unrhyw welliannau angenrheidiol i sicrhau ein bod yn darparu'r gwasanaethau gorau posibl i'n staff, preswylwyr, partneriaid a rhanddeiliaid.

Gofal Plant a Blynyddoedd Cynnar

Byddwn yn gweithio gyda phartneriaid yn cynnwys RhAG a Mudiad Meithrin i gynnal dadansoddiad sgiliau ar gyfer staff o fewn y sector blynyddoedd cynnar a gofal plant er mwyn cynllunio a llywio sut y gall y sector gyfrannu at y targed trosfwaol. Caiff cyfleoedd hyfforddiant a datblygu eu hyrwyddo o fewn y sector i gynyddu a datblygu sgiliau yn y Gymraeg.

Daeth recriwtio yn y sector gofal plant ym Blaenau Gwent yn heriol yn y 18 mis diwethaf. Deallir fod hwn yn fater cenedlaethol, yn benodol yng nghyswllt ymarferwyr cyfrwng Cymraeg. Bydd y Tîm Blynyddoedd Cynnar a Gofal Plant yn gweithio ar gynlluniau i ddenu mwy o bobl i ddilyn hyfforddiant Gofal Plant ar lefel leol. Yn ychwanegol, byddant yn gweithio gyda Llywodraeth Cymru ac awdurdodau lleol eraill i ystyried beth y gellid ei wneud ar lefel genedlaethol a rhanbarthol i gefnogi pob lleoliad gofal plant i recriwtio ymarferwyr ansawdd uchel, wedi eu hyfforddi'n dda.

Staff Addysgu ac Addysg Arbenigol

O fewn 5 mlynedd cyntaf ein cynllun, anelwn weithio gyda phartneriaid allweddol er mwyn cynnal dadansoddiad o anghenion gweithlu, i sicrhau y gallwn fapio, hyfforddi a recriwtio staff yn effeithlon i gyflawni'r blaenoriaethau a nodir yn y cynllun hwn.

Anelwn sicrhau fod gan ein hysgolion a darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg staff priodol, gydag athrawon gyda chymwysterau addas yn medru cyflenwi i safon uchel. Yn ychwanegol, anelwn hyrwyddo a datblygu cyfleoedd i'r gweithlu addysg wella a datblygu eu sgiliau yn y Gymraeg.

Mae'r gweithlu addysg yn newid drwy'r amser ac felly byddwn yn gweithio gyda phartneriaid allweddol yn cynnwys EAS i barhau i ddarparu a chyfeirio ysgolion at amrywiaeth o gyfleoedd dysgu proffesiynol, gan gefnogi staff i gynnal a datblygu sgiliau. Byddwn yn parhau i recriwtio i'r Cynllun Sabothol, gan ddefnyddio data Consortiwm Addysg De Cymru i gefnogi ysgolion/clystyrau er mwyn dynodi anghenion hyfforddiant ac ymarferwyr a fyddai'n cael budd o'r rhaglenni ac arwain ar y Gymraeg yn dilyn eu secondiadau. Dros y 5 mlynedd nesaf, bydd EAS yn datblygu ac ymwreiddio dysgu proffesiynol ar gyfer y Gymraeg (anffurfiol a ffurfiol fel sy'n briodol) fel rhan o hawl dysgu proffesiynol staff EAS. Bod staff yn sicrhau cynnydd yn eu gallu i siarad Cymraeg yn eu swyddi.

Byddwn yn cefnogi ysgolion a chlystyrau i dyfu a manteisio i'r eithaf ar yr arbenigedd iaith o fewn y system addysg, yn cynnwys cefnogaeth Graddedigion Sabothol fydd wedi dilyn rhaglen Cymraeg mewn Blwyddyn.

Cafodd hefyd raglen 2021/22 ei lansio yng nghyswllt y rhaglen ôl-radd Addysg Gychwynnol Athrawon gan eu galluogi i addysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg a darparwyr Addysg Gychwynnol Athrawon yng Nghymru.

Yn unol â'r strategaeth Hyrwyddo ac Ymgysylltu, byddwn yn ymchwilio datblygiad adnoddau i hyrwyddo cyfleoedd ar gyfer hyfforddiant a chyflogaeth yn y sector addysg.

Byddwn yn datblygu rhaglenni hyfforddiant ac ymgysylltu Llywodraethwyr er mwyn cefnogi codi ymwybyddiaeth a rhannu atebolrwydd wrth lwyddo i gyflawni'r weledigaeth, nodau a thargedau a sefydlwyd a gyflwynir o fewn y Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg, tra hefyd yn sicrhau prosesau hyfforddiant a recriwtio effeithlon.

Coleg Gwent

Yn y 5 mlynedd gyntaf, bydd targedau yn gynydd o 50% yn nifer y staff academaidd gyda sgiliau rhugl yn y Gymraeg a chynnydd o 50% yn nifer y staff academaidd gyda sgiliau uwch yn y Gymraeg. Y targedau hyn yw:

	Rhugl	Uwch
Targed 5 mlynedd:	9	21

Bydd y cynnydd hwn yn galluogi'r Cyngor i ehangu ei ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg a dwyieithog presennol i feysydd cwricwlwm cyfrwng Cymraeg arall blaenoriaeth (fel a osodwyd gan y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol).

Bydd y coleg yn canolbwyntio ar y meysydd dilynol er mwyn hwyluso'r cynnydd:

- Parhau i gyflwyno rhaglen Cymraeg Gwaith yng Ngholeg Gwent gyda'r brif nod o gynyddu sgiliau staff lefel Canolradd i lefel Uwch.
- Cymryd rhan yng nghynllun mentora Sgiliaith er mwyn cefnogi staff gyda chyflwyno cyfrwng Cymraeg a dwyieithog;
- Ceisio cyfleoedd i gymell a denu staff sy'n siarad Cymraeg o bob rhan o'r wlad; ac
- Edrych ar opsiynau i lacio gofynion TAR mewn rhai sefyllfaoedd er mwyn denu mwy o ymgeiswyr. Caiff yr unigolion hyn eu noddi i gwblhau ein TAR mewnol yn ystod eu 2 flynedd gyntaf o gyflogaeth.

Ble'r ydym ni'n disgwyl bod ar ddiwedd ein Cynllun deng mlynedd?

Cyngor Blaenau Gwent

Bydd y Cyngor yn edrych ar recriwtio Swyddog Cymorth y Gymraeg yn y tîm Corfforaethol i oruchwylio Strategaeth a Chynllun Gweithredu y Gymraeg, tra hefyd yn sicrhau alino effeithlon gyda'r Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mlynedd. Mae Addysg hefyd yn anelu i sicrhau gallu'r tîm Trawsnewid Addysg dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf, yn cynnwys aelod o'r tîm a fyddai'n ymroddedig i gynllun gweithredu y Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg.

Dros y 10 mlynedd nesaf, byddwn yn gweithio gyda EAS i ddatblygu a sefydlu dysgu proffesiynol y Gymraeg (anffurfiol a ffurfiol fel sy'n briodol) fel rhan o hawl dysgu proffesiynol EAS.

Mae gan Blaenau Gwent fwy o weithlu addysg sy'n gallu addysgu a gweithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, tra hefyd yn cynyddu nifer y staff a all addysgu Cymraeg fel pwnc.

Mae gan Flaenau Gwent gynllun datblygu gweithlu wedi'i sefydlu, sy'n galluogi'r Cyngor a'i bartneriaid i sicrhau staff addysgu a staff ysgol arbenigol arall i gyflwyno'r cwricwlwm yn llwyddiannus drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg ac yn ddwyieithog, er mwyn cyflawni targed Blaenau Gwent ar gyfer disgyblion Blwyddyn 1.

Erbyn diwedd y cynllun 10-mlynedd, bydd Coleg Gwent yn anelu i sicrhau cynnydd o 100% yn nifer y staff academaidd sy'n rhugl ac uwch yn y Gymraeg (o'r lefelau presennol ym Mehefin 2021). Y targedau 10 mlynedd yw:

	Rhugl	Uwch
Targed 10 mlynedd	12	28

Bydd y cynnydd hwn yn galluogi'r Coleg i ehangu ei ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg a dwyieithog presennol i feysydd cwricwlwm cyfrwng Cymraeg blaenoriaeth arall (fel a nodwyd gan y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol). Y meysydd blaenoriaeth yw:

- Gofal Plant
- Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
- Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
- Chwaraeon
- Lletygarwch a Thwristiaeth
- Seiliedig ar y tir
- Busnes, Technoleg Gwybodaeth a'r Cyfryngau

Caiff y camau gweithredu a ddynodwyd er mwyn cyflawni'r targedau 5 mlynedd eu hymestyn i'r ail gyfnod i gefnogi cynnydd ar dargedau 10-mlynedd Llywodraeth Cymru.

Mae'n hollbwysig cynyddu nifer y staff a all gyflwyno yn Gymraeg os ydym i gyrraedd ein targedau uchelgeisiol ar gyfer cynyddu darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg a dwyieithog yn y coleg.

Sut fyddwn ni'n gweithio gydag eraill i gyflawni ein gweledigaeth?

Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent fydd y sbardun strategol tu ôl i'r Cynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg 10-mlynedd. Diben y Fforwm yw cyfrannu at gynllunio strategol, monitro a gwerthuso Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg (Blaenau Gwent). Bydd y Fforwm yn cwrdd bob tymor, gyda is-grwpiau penodol o fewn ac o amgylch cyfarfodydd, yn canolbwyntio ar themâu penodol.

Mae'r Fforwm yn rhoi sianel ffurfiol o gyfathrebu rhwng partneriaid allweddol a rhanddeiliaid sy'n cydweithio tuag at gyflawni'r weledigaeth, nodau, amcanion, blaenoriaethau strategol a thargedau a nodir o fewn y cynllun.

Mae'r Fforwm yn gweithredu fel grŵp ymgynghori, gan gyfrannu at ddatblygu, monitro a gweithredu'r Cynllun drwy:

- gyfrannu at ddatblygu a monitro'r Cynllun;
- monitro'r galw am addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg, ynghyd â'r nifer sy'n derbyn hefyd y ddarpariaeth addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg, gan benderfynu blaenoriaethau strategol allweddol fel grŵp; a
- chefnogi datblygiad adroddiad blynyddol i Lywodraeth Cymru yn disgrifio cynnydd yn nhermau gweithredu targedau'r Cynllun ar yr amserlen gymeradwy.

Yn ychwanegol, aiff adroddiadau cynnydd ar y Cynllun drwy brosesau gwleidyddol y Cyngor yn flynyddol. Mae'r Cynllun Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg hefyd yn ffocws allweddol ym Mwrdd Rhaglen Ysgolion y 21ain Ganrif a'r Fforwm Derbyn, gyda diweddariadau'n cael eu rhoi.

Aelodaeth y Fforwm Addysg Gymraeg

Aelod Gweithredol dros Addysg

Trawsnewid Addysg a Gwasanaethau Newid Busnes CBSBG

Coleg Gwent

Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG)

Tîm Blynyddoedd Cynnar, Gofal Plant a Chwarae CBSBG

Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw

Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg

Gwasanaethau Gwella Ysgolion a Chynhwysiant CBSBG

Gwasanaeth Ieuenctid CBSBG

Pennaeth - Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg

Datblygu Sefydliadol CBSBG

Mudiad Meithrin

Tîm Polisi a Phartneriaeth CBSBG

Tîm Cludiant CBSBG

Menter Iaith

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Adran y Gymraeg – Llywodraeth Cymru

Cyfathrebu Corfforaethol CBSBG

Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru a Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan

Pennaeth ysgol cyfrwng Saesneg

Gwybodaeth am yr ymgynghoriad

Bydd y cyfnod ymgynghori statudol yn rhedeg o ddydd Gwener 5 Tachwedd 2021 am 8 wythnos, gan ddod i ben Dydd Llun 3 Ionawr 2022. Gofynnir i chi sicrhau eich bod yn rhoi eich adborth ac ymatebion cyn cau'r ymgynghoriad.

Mae copi o'r drafft Gynllun Cymraeg mewn Addysg ar gael i'w lawrlwytho ar waelod y dudalen hon.

Gallwch roi eich sylwadau ar y drafft Gynllun drwy naill ai lenwi'r holiadur (dolen islaw) neu drwy gysylltu â ni drwy un o'r dilynol:

Arolwg: <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/179rj>

E-bost: 21centuryschool@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Post: Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif, Adran Addysg, Llys Einion, Abertyleri, Blaenau Gwent, NP13 3DB

Mae'n rhaid gorffen pob ffurf o gyfathrebu a/neu holiaduron erbyn dydd Dydd Llun 3 Ionawr 2022 am hanner dydd.

Beth sy'n digwydd nesaf?

Ar ddiwedd y cyfnod ymgynghori, bydd pob ymateb a dderbynnir yn sail i unrhyw ddiweddariad a/neu newid sydd angen eu gwneud i'r cynllun. Ym mis Ionawr 2022 aiff y cynllun i Bwyllgor Gweithredol y Cyngor cyn ei gyflwyno i Weinidogion Cymru ei ystyried a'i gymeradwyo erbyn 31 Ionawr 2022.

Yn dilyn cyflwyno'r cynllun, gall Gweinidogion Cymru:

- gyflwyno'r cynllun fel y'i cyflwynwyd,
- cymeradwyo'r cynllun gydag addasiadau, neu
- wrthod y cynllun a pharatoi cynllun arall a gaiff wedyn ei drin fel cynllun cymeradwy yr awdurdod.

Bydd y cynllun a gymeradwyir yn rhedeg o fis Medi 2022 hyd fis Awst 2032.

Ar gyfer ymholiadau anfonwch e-bost i 21centuryschools@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk neu ffonio 01495 357704

Agenda Item 13

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 18.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 17.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Revisions to the South East Wales Education Achievement Service Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA)**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanne 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)
	17.02.22	22.02.22				02.03.22		Joint Executive Committee (JEG) South East Wales Consortia (SEWC)

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive with the opportunity to update the South East Wales Education Achievement Service Collaboration and Members Agreement (the CAMA). The proposal outlined within the report will provide a suitable and necessary level of support to the Education Achievement Service (EAS) should the need to make significant staffing changes, with consequential restricting costs, that impact on their ability to operate as an on-going concern.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The current CAMA was agreed by all five local authorities in 2013 (following the establishment of the EAS in 2012), at that time the structure of the organisation and the public funding arena were different to current operating model. The organisation has pivoted away from a traded services model to one which is predicated on system based resources e.g. the role of school bases School Improvement Partners (SIPs). Simultaneously and as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and governmental focus on health recovery, there is a potential risk to the significant grant flows that the Welsh Government has provided to the EAS.

2.1.1 The EAS's previous leadership noted the uncertainty around the funding model and in particular the level of protection in the CAMA. Following a period of challenging industrial relations where both staff terms and conditions and redundancy terms were being renegotiated, there was an intervention from the Chief Executives (through the then lead Chief Executive) to provide assurances that the five controlling authorities would support the EAS if there was a requirement to fund redundancies. This took place in 2016. This paper and

agreement will move the commitment away from an informal agreement to a formalised adaption of the CAMA.

- 2.1.2 The various governance elements of the EAS, namely the Board and the Audit and Risk Assessment Committee (ARAC) have continued to raise this issue with Directors across the region throughout the period.
- 2.1.3 As the lead authority for the period 2019-2021, Monmouthshire County Council has been engaged with its legal representative to assess the need for the amendment to the CAMA. Upon reviewing the original CAMA, it was their view that no further amendment was required as paragraph 8.4 in the current document provided the mechanism for additional funding:
- “8.4 The Company shall provide the Joint Executive Group with the financial information identified in Clause 9.6 and any other information as the Joint Executive Group may require from time to time to verify how the Company is performing against budget. Any additional funding required to fulfil the Company operations shall be considered by the Joint Executive Group and shall be shared between the Home Authorities in proportion to the contribution made by each Home Authority in the year ending on 5th April before the deficit arises.”
- 2.1.4 The Board has been advised of this position at meetings throughout the past period.
- 2.1.5 However, through those discussions with the Board, it has become apparent that there remains a risk (albeit one that is not quantified at this time) that the current funding does not make allowances for the abnormal cost burden that can be incurred in the event of severance arrangements being necessary. These severance costs, which may be incurred due to the continued need to implement efficiencies given financial constraints, could force the company into liquidation. Allowances for such provision is already contained within the Joint Services Protocol covering joint services across Greater Gwent and the principle is that a comparator model is agreed for the EAS.
- 2.1.6 The EAS working with Directors propose that the five controlling authorities formalise an agreement, similar to the home authorities Joint Services Protocol, to underwrite certain severance costs (i.e. redundancy payments and any employer capital pension costs) arising through the EAS having to take appropriate action to achieve a balance budget.
- 2.1.7 This will be achieved through:
- The home authorities underwriting those severance costs incurred within the EAS, which arise through actions required to meet a balance budget. Home authorities will underwrite those costs, pro rata to their current core contribution percentages, subject to the Company first contributing 50% of its retained balances towards the total cost.

- 2.1.8 Other costs, such as payments in lieu of notice and payments for accrued but untaken holiday pay, will be absorbed as part of the normal operational costs of the EAS and will not form part of any costs to be underwritten by the home authorities.
- 2.1.9 To achieve this outcome, it will be necessary for the proposal to be considered in accordance with each Local Authority's legal, financial and democratic procedures.

The proposed wording of the amendment would be:

2.1.10 Costs of Employee Severance Arrangements

In the event of enforced employee severance costs (i.e. the costs of redundancy payments and any employer capital pension costs) being incurred by the Company in order to achieve a balanced budget in the current financial year or to set a balanced budget for the proceeding financial year, the Home Authorities will (subject to clauses 1.5.2 and 1.5.3) pay those costs, pro rata to their core contribution percentages in the financial year in which those costs are incurred by the Company.

The severance costs to be paid by the Home Authorities will be any amount remaining after the Company has used 50% of its previous year end reserve balance to pay the first portion of those severance costs.

Any costs incurred by the Company in addition to the severance costs as defined in clause 1.5.1 (for example, payments in lieu of notice and payments for accrued but untaken holiday entitlement) will be borne by the Company as part of its normal operational costs and will not form part of any severance costs to be underwritten by the Home Authorities.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members agree to the revised form of wording in paragraph 2.1.7 and agree to allow the EAS to retain at fifty percent of their balances to protect their liquidity.

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

- 4.1 The EAS has become an integral part of the school improvement architecture in South East Wales. As it nears ten years since its creation, its role in ensuring the continued improvement activities in all schools and its current critical role in supporting the creation and implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales.
- 4.1.2 The amendment set out above in 2.1.7 provides a greater level of protection to the EAS than the current arrangement (2.1.3). Given the collective commitment to the education agenda in South East Wales and the fact that there would be a greater risk to the five authorities to recreate advisory services

individually the new clause appears to be a proportionate measure to ensure continued service.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

5.1.1 This change in the CAMA would have an impact on the responsibility of partners to meet the costs of change associated with any potential future decrease in funding received by the EAS. Whilst not an exact science, the illustration below provides a sense of how the mechanism could work and the exposure of each local authority based on its current contribution to the EAS.

		Scenario A		Scenario B	
2021/2022		2022/2023	2023/2024 (0%)	2023/2024 (5%)	
End of Year Balance	256,140	213,328	65,254	-82,820	
Grant budget setting	2,883,225	2,961,482		2,813,408	
Grant reduction – 5%		148,074	148,074	140,670	
Impact on balances		65,254	-82,820	-223,491	
	Change Management EAS Contribution.	130,000			
	LA Contribution.	32,627			
	BGCBC	97,373			
	CCBC	11,282			
	MCC	31,606			
	NCC	13,014			
	TCBCB	25,244			
		16,227			

5.1.3 The model above shows the impact of a 5% reduction in core Welsh Government Grants (£148,074) and its impact in reducing the year-end balance to £65,254. If the EAS then had to make staffing changes equivalent to £130,000 it would see its balances protected by 50% or in this case £32,627. This would see the five local authorities having to contribute £97,373 to protect the company and allow it to retain its solvency. The numbers in the table above are based on the current contributions from each authority.

5.1.4 There is no immediate financial risk to BGCBC, as the figures above are for illustration only. Having said that, if the EAS needed to make staffing changes up to the sum of £130,000, BGCBC's share (up to £11,282), could be met within current Education Portfolio estimates.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

The primary risk relates to sustainability of the EAS and the proposed approach largely mitigates the risk, dependent upon the level of WG grant allocation to the organisation and any potential cost reductions.

5.3 Legal

Monmouthshire's Legal team have lead on providing the advice relevant to this report.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no direct HR/OD related considerations associated with this report, however, should grant reductions materialise redundancy situations may arise in the future.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

The EAS has a proven track record of improving value for money i.e. contributing to raising educational standards with less financial resources. The BG contribution to the revenue budget is circa £350,000 per annum.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

The EAS is a key strategic partner in improving educational outcomes in BG, and indeed, across the region.

6.3 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

All the five LAs have been involved in the review of the CAMA.

6.4 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

The approach outlined in this report protects the interests of the regional partnership for the foreseeable future.

6.5 Preventative focus

The review of the CAMA is preventative in nature i.e. it considers protecting the solvency of the EAS.

6.6 Collaboration / partnership working

The regional collaboration associated with the EAS model and the CAMA is built upon a strong partnership.

6.7 Integration (across service areas)

The EAS are in effect a major component of the school improvement function for the LA and their work contributes extensively to supporting BG's schools.

6.8 Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions

N/A

6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment** (complete an impact assessment to consider how the decision might help to reduce the inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage).

N/A

6.9b. **Equality Impact Assessment** (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)

N/A

7. Monitoring Arrangements

The on-going work of the EAS is monitored through Scrutiny/Executive and the Education Directorate's performance management arrangements. The JEG also has representation across the 5 LAs in the form of the respective Executive/Cabinet Members.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

- N/A

Agenda Item 14

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Finance and Performance Report Quarters 1 and 2 (April 2021 to September 2021)**
Portfolio Holder: **Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**
Report Submitted by: **Gemma Wasley, Service Manager Performance and Democratic**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	03.02.22	15.02.22			23.02.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present to the Executive Committee the Finance and Performance Report for Quarters 1 and 2 (April 2021 to September 2021) (attached at Appendix 1).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan was refreshed and approved by Council in July 2020 following a review of learning so far with implementing the plan, as well as learning from the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 2.2 The Finance and Performance Report has been written to align to the priorities within the refreshed Corporate Plan.
- 2.3 The report is presented to the Committee to provide detail of the work that has been undertaken throughout the Council and where further development is required.
- 2.4 The Finance and Performance Report includes the following information:
- COVID-19 and Recovery from the Pandemic
 - Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability
 - Departmental Priorities
 - Key Performance Indicators
 - Budget 2021/22 – Quarters 1 and 2
 - Directorate Risk Register
- 2.5 The Finance and Performance Report is to be used as a key improvement tool for the Authority.
- 2.6 Information included within the report has been gathered from a number of different sources including updates from business plans and drawing evidence from strategic reports. This has provided a detailed view of the activity and performance of directorates throughout the year.

2.8 The report forms part of an on-going process of development within the Council's Performance Management Framework in identifying further areas for improvement and areas of good practice and performance.

2.9 The key themes and notable activity across the Council are included in Appendix 1.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Finance and Performance Report has been approved by CLT at their meeting on 3rd February 2022.

This report will also be considered by the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on 23rd February 2022, and any feedback will be provided verbally to the Executive Committee.

3.1.1 **Option 1**

Provide suggestions to the content of the Finance and Performance Report in order to make it more efficient and effective as a management tool.

3.1.2 **Option 2**

Accept the information as presented.

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

4.1 The Council has a responsibility to provide performance related information to the public in order to scrutinise the Council's performance and to gauge how well the Council is doing. There is also a requirement for Members to scrutinise the Council's performance. Reporting of such information contributes to the Council's Performance Framework.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Financial information is included within Appendix 1 and is split per directorate.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Risk information is included within Appendix 1 and is split per directorate.

5.2.1 The Finance and Performance Report acts as a key monitoring tool for the Council and is considered by external regulators which can have an impact on the reputation of the Council.

5.3 ***Legal***

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

Sickness information is included within Appendix 1 and is split per directorate.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

Performance information and data is included within Appendix 1 and is split per directorate.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The information included within the report will provide opportunity for the public to scrutinise the Council's performance and provide accountability across the Council.

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

Services look to involve partners and involve citizens in consultation where possible. This information is included as part of the planning arrangements of the Council.

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

The Finance and Performance Report is reported on regularly and is aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

The Council aims to work using a preventative approach wherever possible so that problems can be tackled before they are escalated. Preventative actions are included in the Council's business plans.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

There are a number of collaborations that the Council is involved with and, where relevant, information on some of these has been included within the Finance and Performance Report.

6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

The Council's business plan includes where an integrated approach to planning and delivery is taking place.

6.8 **EqIA**

The Finance and Performance Report has no negative impact on the protected characteristics.

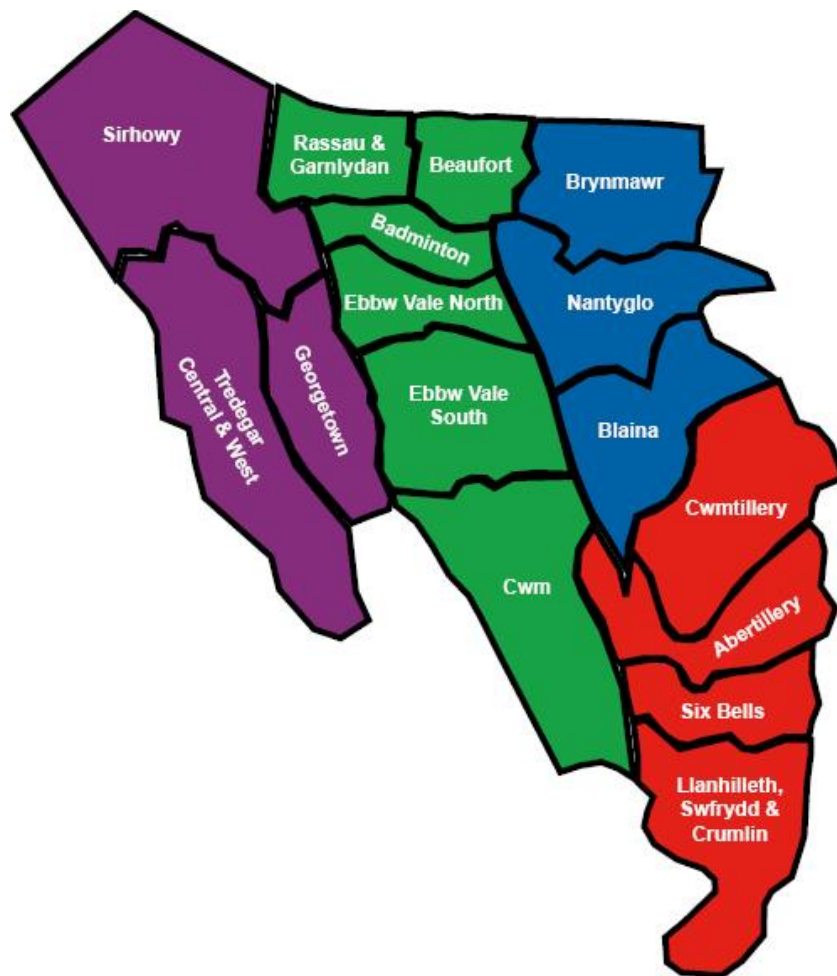
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The report will be monitored quarterly through the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Finance and Performance Report

This page is intentionally left blank



Finance and Performance Report Quarter 1 and 2 (April 2021 to September 2021)

Contents

Introduction and Vision	2
COVID 19 and Recovery from the Pandemic	3
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act	4
Council Examples of Implementing the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act Five Ways of Working	5
BRAG	7
Priorities, Progress and Performance Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities</i>• <i>To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities</i>• <i>Support a fairer sustainable economy and community</i>• <i>Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities</i>	8
Budget Quarter 1 & 2	48
Regulatory Monitoring	50
Corporate Risk Register	51
Contact Details	57

Introduction

Welcome to the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Finance and Performance Report. The Report provides a mid-year review of the activity undertaken to date covering the period April to September 2021. The purpose of the report is to present the performance of the Council, setting out the key activities and measures used to monitor performance against achieving the outcome objectives as identified within the Council's Corporate Plan.

All of these objectives have supporting actions which are monitored as part of the Council's business planning process. The Council has fully aligned all of its planning to the Corporate Plan which includes the Well-being Objectives. These are central to the organisation and future work planning and strategies are aligned to these areas.

The Council's performance supports delivery of the core vision of the Council:

Blaenau Gwent Vision -

Proud Heritage

Strong Communities

Brighter Future

COVID - 19 the Council's Response

In March 2020, a decision was made by the UK Government to put the UK into lockdown in order to try and curb the spread of the global pandemic COVID 19.

In accordance with Emergency Planning arrangements, a GOLD Group was established in Blaenau Gwent which comprised of Corporate Leadership Team, supported by the Civil Contingency Manager and Communications Manager. The strategic aim of GOLD is to delay and mitigate, as far as practicable, the spread and impact of Coronavirus within the community. GOLD was supported by an Emergency Response Team, made up of Heads of Service and Service Managers working alongside partners including the Aneurin Leisure Trust, GAVO, Tai Calon and the Joint Trade Unions.

As part of its response, the Council had to act quickly and had to consider alternative methods of service delivery, ensuring that the most vulnerable in society were supported. This resulted in delivery of critical services only, with other available resources being redeployed to support the response. Particular focus was on:

- Adult Social Services
- Refuse and recycling collection
- Public protection
- Development of school hubs to support key workers with childcare
- Supporting families eligible for free school meals
- The creation of locality hubs, working to support those vulnerable and shielding
- Supporting local businesses to access financial support

Page 260

The Council's Response to COVID 19 – Recovery and Renewal

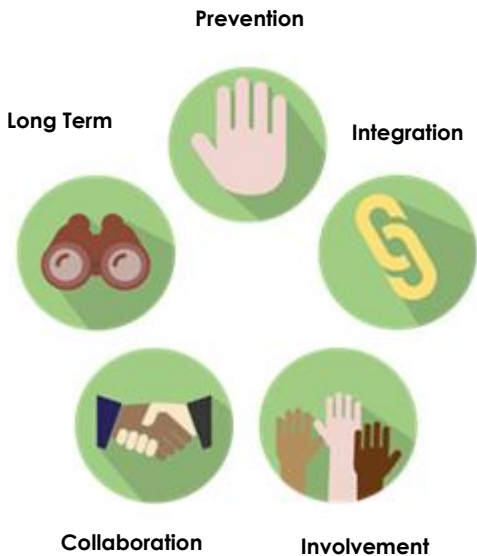
The Council has identified a number of priorities for recovery and renewal, as part of the response to the COVID-19 situation. There are five recovery themes each with an action plan and monitoring methods in place:

- Community (overarching theme);
- Social Services (Children and Adults);
- Economy;
- Education; and
- Workforce.

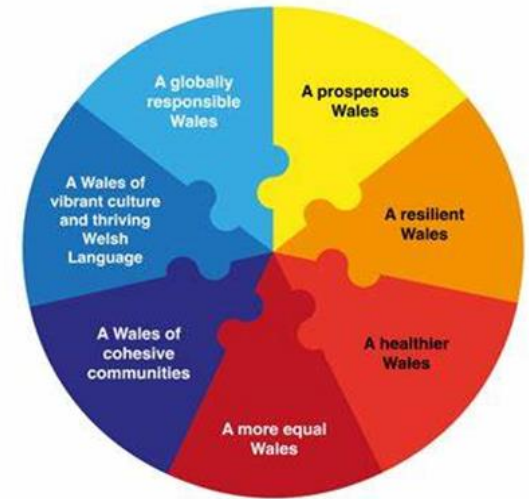
The recovery and renewal plans will act as working documents, outlining how the Council will continue to support schools, the economy, the community, service users and the workforce during, and beyond the pandemic. It is, however, highly likely that there will be a need to continue to move between alert levels and thus working to response and recovery at the same time. Therefore, an effective approach to business continuity at each level is required.

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

This is ground-breaking 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 Principles 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 principles are made up of the five ways of working and progress against these areas is evidenced throughout the report.



The next page highlights some examples of how the Council has been implementing the five ways of working throughout the period:

Five Ways of Working	Council Examples of Implementing the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act Five Ways of Working
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council actively supports the Asylum Dispersal Scheme to provide future families, who have experienced considerable hardship, with the route to a long-term safe haven. It is recognised that there are long-term implications of participation in the Asylum Dispersal Scheme and considerations on services such as education, mental health provision, housing and homelessness. • Analysis of individual school performance data is a key element in ensuring that schools are known well by the Council so that appropriate support and intervention can be directed towards areas of greatest need. • The energy prospectus has been designed to stimulate interest in energy development within Blaenau Gwent that will facilitate a supply of renewable energy that will meet the changing and future energy needs of Blaenau Gwent. It will also contribute towards our target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. • The development of the Blaenau Gwent My Support Team (MyST) 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.
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience will help to mitigate and adapt to climate change and provide positive opportunities to maintain and build mental and physical health and well-being. • Engaging with the Asylum Dispersal Scheme helps to 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. • 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. • By establishing Town Centre Advisory Boards, we hope to prevent further deterioration of Town Centres. They all face significant challenges to survive but bringing groups of stakeholders together, who want to support and help, could prevent them from facing even bigger challenges in the future. • One of the primary aims of the programmes delivered under the Children and Communities Grant (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 out of poverty via routes to employment.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work on the Environment Act duty fits with the Blaenau Gwent well-being plan and ways of working could be shared with members of the Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board. Support for the Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen Local Nature Partnership will assist with a strategic approach to environmental and ecological management in both boroughs. • The service delivery of Civil Parking Enforcement is a collaboration between Blaenau Gwent CBC, Caerphilly CBC and Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC (who provide a PCN processing service under the name of the South Wales Parking Group). CPE will look to work with local

	<p>communities and businesses to maximise economic and regeneration benefits associated with both revenue & capital services and projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council collaborates with neighbouring local authorities through the South East Wales Consortium for the provision of school improvement services from the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and a range of pupil support services for specific groups such as visually and hearing impaired learners. • Continuing to maximise the impact of the Energy Prospectus will be dependent on strong collaboration and partnership working with communities, the public and private sector and businesses. Progressing opportunities from the prospectus would require partnership working across the Council.
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powys County Council has worked successfully across the Authority. Most recently, Powys Officers have provided expert advice and support to the new Front Line Service, Estates and Community Safety service areas, in relation to the ongoing problems relating to straying animals/fly-grazing horses. • The Blaenau Gwent My Support Team (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. • SEWAS continues to form relationships with other councils in the region to improve outcomes for children who are placed for adoption. An example of this is working with communication teams to promote adoption within the region to attract adopters. Training is also provided for local authority social workers on a quarterly basis.
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Blaenau Gwent Civil Contingencies, Neighbourhood Services, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and Natural Resources Wales was undertaken when preparing the Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, Llanhilleth. • There has been engagement with the Wider Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members in development of the Workforce Strategy. There has been a workforce survey and a pulse survey (2020) which has supported the direction of the Strategy. There has been formal consultation with the trade unions and suggestions and amendments have influenced the Strategy. • Extensive engagement is on-going on the development of the 10-year BG Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the formal consultation will conclude early in 2022. • Stakeholders and end-user needs and engagement are of paramount importance to the Education Accessibility Strategy and associated action plan. An Education Accessibility Forum has been developed to secure inter-departmental working across the Council, aligned to effective delivery of both the strategy and plan. In addition, all relevant stakeholders will be consulted in line with the review process. • Blaenau Gwent Council will continue to work with local business parks and carry out further engagement with building owners and tenants. The project will seek to bring together a range of partners to work collaboratively to assist Blaenau Gwent to meet its aspirations of Net Zero Business Parks.

BRAG

The Council uses a BRAG rating system to assess progress against actions and measures, the definitions are provided in the table below:

Status	Description
Blue	The action/priority has been completed; all performance factors set have been achieved (time, quality, financial aspects).
Green	The action/priority is performing to plan; all performance factors are within the acceptable variance levels set.
Amber	Issues have been identified with the action/priority that will/may negatively impact on performance; the priority owner is able to resolve the problem or make corrective decisions without assistance; action/priority is at risk of failing on one or more of the performance factors set.
Red	Significant issues identified with the action/priority that requires corrective action in order to meet objectives; the priority owner requires assistance to resolve the issue; action/priority is failing on one or more of the performance factors set.

Why this is important

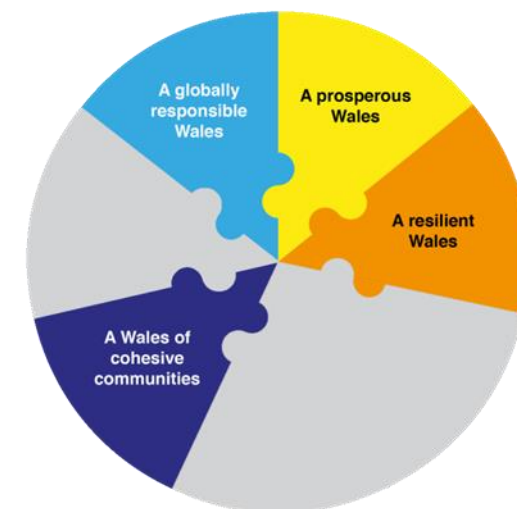
The Corporate Plan provides the focus for delivering lasting change for the area. It also provides the platform for transforming Blaenau Gwent into a more confident and capable Council. The ambition is to deliver better outcomes for the people of Blaenau Gwent and that ambition is underpinned by solid and sustainable plans, ensuring the Council can be held to account for what it has promised to deliver. Maximising the impact of resources to deliver those outcomes sits at the heart of this priority, including; understanding costs, controlling expenditure, maximising income and aligning resources to the needs of residents, businesses and visitors to build a Blaenau Gwent for the future.

Progress against actions

A number of high level priorities (shown below) have been identified to support delivery of the corporate objective, '**An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities**'. These are detailed in the following overview pages along with some associated achievements and challenges.

Priorities

- To demonstrate clear and visible leadership to deliver a viable and resilient Council;
- To ensure effective forward financial planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience;
- To support and develop a workforce that has the capacity and capability to be productive and responsive to future demands;
- We will deliver online services that are simple and convenient, improving the relationship between residents, business and the council;
- COVID 19 – safe working environment for our staff and service users;
- We will work in an agile way, capturing learning and seeking continuous improvement;
- To develop 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; and



To demonstrate clear and visible leadership to deliver a viable and resilient Council

- Gold and Emergency Planning Response Arrangements to respond to the pandemic have continued. With regular communications to the Workforce via the weekly Managing Directors Newsletter or where needed special communications.
- The move to Agile Working has been supported with leadership development sessions on Transitional Leadership and Strategic Leadership of an Agile Workforce.
- Workforce Engagement Plan in place to support the Agile Working policy.
- Well Being Wednesday bulletin to all employees promoting support services, events and tactics to support wellbeing.
- Well Being initiatives implemented to support wellbeing when working from home.
- Regular Wider Leadership Team meetings focussed on priorities and topical issues/development.
- New Workforce Strategy in place with an annual action plan – first year focus on the new Council operating model and the introduction of agile working.
- Strategic HR Headteachers group meeting regularly.
- Introduction of workforce facebook page to include a session with the Managing Director in December 2020.
- Regular monitoring of workforce capacity to include sickness absence and the impact of Covid 19.
- Regular monitoring of critical services in responding to Covid 19 and being able to deliver business as usual.

The Corporate Communications Team remains a key member of the Gwent Local Resilience Forum Warning and Informing Group. This group is responsible for aligning communications and communicating key information to the residents of Gwent during the phases of the Covid-19 pandemic, ensuring a consistent approach between local partners, Public Health Wales (PHW) and Welsh Government. The content has been a mixture of partner material (Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Health Board) and content created by the team maximising their creative skills.

The health, safety and wellbeing of staff has remained a key priority as we move to more business as usual with the following in place:

- Workplace risk assessments to manage the risk of COVID-19.
- Staff to continue to work from home where possible.
- Encouraging and supporting staff to take up the COVID-19 vaccination
- Asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing.
- Ongoing wellbeing support for staff impacted by the pandemic.
- Promotion and encouragement for staff to take up the flu jab.

We will deliver online services that are simple and convenient, improving the relationship between residents, business and the Council

A number of the digital projects have attracted Welsh Government funding and this is being used to support the Council's digital ambitions aligned to the Commercial Strategy, including:

- Working with the Centre for Digital Public Services (CDPS) to deliver better public services for Wales, funding has been secured to explore more user focussed and efficient ways of service delivery.
- Participation in a collaborative Adult Social Care project with Neath Port Talbot and Torfaen local authorities, looking at unavoidable contact at the front door.
- Commencement of a Tech Valleys funded project on exploring the digital interaction with the customer using a service. This project also included the establishment of a Digital apprentice. There was a high level of interest in the role and the successful candidate has joined the digital team in Commercial Services.
- The Digital Democracy Project discovery work involving user research with 16-25 year olds has been completed and findings presented to various groups, including Members. Prioritisation of the findings has taken place and work is being undertaken to include areas within the Diverse Council Action Plan as many of the findings also support this work. The project is being externally supported by Perago, including presenting the findings to Welsh Government to highlight areas that may inform a national focus and approach.

A planned 12-month digital programme has been scoped. This includes (in addition to the externally supported digital projects) corporate activity aligned to the ICT investment roadmap and development of a leadership and training programme for both officers and Members raising awareness and understanding of the scope and opportunities of our digital ambitions and activity.

A review of digital strategies across local authorities is being undertaken with the WLGA, this will inform the development of the Council's digital strategy which it is anticipated will be taken through the Decision making process in 2022.

To ensure effective forward financial planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience

Audit Wales undertook an assessment of the Councils' financial sustainability. A baseline assessment of the initial impact of COVID-19 on local councils' financial position was undertaken. Following this, in October 2020, Audit Wales published a national summary report – Financial Sustainability of Local Government as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. In summary, the findings were:

- Improved financial planning and better-than-expected Welsh Government settlements mean the Council is better placed to maintain its financial sustainability over the short term but challenges remain to fully close budget gaps over the medium term.
- The immediate impact of COVID-19 on the Council's financial sustainability has been mitigated by additional Welsh Government funding.
- The Council continues to develop a more sustainable approach to financial planning and recognises the need to understand the ongoing financial impact of the pandemic.
- The Council is increasing its useable reserves and remains committed to doing so over the medium term.
- The Council's overall performance against budget is improving and, whilst some service areas continue to overspend, the Council is taking steps to help address some of these budget pressures.
- The Council has developed a more sustainable approach to savings planning but further challenges remain to identify sufficient savings to fully close the estimated medium-term funding gap.
- The Council's liquidity position remains the lowest in Wales.

During February / March 2021, the Council engaged Treasury Advisors, Link Asset Services, to conduct a review of the current MRP policy. The review identified the opportunity to change two elements of the current policy which would provide positive benefits to the Council by reducing the annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge until 2031/32 for unsupported borrowing and 2057/58 for supported borrowing.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), is a key element within the Council's strategic planning framework. It is this financial framework which will support the Council's financial resilience and ensure it operates sustainably. The MTFS proposes the approach that the Council will take to respond to the financial challenges we face over the next five-year period. This will be an iterative process and one that will develop and be refined as our funding position from Wales Government becomes clearer and strategic business reviews are further developed and implemented.

Bridging the Gap remains the Council's medium/long term strategy to address the budget gaps currently identified. Additional proposals will be developed to mitigate the possible residual funding gaps in future years.

To support and develop a workforce that has the capacity and capability to be productive and responsive to future demands

Improving attendance remains a key priority for the Council and is identified as a key risk for the Council as it is acknowledged that high levels of sickness absence will have a detrimental impact on the ability of the Council to deliver services.

During 2020/21 the Council, like all workplaces, had to rise to the enormous challenge of responding to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the dramatic impact it had on the way the Council had to work, prompting a transformation to working practices on an unprecedented scale to safeguard people's health, safety and wellbeing. This resulted in delivery of critical services only, with other available resources being redeployed to support the response.

Workforce is a key theme as part of the Council's Recovery Plan, it is acknowledged that COVID-19 will not disappear and a continuing priority will be to manage the capacity of the workforce to ensure that services are delivered.

It is also anticipated that the Council's workforce will be impacted by the NHS treatment waiting lists which could lead to an increase in sickness levels. Also anticipated is a surge in seasonal illnesses with increased prevalence of influenza, winter bugs etc.

The Workforce Strategy 2021-26 aims to build on existing good practice and to promote the Council as a safe, healthy and supportive environment in which to work and will have a strategic focus on wellbeing which will play a significant role in supporting attendance at work.

To be a strong and effective partner and collaborate where possible to deliver financial, business and community benefits

The community hubs became fully operational on 26th July 2021. The Community Hubs work closely with the Locality Teams to proactively provide support solutions and options to those experiencing difficulties and those seeking advice. The Locality Response Team has achieved the following throughout the period:

- 65 residents have been supported throughout in quarter 1 with a wide range of assistance given from food shopping to supporting residents to apply for grants
- 20 supported to enable self-isolation
- 40 supported who received financial benefit gains, i.e. Discretionary Assistance Fund applications
- 33 food vouchers allocated to residents

Blaenau Gwent plays an active role in the wider region through the Cardiff City Region (CCR) partnership. The Council is a member of the Regional Cabinet and Investment Panel. There are a number of new projects that have benefitted from CCR funding over the last few years including design and acquisition work at Abertillery in preparation for the rail line extension; funding for Ebbw Vale (EV) charging and EV taxi trials which strongly links to our decarbonisation aims; Housing Catalyst fund to unlock one of our difficult housing sites in the area and funding to roll out our award winning ASPIRE apprenticeship scheme.

Throughout the response to COVID-19, the Council has worked closely with partner organisations to deliver a joined up emergency response for the community. Civil Contingencies multi-agency response structures were established alongside health specific structure to ensure there was a joint understanding of the current situation and risks, make joint decisions and coordinate the partner response. Specific areas of focus included coordinated public communication, health and social care impact, ensuring partners were able to continue with high priority services, requests for support between partner organisations, mitigating impacts of COVID-19 as far as possible and developing a resilient test, trace and protect service.

The Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) is an advisory body, that takes oversight of and provides direction to, any areas of integrated working across health and social care. The Council is an active partner on the Board. Using transformation funding a number of projects are ongoing across Gwent, these include the development of early intervention and prevention services (Integrated Wellbeing Networks); the development of primary and community care services (Compassionate Communities); the redesign of child and adolescent emotional and mental health services (Iceberg model); and the development of an integrated 'Home First' discharge model. All these models have been successfully implemented and been evaluated externally.

The Regional Partnership Board has also been key in overseeing our joint response to the COVID 19 pandemic over the last 20 months, with regular updates provided to reassured the Board that the hospital capacity and support in the community has been able to cope with each wave of the virus locally and regionally, which has been very much due to the success of collaborative working by all partners and more lately due to the vaccination roll out.

To develop a more commercial organisation to generate income and deliver cost reductions to make local services sustainable and raise money to re-invest in our

The Commercial Strategy approved by Council in September 2020, sets out key themes which support a commercially minded organisation and includes all directorates of the Council. As part of this, a Strategic Commissioning and Commercial Board (SCCB) chaired by the Managing Director has been put in place. The Board has a revised schedule of meetings and a forward work programme which reflects the ambitions set out in the Commercial Strategy. This includes early consideration of potential commercial activity to test ideas, with the Board taking the leading role for the Bridging the Gap review.

A process for 'check and challenge' of third party contracts and commercial opportunities has been established. The Board focus is on contracts above the tender threshold of £75k.

A bespoke baseline financial assessment (profit & loss) to quantify and challenge trading operations has been developed by Resources colleagues for consideration. The aim is to support the Bridging the Gap reviews by providing a clear financial picture of commercial activity.

The Transactional Procurement Group has been established to ensure the same degree of check and challenge is applied to the contracts under the 75k threshold.

We will work in an agile way, capturing learning and seeking continuous improvement

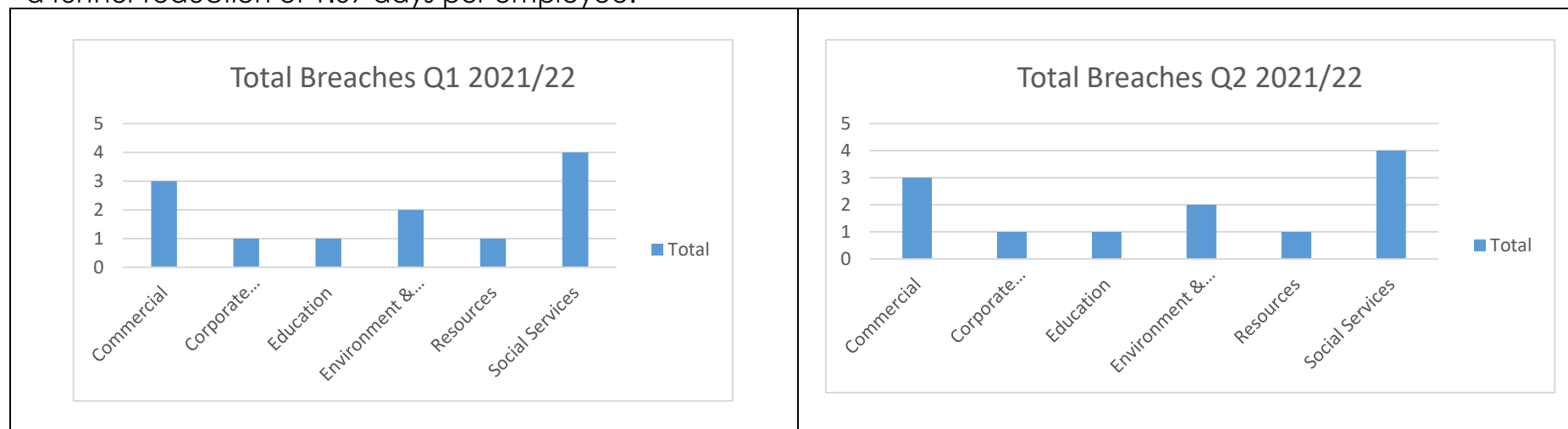
The new Council Operating Model was agreed at Council in March 2021 and included the move to agile working and the development of a supporting policy. The new operating model introduces modern working practices, seeks to enhance employees' working experience, maximise performance and productivity and deliver the greatest value to the organisation, in terms of improving service delivery, as well as realising financial gains. The Operating Model has also introduced new Community Hubs across the Borough, improving customer access to Council Services.

The new Workforce Strategy will be a key enabler in delivering the Council's ambition, the New Council Operating Model and key priorities. It is a five-year strategy focussed on the future, integrating the Council's vision, objectives and financial planning arrangements. It links service outcomes with the workforce required to deliver them and an on-going understanding of how the workforce should look in the future through continual review, re-alignment and measurement of how outcomes are achieved. It will support the workforce to transition from responding to the emergency situation in relation to the pandemic COVID-19 and act as a key lever to facilitate culture change, capacity and skills, continuation of transformational change and performance improvement. The Strategy will aim to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level, and at the right cost.

The Recovery Plan and the Workforce Strategy will link to the Council's vision for sustainable development including sustainable economic growth, de-carbonisation and the health and well-being of both staff and the community.

Key Performance Information

For 2020/21 the Council's **sickness** outturn was 11.67 days on average per employee. This is a decrease of 2.24 days per employee in comparison to the year before. If the COVID related absence is removed from the 11.67 days, the sickness outturn reduces to 9.98 - a further reduction of 1.69 days per employee.



During the period the **Council website** received 84,000 visitors viewing around 5 pages per visit. There were 3,200 **social media posts**. The number of **social media followers** remains steady with Facebook followed by 15,000 residents.

Community Hub Support

A breakdown of the number of residents supported through the Community Hubs during the period:

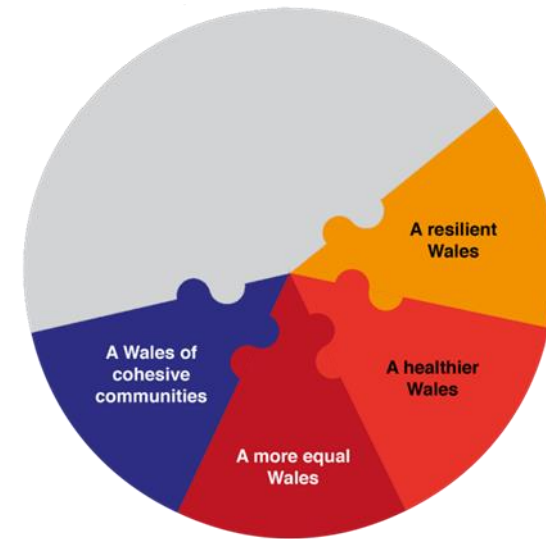
	Ebbw Vale	Tredegar	Brynmaur	Abertillery	Cwm	Blaina	Llanhilleth	Overall
June	10	4	7	4	7	4	4	40
July	39	39	17	20	23	19	8	165
August	133	110	54	89	15	13	5	419
September	110	112	55	87	12	14	0	390
Total	292	265	133	200	57	50	17	1014

To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities

Why this is important

The Council wants to encourage and support people to make healthy lifestyle choices to enable children, young people and families to thrive. Research has proven people demonstrating positive health behaviours from birth through their life will lead to greater independence, and people being free from complicated health conditions later in life and reducing costs to public services. This in turn could reduce demand on services and ensure the services that are provided are high quality, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

With reduced funding and increasing demand on services the Council can no longer do everything it has done in the past. The focus must be on those actions that will have the greatest impact. Safeguarding the most vulnerable people in the community continues to be a top priority for the Council alongside transforming the aspirations of residents and valuing fairness and equality in everything we do.



Progress against actions

A number of high level priorities (shown below) have been identified to support delivery of the corporate objective, '**enabling people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities**'. These are detailed in the following overview pages along with some associated achievements and challenges.

Priorities

- To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own well-being;
- To work with people and families to make sure they have a say in achieving what matters to them;
- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater;
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering integrated responsive care and support with partners;
- To continue our programme of public engagement and respond in a timely and effective way to feedback;
- 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);
- To put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm; and
- To develop a partnership approach to maximising income reducing the impacts of Poverty.

To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own well-being

During quarter 1 2021/22 the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) Team saw a significant increase in the numbers of referrals received across all partners. Analysis of the data over the past two years has been undertaken to understand the increase in the numbers pre and post pandemic. This information has been included within a report identifying the impact that this increase is having on the service. The overarching message was that the number of referrals during the height of the Pandemic was higher than the referral rates the previous year. The total number and average monthly referrals has increased by 7.7%. Despite this overarching message, the report did not include detail of outcomes achieved. Therefore, a more detailed report is in the process of being written and will be completed by the end of November 2021 to consider how best to respond to this demand in the longer term.

Funding for additional resources in the IAA Team has been agreed until March 2022 from the Social Services Sustainability Fund. The long term plan is to make these additional posts permanent using the monies saved by reducing the numbers of children looked after. The rise in workload is presenting a challenge along with securing longer term funding for the additional resources in the team.

Children's Services has received feedback from Children Inspectorate Wales (CIW) who undertook an assurance check in May 2021. The following comments were made in relation to the outcomes culture in Blaenau Gwent and how the voice of the child is heard: 'Senior managers with staff and partners have worked hard to embed strength based outcomes focused 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 recognises 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'.

The mentors programme continues with regular 6 weekly meetings where live cases are discussed and feedback from families and children is included. In addition, the service as a whole continues to deliver interventions based on an outcomes/strengths based approach which has the voices of children and families at the centre of care planning. To ensure this approach is cemented in practice, each team holds group supervisions to hold reflective discussions on cases. The mentor groups still continue to meet monthly to share good practice across the service.

Assessment and care planning activity continues to promote the active voice, choice and control philosophy of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Outcomes focused and strengths based approaches to practice continue to be modelled, and National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) remains an active partner in ensuring that children and their families engage in a meaningful way.

In order to raise awareness of advocacy and increase demand into the service via the Gwent Access to Advocacy (GATA) helpline an awareness campaign was undertaken. However, the Covid-19 pandemic halted progress and made it difficult to establish the true need and demand for advocacy across Gwent. Advocacy providers and the GATA helpline have highlighted that referrals are now returning to pre-covid levels with a marked increase in parent advocacy relating to child protection cases. Data is still being collated, but an overall picture of advocacy provision within Gwent is now being developed. This will help to measure the success of the GATA pilot and inform an options paper for future advocacy commissioning, scheduled in early 2022.

In 2023 the Community Health Council will be replaced by a new 'Citizen Voice Body' which should provide the opportunity to co-ordinate the provision of advocacy support across the health board in order to strengthen the citizen's voice in relation to health and social care.

To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater

The 2021/22 Children and Communities Grant (CCG) delivery plan has been developed and signed off by Welsh Government. The CCG steering group meets bimonthly to monitor and oversee the delivery plan. A workshop is planned for late 2021 to develop the plan for 2022/23. Progress of the plan to date includes:

- Families First holding reflective practice sessions and reviewing their paperwork to make it more strengths based;
- A full review for Families First and Flying Starts reporting requirements is scheduled;
- New model for coordinating administrative duties implemented, which includes a streamlined approach to supporting all 6 internal CCG programmes;
- Engagement and Participation has become a standard agenda item for the CCG Board which provides full updates on developments;
- A Locally developed outcomes framework been implemented to measure and monitor progress linked to the programmes intended outcomes (awaiting the WG framework);
- Full review of Legacy commissioned projects has been undertaken;
- Financial management procedure used as the basis for the review of the Legacy Fund, focusing on outcomes; and
- 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.

Consultation has taken place with staff regarding the reconfiguration of preventative services including the Support Worker roles within IAA and Community Resource Team and the Community Connector roles. It is anticipated the new structure will be in place by April 2022. The new structure will be resilient and sustainable and not be reliant on grant funding. Within the new structure, a Senior Practitioner and Senior Therapist will be co-located within the IAA Team to be at the 'front door'.

Capacity at Augusta House has been safely increased to support up to four guests. Work is continuing to develop new Augusta Promoting Independence Pods at the site. This project has been delayed due to complications with increasing development costs, but the project has now secured additional funding from Welsh Government and should be open by Spring 2022. As part of these plans, the respite offer to young adults, as part of the transition planning from Children's to Adult Services will be increased.

The development of the enhanced Day Activities / Community Options Team has progressed well despite the ongoing COVID 19 pressures. Both the Lake View and Bert Denning buildings have safely re-opened but with limited sessional access which will hopefully increase during quarter 3. The outreach service is growing well and is successfully supporting citizens to meet their outcomes both in their own home or in wider community settings.

The numbers of Children Looked After (CLA) continue to slowly but steadily decrease. Welsh Government has recognised the need to safely reduce the number of children coming into care and identified this as a priority area. In light of this, Integrated Care Fund (ICF) grant money was allocated to each local authority in Wales, via the Regional Partnership Boards in April 2019, to invest in and develop services to safely reduce the numbers of children coming into care.

It is important to recognise that the success of the CLA reduction strategy is dependent on a whole service approach. The robust preventative interventions delivered by Families First and Flying Start prevent needs from escalating into statutory services. The Information Advice and Assistance Team provides robust screening and initial assessment of all referrals ensuring the appropriate action is taken to meet needs. All of the Social Work Teams work exceptionally hard to keep families together and work with families using a strengths based approach. One of the key elements of the strategy is to promote workforce stability. However, operational teams are facing staffing shortages. It is accepted that this is a Wales wide position and there is no simple solution. The senior leadership team is addressing how best to respond to the staffing short-fall from multiple standpoints; a separate strategy has been devised to consider short, medium and longer-term solutions (and considering the opportunity to collaborate on a regional basis).

The new Corporate Parenting action plan for 2021/22 has been finalised and updates given in September 2021. The Corporate Parenting Board meets quarterly and each January the Social Services Scrutiny Committee receive a detailed report on progress of the Board, including an action plan and separate report for Education.

As part of the continuous improvement plan, work has been ongoing regarding the pathway for Part 5 investigations. In line with the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures, strategy discussions, in connection with a potential person in a position of trust, will be held by the safeguarding manager. The safeguarding manager will then assess if threshold has been met to proceed to a full strategy meeting. The chairing of these meetings will continue to be the responsibility of the service manager. The new pathway will be in place by 1st November 2021.

A three-year Strategic Plan was published for The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GwASB) covering the period 2020/21 and 2022/23. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has caused significant disruption to all services and communities across the region. Despite this, Gwent Safeguarding Board and Blaenau Gwent Safeguarding team have worked diligently to ensure that essential services have remained operational to provide support to the most vulnerable adults.

We continue to plan for the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) legislation as a replacement for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and are delivering training as part of the Regional consortium in addition to increasing capacity at a local level.

To continue our programme of public engagement and respond in a timely and effective way to feedback

The Council has provided support to a number of National equality campaigns, such as preparation for 'Proud Council' and contribution to Welsh Government National consultations such as the LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

The Council has been working in consultation with Gwent Public Service Board partners to develop a draft regional Well-being Assessment for Gwent. BGCBC has led on the Economic well-being chapter and supported NRW in the development of the Environmental well-being chapter.

The Council has developed a Corporate Engagement Calendar in order to map, type and level of activity being delivered across the organisation. This is then used to maximise the use of resources and value of engagements and to promote the 'One Council' approach.

Page 280

Analysis of Active Travel Phase 1 Involvement programme has been undertaken which was delivered via the WG digital platform, 'Common Places', as well as through the delivery of online public engagement events. This intelligence was then used to support the statutory consultation on Active Travel Phase 2.

The Council's Engagement Team has provided advice and guidance to a range of service areas over the period to develop and deliver a number of key consultation exercises (including statutory) as well as promote the opportunities via internal and external partnership networks. For example, Pen-y-cwm School capacity consultation, Social Services department survey and Section 19 Flood Investigation Survey.

Owing to the restrictions of the pandemic, the Youth Forum has been delivered online. There is also work being undertaken on the development of a wider Youth Forum network and Children's Grand Council sessions with schools. A review has been undertaken on the Blaenau Gwent Citizen Panel. The Panel will be used to promote BG and partner information as well as specific engagement opportunities. E.g. Social Services, Adult Services user research project.

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)

In the last two years only four Community Asset Transfers can be referenced which are:

- Met Theatre
- Tredegar Recreation Ground
- Sirhowy Woodland
- Llanhilleth Playing Field and Changing Rooms

Arrangements are also close to completion for:

- Millennium Gardens Brynmawr – to Growing Spaces from original Trustees.
- Brynmawr Welfare pitch to Brynmawr FC
- Cwm Welfare – fields and pavilion to Cwm Community Sports

Occupation also needs to be regularised on some sites where groups are in occupation but formal / revised paperwork need to be concluded. This has been hampered by lack of legal resources/ issues with groups registrations/ other issues but include:

- Eugene Cross Park – Eugene Cross Park Sports Limited
- Orchard Street former Community Centre
- Blaina Institute
- Brynithel Recreation Ground
- Llanhilleth Institute
- Market Hall Cinema

New CAT's currently being processed include:

- Queen Street school – CAT process complete, applicant has not completed planning
- Trinity Chapel/ Abertillery Library – CAT process complete, legal agreements still to be complete
- Community Growing Space – Cwm – awaiting business plan
- Community Growing Space – Cwmtillery – awaiting EOI/ Business Plan
- RTB RFC – Beer Garden – CAT process (excluding advert under 1972 Local government Act 1972) complete, awaiting outcome of planning application.

To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering integrated responsive care and support with partners

In July 2021 Foster Wales was launched at the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Summer Festival supported by the deputy minister Julie Morgan. This is a collaboration across all of the 22 local authorities in Wales working together to increase the number of local authority foster carers with the intention of ensuring all children who need to become looked after can remain within their local communities in high quality foster placements. This will allow children to remain in their schools and have easy access to spend good quality time with their families.

There continues to be ongoing strengthening links between the Community Resource Team (Gwent Frailty) and IAA team. This includes close working with GP colleagues to support pressures across the Health and Social Care sectors. Close work is also ongoing with other professionals such as WAST, Primary and Secondary care colleagues to deliver proportionate assessments at the front door.

We have continued to develop a Hospital Hub at Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan to expedite safe discharge from hospital sites. Working with Gwent local authorities to support unnecessary hospital admissions to the acute sites by enhancing the support provided by the Gwent Home First Service. The hospital hub is focussing on a model of 'Discharge to Recover and Assess' whereby a patient undertakes an assessment at home as opposed to being assessed in hospital when it is deemed appropriate.

Page 28
282
Meetings are held daily with ABUHB to discuss the escalating crisis across hospital sites. Where possible, to avoid lengthy in patient stays, owing to availability in care homes, assessments at hospital are being prioritised for social work assessments and the availability of domiciliary care packages.

Work is currently ongoing with Age Cymru to consider options for remodelling the service to increase capacity to deliver a 7-day emergency response team, working alongside the Domiciliary Care Brokerage service. This will then assist in responding to the current pressures in the domiciliary care sector by providing low level support to domiciliary care agencies and the in-house emergency care @ home team (DASH). The service will also support hospital discharges and provide low level prevention support post discharge, to help alleviate the current demands facing hospitals and support people to return home with the support they require.

Regular contact is being maintained with all care homes throughout Blaenau Gwent. Information in relation to staff vaccinations and testing is continuing to be collated and provided to ABUHB for analysis. Information on occupancy and bed vacancies is gathered and shared weekly on a regional basis, this includes updates on Homes which may be closed because of a COVID incident. The service is working in partnership with ABUHB to develop an Infection Control Support Team (IPAC) to support care settings with appropriate advice and guidance to prevent outbreaks. Work is being undertaken with commissioned providers to review when care homes are requiring the support of the WAST within care settings and to seek alternative and safe support to avoid conveyancing residents to hospitals.

To develop a partnership approach to maximising income reducing the impacts of Poverty

Audit Wales is currently undertaking a review on how local authorities ensure they deliver services to minimise or reduce poverty. Blaenau Gwent will be included as part of this review. A series of documents have been provided to Audit Wales for them to consider if the Council is:

- targeting resources to have the most effect, with a focus on poverty from the service user's lived experience.
- how services are geared and structured to help tackle poverty.

Estyn is also considering the poverty agenda and during a recent Link Inspector meeting they considered the following:

Socio-economic inequality: tackling disadvantage –

- What is Blaenau Gwent's strategic vision for addressing educational inequality as a result of poverty?
- How effectively do directorates work together to achieve this vision?

The Council is well placed to evidence the extensive work it has undertaken to tackle poverty. Both the Wellbeing Plan and Corporate Plan identify two key areas to support the poverty agenda:

- Blaenau Gwent wants everyone to have the best start in life – key to the delivery of this objective is looking to tackle childhood poverty (including in work poverty). Evidence shows this can have a positive impact on the quality of overall family life, leading to better educational attainment, better health, increased life expectancy and positive outcomes for the communities in which they live. Blaenau Gwent wants to forge new pathways to prosperity – in Wales, one in four currently live in poverty and Blaenau Gwent is at the sharp end of this. We have the highest child poverty rate in Wales and some of the most deprived communities.

The Corporate Plan also has the following areas:

- To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities - To develop a partnership approach to maximising income reducing the impacts of Poverty.
- Support a fairer sustainable economy and community

The Director of Social Services is the Council's strategic lead for tackling poverty. The Council's Community Hub model proactively looks at support options available to those experiencing poverty, most recently those effected by the Universal Credit Uplift and the possibility of increased gas and electric prices. The teams have started to see residents who are struggling financially due to the loss of £20 a week in their Universal Credit Payment. Since Community Hubs launched on the 21st June, 6 people have presented as Homeless to the team. They have all been supported in finding accommodation, a support worker and as much financial support as possible. Alongside Blue Badge applications, the most common queries are related to Benefits and Council Tax, with an increased number of residents requiring help with paying their Council Tax and Housing Costs due to financial difficulty. Residents regularly require 3rd party support from Citizens Advice to manage their debts and finances as well as needing support to claim Universal Credit.

Key Performance Information

Performance Indicator Description	21/22 (as at 31 st March)	Q1 (as at June)	Q2 (as at September)
Number of Children Looked After	200	195	190
Number of Children on the Child Protection	52	61	68
The total number of contacts to statutory social services during the year for children	4512	1603	1394
Number of referrals received by Adult Services	4572	1494	1462
Total number of packages of reablement completed during the year	232	77	175

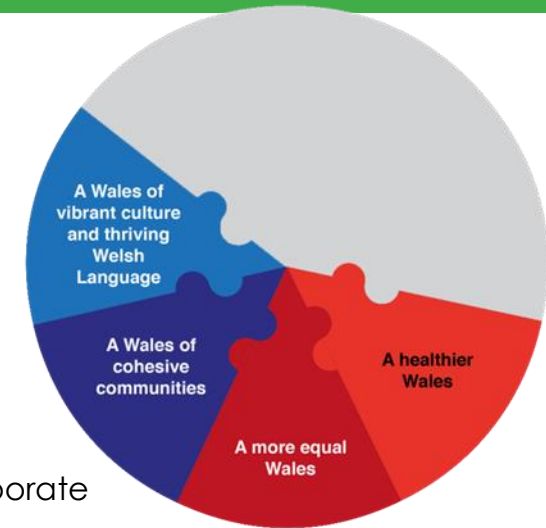
Why this is important

Improving the quality and provision of teaching and learning is vitally important to ensure the service is achieving ambitious outcomes for all. The Council will continue to invest in services in order to support economic development and regeneration in order to provide opportunities for local people and businesses.

Progress against actions

A number of high level priorities (shown below) have been identified to support delivery of the corporate objective, '**Support a fairer sustainable economy and community**'.

These are detailed in the following overview pages along with some associated achievements and challenges.



Priorities

- Support all learners to achieve improved outcomes;
- To improve pupil outcomes, progress and wellbeing;
- Improve skills and promote digital participation;
- To work with partners to provide effective employment support and access to skills development (Apprenticeships);
- To increase the start-up business rate, retention and growth of local businesses and attract new inward investment;
- To actively participate in partnerships such as Tech Valleys and CCRCDC to attract investment; and
- To work with partners to develop a new vision for our town centres ensuring their long term future.

The Education Directorate Leadership team has all positions fully appointed to. This has created capacity and a strong team to take the Education Directorate forward, especially in the way that we support children and young people in both school/college and community settings.

There continues to be robust governance arrangements in place between the Council and the EAS to monitor school performance. The reporting of Council/School level performance data has been relaxed over the last two academic years in Wales by WG. However, Summer 2021 KS4 results demonstrated progress in Capped 9 and L2inc. scores and were in line with the targets set in the 4 secondary settings School Development Plans (SDPs). The KS4 Centre Determined Grades in 2021 generated very few appeals. A Strategic Post 16 Partnership has been established to ensure that BG learner pathways into Further Education are very much strengthened. The Learning Zone's performance at KS5 continues to be good and A Level pass rates for A*-E were 99,1%, which is in line the Welsh mean average.

There are 4 schools currently identified as a School Causing Concern/ Team Around the School approach, however, it is likely that 2 schools will be removed during the next academic year. There continues to be very good progress made at Abertillery Learning Community (ALC), Brynmawr Foundation School (BFS) and Sofrydd Primary Schools. BFS will be subject to an Estyn Monitoring Visit early in the Autumn term. The River Centre has not responded appropriately to the pre-warning notice letter, therefore, a Statutory Warning Notice was issued on the 14th September. The ALC Corporate Group is working effectively and the revenue financial position is improving with deficit reducing to circa £324,000 when the prediction was in the region of £1m. Sofrydd Primary School appointed a permanent Headteacher early in the new academic year and is highly likely to be removed from the Schools Causing Concern (SCC) category in academic year 2021-22.

Blaenau Gwent is well placed to continue with the transformation of the Education Service and supporting children and young people. The strategic links with key partners such as the EAS, Coleg Gwent, Schools, Work Based Learning providers are effective. The Education Directorate has supported schools through the Centre Determined Grades (CDGs) changes effectively, and learner outcomes met SDP expectations.

The corporate and education response to COVID-19 has been strong, as evidenced in the Estyn Thematic Review findings. The Estyn Summer letter received towards the end on the Summer term, provided additional feedback from the Inspectorate. The Education Directorate has established an 'Education Recovery and Renewal' plan and working group. These have a strong focus on supporting the physical and mental health of pupils. Officers feel that, over the last year, supporting pupils' wellbeing has been a strength in all schools and was recognised in pupil surveys and engagement with parents.

The Vision for Education is embedded i.e. a school-led self-improving system. However, the Education Directorate's key purpose is under review based on a new approach of 'Better Schools, Better Citizens and Better Communities'. There will be consultation/engagement starting in 2021-22.

There is strong progress on the Welsh-medium school consultation which has concluded and implementation is planned from September 2023. The Pen-y-Cwm consultation has now concluded with positive feedback overall. Works were completed over the Summer, but it is recognised that space will remain a focus at the school going forward due to the increase in pupils with profound and complex needs. As a result, within the consultation approach, there is the provision for consideration of additional capacity creation as a Part 2 proposals. The proposal is now in implementation stages and the capacity will increase to 175 in 2021-22.

School to school working has continued throughout the period, but physical attendance on sites has been largely curtailed due the stringent risk assessment measures that are in place to prevent the spread of the virus. As such, schools have become competent at varying their approaches to school to school work, particularly cluster working.

The Council will continue to work with partners across the Council, for example, Children's Services, Regeneration, Legal, Finance and Organisational Development to focus the work on improving pupil outcomes and supporting school leaders. The Council will also continue to work with partners, such as the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to support school leaders to improve pupil outcomes and wellbeing.

The Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility has increased to over 30%+ of the pupil population as a result of the socio-economic impact of COVID. Monitoring systems are working well and a process is in place for providing FSM direct payments to families that have been asked to self-isolate.

The Executive Committee and the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee supported the Education Directorate's Recovery and Renewal plan is in line with the corporate approach led by the Director of Regeneration and Community Services. The plan sets out how the Directorate will work with schools on the continuing response to Covid-19, but also beyond the Pandemic in order to recover, and importantly, learn lessons to strengthen the work across the Education Directorate. Whilst the emergency response is very much ongoing, we also need to look forward at how learners and school staff can be supported to remain well, access the best opportunities and achieve the best life outcomes.

The 'Recovery and Renewal Plan' is a working document, which will evolve to take into account emerging challenges. Its overarching priority is to: *'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.'*

The Estyn Thematic Review letter had a particular focus on computers and connectivity:

R1 Urgently address barriers to learning at home, particularly where this is due to a lack of access to suitable computers or adequate connectivity

- Weekly assessments were undertaken to assess the need for pupils requiring ICT devices and monthly monitoring also took place to consider the local authority's overall digital support for schools and families.
- The Shared Resource Service (SRS) provided devices within seven days of a need being identified.
- The local authority has planned to continue with these ICT arrangements until at least the end of the summer term 2021.
- As of May 2021, the local authority had loaned 1,359 devices and 161 Mi-Fi units to pupils.
- A review of the 'Digitally Disadvantaged Device' project plan future provision is being undertaken to allow all families continued digital access. Officers reacted responsively at the start of the pandemic but now have time to reflect and look at the digital learner journey more strategically.
- The local authority has recognised that many parents have a lack of pedagogical understanding and it is recognised that there may be a need to provide more learning opportunities for parents on how to support their children's literacy and numeracy at home, should there be a third wave.

To work with partners to provide effective employment support and access to skills development (Apprenticeships)

Procurement and Economic Regeneration officers are actively engaged in a collaborative procurement project which is sponsored by Welsh Government and facilitated by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). The project outcome is to maximise procurement spend in Wales to support local wealth building and to create a more resilient Welsh economy.

Employment and Skills showcases the Aspire shared apprenticeship scheme with success being demonstrated through businesses taking on a second apprentice following a productive first experience.

The Council's industrial portfolio is at 85% occupancy rate, supporting 615.5 jobs and newly developed units coming to market offering an additional 26,000 sq ft.

Start-ups in BG are higher than this time last year by 6.7% and community benefits to a number of communities delivered through physical projects.

Covid-19 related support grants to businesses amounted to £1.9M (894 grants) delivered alongside other priorities.

To increase the start-up business rate, retention and growth of local businesses and attract new inward investment

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. 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. Thales has 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.

Like the Hybrid Units, the development of the Hwb Bocs provides 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. The project was delivered in partnership with Welsh Government and has transformed shipping containers into 21 separate office spaces alongside communal facilities and is located adjacent to the Coleg Gwent building. The Council is working closely to identify suitable tech-based businesses and entrepreneurs as part of its marketing programme with significant interest being expressed.

Department for Work and Pensions approached Blaenau Gwent CBC to act as a Gateway organisation to support applications from local businesses. As a Gateway the Employment and Skills team are required to liaise with partners within their networks to identify Kickstart job placements, submit bids directly online through the Kickstart portal and administer grant funding to companies. A number of expressions of interest were received from a range of sectors including childcare, production/manufacturing, retail, hospitality and construction. To date the Blaenau Gwent Gateway has:

- supported 25 businesses
- created 109 placements
- 63 placements filled
- 48 placements in recruitment stage

To actively participate in partnerships such as Tech Valleys and CCRCDD to attract investment

The STEM Facilitation Project, created as a result of Tech Valleys, is a co-ordinated programme of support, centred on “industry in schools STEM facilitation” within a cluster of Blaenau Gwent based schools, raising aspiration and preparing children for their journey into the world of work, whilst remaining complementary to the school curriculum. The project is also seeking to support and develop a sustainable relationship between local businesses and schools, via the industry liaison element of the role. In the first six months the project has engaged with thirty-one businesses and twenty-nine have pledged to support where possible. Of the twenty-nine businesses that have engaged there is a wide range of industry sectors covered including manufacturing, a range of aspects of Engineering, Environmental, Renewable Energy and Chemistry within Science.

The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCDD) Housing Viability Gap Fund is a targeted funding programme to bring forward new homes on key strategic housing sites across South East Wales. Blaenau Gwent made a successful submission to the fund as it was identified that there is a viability gap which requires a grant input to support the development to go ahead.

The funding for the Civic Crowdfunding project through the Cardiff City Region Challenge Fund submission was unsuccessful. Blaenau Gwent was advised that it didn't fit the criteria for the Challenge Fund although initially the Council was encouraged to submit it as a project. The CCR Team have advised that they will assist the Council in looking at other funds.

The CCR Investment panel received a proposal from Aspire BG to roll out the offer across the Region to provide support for Industries of the Future in 2020. Following a review of the existing apprenticeship landscape across SE Wales, specifically focussing on Shared Apprenticeship Programme aspect in relation to growing and priority sectors, a response has been received: 'The CCR Investment panel approved the paper in October 2021 along with the sum of £500k for two years, this will need to be agreed by CCR Cabinet and they will meet on the 29th November. It is understood that this funding will be for a Shared Apprenticeship pilot delivery model and further research'.

To work with partners to develop a new vision for our town centres ensuring their long term future

Placemaking plans for all towns are now in place across all Blaenau Gwent Towns. Footfall has been increasing in towns over the last 3 months with a total of 864,612 people. Grants and loans for privately owned property continue to be successful with around £2M in total being approved.

Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) in Tredegar Town Centre continues with NCB Town Hall and ongoing funding discussions with HLF continue. Rail improvements are gathering pace for both Ebbw Vale and Abertillery as funds from WG have been secured and funds from UK Government are awaited. Key, are complex buildings and structures like Big Arch, Trinity Chapel and Truck Shop have all been progressed during this period.

The Council only has limited financial and human resources in order to deliver projects. Therefore, we need to look at ways we can involve other key stakeholders and partners to achieve our vision. The Tredegar Advisory Board has provided a platform for both discussion, development and delivery of projects. Adopting a similar approach across each of the other towns could help the Council to support projects across each of the Towns supported by a wide range of stakeholders. The Council is looking to form a series of Advisory Boards for the Town Centres of Abertillery, Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale based upon the Tredegar Advisory Board approach. The Advisory Board shall act as a consultative body to oversee development and delivery of Town Centre Strategies and Plans.

It is hoped that by bringing Advisory Boards together we will be able to deliver projects that encourage future use of our Town Centres. Changing the way our Town Centres operate and offering a diverse range of uses would improve the variety of services that residents have access to.

Key Performance Information

Performance Indicator Description – School Applications	18/19	19/20	20/21
Applications – Nursery	693	696	714
Applications – Primary	739	731	701
Applications – Secondary	677	679	696
Performance Indicator Description - School Attendance	July 19	July 20	July 21
Attendance – Primary	94.4	93.5	90.7
Attendance Secondary	93.3	91.7	84.8
Performance Indicator Description – Schools Exclusions	April 19 to March 20	April 20 to March 21	April 21 to September 21
Exclusions Primary	108	25	17
Exclusions Secondary	459	135	183
Average Number of Primary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	108 (9.8)	25 (3.6)	17 (3.4)
Average Number of Secondary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	459 (41.7)	135 (19.3)	183 (36.6)
Performance Indicator Description – Free School Meals	2019	2020	2021
Entitlement to FSM/Transitionally Protected (%)	21.1	24.6	30.4

Performance Indicator Description – Business Estates Council and Non-Council	20/21	21/22 (to date)
Number of Business Unit Lease Transactions	12	14
Total Floor Space	35000 sq. ft.	16,000 sq. ft.
% Occupied Business Units (Council Portfolio)	85%	88%
% overall floor space occupied (Council Portfolio)	91%	93%
Kick Start Plus Approved	13	5
Total (£)	£10,765.00	£4,142.00
Number FTE Jobs Created	6	5
Number of FTE Jobs Safeguarded	22	7

Why this is important

Blaenau Gwent has a rich heritage and its buildings and countryside are part of Blaenau Gwent's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. The local environment should be used to help improve the health and well-being of 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.



Progress against actions

A number of high level priorities (shown below) have been identified to support delivery of the corporate objective, '**Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities**'. These are detailed in the following overview pages along with some associated achievements and challenges.

Page 294

Priorities

- To re-invest in highways maintenance particularly improvements to our residential roads, streets and pavements;
- 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 improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors
- To work with partners to provide a variety of homes
- To develop an excellent digital infrastructure including internet and mobile network connectivity that can support the needs of the whole community.
- 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

To re-invest in highways maintenance particularly improvements to our residential roads, streets and pavements

Building on the success of a previous Highways Capital Works Programme, which improved the nature and condition of the classified network, a programme targeting unclassified/ residential roads was approved by the Authority in 2017 covering the period up to 2022. A capital sum of £2.115million was generated from a 20 year prudential borrow based on revenue contributions of £130k per year. This Capital Sum has been augmented by Welsh Government Highways Refurbishment grant funding over the period 2017 to 2021 as detailed below:

Funding	Amount
Prudential Borrowing	£2,115,000
WG Grant 2017-2018	£553,000
WG Grant 2018-2019	£380,065
WG Grant 2019-2020	£409,776
WG Grant 2020-2021	£383,000
WG Refurbishment Grant* 21/22 & carry over 20/21 WG Revenue Grant	£602,000
Total	£4,442,841
*Welsh Government Refurbishment Grant is awarded to Authorities on the basis that it will be spent in line with Authority's Highways Asset Management Plan [HAMP].	

In accordance with the HAMP, with its identified priorities & risks to the Blaenau Gwent Highways Network, it is proposed that the 2021/22 programme will continue to pay due attention to high priority works to the Network whilst retaining a focus around improving the residential/ unclassified network. Following on from the previous works programme it is proposed that a priority ranking of residential streets is determined, utilising the assessment matrix criteria that was developed in line with the specific features associated with residential highways.

To re-invest in environmental services to address the issues created by fly-tipping, dog fouling, littering, grass cutting, street cleansing and pest control

The Litter and Fly Tipping Strategy for the Council is now in place. An LEQ Officer has been appointed who is working on implementing the strategy and supporting action plan. An Engagement Strategy and Litter Bin Protocol is also now in development.

Support to local community groups is continuing with local litter champions being provided with materials, equipment, staff support and the collection of waste following clean up and clearance.

The intention is to further develop the Mobile Worker App so that service requests can be reported quickly and resources applied as required. However, owing to COVID, this work was put on hold. Work will continue when resources allow. Once completed staff will undertake training on the new app features.

To increase rates of recycling to enable us to achieve national targets

In July 2021, Audit Wales published their report 'Review of People, Performance and Financial Resilience in Community Services' following workshops and interviews that took place early 2021. Key findings included:

- Waste Services has achieved substantial progress since 2015 through sound strategic planning supported by the adoption of a learning culture to manage change effectively.
- Waste and recycling performance has improved significantly but the use of performance data is inconsistent across Community Services and some performance reports lack sufficient detail
- Robust corporate budget monitoring arrangements have helped manage
- Community Services' overspends but the scope and focus of financial planning is overly short-term

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.

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.

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.

To improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors

The Active Travel (Wales) Act encourages healthy and sustainable travel throughout Wales and is further supported by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015. All local authorities in Wales must, by law, encourage walking and cycling as a preferred travel mode for purposeful journeys within short distances. Whilst cycling and walking as leisure activities are healthy in their own right, an active travel journey is one that is taken by a person(s) to get to a destination to carry out a specific task without using a car. Blaenau Gwent CBC, successfully applied for funding and received £429,000 for the following schemes to enhance the existing and future Active Travel network:

- Ebbw Vale Town Centre Sustainable Link Feasibility study - to determine a suitable sustainable route between the railway station and town centre for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Glyncoed Footpath Upgrading Works – feasibility and design
 - The Dingle, Brynmawr – Existing cycle path extension
 - Heathfield, Tredegar – Feasibility / design of a suitable footway link from the near-by residential area (Georgetown, Peacehaven areas) to the Bedwelty active travel route.
 - Minor Works - includes small scale schemes of localised improvements such as dropped kerbs & tactile paving, lighting, signage, path widening etc to upgrade existing routes to the required standard set by Active Travel guidance.
- Active Travel Network Mapping (ATNM), submission of final draft to Welsh Government and Community and Statutory Consultation

The purpose of the Safe Routes in Communities (SRiC) funding is to support capital schemes that contribute to the Welsh Government's objectives to improve accessibility, safety and encourage walking and cycling in communities (Active Travel). There is particular emphasis on improving routes to and from schools. The aim is to change how people travel for purposeful journeys, resulting in greater social inclusion and improved community safety. Having more families walking or cycle around their neighbourhoods can also help community cohesion, bringing people together and having people look out for one and other (improving overall safety).

The Authority successfully applied for £25,000 of funding under the Safe Routes in the Communities grant scheme for the financial year 2021/22. The funding has been used to commission a feasibility study and design work on footpath improvements between Mafeking Terrace and Georgetown Primary School, Tredegar. In the previous financial year, 2020/21, £19,479 was spent on improving the footpath along Ebenezer Street, Tredegar, providing a safe footpath to help connect Ebenezer Street to Glanhwy School, Tredegar.

The actions identified within the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) prioritises actions, to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. The three delivery mechanisms, for implementing activities, are Service Area Action Plans; Environment Champions network and advice from the Natural Environment team.

To work with partners to provide a variety of homes

There continues to be an improvement in the number of affordable and private homes delivered and delivery of new sites for housing, with high numbers of homes accessing funding for making them more energy efficient. Alongside this, the early intervention for homelessness means 73% of potentially homeless households were prevented from becoming homeless.

During the reporting period the announcement that the team has been shortlisted for Council of the Year (UK Housing Awards) was made - awards ceremony will be held in November 2021.

Progress against each housing development is captured below:

- Glanffrwyd, Ebbw Vale (23 units) (social rent); WRW the appointed contractor has gone into administration, Tai Calon have re-tendered the works with a view to recommencing the development during 2021/22
- Greenacres, Tredegar (22 units) (social rent) on site and progressing though completion date is delayed.
- Golwg Y Bryn, Ebbw Vale (100 units) (70 open market) (30 social rent) is nearing completion (October 2021) slightly delayed but all homes the open market homes are sold. The scheme was shortlisted for the Welsh Housing Awards - Building Quality Homes category.
- Ebbw Vale School Site (277 units) (222 open market) (55 social rent); The ground-breaking event was held during this period and development at the site continues, including construction of the show home.
- Glan Yr Afon development phase is progressing, pre application consultation completed, planning application and SAB application submitted, anticipate Tai Calon being in contract this financial year. The other package deals i.e. Crawshay House and Briery Hill are at negotiation stage for acquisition during this financial year.

Progress on Development Sites includes:

- Pithead Baths Land Release Funding has been secured for Year 1 associated development work. Work for the rest of the year will include: Site Investigation Works; land valuations; legal negotiations; and initial site layouts. A public consultation meeting, facilitated by the Executive Member, was also held with residents during this period.
- Civic Centre Site; Initial design layout prepared by the Urbanists for comment. Options appraisal paper for consideration by the commercial board will be prepared and presented late 2021.
- The independent valuation commissioned for Ashvale highlighted the viability of the scheme without grant. During the period, extensive work to engage with the CCRCDC took place and to challenge the findings. Managing partner relations and maintaining positive dialogue have been critical to maintaining momentum.
- Initial design layouts for Abertillery Leisure Centre, with appropriate access, have been developed by the RSL partner.

To develop an excellent digital infrastructure including internet and mobile network connectivity that can support the needs of the whole community

In Blaenau Gwent, there is a placemaking plan in place for Ebbw Vale Town Centre. Placemaking looks to deliver sustainable development and provide solutions and investment that addresses the needs of an area.

The primary purpose of the Placemaking Plan for Ebbw Vale is to inform and influence future strategic decision making for regeneration activity within the town and act as an evidence base to support the Council with future external funding options and support development of the replacement Local Development Plan (LDP). The overall vision of the Ebbw Vale Placemaking Plan is:

“We want Ebbw Vale to be a smart, resilient and sustainable town that is a great place to work, have a business, live and visit.”

Delivery of our vision shall be done by exploiting three opportunity areas for Ebbw Vale Town:

- Connect the town with the locality and destinations
- Build on the area's green legacy
- Exploit tech and digital investment opportunities

The technical and digital measures include developing a digital presence for the town, strengthening the quality of WI-FI coverage, creating a favourable commercial environment for businesses to survive and grow and establishing a regular series of events and initiatives that raise interest in the town as a destination and increase visitors.

The digital interventions of the project include:

- 5G connectivity throughout the town centre with 5G classroom at the Works site.
- Create a digital high street through development of an app that allows interaction with Ebbw Vale and provides access to local businesses.
- Establish a brand and marketing strategy for the town, that consistently promotes the leisure, tourism and retail offer that is available in the town and wider region.
- Create or link to existing digital resources (online maps/council website/app) to aid way-finding for the cycle and walking opportunities through the town

The placemaking plan embraces the digital and technological revolution with trying to establish Ebbw Vale with world-class connectivity. This will support businesses and provides a means for retailers to trade online.

To develop a portfolio of potential energy opportunities to deliver economic, business and community benefits

Regeneration has a commitment to managing a sustainable future energy delivery programme to allow a choice of affordable energy and to reduce fuel poverty for future generations, with the aim of:

- Improving the choice of supply;
- Developing models that enable community ownership of energy; and
- Meeting the energy needs of vulnerable households.

The Regeneration Opportunities Team has been exploring the potential to develop a range of renewable energy generation opportunities, including small scale hydro (micro-hydro) generation projects across the Borough. In 2017, Carbon Trust reported on Hydro potential in Blaenau Gwent as part of a borough wider study of potential renewable energy generation including wind, solar and hydro schemes. In September 2020 an application was submitted to the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme under the LEADER scheme for funding to undertake a Community Hydro Study of potential opportunities within the electoral wards of Llanhilleth and Cwm. The funding was awarded in December 2020 and together with funding from within the Council.

The Feasibility Study identified there is potential for a 15 – 25kW hydro scheme at Cwm Cynw with a power output of 17kW and average generation of 55MWh a year. This is the equivalent of powering 14 average homes for a year and that there is potential for a 20 – 30kW hydro scheme at Cwm Big with a power output of 28kW and average generation of 62mWh a year. This is the equivalent of powering 16 average homes for a year.

The Energy Prospectus has been completed 'Energy Generation Opportunities' is now in the market place. Funding for electric charging points in BG has been successful enabling 73 charge points across 35 sites for the community and visitors in addition to workplace, taxi and bus points. Work on the ReFIT program of works continues – 6000 non-LED street lights have been replaced with LEDs and will generate energy savings for the Council. Hydro and wind generation projects are being investigated in detail. The GovTech Catalyst project is in the last stages of development and final reporting will enable BG to assess the suitable tech for us. £20million National Digital Exploitation Centre (NDEC) is running and has started to assist SMEs and micro businesses with cyber security and digital design – the first R&D facility of its kind in Wales.

To improve the quality of our school buildings to help learners achieve great outcomes

The preparations for the 21st Century Schools Band B Programme are progressing well with WG business case submissions being made and agreed for key projects. The Managing School Places report is demonstrating progress towards meeting the SOP 15% target.

A review of the overall Band B Programme including timeline, cost and challenges have been considered and prioritised which will see some work spanning into the Band C programme.

A meeting has been held to discuss current facilities and use of school buildings. From this, a questionnaire is planned for Autumn term to support the action plans to enhance facilities for community use

- Glyncoed project Pre-planning Consultation April 2021 outturn report has been generated and submitted as part of the planning application.
- Remodelling of the 3-16 River Centre secondary campus - business case preparations are to be undertaken for Autumn Submission.
- Brynmawr 3G Pitch will be for community use and a Community Use agreement has been developed in conjunction with the school for the grant purpose.
- The monitoring form for the existing Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017/20 has been extended and will continued to be monitored annually until the new 10-year plan in 2022. There have been several workshops and meetings to inform the direction of the new plan.

A new Welsh-medium 210 place Primary School with Co-Located Childcare Provision on Chartist Way has been approved for development.

The Council has a Decarbonisation Plan in place and declared a Climate Emergency on 24 September 2020. The Plan sets out we would deliver our commitment to the ambition of the Welsh Public Sector to achieve net Zero by 2030. It outlined how we could reduce our organisational emissions across nine transitions:

- Transport Direct
- Transport Commissioned
- Sequestration
- Procurement Goods
- Procurement Services
- Procurement Works
- Electricity
- Heat
- Waste

Since the plan was adopted a Decarbonisation Board has been established, chaired by the Managing Director, and consisting of a range of experienced officers from across the Council. The Council is working closely with partners at both a local Blaenau Gwent level, through our newly formed Well-being Partnership Group and the Regional Gwent PSB and Climate Ready Gwent.

Blaenau Gwent has been responsible for the development of the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly, the first climate assembly in Wales, which took place online in March 2021. 44 demographically representative Blaenau Gwent residents, heard from over 20 expert speakers and deliberated for 23 hours about the question '*what should we do in Blaenau Gwent to tackle the climate crisis in a way that is fair and improves living standards for everyone?*'. The Assembly produced five official recommendations, drafted by Assembly participants that received 80% support.

The Climate Assembly recommendations will help to inform the development of a plan to address territorial emissions in Blaenau Gwent. Continuing this public engagement is a priority for both the council and the PSB.

Regional projects have included:

- Electrical Vehicle Charging Project where 62 new dual electric vehicle 22kw fast charging units have been installed at 34 sites across Gwent.
- Gwent Green Grid Partnership, where funding has been secured by Gwent partners for a three-year programme of work in support of woodland creation and management, green spaces cycle ways and the enhancements of vital habitats.
- Contributed to the development of Cardiff Capital Region Energy Strategy.

Key Performance Information

Recycling Outturn

Quarter	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Quarter 1 (April – June)	62.24%	62.17%	66.51%
Quarter 2 (July – Sept)	64.95%	65.94%	37.3%
Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec)	69.69%	63.06%	
Quarter 4 (Jan – March)	63.66%	65.53%	
Annual (as at 31st March following validation).	65.31%	64.29%	

Annual Recycling Comparisons between 19/20 and 20/21

- Residual waste increased by 1269.832 tonnes (10.69%)
- Food waste increased by 501.07 tonnes (15.53%)
- Kerbside Recycling increased by 1473.766 tonnes (28.95%)
- Garden waste increased by 20.014 tonnes (1.16%)
- HWRC Recycling has decreased by 2628.502 tonnes (46.43%)

Page 304

Since **Civil Parking Enforcement** commenced on the 10th September 2019, a total of 3,777 Penalty Charge Notice (PCN's) have been issued.

The number of PCN's issued during this period has been sub-divided into geographical areas as detailed below:

Location	Number of PCN's Issued
Abertillery	218
Blaina and Nantyglo	5
Brynmawr and Beaufort	244
Ebbw Vale*	406
Tredegar	145
Total	1029

- 1,029 PCN's issued between 1st Nov 2020 to 30th Sept 2021.
- 95% collection rate of PCN's (percentage of PCN's paid). This is an improvement on last year's collection rate (88%)
- ** Note - The Ebbw Vale total includes 212 PCNs issued at The Works*

Budget 2021/22 - Quarter 1 & 2 (April 2021 to September 2022)

Capital Budget - The overall financial position as forecast at 30th September 2021 indicates an adverse variance of £283,128 against a total in year capital budget of £17.12m.

Portfolio	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Forecast Variance (Adv) / Fav
Corporate Services Portfolio	2,531,799	812,650	0
Social Services Portfolio	5,734,482	1,739,119	(1,761)
Economy Portfolio	13,773,153	3,263,132	(234,710)
Education and Active Living	26,446,098	2,433,361	0
Environment Portfolio	5,863,489	3,928,576	(42,756)
Infrastructure Portfolio	4,676,520	3,187,699	(3,900)
All Portfolios	1,952,775	1,750,860	0
Total Capital Funding	60,978,316	17,115,397	(283,127)

Significant overspends have been identified 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.
- **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.

Discussions with funding bodies are ongoing to determine whether additional funding is available, therefore, at this stage it is not proposed that funding for these schemes be built in from the Capital contingency.

Revenue Budget – The forecast includes actual and estimated funding from the Hardship fund for April to September 2021 of £3.555m. Claims have been submitted, in line with the set of principles issues by Welsh Government, for quarter 1 and quarter 2 loss of income and £104,000 is included in the forecast for Social Services. It has been confirmed that Welsh Government Hardship Funding will continue to March 2022. The forecast overall financial position across all portfolios at 30th September 2021 (before the inclusion of Covid-19 related expenditure):

Portfolio	2021/2022 Revised Revenue Budget £m	2021/2022 Forecast Outturn 30 Sept 2021 £m	Favourable/ (Adverse) To 31 March 2022 £m
Underspending Portfolios			
Corporate Services & Financial Management & Strategy	18.425	17.171	1.254
Education & Leisure	63.863	63.693	0.170
Social Services	46.329	44.825	1.504
Planning	1.274	1.274	0.000
Licensing	0.106	0.106	0.000
Sub Total (1)	129.997	127.069	2.928
Overspending Portfolios			
Economy	1.551	1.568	(0.017)
Environment	26.484	26.581	(0.097)
Sub Total (2)	28.035	28.149	(0.114)
Total	<u>158.032</u>	<u>155.218</u>	<u>2.814</u>
Covid-19 Costs Social Services		1.487	(1.487)
Covid-19 Costs Education		0.277	(0.277)
Covid-19 Costs Environment		1.791	(1.791)
Sub Total – Covid19 spend		<u>3.555</u>	<u>(3.555)</u>
WG Hardship funding			<u>2.068</u>
WG SS Hardship funding			<u>1.487</u>
Revised Total			<u>2.814</u>

Regulatory Monitoring

The Council is subject to numerous internal and external audits and regulatory reviews each year which ensures local authorities provide value for money when delivering services, services are being run efficiently and effectively, and identifies local authorities approach in planning and delivering improved services in the future. This section aims to capture the progress being made against these proposals.

Reports and Proposals

At 30th September 2021 there were 10 open audits, 7 of which are 'active' audit reports.

Active Reports:

- Springing Forward – workshop undertaken on 25th November 2021. Information from this session will inform the future direction of this review.
- Building Social Resilience – CLT lead identified and interview scheduled for early 2022.
- Social Enterprises – CLT lead identified and interview scheduled for early 2022.
- Poverty in Wales – CLT lead identified and interview scheduled for early 2022.
- Nation Auditor Generals Equality Review – documentation provided and interview to take place December 2021.
- Public Service Ombudsman Review on Homelessness – Council considering the national proposals received.
- Decarbonisation baseline review – Council in the process of pulling information together for this review.

Open Reports:

- SRS Follow Up – awaiting final report from Audit Wales
- Data Driven Decision making – part one report received, awaiting part two to take place in 2022
- Value for Money of Direct Payments - awaiting final report from Audit Wales

Corporate Risk Register

Ref:	Risk Description	Residual Score	Progress against further controls	Target Score
CRR14	Failure to improve staff attendance rates within the Council will lead to an unacceptable impact on the ability of the Council to deliver services effectively and financially support the cost of sickness absence.	3 x 4 Critical	<p>The inherent risk score has moved from High to Critical. The impact score was amended from a 3 to a 4 to reflect the consequences more adequately owing to an increase in sickness absence being reported.</p> <p>Unpublished data is indicating that Blaenau Gwent has the worst performance in Wales on sickness. Critical levels of sickness being experienced in Provider Services, with 39.25 days per employee which is pushing the Council's total average sickness up – capacity in this service also has a direct impact on the risk score. Covid and long Covid will continue to impact negatively on sickness absence as well as the waiting times for NHS treatment and seasonal illnesses. All this will impact on the capacity of the workforce alongside any recruitment and retention issues. Other Councils are also suggesting they have significant increases in sickness absence.</p> <p>Sickness reporting has been taken to CLT and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee. Some activity to reduce sickness absence includes: reviewing the top 20 cases in each directorate; Workforce Wellbeing bulletin published weekly; Agile Working policy agreed by Council March 2021.</p>	2 x 4 High
CRR	If the Council does not manage its information assets in accordance with requirements set down within legislation then it may be faced with financial penalties and possible sanctions that hinder service delivery.	3 x 4 Critical	<p>The inherent risk score has moved from High to Critical. The impact score was amended from a 3 to a 4 to reflect the consequences more adequately.</p> <p>The Information Security Policy and Acceptable Use Policy have been reviewed and progress is being made with the review of the Records Management, Social Media and Password Policy and the Record of Processing Activities (ROPA).</p> <p>Increased data breach numbers seen in Q3 2020/21 but returned to more normal levels in Q4 and have continued this trend in 2021/22 with a total of 6 by quarter 2 with limited severity. The risk of cyber-attacks is increasing with a number of high profile attacks against Councils being reported in recent years. Consideration is being given to enhancing the protection in place on the Council's IT network by implementing a SOC / SIEM solution which will monitor and warn of potential threats.</p>	2 x 4 High

Ref:	Risk Description	Residual Score	Progress against further controls	Target Score
CRR24	There is a risk that exiting the EU will have an adverse impact at a national and local level which could impact on the community and on the Council and its ability to deliver public services.	3 x 4 Critical	<p>*** Draft target score has been added for discussion by CLT ****</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EU Settlement Scheme closed in July 2021. 1,490 EU citizens registered to addresses in BG have now applied for settled or pre-settled status. OD pre-employment checks and offer letters to new staff revised to ensure the new right to work requirements are outlined and captured. Impact not yet known as Covid travel restrictions during first half of 2021 resulted in an additional reduction of EU citizens entering the UK for work. Ongoing monitoring of labour and supply shortages associated with EU exit i.e. HGV driver shortages due to visa blockages and its impact on public service delivery through ERT & LRF. Currently low impact but keep monitoring as winter pressures grow. 	3 X 4 Critical
CRR26	Business Continuity. The on-going COVID 19 pandemic presents a continued risk to service delivery.	3 x 4 Critical	<p>Gwent SCG and BG GOLD reconvened in August to respond to issues in health and social care in Gwent.</p> <p>SRG continue to meet with a focus on Recovery across were in place the following themes: Community, Social Services, Learners, Workforce and Economy.</p>	1 x 4 Medium
CRR1	Failure to deliver and sustain the changes required to ensure that vital services are prioritised within the financial constraints faced by the Council	2 X 4 High	<p>Council agreed the new operating model in March 2021. The Programme Board, chaired by the Managing Director, which includes CLT and all Workstream Leads oversees the delivery of the new operating model; work to decommission the Civic Centre remains on target; Democratic Hub at the General Offices is now operational; designs have been agreed for the refurbishment of Anvil Court to an agile workspace; staff were issued with an amendment to their contracts to reflect a move to agile working. Six new Community Hubs have opened across the Borough. The Workforce Strategy 2021 – 2026 was approved by Council July 2021.</p>	1 X 4 Medium

Ref:	Risk Description	Residual Score	Progress against further controls	Target Score
CRR4	Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent	2 x 4 High	<p>*** Draft target score has been added for discussion by CLT ****</p> <p>Social Services Referrals have increased with the easing of lockdown but it remains to be seen whether these will materialise into cases where further action is needed. A programme has been put together for Safeguarding training which was to be implemented in Q2, this is delayed as queries have been raised by CLT around delivery and cost. Safeguarding Policy has been updated but as linked to the training programme has not been progressed via the political process to date. Q2 has seen increased pressures within health and social services relating to employees taking annual leave after a difficult period during the pandemic, increase in numbers of staff self-isolating, staff off sick and difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in the domiciliary care and residential sector. This will be the subject of a separate risk on the Corporate Risk Register but it is highly likely that these pressures could have a direct effect on safeguarding arrangements and this risk will need to be kept under close review as we move into Q3.</p> <p>Education Education, including the Youth Service, provided partial performance information for the Joint Scrutiny/Executive performance report in Q4. Due to periods of school/pupil disruption. However, full data for Q1 in 2021-22 are being collated following a full return to face to face learning in schools during the Spring/Summer terms of 2021.</p> <p>The Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy has been updated and discussed at Joint Scrutiny Committee and was subsequently agreed by the Executive Committee in July 2021. The policy is now in line with the latest Keeping Learners Safe Guidance.</p>	1 X 4 Medium

Ref:	Risk Description	Residual Score	Progress against further controls	Target Score
CRR20	There is a risk that increasingly complex needs and demand for services provided by Social Services and Education, in particular for Looked After Children, will put further significant pressure on the Council's budget.	2 X 4 High	<p>Number of children looked after continues to reduce (187 as at 21/09/21) however there is a risk that the rise in referrals may result in more children coming into care. We have started to implement the revised Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2020 to 2025 following its agreement by Executive. We are also working with Education to implement the new ALN reforms. This remains a high risk given the gradual reduction of COVID-19 restrictions and the possibility of more children at risk coming to light over the coming months.</p> <p>In adult services, cases are more complex and needs of the older population are at a higher level than anticipated as early intervention and preventative work has not been possible due to the pandemic. Discussions are ongoing in respect of a future collaboration with Caerphilly for the provision of legal services in respect of children's services in particular. It is anticipated that this will reduce the budget for legal services which is high in particular in respect of children's services due to currently being outsourced due to a lack of capacity within the Council's legal services.</p>	1 X 4 Medium
CRR21	The Financial resilience of the Council could be at risk if the Council does not ensure that financial planning and management decisions support long term stability and sustainability.	2 X 4 High	<p>Target risk score has been set as High as it is doubtful that the likelihood will reduce given the annual funding settlements, changing political priorities and economic environment of BG which is likely to remain reliant on WG funding and grants as opposed to Council Tax and Fees and charges.</p> <p>Whilst good progress is being made in reviewing the MTFs, significant cost pressures are emerging for 2022/23 onwards not least the announcement by the UK Government of a 1.25% increase in National Insurance contributions, the predicted increase in gas prices (40%) and the potential for additional costs connected to the Council's response to and recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic to continue into 2022/23 and onwards.</p> <p>BtG estimated achievement has increased for future years with the review of the MRP policy and the Prevention & early intervention work throughout the Council however these are not at the level to fully offset the budget gaps currently being forecast. WG annual settlement announcements are not being made until December and there remains a high level of uncertainty around the level of the Council's funding for future years.</p>	2 X 4 High

Ref:	Risk Description	Residual Score	Progress against further controls	Target Score
CRR25	The 2 schools currently in receipt of Council Intervention fail to make appropriate progress against the Statutory Warning Notice to Improve and their Post Inspection Action Plans	3 X 3 High	<p>The overall position against this risk remains, however, the Education Directorate and EAS are increasingly confident in the progress that both settings are making. Progress includes:</p> <p>Abertillery 3-16 Learning Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance has improved significantly. • 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. • 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 May verification visit showed that the school has made satisfactory progress overall with some aspects identified as strong (e.g. leadership development). <p>Brynmawr Foundation School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance has significantly improved. • The school has had several beneficial changes in senior leadership since the core inspection. • A strong support plan is currently in implementation as part of the EAS Learning Network School model, working closely with Cardiff High School. • The school is part of the national pilot for multi-agency support for schools in special measures national initiative. • From 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. This assessment will be verified during the Estyn monitoring visit in October. • Both schools engaged 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. 	2 X 3 Medium

Ref:	Risk Description	Residual Score	Progress against further controls	Target Score
CRR22	Failure to deliver the Council's priorities within the agreed annual budget resulting in the increased use of emergency finance measures and the drawdown of reserves.	1 X 4 Medium	<p><i>It is recommended that the risk score be amended to medium.</i></p> <p>2021/22 budget agreed March 2021. During Q2, the Council agreed a supplementary budget to undertake additional Highways maintenance works funded by general reserves. Despite this, the forecast outturn for 2021/22 continues to be favourable which will result in the general reserves increasing further by the year end with no unplanned draw from the general or earmarked reserves. Delivery of the 2021/22 BtG proposals are on track and estimated to be achieved</p>	1 X 4 Medium

Contact Details

If you require any further information or have any feedback you wish to share, please:

Write to us:

Head of Policy and Partnerships
Corporate Services
General Offices
Steelworks Road
Ebbw Vale
NP23 6AA

Call us:

(01495) 311556

Email us:

pps@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Visit our Website:

www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Agenda Item 15

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme**
Portfolio Holder: **Executive Member Cllr D Davies, Regeneration and Economic Development**
Report submitted by: **Richard Crook, Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
x	27.01.22	15.02.22			09.02.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Members to consider performance of the Aspire programme and associated external business engagement; and to also provide performance information on the BGCBC internal apprenticeship programme.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Aspire Shared Apprentice Programme was initially setup in 2015, with funding from WG, as a response to identified market failure within the engineering and advanced manufacturing sector within Blaenau Gwent. It proved so successful that it was expanded to include provision in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in 2017 and the project has been extended to September 2022 in both localities.
- 2.2 In 2018 the Aspire Team started working with internal departments to raise the profile of the programme and demonstrate how having an apprentice could strengthen the workforce and fulfil future skills gaps and in October 2020 a designated officer was appointed through Legacy Funding to support this.
- 2.3 Currently there are 11 apprentices in situ within departments in the Council. There are 4 vacancies with 5 pending. The opportunities are widening to Social Services, Estates and Finance. It has been really encouraging how the Authority has embraced this over the last 12 months and really positive in creating opportunities of long term roles within the Authority not just placement opportunities.
- 2.4 The mentor alongside the apprenticeship pathways also facilitates work placement opportunities for the 'Children who are Looked After'. At present there are 3 on placement with partners in the borough.
- 2.5 In 2019 & 2021 Aspire won the 'Large Employer of the Year' award at the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2019 (AAC), The award category entitled 'Large and Macro Employer of the Year' recognises and celebrates the employer's commitment to developing their workforce through

apprenticeships, whilst also supporting their employees during training. To have won the award a second time and during a pandemic, demonstrates the commitment and support the Team has given to apprentices and their employers.

2.6 **The Aspire Offer to Apprentices across Blaenau Gwent**

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

2.7 **The Aspire Offer to Businesses across Blaenau Gwent**

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

2.8 To date the Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme has:

Externally

- Recruited and supported 84 apprentices (2015-2020)
- The Programme has engaged with over 60 manufacturing companies across the Local Authority to facilitate the apprenticeships, 20 have become host employers of which some of the companies are:
 - Continental
 - PCI Pharmaceutical
 - JC Moulding
 - GTEM
 - Cruz Engineering
 - Sogefi Filtration
 - Liberty Steel
 - TCK Electrical
 - Camtronics
- 60% of companies are SMEs
- Learning Pathways include:
 - Electrical Engineering
 - Mechanical Engineering
 - Applied Science
 - IT
 - EEP's
 - Commercial focused Business Administration
 - Quality Engineering
- 100% of apprentices on cohort 1 have been employed, of which 67% retained within host employer
- The programme can now measure the outcomes due to the first two cohorts of apprentices completing their apprenticeships.

2.9 The programme has facilitated 101 apprentices based within industry in Blaenau Gwent on various pathways including: - Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Applied Science, IT, EEP's, Commercial focused Business Administration and Quality Engineering.

2.10 In 2015/2016/2017 academic years Cohort 1 and 2 & 3: -

	Number of apprentices	Completed their framework	Framework completed if transfer was successful	Entered Employment	Progressed onto further learning
Cohort 1	18	15 (83%) 2 transferred onto other apprenticeships	17 (94%)	18(100%)	10 (55)%

Cohort 2	19	16 (84%)	16 (84%)	18 (95%) 1 apprentice when on to a degree	9 (47%)
Cohort 3	19	13 (68%) 2 Transferred	15 (79%)	17 (89 %) 1 Apprentice degree 1 different sector course	8 (42%)
Totals	56	44 (79%)	48 (85%)	53 (95%)	19 (51%)

2.11 From the above data the SAP programme has had good framework completion rates – all above the traditional apprenticeship framework success rate which was 80.9% in Feb 2020 a decrease of 0.6 of a percentage point from 2017/18.

2.12 Entering into employment is also positive, the lowest being 89% in cohort 3 but almost all SAP apprentices are employed within their hosts following framework completion.

2.13 Progression from the Level 3 programme into higher apprenticeships is also successful with almost half of the recruits continuing their learning journey.

2.14 Internally

- Recruited 11 Internal Apprentices employed within BGCBC on a range of pathways.
- Community Services, Audit, Business Support and Social Services are departments who have already engaged.
- Housing and Digital pathways are being reviewed and it is hoped vacancies in these areas will be created in early 2022.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

Members to not accept the report.

Option 2

Members to 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**

- Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan: Forge new pathways to prosperity through employment and skills development
- Corporate Plan: Economic Development and Regeneration
- Regeneration Priorities: employment and skills, enterprise and innovation.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Short Term

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

Long Term

It is anticipated that the proposals submitted to the Welsh Government and City Deal will generate funding for the programme to continue over the next 6 years for Blaenau Gwent and the City Region

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

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

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

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

5.3 ***Legal***

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

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

5.4 ***Human Resources***

Not required for this update

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

To date the Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme has:

- Recruited and supported 101 apprentices placed in over 25 manufacturing companies across Blaenau Gwent in addition to employment of 11 apprentices within council departments.
- 51% of apprentices within Cohorts 1 2 &3 have progressed onto higher education / HNC.
- 100% of apprentices on cohort 1 have been employed, of which 67% retained within host employer
- Framework completed: Cohort 1 –83%, Cohort 2 – 79% Cohort 3 – 68%
- 100% of apprentices in cohorts 1-6 have had the opportunity to rotate to another company to fulfil skills gaps

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The following are future outcomes that are based on the regional proposals submitted to City Deal and Welsh Government respectively which includes Blaenau Gwent and 9 other authorities:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The future proposals aim to meet the needs businesses; future skills planning and fulfil current skills gaps. The success within two current local authorities' (BG & MT) demonstrate the need for a coordinated approach to facilitate the recruitment for business and engagement with learning providers.

The team are continually working with education to identify progression routes onto higher education as industry requires these higher level skills and with this apprenticeship pathway it provides alternative routes to employment for young people.

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

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

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

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The proposals are integral to collaborative working across the city region and with individual local authorities, that is the key to its success, to date there has been RSP engagement, partner LA and FE discussions, business engagement.

There are currently Joint Contracts of employment in place with all current employers with apprentices and these documents will be shared and part of the proposal.

It is vital that the team works closely as they have done in the past with FE. It will be important to utilise the apprenticeship contract within individual providers for each area. Relationship with the FE to support delivery.

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

The contents of the plan will link closely with Education.

6.8 ***EqIA***

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

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 16

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **21st Century Schools Band B Progress**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Joanne Collins, Executive Member Education**
Report Submitted by: **Corporate Director of Education – Lynn Phillips**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
13.1.22	13.1.22	15.02.22			1.2.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Executive Committee with an overview of the 21st Century Schools Programme, along with the opportunity to accept the progress in line with the delivery of the Band B Programme.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The 21st Century Schools Programme is a long-term strategic investment in the education estate throughout Wales. The Programme is broken down into phases of investment, categorised as Bands. The Band A Programme in Blaenau Gwent, successfully concluded in the autumn-term of 2019, with the delivery of the final project, Six Bells Campus. The Band A Programme realised an investment of £20.25m in school estate between 2014-19 (50/50 WG and Council funded).
- 2.2 Blaenau Gwent 21st Century Schools Programme has an established programme management structure, delivered in line with the Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) methodology. The Programme Board who oversee it, is comprised of key council officers, along with external partners, and is accountable to Corporate Leadership Team, who act as Programme Sponsor. Projects are managed in accordance with Blaenau Gwent's Corporate Project Management Framework and PRINCE 2, and each has a dedicated project management team
- 2.3 Welsh Government encourages and expects Councils to participate in a Gateway Review process. A Gateway Review is a form of peer review, which tests the Council's readiness and capacity to successfully deliver projects and programmes. The Education Transformation team agreed with the review team that, due to the programme status, the delivery confidence assessment should be split as follows, one for Band A and one for Band B respectively. For Band A, based upon a Gateway 5, the review team considered that the delivery confidence assessment as Green. For Band B, based upon a Gateway 0, the review team considered that the delivery confidence assessment as Amber, due to fact that Band B was in its infancy at the time. The outcome report (Please refer to **Appendix 1**), highlighted

that the 21st Century Schools programme management arrangements are to be commended, as follows:

'...all of the projects within the Portfolio have been successfully completed... ongoing monitoring and realisation of benefits is well-evidenced. The positive impact of these projects on education and wider societal outcomes in the Blaenau Gwent area is also clearly evidenced... the very high quality of programme management in evidence is impressive'

- 2.4 An Internal Audit of the 21st Century Schools Programme was undertaken during the 2019/20 academic year, the outcome of which was a grading of 'reasonable assurance'. Only 2 weaknesses were found which pre-date the existing programme team. The weaknesses found were pertaining to the Band A SOP (submitted in 2010), along with business case submissions pre-2014. Both of these weaknesses have subsequently been addressed by the current Programme team (for more information please refer to **Appendices 2 (a), (b) and (c)** containing the audit reports).
- 2.5 The Blaenau Gwent Band B Strategic Outline Programme was approved in 2018. Blaenau aims to address the following key priorities:
- I. Raising standards, particularly at KS4;
 - II. Improving suitability and condition of the school estate;
 - III. Programme deliverability-match-funding and affordability;
 - IV. Sustainability and reducing revenue costs; and,
 - V. Increasing Welsh medium learning opportunities.
- 2.6 The Blaenau Gwent Band B Programme investment objectives are as follows:
- **Investment Objective 1:** to raise standards and achievement in line with localised targets at foundation phase, KS2, KS3 and KS4; and secure improved transition into post 16 learning.
 - **Investment Objective 2:** to create a sustainable model for the 21st Century school estate in consideration of both capital and revenue investment, along with the condition and suitability of buildings.
 - **Investment Objective 3:** to establish effective management and provision of school places, by having the right schools in the right place at the right time.
 - **Investment Objective 4:** to implement the 21st Century Schools Programme in line with local, regional and national school organisation policy; ensuring synergy between progression, development and implementation.
 - **Investment Objective 5:** meeting the needs of vulnerable learners.

- 2.7 The Band B Programme commenced in April 2019 and is set to conclude in 2025. The Programme will realise and investment of £19.6million throughout the Blaenau Gwent school estate. The Welsh Government intervention rate for Band B is a 65/35 split, in favour of Local Authorities.
- 2.8 In November 2021, the Education and Welsh Language Minister announced that all new schools and college buildings, major refurbishment and extension projects, will be required to meet Net Zero Carbon targets from January 1st 2022. The Council meets with Welsh Government on a monthly basis in line with programme monitoring. At the last meeting, it was discussed that although the application of Net Zero Carbon is not required retrospectively, Welsh Government would commit 100% funding where application to existing schemes which are under development is possible. Therefore, the team have been investigating this, as detailed within the update below.
- 2.9 The Band B Programme seeks to deliver the following key projects in line with the investment objectives:
- Continued secondary school re-modelling within the following priority schools:
 - Abertillery Learning Community Secondary Campus
 - Brynmawr Foundation School
 - River Centre Learning Community
 - Tredegar Comprehensive School

This project will be a continued focus in line with future bandings of the 21st Century Schools Programme, due to the level of investment required – **Good progress has been made in identifying the priority works at the schools, via initial site visits and discussions. Further detailed assessments are programmed for development throughout the spring-term 2022. The assessments will be used to inform the options appraisal process and associated business case development, with business case submission is programmed throughout 2022.**

- The development of a new 360 primary school to replace Glyncoed Primary, which is the only category 'D' building in terms of condition within County Borough – **All business cases have been submitted and approved by Welsh Government. Significant progress has been made in relation to the Glyncoed project, the stage 3 design is complete, and the pre-planning application process concluded in September 2021. A full planning application has been submitted and the tender process initiated. The project team are currently assessing the potential application of Net Zero Carbon, along with the associated implications and impact from both a programme and financial profiling perspective. This is being explored further via the tender process, and will be**

progressed accordingly in line with contractor appointment. Finally, a pick-up and drop-off area has been developed off Allotment Road, with the aim of easing congestion and improving access to the site. The scheme was taken forward via the Highways Department, Education and Community Services, in line with feedback resulting from the Pre-Application Consultation process.

- **Primary School remodelling within the Ebbw Fawr Valley consisting of Beaufort Hill, Cwm and Rhos y Fedwen Primary Schools – All business cases have been submitted and approved by Welsh Government. The Rhos y Fedwen Primary remodelling project brief has been developed and agreed. Planning applications and tender documents are currently under development. We aim to submit relevant planning applications in the Spring 2022, and initiate the tender process during the Summer period 2022.**
- **Remodelling of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg to address ongoing condition and suitability issues – The business case has been submitted and approved by Welsh Government. The internal works commenced at the end of the Summer period 2021, and are nearing completion. We plan to re-initiate the tender process in January 2022, to secure a provider to undertake the external works. The project is on track for completion during the Spring 2022.**

- 2.10 In addition to the Band B funding envelope, Blaenau Gwent Council received confirmation in October 2018, that they were successful in securing £6 million from the Welsh-medium capital grant, along with £200,000 from the Capital Childcare Grant. The grants were awarded in line with the proposal to create a new 210 place Welsh-medium primary school and associated childcare facility in the Tredegar/ Sirhowy valley – **Design work has commenced and the project development phase is progressing well, along with tender document preparation. The project team aim to submit the pre-planning application at the end of January 2022, and initiate the tender process during the Spring 2022. Welsh Government have agreed the latest cost profile in principle – subject to Ministerial sign off. The latest cost profile has increased due to COVID, market forces, design development associated with site constraints, along with additional information which emerged as a result of the site investigation process. In addition, Education have engaged Welsh Government who have stated that they would provide 100% additional funding in order to deliver a Net Zero Carbon school.**
- 2.11 The delivery programme/timeline has and continues to be subject to regular review. The financial profile has also undergone review in discussion with Welsh Government, with the latest profile having been submitted in December 2021 (Please refer to **Appendix 3(a)** for the overarching delivery programme/timeline and **Appendix 3(b)** for the funding forecast).

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 This report was supported by the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee on 1st February 2022.

Option 1: The Executive Committee accepts the report.

Option 2: The Executive Committee does not accept the report and provides comments relating to improvements that can be made.

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

There is a statutory requirement upon the Council to deliver the Band B Programme in line with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018). Education is a strategic priority within the Council's Corporate Plan and the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan, of which 21st Century Schools is an essential component in securing: improved access to education, education facilities (including condition and suitability), provision and standards throughout the school estate. The 21st Century Schools Programme is a key element in responding to the Council's wellbeing goals for all learners, particularly learners with Additional Learning Needs.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There are no new or additional budgetary implications for the Council. The financial profile was last reviewed and submitted to Welsh Government in December 2021. The total programme cost 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.

In addition, the Welsh Medium Project which has received 100% funding from Welsh Government is currently estimated to be £8.2million. Discussions have taken place with Welsh Government, who have approved the cost increase on an 'in principle' basis, subject to Ministerial approval. Ongoing detailed cost review processes are in place, to support effective financial management of the project. The programme is currently on profile, with regular reviews taking place with all relevant representatives on a monthly basis.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

Raising educational standards is a strategic risk on the Corporate Risk Register (CRR). The 21st Century Schools Programme proposals presented within this report will contribute to mitigating this risk. Moreover, there are robust risk management arrangements in place for the 21st Century Schools Programme, with identified risks regularly monitored reported and escalated via the 21st Century Schools Programme Board.

The high-level risks associated with programme delivery at present, include: the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic along with financial, resourcing and programming implications. Project Groups have been established for all live projects monitoring development, delivery and associated requirements.

Programme Board are monitoring programme delivery, with core project team (Education, Finance and Community Services) monitoring and reviewing programme resourcing, progress, timelines and financial profiles on a monthly basis. 2 business cases have been approved to date, with the remainder on track for submission as programmed. Monthly meetings continue to take place with Welsh Government, in order to review and consider the financial profile and delivery programme.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no direct legal implications associated with this report, other than the requirement for the Local Authority to follow the statutory processes set out within the Welsh Government School Organisation Code.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct human resource implications associated with the report, staffing and other resources have been secured in line with programme delivery, and contingencies built-in. Resourcing is subject to regular review at both a programme and project level, with transition plans established to oversee school organisation priorities (including OD/HR).

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

Band B projects are currently on profile and programme. To date the following outcomes have been achieved:

- All 4 projects have been delivered, securing successful conclusion of the Band A Programme, on programme and profile.
- The Band A programme has been subject to internal review and evaluation, internal audit, along with 4 external Gateway Reviews. The latter demonstrates excellent progress and strong programme/project management arrangements are in place. Learning from the Band B Programme has been used to inform Band B development and implementation.
- Welsh Government have approved all Business Case submissions to date in line with delivery of the Band B Programme.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The 21st Century Schools Programme will contribute to raising the standard of education throughout the school estate, promoting pupil and staff wellbeing and attainment, whilst ensuring fit for purpose teaching and learning environments.

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

The 21st Century Schools Programme contributes heavily to the strategic direction for the school estate across the County Borough. The 21st Century Schools Programme Board has representation from across all services within the Council. There are also statutory requirements to involve stakeholders in school organisation proposals linked to the WG's School Organisation Code (2018).

- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
The 21st Century Schools Programme is a long-term investment programme that at present, spans the period 2014 to 2034. The Band B element covers the period 2019 to 2025. The Programme takes account of facilities management and asset condition and suitability, along with key strategic and policy developments, at both a local and national level.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
The 21st Century Schools Programme will take a preventative approach in line with the needs of school staff and learners, placing an emphasis on delivering a school estate that is fit for purpose and contributes to raising educational standards, which is a Council priority.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
The Vision for Education is based upon a school led, self-improving, collaborative approach. The 21st Century Schools Programme plays a fundamental part in improving partnership arrangements with the schools and their respective communities e.g. the community focussed school's agenda. In addition, the programme itself is delivered via a team officers from across all Council directorates, along with external partners such as the Shared Resource Service Wales and contractors.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
The project is being progressed and managed by a multi-disciplinary team with dedicated officers from key services.
- 6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**
All capital schemes and associated remodelling projects undertaken within schools, seek to contribute to CO2 carbon reduction and decarbonisation. Prior to design development, the project team establish key targets, with evidence provided via BREEAM trackers, benefits realisation plans, closure reports and other relevant project management documentation. The Council are committed to ensuring that all new schools and college buildings, major refurbishment and extension projects meet Net Zero Carbon targets from January 1st 2022. Although the application of Net Zero Carbon is not required retrospectively, Welsh Government has confirmed that they will look to commit 100% funding where the application to existing schemes under development is possible.
- 6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**
The Band B Programme was created prior to the socio-economic duty commencing. However, the impact of each project will be considered.
- 6.9b. **Equality Impact Assessment**
An Equality Impact Screening Assessment (EQIA) has been completed, which determined that there is no negative impact upon the protected characteristics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The Education Directorate has established a 21st Century Schools Board that has a strategic oversight for the programme, in line with the requirements of the Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) good practice guidelines. The 21st Century Schools Programme team reports to Education Department Management Teams (DMT) and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). The Education and Learning Scrutiny/Executive Committees monitor progress via their forward work programmes and Scrutiny are also consultees on any statutory school re-organisation consultation exercise. Furthermore, the 21st Century Schools Programme is independently assessed through the WG facilitated Gateway Review process.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Gateway Review Report

Appendices 2 (a), (b) and (c) – Audit Reports

Appendix 3 (a) and (b) – Programme/timeline Version and Financial Profile

Appendix 1 – Gateway Review Report



OGC Gateway™ Review 5 - Operations review & Benefits Realisation & Review 0 Strategic assessment

Version number:	FINAL 1.0
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO):	Lynn Phillips
Date of issue to SRO:	25 th September 2019 Final Version 1 st October 2019
Project Title:	Blaenau Gwent's 21 st Century Schools Programme
Department/Organisation of the Project	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Education Transformation and Performance
Review dates:	23 rd to 25 th of September 2019
Review Team Leader:	Alex Porter
Review Team Members:	Robin Davis Sheila Powell
Previous Review:	Gateway 0 – Band A 17 th to 19 th of July 2017 Green Amber
IAH ID number:	AH/19/35

This assurance review was arranged and managed by:

Welsh Government Integrated Assurance Hub (IAH)
Cathays Park 2
Cathays
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

IAH helpdesk: ppmdevelopmentunit@gov.wales

1.0 Delivery Confidence Assessment (DCA)

<u>Delivery Confidence Assessment:</u>	For Band A - GREEN For Band B - AMBER
<p>The Review Team considers that, due to the programme construct, the Delivery Confidence Assessment for the current status of Blaenau Gwent’s 21st Century Programme, should be split into two separate assessments for Band A and Band B respectively.</p> <p>For Band A, based upon a Gateway 5, the Review Team considers that the Delivery Confidence Assessment is Green.</p> <p>For Band B, based upon a Gateway 0, the Review Team considers that the Delivery Confidence Assessment is Amber.</p> <p>For Band A, the Review Team found that all of the projects within the Portfolio have been successfully completed, with the most recent project - Six Bells - handed over a few weeks ago. Ongoing monitoring and realisation of benefits is well-evidenced. The positive impact of these projects on education and wider societal outcomes in the Blaenau Gwent area is also clearly evidenced. The Education team (and the Council colleagues who have supported them) should be commended for their efforts in delivering Band A successfully. The very high quality of programme management in evidence is impressive.</p> <p>For Band B, the Review Team found that whilst the vision and objectives of the programme are set out and a high degree of stakeholder ‘buy in’ already achieved, overall programme development is at an early stage. An initial list of projects within the Band B portfolio has been developed with the first project (Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Remodelling) business case being developed. Other project business cases are being developed and will be put forward to the Welsh Government for consideration.</p> <p>The assessment of Amber reflects the current level of delivery confidence in the programme’s eventual <i>outcomes</i>. At this early stage there remain some unknowns; some risks have not been fully quantified; the final project list requires approval, and; there is uncertainty over some, specific aspects of funding which requires resolution.</p> <p>The Review Team are keen to note that the Band B programme already has some significant strengths on which to build. The Council has retained the existing Band</p>	



A team, funding requirements have been evaluated carefully and work is under way to drive forward the Band B programme. Clear evidence was seen of the commitment of the council's senior executive and the Welsh Government to the Band B programme.

In addition to Band B, the programme team are also managing a number of other projects that are interlinked with Band B. Focus does need to be maintained on delivering Band B with the right number of resources to successfully secure the outcomes.

1.1 Delivery Confidence Assessment

The Delivery Confidence assessment RAG status should use the definitions below:

RAG	Criteria Description
Green	Successful delivery of the project to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery.
Amber/Green	Successful delivery appears probable. However, constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery.
Amber	Successful delivery appears feasible but significant issues already exist requiring management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage and, if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun.
Amber/Red	Successful delivery of the project is in doubt with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. Urgent action is needed to ensure these are addressed, and establish whether resolution is feasible.
Red	Successful delivery of the project appears to be unachievable. There are major issues which, at this stage, do not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The project may need re-baselining and/or overall viability re-assessed.

2.0 Summary of Report Recommendations

The Review Team makes the following recommendations, which are prioritised using the definitions below:

Ref. No.	Recommendation	Urgency (C/E/R)	Target date for completion	Classification
1.	The SRO should maintain management and team continuity from Band A into Band B.	C- Critical	24 th Dec 2019	10. Resource & Skills Management 10.2 Capacity Planning & Management
2.	Ensure a strong communications strategy to support delivery plans.	C- Critical	31 st Mar 2020	3. Programme and Project Management 3.6 Communications
3.	The SRO should continue to seek clarity on the revenue implications of a new Welsh Medium primary school in Blaenau Gwent.	E- Essential	31 st Oct 2019	1. Governance 1.3 Approvals

Critical (Do Now) – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome it is of the greatest importance that the programme should take action immediately.

Essential (Do By) – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome the programme/ project should take action in the near future.

Recommended – The programme should benefit from the uptake of this recommendation.



3.0 Comments from the SRO

The SRO presented to the Review team in a pre-meeting and requested that the Gateway Review focused on the following:

- A 'Programme' focus;
- Assess Band A progress – with a focus on closure; and,
- Assess preparedness for Band B.

The Blaenau Gwent team are pleased with the outcomes of the Gateway Review and accept the associated recommendations. The Review has been a totally valuable and worthwhile experience that will contribute to driving forward further improvement across the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme. The SRO would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Gateway Review team for their professionalism and the balanced approach that was taken throughout the review.

Blaenau Gwent's Education Transformation team will use the report's recommendations to produce a detailed action plan to cover the initial stages of the Band B Programme.



4.0 Background

The aims of the Programme:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (“the Council”) is committed to providing all children and young people with education and training, tailored to meet their needs, which will develop their potential, promote social inclusion and contribute to the economic regeneration of the area. Whilst progress has been made, there is a long way to go to improve outcomes for young people in relation to the ‘All Wales’ educational attainment and achievement levels. A fundamental review of the existing school estate is an essential component to transform education across the Authority. The vision is to improve pupil attainment and achievement levels through the transformation of schools and learning to meet modern 21st Century School standards.

The driving force for the Programme:

Improving standards pupil outcomes and wellbeing in Education is a Council priority. On many measures, current performance is above expected levels against similar Local Authorities and, in fact, in some measures Blaenau Gwent is performing significantly above expectations. However, the Council’s ambition is to exceed the all-Wales means in every measure going forward in line with National Reform, which includes the new measures currently going through a transition period.

The procurement/delivery status:

The Programme has multiple projects, delivered over successive tranches known as ‘Bands’. ‘Band A’ both refurbished existing school sites and delivered entirely new learning environments, with complementary transformative changes to school governance and leadership. This is substantially complete, following the opening to pupils in September 2019 of the final project, the Six Bells school site, a key component of the wider Abertillery Learning Community.

‘Band B’ encompasses the remodelling of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg, Blaenau Gwent’s sole existing Welsh Medium primary school; the remodelling of three existing secondary schools, and; the development of a new primary school, Glyncloed, in the Ebbw Vale locality. Band B is at an early stage. The Review Team found that activity was under way across multiple projects to, variously, secure Business Case sign-off, initiate Consultation exercises and conduct maintenance, condition and suitability assessments.



It should be noted that in addition to the projects formally in scope for Band A and Band B the Blaenau Gwent Education team seeks to deliver a number of further projects. Most of these are not in scope for this Review. However, a project to deliver a new Welsh Medium primary school in the Tredegar Valley, funded principally through a capital grant from the Welsh Government, is being managed as a *de facto* part of Band B and has therefore been considered by the Review team.

Current position regarding OGC Gateway™ Reviews:

This is the fourth Gateway Review of the Programme. The previous review (Gateway 0) was undertaken in July 2017. All recommendations from this previous Review have been completed.

A summary of recommendations, progress and status from the previous assurance review can be found in **Annex C**.

5.0 Purposes and conduct of the OGC Gateway Review

The primary purposes of an OGC Gateway Review 5: ‘Operations Review & Benefits Realisation’ are to assess whether the anticipated benefits are being delivered and confirm that the ongoing contractual arrangements meet the business need.

The primary purposes of a Gateway Review 0: ‘Strategic Assessment’ are to review the outcomes and objectives for the programme (and the way they fit together) and confirm that they make the necessary contribution to Ministers’ or the departments’ overall strategy.

Annex A gives the full purposes statement for an OGC Gateway Review 5 and an OGC Gateway Review 0.

Annex B lists the people who were interviewed during the review.

6.0 Acknowledgement

The Review Team would like to thank Lynn Phillips, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), the Programme Team and all stakeholders who attended interviews for their support and openness, which contributed to the Review Team’s understanding of the Programme and the outcome of this Review. Particular thanks go to Sharon Northall for managing the logistics for the Review and coordinating the interview process, and



to Stefan Roberts, specialist English-Welsh translator, who stepped in at short notice to support the Review Team in ensuring successful interviews for all stakeholders.

7.0 Scope of the Review

Against the background set out above, the scope of the review is two-fold. For Band A, a Gateway 5 - review of operating phase - was undertaken. For Band B, a Gate 0 – ongoing strategic assessment - was undertaken.

8.0 Review Team findings and recommendations

8.1: Gate 5: Review of operating phase

The Review Team found that, following the recent opening of the Six Bells site, all Band A projects are now complete and operating as planned. Band A represents a major achievement in the delivery of sometimes complex infrastructure projects. The Review Team considers that this is the outcome of a successful partnership between the Council, the Schools, the Welsh Government and appointed contractors, in which all parties have invested early and consistently. The Review Team commends the programme team for their enthusiasm, commitment and professionalism in delivery a challenging Band A programme.

The strength of the partnerships between the Council and other stakeholders allowed the programme team to manage potentially disruptive issues effectively, minimising the impact on outcomes for pupils and families. This was particularly well-evidenced at the Six Bells site, where the Council, Welsh Government and Morgan Sindall worked together in a way characterised by professional diligence, open communication and financial flexibility to overcome the late discovery of a sewerage main across the planned school footprint (not shown on incorrect, dated Welsh Water plans). An additional £1.5M of required funding was secured through discussion between the Council and Welsh Government; the Morgan Sindall team delivered viable alternative designs rapidly, and – critically – strong communication with community representatives was maintained throughout. As a result, Six Bells opened to pupils, as planned, at the start of the Autumn term 2019.

While Band A has had a large infrastructure component, the Council is clear that building and refurbishment work are *enablers* to improved learning and wider

outcomes for the young people of Blaenau Gwent, and the community of which they are part.

8.2: Gate 5: Business Case and benefits management

Prior to delivery of each of the projects, a business case with clearly identified benefits was submitted for approval to the Council executive and Welsh Government. The result of this was appropriate funding being secured for projects to commence.

A clear approach to benefits realisation and management was articulated for each project, and managed coherently at a programme and corporate level. With delivery of all of the projects in the Band A portfolio now completed, the Review Team have found that benefits realisation, ensuring Value for Money and continued monitoring of benefits is at the core of the Council's and programme team's scrutiny, with regular meetings and reports conducted.

Closure reports for each of the projects have been produced, with the exception of Six Bells Primary, which has only recently been occupied. This report is the only one left to produce. Each closure report contains statements on benefits achieved and the programme team are collating ongoing benefits realised through delivery of the projects. The Review Team found that the delivery of community benefits has been at the heart of the programme and the subsequent projects delivered.

8.3: Gate 5: Plans for ongoing improvements in value for money, performance and innovation

The programme team is well-versed not just in monitoring benefits but in consistently reviewing activity and seeking opportunities for improvement. The Education team lead co-ordinates the South East Wales Education Group to share best practice and regularly works with Welsh Government to pilot new initiatives and attend all-Wales Education fora.

As a Council under austerity, the focus is very much on delivering Value for Money and using innovative measures in projects and making improvements to do so. It is clear to the Review Team that this approach underpins everything the Council undertakes and that this will continue into the Band B projects. Quite simply, if a project was forecast not to meet the strategic objectives, not to deliver value for money or not to secure expected benefits, this experienced programme team would not take it forward.



For each of the projects delivered in Band A, governance and monitoring is in place for continued improvements to be made. The Council has transitioned ownership of continuous improvement to local school leadership teams, who are proactive in generating ideas for future utilisation and improvement.

8.4: Gate 0: Policy and business context

The Vision for Education puts schools at the centre of the improvement plans, setting ambitious plans for an outward-looking, self-improving system, building a joint, shared vision, core values and principles. The successful delivery of Band A projects provides valuable lessons learnt to support Band B delivery.

The Education team demonstrate a strong commitment to the programme and clear understanding of the task ahead. They have developed consultation plans to focus on the delivery of the Welsh Medium provision, which whilst outside the formal scope of Band B is a key aspect of the Vision for Education. To support this, the team have already built strong links with the key stakeholder groups.

In terms of the proposed secondary school remodelling proposals, the team are liaising with Head Teachers, many of whom are new to their schools. Their focus is to understand the school vision and identify how best to allocate the resources available to provide solutions which will meet the school aspirations within available budgets.

The current programme team have been integral to the success of Band A. The Review Team note that the programme team is continuing into Band B and judge that this will help to set Band B for success.

The Review Team support the planned creation of a new post to supplement existing programme team resources, in recognition of the multiple, interlinking programmes and projects which are supporting the wider improvements in education delivery.

Recommendation - The SRO should maintain management and team continuity from Band A into Band B.

8.5: Gate 0: Business Case and stakeholders



The Council is at an early stage in the Band B programme, having identified a range of projects within the allocated budget forecast of £19.6m. These include a new build primary, Glyncoed, in the Ebbw Vale area and remodelling of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg and the three secondary schools. The provision of a Welsh Medium primary school, which as noted above is not within the Band B programme but clearly impacts Band B plans as it will be managed by the same team, will be delivered through a full capital cost grant of circa £6m from Welsh Government.

The Council has not yet developed any detailed business cases to identify the project specifics. The Education team have, however, identified the key stakeholders and are building relationships to ensure that the solutions will have the necessary support and deliver to the aspirations of the individual schools.

It is important to also recognise the importance of community engagement to build trust and overcome potential barriers. Communications plans must include both the schools and the wider communities they support in order to maximise the benefits of the proposed investments.

Recommendation - Ensure a strong communications strategy to support delivery plans.

8.6: Gate 0: Readiness for the next phase

The Council has a clear strategic vision for Band B, has identified several projects and has secured capital funding to support delivery of all projects formally in scope. The Council has an effective delivery team, who have demonstrated their capability to deliver through the Band A programme and to improve for the future using lessons learned from the Band A projects.

The Council has recently issued a statement about the revenue implications of the new Welsh Medium primary school provision and is working to clarify the situation with Welsh Government and other stakeholders. The Review Team note that such revenue challenges are not unique to Blaenau Gwent and have been experienced by other local authorities.

Recommendation – The SRO should continue to seek clarity on the revenue implications of a new Welsh Medium primary school in Blaenau Gwent.

9.0 Next Assurance Review

OFFICIAL COMMERCIAL
OGC Gateway™ Review 5:
Operations Review & Benefits Realisation
Project Title: AH/19/35



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

It is recommended that a further Gate 0 on projects in scope for Band B (including any projects managed de facto as part of Band B) be scheduled in Spring term 2021, by which time near-term projects should be substantially advanced and uncertainty removed from longer-term projects.

ANNEX A

OFFICIAL COMMERCIAL

Page 12 of 16

[Version 2.1 \(2018\)](#)

© Crown Copyright 2016

This report is an evidence-based snapshot of the project's status at the time of the review. It reflects the views of the independent review team, based on information evaluated over the review period, and is delivered to the SRO immediately at the conclusion of the review.



Purposes of OGC Gateway™ Review 5: Operations review & benefits realisation

- Assess whether the Business Case justification for the project at OGC Gateway Review 3: Investment decision was realistic.
- Confirm that there is still a business need for the investment
- Assess whether the benefits anticipated at this stage are actually being delivered.
- Assess the effectiveness of the ongoing contract management processes.
- Confirm that the client side continues to have the necessary resources to manage the contract successfully.
- Confirm continuity of key personnel involved in contract management/'intelligent customer' roles.
- Where changes have been agreed, check that they do not compromise the original delivery strategy.
- Assess the ongoing requirement for the contract to meet business need. Ensure that if circumstances have changed, the service delivery and contract are adapting to the new situation. Changing circumstances could affect: partner management; relationship management; service management; change management; contract management; benefits management; performance management.
- Check that there is ongoing contract development to improve value for money.
- Confirm that there are plans to manage the contract to its conclusion.
- Where applicable, confirm the validity of exit strategy and arrangements for re-competition.

Purposes of the OGC Gateway Review 0: Strategic assessment:

OFFICIAL COMMERCIAL
OGC Gateway™ Review 5:
Operations Review & Benefits Realisation
Project Title: AH/19/35



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

- Review the outcomes and objectives for the programme (and the way they fit together) and confirm that they make the necessary contribution to overall strategy of the organisation and its senior management.
- Ensure that the programme is supported by key stakeholders.
- Confirm that the programme's potential to succeed has been considered in the wider context of Government policy and procurement objectives, the organisation's delivery plans and change programmes, and any interdependencies with other programmes or projects in the organisation's portfolio and, where relevant, those of other organisations.
- Review the arrangements for leading, managing and monitoring the programme as a whole and the links to individual parts of it (e.g. to any existing projects in the programme's portfolio).
- Review the arrangements for identifying and managing the main programme risks (and the individual project risks), including external risks such as changing business priorities.
- Check that provision for financial and other resources has been made for the programme (initially identified at programme initiation and committed later) and that plans for the work to be done through to the next stage are realistic, properly resourced with sufficient people of appropriate experience, and authorised.
- After the initial Review, check progress against plans and the expected achievement of outcomes.
- Check that there is engagement with the market as appropriate on the feasibility of achieving the required outcome.
- Where relevant, check that the programme takes account of joining up with other programmes, internal and external.
- Evaluation of actions to implement recommendations made in any earlier assessment of deliverability.

OFFICIAL COMMERCIAL

Page 14 of 16

[Version 2.1 \(2018\)](#)

© Crown Copyright 2016

This report is an evidence-based snapshot of the project's status at the time of the review. It reflects the views of the independent review team, based on information evaluated over the review period, and is delivered to the SRO immediately at the conclusion of the review.



ANNEX B

List of Interviewees

The following stakeholders were interviewed during the review:

Interviewees:

Name	Organisation and role
Lynn Phillips	Head of Education Transformation and Performance / SRO
Lynette Jones	Corporate Director for Education
Claire Gardner	Education Transformation Manager / Programme Manager
Joanne Watts	Principal Capital Accountant
Martin Woodland	BGCBC Solicitor Commercial Services Programme Board Number
Ann Toghil	Head teacher, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg
Cath Barnard	Shared Resource Services Education Service Manager
Michael Pyatt	Morgan Sindall – Project manager Six Bells
Sharon Northall	21 st Century Schools Officer / Business Change Manager
Mike Price	Property Services Manager
Councillor Joanne Collins	Executive Member for Education
Dave Robinson	Architectural Projects Manager
Marie Lewis	ALC Former Head of Campus Queen Street and Bryngwyn Road
Louisa Tudge	ALC Former Head of Campus Queen Street and Bryngwyn Road
Kathryn Massey	Head of Capital Funding, Education and Public Services, Welsh Government



ANNEX C

Progress against previous assurance review (17th to 19th of July 2017) recommendations:

Recommendation	Progress/Status
The SRO is to engage with the Welsh Government to confirm the re-profiling of finances.	Completed: approval letter received from Welsh Government. Further re-profiling was undertaken successfully over 2018/19.
Review and update the risk register to include action owners and target closure dates and update the issue register with issue owners and target resolution date.	Termly Programme Risk Workshops have taken place throughout 2018/19, along with bi-monthly risk reviews.
The SRO is to ensure that cost control is maintained and value engineering is carried out where required.	Programme spend is monitored on a monthly basis. £150,000 additional funding was secured by a variation request, to address cost pressures on the Six Bells contract, in line with inflationary costs of materials, which impacted upon the value engineering target.
The SRO is to take measures to secure programme staff and maintain management continuity between Band A and a future Band B programme.	Existing staff have been secured, and approval has been granted by Education Department Management Team (DMT), to secure an additional member of staff in line with Project Management.

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

SYSTEMS AUDIT – 21st CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

1. INTRODUCTION/OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. The objective of the Audit was to conduct a review of the systems in place, report upon the soundness and adequacy of the internal controls, and ensure compliance with any relevant statutory requirements and regulations in line with the Audit Plan for 2019/20.
- 1.2. This report includes an Audit Opinion and a Risk Rating Category, further details of which are contained in Appendix A.

2. SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

- 2.1. The scope of the audit was to determine the effectiveness of the internal control procedures within the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Authority's 21st Century Schools Programme and the Projects contained therein.
- 2.2. The audit involved confirming the current system with relevant staff and conducting 'walk through tests' on the processes carried out within the service.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The 21st Century Schools programme is a long term strategic investment in Wales' educational estate. It is a collaboration between Welsh Government, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), local authorities, colleges and dioceses. It included a £1.4 billion investment in education throughout all 22 Local Authority areas in Wales, resulting in the rebuild and refurbishment of over 150 schools and colleges, which have been prioritised by the delivery partners.
- 3.2. The delivery of the first investment phase (Band A) continued until March 2019 and focused on:
 - reduction of poor condition school buildings;
 - provision of the right number of places, in the right places to serve local pupil demand by reducing surplus capacity, and addressing specific Welsh-medium and Faith-based provision needs;
 - reduction of running costs so as to maximise resources available to target improvements to learner outcomes; and,
 - promoting sustainability through reducing recurrent costs, energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- 3.3. The delivery of the second investment phase (Band B) commenced in April 2019 and it focuses on:
 - addressing growth in demand for Welsh-medium education;
 - reducing surplus capacity and inefficiency in the system;
 - expansion of schools and colleges in areas of increased demand for educational services;
 - addressing condition of educational assets; and,
 - making assets available for community use where demand exists, to optimise the infrastructure and resources for public services.

- 3.4. The Council's Education Transformation Team delivers the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Education Capital Programme on behalf of the Authority. A number of Blaenau Gwent's key projects were commenced within Band A of the Programme, including:
- Tredegar Comprehensive School remodelling project;
 - Abertillery Primary School new build; and,
 - Six Bells Primary School new build.

4. AUDIT FINDINGS & WEAKNESSES

- 4.1. The findings and weaknesses below are in order of risk, with the first being the highest risk area.
- 4.2. In order to satisfy Welsh Government's (WG) application requirements in respect of the 21st Century Schools Programme a Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) is required providing an overview of the future education provision within the Borough and identifying projects for investment. A copy of the SOP compiled by the Authority was obtained during the audit and it was evident that it contained the information as required by WG, however it was not possible to determine the date that the SOP was submitted to WG, and therefore it was not possible to determine compliance with the applicable timescales.
- 4.3. As part of WG's application process for individual investment projects it was evident that business case documentation was required to be submitted, satisfying a number of criteria that were stipulated within published guidance. A sample of applications submitted by the Authority was selected during the audit, with the associated documentation assessed. It was evident that the business case documentation submitted by the Authority contained relevant cases to support the application; however, it was not evident that one of the documents obtained during the audit had been signed by senior management to certify approval prior to submission.

5. RISKS AND AGREED ACTIONS

Ref	Summary of Findings	Risk	Agreed Action	Client Management Comments	Person Responsible and Target Date
4.2.	It was not possible to determine the date that the SOP was submitted to WG, and therefore it was not possible to determine compliance with the applicable timescales.	Medium – Unable to verify that WG submission deadlines have been satisfied.	Evidence of submissions to WG will be retained and stored centrally where applicable.		Head of Education Transformation. Ongoing.
4.3.	It was not evident that the business case documentation obtained during the audit had been signed by senior management to certify approval prior to submission.	Medium – Lack of identification of senior accountable officer for submission. Lack of confirmation that the version submitted has been approved by senior management.	Evidence of submissions to WG will be retained and stored centrally where applicable.		Head of Education Transformation. Ongoing.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1. This audit report is compiled on an exception basis, thus the only points made are where weaknesses have been identified. The samples chosen would not be able to cover every transaction or eventuality; therefore reliance is placed in part on the information and explanations provided by the appropriate officers.

7. INTERNAL CONTROL STANDARD GRADING

- | |
|--|
| <p>7.1. In accordance with the standard gradings set out in Appendix A, systems examined indicate that the internal controls used within the 21st Century Schools Programme appear to be operating effectively. The grading is therefore assessed as ‘Reasonable Assurance’.</p> |
|--|

INTERNAL AUDIT SUMMARY REPORT

SYSTEMS AUDIT – 21st CENTURY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This audit was carried out in line with the Internal Audit Plan 2019/20, and in full consultation with operational staff and management.
- 1.2. The scope of the audit was to determine the effectiveness of the internal controls within the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Authority's 21st Century Schools Programme and the Projects contained therein.
- 1.3. The audit was conducted by the Senior Auditor and took the form of a series of detailed tests and checks, together with discussions with operational staff and managers.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1. Two weaknesses were identified, both of which were classified as Medium Risk. The weaknesses were:
 - It was not possible to determine the date that the Strategic Outline Programme was submitted to Welsh Government (WG), and therefore it was not possible to determine compliance with the applicable timescales.
Agreed action – Evidence of submissions to WG will be retained and stored centrally where applicable.
 - It was not evident that the business case documentation obtained during the audit had been signed by senior management to certify approval prior to submission.
Agreed action – Evidence of submissions to WG will be retained and stored centrally where applicable.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. After reviewing all documentation and the current system, it was found that the internal controls used within the 21st Century Schools Programme appear to be operating effectively.
- 3.2. The Head of Education Transformation has agreed to mitigating actions for each of the weaknesses identified.

4. INTERNAL CONTROL STANDARD GRADING

- 4.1. In accordance with the standard gradings, the systems examined indicate that internal controls within the 21st Century Schools Programme appear to be operating effectively. The grading is therefore assessed as **'Reasonable Assurance'**.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX A

INTERNAL CONTROL CLASSIFICATION.

The Internal control classifications are as follows: -

<u>Category</u>	<u>Classification</u>
Full Assurance	Minimal or no risks identified with controls operating as expected or a few areas identified where changes would be beneficial.
Reasonable Assurance	Controls appear to be operating effectively however a few weaknesses have been identified that requires systems to be strengthened.
Limited Assurance	A significant weakness or a number of weaknesses have been identified within internal controls, resulting in an increased risk to the Authority.
No Assurance	Unacceptable risks identified; with fundamental improvements required.

RISK RATING CATEGORIES.

The Risk Rating classifications are as follows: -

<u>Category</u>	<u>Suggested Indicators</u>
High	Action that is considered significant and ensures the Authority and the service is not exposed to considerable risks.
Medium	Action that is considered necessary to avoid exposure to risks.
Low	Action that is less significant to the overall risks of the Authority but will result in enhanced control to the service.

This page is intentionally left blank

Projects	Timeline/ Milestones
	Welsh Medium Grant Project
New Welsh-medium Primary (Welsh Medium Capital Grant)	Business case: Submitted and approved Formal consultation: Concluded Statutory notice period: Concluded Site investigation: Spring 2021 ongoing Project brief: Spring/Summer 2021 Tender document preparation and detailed design: Autumn 2021/Spring 2022 Pre-planning consultation: Autumn 2021 Planning: Spring 2022 (potential timeframe - 6 months) Out to tender: Summer 2022 Contractor appointment: Autumn 2022 Commencement: Late Autumn 2022 (14-month contract) Conclusion: Autumn 2023 Occupation: Autumn 2023
	Band B – Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Remodelling Project
Welsh-medium Remodelling Project (Band B)	Business Case: Submitted and approved Tender document preparation/ detailed design work: Autum 2020/Spring 2021 Out to tender: Summer 2021 (internal) and Autumn 2021 (external) Contractor appointment: Summer 2021 (internal) and Spring 2022 (external) Commencement (internal works): Summer/Autumn 2021 Commencement (external works): Spring 2022 (6weeks) Conclusion: Spring/Summer 2022
	Band B – Band B Ebbw Fawr Valley Primary Redevelopment Projects
New Build Glyncoed Primary School (Band B)	Business case: Submitted and approved Project brief: Autumn-term 2020 Glyncoed Site investigations commencement: Spring 2020 Tender document preparation/ detailed design work: Summer 2021 Pre-planning consultation: April/May 2021 Planning submission: Autumn 2021 (potential timeframe - 6 months) Out to tender: Spring 2022 (6 - 8 weeks) Evaluation: Spring 2022 Contractor appointment: Summer 2022 Commencement: Summer 2022 (17-month construction period) Conclusion: Autumn 2023 Occupation: Autumn 2023
Rhos y Fedwen Primary School Remodelling (Band B)	Business case: Submitted and approved Site investigations: Summer 2021 Project brief: Summer 2021 Tender document preparation/detailed design work: Spring 2022 Building regulation/planning applications to be submitted: Spring/Summer 2022 Out to tender: Summer 2022 Evaluation: Summer 2022 Contractor appointment: Autumn 2022 Commencement: Autumn 2022 (12-months contract period) Conclusion: Summer 2023
Primary School Re-modelling:	Business case: Submitted and approved Project brief: Autumn 2022

Cwm & Beaufort Hill Primary Schools (Band B)	Tender document preparation/detailed design work: Spring 2023 Out to tender: Autumn 2023 Contractor appointment: Autumn 2023/Spring 2024 Commencement: Spring 2024 (depending on scope of work) Conclusion: September 2025
	Band B – Band B Secondary School Remodelling Projects
Brynmawr Foundation School (Band B)	Detailed options appraisal in consideration of site suitability and constraints: Spring 2022 Business Justification Case: Summer 2022 Tender document preparation/ detailed design work: Summer /Autumn 2022 Out to tender: Spring 2023 Contractor appointment: Summer 2023 Commencement: Autumn 2023 Conclusion: TBD dependent on the option taken forward
The River Centre – Secondary Campus (Band B)	Business Justification Case: Spring 2022 Tender document preparation/ detailed design work: Spring 2022 Out to tender: Autumn 2022 (4-6 weeks) Contractor appointment: Autumn 2022 Commencement: Spring 2023 (1-year construction period per/project) Conclusion: Autumn 2024
ALC-Secondary Campus (Band B)	Business Justification Case: Autumn 2022 Tender document preparation/ detailed design work: Spring 2023 Out to tender: Summer 2023 (4-6 weeks) Contractor appointment: Autumn 2023 Commencement: Spring 2024 (1-year construction period per/project) Conclusion: Autumn 2025
Tredegar Comprehensive School (Band B)	Business Justification Case: Autumn 2022 Tender document preparation/ detailed design work: Spring 2023 Out to tender: Summer 2023 (4-6 weeks) Contractor appointment: Autumn 2023 Commencement: Spring 2024 (1-year construction period per/project) Conclusion: Autumn 2025

21st Century Schools and Education Programme - Band B Funding Forecast

Organisation Name:				Total Funding			
Project Name	Proposed Capacity	Education Level	Education Medium Type	Self Funded Element	Welsh Government Support	Total	WG Grant %
Band B							
Ysgol Bro Helyg	258	Primary	Welsh	350,000	650,000	1,000,000	0.65
Ebbw Fawr New Build/Primary School Redevelopment	971	Primary	English/Welsh	3,150,000	5,850,000	9,000,000	0.65
Secondary School Remodelling	tbc	Secondary	English	3,360,000	6,240,000	9,600,000	0.65
				-	-	-	
Childcare Offer							
Blaina ICC	tbc	Pre School	English		1,250,000	1,250,000	1
Glyncoed new setting	60	Pre School	English		1,500,000	1,500,000	1
Six Bells new setting	60	Pre School	English		8,777	8,777	1
Small Grant Scheme	tbc	Pre School	English		122,000	122,000	
Swffryd Flying Start	tbc	Pre School	English	-	748,239	748,239	1
Dynmawr Childcare	tbc	Pre School	English		491,233	491,233	
Welsh Medium Provision - Band B Seedling School & New Build WM	tbc	Pre School	Welsh	-	200,000	200,000	1
				-	-	-	
Welsh Medium							
Band B Seedling School & New Build WM	210	Primary	Welsh	-	8,200,000	8,200,000	1
				6,860,000	25,260,249	#####	
				£0.21	78.64%		

Page 357

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 17

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**

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,**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
09.12.21	23.12.21	15.02.22			26.01.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Executive Committee with the updated Recovery and Renewal Action Plan (Appendix 3), and the updated One Page Overview (Appendix 4), which address the Education Directorate's identified priorities for recovery and renewal, as part of the corporate response to the COVID-19 situation.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Members 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 re-purposing 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 continues to be a working document, which outlines how the Council will continue to support schools, both during and beyond the pandemic. The One Page Overview has been updated to reflect the key recovery indicator. Changes to the documents have been highlighted in yellow for ease of reference. 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.
 - **Childcare** - After school and pre-school provision which has been reduced and/or is not available due to COVID restrictions. Rhythm of School Day is a Welsh Government scheme that schools have been invited to express an interest in being part of. The scheme supports extra-curriculum activities either before or after school, with a focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills.
 - **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. Changes to statutory functions and regulations which affect school operation e.g. school admissions. ICT infrastructure and devices. 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. 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. 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 Improvement Partners formerly known as Challenge Advisors, were not able to hold schools to account and school data monitoring suspended. Estyn 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.
- **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** - 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. The relationship between the Council and its schools is stronger than ever before. Our aim is to create a shared purpose and associated plan to address key priorities for the future of Education within Blaenau Gwent. The shared purpose is framed on 'Better Schools, Better Citizens and Better Communities'.

2.6 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:

- 2.7 *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.*

2.8 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 using the experience of the pandemic to shape education provision as we move forward.

2.9 Next Steps and Progress

- Impact assessment completed.
- Key measures to indicate progress identified (**Appendix 4**).
- Baseline and data collection on key measures, from 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 monthly.
- Curriculum Reform and Recovery and Renewal groups set up from September 2021 and now working effectively 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:
 - Shared and discussed with the Youth Service October 2021
 - Shared and discussed with headteachers October 2021, November 2021 and December 2021
- A Headteacher working group has been set up with 6 schools, starting January 2022. Recovery and Renewal, and the theme of 'building back better' will be a key part of the work of this group.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 This report has been discussed by Education DMT, CLT and Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee.

- **Option 1** – The Executive Committee accepts the report, associated documentation and proposed course of action.
- **Option 2** – the Executive Committee do not accept the report and seek further clarification 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 **EqlA**

The application of EqlA's to each priority has been considered as part of the Education impact assessment process. EqlA's will be undertaken in line with development and implementation of the recovery and renewal plan.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The report will be presented to the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee and then subsequently through to 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

This page is intentionally left blank

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. 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>	Working with Finance and Insurance colleagues to undertake an impact assessment, in order to inform future planning.	
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>	Work with the EAS to review current practice for governance and school leadership.	Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
Poverty	Red	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.	Working with Finance and Benefits colleagues to undertake an impact assessment, in order to inform future planning.	Service Manager ET and BC/ Head of School Improvement and Inclusion
School community	Red	Limited face to face contact and the shift to online engagement has challenged communication and relationships.	Provide support for individual schools to address barriers to parent engagement in partnership with the EAS.	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	
--	--	--	--	--

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

RECOVERY AND RENEWAL
BLAENAU GWENT ACTION PLAN Summer 2021 – Summer 2022

Priority 1: Learner and staff Wellbeing

Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Termly Updates
HoSIaI and SMETBC	<p>Undertake stakeholder engagement to facilitate learning from experience, and renewal of practice.</p> <p><u>Stakeholder Recovery and Renewal Group</u></p> <p>Monthly engagement with primary and secondary headteachers to shape support for recovery and renewal</p>	Monthly meetings	July 2021 - ongoing	All stakeholders engaged, represented and informed	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive as part of FWP.	Meetings continue to take place on a monthly basis, with September's session having to be re-arranged to accommodate partners, next meeting October
	<p><u>Focus Groups</u></p>	As required (led by education)	June 2021 January 2022 (6 months pending review) – ongoing	All stakeholders engaged, represented and informed	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive as part of FWP.	<p>The following meetings have taken place to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to schools – September • Risk Assessments and Operational Guidance • Track and Trace Processes • Breakfast Club • Cyber Security

	<p><u>Headteacher Working Groups</u> A headteacher working group inclusive of primary, special, secondary and all through settings (from January 2022), to look at 3 key strands of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALN reform • Curriculum reform • Renewal 	Fortnightly meetings. Each school will be given £2,500 to support with any cover arrangements or other potential costs associated with engagement	January 2022 for two terms initially	Blaenau Gwent approach to these key areas of work, accompanied by a development plan and reported via the Council's political processes.	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	Recruitment and selection of school representatives has taken place
HoSlal	<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>	Meetings with all relevant stakeholders	October - ongoing	Schools have provision in place to support learner's wellbeing	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	Next meeting with Caroline Friend re: TIS in September
HoSlal and SMETBC	<p><u>Further develop partnership working and re-establish pre-Covid referral systems and interventions</u> e.g. healthy schools, Post-16 partnership, youth</p>	Attendance at relevant meetings	July 2021 - onwards	Partnership working developed to support pupil wellbeing across all educational	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive. Share good practice across EAS.	<p>Joint planning with healthy schools to provide training for schools on respect and tolerance</p> <p>Work has been undertaken with the Policy and Partnerships team to undertake an Equality Action</p>

	service, education transformation, social services			settings. Develop cross partnership BG agreed ways of working		Plan review on a school by school basis
Priority 2: Vulnerable Learners						
Responsibility	Action	Resources (Specific no. of days/costs)	Timescale (Start/End)	Success Criteria	Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for actions (date)	Termly 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. 1,359 devices and 161 Mi-Fi units have been distributed to date. Schools will be required to fund any renewal/additional licences and connectivity from January 2022.
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 approximately 2,500 pupils eligible for direct payments, 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 – ongoing	Pilot in place, with aim to reintroduce BC	Review of BC provision with schools	Breakfast club was re-introduced during the Autumn Term for existing registrants only. The provision is subject to regular review.

SMETBC	<u>Proposal to increase capacity of Pen y Cwm has been approved by Executive Committee, and first phase completed. Second phase to be completed by next Autumn term</u>	Consultation process, meetings with architects, school 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 are complete. Phase 2 works are in development, with the design process underway. In addition, the long-term planning process has been initiated in partnership with Planning, Estates and Technical Services etc.
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. There is a meeting January 2022 to re-launch the ALN Service/offer – now called the Outreach Service
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 2021 A proposal has been put to School Budget Forum – November 2021
HoSlal	<u>Review of Inclusion Service /ALN Reform</u>	Meetings with all relevant stakeholders	September 21 – August 22	Inclusion service able to meet needs of ALN Bill	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	As above re: service review. Now within implementation phase statutory as of January 2022. Ongoing work with Tredgar Comprehensive School to support

HoSlal and Lisa Adams	<u>Review of EHE Policy and practices</u>	Meetings with relevant stakeholders. Support from Tredegar Comp	June 21 – August 22	Updated Policy to meet needs of EHE learners	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	schools with statutory changes and legislation Policy in place and shared with schools
SMETBC/HoSlal	<u>Intimate Care Needs Policy – review Policy</u>	Meetings with relevant stakeholders.	January 2022 onwards	Updated policy	Report to DMT/CLT and Scrutiny/Executive	Initial planning meetings have been undertaken, with the formal review process set to commence in January 2022.
SMETBC	<u>Accessibility Strategy</u>	Time to review policy/strategy	July 21 – Spring/Summer 22	Policy and strategy updated	Monthly monitoring in place, via Accessibility Action plan	Updated timeline and action plan have been taken via the Council's political processes. The review process has commenced, along with the development of the tender documents aligned to detailed accessibility audits of each school.
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		Training for all schools set up for October 20 th 2021. Individual support for schools since November 2021

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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 This will be a key focus of the Headteacher Group from January 2022
HoSlal	<u>Partnership work with the EAS to broker support in line with the EAS Business Plan.</u>	Time for meetings	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 update meetings with HoSlal and Principle Challenge Advisor Meeting planned February 2022 to discuss the MER Cycle with all School Improvement leads across the SEWC region
	Co-construction of MER cycle to hold EAS to account for services provided to BG schools	Time for meetings	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	
	Fortnightly meetings with PCA to monitor MER cycle and share information about schools	Time for meetings and visits				

HoSIal and SMETBC , Richard Crook's team	<p><u>Engagement with STEM</u></p> <p>Increase opportunities for STEM links across BG schools</p> <p>Work with Regeneration on the STEM activity</p>	Staff resource and funding	Ongoing	Increased engagement with STEM in schools.	Monthly monitoring via project groups	Ystruth Primary School are engaging with the STEM Powered Learning Project on behalf of the Brynmawr Cluster
HoSIal and SMETBC	Promote 5G classroom across BG schools					The ET team are now engaged within the project group, and have led on school planning and participation. Education are presently working on the recruitment of a new staff member, to develop and oversee school engagement, training and content creation.
HoSIal and SMETBC	<p><u>Develop a LA blended learning best practice policy</u></p> <p>Work with the EAS to review current practice for governance and school leadership in current context, to inform future ways of supporting leadership</p>					
HoSIal and SMETBC	Review of support for families accessing Welsh		2020 – 2022			

HoSIal and SMETBC	Medium Education working with WG, schools and securing alignment with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Work with the Policy and Performance team to create Parent Engagement Survey – to inform the Blended Learning Approach, and to develop engagement/training	Education, WG and the WEF	January 2022	Draft WESP submitted wot Welsh Ministers January 2022	Monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis	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 The BG WESP has been drafted and is currently out to consultation. Education had been successful in securing funding via the WG Immersion Grant, to support the development of latecomer provision. In addition, an EOI has been submitted for the WG Welsh Medium Capital Grant. Initial planning meetings have taken place, in order to explore data-based requirements and plan engagement opportunities. This work will be further developed during the Spring-term 2022.
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
HoSIal and SMETBC	<u>Survey of schools to identify where training is not up to date e.g. Safeguarding, first aid and Health and Safety</u>	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. Ongoing work with H&S to plan and monitor H&S and FRA

	<p>Engagement sessions with schools – new protocols in place to support schools to manage positive cases</p> <p>All schools have emergency contact information to support escalation procedures i.e. move to blended learning</p> <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> <p>Review Home to School Transport Policy and established working group to address complex applications and policy and practices</p> <p>Monitoring group established around national shortage of drivers – target to address capacity issues as</p>	<p>Education, Environmental Health, TTP and schools</p> <p>Education, Environmental Health and schools</p> <p>H&S, Education and Environmental Health</p> <p>Education and Community Services</p> <p>Education and Community Services</p>	<p>September 2021 – ongoing (monitored fortnightly)</p> <p>July 2021 – ongoing</p> <p>July 2021 – ongoing</p> <p>July 2021 - ongoing</p> <p>September 2020 – ongoing</p>	<p>Early identification and monitoring of positive cases</p> <p>Schools are able to effectively respond to case escalation</p> <p>Schools operate safely with sufficient measures and controls in place</p> <p>All eligible pupils and students have access to transport</p> <p>Transport solutions are agreed where issues are</p>	<p>Daily monitoring undertaken and reported via Education to all relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Daily monitoring undertaken and reported via Education to all relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Daily monitoring between Education, H&S, Environmental Health and Schools</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring</p>	<p>inspections, along with associated training. Ongoing engagement sessions, guidance and support for schools is in place.</p> <p>New process and guidance in place. Daily support is provided via Education and Environmental Health. Comms and guidance in place</p> <p>This is monitored daily. All schools have up to date risk assessments in place, which are frequently reviewed in line with the latest PHW and WG guidance etc. A school planning meeting took place w/c 13.12.21, with another planned for 4.1.22.</p> <p>2022/23 Policy review complete. Transport is subject to weekly monitoring processes in line with compliance, recent strike actions and provider/driver shortages. Fortnightly meetings are in place to review complex case requests for transport. A procedural review is underway and will be completed during the first part of the Spring Term 2022, along with a full service review</p>
--	---	---	--	---	--	--

	a result of COVID and resource based issues with transport			identified. Meaning all pupils have access to education, without their transport needs presenting a barrier		Transport contingency plans are in place and being monitored.
	Fire Risk Assessment Review process in place	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 and are ongoing
	Facilities Action Planning with individual schools re-established	H&S and Education	October – December 2021	All schools have up to date Facilities Action Plans	Monthly monitoring is in place	All school action plans are up to date, and works programmed for completion in order of priority.
	Minor works and maintenance programme	Community Services and Education	Ongoing	All programmed minor works are completed	Monthly monitoring is in place	The Summer and Autumn works programmes have successfully been completed, with a plan for Spring 2022 in place.

Education Recovery Plan – Overview

All schools, education providers and support services are fully operational, with children and young people able to access a full range of provision and services both school and community based, in order to meet their: Educational; Social; Emotional; Behavioural; and Other relevant needs.

Blaenau Gwent children and young people are able to effectively transition from one stage of their education to another, with wellbeing as a primary focus, supporting them to achieve their potential.

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:

- **Learner and staff Wellbeing**
- **Vulnerable Learners**
- **Academic Progress**
- **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

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:

Priority Area	PI	18/19	19/20	20/21	Target (when will we know we have recovered)?
Learner Wellbeing	Applications – Nursery	693	696	714	Applications are the same level or higher

					than pre-Covid levels. EHE numbers are the same or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Applications – Primary	739	731	701	Applications are the same level or higher than pre-Covid levels. EHE numbers are the same or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Applications – Secondary	677	679	696	Applications are the same level or higher than pre-Covid levels. EHE numbers are the same or lower than pre-Covid levels.
		July 2019	July 2020	July 2021	
	Attendance – Primary	94.4	93.5	90.7	Attendance levels are consistently in line with or higher than Wales average.
	Attendance Secondary	93.3	91.7	84.8	Attendance levels are consistently in line with or higher than Wales average.
		April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April 21 - September 2021	
	Exclusions Primary	108	25	17	Exclusions are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.

	Exclusions Secondary	459	135	183	Exclusions are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Average Number of Primary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	9.8	3.6	3.4	Exclusions are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Average Number of Secondary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	41.7	19.3	36.6	Exclusions are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.
		2019	2020	2021	
Vulnerable Learners	Entitlement to FSM/Transitionally Protected (%)	21.1	24.6	30.4	FSM numbers are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels. This may take some time to show recovery due to entitlement being protected.
		April 19 - March 20	April 20 - March 21	April 21 - September 2021	
	Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16)	2382	2260	1702	Referrals to social services are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Average Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16) per month (no. of months in brackets)	198.5 (12)	188.3 (12)	283.7 (6)	Referrals to social services are in line with or lower than pre-Covid levels.
	Digital Disadvantage	0	1,359 pupils with devices 161 pupils with MiFi Dongles	Under review	Need for blended learning is greatly reduced, meaning that schools have very few or no requests for devices of MiFi dongles.

Academic Progress

	2021				2020				2019			
	Capped 9	Literacy	Numeracy	Best Science	Capped 9	Literacy	Numeracy	Best Science	Capped 9	Literacy	Numeracy	Best Science
School 1	335.9	32.6	35.1	32.7	355.9	36.1	36.6	32.2	341	35	33	27
School 2	377.0	41.0	32.0	38.0	375.7	41.0	35.0	36.4	349	38	31	28
School 3	369.0	40.4	39.1	40.6	378.0	39.3	37.2	38.2	340	37	35	36
School 4	373.5	41.5	39.5	36.2	358.3	39.9	37.5	36.4	362	39	36	36

Improvement in performance from previous year.

Decline in performance from previous year.

Agenda Item 18

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Corporate Director of Education Services
Spring and Summer Terms Report 2021**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Jo 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)
09.12.21	23.12.21	15.02.22			26.01.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the Corporate Director of Education's Spring and Summer Terms Report (2021), which is attached as Appendix 1.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 It is a statutory responsibility of the Corporate Director of Education to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of Education and produce updates for Members that forms part of the Annual Council Reporting Framework. The provision of Education is regulated under the Estyn Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework and this report will complement the Directorate's self-evaluation arrangements.
- 2.2 This is the first time that the Education Directorate has produced such a report, and moving forward, it is intended to bring annual reports to Members in the Autumn term in line with performance within the previous academic year.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 The report has been considered by Education's DMT, Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 **Option 1**
Executive Committee are asked to accept the information detailed within the Corporate Director of Education's Spring/Summer terms 2021 report and contribute to the continuous self-assessment of effectiveness.
- 3.3 **Option 2**
Do not 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 It is a statutory responsibility of the Corporate Director of Education to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of Education and an annual report will be produced, in line with the Scrutiny and Executive's Forward Work Programme.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

The attached report identifies the financial and budgetary implications from April 2021 to September 2021.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

The Education service maintains a Directorate Risk Register, which is aligned to both service level and corporate risks. The attached report highlights the main risks currently under consideration and the mitigation. The risk register is reviewed as part of the business planning process and included within the performance reporting of the Education service.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 The detailed performance information is included within Appendix 1. The Education Directorate is working together with key stakeholders on a joint purpose to deliver 'Better Schools, Better Citizens and Better Communities – all through a children and young person centred approach'.

6.2 The Education Directorate's priorities outlined in the Education Improvement Plan (EIP) are as follows:

- Improve outcomes and wellbeing for pupils, particularly at KS4, through effective governance arrangements;
- Delivery of the vision for education to support all learners in a modern and safe environment;
- Transforming education in line with curriculum, qualifications and ALN reform that is fit for the 21st Century;
- Deliver community based learning and recreation provision to meet need; and,
- Creating a performance culture for Education and Leisure that delivers improved value for money.

6.3 The proposed structure of the Corporate Director's report covers the following areas:

- An Introduction - Context of Education in Blaenau Gwent
- Corporate Director's Overview
- COVID 19 and Recovery from the Pandemic
- Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability
- Estyn - Regulatory Activity
- Departmental Priorities
- Progress Against the Priorities - Updates
- Improving Schools Programme 2021
- Key Performance Indicators

- Budget 2021/22 - Quarters 1 & 2
 - Directorate Risk Register
- 6.4 It is intended to review the structure of the first annual report following both Officer and Member discussion to ensure that the report is fit for purpose in the 2021-22 full academic year and the next iteration of the report.
- 6.5 **Expected outcome for the public**
Reporting performance provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Education Directorate and ensure accountability.
- 6.6 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
The Blaenau Gwent 'We Want' Plan 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 enables the Education Directorate 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 Education Directorate promotes a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. The respective teams have an active rather than re-active approach to service planning can also help with planning resources and ensuring value for money services are delivered.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The performance of the Education Directorate is monitored via the business planning process and reported through the democratic process via various reporting mechanisms including the Finance and Performance Report, the Assessment of Performance and various performance monitoring reports.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 –Report of the Corporate Director of Education Services 2021



Director of Education
Report Q12 Nov 2021

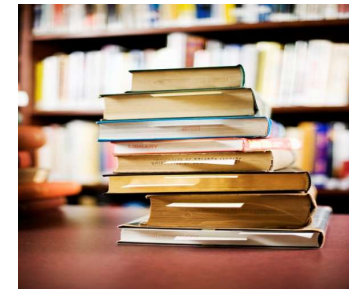
This page is intentionally left blank



Education Directorate

Director of Education Report

Quarter 1 and 2 (April 2021 to September 2021)



*'The Education Directorate, working together with key stakeholders on a joint purpose to deliver **better schools, better citizens and better communities** – all through a children and young person centred approach'*

Contents

<u>Introduction and Blaenau Gwent Context</u>	3	<u>Improving Schools Programme 2021</u>	19
<u>Director's Overview</u>	6	<u>Key Performance Indicators</u>	22
<u>COVID 19 and Recovery from the Pandemic</u>	7	<u>Budget 2021/22 - Quarter 1 & 2</u>	24
<u>Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability</u>	9	<u>Directorate Risk Register</u>	25
<u>Estyn Regulatory Activity - Monitoring Letter</u>	10	<u>Glossary</u>	28
<u>Departmental Priorities</u>	13	<u>Contact Details</u>	29
<u>Progress Against the Priorities Updates</u>	14		

Introduction

Welcome to the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's report of the Director of Education. The report covers the period April to September 2021. The report is used to highlight the key areas of progress and improvements that the service has experienced. This report provides a mid-year review of the activity undertaken to date in academic year 2021-22.

This year's report will also include detail on the activity undertaken by the Directorate to respond to the global COVID-19 pandemic. It should be noted that the accountability framework in Wales had changed significantly and there was no end of Key Stage Assessments for the Foundation Phase, KS2 or 3 this year. Furthermore, the outcomes for students at the end of Key Stage 4 and those sitting AS and A Levels were subject to a series of process and policy changes throughout the year. The eventually published Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) results have not been compared with any previous years.

The Council will continue to work with partners across the Council, for example, Children's Services, Regeneration, Legal, Finance and Organisational Development to focus the work on improving pupil outcomes and supporting school leaders. The Council will also continue to work with partners, such as the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to support school leaders to improve pupil outcomes and wellbeing.

Blaenau Gwent Context

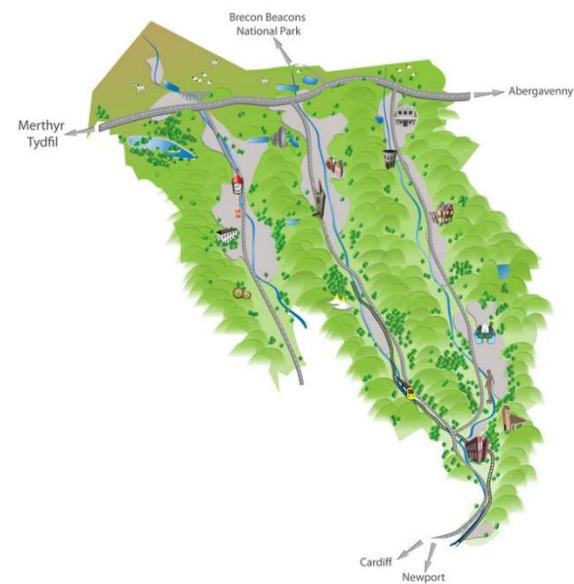
Blaenau Gwent is a place of heritage and dramatic change, with a sense of its past but its eyes firmly on the future. The area is relatively small geographically, being at most 15 miles north to south, and 8 miles east to west. Blaenau Gwent is defined physically by high hillsides dividing the three main valleys. These valleys are home to towns and villages which seem to merge together into one. However, each community proudly maintains its own character and traditions. Although the towns give the county borough a busy, urban feel, Blaenau Gwent is actually a largely rural area. Wherever you are, beautiful countryside is never far away. Figure BG01 below looks to give a visual representation of Blaenau Gwent, highlighting some of our distinctive local features.

Blaenau Gwent has 25 schools:

- 2 Maintained 3-16 Learning Communities;
- 1 Foundation Comprehensive;
- 1 Maintained Comprehensive;
- 1 x Maintained 3-18 Special School;
- 1 x Maintained 3-16 SEBD Special School; and
- 19 Primaries (of which 4 are voluntary aided / faith schools)

There are currently circa 9,000+ pupils on roll across all Blaenau Gwent schools.

The organisation, End Child Poverty, released new data in October 2020 with findings showing that the highest rates of child poverty in Wales are in Pembrokeshire and Blaenau Gwent. Blaenau Gwent is one of 5 counties in Wales to have seen a rise in the proportion of children living in poverty since 2015. The impact of poverty on children is well documented, with children from low-income families more likely to experience worse physical and mental health; do less well in school; and have fewer opportunities in the future. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) captures the extent of deprivation as a proportion of residents living in each lower super output area (LSOA). The eight considerations of the WIMD are: income; employment; health; education, skills and training; geographical access to services; housing; physical environment; and community safety. Blaenau Gwent has the highest percentage of LSOAs in the most deprived areas across Wales at 10%, for income (19.1%), education (27.7%), and community safety (23.4%).



The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals in Blaenau Gwent was almost 30% during 2010-16 and the highest of all LAs in Wales by a significant margin. The proportions declined during 2016-19, but BG remained the 2nd highest in Wales for all LA schools and highest for secondary schools during 2018-19. During 2021-22, the eligibility for FSM has again increased to circa 30%. Given the evidential relationship between pupil performance and deprivation (using eFSM as a proxy indicator), pupil outcomes in BG would be expected to be among the lowest in Wales. However, within Blaenau Gwent we have high ambitions for all of our learners and our socio-economic standing is a challenge that we are working to overcome to the benefit of all of our children and young people.

Overall, the 2019 WIMD figures and high eFSM eligibility reflect very high levels of deprivation within the County Borough. They also indicate the significant consideration required to improve educational outcomes to levels within other similar LAs and to consistently match the all-Wales averages. 2018-19 performance figures show that Blaenau Gwent has achieved parity, and indeed, out-performed some LAs in a number of measures confirming the progress being made within its schools. The 2020-21 KS4 and Post 16 KS5 provisional results will be included in the Summary SER via the performance data pack during the Autumn term to inform the on-going self-evaluation process, however, there is recognition the outcomes were awarded via the Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs) and/or the awarding examination body's assessed grade.

Age and Gender Population Profile

NCY	Females	Males
N1	194	206
N2	342	341
R	378	340
1	350	378
2	365	413
3	395	394
4	370	361
5	334	430
6	395	395
7	299	347
8	321	361
9	301	267
10	328	313
11	269	291
12	5	8
13		6
14	2	3
Totals	4648	4854

ALN Population Profile

NCY	School Action	Schools Action Plus	Statemented	No Additional Need
N1	5	6	1	388
N2	12	24	2	645
R	23	33	6	656
1	37	34	18	639
2	40	48	8	682
3	59	50	15	665
4	84	48	10	589
5	89	60	10	605
6	85	53	21	631
7	78	39	31	498
8	102	44	27	509
9	81	41	14	432
10	72	75	31	463
11	60	73	33	394
12			13	
13			6	
14			5	
Totals	827	628	251	7796

Director's Overview

Blaenau Gwent is a relatively small geographical area, with big ambitions for our schools and learners. We are determined to play our part in Wales being a first class education system with a clear ambition to increase the skills and standards of education across the County Borough. We fully support and are committed to the Welsh Government's national mission for educational transformation, including Curriculum and ALN Reforms. Blaenau Gwent's strategic aims that are advocated in our Recovery and Renewal Plan is to realise;

- All schools, education providers and support services are fully operational, with children and young people able to access a full range of provision and services both school and community based, in order to meet their: Educational; Social; Emotional; Behavioural; and other relevant needs.
- Blaenau Gwent children and young people are able to effectively transition from one stage of their education to another, with wellbeing as a primary focus, supporting them to achieve their potential.

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:

- **Learner Wellbeing**
- **Vulnerable Learners**
- **Academic Progress**
- **School Operations**

Over the last academic session school operations have been negatively affected by the pandemic. However, BG's corporate response in supporting our schools and learners during the COVID-19 pandemic has been largely effective. 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, 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 new baseline. 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. The Education Directorate are now clearly focussing on the future. As a consequence, stakeholder engagement and communication plans are in place, with 3 consultative groups having been established as follows:

- Recovery and Renewal Group, Curriculum Reform Group and the School Operations Management Group



Lynn Phillips - Director Education



Cllr Joanne Collins - Executive Member Education

COVID-19 The Council's Response

In March 2020, a decision was made by the UK Government to put the UK into lockdown in order to try and minimise the spread of the global pandemic COVID 19.

In accordance with Emergency Planning arrangements, a GOLD Group was established in Blaenau Gwent which comprised of Corporate Leadership Team, supported by the Civil Contingency Manager and Communications Manager. The strategic aim of GOLD is to delay and mitigate, as far as practicable, the spread and impact of Coronavirus within the community. GOLD was supported by an Emergency Response Team, made up of Heads of Service and Service Managers working alongside partners including the Aneurin Leisure Trust, GAVO, Tai Calon and the Joint Trade Unions.

As part of its response, the Council had to act quickly and had to consider alternative methods of service delivery, ensuring that the most vulnerable in society were supported. This resulted in delivery of critical services only, with other available resources being redeployed to support the response.

Particular focus was on:

- Adult Social Services
- Refuse and recycling collection
- Public protection
- Development of school hubs to support vulnerable learners and key workers with childcare
- Supporting families eligible for free school meals
- The creation of locality hubs, working to support those vulnerable and shielding
- Supporting local businesses to access financial support

The Education Directorate's Response to COVID 19 – Recovery and Renewal

The Education Directorate has identified a number of priorities for recovery and renewal, as part of the response to the COVID-19 situation.

The recovery and renewal plan is in development and will be a working document, outlining how the Council will continue to support schools, both during, and beyond the pandemic. It is, however, highly likely that there will be a need to continue to move between alert levels and thus working to 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 the WG's Local Infection Control Framework for Schools and BG's 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.

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 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.

The relationship between the Council and its schools is stronger than ever before. The aim is to create a shared vision and associated plan to address key priorities for the future of Education within Blaenau Gwent.

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:

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.

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.

Recovery – Priorities

The Education Directorate's Recovery and Renewal plans are in line with the corporate approach led by the Director of the Environment and Regeneration. 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;

'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.'

Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability

The structure of the Education Directorate provides clear levels of management and accountability. As a whole, the Council has a clear governance and accountability framework in place which all directorates are signed up to. This framework identifies how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create a 'golden thread'. This framework is complied with by Education who also have additional monitoring requirements as part of the Estyn Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework.

The Education Directorate is subject to audit, inspection and review by Estyn. On a termly basis the Director of Education and/or Senior Education Managers meet with Estyn to discuss achievements, performance and key challenges. The Directorate has one Executive Member who has portfolio responsibility for Education and Learning (including the Aneurin Leisure Trust). The Directorate is scrutinised by the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee. There is also a Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee which is a joint committee between the Social Services and Education and Learning Scrutiny Committees. Regular liaison meetings are held with the Directorate, the Executive Member and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

Engagement with Members

Aside from the work programmes for Scrutiny, Executive and Council, the Education Directorate also regularly engages with all Elected Members via a series of briefing sessions, aimed at informing Members of key areas of the Directorate to enhance their learning and understanding. The following sessions have taken place to date:

- EAS held a session on 17th May on 'Distance and Blended Learning across Blaenau Gwent Schools';
- Education, held a session on 30th September on 'Current Pressures Facing the Council' and Self-Evaluation;

How People Are Shaping Our Services

The Education Directorate is committed to providing high quality services to its citizens and uses various engagement methodologies in order to understand if the service is making the intended outcomes or if amendments to service delivery need to be considered. Throughout April to September 2021 a variety of engagement events have taken place:

- Wavehill Evaluation
- County Lines (consultation)
- Young People's Participation (focus group)
- Young People's Safe Areas (consultation)
- Aspire / Lego secondary school engagement with Year 8 Pupils (undertaken by the Regeneration Department)
- Establishing a new Welsh Medium Primary School in the Tredegar / Sirhowy Primary (consultation with Members) and the Proposal to Extend the Capacity at Penycwm Special School (consultation with Members)

Estyn Regulatory Activity - Summer Monitoring Letter

In July 2021, the Council received a letter from Estyn which provided an overview of the progress made in relation to recommendations from the overarching thematic report published in January 2021. The thematic report identified five recommendations for the Welsh Government and recognised that a whole system approach was needed to address these. The first three recommendations were more immediate and urgent in nature, whilst the last two recommendations would take longer to address. From discussions with the Directorate, feedback from learners and engagement work with schools, Estyn felt it was clear that, through collaboration, progress was made across Wales in equipping schools and learners to provide better remote learning experiences during the second lockdown. Below is an overview of the recommendations and a summary of the findings, full detail can be found in the following attachment.



Blaenau Gwent Estyn
Summer Letter.pdf

R1 Urgently address barriers to learning at home, particularly where this is due to a lack of access to suitable computers or adequate connectivity

- Weekly assessments were undertaken to assess the need for pupils requiring ICT devices and monthly monitoring also took place to consider the local authority's overall digital support for schools and families.
- The Shared Resource Service (SRS) provided devices within seven days of a need being identified.
- The local authority has planned to continue with these ICT arrangements until at least the end of the summer term 2021.
- As of May 2021, the local authority had loaned 1,359 devices and 161 Mi-Fi units to pupils.
- A review of the 'Digitally Disadvantaged Device' project plan future provision is being undertaken to allow all families continued digital access. Officers reacted responsively at the start of the pandemic but now have time to reflect and look at the digital learner journey more strategically.
- The local authority has recognised that many parents have a lack of pedagogical understanding and it is recognised that there may be a need to provide more learning opportunities for parents on how to support their children's literacy and numeracy at home, should there be a third wave.

R2 Improve the quality of the distance and blended learning experiences for pupils by supporting more effective teaching across and within schools and PRUs

- Officers are very positive about the work of Blaenau Gwent schools in developing and improving regional blended learning approaches.
- The Celebrate, Support, Share and Refine (CSSR) pilot involved 13 out of 25 local authority schools and will be extended in the summer term to include all schools.

- Local authority officers have monitored each school's provision using a blended learning survey. This has helped them identify areas that schools need to improve and to celebrate and share successful practice.
- The local authority's recovery and renewal plan outlines how they aim to build on the responses to their pupil survey to further strengthen distance learning should there be another wave of the pandemic.
- In the coming months, the Head of School Improvement and Inclusion will be meeting with various groups of pupils to gain more information on the impact of blended learning experiences on their education.

R3 Develop a coherent approach to improve progress in literacy, numeracy and the personal and social skills of vulnerable pupils disproportionately affected by the pandemic, for example pupils eligible for free school meals

- The Head of School Improvement and Inclusion is taking lead responsibility for the 'Education Recovery and Renewal' working group which includes headteachers and other key partners.
- One purpose of the group is to support the progress of all learners, with a strong focus on supporting vulnerable pupils who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. The work of this group will be complemented by a review of the Inclusion Service to enable support to be targeted effectively at vulnerable pupils.
- To help overcome support engagement with the Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families, a Welsh Government grant has been used to appoint a member of staff to their Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupil support team.
- Across the local authority, there has been an increase in demand for counselling services. As a result, the counselling team has been increased.
- Since the start of the pandemic, the local authority has seen an increase in demand for elective home education (EHE). This has mainly been due to anxiety issues and officers are hopeful that many of these pupils will return to school in the future. Educational Welfare Officers have been keeping in touch with these families and has been linking them with schools so they can have support from professionals with home learning.

R4 Establish strategies to monitor and address the long-term impact of the pandemic on the physical and mental health of pupils

- The 'Education Recovery and Renewal' working group has a strong focus on supporting the physical and mental health of pupils. Officers feel that, over the last year, supporting pupils' wellbeing has been a strength in all schools and was recognised in pupil surveys and engagement with parents.
- The Education Recovery and Renewal Plan 2021/22 will inform a three-year plan to support the long-term actions needed to improve the physical and mental health of pupils.
- The Head of School Improvement has considered a range of evidence on the physical and mental health of pupils and will be engaging with a wide range of stakeholders during the summer term to obtain first-hand evidence of the impact of the pandemic on pupils' mental and physical health.
- The local authority is committed to continue to deliver a wide range of sport, physical activity, community engagement and swimming opportunities across Blaenau Gwent and Aneurin Leisure Trust intends to build on their current 'Family Engagement' project for the most vulnerable families.

- Funding has been secured to pay for the six schools with the highest number of eFSM pupils to run the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP), a school-based education programme that provides food and nutrition education, physical activity, enrichment sessions and healthy meals to children in areas of social deprivation during the school summer holidays.
- The Youth Service are continuing to offer support to young people in schools and across communities. They are continuing to work closely with organisations, such as the Rotary Club, to help fund essential items such as food hampers. Officers are also engaging with schools to address the period dignity agenda, including working with third party organisations to help with the distribution of products for all family members.

R5 Create opportunities to take stock and evaluate the impact of policies and practices developed since the start of the pandemic to inform future ways of working and curriculum design

Education officers present regular reports to the Education and Learning Scrutiny and Executive Committees to reflect upon and to evaluate the effectiveness of the local authority's response to the pandemic. The top priority for education officers and the EAS business planning for 2021/22 is to maximise pupil progression and minimise the impact of the pandemic on learners. The local authority has developed local policies, guidance, risk assessments and operational plans for and with schools.

The local authority has established a Headteacher curriculum reform group with representation from all sectors. In this group, schools are invited to share their progress with curriculum reform. Representatives then highlight which schools have good practice to share and which schools need additional support in implementing the new curriculum. Officers feel that the EAS has provided very good curriculum training sessions for all schools and the uptake from Blaenau Gwent schools has been high [*school feedback is showing that the support received was useful but would now like for more practical support*]. They feel in a good position to build on the positives from their blended learning approach to enhance curriculum reform. This includes enhancing opportunities for pupils to work independently using blended learning approaches. In conjunction with the EAS, the local authority will organise bespoke training packages to avoid duplication. Officers feel that the local authority are in a good position for schools to support each other on their journey.

Departmental Priorities 2021/22

Directorate Priorities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve outcomes and wellbeing for pupils, particularly at KS4, through effective governance arrangements • Delivery of the vision for education to support all learners in a modern and safe environment • Transforming education in line with curriculum, qualifications and ALN reform that is fit for the 21st Century • Deliver community based learning and recreation provision to meet need • Creating a performance culture for Education and Leisure that delivers improved value for money 		
Education Transformation and Business Change Priorities	Inclusion and Improvement Priorities	Young People and Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, review and implement Education Transformation policies and strategies, to secure effective access to education and associated provision, improve outcomes and wellbeing for all pupils; whilst also fulfilling the team's statutory responsibilities and ensuring regulatory compliance. • Ensure an effective and informed approach to school organisation, which facilitates the vision for education, and contributes to improving standards of delivery. • Secure an effective partnership approach between the Council and its schools, which seeks to improve delivery and support mechanisms/services including: review, development and renewal of Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and effective strategic procurement processes • Ensure effective national and regional working arrangements are in place, to facilitate the sharing of good practice, coordination of key strategic priorities, and in order to maximise opportunities for joint working and partnership approaches. • Develop, review and implement transformation programmes, projects and plans to facilitate effective curriculum delivery; whilst also contributing to key strategic priorities including: Welsh-medium education and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) reform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to secure effective, efficient and economical high quality provision for our vulnerable learners, progressing our vision for education • Improve progress for learners with ALN through successful implementation of the ALN and Educational Tribunal Act 2018 • Contribute to strong governance arrangements including self-evaluation (SE) and improvement planning. • Maintain and enhance the self-evaluation processes for the department so they are the best that they can be • Progress our Vision for Education across our learning communities in line with the strategic approach to school improvement (schools to schools work and professional working) • Further develop our processes, via the intelligent-client role, to hold the EAS effectively to account for commissioned school improvement services. • To ensure that all children and young people in LGEs settings are safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving educational standards and life chances of children and young people through delivering an effective Youth Service • Achieving the outcomes within the Leisure and Cultural Strategy through effective oversight and governance of commissioned services • Improving life chances of young people and young adults from education through to employment through enabling an effective partnership approach to Post 16 delivery

Progress against the Priorities

Improve outcomes and wellbeing for pupils, particularly at KS4, through effective governance arrangements

Self-Assessment – The Education Directorate Leadership team has all positions fully appointed to. This has created capacity and a strong team to take the Education Directorate forward, especially in the way that we support children and young people in both school/college and community settings.

The quality of reports to CLT/Scrutiny/Executive is continuing to improve and there is robust self-evaluation, risk management, financial management and performance coaching arrangements in place. There continues to be robust governance arrangements in place between the Council and the EAS to monitor school performance. A Corporate Group has been established to oversee Self-Evaluation and Estyn preparedness. The Main SER was reported to Scrutiny Committee in September 2021. The reporting of Council/School level performance data has been relaxed over the last two academic years in Wales by WG. However, Summer 2021 KS4 results demonstrated progress in Capped 9 and L2inc. scores and were in line with the targets set in the 4 secondary settings SDPs. The KS4 Centre Determined Grades in 2021 generated very few appeals. A Strategic Post 16 Partnership has been established to ensure that BG learner pathways into Further Education are very much strengthened. The Learning Zone's performance at KS5 continues to be good and A Level pass rates for A*-E were 99,1%, which is in line the Welsh mean average. Reports on Improving Schools were presented to the Executive/Scrutiny Committees.

There are 4 schools currently identified as a School Causing Concern/ Team Around the School approach, however, it is likely that 2 schools will be removed during the next academic year. There continues to be very good progress made at Abertillery Learning Community (ALC), Brynmawr Foundation School (BFS) and Sofrydd Primary Schools. BFS will be subject to an Estyn Monitoring Visit early in the Autumn term. The River Centre has not responded appropriately to the pre-warning notice letter, therefore, a Statutory Warning Notice was issued on the 14th September. The ALC Corporate Group is working effectively and the revenue financial position is improving with deficit reducing to circa £324,000 when the prediction was in the region of £1m. Sofrydd Primary School appointed a permanent Headteacher early in the new academic year and is highly likely to be removed from the Schools Causing Concern (SCC) category in academic year 2021-22.

Finally, the corporate and education response to COVID-19 has been strong, as evidenced in the Estyn Thematic Review findings. The Estyn Summer letter received towards the end on the Summer term, provided additional feedback from the Inspectorate. The Education Directorate has established a Recovery and Renewal Plan to respond to the COVID pandemic and this features as part of the Scrutiny/Executive FWPs.

Delivery of the vision for education to support all learners in a modern and safe environment

Self-Assessment – The corporate and education response to COVID-19 has been strong, as evidenced in the Estyn Thematic Review Summer letter. The Directorate is well placed to move forward on the Recovery and Renewal priorities and these have been shared and discussed with Members of the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee. The collaboration agenda and partnership working has been strengthened, particularly the relationships with the schools, Post 16 providers and the Aneurin Leisure Trust.

The Vision for Education is embedded i.e. a school-led self-improving system. However, the vision is under review based on a new approach of 'Better Schools, Better Citizens and Better Communities'.

There will be consultation/engagement starting in 2021-22. There is strong progress on the Welsh-medium school consultation which has concluded and implementation is planned from September 2023. The Pen-y-Cwm consultation has now concluded with positive feedback overall. Works were completed over the Summer, but it is recognised that space will remain a focus at the school going forward due to the increase in pupils with profound and complex needs. As a result, within the consultation approach, there is the provision for consideration of additional capacity creation as a Part 2 proposals. The proposal is now in implementation stages and the capacity will increase to 175 in 2021-22.

School to school working has continued throughout the period, but physical attendance on sites has been largely curtailed due the stringent risk assessment measures that are in place to prevent the spread of the virus. As such, schools have become competent at varying their approaches to school to school work, particularly cluster working.

The appointment of the Head of School Improvement and Inclusion and the Service Manager Inclusion will further strengthen the intelligent client role to ensure that barriers to learner progress are mitigated in a timely manner. This continues to provide beneficial support to schools as, over time, effective networks have been established to enable this approach. Work is ongoing to re-establish face to face learning so that the commissioned service is able to provide the authority with judgements that are validated through first hand evidence. This work will be key to informing the Recovery and Renewal phase of the Council's response to the pandemic. The School Budget Forum will be the forum to take forward the SLA renewal process and the Service Manager for Education Transformation and Business Change has been identified as the lead officer within the Directorate. Liaison with schools is underway and there has been strong progress made on the Hwb EdTech initiative across the school estate.

The River Centre is a SCC and the Governing Body's response to the Service Agreement, intended to provide clarity over process between the LA and school, has created difficulty resulting in significant involvement from senior leaders. The response to the pre-warning notice letter is unsatisfactory and a Statutory Warning Notice has been issued. The Education Directorate are considering the next steps with the school and the potential use of intervention powers. A new Chair of Governors has been appointed and the strengthening of the Governing Body's effectiveness will continue to be a focus.

The FSM monitoring systems are working well and a process is in place for providing FSM direct payments to families that have been asked to self-isolate. The purpose of the meeting is to check against incidents reported against RPI's reported and to ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements and are trained accordingly.

Transforming education in line with curriculum, qualifications and ALN reform that is fit for the 21st Century

Self-Assessment – Blaenau Gwent is well placed to continue with the transformation of the Education Service and supporting children and young people. The strategic links with key partners such as the EAS, Coleg Gwent, Schools, WBL providers are effective. The Education Directorate has supported schools through the Centre Determined Grades (CDGs) changes effectively, and learner outcomes met SDP expectations.

Compliance with the WG's Admissions and School Organisation Codes is strong. The School Organisation Policy has been reviewed and updated accordingly. WG Code of Practice for ALN has now been finalised and is in place, however, the ALN and Inclusion functions are being reviewed. An update on the ALN Reform has been provided to both Scrutiny and Executive during the Autumn term 2021. Since September 2021, Tredegar Comprehensive School (TCS) has met with nearly all maintained schools across the LA, and engaged in high-quality professional dialogue with headteachers/SLT and ALNCos. Following these initial discussions, TCS will now put in place relevant and tailored support for each school, in order to realise fully the implementation plans for mandated years by Summer 2022.

The Council are well on track for implementing ALN reform. Where challenges for implementation have been identified, relevant training opportunities are being put in place for both senior leaders and ALNCos. Further training will also be commissioned for Governors.

The preparations for the 21st Century Schools Band B Programme are progressing well with WG business case submissions being made and agreed for key projects. The Managing School Places report is demonstrating progress towards meeting the SOP 15% target and will be presented to Members later in the term.

A Strategic Post 16 Partnership has been established to ensure that BG learner pathways into Further Education are further strengthened. The BG Learning Zone's performance at KS5 continues to be good.

The relationship between the Inclusion and Youth Service is strong. Joint funding approaches through the ALN grant mean that a broader spectrum of support can be offered to young people.

Deliver community based learning and recreation provision to meet need

Self-Assessment – The Education Portfolio has also changed in 2020-21 to include the client function for the Aneurin Leisure Trust. This is transforming the relationship between the Council and the Leisure Trust, with a new five-year agreement in place. A Leisure and Libraries Strategic Partnership Board has been established, which is Chaired by the Leader of the Council. The joint working between the Council and the ALT has improved significantly and the performance of the Trust is showing really encouraging signs of recovery. The ALT financial position has improved significantly and the Trust has supported the Council exceptionally well during the COVID-19 pandemic and with the community hub provision, in line with the new operating model.

All Youth Service provision has now reopened. Targeted services are seeing increases in referrals in all areas. The Education Directorate has reported on both the Youth Services performance and the Inspire initiative reports, which give strong evidence of continued good performance against the reach of the service, accredited outcomes and the level of NEETs.

The Directorate's Risk Register has been updated to reflect the risks associated with the closure of the ESF funding. There will be a need to review capacity within the Education Directorate, but particularly for the Education Transformation/Inclusion and Young People teams. Phase 2 restructuring plans are in the early stages of development. Awareness has been raised about the ESF programmes ending in July 2022, which puts approximately 25 full time members of staff at risk of redundancy. Regional groups are meeting to highlight this risk across South East Wales. However, a clear approach to securing new funding e.g. Shared Prosperity Fund is not in place to address the funding deficit.

The Welsh Government Youth Support Grant has been approved again this year, continuing with additional support around Mental Health and Youth Homelessness. Additional funding has been secured through the ALN grant last year and has been requested again this year, which will continue the alternative provision for those young people on the cusp of permanent exclusion.

The Youth Service has experienced challenges around recruitment as posts have traditionally been 'training' routes for young people and volunteers. However, these roles now require to be registered and qualified with the EWC, and finding qualified, registered workers available for part time work has not been possible. As a short term solution, the Youth Service is considering training staff on the job.

Creating a performance culture for Education and Leisure that delivers improved value for money

Self-Assessment – A performance culture is developing and the first Education and Leisure joint staff meeting took place in the Summer term. Engagement with BG's schools continues to be progressive and collegiate in approach.

There are improved processes in place between Education & Finance to ensure improved monitoring of the revenue and capital budgets. This has contributed to a favourable financial position at year-end circa £363,000. The Council provided schools with a 3.6% uplift in budgets during 2021-22 financial year. The management of school balances has been effective and budget considerations are discussed at School Budget Forum, including a review of the funding formula. The Education Directorate and the EAS are providing improved value for money i.e. standards are improving with less resources. The Q1 revenue budget is showing a favourable variance circa £196,000. The capital budget position is stable with a likely investment circa £26m into the school estate in the period up to 2021-26. However, there are some identified cost pressures associated with COVID and BREXIT and discussions are underway with WG e.g. Welsh medium primary school.

Business planning is secure, including a review of the priorities in the Education Improvement Plan (EIP). The FADE Register is up to date and the Risk Register has been updated, with only one corporate risk relating to ALC and BFS. The Directorate regularly reports SE through to the Education and Learning Scrutiny and Executive Committees. The quality of reports is improving and the level of scrutiny provided by Members continues to develop. There is continuity in both professional and political leadership within the Education Directorate.

Improving Schools Programme 2021

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 spring term 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 Autumn term 2021, 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.

Education Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator Description - Applications	18/19	19/20	20/21
Applications – Nursery	693	696	714
Applications – Primary	739	731	701
Applications – Secondary	677	679	696
Performance Indicator Description - Attendance	July 19	July 20	July 21
Attendance – Primary	94.4	93.5	90.7
Attendance Secondary	93.3	91.7	84.8
Performance Indicator Description - Exclusions	April 19 to March 20	April 20 to March 21	April 21 to September 21
Exclusions Primary	108	25	17
Exclusions Secondary	459	135	183
Average Number of Primary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	108 (9.8)	25 (3.6)	17 (3.4)
Average Number of Secondary exclusions per month (no. of months in brackets)	459 (41.7)	135 (19.3)	183 (36.6)
Performance Indicator Description – Referrals to Social Services			
Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16)	2382	2260	1702
Average Number of referrals to Social Services for children and young people of school age (3-16) per month (no. of months in brackets)	198.5 (12)	188.3 (12)	283.7 (6)
Performance Indicator Description – Digital Disadvantage			
Number of devices provided to pupils	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,359 devices • 161 MiFi Dongles 	Under Review
Performance Indicator Description – Free School Meals	2019	2020	2021
Entitlement to FSM/Transitionally Protected (%)	21.1	24.6	30.4

Education Performance Indicators

KS4 Progress (Centre Determined Grades)

	2021				2020				2019			
	Capped 9	Literacy	Numeracy	Best Science	Capped 9	Literacy	Numeracy	Best Science	Capped 9	Literacy	Numeracy	Best Science
School 1	335.9	32.6	35.1	32.7	355.9	36.1	36.6	32.2	341	35	33	27
School 2	377.0	41.0	32.0	38.0	375.7	41.0	35.0	36.4	349	38	31	28
School 3	369.0	40.4	39.1	40.6	378.0	39.3	37.2	38.2	340	37	35	36
School 4	373.5	41.5	39.5	36.2	358.3	39.9	37.5	36.4	362	39	36	36

Improvement in performance from previous year.

Decline in performance from previous year.

Budget 2021/22 - Quarter 1 & 2 (April 2021 to September 2022)

Budget Area		Budget	Forecast	Variance	
		£	£	£	%
1	Individual Schools Budget	46,522,380	46,522,380	0	0
2	Education Improvement Grant	257,360	261,402	(4,042)	(1.57)
3	Other Costs	722,410	722,897	(487)	(0.07)
4	Supporting SEN - Schools	1,679,830	1,103,550	(77,156)	(4.59)
5	Strategic Management	2,432,410	2,243,658	188,752	7.76
6	Assuring Access to Schools	2,317,310	2,316,456	854	0.04
7	Facilitating School Improvement	419,760	407,815	11,945	2.85
8	Supporting SEN - LEA	342,470	310,763	31,707	9.26
9	Further Education & Training	133,290	121,816	11,474	8.60
10	Youth Service	311,437	298,097	13,340	4.28
11	Other Expenditure	141,030	124,748	16,282	11.55
12	Education Departmental Budget	64,323	81,685	(17,362)	(26.99)
13	Corporate Recharges	4,360,220	4,360,220	0	0
	Leisure	4,159,100	4,164,405	(5,305)	(0.13)
Grand Total		63,863,330	63,693,328	170,002	0.27

Education Risk Register

Risk Description	Quarter 1 and 2 Progress (April – September 2021)	Status
CRR 4 - Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, including the Youth Service, provided partial performance information for the Joint Scrutiny/Executive performance report in Q4. Due to periods of school/pupil disruption. However, full data for Q1 in 2021-22 are being collated following a full return to face to face learning in schools during the Spring/Summer terms of 2021. • The Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy has been updated and discussed at Joint Scrutiny Committee and was subsequently agreed by the Executive Committee in July 2021. The policy is now in line with the latest Keeping Learners Safe Guidance. • An Education Safeguarding self-evaluation has been reported to CLT and through the political processes that discusses the good progress overall, particularly the strong collaboration between Social Services and Education. The areas for further development include the roll-out of the 360-degree policy and MyConcern implementation across all schools across the County Borough in 2021-22. 	Critical
CRR 25 - The 2 schools currently in receipt of Council Intervention fail to make appropriate progress against the Statutory Warning Notice to Improve and their Post Inspection Action Plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are robust governance arrangements in place between the Council and EAS to monitor both schools' performance. The two schools in an Estyn Category, namely ALC and BFS are part of the regional Schools Causing Concern arrangements and have been assessed as making satisfactory progress by the respective Schools Causing Concern Panels, but, in particular, the progress at ALC is moving towards a strong assessment. BFS is now part of the WG Multi-Agency Support for Schools in Special Measures initiative and this will replace the SCC meetings. Furthermore, the ALC Corporate Group has been re-established and the revenue financial position is improving circa £324,000 deficit at year end in 2020-21. • The reporting of Council/School level performance data has been relaxed this academic year in Wales by Welsh Government. However, Summer 2020-21 KS4 Centre Determined Grades results were in line with the targets set in both the secondary settings School Development Plans. • The review of Statutory Warning Notices will take place during the Autumn term for both ALC and BFS, with both schools in particular showing improvements in their leadership and governance arrangements. • Progress against further controls is on-going and largely on track, the forecasted direction of travel is an improving position. The Education Directorate and EAS are increasingly confident in the progress that both settings are making. 	High
EDDRR8 - Failure to minimise the risks associated with pupil regression linked to COVID-19 learning disruption and to maximise learner progression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EAS pilot initiative has been completed. • The Corporate Recovery structure has been completed as well as an initial impact assessment. The action plan sits alongside key impact areas for which baseline information is currently being collated. • Professional discussions set up for every school in Blaenau Gwent with the EAS in the Autumn Term • The draft Recovery and Renewal Plan is in place, following an impact assessment process. 	High

Risk Description	Quarter 1 and 2 Progress (April – September 2021)	Status
EDDRR9 - Dependency on funding around ESF Inspire projects in youth service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire 2 Achieve (I2A, 11-16 year olds) funding for delivery ends July 2022 and Inspire 2 Work (I2W, 16-24 year olds) delivery ends September 2022. Numbers of staff affected are 1 x I2A/I2W Team Manager, 13 x I2A staff (includes 1 x Team Leader, 6 school based youth workers, 4 x transition youth workers, 1 x school aged mental health youth worker, 1 x admin support) and 7 x I2W staff (includes 5 x youth workers, 2 x health and wellbeing youth workers). These posts have directly contributed to the lowest levels of NEET figures, preventing low levels of mental health from escalating and overcoming barriers to employment. • Although the LA through Environment and Regeneration is involved in discussions related to the City Deal and Shared Prosperity Funding, the outcome and timeline for these areas of funding are unclear. Furthermore, all discussions to date are focussed on future funding for unemployment programmes for adults. It is unclear whether funding will be made available for earlier interventions and support within schools and colleges. If funding is not secured beyond July 2022, transition support for those most at risk will not be in place, destinations will not be supported and will lead to NEET figures rising. These areas are monitored nationally by Welsh Government and through Estyn inspections. Processes with staff will need to begin in April 2022. • This risk was escalated to CLT who agreed for the risk to not be escalated to the Corporate Risk Register at this time owing to ongoing discussions with the Capital Region to secure UK Government Shared Prosperity Funding. 	High
EDDRR1 - Failure of schools in Blaenau Gwent to adapt and change accordingly to the requirements of the new curriculum and national agenda of the Welsh Government as laid out in the National reform agenda document "Education for Wales: Our national Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation delayed until January 2022. • A report has been presented to Scrutiny for assurance that the inclusion service is fit for purpose to support ALN reforms and schools. • ALN Reform Report going to Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee in Autumn term and report indicates high-level confidence that Education' Inclusion service and schools are well on track for implementation. • Termly catch up planned with Estyn to discuss activities for this term. 	Medium

Risk Description	Quarter 1 and 2 Progress (April – September 2021)	Status
<p>EDDRR4 - Failure to create a sustainable and successful Abertillery Learning Community that delivers good outcomes for learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The authority has funded additional revenue support for ALC so that the school can take in the full range in order to increase the pupil population. • Established project group to look at capacity and physical space issues and will look to undertake an annual review. • ALC is programmed for remodelling under 21st Century Schools under the Band B Programme. • The Council recognises that ALC leadership and governing body leadership continue to improve. • The revenue out-turn position for ALC saw the revenue deficit reduce to circa £324,000 and the deficit reduction plan for 2022-23 is progressing. • Estyn monitoring visit expected in early Spring Term. 	Medium
<p>EDDRR5 - Failure to deliver an effective ICT strategy in line with the WG Education Digital Standards, which facilitates and enhances delivery aligned to the Digital Competency Framework and the new Curriculum for Wales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Infrastructure and Connectivity Project has successfully been delivered, along with Waves 1-3 of the Hwb EdTech Programme. Wave 4 implementation is currently underway, and progressing as programmed and in line with the financial profile. • Sustainability sessions have taken place in order to inform the device refresh and replacement programme, along with the development of the ICT Strategy. As a result, school's ICT Sustainability Plans have been drafted and will be reviewed in the early part of the Spring-term 2022, for implementation in the 2022/23 financial year. • The ICT Strategy Group has been further developed and meets bi-monthly. In addition, Education regularly meet with SRS, WG and Corporate colleagues, in order to ensure effective alignment between service delivery, strategic planning and policy. • Very good progress has been made in line with the development of the Education ICT Strategy, which is scheduled for consultation in the Spring-term 2022, and implementation from September 2022. • The Website/PSA issues continue to be subject to daily monitoring and escalation processes, with school's connectivity having been negatively affected – particularly during the latter part of the Autumn-term 2021. These issues have been escalated to the highest level, with WG having produced an action plan to address them. An effective communications plan is in place, which has been developed in partnership with SRS and neighbouring authorities, to ensure that schools are in receipt of up to date information in order to aid planning, engagement and delivery. • Delivery and monitoring of the digitally disadvantaged learner device programme is ongoing, with all requests to date having been successfully met. 	Medium

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is continued engagement with school's via headteachers, regarding both the projects and individual school needs. • Device and infrastructure audits have been undertaken for all schools and are update annually, meaning that the Council, SRS and schools have an excellent working knowledge of provision. 	
EDDRR10 - Failure of school (RC) to improve following the issue of a pre-warning notice and statutory warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Governors being provided with support and work undertaken with chair and vice chairs to better understand their role. • School has been issued with statutory warning notice (14th September) as it failed to improve in line with the pre warning notice. • LA has reviewed and clarified its admissions procedures with the school. • SCC meetings half termly. 	High

Glossary

ALC – Abertillery Learning Community

ALN – Additional Learning Needs

ALT – Aneurin Leisure Trust

BFS – Brynmawr Foundation School

CAGs – Centre Assessed Grades

CDGs – Centre Determined Grades

CLT – Corporate Leadership Team

CSSR – Celebrate, Support, Share and Refine

EAS – Education Achievement Service

eFSM – eligible for Free School Meals

EIP – Education Improvement Plan

ESF – European Social Fund

EWCC – Education Workforce Council

KS – Key Stage

LA – Local Authority

LGES

LSOA – Lower Super Output Area

NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training

RPIs – Restricted Physical Interventions

SCC – Schools Causing Concern

SE – Self-Evaluation

SEBD – Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties

SER – Self-Evaluation Report

SDP – School Development Plan

SOP – Strategic Outline Plan

WBL – Work Based Learning

FADE – Self Evaluation (Focus, Analysis, Do, Evaluation)

FWPs – Forward Work Programmes

GAVO – Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations

I2A – Inspire to Achieve

I2W – Inspire to Work

WIMD – Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

WG – Welsh Government

Contact Details

If you require any further information or have any feedback you wish to share, please:

Write to us:

Corporate Director of Education

Education Directorate

Anvil Court

Church Street

Abertillery

NP13 1DB

Call us:

(01495) 311556

Email us:

info@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Visit our Website:

www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 19

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent Education/Schools ICT Strategy and Project Update**
Portfolio Holder: **Education and Learning Portfolio – Cllr. Joanne Collins**
Report Submitted by: **Corporate Director of Education – Lynn Phillips**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
13.1.22	13.1.22	15.02.22			1.2.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Executive Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise progress in relation to Blaenau Gwent Education/Schools ICT Strategy, along with associated projects.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 Blaenau Gwent ICT Strategy Purpose and Overview

The purpose of the Education ICT Strategy is to clearly set out the Council and its schools' aspirations and goals, aligned to the digital learner journey within Blaenau Gwent. In addition, the strategy seeks to identify the priorities and resources required to facilitate effective infrastructure, connectivity and approaches to learning via the use of digital technologies.

2.2 Vision for Education ICT

'To secure continued development ensuring that all learners, regardless of age or demographic, have continued safe access to a blend of digital resources, hardware and cloud-based learning throughout the course of their education'.

2.3 Aims and Objectives

- Create a safe teaching and learning environment fit for the digital age
- Effectively engage teaching practitioners in seeking to improve and enhance the quality of teaching and learning
- Secure continued access to high quality devices both within and outside of the classroom
- Encourage and develop the use of technology in the classroom to facilitate improved learner outcomes in line with the Digital Competency Framework.
- Use and incorporate new technologies in inspiring learners to become digitally skilled and enabled citizens
- Facilitate effective connectivity for all learners in line with the delivery of a flexible blended learning offer

- Secure and develop collaboration with key partners and neighbouring authorities to inform localised developments, opportunities and create a regional strategic overview which is aligned to national priorities and associated policy

2.4 **Progress to Date**

The Blaenau Gwent Education ICT Strategy Group was re-established post emergency response period and met for the first time since November 2019, on March 18th 2021. The Group met 4 times over the course of the last academic session, and have made very good progress towards completion of the draft Education ICT Strategy. There are two remaining aspects which require completion, as follows:

- Delivery Strategy; and,
- Migration to and use of HWB.

2.5 Due to the pressures on schools and associated staff resourcing issues during the autumn-term 2021, a decision was taken to hold the final workshop until towards the end of January 2022. This will contribute to the final draft of the delivery strategy section.

2.6 Local authorities throughout Wales, have been experiencing issues with connectivity, due to an issue with the Welsh Government Internet filtering solution Websafe, which SRS authorities moved to in September 2020. Welsh Government had highlighted this solution to be more efficient, much simpler and quicker to use for schools. However, to date, these benefits are yet to be realised. BG have experienced outages and reliability issues, which have been escalated to the highest levels within Welsh Government, BT and local authorities in seeking a solution. SRS LAs were informed by Welsh Government in January 2022, that the issues which have been ongoing since the early part of the autumn-term 2021, will be resolved by the end of the second week in January. Once these issues are resolved, we can review the HWB migration strategy and complete the final section of the draft strategy.

2.7 The timeline which includes indicative dates for production of the final draft, consultation, approval and implementation can be found in **Appendix 1**.

2.8 **ICT Project Progress to Date**

Despite the impact of COVID-19, which resulted in both school access and resourcing issues, along with extensive additional planning and risk assessment requirements; the Infrastructure and Connectivity Project (ICP) was successfully delivered during the 2020/21 academic session. The project has not been without it's challenges and has encountered issues along the way including: facilities issues, Public Sector Broadband and British Telecom technical and resourcing issues, service disruption etc. However, issue management has been strong, and addressed via detailed action plans which are effectively monitored in partnership with the Council and schools.

2.9 The capital investment of £560,000 has achieved the following throughout the school estate:

- **Migration to the Schools EDU Network** – Improving the network infrastructure within schools throughout BG.
- **Improved internet connectivity and use** – Prior to project inception, school usage on the connection peaked at just over 50%. Internet usage in schools is expected to increase following these improvements. Should the capacity for schools have remained the same this would create a bottle neck, which despite faster connection, would mean that schools experience slowness.
- **School connectivity** – Connection between the school and the central infrastructure. Achieving LiDW 2020 aspirations for all schools; i.e. 100MB for primary schools and 1GB for secondary schools, for middle schools on separate sites the primary and secondary requirements apply.
- In-school infrastructure to ensure **effective internet access to meet current and future** requirements and aspirations (switches and wireless).
- **Internal connectivity** - the BG standard is defined as infrastructure and connectivity for every person in the school (student, teacher, adult) to have a maximum **1.5 internet connected devices simultaneously in appropriate areas**.
- Provision of **secure remote access for teachers, pupils, parents and governors**.
- **Centralised infrastructure including** school file storage, infrastructure licensing, software deployment servers (SCCM).
- **Secure e-safety** infrastructure arrangements – to include web filtering, anti-virus protection, and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD).
- **Centralised SIMS** – ensuring consistency and continuity of access.

2.10 **Welsh Government Hwb EdTech Initiative**

During 2019, the Welsh Government launched the Hwb EdTech (HET) initiative, which over a 3-year period, will realise an investment of over £2 million (£900,000 over waves 1 and 2) throughout the school estate. The status of the ICP placed Blaenau Gwent in a strong position to further enhance the infrastructure in line with the first 3 waves of Hwb EdTech funding. Welsh Government stipulated that waves need to be signed off sequentially. Waves 1-3 of the Hwb EdTech Programme were completed on January 31st 2021. The Council and SRS are currently working towards the completion of Wave 4, having already replaced over 40% of end of life devices, which equates to 4,194 devices in total to date.

2.11 **Digitally Disadvantaged Learners (DDL)**

The Council are working with the Shared Resource Service and its schools, in order to undertake a fundamental review of both the provision and demand. The strategy to date, has involved the repurposing of end of life devices using Neverware software, which is carried out by the Shared Resource Services via the current SLA team. However, there is a licence cost involved with the Neverware product, which requires renewal on an annual basis. To date, funding has been obtained via a variety of sources

as follows: Welsh Government Hwb EdTech Programme, the Welsh Government Hardship Grant and the Council, in order to establish and deliver this project.

- 2.12 Device requirements for digitally disadvantaged learners are regularly reviewed in partnership with schools, with a view to identifying, rebuilding and distributing devices in line with demand. Currently, 1,359 devices and 161 Mi-Fi units have been distributed to digitally disadvantaged learners, the allocation and management of which, is undertaken by the schools in partnership with SRS and the Council.
- 2.13 **Sustainability**
It has been agreed that the Neverware licences for 682 of the current DDL device allocation, will be supported by the Welsh Government until July 2022. Additional devices over and above those funded by Welsh Government, will require a Neverware licences at a cost of £25 per device, per annum. The Council has been supporting connectivity for the Mi-Fi devices at a cost of approx. £2,135 per calendar month between Spring 2020 and Spring 2022. Ongoing costs associated with the Mi-Fi connectivity (the devices/units themselves have been purchased via the Council), will be taken over by schools from January 2022.
- 2.14 A review process commenced with schools during the spring-term, in order to inform the development of school device sustainability plans from January 2022. In addition to DDL device management, school-based device replacement sustainability planning is in development for implementation from April 2022. This will ensure that the device replacement strategy of at least 20% of end of life devices per annum, in line with the device audit and review process.
- 2.15 **SRS Service Level Agreement (SLA)**
The SRS SLA is coming to the end of the existing 3-year cycle (April 2019 – April 2022), and is currently under review in line with the Council's SLA programme. Headteacher and Governor engagement sessions are planned throughout January and February 2022.
- 2.16 The SRS Education Service aims to provide a comprehensive and all-inclusive offering that caters for the needs of the school and underpinned by the SLA agreement between schools and the SRS. The SLA provision covers:
- Management and monitoring of the ICT infrastructure and hardware in schools such as switches, access points and caching servers.
 - Management and monitoring of the central ICT infrastructure.
 - Day to day technical support, school visits and end user device management.
 - High quality technical advice, project planning and problem resolution.

- 2.17 The service has significantly moved forward over the last 18 months, reshaping to continue to deliver a high quality service despite the backdrop of the global pandemic. Blaenau Gwent schools have been supported with:
- The Hwb EdTech programme delivery – including the device roll-out project.
 - Design, implementation and review of the Digitally Disadvantaged Learners strategy.
 - A home working response team dedicated to meeting the needs of staff and students as we moved away from an education setting to ‘blended learning’.
 - Safeguarding schools against cyber threats.
 - Maintaining the integrity of associated systems.

Ensuring the platform and service provided is relevant to school’s needs.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** The Executive Committee accepts the report.

3.2 **Option 2:** The Executive Committee considers the report, and provides comments relating to the current monitoring and reporting processes.

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 within the Council’s Corporate Plan, of which the development and sustainability of school-based ICT provision is an essential component in relation to teaching, learning and pupil outcomes.

4.2 Welsh Government has developed the Digital Competency Framework (in line with the Donaldson report, and ‘A Curriculum for Wales – a Curriculum for Life’, 2015). The DCF establishes a framework for the delivery of ICT across the curriculum that will enable the development of a digitally skilled pupil population in the use of technologies, whilst preparing them for future progression routes and career pathways.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There are no new or additional budgetary implications for the Council associated with the ICT Strategy. There is, however, an agreed approach to infrastructure and device sustainability, which has previously been approved via the Council’s political process, and will be subject to continued monitoring and review. This involves:

- **Future infrastructure costs** will be funded by continuing the existing ISB top slice (£50,000) to generate further prudential borrowing. This will realise a further investment of circa £500,000.
- **Future device costs** will be funded via school budgets on an annual basis, in line with each individual school’s sustainability plan.

5.1.1 The SRS Service Level Agreement review is underway, with cost plans programmed for circulation among school leaders and governance, during the latter part of January 2022.

5.1.2 The ICP project was delivered on profile as was the Digitally Disadvantaged Learner Project. Welsh Government Hwb EdTech Funding received for Wave 4 to date, is as follows: £293,293.35. Education are presently awaiting confirmation of further funding to complete this Wave, having highlighted to Welsh Government our current status and future requirements.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

The primary risk is failure to deliver an effective ICT strategy in line with the WG Education Digital Standards, which facilitates and enhances delivery aligned to the Digital Competency Framework and the new Curriculum for Wales. However, this is largely mitigated due to the following:

- The Infrastructure and Connectivity Project has successfully been delivered, along with Waves 1-3 of the Hwb EdTech Programme. Wave 4 implementation is currently underway, and progressing as programmed and in line with the financial profile.
- Sustainability sessions have taken place in order to inform the device refresh and replacement programme, along with the development of the ICT Strategy. As a result, school's ICT Sustainability Plans have been drafted and will be reviewed in the early part of the Spring-term 2022, for implementation in the 2022/23 financial year.
- Strong progress has been made in line with the development of the Education ICT Strategy, which is scheduled for consultation in the Spring-term 2022, and implementation from September 2022.
- The Website/PSA issues continue to be subject to daily monitoring and escalation processes, with school's connectivity having been negatively affected – particularly during the latter part of the Autumn-term 2021. These issues have been escalated to the highest level, with WG having produced an action plan to address them. An effective communications plan is in place, which has been developed in partnership with SRS and neighbouring authorities, to ensure that schools are in receipt of up to date information in order to aid planning, engagement and delivery.
- There is continued engagement with school's via headteachers, regarding both the projects and individual school needs
- Device and infrastructure audits have been undertaken for all schools and are update annually, meaning that the Council, SRS and schools have an excellent working knowledge of provision.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

To date the following outcomes have been achieved:

- 1,359 devices and 161 Mi-Fi units have been distributed to digitally disadvantaged learners.
- 4,194 devices have been ordered to replace end of life devices throughout the school estate.
- 30 out of 30 school sites have been fully migrated and their connectivity addressed under the ICP. Infrastructure upgrades have been completed in 30 out of 30 school sites.
- Device and infrastructure audits have been completed and updated for all schools.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The primary outcomes associated with projects are driven by two key education objectives:

- Improved quality of teaching and learning via the development of a fit for purpose ICT infrastructure; and,
- Improved standards of education, pupil attainment and outcomes.
-

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

Stakeholder and end user needs and engagement are of paramount importance, and a key focus of the strategy and associated projects. The strategy will be subject to consultation, which will be used to inform development, delivery, progression and learning.

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

The projects and Blaenau Gwent ICT Strategy will be form part of a 10-year plan in addressing classroom delivery, ICT infrastructure, connectivity and device-based sustainability, throughout Blaenau Gwent school estate.

- 6.4.1 Shared Resource Service Wales SLA, will be reviewed with schools on a 3-yearly basis in line with the economic life of the assets. The SLA will ensure that SRS are able to provide the required level of support in managing the infrastructure and connectivity requirements of Blaenau Gwent's schools.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

The ICP and Hwb EdTech Projects, along with the strategy aim to address existing ICT issues and enhance provision, whilst ensuring parity of provision throughout the school estate and ensuring a sustainable strategic approach which creates consistency.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

Both the strategy projects require a collaborative approach in terms development, implementation, monitoring and progression. This is carried out via the ICT Strategy Group, Project, Welsh Government and SRS delivery team and strategic planning meeting.

6.7 Integration (across service areas)

The projects and strategy are being progressed and managed by a multi-disciplinary team with dedicated officers from key services, along with external partners.

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 report does not involve a strategic decision covered under the Act, however, the above assessment will be undertaken in line with production of the final strategy.

6.9b. Equality Impact Assessment

EqlA screening and impact assessments are carried out on a case by case basis.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 The projects are managed in accordance with Blaenau Gwent Corporate Project Management Framework and the PRINCE 2 methodology. Project development and implementation is managed via the Education Transformation Manager in partnership with the Shared Resource Service. Project monitoring is carried out via the Project Group, Programme Board and the ICT Strategy Group, along with regular reporting to Welsh Government. This process supports effective project management ensuring that both projects meet spend and delivery profiles.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Timeline

BLAENAU GWENT EDUCATION ICT STRATEGY

Timeline and Milestones 2020/21	
Planning and Preparation	<p>Agree the lead person for each section, along with the associated stakeholder groups – June 2021</p> <p>Final Delivery Strategy Workshop – Thursday 27th January 2021 (2pm-4pm)</p> <p>Draft Strategy to be produced by – Friday 18th February</p>
Consultation	<p>Consultation start date – Monday 28th February 2022</p> <p>Consultation with Education and Learning Scrutiny – Tuesday 1st February 2022</p> <p>Consultation end date – Monday 28th March 2022</p>
Consultation Out-turn and Review	<p>Out-turn Report taken via the ICT Strategy Group – April 2022</p> <p>Out-turn Report via Directorate Management Team – April 2022</p> <p>Out-turn Report via Corporate Leadership Team – April 2022</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee - TBD</p>
Political Approval	Executive Committee – TBD
Implementation	Implement the Education ICT Strategy 2022 - 2025 – September 2022

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 20

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2021/2022 (Quarters 1 and 2).**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**
Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director of Social Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
07.12.2021	16.12.2021	15.02.22			20.01.2022	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to highlight key points from quarters 1 and 2 of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2021/2022 (Appendix 1).

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The performance of the department is monitored throughout the financial year from April to March, with quarterly reports presented to Social Services Committee. At the end of the year a comprehensive self-evaluation of performance is undertaken to inform the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services.

2.2 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions.

3. Options for Recommendation

Option 1

The Executive accept the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2021/2022 (quarters 1 and 2)

Option 2

The Executive do not accept the report as provided.

The Social Services Scrutiny Committee at their meeting of the 20th January 2022 agreed Option 1.

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

It is a statutory responsibility of the Director of Social Services to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of Social Services and produce an Annual Report. The

Annual Report contributes and forms part of the Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF).

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

The Director's Annual Report identifies the pressures and budgetary implications for 2021/2022

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.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications with this report

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no staffing implications related in this report

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Detail is provided within the Director's Annual Report 2021/2022 (quarters 1 and 2).

Headline updates:

Children's

During quarter 1 2021/22 the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) saw a significant increase in the numbers of referrals received across all partners. Analysis of the data over the past two years has been undertaken to understand the increase in the numbers pre and post pandemic. This information has been included within a report identifying the impact that this increase is having on the service. The overarching message was that the number of referrals during the height of the Pandemic was higher than the referral rates in the previous year.

The formal consultation with Blaenau Gwent foster carers has been finalised and the outcome shared internally with senior management team, the Placement Team and with foster carers. The response rate was just under 17% with a higher response from the kinship foster carers. The consultation showed that the highest satisfaction rate was achieved, with support from the link worker and Placement Team (10 out of 10 from generic foster carers) and a significant increase of satisfaction with training and learning opportunities available (8.85/9.35 out of 10). An Action Plan has been developed and will be implemented until the next formal consultation due in March 2022.

The numbers of Children Looked After (CLA) continue to slowly but steadily decrease. Welsh Government has recognised the need to safely reduce the number of children coming into care and identified this as a priority area. In light of this, Integrated Care Fund (ICF) grant money was allocated to each local authority in

Wales, via the Regional Partnership Boards in April 2019, to invest in and develop services to safely reduce the numbers of children coming into care.

Adults

There continues to be ongoing strengthening links between the Community Resource Team (Gwent Frailty) and IAA team. This includes close working with GP colleagues to support pressures across the Health and Social Care sectors. Close work is also ongoing with other professionals such as Welsh Ambulance Service Trust, Primary and Secondary care colleagues to deliver proportionate assessments at the front door.

We have continued to develop a Hospital Hub at Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan to expedite safe discharge from hospital sites. Working with Gwent Local Authorities to support unnecessary hospital admissions to the acute sites by enhancing the support provided by the Gwent Home First Service. The hospital hub is focussing on a model of 'Discharge to Recover and Assess' whereby a patient undertakes an assessment at home as opposed to being assessed in hospital when it is deemed inappropriate.

A three-year Strategic Plan was published for The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GwASB) have published a three-year Strategic Plan covering the period 2020/21 and 2022/23. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has caused significant disruption to all services and communities across the region. Despite this, Gwent Safeguarding Board and Blaenau Gwent Safeguarding team have worked diligently to ensure that essential services have remained operational to provide support to the most vulnerable adults. We continue to plan for the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) legislation as a replacement for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and are delivering training as part of the Regional consortium in addition to increasing capacity at a local level.

Consultation has taken place with staff regarding the reconfiguration of preventative services including the Support Worker roles within IAA and Community Resource Team and the Community Connector roles. It is anticipated the new structure will be in place by April 2022. The new structure will be resilient and sustainable and not be reliant on grant funding. Within the new structure, a Senior Practitioner and Senior Therapist will be co-located within the IAA Team to be at the 'front door'.

6.2 *Expected outcome for the public*

The key theme of the Social Services and Well-being Act is to promote the well-being of people who need care and support. Within the annual report it is highlighted where the Directorate has worked closely with the public to improve service delivery and user outcomes. Reporting provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Directorate and ensure accountability.

6.3 *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.

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

The Annual report 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.

6.5 ***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.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Social Services work collaboratively across boundaries to benefit citizens requiring health and social care services across Gwent.

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

The purpose of the SSWBA is to foster integration between Health and Social Services. The report enables the department to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where it needs to be in the future to support a sustainable and viable service.

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

The workforce who deliver the functions of the SSWBA 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.

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

All service provision and functions that sit under social services are subject to socio economic disadvantages for example, low income, material and area deprivation. All programmes work towards addressing these disadvantages.

6.9b ***Equality Impact Assessment***

The overarching vision 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 The Annual Report for 2021/2022 (quarters 1 and 2) will be monitored via quarterly monitoring reports to the Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Report of the Director of Social Services



Social Services

Annual Report of the Director of Social Services

Quarter 1 and 2 (April 2021 to September 2021)



Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	3	<u>Adult Services Key Performance Indicators</u>	23
<u>Director's Overview</u>	4	<u>Case Studies</u>	24
<u>Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability</u>	6	<u>Managing Our Business - Workforce</u>	26
<u>How People Are Shaping Our Services</u>	7	<u>Budget 2021/22 - Quarter 1 & 2</u>	27
<u>Departmental Priorities</u>	8	<u>Social Services Corporate Risks</u>	28
<u>Quality Standards</u>	9	<u>Glossary</u>	31
<u>Directorate Priorities – How We Have Performed</u>	21	<u>Contact Details</u>	32
<u>Children's Services Key Performance Indicators</u>	22		

Introduction

Welcome to the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Social Services Report of the Director of Social Services. The Report covers the period April to September 2021. The Report is used to highlight the key areas of progress and improvements that the service has experienced and is developed in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, referred to as 'the Act' throughout this document.

The Act aims to provide the most radical change to the way in which Social Services is provided since 1948. It focuses on improving the well-being of people who come to Social Services for support. It is person centred and focuses on prevention and reducing the need for care and support. It recognises that responsibility lies not only within Social Services Departments, but also within the wider Local Authority and with partners (particularly Health and the Third Sector). The Act shares similar principles with a number of key national/regional strategies that are being implemented throughout the Council, in particular the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The Director of Social Services has a statutory requirement to publish an annual report in relation to the delivery of its functions, to evaluate its performance and also include lessons learned. This Report provides a mid-year review of the activity undertaken to date. A key aspect of the report is showing how the six Quality Standards have been implemented in relation to well-being outcomes.

Director's Overview

The previous 18 months has been the most significantly challenging in our life time. We have not witnessed a public health crisis of this scale and ferocity in over a 100years. The consequences of the global health pandemic mean we need to innovate and evolve the way we work and deliver services.

Although there has been a lot of emphasis on recovery, the virus is very much still prevalent within our community and community transmission continues to rise at the end of Quarter 2, although hospitals have been less impacted than in previous waves there continues to be significant pressure in the community managing the delivery of services within the continuing pandemic.

The situation we face has been exacerbated by workforce shortages which is impacting on our ability to function. It is widely accepted that key areas of social service functions are facing systemic challenges in a system that is facing unprecedented levels of complexity and demand. This, combined with fundamental workforce shortages, has exposed an already fragile situation.

Sustainability of the domiciliary care sector is of great concern to us, and the need to address the ability to recruit and retain this much needed workforce has never been more urgent. Especially given the competitive nature of the labour market at present, particularly our experiences of competing with the hospitality and retail sector. Some of this is related to the impact of immigration controls across sectors post Brexit. It is within these capacity constraints, that we are reliant on the willingness of the existing workforce to provide additional capacity over the coming winter months to best mitigate this situation. We know that our existing workforce are exhausted, reflected in the growing number of staff taking early retirement; we are minded that the wellbeing of our workforce is paramount and continue to explore mechanisms of support across the system.

We are experiencing increased complexity and frailty in older people from reduced prevention, medical care, increased waiting lists and a greater level of community isolation. We are aware this is a national problem and requires a national solution, however the shortage of staff in a number of sectors is impacting on pressures within hospitals, together with the pent up demand suppressed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Children Services we are also having difficulty in recruiting and retaining social workers in sufficient numbers across the sector, particularly in frontline children services. A growing mental health crisis in young people and in family instability post pandemic is also impacting on increased demand. We again are reliant on the willingness of the existing workforce to provide additional capacity to support this demand whilst we look at ways to increase our capacity but again this is a national problem.

On a positive note, we had a Care Inspector Wales assurance check between the 17th and 21st May 2021 and a letter of their findings on the 11th June 2021, there was positive feedback about how we had continued to keep people who need care and support and carers who need

support, safe and promoted their well-being during the pandemic. They were also very positive about our Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy and our continued downward trend of the number of children who were looked after by the authority.

It is important to note that the vast majority of our services did not stop and continued to be delivered throughout the pandemic, where we had to stop services these were within buildings and for safety and social distancing reasons, however as restrictions have eased then we have cautiously and safely re-introduced these through robust risk assessments which protect both users and staff. We may not be able to provide the same services we did pre-pandemic due to our responsibility to keep people safe and to mitigate the risk of further spread of the virus, but it is important we continue to look at new ways of delivery where we can meet identified needs.

Finally, I have to say a heartfelt 'thank you' to all frontline staff, managers and senior managers who have worked tirelessly over the last 18 months, many of whom are exhausted but continue to deliver services to our community. The last 6 months have brought some new and existing pressures to deal with, but as always they tackle these problems put in front of them and continue to deliver to the best of their ability, once again 'Thanks You!'



Damien McCann
Director Social Services



Cllr John Mason
Executive Member Social
Services

Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability

The structure of the Social Services Directorate provides clear levels of management and accountability. As a whole, the Council has a clear governance and accountability framework in place which all directorates are signed up to. This framework identifies how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create a 'golden thread'. This framework is complied with by Social Services who also have additional monitoring requirements as part of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The Social Services Directorate is subject to audit, inspection and review by the Care Inspectorate for Wales (CIW). On a quarterly basis the Director of Social Services and/or Heads of Adult and Children's Services meet with CIW to discuss achievements, performance and key challenges. The Directorate has one Executive Member who has portfolio responsibility for Social Services as a whole. The Directorate is scrutinised by the Social Services Scrutiny Committee. There is also a Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee which is a joint committee between the Social Services and Education and Learning Scrutiny Committees. Regular liaison meetings are held with the Directorate, the Executive Member and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

Blaenau Gwent continues to work with a wide range of partners where partnership opportunities provide better outcomes for local residents than the Council could achieve if working on its own. Social Services work in partnership with a variety of stakeholders including staff, residents and businesses. Some Social Services collaboration includes:

- Joint Partnership and Workforce Development Service with Caerphilly;
- South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS);
- South East Wales Emergency Duty Team;
- South East Wales Adult Placement Scheme;
- Gwent Frailty Programme Integrated Health and Social Care Teams;
- South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB);
- Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB);
- Gwent Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Partnership Team;
- South East Wales Improvement Collaboration -4C's (SEWIC);
- Gwent Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team;
- Greater Gwent Regional Partnership Board;
- Gwent Regional Collaborative (RCC) - Supporting People;
- Gwent wide agreement with National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to provide children's advocacy services; and
- Greater Gwent Workforce Development Board.

How People Are Shaping Our Services

The Social Services Directorate is committed to providing high quality services to its citizens and uses various engagement methodologies in order to understand if the service is making the intended outcomes or if amendments to service delivery need to be considered.

Throughout April to September 2021 a variety of engagement events have taken place from the following Teams:

- Flying Start
- Placement Team
- Fostering Team
- Supporting Change Team
- Families First

The Social Services Department is committed to providing high quality services to its users; however, despite best intentions, it is recognised that sometimes things can go wrong and the Social Services complaints procedure provides people with the opportunity to voice their concerns when they are dissatisfied with a service. The service uses learning from these complaints to improve services moving forward. The service also welcomes positive feedback and compliments and also uses this information to further improve services.

From 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021 four complaints were received:

- 2 x Children's Services - stage 1
- 1 x Children's Services - stage 2 (currently being investigated)
- 1 x Adult Services - stage 1

The numbers are very low in comparison with other local authorities. The Service proactively works with the complainant at an early stage to seek an immediate resolution to prevent the complaint from escalating and, as such, do not go through the complaints process. Social Services has received in excess of 30 initial complaints up to quarter 2 but with only 4 progressing to full investigation under the Social Services Regulations.

Departmental Priorities 2021/22

Departmental Priorities

- To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own well-being.
- 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 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 put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.
- To develop a partnership approach to reducing and alleviating the impacts of poverty.
- To ensure effective forward financial planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience.
- Ensure long-term sustainability is at the forefront of our thinking and decision-making, enabling us to work better with people, communities and each other, looking to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

Children's Services Priorities

- Page 448
- Enhance screening and IAA provision (Front door) – Children.
 - Support and encourage a cultural change across Children's Services by ensuring that community members have a say in what matters to them.
 - Implementation of the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy.
 - Implement the Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2017-2020.
 - Improve outcomes for Children Looked After.
 - To provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high quality placements.
 - All teams to ensure the children and young people of Blaenau Gwent are safeguarded.
 - Manage the Children's Services budget to ensure expenditure comes within budget.
 - Children's Services contributes to meeting the Sustainable Development Principles.
 - Ensure that all children in Blaenau Gwent have the best start in life (Early years)

Adult Services Priorities

- Enhance screening and IAA Adult Services support at our front door - in line with recommendations within the SSWB (Wales) Act 2014.
- Support and encourage a cultural change across Adult Services by ensuring that citizens have a say in what matters to them.
- Ensure that preventative support is available to citizens - promoting personal independence and reducing dependencies.
- Ensure that we provide / commission modern, high quality care and support provision that meet both current and future well-being needs of our citizens.
- To develop alternative models of support that promotes independence and supports well-being outcomes.
- Ensure that vulnerable adults are safeguarded.
- Develop and maximise opportunities for partnership working across Welsh Government Flexibilities Grants and Welfare Reform related programmes.
- Manage the Adult Services core budget and grant programmes to ensure that expenditure comes within budget.
- Adult Services contributes to meeting the Sustainable Development Principles.
- Support our local environment; the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and our duty as a Council and as an Adult Services Department

Quality Standard 1 - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.

Children's Services Self-Assessment – During quarter 1 2021/22 the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) saw a significant increase in the numbers of referrals received across all partners. Analysis of the data over the past two years has been undertaken to understand the increase in the numbers pre and post pandemic. This information has been included within a report identifying the impact that this increase is having on the service. The overarching message was that the number of referrals during the height of the Pandemic was higher than the referral rates the previous year. The total number and average monthly referrals has increased by 7.7%. Despite this overarching message, the report did not include detail of outcomes achieved. Therefore, a more detailed report is in the process of being written and will be completed by the end of November 2021 to consider how best to respond to this demand in the longer term.

Funding for additional resources in the IAA Team has been agreed until March 2022 from the Social Services Sustainability Fund. The long term plan is to make these additional posts permanent using the monies saved by reducing the numbers of children looked after. The rise in workload is presenting a challenge along with securing longer term funding for the additional resources in the team.

Children's Services has received feedback from the CIW who undertook an assurance check in May 2021. The following comments were made in relation to the outcomes culture in Blaenau Gwent and how the voice of the child is heard: *'Senior managers with staff and partners have worked hard to embed strength based outcomes focused 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 recognises 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.'*

The mentors programme continues with regular 6 weekly meetings where live cases are discussed and feed-back from families and children is included. In addition, the service as a whole continues to deliver interventions based on an outcomes/strengths based approach which has the voices of children and families at the centre of care planning. To ensure this approach is cemented in practice, each team holds group supervisions to hold reflective discussions on cases. The mentor groups still continue to meet monthly to share good practice across the service.

Assessment and care planning activity continues to promote the active voice, choice and control philosophy of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Outcomes focused and strengths based approaches to practice continue to be modelled, and NYAS remains an active partner in ensuring that children and their families engage in a meaningful way.

Quality Standard 1 - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.

Adult Services Self-Assessment –

In order to raise awareness of advocacy and increase demand into the service via the Gwent Access to Advocacy (GATA) helpline an awareness campaign was undertaken. However, the Covid-19 pandemic halted progress and made it difficult to establish the true need and demand for advocacy across Gwent. Advocacy providers and the GATA helpline have highlighted that referrals are now returning to pre-covid levels with a marked increase in parent advocacy relating to child protection cases. Data is still being collated, but an overall picture of advocacy provision within Gwent is now being developed. This will help to measure the success of the GATA pilot and inform an options paper for future advocacy commissioning, scheduled in early 2022.

In 2023 the Community Health Council will be replaced by a new 'Citizen Voice Body' which should provide the opportunity to co-ordinate the provision of advocacy support across the health board in order to strengthen the citizen's voice in relation to health and social care.

Quality Standard 2 - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support and relevant partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

Children's Services Self-Assessment – The formal consultation with Blaenau Gwent foster carers has been finalised and the outcome shared internally with senior management team, the Placement Team and with foster carers. The response rate was just under 17% with a higher response from the kinship foster carers. The consultation showed that the highest satisfaction rate was achieved, with support from the link worker and Placement Team (10 out of 10 from generic foster carers) and a significant increase of satisfaction with training and learning opportunities available (8.85/9.35 out of 10). An Action Plan has been developed and will be implemented until the next formal consultation due in March 2022.

Further work has been undertaken to progress the evaluation of the disability service, planned for May 2022. A longitudinal study by Worcester University is also planned to follow up the journey through transition from 14 to 24 years old. Both pieces of research will have involvement and contribution of children, young adults and families.

Families First hold mandatory reflective practice sessions on a monthly basis. These sessions are facilitated by the 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. Families First paperwork is also being reviewed to become more strength based.

Supervision is used to help support workers reflect on their practice, to reinforce an outcomes based approach when discussing families, including the 'what matters question'. This is then reinforced during monthly reflective practice sessions.

Quality Standard 2 - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support and relevant partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

Adult Services Self-Assessment – There continues to be ongoing strengthening links between the Community Resource Team (Gwent Frailty) and IAA team. This includes close working with GP colleagues to support pressures across the Health and Social Care sectors. Close work is also ongoing with other professionals such as WAST, Primary and Secondary care colleagues to deliver proportionate assessments at the front door. We have continued to develop a Hospital Hub at Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan to expedite safe discharge from hospital sites. Working with Gwent Local Authorities to support unnecessary hospital admissions to the acute sites by enhancing the support provided by the Gwent Home First Service. The hospital hub is focussing on a model of 'Discharge to Recover and Assess' whereby a patient undertakes an assessment at home as opposed to being assessed in hospital when it is deemed appropriate.

Integral to promoting independence and reducing dependency on traditional care agencies, is the further enhancement of the Care Management, IAA, Community Resource Team and preventative works streams. In order to meet anticipated health and social care demands over the winter period there has been an increase in the capacity of a number of projects including:

- Commissioning additional third sector support from the Age Cymru Hospital Discharge Team;
- Recruiting additional health care support workers to increase the assessments of those receiving double handed care packages with the aim of reducing these to single handed care with new state of the art equipment / beds etc.;
- Increased capacity of Pharmacy support to enable citizens to be independent with medication.
- Increased availability of Community Meals service to include a potential offer of tea parcels.
- Reviewing all current care packages as part of contingency planning;
- Increasing the capacity of the emergency care @ home / DASH service to respond to urgent care packages, including where there has been a rapid deterioration on a person's condition due to declining health, carer stress etc.;
- Scoping the potential to implement a night time response service in partnership with out of hours GP service, WAST, ABUHB and assistive technology providers; and
- Reviewing the dementia reablement service due to low numbers of referrals.

One Domiciliary Supported Living Service Provider has been placed under Provider Performance protocols and an Action Plan implemented; actions; monitoring; performance meetings and visits continuing to take place.

Meetings are held daily with ABUHB to discuss the escalating crisis across hospital sites. Where possible, to avoid lengthy in patient stays, owing to availability in care homes, assessments at hospital are being prioritised for social work assessments and the availability of domiciliary care packages.

Quality Standard 3 - Local Authorities must take appropriate steps to protect and safeguard people who need care and support and carers who need support from abuse and neglect or any other kinds of harm.

Children's Services Self-Assessment – The numbers of Children Looked After (CLA) continue to slowly but steadily decrease. Welsh Government has recognised the need to safely reduce the number of children coming into care and identified this as a priority area. In light of this, Integrated Care Fund (ICF) grant money was allocated to each local authority in Wales, via the Regional Partnership Boards in April 2019, to invest in and develop services to safely reduce the numbers of children coming into care.

It is important to recognise that the success of the CLA reduction strategy is dependent on a whole service approach. The robust preventative interventions delivered by Families First and Flying Start prevent needs from escalating into statutory services. The Information Advice and Assistance Team provides robust screening and initial assessment of all referrals ensuring the appropriate action is taken to meet needs. All of the Social Work Teams work exceptionally hard to keep families together and work with families using a strengths based approach. One of the key elements of the strategy is to promote workforce stability. However, operational teams are facing staffing shortages. It is accepted that this is a Wales wide position and there is no simple solution. The senior leadership team is addressing how best to respond to the staffing short-fall from multiple standpoints; a separate strategy has been devised to consider short, medium and longer-term solutions (and considering the opportunity to collaborate on a regional basis).

The new Corporate Parenting action plan for 2021/22 has been finalised and updates given in September 2021. The Corporate Parenting Board meets quarterly and each January the Social Services Scrutiny Committee receive a detailed report on progress of the Board, including an action plan and separate report for Education.

As part of the continuous improvement plan, work has been ongoing regarding the pathway for Part 5 investigations. In line with the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures, strategy discussions, in connection with a potential person in a position of trust, will be held by the safeguarding manager. The safeguarding manager will then assess if threshold has been met to proceed to a full strategy meeting. The chairing of these meetings will continue to be the responsibility of the service manager. The new pathway will be in place by 1st November 2021

Quality Standard 3 - Local Authorities must take appropriate steps to protect and safeguard people who need care and support and carers who need support from abuse and neglect or any other kinds of harm.

Adult Services Self-Assessment –

Members from the Safeguarding Team are being based within the IAA each week in order to further enhance the service at the front door.

A three-year Strategic Plan was published for The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GwASB) have published a three-year Strategic Plan covering the period 2020/21 and 2022/23. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has caused significant disruption to all services and communities across the region. Despite this, Gwent Safeguarding Board and Blaenau Gwent Safeguarding team have worked diligently to ensure that essential services have remained operational to provide support to the most vulnerable adults.

We continue to plan for the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) legislation as a replacement for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and are delivering training as part of the Regional consortium in addition to increasing capacity at a local level.

There has been since the end of quarter 1 a shortage of staff in particular within the domiciliary care sector, due to increased wages and competition from sectors such as retail and hospitality together with pent up demand suppressed during the COVID-19 pandemic which has created problems for service delivery. In order to manage the expected increases in demand over the winter period, a risk management tool is to be implemented to prioritise assessments and care packages. This will be undertaken in partnership with ABUHB and CIW.

Quality Standard 4 - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to learn, develop and participate in society.

Children's Services Self-Assessment – A Full review of all Legacy commissioned projects is underway. Financial management procedures are being used as the basis for the review, focusing on outcomes. No underspend has been identified at this point of the year which requires realigning, however, there has been notification from Welsh Government (WG) that the Children and Communities Grant (CCG) are to receive additional funds as part of the COVID recovery, therefore this process will be fully adopted to ensure the intended flexibility of the grant is honoured. The CCG board will agree services to be provided post April 2022 following the CCG Board in September 2021.

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.

A significant proportion of the preventative services delivered in Children's Services are dependent on grant funding which is allocated on an annual basis. If this funding was removed it would be a significant risk to the department.

Funding assisted places continues to be the priority of the Child Development Fund this is to enable children in need to experience learning from an early age. Take up of the offer is very positive.

Quality Standard 4 - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to learn, develop and participate in society.

Adult Services Self-Assessment – Consultation has taken place with staff regarding the reconfiguration of preventative services including the Support Worker roles within IAA and CRT and the Community Connector roles. It is anticipated the new structure will be in place by April 2022. The new structure will be resilient and sustainable and not be reliant on grant funding. Within the new structure, a Senior Practitioner and Senior Therapist will be co-located within the IAA Team to be at the 'front door'.

Capacity at Augusta House has been safely increased to support up to four guests. Work is continuing to develop new Augusta Promoting Independence Pods at the site. This project has been delayed due to complications with planning approval and increasing development costs, but the project has now secured additional funding from Welsh Government and should be open by Spring 2022. As part of these plans, the respite offer to young adults, as part of the transition planning from Children's to Adult Services will be increased.

The development of the enhanced Day Activities / Community Options Team has progressed well despite the ongoing COVID 19 pressures. Both the Lake View and Bert Denning buildings have safely re-opened but with limited sessional access which will hopefully increase during quarter 3. The outreach service is growing well and is successfully supporting citizens to meet their outcomes both in their own home or in wider community settings.

Quality Standard 5 - Local Authorities must support local people who need care and support and carers who need support to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

Children's Services Self-Assessment – As at 30th September 2021 Blaenau Gwent had 6 children placed outside Wales. This is an increase of 2 children (those children being made subjects of interim care orders and placed in the care of a parent). The remaining cohort of children placed outside Wales remains unchanged with 2 children placed with relatives in long-standing kinship placements and 2 in residential provision. Out of the 6 children living outside of Wales this is the long term plan for 2 of them as they are living with extended family members. The 2 new admissions to the care system have been placed with their parent as a result of a crossover between private and public law and it is envisaged that they will need to be looked after for a very short period of time. Therefore, in real terms, we only have 2 children looked after living outside of Wales.

The information above highlights that, as a Local Authority, Blaenau-Gwent bases care planning and placement decisions on the provision that best meets the child's identity and support needs with priority given to promoting a child's upbringing within their family of origin if it is safe to do so. The two young people placed in residential provision outside Wales are involved in focused planning to support a return to Wales in the future (if that is what matters to them) at an appropriate time for them.

In July 2021 Foster Wales was launched at the ADSS Summer Festival supported by the deputy minister Julie Morgan. This is a collaboration across all of the 22 local authorities in Wales working together to increase the number of local authority foster carers with the intention of ensuring all children who need to become looked after can remain within their local communities in high quality foster placements. This will allow children to remain in their schools and have easy access to spend good quality time with their families.

Quality Standard 5 - Local Authorities must support local people who need care and support and carers who need support to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

Adult Services Self-Assessment – Work is currently ongoing with Age Cymru to consider options for remodelling the service to increase capacity to deliver a 7-day emergency response team, working alongside the Domiciliary Care Brokerage service. This will then assist in responding to the current pressures in the domiciliary care sector by providing low level support to domiciliary care agencies and the in house emergency care @ home team (DASH). The service will also support hospital discharges and provide low level prevention support post discharge, to help alleviate the current demands facing hospitals and support people to return home with the support they require.

A submission to Welsh Government is being prepared for the anticipated Covid Recovery Grant and Winter pressures funding. The WG Carers Grant has also been utilised and provides additional support for unpaid carers through the offer of additional Community Options Outreach sessions and sessions with the Shared Lives Service.

The service is carefully monitoring the core budget and, in particular, the new ways of supporting people owing to COVID restrictions and having to offer alternative models of day support, increased staffing levels and increased infection control processes. The use of agency staff is also being monitored due to high levels of staff absences.

The Carers Lead Officer and GP Engagement Support Officers continue to support unpaid carers; providing information, advice, assistance and on referral carers assessments. They maintain a presence in GP Surgeries and in Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan and carers are also supported with one to one sessions and appointments. Data shows:

- 55 Carers supported with information only
- 29 Carers supported with advice and assistance
- 84 Referrals received from GP Surgeries
- 128 x 1:1 - Carers support sessions/appointments
- 30 x MDT meetings attended

A number of additional models of support for unpaid carers has been identified including increased support via the Community Options Outreach Team and Shared Lives Service. A number of enhanced support opportunities are also being developed, via the COVID recovery grant, to support unpaid carers including:

- Increasing the capacity of the Carers Engagement team from November 2021;
- Increased third sector support for carers;
- Blocked booking of respite beds to support carers;
- Increased availability of respite at Augusta House; and
- Carers 'wellbeing sessions' and peer support events.

Quality Standard 6 - Local Authorities must work with and support people who need care and support and carers who need to support to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

Children's Services Self-Assessment – The accommodation subgroup now meets every six months as all actions are on track. The team has met with Tai Calon to plan accommodation for care leavers every January. There is still a shortage of 1 bedroom flats. This has been considered for a number of years but there is no appetite from the Registered Social Landlord's (RSL's) to develop this provision as it limits tenancing options.

The team manager for the 14+ team is a regular attendee on the Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) and Accommodation task group. Actions from these groups are regularly monitored and reviewed. The CLA education coordinator has successfully completed the Trauma Informed Diploma to inform and improve practice for our CLA. A number of schools across Gwent have also completed this programme.

The Placement Team and Locality Teams undertake parallel planning to prevent drift and ensure children are moved onto their long-term provision as quickly as possible. Placement stability meetings take place for unstable placements and the learning from those meetings informs service and practice development.

Quality Standard 6 - Local Authorities must work with and support people who need care and support and carers who need to support to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

Adult Services Self-Assessment – The Service has recently recruited a Housing Support Worker who will be based within the IAA Team providing support to people with housing needs. The Community Resource Team continues to operate a home visiting service so that patients are supported to undertake preventative assessments to avoid the need for health or social care services. A pilot is being scoped, with colleagues from Public Health Wales (PHW) and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), on delivering early public health information to patients who are at high risk of requiring a hospital admission over the winter period. This will enable some people to stay well during winter and is based on a model of preventative support that has been successfully used in New Zealand to maximise independence in the older population.

The service is continuing to look at funding options in order to increase capacity and enhance Technology Enabled Care (TEC) provision via the Gwent TEC group. A SMART flat is in development, within a sheltered housing scheme, to demonstrate the range of TEC available to support people to continue to live independently within the community.

An increase of £828,401 has been received in our HSG allocation for 2021/22. These monies can now be used to commission services, as evidenced in the Commissioning Plan/Spend Plan, to meet the housing support needs of the citizens of Blaenau Gwent. The following services have been commissioned:

- Increase in the capacity of the current generic floating support service to meet both the current and future demand;
- Increase in the in-house housing first provision to support individuals with complex needs. Currently, the team are working with 5 individuals, and the introduction of the 9 units at Cosy Place, Brynmawr will enhance the scheme and allow the scheme to be delivered effectively;
- A Crisis Worker supporting people affected by domestic abuse has been recruited. The support worker will be able to provide timely support to people in a crisis and will also assist in reducing the current demand on the domestic abuse floating support service;
- There is a high demand for the mental health floating support service. The current service has been enhanced by commissioning a Senior Support Worker, a dedicated Benefits Support Worker and an Asset Coach providing strengths based housing related support which is person led; and
- An Assertive Outreach Service is now available offering support to people with substance misuse issues residing in temporary accommodation and HSG accommodation based schemes.

The service is in the process of commissioning the following service provisions:

- A young person's floating support service
- A Housing Support Worker co-located within Adult Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Team

The Greenacre Site development has been further delayed until Winter 2021. Pre tenancy support is currently being delivered to the tenants who will be moving into the new supported living bungalow on site.

Regular contact is being maintained with all care homes throughout Blaenau Gwent. Information in relation to staff vaccinations and testing is continuing to be collated and provided to ABUHB for analysis. Information on occupancy and bed vacancies is gathered and shared weekly on a regional basis, this includes updates on Homes which may be closed because of a COVID incident. The service is working in partnership with ABUHB to develop an Infection Control Support Team (IPAC) to support care settings with appropriate advice and guidance to prevent outbreaks.

Work is being undertaken with commissioned providers to review when care homes are requiring the support of the WAST within care settings and to seek alternative and safe support to avoid conveyancing residents to hospitals.

Departmental Priorities Quarter 1 and 2 – How We Have Performed

Priority Title	Self-Assessment
To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own well-being.	Children's Services - Amber Adult Services - Green
To work with people to make sure they have a say in achieving what matters to them.	Children's Services – Amber Adult Services - Green
To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater.	Children's Services – Green Adult Services – Green
To work with our partners including Aneurin Bevan Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support.	Children's Services – Green Adult Services – Green
To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities.	Children's Services – Green Adult Services – Green
To put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.	Children's Services – Amber Adult Services – Green
To develop a partnership approach to reducing and alleviating the impacts of poverty.	Children's Services - Green Adult Services – Green
To ensure effective forward financial planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience.	Children's Services - Green Adult Services – Green
Ensure long-term sustainability is at the forefront of our thinking and decision-making, enabling us to work better with people, communities and each other, looking to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.	Children's Services - Green Adult Services - Green

Children's Services Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator Description	Outturn 2018/19	Outturn 2019/20	Outturn 2020/21	Annual Trend	Performance 2021/22		
					Q1	Q2	Quarterly Trend
Number of children on Child Protection Register	56	61	52	↓	61	68	↑
Rate of Children on the Child Protection Register per 10,000 population	41	45	38	↓	45	50	↑
The percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR)	1.87%	6.1%	5.2%	↓	4.5%	7.5%	↑
The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year	277	295	219	↓	237	252	↑
Number of children looked after	222	208	200	↓	195	190	↓
Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 population	163	153	147	↓	143	140	↓
The percentage of looked after children who have had three or more placements during the year	8.11%	10.1%	9%	↓	9.2%	6.3%	↓
Proportion of children's services cases supported by preventative services	61.3%	54.6%	59.3%	↓	56.3%	55.2%	↑
Percentage of referrals signposted to preventative services (children)	N/A*	8.4%*	10.1%	↑	9.3%	7.7%	↑

- Reporting started in 2019/20 and routinely from quarter 2

Adult Services Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator Description	Outturn 2018/19	Outturn 2019/20	Outturn 2020/21	Annual Trend	Performance 2021/22		
					Q1	Q2	Quarterly Trend
Rate of delayed transfer for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 and over	1.16	0.98	N/A*	-	-	-	-
Rate of older people in residential & nursing home care per 1,000 population aged 65 or over	14.11 (196)	14.64 (204)	11.70 (166)	↓	11.91 (169)	12.40 (176)	↑
The number of adults (aged 18+) receiving a service in the community who receive a direct payment	127	120	111	↓	112	117	↑
Percentage of referrals signposted to preventative services (adults)	7.1%	17.9%	17.6%	↔	10.7%	13.2%	↑
Proportion of adult services cases supported by preventative services (New)	29.6%	33.8%	31.9%	↓	37.0%	34.9%	↓
Percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescales**	93.3%	95.3%	62.1%	↓	60.7%	47.5%	↓
Percentage of proportionate assessments that led to a more comprehensive assessment for care and support - adults	64.3%	14.4%	44.5%	↓	42.7%	45.6%	↓

* DToC figures are no longer reported by Social Services. March 2020 was the last time the figures were reported

** Percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescales – Change in Process from Oct 20 and new forms developed to capture more realistic data.

Case Studies

14+ Team and Supporting Change Team

Miss B

Miss B lived at home with both parents until they separated in her early teenage years. The family then came to an arrangement for Miss B to live with mum on weekdays and with dad on weekends. The separation between parents was not amicable and Miss B struggled with witnessing arguments. Mum would often support financially and emotionally but there was no help from dad and this caused significant tensions between family members. The family had a care and support plan put in place as there was a significant risk of family breakdown due to parents struggling to manage the young person's behaviour.

The Supporting Change Team completed work around relationship building and understanding what matters to the family. This led to the development of a family plan of direct work while utilising tools to assess the parent's motivation to change in addition to completing direct work with the young person around wishes and feelings, emotional literacy, consequences and expectations.

Miss B remains at home with mum and their relationship has improved. Tensions in the family have reduced and the parents now have a better understanding of Miss B's emotional needs and can better respond to these.

Miss V

Miss V was presenting as both verbally and physically aggressive towards her mother and younger brother. She was struggling to manage her feelings, particularly anger and also had several instances where she had been involved with the police. Mother and step father found it difficult to manage this behaviour. The family were supported to prevent the risk of a family breakdown as well as Miss V receiving educational support. Intensive support sessions were completed with Miss V, mother, step-father and grandmother. These sessions explored escalation, de-escalating strategies, PACE, managing emotions, fight/flight responses, upstairs and downstairs brain. Referrals have been made to New Pathways and NYAS following disclosures and education issues.

Following this support, the family are now able to manage Miss V's behaviours more effectively as there is a better understanding of her emotions.

Provider Services

Miss R

Miss R is a 31-year-old who has both physical and mental learning difficulties and epilepsy, requiring full support to manage her personal care needs. She is unable to communicate verbally but can communicate if unhappy or in pain. Miss R lives at home with her mother and father with mother being the main carer. Miss R uses a wheelchair, mobilised by others, and likes to spend most of her time out and on the floor.

The COVID 19 pandemic resulted in a lockdown of Provider Services. Miss R used to attend using the sensory room every day and the hydrotherapy pool once a week. These provided her with physical relaxation, exercise and mental stimulation as Miss R is able to mobilise her body more fully and independently. Throughout the lockdowns Miss R struggled with stimulation which impacted negatively on her overall mental well-being. However, since services have started to open back up Miss R is again able to access the hydro pool once a week and has stimulation with being around others and being in a different environment. Miss R continues to live at home with her parents who are able to have a break from their caring role whilst Miss R utilises the services at the Bert Denning Centre.

Mr T

Mr T is a 51-year-old who has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, epilepsy, is registered blind, has a mild form of asthma, eczema, anaemia, high blood pressure, a hernia, limited communication and has learning difficulties. Mr T lives at home with his mother and step-father.

Mr T's diagnosis of cerebral palsy and his age means that an exercise plan in the hydro pool is important to limit the tightening and shortening of his muscles, to maintain mobility and enable strengthening and relaxation of the muscles. Mr T's posture has deteriorated and the exercise plan also prevents his posture from deteriorating further.

Prior to the COVID 19 Pandemic, Mr T accessed the Bert Denning centre four days a week and once a week had access to the hydrotherapy pool. A referral was made to the Critical Care and Support Team for Mr T to continue to use the hydrotherapy pool twice a week to maintain his mobility and posture as well as having contact with others and enjoyment at the centre.

Managing Our Business - Workforce

This year remains an extraordinarily challenging period for the Social Care Sector. The workforce continues to deliver through resolve, dedication and commitment. Workforce Development, as a support service, strives to deliver whatever it can to enable the sector to fulfil that challenge skilfully and confidently. Blaenau Gwent has been actively maintaining delivery, within safe COVID 19 related guidance, including:

- Induction, registration and qualification of the registered workforce;
- Continued professional development for social workers;
- Preparation for the registration of the Adult Care Home workforce;
- Heightened focus on the Mental Capacity Act in practice whilst waiting for the Liberty Protection Safeguards codes of practice; and
- Facilitating an all-Wales response to training/refreshers for Appointed Officers (APSO).

Alongside continued sponsorship for managers to complete national programmes, Blaenau Gwent has also delivered local programmes:

- Managing an agile workforce;
- Supporting the workforce to access and use digital alternatives and new processes;
- Regulation and legal updates;
- Current essential skills such as management of the wellbeing of others and self; and
- Generic management skills.

The level of direct entry social work students requiring placements is lower than the authority commits to support. Blaenau Gwent has partnerships with four providers of the social work degree programme, and they continue to show a pattern of reduced attraction and recruitment. There are currently six unoccupied direct entry first year placements across Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly. In response the joint workforce development approach Blaenau Gwent continues to invest heavily in its Social Work Strategy and the internal sponsorship of employees to qualify as social workers. It remains the highest investor in Wales to maximise the Open University route to qualification.

Heightened focus and support have been awarded to newly qualified social workers, particularly those that qualified during 2020 and 2021. Workforce Development is engaged in numerous retention initiatives during this challenging period of sector retention and recruitment. A full programme of events has returned using a full range of learning options.

Activity to support the workforce respond to the digital transformation has included:

- Linking with Digital Communities Wales to provide both digital resources and learning opportunities;
- Supporting management to provide resources and the environment to enable staff to access digital learning; and
- Playing a leading role in an all-Wales local authority project securing a fit for purpose learner experience platform, with combined learning management, that will provide equal access to local authority employees and non-employees who provide a service to the community.

Benefits continue to be realised for and by the workforce through the scale of opportunity possible due to the joint workforce development service model hosted by Blaenau Gwent in partnership with Caerphilly.

Budget 2021/22 - Quarter 1 & 2 (April 2021 to September 2021)

Budget Area		Budget	Forecast	Variance	
		£	£	£	%
1	Commissioning & Social Work	3,727,710	3,546,738	180,972	4.85
2	Children Looked After	7,428,140	6,876,898	551,242	7.42
3	Family Support Services	188,600	199,603	(11,003)	-(5.83)
4	Youth Justice	232,920	228,118	4,802	2.06
5	Other Children's and Family Services	2,340,130	2,297,228	42,902	1.83
6	Older People Aged 65 and Over	6,672,430	6,260,780	411,650	6.17
7	Adults under 65 with Physical Disabilities	41,800	23,577	18,223	43.60
8	Adults under 65 with Learning Disabilities	3,306,890	3,165,832	141,058	4.27
9	Adults under 65 with Mental Health Needs	531,730	522,314	9,416	1.77
10	Other Adult Services	392,250	391,155	1,095	0.28
11	Community Care	15,373,320	15,291,024	82,296	0.54
12	Support Service & Management Costs	881,130	812,132	68,998	7.83
13	Corporate Recharges	5,212,400	5,210,027	2,373	0.05
Grand Total		46,329,450	44,825,426	1,504,024	

Social Services Corporate Risks

Risk Description	Quarter 2 Update (July – September 2021)	Status
<p>CRR 4 - Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent</p>	<p><u>Quarter 1 Progress (April – June 2021)</u> Safeguarding referrals have continued to increase in the first quarter following the return to face to face teaching after the February half term in quarter 4 in 2020/2021. There has also been an increase in the number of referrals in adults safeguarding compared to this time last year. There were more cases of abuse within the persons own home than previous quarters which may be a result of the pandemic and lockdowns. We are currently working on a safeguarding training programme which can be implemented in quarter 2 of the business plan together with the updated Corporate Safeguarding policy. High referral rates from the police and police force policy is such that any call outs undertaken where children are present at the address will result in a safeguarding referral being made. We are currently working with the Police to try and address whether this is necessary. Training for staff on Domestic Abuse is 70% complete and the remaining 30% will need to be trained face to face due to difficulties with online training (e.g. without access to ICT) this has proved difficult due to COVID 19 restrictions.</p> <p><u>Quarter 2 Progress (July – September 2021)</u> Referrals have increased with the easing of lockdown but it remains to be seen whether these will materialise into cases where further action is needed. A programme has been put together for Safeguarding training which was to be implemented in Q2, this is delayed as queries have been raised by CLT around delivery and cost. Safeguarding Policy has been updated but as linked to the training programme has not been progressed via the political process to date. Q2 has seen increased pressures within health and social services relating to employees taking annual leave after a difficult period during the pandemic, increase in numbers of staff self-isolating, staff off sick and difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in the domiciliary care and residential sector. This will be the subject of a separate risk on the Corporate Risk Register but it is highly likely that these pressures could have a direct effect on safeguarding arrangements and this risk will need to be kept under close review as we move into Q3.</p>	<p>High</p>

Risk Description	Quarter 2 Update (July – September 2021)	Status
<p>CRR20 - There is a risk that increasingly complex needs and demand for services provided by Social Services and Education, in particular for Looked After Children, will put further significant pressure on the Council's budget.</p>	<p><u>Quarter 1 Progress (April – June 2021)</u></p> <p>There continues to be an increase in referrals in the first quarter following the return to face to face teaching after the February half term in quarter 4 in 2020/2021. We have started to implement the revised Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2020 to 2025 following its agreement by Executive. We are also working with Education to implement the new ALN reforms. The numbers of children looked after continues to fall during the first quarter of 2021/22, with the number now standing at 195 from 200 at the end of quarter 4. This remains a high risk given the gradual reduction of COVID-19 restrictions and the possibility of more children at risk coming to light over the coming months.</p> <p><u>Quarter 2 Progress (July – September 2021)</u></p> <p>Number of children looked after continues to reduce (187 as at 21/09/21) however there is a risk that the rise in referrals may result in more children coming into care. In adult services, cases are more complex and needs of the older population are at a higher level than anticipated as early intervention and preventative work has not been possible due to the pandemic. Discussions are ongoing in respect of a future collaboration with Caerphilly for the provision of legal services in respect of children's services in particular. It is anticipated that this will reduce the budget for legal services which is high in particular in respect of children's services due to currently being outsourced due to a lack of capacity within the Council's legal services.</p>	<p>High</p>

Risk Description	Quarter 2 Update (July – September 2021)	Status
<p>New Corporate Risk (links to SS10/12) - There is a risk that identified staffing pressures in social services will result in an inability to deliver services particularly in provider services and domiciliary care.</p>	<p>This risk is to reflect the acute pressures in the Health and Social Care System due to a “perfect storm” of multiple contributing factors. Increases in hospital numbers for heart attacks and strokes, increases in mental health issues and an increase in the deconditioning and frailty of our older population due to the period of inactivity as a result of the pandemic. This is alongside a workforce who are exhausted, staff who have COVID-19 due to opening up or been ‘pinged’ and self-isolating, Staff who are exhausted and are off sick which when coupled with the fact we are unable to recruit particularly to the domiciliary care sector and residential sector nor retain existing staff (many leaving for easier jobs in the hospitality or retail sectors and more money) and shortages of staff in hospitals and within the community e.g. nurses, occupational therapists, district nurses, rapid nurses. The Council is struggling to deliver existing packages because of shortages of staff and will struggle to deliver new package to new people coming into the system. Although BG has not currently had any hours returned to us, we are aware many of our neighbouring authorities have and it would seem to only be a matter of time before this occurs. The Gwent Strategic Co-ordination Group (GSCG) chaired by Chief Superintendent Tom Harding has been convened as a result of the blue light services concerns about the problems they were experiencing (i.e. the hour’s ambulances were stuck outside hospitals and therefore unable to answer calls and police having to transport people to hospital). A Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) Chaired by Chief Executive Paul Matthews (Monmouthshire CBC) has been convened by the GSCG. The remit is to pull together representatives from all parts of the system and determine a set of interventions that will help (in the short term) to alleviate pressure and commence a more detailed piece of work to look at all system components and re-imagine / re-design how we can work more effectively so that this situation does not continue to re-present on a cyclical basis.</p>	<p>Critical</p>

Glossary

ABUHB – Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

ACRF – Annual Council Reporting Framework

ADSS - Association of Directors of Social Services

BG – Blaenau Gwent

CCG – Children & Communities Grant

CIW – Care Inspectorate for Wales

CLA – Children looked After

CRT – Community Resource Team

DoLS – Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

GATA – Gwent Access to Advocacy

GP – General Practitioner

GWASB – Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board

HSG – Housing Support Grant

IAA – Information, Advice and Assistance

ICF – Integrated Care Fund

LA – Local Authority

LPS - Liberty Protection Safeguards

NYAS – National Youth Advocacy Service

PHW – Public Health Wales

Quarter 1 – April to June

Quarter 2 – July to September

Quarter 3 – October to December

Quarter 4 – January to March

RCC – Regional Collaborative Committee

RISCA - Regulation and Inspection Social Care Act

SEWAS – South East Wales Adoption Service

SEWIC – South East Wales Improvement Collaboration

SEWSCB – South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board

SGO - Special Guardianship Order

SLA – Service Level Agreement

SPACE - Single Point of Access for Children’s Emotional Well-being and Mental Health

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

TESSA - therapeutic educational support services in adoption

The ‘Act’ or SSWB Act – Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

WAST – Welsh Ambulance Service Trust

WG – Welsh Government

Contact Details

If you require any further information or have any feedback you wish to share, please:

Write to us:

Director of Social Services
Annual Council Reporting Framework
Social Services Department
Anvil Court
Church Street
Abertillery
NP13 1DB

Call us:

(01495) 311 556

Email us:

info@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Visit our Website:

www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Agenda Item 21

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.02.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 16.02.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **2nd March 2022**
Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services and Education – 1st April to 30th September 2021**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services
Cllr Joanne Collins, Executive Member Education**
Report submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director Social Services
Lynn Phillips, Corporate Director 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)
17.12.21	23.12.21	15.02.22			21.01.22	02.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Executive Committee with safeguarding performance information and analysis from Children's Social Services and Education from 1st April 2021 to the 30th September 2021. Monitoring and reporting systems are well developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.

The information provided will enable members to identify safeguarding trends and areas within the Authority that require further development to improve safeguarding practice in order to meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people within Blaenau Gwent.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report contains safeguarding information from Social Services from 1st April 2020 – 30th September, 2021 and Education information from 1st April to 31st July 2021.
- 2.2 This report is written in order to provide a greater focus on the safeguarding agenda. The Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members agreed for safeguarding information to be reported to a Joint Social Services /Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee after each school term.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 Option 1

The Executive Committee accepts the approach and information detailed in the report provided.

Option 2

The Executive Committee do not accept the approach and information detailed in the report provided.

The Joint Education and Learning and Social Services (Safeguarding) Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 21st January 2022 agreed Option 1.

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

The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the Council's Corporate Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Improvement Plan
- Single Integrated Plan
- Corporate Risk Register
- Safe Reduction of CLA Strategy
- Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy

Social Services work to a number of regional and national safeguarding procedures which can be located on the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board website: <http://sewsc.org.uk>

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There is no impact on the budget both in the short and long

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The Directorate Risk register identifies the highest risks for the Social Services Department. These are monitored as part of the quarterly report of the Director of Social Services.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data (see Appendix 1)**

6.2 **Social Services**

6.2.1 **Referrals to Social Services**

Figure 1:1 Shows the number of referrals made to social services. The chart demonstrates a slight increase in referrals between Q3 (1,363) and Q4 (1,368), a significant increase in Q1 (1823), with a decrease in Q2 (1578). The data indicates no levelling off of referral rates although there was a slight decrease in Q2. However, despite this, referrals remain high across all Q's compared to previous years. The referral rates are currently being monitored and similar pictures have been observed across neighbouring authorities.

Figure 1.2: Shows the source of the referrals. As in previous quarters, police remain the highest referring agency (35% in Q3, 36% in Q4, 35% in Q1 and 44% in Q4), followed by Health (15%) and followed by Individuals (10%).

Figure 1.3: shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. During Q4 the number increased to 1055 from 981 in Q3, further increased to 1404 in Q1 and decreased to 1234 in Q2. Again, this situation continues to be monitored regularly

6.2.2 **Youth Services**

Figure 1.4: Shows the numbers of youth service referrals over the past 6 quarters. The figure shows an increase in referrals between Q3 (7) and Q2 (11).

The Youth Service is an active partner on the Space Wellbeing Panel, they sit on the Steering Group as part of the Families First model and they actively participate in the South East Wales Safeguarding Local Network meetings. Multi agency working and close partnership arrangements with the Youth Service ensure that safeguarding is prioritised. All Youth Service staff are expected to keep up to date with safeguarding trainings offered by Gwent Safeguarding Board and trained secured by the Youth Service ensuring that knowledge of issues that impact on safeguarding is current and up to date.

6.2.3 **Child Protection**

Figure 2.2: Gives a summary of the number of children on the child protection register and the numbers of registrations and deregistration is also included. There were a total of 68 children on the child protection register in Q3 to 33 families. This was a decrease of 8 from the previous quarter. The numbers of children on the child protection register decreased by a further 16 to 52 in Q4 involving 24 families.

Q1 saw 61 children on the child protection register to 30 families, which was an increase of 9 from the previous quarter. The number of children increased to 68 in Q4 to 30 families.

68 in Q3 (2020)
52 in Q4 (2021)
61 in Q1 (2021)
68 in Q2 (2021)

Children's services have been using a strengths based model of assessment and intervention and this has proved very successful in how social workers intervene with families. The strengths based model requires assessments to consider what is working well within the family and what matters to families in respect of change. Risk management is a contributing factor in the assessments and is having a very positive outcome when engaging with all family members. Whilst we have seen a small rise in Q2 there is nothing to suggest the LA need to review its practice as the numbers have remained stable throughout all the Q's.

Figure 2.5: shows the average time a child is on the CPR. The Social Services senior management team review all those children on the CPR for 12 months or longer to ensure there is no unnecessary drift. The data provided does not give rise to concern and is as expected.

Figure 2.6: gives the breakdown on both initial and review conferences. They show the numbers of conferences held the number of families involved and the outcomes in terms of registered or not.

The numbers of initial conferences held in Q3 decreased to 28 children to 12 families. Of the 28 children subject to child protection case conference 27 were registered.

53 review conferences were held in Q3. 26 children continued registration with 27 who ceased to be registered.

The numbers of initial conferences held in Q4 decreased to 13 children to 8 families. Of the 13 children subject to child protection case conference 12 were registered.

55 review conferences were held in Q4. 29 children continued registration with 26 who ceased to be registered.

The numbers of initial conferences increased in Q1 to 24 children to 14 families. Of the 24 children subject to child protection case conference 20 were registered.

33 review conferences were held in Q1, 21 children continued registration with 12 children who ceased to be registered.

The numbers of initial conferences held in Q2 increased to 26 children to 13 families. Of the 26 children subject to child protection case conference 24 were registered.

41 review conferences were held in Q2 and 24 children continued registration with 17 who ceased to be registered.

Figure 2.7: shows the number of initial conferences held within timescales. There has been consistent practice in this area throughout, Q3, Q4, and Q1 with 100% of conferences held within timescales. Q2 saw a slight decline to 96% of conferences held within timescales.

Figure 2.8: relates to review conferences and the percentage held within timescale shows 100% for Q4 and Q1, 96.2% for Q3 and 95.1 for Q2. The data provided does not give rise to concern.

6.3 **Education Information**

6.3.1 **Overview**

Blaenau Gwent Council and Education Directorate is committed to ensuring that Safeguarding in Education processes are robust, fit for purpose and are being consistently applied. Through this report Scrutiny Members are provided with an overview of the extensive work that is undertaken in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements give no cause for concern and fulfil the requirements as set out in the Estyn framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES). Moving forward the Directorate intends to review the data presented to this committee and as such it is likely that further reports will encapsulate a broader data set which will include training take up, safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable learners etc.

April 2021 to July 2021

Schools continued to be impacted by the pandemic and whilst they have remained predominantly open, some settings have been impacted by a degree of closure/blended learning, which has continued to impact upon the business as usual activities. However, Members will be aware that schools have continued to respond to the emergency and below is a more detailed report capturing the majority of data sets.

6.3.2 **Bullying Incidents and Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI)**

6.3.3 **Numbers of restrictive physical interventions**

Systems are in place within the Local Authority to gather incidents when Restrictive Physical Interventions (Figure 4.1) are used in school to manage pupils' behaviour. Following each incident, the school is required to record the incident in a Bound and Numbered book and complete an incident form. The incident form is sent to the Local Authority Education Directorate where it is recorded on a central recording system.

Figure 4.1: number of RPIs used in school during the Summer Term 2021.

The number of RPIs reported to the Local Authority in the Summer term was 15 This is an increase compared to the figures reported since the onset of Covid-19 in March 2020. During the first lockdown period, in the summer term of 2020, there were 2 reported RPIs, 11 during the autumn term 2020 and 3 during the second lockdown period in the spring term 2021. Given the disruption to school operations during this period, it is not possible to make comparisons with previous data.

In June this year, the Equality and Human Rights Commission has published their report: 'Restraint in Schools inquiry: using meaningful data to protect children's rights'. The inquiry looked at:

- whether and how schools are collecting, recording and using data on their use of restraint and restrictive interventions
- what schools can learn from places that routinely record, monitor and analyse this data and use it to make changes to their approach

The commission has also published case studies of good practice for schools to use.

Termly monitoring of incident forms is undertaken by the Safeguarding in Education Manager to ensure the use of physical intervention is appropriate.

6.3.4 **Numbers of bullying incidents reported which have led to exclusions:**

Bullying has been identified by children and young people as a significant issue they face. An anti-bullying strategy has been developed by the Education Department.

Figure 4.2 shows that between April 2021 and July 2021 there were no exclusions from school where bullying was recorded as the primary reason for the exclusion. There have been no exclusions from school for bullying since the summer term 2019.

6.3.5 **Quality Assurance Meetings**

The Education Directorate has developed a quality assurance process across Local Government Education settings (LGES) which has been in place since September 2017.

Quality assurance visits to Local Government Education Settings (LGSES) have included pupil and staff voice through pupil and staff discussions, scrutiny of training, policy, safe recruitment practice, and record-keeping of concerns. A "dip test of activity" is undertaken by the Safeguarding in Education Manager to test the robustness of the safeguarding systems and to ascertain a level of assurance. As a result of COVID disruption, these visits have been amended and now take the form of virtual meetings.

Members will be aware through a report to this Committee that this protocol was recently reviewed and learning from visits and broader safeguarding issues has continued to inform the focus of the Safeguarding in Education Managers work.

During the Summer Term 2021, 6 quality assurance meetings took place. Of these 4 were with schools, 1 with Early Years, Childcare and Play and 1 with Cleaning. 3 quality assurance visits had been projected for this period. No significant safeguarding issues were identified during these meetings, providing reassurance that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Schools have also engaged well with the termly meeting for designated safeguarding persons, with 88% of schools being represented at the meeting in the Summer term.

6.3.6 **Estyn Judgements**

Scrutiny members will be aware of the Estyn framework for schools which changed in 2017, and that Inspection area 4 covers the safeguarding element. In arriving at a judgement for this Inspection area within 4.3, inspectors will consider whether the schools safeguarding arrangements are effective and give no cause for concern. In coming to a judgment, inspectors will consider a multitude of evidence such as;

- whether the schools safeguarding arrangements protect all children and young people;
- the arrangements for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers;
- how well the school promotes safe practices and a culture of safety;
- whether the school complies with statutory guidance in discharging its safeguarding functions;
- the arrangements of the management of bullying, harassment and discrimination, and the reporting of physical interventions;
- how well the school keeps pupil safe from radicalisation;
- arrangements for the provision of pupils educated off site and;
- the health and safety of the school buildings and site.

Figure 4.4: - provides an overview of the Estyn judgements for schools inspected under the new arrangements from September 2017 up until March 2021. Estyn inspections have been suspended during the pandemic and therefore there is no change in the data in this report. However, moving forward it is anticipated that Estyn visits will commence early in 2022, with monitoring visits for schools in a category already taking place.

The table evidences that care support and guidance arrangements in nearly the majority of schools (5/9) are good or better, with 4 schools receiving adequate judgements. All schools inspected during the period were

assessed as having suitable arrangements for safeguarding in place that meet requirements and give no cause for concern

6.3.7 **Operation Encompass**

Figure 4.5 - shows the number of domestic abuse incidents reported during the period. During the period there were 296 occurrences involving 371 children. From the data received for this period, it is not possible to break this down further to understand the age profile of the children affected as to whether there is any identifiable trend involving children of a particular age group, which may provide further context in respect of the incidents reported.

Of these (371) children, 19.9% experienced repeat incidents during the period.

Risk is assessed on a case by case basis by a professional against a risk tool known as the Dash checklist. The purpose of the Dash risk checklist provides a consistent and simple tool for practitioners who work with adult victims of domestic abuse in order to help them identify those who are at high risk of harm and whose cases should be referred to a MARAC meeting in order to manage their risk.

For this period the Police have not provided the breakdown of incidents on a risk basis (high to Low risk)

6.3.8 **Compliance Reporting**

The Police compliance target for recording the school name on the PPN is 90%. At the end of the current period the compliance rating in Blaenau Gwent has improved to a rate of 76.7% from 75%.

6.3.9 **Elected Home Educated (EHE):**

Elective home education (EHE) is when parents decide to provide home based education for their child rather than sending them to school. Home educated children are therefore not registered at mainstream or special schools.

There has been an increase in numbers over this period due to the Covid pandemic and when schools returned in September 2020 there were a number of parents that deregistered their children stating Covid anxiety. Other reasons for elective home education include cultural reasons and mental health issues.

In Blaenau Gwent we have worked closely with our elective home educated cases to ensure that home visits are undertaken to offer support, advice and guidance., At the time of PLASC on 26th January 2021, 75% of families in Blaenau Gwent had received a visit in the last 12 months (16th January 2020 – 26th January 2021) compared to the Wales average of 53%. It is

anticipated that the appointment of an EWO for elective home education, which is funded by WG, will increase the number of visits undertaken.

From a safeguarding point there are bi-monthly meetings between education, health, social services and police to discuss any new electively home educated pupils and those families that refuse home visits.

Figure 4.6 - The total number of children electively home educated as of 31st July 2021 was 102. At the same point in 2020 the number was 55.

Figure 4.7 - sets out the number of secondary age pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the Autumn, Spring and Summer term. There is an increase of 7 pupils coming out of school when compared to the data for the previous term.

Figure 4.8 - sets out the number of additional pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the Autumn, Spring and Summer term. There is an increase of 10 pupils coming out of school when compared to the data for the previous two terms.

Figure 4.9 - provides a breakdown by year group of EHE pupils. The numbers of pupils in KS4 is the highest which is similar to the pattern across Wales where KS4 is the highest.

Members should note that there are appropriate processes in place to monitor elective home education with formal visits held to check on the suitability of education. However, whilst the number of EHE pupils overall has seen an increase this is similar to the rest of Wales.

6.4 Corporate – Education

6.4.1 DBS Escalations

Figure 5.1.1 provides the DBS escalations for the period. Within the Education Directorate there are well established escalation process that are in place to manage any noncompliance issues with DBS or registration with EWC. This information along with other data such as training uptake, policy adoption etc. is held on the Directorate Safeguarding matrix that is monitored by the Safeguarding in Education Manager who produces a Fade report for consideration by Education DMT on a termly basis.

6.4.2 VAWDASV

Figure 5.3.2 - provides the training uptake for Group 1 training by schools. This confirms that the current level of take up is 73%

VAWDASV training compliance is regularly shared with education settings and advice provided regarding training completion.

7.1 Expected outcome for the public

Those children who are assessed to be at risk of harm are protected and safeguarded, and that the Local Authority adheres to legislation regarding statutory intervention.

7.2 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental Safeguarding Leads meetings have been reconvened in 2021 and will help to ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any emerging issues or trends within safeguarding.

Termly meetings also take place with the Safeguarding Leads from all the schools and monthly meetings take place between the safeguarding team and lead education staff.

The SEWSCB local Safeguarding Network group also reviews the safeguarding information to ensure all partner agencies are as fully aware as possible.

7.3 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) enables Social Services to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future.

7.4 Preventative focus

The work undertaken by the Social Services Directorate looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having a proactive rather than reactive approach to service planning can also help with planning resources.

Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to Scrutiny Committee enables members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

7.5 Collaboration / partnership working

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and its sub groups ensure a multi-agency collaborative approach to safeguarding. Blaenau Gwent fully participates in the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

Additionally, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures each department has safeguarding leads and these meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority. The Leisure Trust lead also participates in this meeting.

Throughout the Q's partnership working with the police and statutory partners continued to progress. The Hub model is working well, with multi agency safeguarding meeting happening in a timely manner

7.6 **Integration (across service areas)**

All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

EqIA

N/A

8. **Monitoring Arrangements**

The Local Safeguarding Network Group is a sub group of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board. This group is made up of multi-agency representation from within Blaenau Gwent who monitors and reviews the safeguarding information and performance. This group has direct links with the Youth Forum to ensure the voice of the child is fully considered and heard on safeguarding issues.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

*Appendix 1 – BG Safeguarding Reporting Template April 2021-Sept 2021
Final*

Appendix 2 – Anti Bullying Strategy

This page is intentionally left blank

Safeguarding Performance Report

Social Services
1st April 2021 to
30th September 2021

Education
Summer Term 2021

Corporate Services
1st April 2021 to
30th September 2021



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

00 | Table of Contents

00

Foreword
Community Profile - Demographics

01

Referrals to Social Services

Number of referrals received by social services
(on new and closed cases)
Percentage of referrals received by source
Additional Multi Agency Referrals (on open cases)
Referrals from Youth Services

02

Child Protection

Number of children on the Child Protection Register
Child Protection Register Summary
Categories of Abuse
Age Breakdown

Average Length of Time on Register
Child Protection Conferences
Initial Child Protection Conferences
Review Child Protection Conferences

03

Referrals from Education

Contacts by Source (Primary)
Contacts by Source (Secondary)
Contacts by Source (Other)

04

Education

RPI Incidents
Bullying Incidents leading to Exclusions
Quality Assurance Meetings
Estyn Judgements
Operation Encompass

Elected Home Education (EHE)
School Exclusions

05

Corporate

DBS Compliance
Corporate Training
Risk Register
Regulatory Proposals

Purpose of the report

The council is committed to creating an environment which enables people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities whilst feeling safe and protected.

We believe that all children, adults and young people have the right to be safe from harm and it is a corporate objective to put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.

We recognise our responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and this includes the contribution we make to working together with other agencies so that all children and young people reach their full potential and we continue to look after the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The purpose of this report is to provide safeguarding information that is recorded and monitored to ensure that we are indeed delivering this objective.

Monitoring and reporting systems are well-developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.

Performance information is collated from Social Services, Organisational Development and Education information systems which identifies activity, demands and trends of data. This includes a number of items that are statutory requirements as part of the Welsh Government Performance Framework.

The report includes information on the following:

- Referrals received and their outcomes
- Children who are being safeguarded and analysis
- Quality assurance arrangements with education settings
- Broader issues within education that impact upon safeguarding
- Corporate progress on recommended proposals for improvement
- DBS Compliance
- Safeguarding Corporate Risk Register

This report will be shared with Senior Management Teams and presented to the Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee for Social Services, Education and Active Living.

00 | Community Profile - Demographics

Community Profile



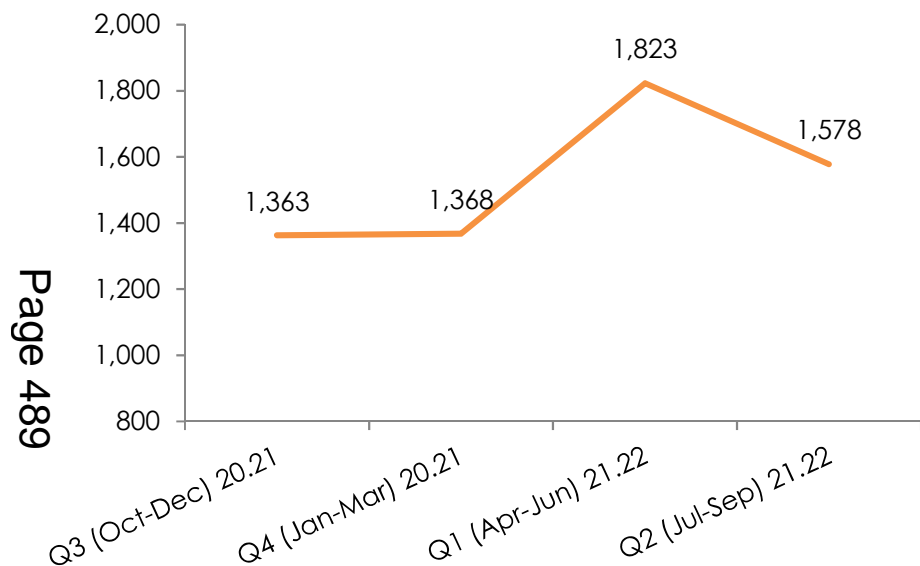
– key benefit claimants November 2016 – 20.3% in Blaenau Gwent compared to all Wales level of 14.4%.

- Total Population: **70,020** Number of 0 – 17 year olds: **13,619** (2020 Population Estimates)
- Number of Open cases to Children's Social Services as at 31st December 20: **1,108**
- Number of pupils attending primary schools: **5,911**
- Number of pupils attending secondary schools: **3,262**

- 45% of Blaenau Gwent's local areas are amongst the top 20% deprived areas in Wales. (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)
- The proportion of benefit claimants amongst people of working age was higher in Blaenau Gwent than the proportion across the comparable authorities (working-age client group)

01 | Referrals to Social Services

Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services



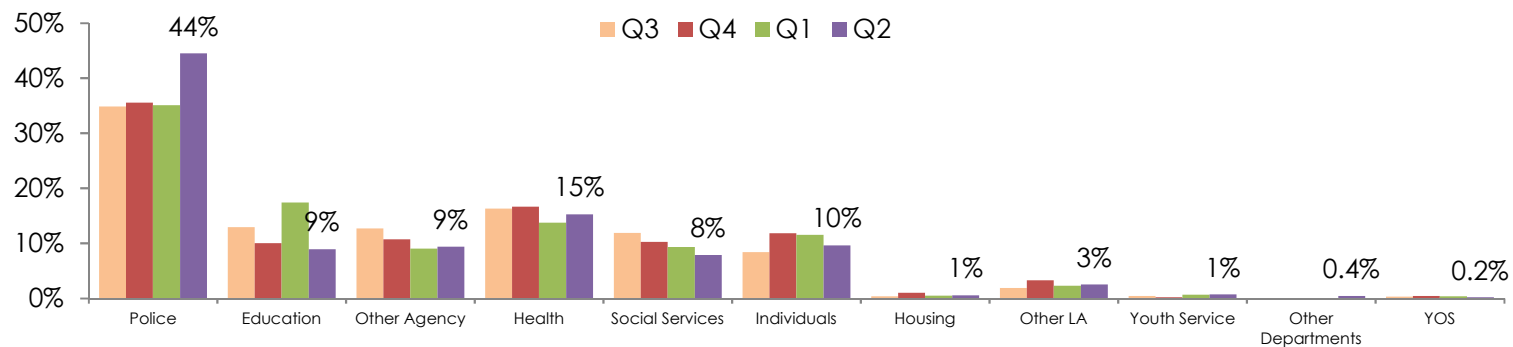
Page 489

Fig: 1.2 Number and Percentage of Referrals by Source (Q1, Q2, Q3 & Q4)

	Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Quarter 1		Quarter 2	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Police	475	35%	486	36%	639	35%	702	44%
Education	158	12%	135	10%	302	17%	134	8%
Other Agency	173	13%	147	11%	165	9%	148	9%
Health	222	16%	228	17%	251	14%	241	15%
Social Services	162	12%	140	10%	170	9%	124	8%
Individuals	114	8%	162	12%	210	12%	152	10%
Education - Post 16	3	0%	2	0%	4	0%	1	0.1%
Education - OOC	15	1%	0	0%	11	1%	6	0.4%
Housing	5	0%	14	1%	9	0%	9	1%
Other LA	26	2%	45	3%	42	2%	40	3%
Youth Service	6	0%	3	0%	12	1%	11	0.7%
Other Departments	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	7	0.4%
YOS	4	0%	6	0%	7	0%	3	0.2%
Total	1,363	100%	1,368	100%	1,823	100%	1,578	100%

01 Referrals to Social Services

Graph showing the source of referrals and the percentage



Page 490

Fig: 1.3 Multi-agency referral forms (MARF's) received on open cases

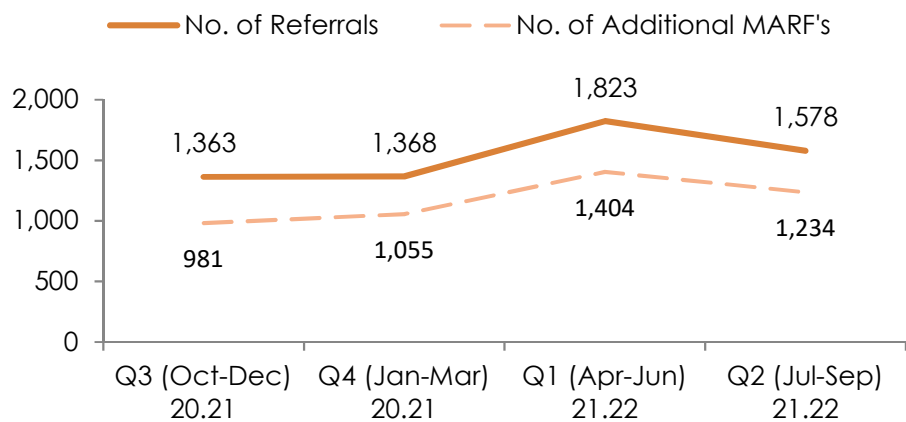
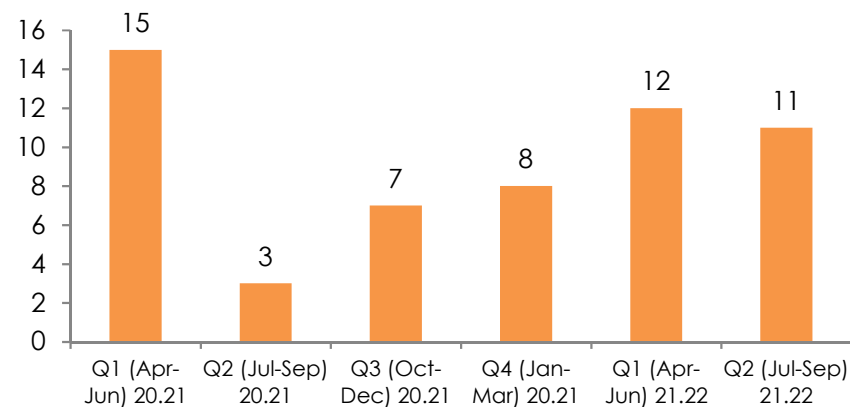


Fig: 1.4 Referrals received from Youth Services



02 | Child Protection Register

Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register

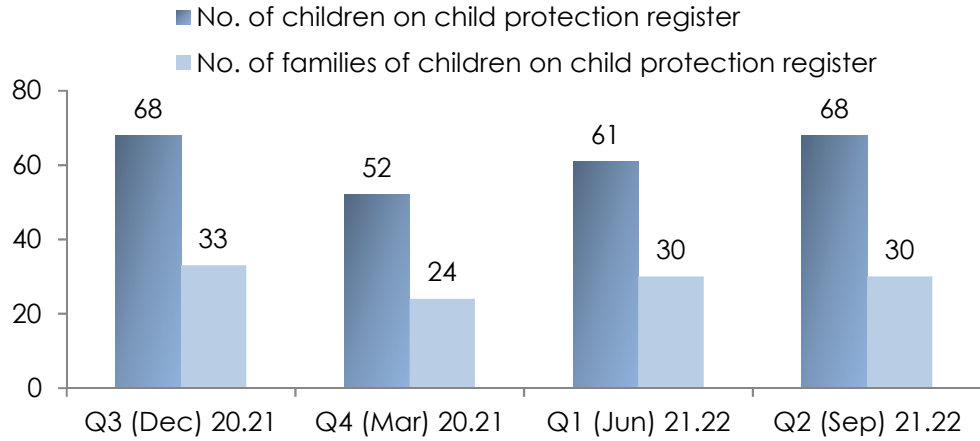
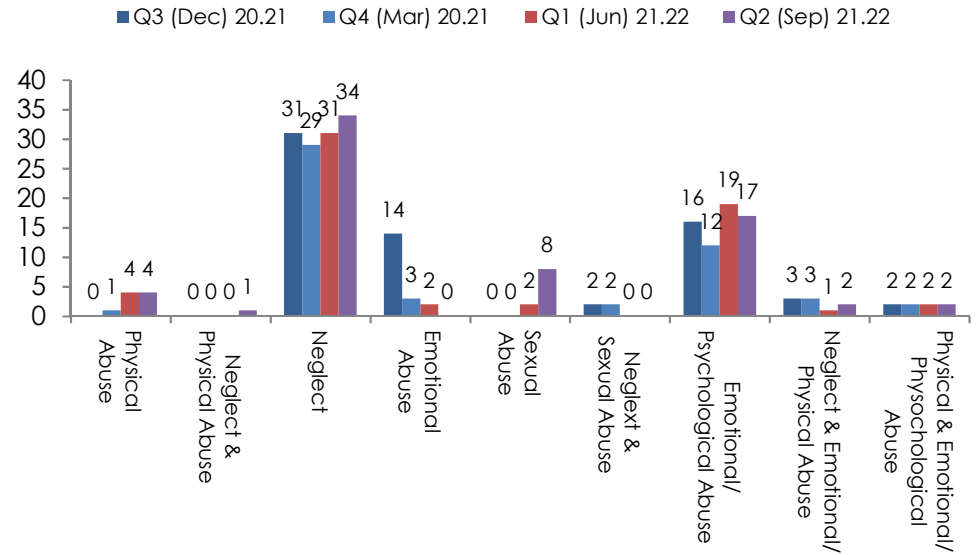


Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse



Page 491

Fig 2.2 Child Protection Register Summary

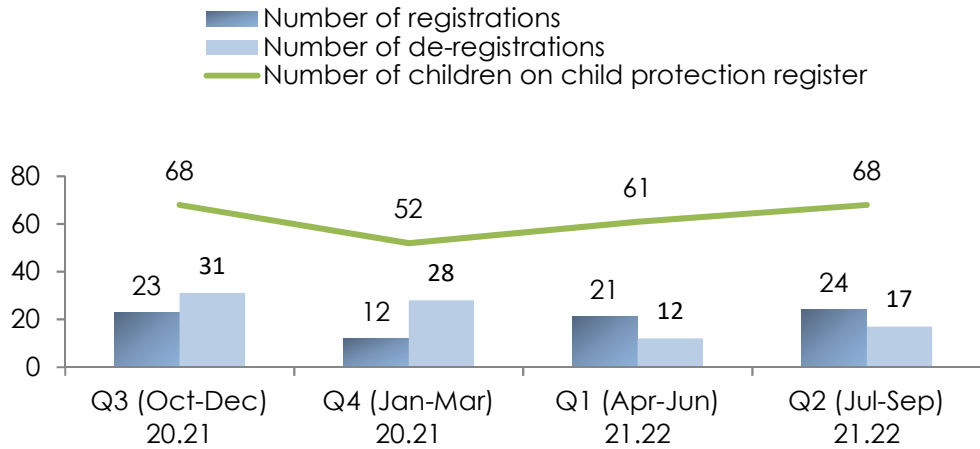
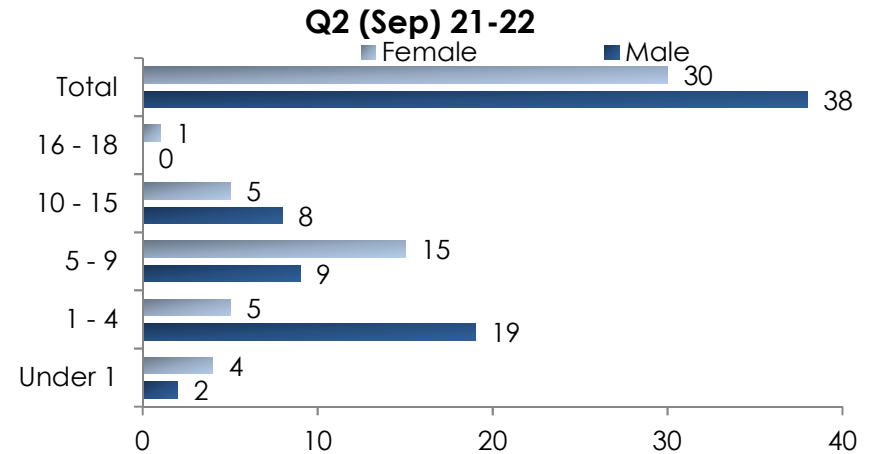


Fig 2.4 Age Breakdown of children on child protection register



02 | Child Protection Register

Fig 2.5 Average length of time on register

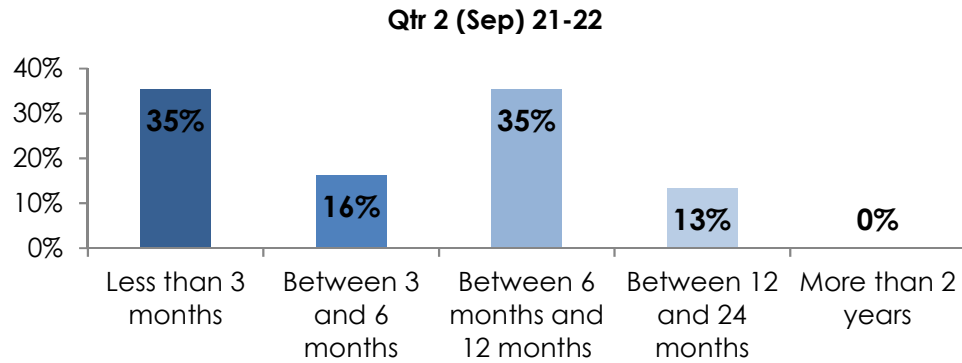


Table showing the breakdown of children on the child protection register over the last 12 months

Page 492

	Q1 (Jun) 20.21	Q2 (Sep) 20.21	Q3 (Dec) 20.21	Q4 (Mar) 20.21
Less than 3 months	23	12	20	24
Between 3 and 6 months	20	22	10	11
Between 6 months and 12 months	15	13	25	24
Between 12 and 24 months	9	4	5	9
More than 2 years	1	1	1	0
	68	52	61	68

02 | Child Protection Register

Fig 2.6: Child Protection Conferences

	Q3 (Dec) 20.21		Q4 (Mar) 20.21		Q1 (Jun) 21.22		Q2 (Sep) 21.22	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Conferences Held	81		68		57		67	
Initial Conferences	28	35%	13	19%	24	42%	26	39%
No. of Families	12		8		14		13	
Review Conferences	53	65%	55	81%	33	58%	41	61%
No. of Families	29		25		37		21	

Initial Child Protection Conferences	28		13		24		26	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Registered	22	79%	8	62%	18	75%	23	88%
Registered at birth	5	18%	4	31%	2	8%	1	4%
Not registered	1	4%	1	8%	4	17%	2	8%

Review Child Protection Conferences	53		55		33		41	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Continue with registration	26	49%	29	53%	21	64%	24	59%
Cease registration	27	51%	26	47%	12	36%	17	41%

02 | Child Protection Register

Fig 2.7 Initial Child Protection Conferences

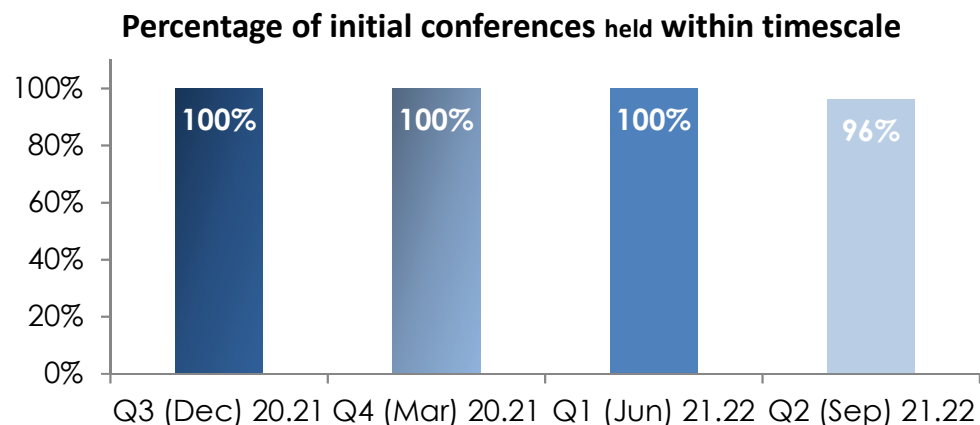
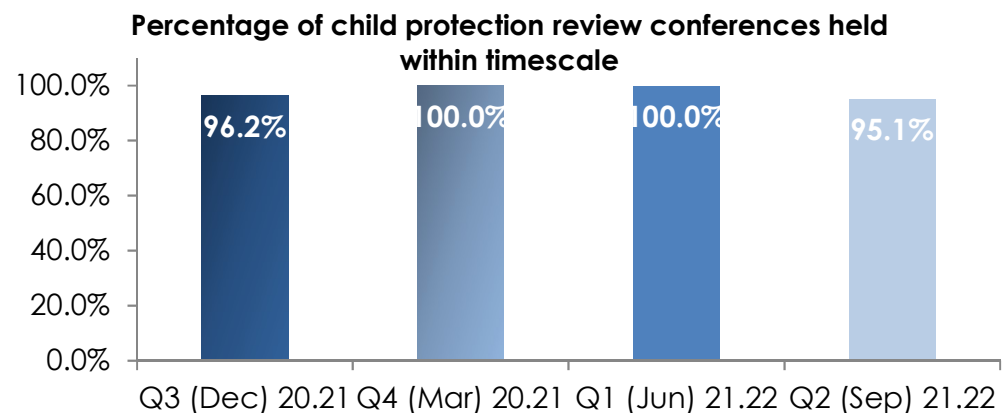


Fig: 2.8 Child Protection Review Conferences



Page 494

	Q3 (Dec) 20.21	Q4 (Mar) 20.21	Q1 (Jun) 21.22	Q2 (Sep) 21.22
Number of initial conferences held	28	13	24	26
Number of initial conferences held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion	28	13	24	25
Percentage of initial conferences held within timescale	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	96.2%

	Q3 (Dec) 20.21	Q4 (Mar) 20.21	Q1 (Jun) 21.22	Q2 (Sep) 21.22
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held	53	55	33	41
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	51	55	33	39
Percentage of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	96.2%	100.0%	100.0%	95.1%

03 | Referrals from Education

Fig 3.1 Contacts by Source – Primary School

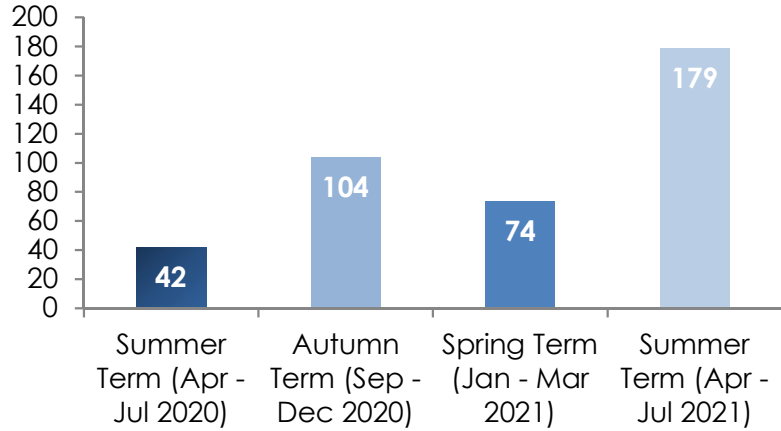
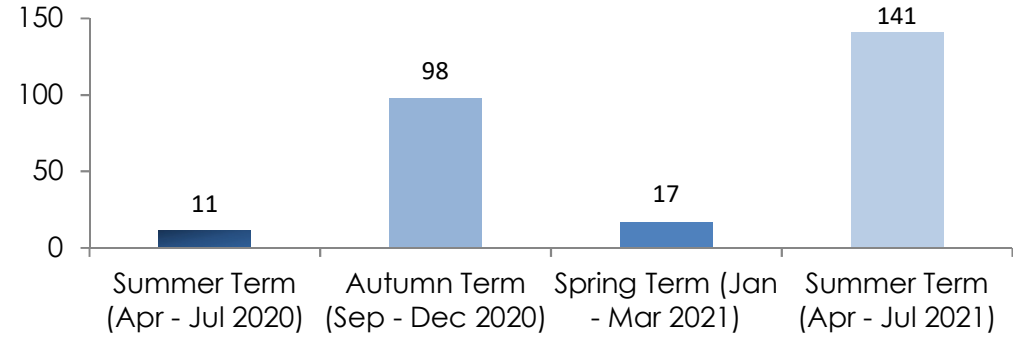
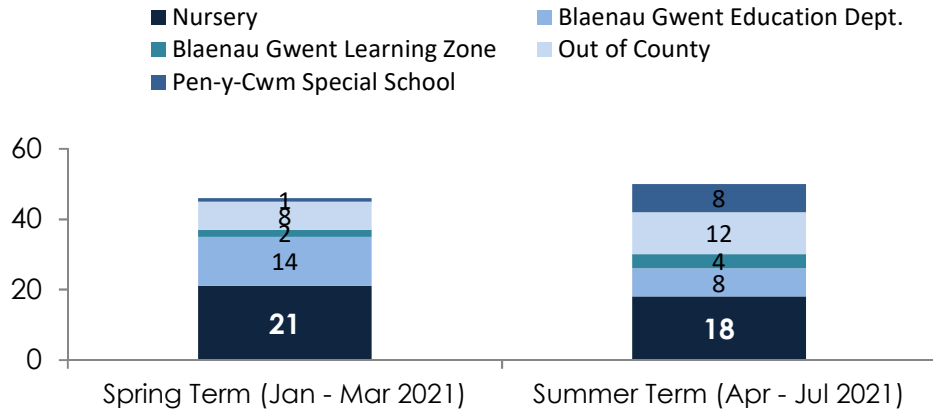


Fig 3.2 Contacts by Source – Secondary School



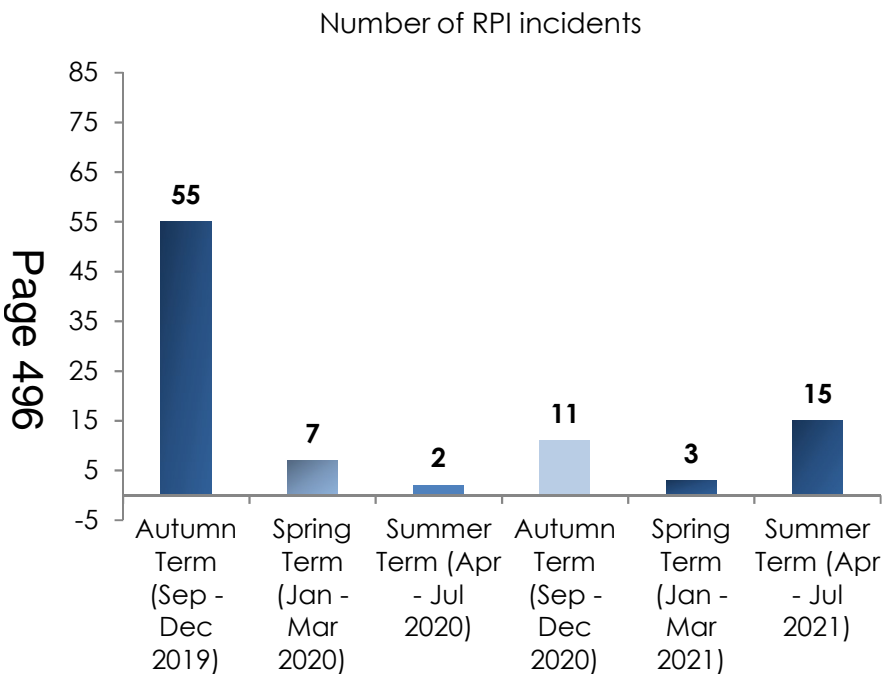
Page 495

Fig 3.3 Contacts by Source - Other



Attendance at schools has been severely disrupted due to the Covid pandemic. Schools have been closed for extended periods of time, repurposed, and partially opened, re-opening after February half-term. For these reasons, it is not advisable to make comparisons with performance in previous quarters, and years.

Fig: 4.1 RPI Incidents



Page 496

Fig: 4.2 Bullying incidents leading to exclusion

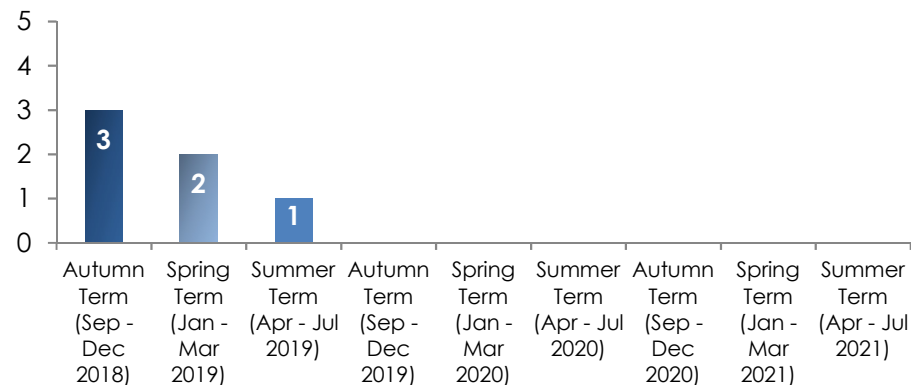
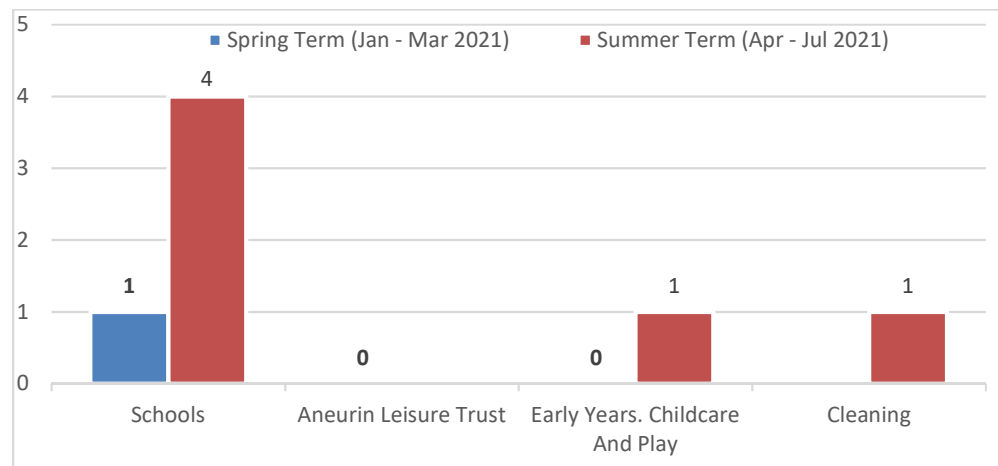


Fig 4.3 Quality Assurance Meetings



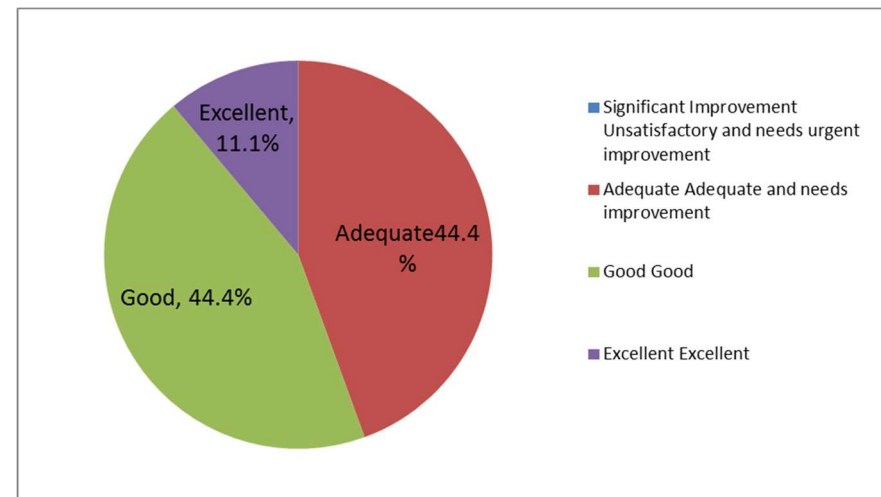
4 Estyn Judgements

The table below provides an overview of the Estyn judgements for schools inspected under the new arrangements from September 2017 up until December 2020.

Estyn Inspection Framework September 2017							Inspection Areas					
LA	Phase	School #	School	Date report Published	Follow-up Activity	Monitoring Visit 1	Standards	Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Teaching and learning experiences	Care, Support and guidance	Leadership and management	Out of Follow-up activity
BG	Secondary	6775401	Brynmawr Foundation School	Dec-19	SM		Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
BG	Primary	6773309	St Marys CIW Primary School	Mar-19	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6772310	Rhos y Fedwen Primary **	Feb-17	Estyn Review		Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Jul-18
BG	Primary	6772310	Blaenycwm Primary	May-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	
BG	Secondary	6772306	Abertillery Learning Community	01/02/2018 (revisit June 19)	SI	SI	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
BG	Primary	6774074	St. Joseph's R.C. Primary	Jan-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6773316	St. Illtyd's Primary	01/10/2017 (revisit Mar 19)	Estyn Review	-	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Mar-19
BG	Primary	6772312	Glyncoed Primary*	Nov-17	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6772309	Glanhowy Primary*	Feb-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	

Page 497

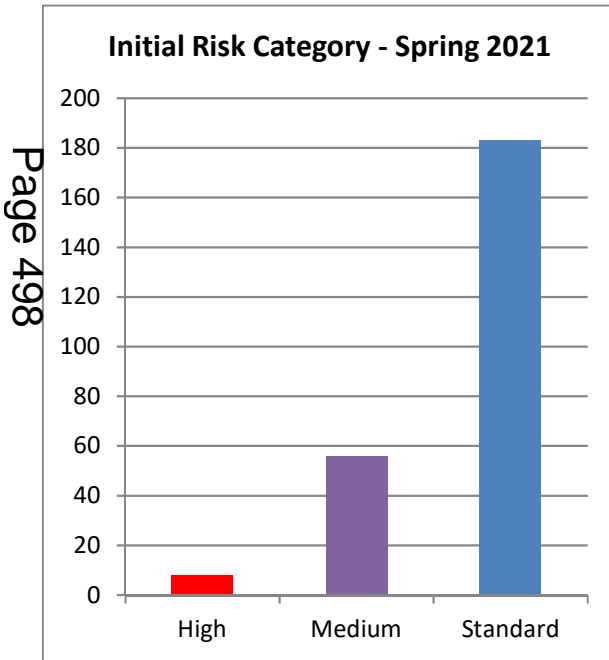
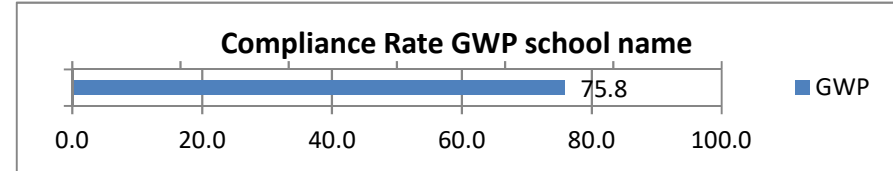
Care and Support Guidance Inspection Ratings



4.5 Operation Encompass

For the period summer term– April - July

Term	Occurrences	CYP
Summer Term 2021	296	371
Spring Term 2021	141	185



* No risk breakdown available for Summer Term 2021

4.6 Elected Home Education (EHE)

	July 2021	July 2020
Total number of children electively home educated	102	55

4.7 The table below sets out the number of secondary age pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn, spring and summer terms.

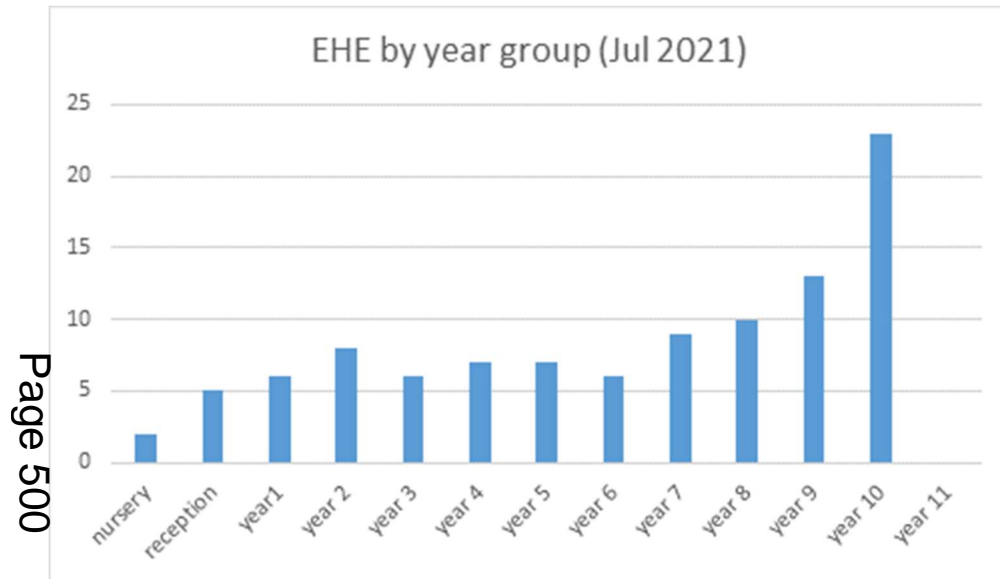
Month	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Sept – Dec 2020	2	0	3	0	4	2	1	0
Jan – Mar 2021	1						2	
Apl – Jul 2021	3		1		3		3	
Total	6	0	4	0	7	2	6	0

Page 499

4.8 The table below sets out the number of additional pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn, spring and summer terms.

Month	Primary		College		Did not transition		Moved into/out of Borough (including BG pupils that were in OOC schools)		School place unavailable	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Sept – Dec 2020	18	2	0	2	8	0	4	5	2	0
Jan – Mar 2021	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	1		
Apl – Jul 2021	7	1			1		6			
Total	27	4	0	2	10	0	11	6	2	0

4.9 Breakdown per year group EHE



- Please note that all year 11 pupils are removed on the last Friday of June when they end compulsory school education.

5.1 DBS Compliance

Managers are required to identify the requirement of a DBS check utilising the eligibility criteria, all DBS checks are renewed on a 3 yearly basis. Organisational Development co-ordinates this DBS process for new starters and 3 yearly rolling programme along with monitoring the compliance of these checks and we have formal escalation processes in place. The updates on the compliance with DBS are provided bi-annually to Corporate Leadership Team.

This reporting has been relaxed during the pandemic, however the monitoring and escalation processes have continued.

The latest submission to CLT was October 2021 and is shown below:

5.1.1 Position Statement: New Starter / Rolling Programme DBS Checks Schools

Effective Date: 13th October 2021

Page 501

Criteria	Total
Staff requiring a DBS	1284
Staff with a valid DBS	1281

Out of Compliance	Less than 4 weeks	1 - 3 months	More than 3 months	Total
New Starters currently out of compliance	0	0	0	0
Rolling Programme currently out of compliance	0	2	1	3
Totals	0	2	1	3

5.1.2 Position Statement: New Starter / Rolling Programme DBS Checks Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (Excluding Schools).

Effective Date:

13th October 2021

Criteria	Total
Staff requiring a DBS	1066
Staff with a valid DBS	1063

Out of Compliance	Less than 4 weeks	1 - 3 months	More than 3 months	Total
New Starters currently out of compliance		1	2	3
Rolling Programme currently out of compliance				0
Totals	0	1	2	3

1st DBS Check					
Department / School	Awaiting Appointment	Appt Comments	Awaiting Certificate	Cert Comments	Total
Corporate Services			2	Currently with the DBS	2
Regeneration and Community Services			1	Awaiting sight of Cert from employee	1
Corporate Education					0
Social Services					0
Totals	0		3		3

Escalation Process

Employees and Managers receive automated e-mails from the DBS system reminding that the process has not been completed

Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required

5.3 VAWDASV Corporate Training Online

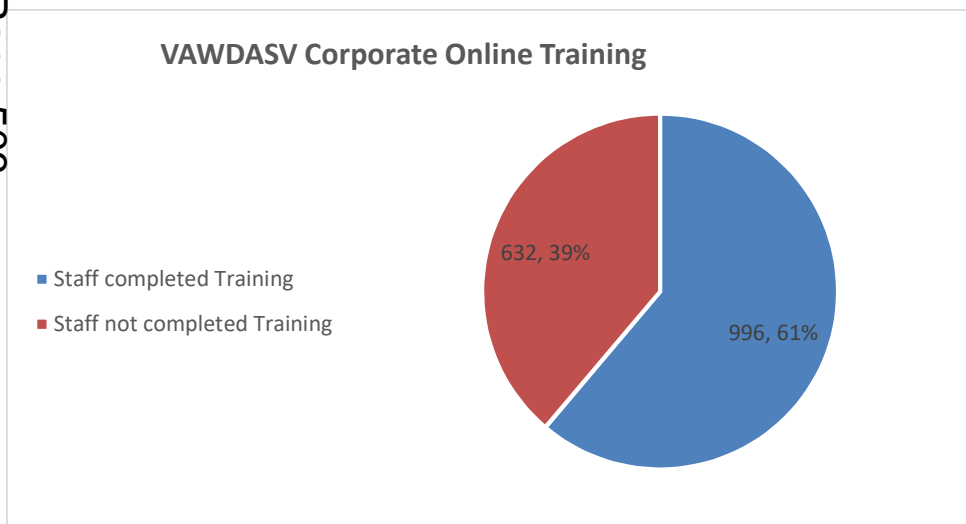
Corporate Training

Domestic abuse Training

Corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with **61%** of staff having **completed** the **VAWDAS online training**.

5.3.1 VAWDASV Corporate

Page 503

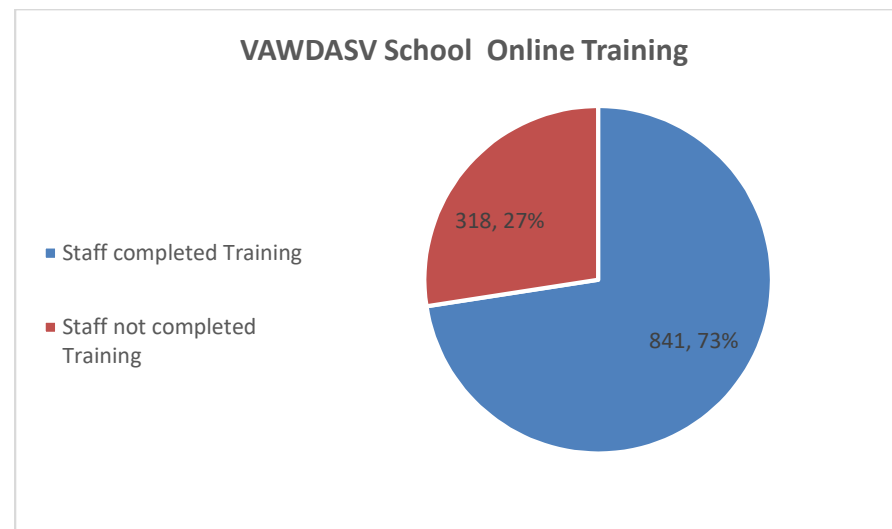


All Wales Safeguarding Training on line for staff

Online Safeguarding training was included in the online corporate induction module in 2019.

In terms of the wider workforce a suitable module is currently being evaluated by the corporate Safeguarding group which has been delayed due to the impact of the pandemic.

5.3.2 VAWDASV Schools



5.4 Risk Register

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Triggers	Consequences				Current Controls						Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Risk Owner
				Likelihood	Impact	Status	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Likelihood	Impact	Status		
CRR4	Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is inadequate assessments and monitoring If there is a lack of documentation If there are increasing referrals for services If there is a lack of appropriate guidance and training If there is poor communication between all parties (internal / external) If there is a high turnover of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential significant harm / loss of life Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution External intervention Increased pressure on budgets Low staff morale 	3	4	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board Standing item on CLT agenda Safeguarding Network Director of Social Services has a corporate responsibility for safeguarding Lead Executive Member identified for safeguarding Adult protection co-ordinator and process in place in line with All Wales process. Manager's report consistently on safeguarding to elected Members and the Corporate Leadership Team Joint Education and Social Services Safeguarding Team Joint Social Services and Education Safeguarding scrutiny meeting held 3 times a year Joint Business unit and subgroups for adults and children 	2	4	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Plans will further embed risk assessment tools Embedding of quality assurance processes in adult safeguarding Training for all staff on Domestic Abuse Corporately 	<p>Director of Social Services</p> <p>Councillor John Mason</p>		

Quarter 1 and 2 Progress (April to September 2021)

Throughout this period COVID 19 has impacted significantly on the Social Services department however despite this, the department has been able to continue to provide a consistent approach and timely response when discharging our statutory safeguarding responsibilities across both Children and Adult Services. Both teams have continued to prioritise safeguarding both within our proactive and reactive responses to support vulnerable families and communities. Both areas experienced an initial reduction in safeguarding referrals during the first few weeks of April 20 but following this period there has been a continued increase in referrals with referral levels/ data indicating that we have quickly returned to 'normal' levels when compared to similar time periods in previous years. Both Adults and Children's services have monitored and reported safeguarding performance measures to Welsh Government during quarter 1. This information has also been reported to the Gwent Safeguarding Board during this period. Both the head of Adults and Children's have been core members of the Gwent Safeguarding Board during this period meeting with key partners including Police, Health, Education, Probation and specialist services on a fortnightly basis. These actions have continued for quarter 2.

Adult Services during quarter 1:

- Safeguarding and Commissioning Teams have led on the safeguarding support relating to COVID including supporting internal and commissioned providers in relation to PHW guidance, PPE compliance, testing and infection control;
- Work has continued in relation to the implementation of the new All Wales Safeguarding procedures including the implementation of the training including alternative IT solutions and the implementation of the new duty to report tools on WCCIS;
- Care Management Teams have continued to support vulnerable people throughout proactive case contact via telephone or where required face to face contact;
- Our safeguarding support providers – including domestic abuse support within IAA have remodelled their provision to enable them to support both via telephone and / or face to face support.

Adult Services during quarter 2:

- Actions are per Quarter 1 have continued for Quarter 2;
- All Wales Safeguarding training has been developed on line for all BG staff to include the implementation of the new Gwent wide duty to report form and guidance;
- Commenced development of Gwent multi agency safeguarding hub across both Adult and Children Services – due for implementation January 2021.

Children Services during quarter 1:	Children Services during quarter 2:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All safeguarding referrals have been dealt with and children and families have been seen face to face when required throughout the COVID lockdown. All visits have been undertaken following a risk assessment and using the appropriate PPE; • All child protection conferences have continued to be held on a virtual basis using a combination of TEAMS can conference calls; • All children on the child protection register have continued to be seen since lockdown began following risk assessments and use of PPE where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same situation applies to Quarter 2 for Children's Services as outlined in Quarter 1; • The CIW inspection in the further controls column relates to the inspection of 2018 and all the recommendations have been completed; • An audit of Section 47 investigations was agreed for Quarter 2 but will be undertaken in Quarter 3.

Regulatory Proposals

88	WAO	Follow-up review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children Document Reference: 1521A2019-20	01/10/2019	<p>1. Corporate Safeguarding Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Policy • Update the structure • Include updated information from the All Wales Policy • When adopted in April 2020, include information from the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures <p>Completion Date April 2020</p>	Alison Ramshaw (Corporate Safeguarding Group) T1 Families First, IAA 14+ and Safeguarding	Social Services	<p>The Corporate Safeguarding Leads mtg were on hold during the first stage of the pandemic but reconvened during the latter part of the year. The chair of the CSL group wrote a report to CLT and the Audit Committee seeking approval to extend the completion dates of the WAO Safeguarding Review recommendations as the pandemic meant that no progress could be made. Extended dates were agreed and a further 12 months was approved. Work was completed on the updating of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and a Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework has been developed. Both pieces of work are currently awaiting CLT approval prior to implementation. The Wales Safeguarding App is available to all those staff who have a works mobile and communications have gone out to alert those staff without a works mobile of the App which is available to all via Google search engine. Lead officers with responsibility for safeguarding are still to be identified</p>
----	-----	--	------------	--	---	-----------------	---

This page is intentionally left blank

ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGY



Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol
Blaenau Gwent
County Borough Council

Anti-Bullying Strategy

Contents

Introduction	1
Aim	3
Definition	3
Strategic Objectives	5
Core Strands	6
Policy and Practice	6
Awareness and Communication	7
Evidence-based Initiatives	8
Involving Children and Young People	9
Positive Partnerships	10
Monitoring	11
Key Recommendations: A Shared Approach	13
Appendices	14
A - Bullying Audit	15
B - Links	18
C - Policy guidelines, Sample Charter and Recording Sheets	19
D – Resources and Contacts	24

Introduction

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and its partner agencies take bullying among children and young people very seriously. Almost half (46%) of children and young people say they have been bullied at school at some point in their lives. 38% of disabled children worried about being bullied. 18% of children and young people who worried about bullying said they would not talk to their parents about it (*National report - Department for Children, Schools and Families*).

Locally, our children and young people have also spoken of their concern of bullying and the need for further action (Appendix A). This multi-agency strategy details the commitments made in responding to this, and lays down the key objectives to be achieved. We must not underestimate the impact bullying has on the emotional, academic, social and personal wellbeing of children and young people. Bullying causes great distress which can continue right through adulthood and, at worst, bullying can lead to suicide.

This strategy recognises the complex nature of bullying behaviour and the importance of early identification and intervention. Traditional 'bully/victim' stereotypes need to be challenged, and a more in-depth understanding and awareness needs to be fostered. We need to establish a 'culture of telling' across settings, where children and young people, parents and professionals alike feel confident in dealing with bullying, and have confidence that appropriate action will be taken if instances are reported. Although we cannot entirely control the environment children and young people grow up in, we can discourage them from engaging in bullying behaviour.

To establish a consistent approach to tackling bullying between children and young people across the borough, a project group has developed this strategy. There are often deep-rooted triggers to bullying behaviour, and a multi-faceted approach is required in response. Prevention of, and reaction to, bullying should be addressed in equal measure and guidance and training need to be provided. Specific support will be required to protect the most vulnerable children and young people (e.g. those in care of Social Services, those who are young carers, those who have additional needs and/or disabilities, and those who suffer racial and homophobic bullying in particular), and communication between agencies will be essential if we are to identify and reduce persistent patterns of bullying behaviour.

Efforts to reduce bullying map directly onto four of the seven Core Aims of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Rights to Action (2004). Every child and young person should: enjoy education, training and learning opportunities that are free from the personal threat of bullying (Core Aim 2); experience the best possible mental, social and emotional health, which is free from abuse,

victimisation and exploitation (Core Aim 3); be listened to, treated with respect and have their race and cultural identity recognised (Core Aim 5) and; have a safe home and community which supports emotional wellbeing (Core Aim 6).

By bringing together work from various teams in Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council with that of partner agencies, this strategy provides a coordinated approach to tackling bullying. A borough-wide definition of bullying is provided, along with six core strands of work. A number of strategic objectives are outlined and a shared approach to tackling bullying is summarised. Guidance produced by the Welsh Government on how to develop an anti-bullying policy can be found in Appendix C, along with a sample anti-bullying participation charter and newly developed recording protocol. Information on where to find resources and contacts can be found in Appendix D.

Genuine commitment to the strategy is required from all headteachers, school staff, governors and centre leaders. Anti-bullying needs to take a high priority, and each institution is responsible for developing a model of good practice. The Council will work with all relevant settings to monitor, support and challenge where appropriate. Ultimately, we all have a role to play in ensuring communities flourish where children and young people are free from bullying.

What Children, Young People, Parents and Professionals Think

'It isn't big to make others feel small'

Primary school pupil.

'Bullying is cruel not cool'

Secondary school pupil.

'We found that listening to what our daughter wanted and needed was the right thing to do'

Parent.

'Bullying is not an easy issue to approach, especially if you suspect the child you're looking after is doing the bullying'

Foster Carer.

'Schools should create a whole school ethos where bullying is unacceptable in a safe, inclusive climate.'

Teacher.

Aim

The aim of this strategy is to establish a coordinated, consistent approach to tackling bullying in all Blaenau Gwent schools, youth and community settings. The Council and all partner agencies need to work together from a shared understanding to develop evidence-based methods for significantly reducing instances of bullying between children and young people.

The following key stakeholders have signed up and committed to the above aim of this anti-bullying strategy:

Education Welfare Service
Service Improvement and Performance Team
Communities First
Healthy Schools Officer
Inclusion Team
Children and Young People's Participation Officer
Youth Service
Corporate Equalities Officer
GAVO
Schools Liaison Police Officers

Definition

Although bullying is a subjective experience, and thus hard to define, it is important that we develop a shared understanding of what bullying is and how it differs from other forms of misbehaviour. All agencies are invited to adopt the Blaenau Gwent definition of bullying, developed by children, young people and adults in the borough:

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated, that intentionally hurts another individual either emotionally or physically".

Bullying can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in [sporting](#) teams, between neighbours or in the [workplace](#).

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

Verbal	Physical
Emotional	Indirect

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

Racial bullying	Homophobic bullying
Cyber bullying	Sexual bullying
Teasing	Name calling
Making threats	Physical assault

Bullying can also be based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance.

It is important that when dealing with alleged incidents of bullying, individual perspectives are taken into account. If a child, young person or adult states that bullying is happening, action must be taken to determine why this allegation has been made. There will be occasions when children and young people physically or emotionally hurt others without meaning to do so, and it is important that appropriate support is provided to both parties, but the behaviour need not be labelled as bullying. It is also important to be mindful that extreme instances of bullying that include harassment could be treated as a criminal offence. All bullying is based on difference to some degree (perceived or actual), and the WG document 'Respecting Others' provides information for tackling all forms of bullying.

Cyber bullying - much work needs to be undertaken with children and young people to further our understanding of this issue and develop methods for tackling it. Sending threatening text messages or emails is a criminal offence and police have the power to search computers and mobile phones for evidence. The latest guidance on tackling cyber bullying can be found at www.bullying.co.uk, and (*insert organisation*) offer workshops and training programmes on a variety of internet and mobile technology topics, including cyber bullying (see Appendix E).

Homophobic bullying is based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, and when tackling this issue we should also be mindful of transgender bullying, that is, bullying based on socially non-normative gender identity. Recent research has shown that of 300 secondary schools in England and Wales surveyed, 82% of teachers were aware of verbal incidents, yet only 6% of schools referred to this type of bullying in their anti-bullying policy. We need to improve upon staff and parental knowledge and attitude in this area: EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia), Stonewall Cymru and <http://www.lgbtcymruhelpline.org.uk/> The Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender help line provide support to young people (help line) and training for professionals, (see Appendix D)

Racial bullying can be motivated by race, skin colour, nationality, accent, cultural identity and/or religion, and we need to work closely with partner agencies to challenge such stereotyping, discrimination and prejudice. Gwent Ethnic Minority Support Service and Valrec can provide advice and guidance on the Equality Act 2010, and how to deal with racist incidents and develop understanding of diversity (see Appendix D).

Bullying of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs requires careful consideration, because some of these young people may have social or communicative difficulties reporting it. We need to support all vulnerable groups, and Social Services have a particular role to play here.

Organisations such as Mencap, the National Youth Advocacy Service and Special Needs Advocacy Project may be able to offer additional advice (see Appendix D), and we need to also tackle bullying of the more able and talented.

Strategic Objectives

There are a number of strategic objectives that need to be met if we are to build upon the anti-bullying work conducted in Blaenau Gwent. The project group will report to the Education Directorate Senior Leadership Team and the Council on progress made in achieving these objectives, in particular:

- All partner agencies have effective anti-bullying policies and recording procedures in place.
- Training is provided to all partners.
- Collation and analysis of bullying incident information from partner agencies.
- Sharing of information between partners.
- Revise strategy according to needs analysis.

In conjunction with working towards these strategic objectives, it is vital that all agencies regularly reflect on their own anti-bullying work and consider how improvements could be made.

Core Strands

Six core strands of work underpin Blaenau Gwent's Anti-Bullying Strategy:

- Policy and practice
- Awareness and communication
- Evidence-based initiatives
- Involving children and young people
- Positive partnerships
- Monitoring

Each of these will be summarised in turn, and key activities will be highlighted throughout. Ultimately, the Project Group will evaluate progress in achieving these key activities and the strategic objectives outlined.

Strand 1: Policy and Practice

To tackle bullying effectively, it is essential that we get policy and practice right. The Welsh Government Circular 23/2003, Respecting Others: Anti-Bullying Guidance provides school governors, headteachers, teachers and other staff with information on tackling bullying in schools and the steps that schools should take to support learners who report bullying outside of school.

The Government's Safeguarding Guidance Aug 2013 (draft) states that "All settings in which children are provided with services should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies. Schools need to take an active approach to tackle all forms of bullying, and should be taking action to prevent bullying behaviour as well as responding to incidents when they occur."

Under the School Standards Framework Act 1998 (Section 61), headteachers have a legal obligation to ensure an anti-bullying policy is in place within their school. Each anti-bullying policy needs to be clear about what bullying is and how the school, youth or community setting intends to deal with it. Policies should extend to after school clubs and transport arrangements and protocol should also be in place for dealing with the most serious instances of bullying, such as when a child or young person threatens to commit suicide. All policies should be reviewed annually, and it is important that children, young people, staff and parents are involved in this process to develop a whole-school/community approach.

A 'culture of telling' needs to be encouraged. Children and young people, parents and professionals need to feel confident that, if reported, bullying will be dealt with appropriately. All staff need to work from a shared understanding, and all incidents of bullying need to be dealt with fairly and consistently. A good working relationship between staff and parents can only improve the situation.

There is clear evidence that anti-bullying charters/agreements can be used effectively to promote positive participation, and all agencies are encouraged to use such tools to establish whole-school/community cohesion. A sample charter can be found in Appendix C, along with WAG policy development guidance.

Key Activities

- All school, youth and community settings need to develop, implement, monitor and review whole-school/community anti-bullying policies effectively.
- All agencies are encouraged to nominate an anti-bullying lead to oversee implementation of the Key Recommendations.
- All agencies are encouraged to monitor the effectiveness of their own policy.
- Blaenau Gwent will issue an Anti-bullying toolkit for settings to assist them in formulating policy and practice.

Strand 2: Awareness and Communication

All children, young people, parents and professionals need to have an understanding of what bullying is and why it happens. Events such as Anti-Bullying Week are important for raising awareness, but regular work throughout the year needs to be done to celebrate diversity and respect difference. A cross-curricular approach needs to be adopted in schools, and youth and community settings need to be creative and innovative in approaching this complex issue. Local media and the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council website will be utilised to raise the profile of anti bullying practice across the borough.

Communication between agencies within and across authorities needs to develop further and it is proposed that the Anti-bullying Project Group evolves as a sub-group of Blaenau Gwent's Local Safeguarding Children Board. Current members of the multi-agency anti-bullying group can be found in the Positive Partnerships section.

Key Activities

- Raise the profile of anti bullying practice in school, youth and community settings.
- Work with parents/carers to raise awareness and understanding of issues surrounding bullying.
- Encourage full engagement and coordinate evidence-based activities for Anti-Bullying Week
- Establish a standing group to promote communication between agencies and monitor and evaluate progress of the strategy.

Strand 3: Evidence-based Initiatives

All work designed to prevent and challenge bullying needs to be informed by good practice, and all staff working with children and young people need to understand the underlying causes of bullying and have the ability to promote positive life and social skills. Research has identified a number of pro-active preventative and reactive initiatives that can be used effectively to combat bullying and promote positive peer relations. All children and young people should have access to a choice of methods for reporting incidents of bullying without feeling threatened (e.g., friendly teacher, peer supporter, worry box), and information on different reporting options should be promoted and made readily available.

Wherever possible, an anti-bullying message needs to be reinforced. Cooperative group work and circle time activities can be used from the early years onwards to promote positive peer relations, celebrate diversity and respect difference. School councils can play a crucial role in identifying work that needs to be done, and peer support schemes harbour an anti-bullying ethos, provide direct assistance for those who need it, and promote the development of social skills and confidence in those who participate.

If an individual is in need of more support, a circle of friends or support group can be set up. Direct mediation of the situation can be carried out by trained peers or adults, and restorative practice provides a well-established framework for repairing harm as far as possible. Assertiveness training can also be used to promote resilience, raise self-esteem and empower bystanders. As the evidence-base for school-based counselling develops, this will be kept under

review in order to share good practice and bridge the gap between research and practice.

Key Activities

- Identify resources to develop high quality evidence-based training entitlement for all settings.
- Develop and publicise signposting information to direct schools and other settings on how to access support.

Strand 4: Involving Children and Young People

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that all children and young people are given the opportunity and encouragement to speak out and have their voices heard on matters that directly affect them. This right is formerly recognised in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Welsh Government document Extending Entitlement.

This strategy was written in response to requests made by children and young people of Blaenau Gwent. Therefore, it is critical that our children and young people are provided with continuing opportunities to influence key decisions that will shape our anti-bullying work. It is recommended that children and young people are fully consulted in the drafting of this strategy and are engaged in further developments such as work on an anti-bullying website for Blaenau Gwent.

We need to give children and young people the opportunity to make a stand against bullying, and equip them with the skills needed to prevent it, deal with it and help others. Schools and other youth and community settings are encouraged to involve children and young people as far as possible in developing and reviewing anti-bullying policies. Bullying is a complex ever changing issue, and children and young people will have many of the answers. They can tell us what the most important issues are, and provide some insight into how best to solve them.

Key Activities

- Invite representative Blaenau Gwent Grand School Council members to

contribute to the anti-bullying standing group.

- Identify resources to host a children and young person's anti-bullying conference on an annual basis.
- Further develop the role of Young Ambassadors in assessing schools for the Anti Bullying Kite Mark

Strand 5: Positive Partnerships

Without partnership working, we will not be able to deliver a consistent anti-bullying approach in Blaenau Gwent. In particular, the following services will be instrumental in the future development of the strategy:

Schools

Education Directorate Services

Local Health Board: Primary Mental Health Team

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Communities First

Children and Family Services: Strategic Partnership Officer

Youth Offending Service

Gwent Police: Community Safety Partnership

Local Service Board

Gwent Ethnic Minority Support Service

Corporate Equalities Officer

More work is required to ensure parents and families understand the complex nature of bullying and how best to prevent it, deal with it and support those affected by it. All anti-bullying policies should be made available to parents/carers, because trusting communicative relationships are essential if families are to work together with school, youth and community settings. Governors also have an important role to play in informing school policy and ensuring effective implementation (see Appendix E for a useful guide).

It is critical that a 'joined-up' approach continues to develop, and formalising an anti-bullying standing sub-group within Blaenau Gwent's Local Safeguarding Children Board will support this. The current audit of anti-bullying services also needs to be updated and publicised across the borough.

Key Activities:

- Develop a multi-agency standing group to oversee all anti-bullying work and evaluate progress.
- Communicate key developments and encourage collaborative working between partners via the standing group.
- Evaluate and respond to the training needs of professionals and provide support/guidance to parents and carers.

Strand 6: Monitoring

Although recent audits have identified bullying as a key issue faced by children and young people in Blaenau Gwent (Appendix A), we have few baseline measures or statistics to guide our work. Gathering accurate information on the prevalence of different types of bullying is therefore a key priority within this strategy.

All children's services have a duty of care, under the Children Act 2004 (Section 11), to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is therefore critical that school, youth and community settings record all instances of bullying, along with actions undertaken and outcomes. Every setting is responsible for recording, reporting and acting upon incidents of bullying that occur in their care and bullying in the community needs to be reported to Gwent Police and/or the Community Safety Partnership. Agencies that are aware of bullying occurring in settings other than their own should ensure those in charge are aware of the situation. A suggested recording protocol for schools and youth settings can be found in Appendix D, and further details of reporting arrangements can be found in the Key Recommendations. Every alleged incident needs to be recorded, and if confirmed, logged accordingly. Schools will report confirmed incidents of bullying via SIMS. Other youth settings may use the annual summation forms to collate the confirmed information and report it to their appropriate line manager. All agencies are encouraged to monitor their own progress in combating bullying and share this with the Local Service Board so that relevant resources can be targeted where needed most.

The benefit of collating borough-wide information year on year will be evidenced in the ability to:

- analyse information to provide audits and target resources appropriately;

- monitor the effectiveness of individual policies;
- evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Anti-Bullying Strategy.

Schools should be reporting to governors termly, and the Project Group will report to the Blaenau Gwent Association of Schools Governors and Council annually. It should be noted that reported rates of bullying may increase initially as a result of awareness raised by this strategy.

Key Activities

- Provide key stakeholders with clear, simple and consistent protocol for recording and reporting instances of bullying, reinforced by the inclusion of reporting arrangements in the kite mark award.
- Assess levels and types of bullying in school, youth and community settings and compare with current statistics.
- Use this data along with information gleaned from training evaluation and consultation with children and young people as performance indicators.
- Work with all partners to develop protocol for sharing information regarding bullying.

Key Recommendations: A Shared Approach

Because bullying often persists across a variety of settings, a number of broad recommendations are required to establish a 'shared approach'. All partner agencies (see Appendix B) are encouraged to:

1. nominate an anti-bullying lead to help settings implement the above recommendations and, if possible, act as a first point of contact for other professionals in partner agencies;
2. develop, implement, monitor, revise and publicise an anti-bullying policy in line with the WG guidance provided in Appendix D;
3. work on prevention and intervention activities throughout the year and organise events for Anti-Bullying Week (usually end of November);
4. adopt the components of the Blaenau Gwent definition of bullying and recording protocol as a basis for good practice (see Appendix D). these components are defined within the BG Anti-bullying toolkit;
5. share incident information with the appropriate department (e.g. schools would report to Inclusion team) so that the anti-bullying work conducted across Blaenau Gwent can be evaluated, co-ordinated and improved. All settings are also encouraged to use incident information to evaluate their own policy and target resources where needed most. A precise information sharing protocol will need to be developed for this in the future.
6. share confirmed bullying incident information when appropriate with the Community Safety Partnership, who will determine (with consent from the young person who has experienced the bullying) what course of action, if any, is required;
7. make use of training provided to ensure that all settings are able to implement the above recommendations and develop effective evidence-based anti-bullying strategies;
8. undertake internal audits of staff, children, young person and parent/carer perceptions of bullying. Both the 'life in schools' questionnaire and the Anti-Bullying Alliance audit toolkit can be used for this purpose (see Appendix E for details).

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Bullying Audit
Appendix B	Links
Appendix C	Policy Guidelines, Sample Charter and Recording Sheets
Appendix D	Resources and Contacts

APPENDIX A

Bullying Audit

In 2010, 135 young people attended an Anti-bullying conference event. The event took place during half term in Ebbw Vale leisure centre.

Young people facilitated the event from training they received from Communities First and 'Funky dragon'. 94 questionnaires were completed.

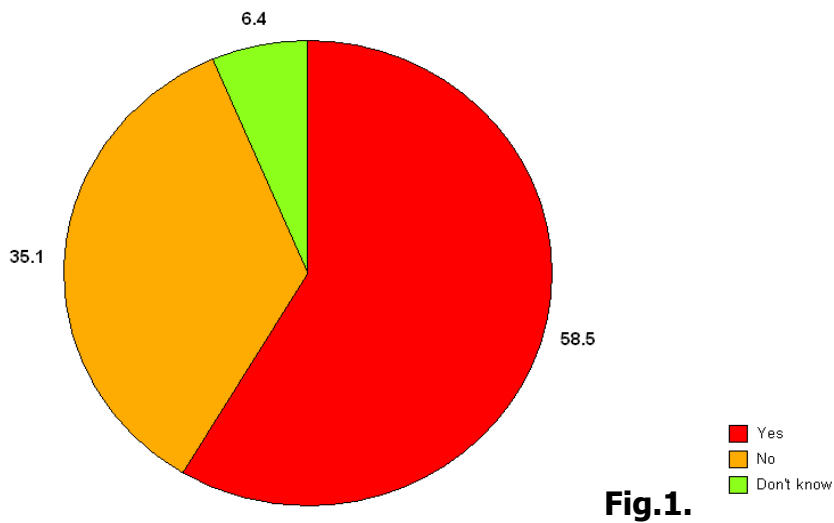


Fig.1.

Fig. 1 demonstrates whether young people thought they had been bullied.

Fig 2.

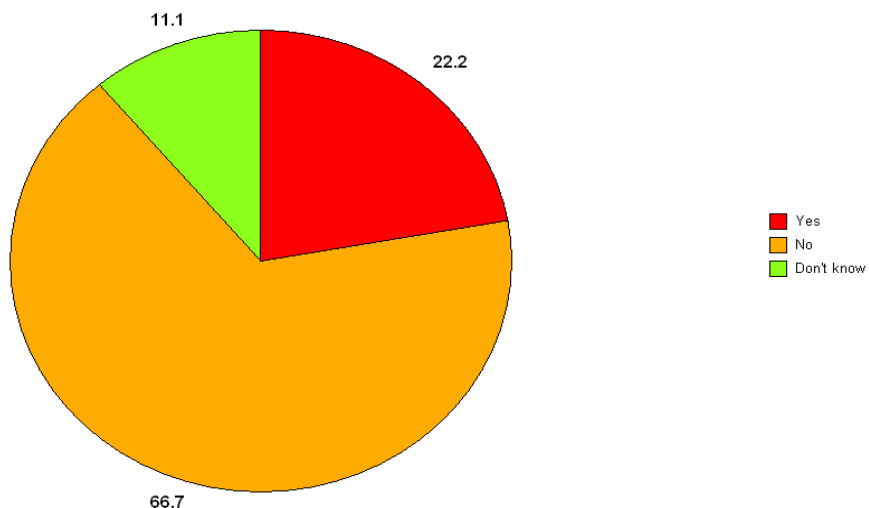


Fig 2. shows the responses to the question 'have you ever been a bully?'

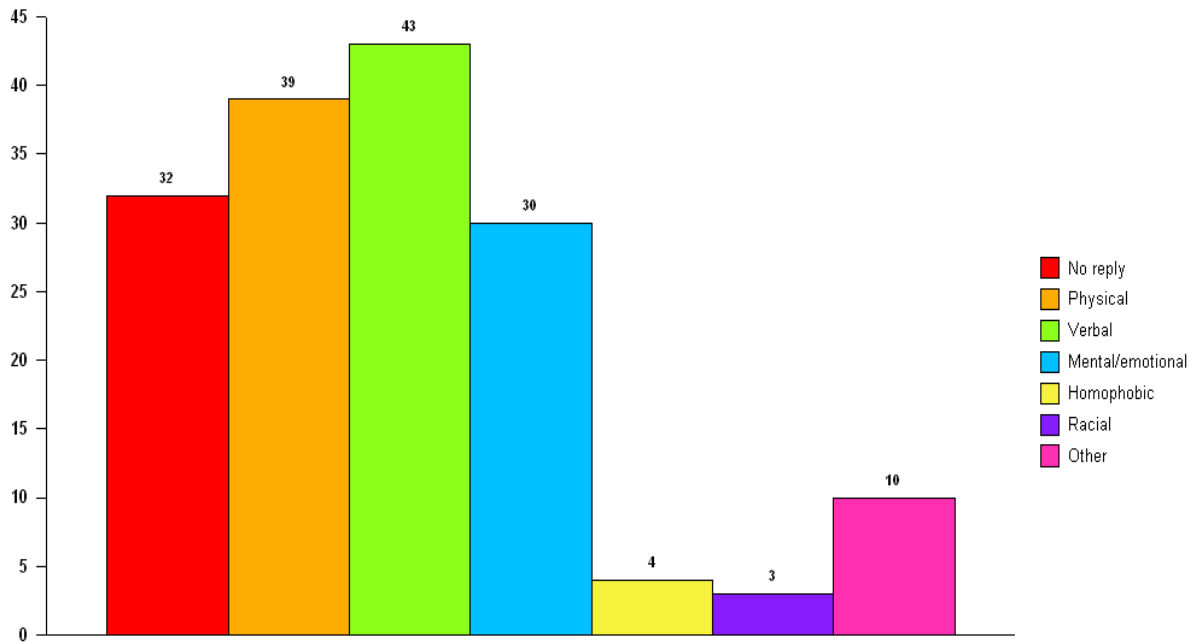


Fig.3. demonstrates the types of bullying young people have experienced

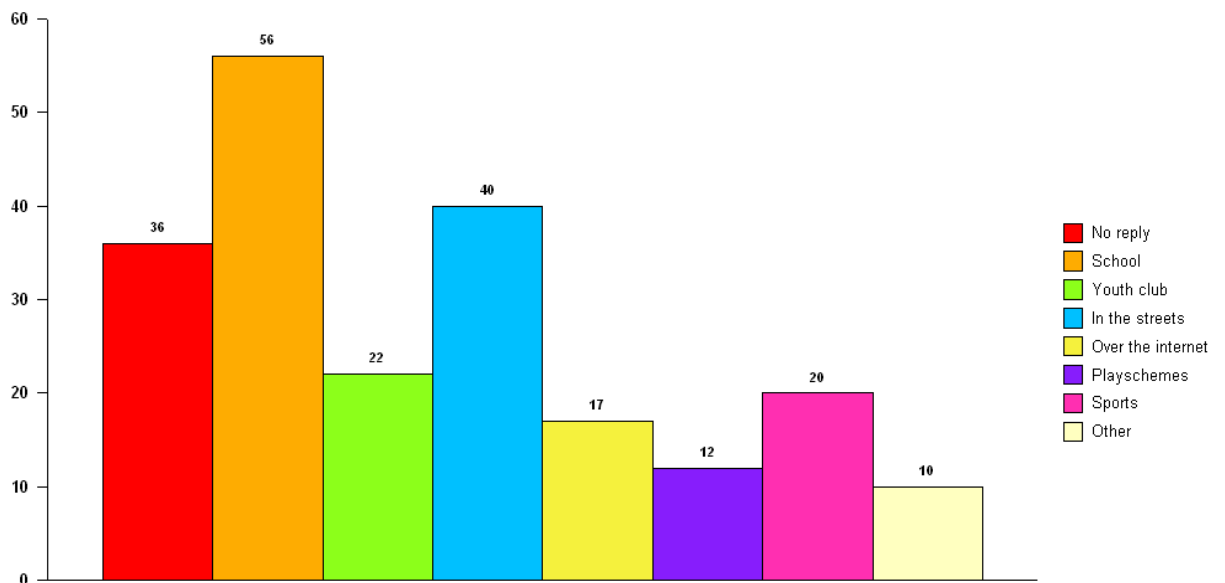


Fig 4 shows where young people have been bullied.

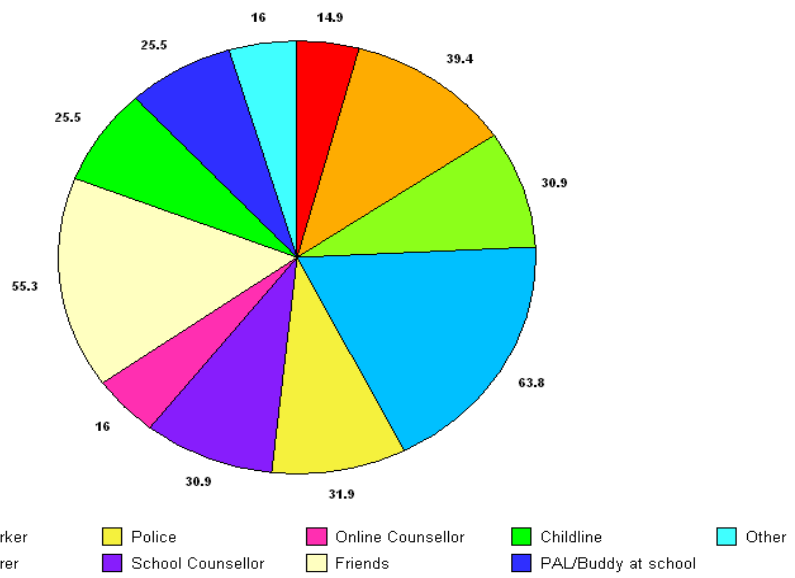


Fig 5 shows who young people would turn to if they, or they knew someone else was being bullied

APPENDIX B

Links

This Anti Bullying Strategy links appropriately with other current LA plans including:

Self Evaluation Report
Corporate Improvement Plan
Single Integrated Plan

Links with other local documents include:

Local Safeguarding Children Strategy
Community Safety Strategy
Strategic Equalities Plan
Special Educational Needs Policy and Practice
Inclusion Strategy
Engagement Strategy
Local Service Board Strategy
School Beat Policy

Links with national and international documents include:

UN Convention of the Rights of the Child 1992 www.cirp.org/library/ethics/UN-convention

Education Act 1996 www.opsi.go.uk/acts/acts1996

School Standards and Framework Act 1998 www.opsi.go.uk/acts/acts1998

Human Rights Act 1998 www.opsi.go.uk/acts/acts1998

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 www.opsi.go.uk/acts/acts2000

Welsh Assembly Government: Extending Entitlement 2000
www.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills

Welsh Assembly Government: Respecting Others 2011
www.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills

Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004
www.wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/publications/guidance

Welsh Assembly Government: Rights to Action 2004
www.wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/publications

Estyn: Tackling Bullying in Schools 2006 www.estyn.gov.uk/publications

Education and Inspections Act 2006 www.opsi.go.uk/acts/acts2006

Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

APPENDIX C

Policy Guidelines, Sample Charter and Recording Sheets



The following policy guidelines have been adapted from the self-assessment toolkit currently being piloted in schools by Welsh Assembly Government. Small changes have been made to the text to ensure it is applicable to other youth and community settings, and it should be used with reference to the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 050/2011 Respecting Others: Anti-bullying Guidance.

Consultation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has the school consulted widely in developing its policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have a variety of methods of consultation been used?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are interested groups being consulted at all stages of developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Definition of bullying	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy define what the school considers 'bullying' to be?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is this definition of bullying clear and age-appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to identify behaviour as bullying	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy identify types of bullying behaviour, including the use of modern technologies as a tool for bullying?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy identify important categories of bullying, for example bullying on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, Special Educational Needs or disabilities and long-term health conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategies for the school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy deal with bullying as a whole-school issue?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy identify a range of strategies the school can use to reduce bullying?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy consider all the opportunities where bullying can be tackled through the curriculum?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy lay out an effective system for keeping records of bullying incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategies for parents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have parents/carers been consulted on the development of the school's anti-bullying strategies?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy set out clear guidelines for parents wishing to complain about bullying?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Strategies for pupils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy lay out clear, age-appropriate guidelines for pupils wishing to complain about bullying?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy ensure that all children and young people are aware of the support available to those who have been bullied?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy ensure that all children and young people are aware of the disciplinary processes for those involved in bullying incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are these clear procedures for reporting and dealing with incidents of bullying for pupil, parents, teachers and other staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there clear guidelines on how new pupils/staff are inducted into the school's anti-bullying policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there clear processes for keeping the policy under continuous monitoring?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timetable for development and review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy include a checklist of by when things should have happened?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the policy lay out dates for regular reviews of the policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Anti-Bullying Charter

In our community, we will:

-  Work together to prevent bullying;
-  Celebrate diversity;
-  Respect difference;
-  Be friendly to one another;
-  Always report bullying;
-  Deal with bullying seriously;
-  Accept others, regardless of appearance, race, ability, culture, sexuality, gender or circumstance.

Signature: _____

Blaenau Gwent Alleged Bullying Incident Log

	Name(s), Age, Gender	Setting
Child(s) alleged to be experiencing bullying behaviour		
Child(s) alleged to be engaging in bullying behaviour		
Reported by:		Date:
Investigation by:		Date:
Account of individual(s) alleged to be experiencing bullying behaviour: (use separate sheet if required)		
Looked After Child? Yes / No	Ethnicity:	
Account of individual(s) alleged to be engaging in bullying behaviour: (use separate sheet if required)		
Looked After Child? Yes / No	Ethnicity:	
Action: (use separate sheet if required)		
Review/monitoring date:		
Was alleged bullying confirmed?	Yes	No
		Insufficient evidence to decide
Was the matter resolved?	Yes / No	
Details:		
Future action : (if appropriate)		

* Blaenau Gwent Confirmed Bullying Incidents should be logged and then reported to the LA via SIMS (for schools only)

“Bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power where a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals of equal power should not be seen as bullying.”

Annual Bullying Incident Summary

Name of organisation/team:

(Note schools' data will be gathered via SIMS reports)

Name of person collating information:

	September/ December		January/ April		May/ August		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total number of bullying incidents								
Physical								
Verbal								
Indirect								
Cyber								
Racial								
Homophobic								
Sexual								
Based on gender								
Based on appearance								
Based on disability								
Based on ability								
Looked After Child								
Other								

Total number engaging in bullying behaviour	Male				
	Female				

Total number experiencing bullying behaviour					

APPENDIX D

Resources and Contacts

The Blaenau Gwent Anti Bullying Toolkit includes a number of links to resources and websites that can be used to help tackle bullying.

<http://www.eachaction.org.uk/support/homophobic-bullying/>

Show Racism the red card

<http://www.srtrc.org/>

NASUWT: Guidance on prejudice related bullying, including homophobic bullying, racist bullying, faith-based bullying, disability bullying, sexist bullying and transphobic bullying

<http://www.nasuwat.org.uk/MemberSupport/NASUWTPublications/PrejudiceRelatedBullying/>

Stonewall cymru : the all Wales lesbian, gay and bi sexual equality charity.

http://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/cymru/english/about_us/

BBC Newsround: Lesson plans and resources around tackling racism

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/news/>

Rewind: materials and discussions about race

http://www.rewind.org.uk/resources_for_schools

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank