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

10th November 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

**COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee will be held as a Hybrid Meeting: via Microsoft Teams/Abraham Darby Room, General Offices, Ebbw Vale on Monday, 15th November, 2021 at 10.00 am.

***Please note that a pre and post meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start and following the conclusion of the meeting for members of the committee.***

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris  
Managing Director

**AGENDA**

**Pages**

**1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION**

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

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

will be provided if requested.

2. **APOLOGIES**

To receive.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND  
DISPENSATIONS**

To receive.

4. **COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES** 5 - 18

To receive the minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

(Please note the minutes are submitted for accuracy points only).

5. **ACTION SHEET** 19 - 28

To receive the Action Sheet.

6. **BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE  
FORWARD PLAN (2019-2022) 2020/21 ANNUAL  
REPORT** 29 - 76

To consider the report of the Head of Community Services.

7. **CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT – SERVICE  
UPDATE** 77 - 90

To consider the report of the Head of Community Services.

8. **UPDATE REPORT FLY GRAZING HORSES** 91 - 98

To consider the report of the Service Manager Neighbourhood Services.

9. **ANIMAL HEALTH, WELFARE & LICENSING  
SERVICE COLLABORATION – POWYS CC  
PARTNERSHIP – ACTIVITIES & UPDATE REPORT –  
OCTOBER 2021** 99 - 124

To consider the report of the Service Manager, Public Protection.

**10. ACTIVE TRAVEL AND SAFE ROUTES IN COMMUNITIES 2021/22** 125 - 130

To consider the report of the Head of Community Services.

**11. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - 17TH JANUARY 2022** 131 - 134

To receive the report.

To: Councillor M. Moore (Chair)  
Councillor C. Meredith (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor P. Baldwin  
Councillor M. Cook  
Councillor M. Cross  
Councillor M. Day  
Councillor P. Edwards  
Councillor S. Healy  
Councillor W. Hodgins  
Councillor J. Holt  
Councillor J. C. Morgan  
Councillor L. Parsons  
Councillor T. Sharrem  
Councillor B. Summers  
Councillor L. Winnett

All other Members (for information)  
Manager Director  
Chief Officers

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**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

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

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –  
4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2021**

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

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**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. MOORE (CHAIR)**

Councillors G. Paulsen (substituting for C. Meredith)

P. Baldwin

M. Cook

J.P. Morgan (substituting for M. Day)

P. Edwards

S. Healy

W. Hodgins

J. Hill (substituting for J. Holt)

J.C. Morgan

L. Parsons

B. Summers

T. Smith (substituting for L. Winnett)

**WITH:** Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services  
Head of Community Services  
Service Manager Neighbourhood Services  
Team Leader Environmental Protection  
Engineering Manager  
Senior Engineer Land Drainage  
Engineer  
Estates Manager  
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor

**AND:** Charlotte Owen (Audit Wales)  
Mr. D. Waggett (Silent Valley Waste Services Ltd.)

<b><u>ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>SUBJECT</u></b>	<b><u>ACTION</u></b>
<b>No. 1</b>	<p><b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
<b>No. 2</b>	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received for Councillors C. Meredith, M. Day, J. Holt and L. Winnett.</p>	
<b>No. 3</b>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>Councillors B. Summers and M. Cook declared an interest in the following item:</p> <p>Item No. 11 Silent Valley Waste Services Ltd. Performance Report</p>	
<b>No. 4</b>	<p><b><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>The minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<b>No. 5</b>	<p><b><u>ACTION SHEET – 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2021</u></b></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 was submitted, whereupon:</p> <p><i><u>Position Report Straying Animals</u></i></p> <p>The Chair confirmed that a report would be presented to Members at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.</p>	

No. 6

**AUDIT WALES: REVIEW OF PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL RESILIENCE IN COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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

The Head of Community Services presented the report Audit Wales report, 'Review of People, Performance and Financial Resilience in Community Services' (attached at Appendix 1). The report also included the Community Services action plan in response to Audit Wales' proposals for improvement.

The Audit Wales representative then went through the report and highlighted the main points contained therein, namely:

- There are opportunities for the Community Services Directorate to build resilience by sharing the learning and good practice demonstrable in specific service areas to further develop its arrangements to manage performance, and strengthen strategic financial and workforce planning.
- The waste service has achieved substantial progress over the period since 2015 through sound strategic planning supported by the adoption of a learning culture to manage change effectively.
- The Council is developing a new corporate workforce strategy and although Community Services understands its key workforce issues and is taking steps to address them, there is scope for closer collaboration with HR to improve workforce planning and resilience.
- 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.

The Audit Wales representative confirmed one proposal for improvement was identified, namely *'to strengthen its resilience, Community Services should ensure that learning and good practice that exists within its different service areas is shared throughout the directorate. The Council should also consider whether it would benefit from sharing some examples more widely across the Council.'*

The Head of Community Services thanked Audit Wales for their support throughout the review process. In terms of the one proposal for improvement, he felt this was a positive and was more of a celebration of the Department's successes, and that this message be passed on to other elements of the Council. He also pointed out that the review was undertaken during the last 18 months through the Covid pandemic when frontline services were under immense pressure.

He then went through the report in detail and highlighted points contained therein. In terms of the management response to the proposal for improvement, i.e. to ensure that the good learning and practice is shared throughout the Authority, he confirmed that the Waste Team would be making presentations to the wider environment groups and wider CLT. It was also proposed to present the technical services income generation model to the wider audience in due course. This would be followed-up with business plans and performance reports to the relevant Committees.

A Member said the Council should consider establishing a contingency fund to respond to unexpected pressures, and asked whether any other Local Authorities were taking this approach.

The Audit Wales representative said she was not aware of any other Local Authorities taking this approach, but pointed out that not all Councils would be subject to the same level of overspend as Blaenau Gwent, and contributing factors like the weather and issues of fly tipping varied between Local Authorities. She said the Council should analyse data

	<p>to identify trends over a number of years to help mitigate in-year events that are difficult to plan for.</p> <p>A Member said this was a pleasing report, particularly the 5 apprentices that had been taken on and the career progression opportunities created within the Department. He also agreed with the suggestion of a contingency fund and said this should be considered.</p> <p>Another Member said this was a positive report, however, he was concerned that the issue of updating the iTrent system had been identified.</p> <p>In response the Head of Community Services said this was a challenge particularly with the volume of staff in frontline services, and also the technical challenges around the IT system. However, he confirmed that Audit Wales' comments had been noted and the Department was currently working with OD on this issue.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the Audit Wales report be accepted and the actions to implement the proposals for improvement. (Option 1)</p>	
<p><b>No. 7</b></p>	<p><b><u>WASTE AND RECYCLING PERFORMANCE 2020-21</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Service Manager Neighbourhood Services.</p> <p>The Service Manager Neighbourhood Services presented the report which provided an update on waste and recycling performance outcomes for 2020-21.</p> <p>The performance data was summarised in Appendix 1, and the Officer pointed out that during the previous 2 years the Council had exceeded the WG statutory recycling target of 58% and 64% respectively. This success was maintained in 2021 and the Council exceeded the target by attaining 64.29%. He acknowledged that this had been achieved through the hard work of the Waste Team, working with partners in WRAP, and also the Council's Communications, Performance, and Senior Management Team; but most importantly the residents of Blaenau Gwent in what had been a very difficult year. He said through careful</p>	

prioritisation and engagement with our workforce, the Council was able to maintain all waste and recycling collections throughout the Covid pandemic.

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

A Member asked whether recycling rates would increase if the Council reduced the number of communal collection points throughout the Borough. He felt it was unfair that the majority of residents were expected to comply with number of refuse bags they were able to put out, but residents in communal collection areas were able to deposit as much as they liked. He also asked whether fly tipping collected from Tai Calon's estates were included in the Council's figures.

In relation to the Council's communal collection points he said some progress had been made where possible, however, the Council were unable to remove some collection points due to health and safety restrictions.

In terms of fly tipping on Tai Calon's estates the Team Leader Environmental Protection explained that waste deposited on private land was the responsibility of the landowner to remove. He understood that Tai Calon had their own cleansing team so any fly tipping they removed would not be included in the Council's figures.

He also confirmed that a new Team had been established to look at unofficial collection points causing significant problems. When this work was resolved it was intended to then look at official collection points to ensure everyone complied with the rules.

A Member commended the Waste and Recycling Team for their work during a very challenging year. He asked whether a contingency plan was in place in the event of a fuel shortage and the lack of HGV drivers, and staff sickness. He also referred to the figures for composting recycling and said it was unfair for Blaenau Gwent to be compared to rural LA's and that WG should consider a fairer approach to this element of recycling.

The Member also expressed concern regarding the increase in residual waste and asked whether this was due to a change of habits and residents mixing their residual waste with recycling. He also asked whether the 'appointment only' approach at our HWRCs was a contributing factor and whether it was intended to return to a non-appointment system post Covid.

In response to the Member's comments regarding a contingency plan the Service Manager Neighbourhood Services confirmed that the Council received a fuel delivery last week which would last 3 weeks on a normal working pattern. There was a plan in place in the event of a fuel shortage and the need to reissue fuel to other services, but to date there had been no impact of the fuel shortage reported in the press.

He said the shortage of HGV drivers was a national issue, but fortunately there had been no impact on the Council's services. He said the Department's priority services continued to be waste collections and winter maintenance operations from 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2021. However, the issue had been highlighted on the risk register in the event of a major spike in sickness and Covid infections.

In relation to the composting recycling figures he agreed that Blaenau Gwent were at a disadvantage with the limited number of green areas compared to rural LA's. However, moving forward it was intended to focus efforts on improving the food recycling element.

With regard to the increase in residual waste he said the fact that enforcement activities ceased for a significant period through 2020/21 in response to the Covid pandemic had contributed. However, it was intended to reinstate enforcement activities and hopefully this would help to change behaviour and return to the positive impact prior to the pandemic.

In relation to the booking system put in place as a result of the Covid pandemic the Officer confirmed that the system had been improved. He pointed out the whilst a number of Covid restrictions had been relaxed, the track and trace element was still in place and there was still a responsibility

to restrict numbers at the sites. He said feedback from staff was positive, and a significant number of residents who utilised the sites seemed happy with the system in place, however, he acknowledged that some residents saw it as a block to using the sites.

In response to a question raised by a Member regarding the difference in figures for the 2 sites, the Officer explained that this report outlined performance for 2020/21. Only New Vale was operational during 2020/21 as the Roseheyworth site did not open until earlier this financial year.

In response to a further question regarding the recycling figures for rear lane collections the Officer said he did not have specific figures as this formed part of the overall recycling round. However, additional rear lane collections were intended over the coming months as part of our route optimisation exercise.

A Member asked whether the figures for the recycling materials deposited at our HWRC sites were factored into the kerbside recycling figures.

The Officer explained that all waste streams at our HWRC sites were included in our tonnages. However, the only income generated was from cardboard and scrap metal, and the Council had to pay disposal costs for all other materials deposited at the sites.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the HWRC sites when the Officer stated that the Roseheyworth site was less used than New Vale, however, there were no usage figures available prior to the Covid pandemic and the booking system being put in place. He said only a small number of complaints had been received about the booking system, and confirmed that the provision of same day bookings was being explored.

A Member referred to the last sentence of section 5.1 of the report and asked why the budget had not been aligned to the change in recycling habits.

The Officer explained that habits had changed since the significant changes to the service in 2015, and recycling



	<p>receptacles are more expensive and more in demand particularly following storms in the winter months. The drive to hit Welsh Government's target also meant additional resources were required, but hopefully the policies now in place would offset these additional resources moving forward.</p> <p>In response to a question raised by a Member the Officer confirmed that a pilot scheme was undertaken of approximately 2k properties to separate glass from cardboard waste. Feedback from the pilot scheme was positive and it was intended to roll this out to over 5k properties Borough wide over the coming months. This would provide additional capacity for residents to recycle more cardboard.</p> <p>Another Member enquired as to the trial undertaken to recycle plastic bags and the Officer reported that this project was undertaken in conjunction with Merthyr Tydfil CBC, with support from WRAP. The results of the trial had yet to be analysed, and when this was completed it would be brought to Members for consideration as there was costs associated with the scheme.</p> <p>A Member proposed Option 1, and this was seconded.</p> <p>Another Member proposed Option 2 with the addition that a review of the budget be undertaken, with a view to establishing a contingency budget.</p> <p>A Member seconded the proposal.</p> <p>A vote was thereupon taken, and</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted. (Option 1)</p>	
<p><b>No. 8</b></p>	<p><b><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Community Services.</p>	

The Head of Community Services presented the report which provided an update on Community Services performance outcomes over the period 2020/21, including the following key service areas:

- Infrastructure Services
- Neighbourhood Services; and
- Property services

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

In response to concerns raised by a Member regarding the limited resources within the Section to undertake inspections, the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services confirmed that the level of resources was a challenge as the service was extremely busy. He said Members would be aware of the funding constraints in the public sector over a number of years, with the public sector being expected to do more work with the same level of resources. However, he confirmed that workloads were cautiously prioritised, and funding opportunities explored wherever possible for jobs, and also apprentices. He confirmed that pressures would continue to be monitored to ensure sufficient resources.

A Member said consideration should be given to instating an impounding service. He also expressed concern regarding the level of fly tipping in the Borough.

The Head of Community Services reported that a decision was taken by the previous Council to cease the impounding service. However, if Members felt that the issue of straying animals was significant to warrant reinstating the service, it would go through the appropriate process of review.

In relation to concerns regarding fly tipping, he said the Litter & Fly Tipping Strategy was adopted approximately 6 months ago, and hopefully improvements would be seen over the coming months.

In response to a question raised by a Member regarding Aberbeeg Road and the Big Arch, the Officer reported that a significant amount of work had been undertaken on

	<p>Aberbeeg Road and this was reflected in the costs. That section of road would continue to be monitored and funding had been secured from Welsh Government to undertake feasibility studies to potentially improve the road in the longer terms. In relation to the Big Arch the Officer confirmed that works were due to commence shortly.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted. (Option 1)</p>	
<p><b>No. 9</b></p>	<p><b><u>SECTION 19 FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORT, LLANHILLETH</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Community Services.</p> <p>The Engineer presented the S19 Flood Investigation Report for Llanhilleth following the flooding that occurred in Meadow Street and Railway Street during 15-16<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The Officer went through the report in detail and highlighted the key findings of the report detailed at section 2.3 of the report; and the key actions detailed at section 2.4</p> <p>A Member said he was disappointed that the report was available in the public domain prior to Ward Members having sight of it. However, he thanked all Council staff and other agencies who worked tirelessly at the time of the flooding, and in the days and weeks thereafter. He said while this was a very comprehensive report it did not reflect the anguish of the residents affected.</p> <p>He then referred to page 112 of the report, namely the DCWW Pumping Station, and said in his opinion the enquiry should have been undertaken by an independent body. He had been informed by residents that the pump was faulty but when they tried to report it to Welsh Water they could only get through to an answer phone.</p> <p>The Member also asked whether the Council carried out further checks between the date of the incident and the 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2020.</p>	

In response the Senior Engineer Land Drainage reported that CCTV surveys were undertaken some weeks after the incident in March. He confirmed that regular surveys were undertaken of culverts, and depending on the classification this would be done every 2 weeks for critical culverts and every 12 weeks for significant culverts.

The Member pointed out that Railway Street would have flooded again on the 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 had it not been for the work of an Officer who located another blockage between Railway Street and Meadow Street. He said 89 properties had been flooded and the Council should look to compensate those residents who have needed to vacate their homes for 10 months, and that the process of compensation should be made as easy as possible.

A Member referred to section c on page 127 of the report and asked whether any remedial works had been undertaken to remove the pipe. He stressed the importance of all remedial works being undertaken as a matter of urgency to alleviate any problems in the future.

In response the Senior Engineer Land Drainage said the pipe could not be removed, however, investigations were ongoing to determine whether it was possible to install an additional pipe and re-route the main drain. He confirmed that funding had been secured to undertake remedial works, with a deadline to spend the money by the end of March 2022, and site investigations were currently being undertaken.

A discussion ensued when the Engineer explained that the report stated that it was probable that the high intensity and prolonged rainfall saturated the ground, and the 2 blockages identified in the drainage system contributed to the flooding.

A Member suggested an amendment to Option 1, namely that the Council puts in place a scheme to compensate residents affected by the flooding.

A discussion ensued when the Scrutiny Officer explained that it was not within the remit of the Committee to agree compensation.

	<p>In response the Member said he would approach the Executive Member Environment and a request a public meeting.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, Llanhilleth report be accepted and published in accordance with the FWMA 2010 legislation. (Option 1)</p>	
<p><b>No. 10</b></p>	<p><b><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME: 15TH NOVEMBER 2021</u></b></p> <p>The Forward Work Programme for the meeting scheduled to be held on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 was submitted.</p> <p>A Member requested that the following additional items be considered for inclusion on the FWP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full list of Community Asset Transfers.</li> <li>• A report on the condition of drainage systems throughout the Borough.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Forward Work Programme be accepted.</p> <p>Councillor S. Healy left the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
<p><b>No. 11</b></p>	<p><b><u>SILENT VALLEY WASTE SERVICES LTD PERFORMANCE REPORT</u></b></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p>	

Consideration was given to report of the Service Manager Neighbourhood Services.

The Service Manager Neighbourhood Services presented the report which provided an update of Silent Valley Waste Services Ltd performance outcomes for 2020/21.

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

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report which contained information relating to the business/financial affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted and the information contained therein be noted. (Option 1)

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

**Action Sheet**

**Community Services Scrutiny Committee – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action to be Taken</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
	<p><b><u>Actions Referred from the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021</u></b></p> <p><b>Revenue Budget Monitoring</b> Breakdown of funds received for recycling.</p> <p><b>Capital Budget Monitoring Forecast – Appendix 1</b> 327061 – CATs – breakdown of CATs transfers that have taken place over the last two years.</p> <p>332368 – Play Area schemes - breakdown of how the funding has been spent to be provided.</p>	<p>Matthew Stent</p> <p>Mark Howland</p> <p>Dave Watkins</p>	<p>See attached</p> <p>See attached</p> <p>See attached</p>
10	<p><b><u>Forward Work Programme</u></b></p> <p>Officers to consider including a report on culverts.</p>	<p>Clive Rogers</p>	<p>A section on culverts to be included in the Annual Flood Management report.</p>

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## Recycling Income Analysis

<b>Material</b>	Average price paid per tonne 2019-20		Average price paid per tonne 2020-21		Average price paid per tonne 2021
Paper	£83.33		£58.71		£121.67
Cardboard	£15.00		£21.96		£79.42
Mixed Glass	£20.50		£20.50		£20.50
Mixed Plastics	£156.33		£76.67		£127.50
Steel cans	£104.08		£101.88		£211.33
Aluminium cans	£785.75		£580.00		£760.00
Textiles	£169.50		£61.25		£48.67

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**Briefing/ Response Note - Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Action/ Request - 327061 – CATs – breakdown of CATs transfers that have taken place over the last two years.**

**Response:**

- The majority of the community asset transfers took place past the two -year period to which the request relates. In the last two years only four transfers can be referenced which are: -
  - ❖ Met Theatre
  - ❖ Tredegar Recreation Ground
  - ❖ Sirhowy Woodland
  - ❖ Llanhilleth Playing Field and Changing Rooms
- There have been others where the occupants have moved onto new agreements and efforts continue to regularise occupations of some groups.
- 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
- Newer CAT's currently being processed: -
  - ❖ 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

- ❖ Rassau Community Centre – Report ready for Executive but delayed as building has not legally been returned/ transferred

MH151021

## Briefing Note Children's Play Area Schemes & Funding

### **Grant Funding Breakdown Children's Play Areas**

The Authority conducted a comprehensive review of all playgrounds and reported to committee in December 2018. The report identified that any future "All Wales Play Opportunity Grants" (AWPOG) would be used to address the recommendations from the play area review.

An initial AWPOG of £117,000 was received in 2019/20 to support the implementing of Blaenau Gwent's "Play Sufficiency Action Plan". A report on this funding was included on the information pack for scrutiny on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and has been identified as phase 1 works.

In March 2020 the Council was notified by Welsh Government of a further allocation of funding, this funding had already been received by Blaenau Gwent in 2017/18, (£110,000), this funding had been initially allocated to a project for the creation of a "**Splash Pad**" facility in Blaenau Gwent. This has now been identified as phase 2 works.

Due to the need to resolve the funding issue during the Covid 19 lockdown period, the Managing Director, advised by both Director of Social Services & Director of Regeneration & Community Services, used delegated authority to approve the use of the funding to purchase a range/selection of play equipment as there was a risk of having the **Splash Pad** funding (£110,000) clawed back by Welsh Government.

The two elements of funding have now been allocated as follows;

**Phase 1** - funding received £117,000 in 2019/20 from Welsh Government to commence the implementation of the Play Sufficiency Action Plan.

The following phase 1 play area sites to be upgraded were presented to scrutiny committee's information pack in February 2020 and are in line with the play area review undertaken and reported to committee in December 2018;

<b>Play Area Sites (Phase 1 works)</b>	<b>New Equipment to be Installed 2020</b>
Multi Use Games Area Fencing Six Bells Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upgrade Boundary Fencing</li></ul>
Letchworth Rd. Ebbw Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swingo</li><li>• Multi Play Unit</li><li>• 4-Way Springy</li></ul>
Central Park Blaina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multi Play Area</li></ul>

Brynmawr Welfare Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classic Slide</li> <li>• Ariel Runway</li> <li>• Add Swing Bay</li> </ul>
Williams Street Cwm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Slide</li> <li>• Inclusive Roundabout</li> </ul>
Swffryd Play Area Abertillery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roundabout</li> <li>• Free Rider</li> </ul>
Bedwellty Pits Play Area Tredegar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Saw Springer</li> </ul>
<b>Costs Breakdown</b>	
Play Sufficiency Officer Salary	£10,000
Equipment Purchase	£68,150
Installation Costs	£38,850
<b>Total Costs (Phase 1)</b>	<b>£117,000</b>

**Phase 2** - funding received (£110,000) in 2017/18 from Welsh Government to support the development of the **Splash Pad** Facility. Funding repurposed in March 2020 towards Play Sufficiency Action Plan.

The following phase 2 play area sites to be upgraded were presented to scrutiny committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020;

<b>Play Area Sites (Phase 2 works)</b>	<b>New Equipment to be Installed 2020</b>
Banna Park Nantyglo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Multi Play Unit (Replacement)</li> <li>• See Saw Springer</li> <li>• New Toddler Springers</li> <li>• Refurbishment of Swing Bays</li> </ul>
Duffryn Park Blaina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New See Saw</li> <li>• New Free Rider/Swinger/Roundabout</li> </ul>
Gelli Grug Park Abertillery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Multi Play Unit</li> <li>• New Free Ride Swingo</li> <li>• New Group Basket Swing</li> </ul>
Brynmawr Welfare Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New toddler Unit</li> </ul>
Warm Turn Play Area Abertillery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Spring Rocker</li> <li>• New See Saw</li> <li>• New See Saw Springy</li> </ul>

New Rassau Park Ebbw Vale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Multi Play</li> <li>• New Free Ride/Swingo</li> </ul>
<b>Costs Breakdown</b>	
Equipment Purchase	£65,150
Installation Costs	£44,850
<b>Total Costs Phase 2</b>	<b>£110,000 (repurposed Splash Pad Funding)</b>

The Council has also benefited from a further grant received from Welsh Government through the Valleys Regional Parks “Discovery Gateway Project” to support additional play facilities as follows;

<b>Play Area Sites (Additional)</b>	<b>New Equipment Installed 2020</b>
Parc Bryn Bach Tredegar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total upgrading and installation of a new visitor play attraction.</li> </ul>
<b>Costs Breakdown</b>	
Equipment Purchase and installation	£185,000
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>£185,000</b>

**Phase 3** - Additionally, a further £62,000 was allocated through AWPOG funding in December 2020 to be spent by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, which was a very tight deadline to achieve.

In line with the play area reports submitted to scrutiny and the executive and as the authority had conducted a comprehensive review of playgrounds in December 2018, where it was the intention that when this review was fully complete then AWPOG funding would be used to address the recommendations from the review.

The methodology used from the Playground Review 2018, has now been used to identify sites suitable for upgrading on a rolling programme and should future AWPOG funding be made available it could be easily allocated to priority play area works. This would also allow for implementation to be expedited should future funding require expenditure at short notice.

In line with the findings of the 2018 review, and now classed as phase 3 works, together with being as a Priority 2 site in the matrix, Abertillery park was identified as

the next play area for a full refurbishment to be undertaken utilising the additional £62,000 AWPOG funding.

Play Area Sites (Phase 3 Works)	New Equipment Installed 2021
Abertillery Park (Visit Play Area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The total upgrading and installation of a new visitor play area.</li> </ul>
<b>Costs Breakdown</b>  Equipment Purchase and installation  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Total Costs</b></p>	£62,000  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>£62,000</b></p>

### Summary of Funding

The total funding allocation to children’s play facilities is therefore as follows;

From	Amount	Year Awarded
Welsh Government AWPOG funding - phase 1	£117,000	(2019/20)
Welsh Government AWPOG funding (Splash Pad) – phase 2	£110,000	(2017/18)
Welsh Government Valleys Regional Park Grant – additional works phase 2	£185,000	(2018/19)
Welsh Government AWPOG funding - phase 3	£62,000	(2020/21)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>£474,000</b>	



# Agenda Item 6

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **15 November 2021**  
Report Subject: **Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) 2020/21 annual report**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr J. Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**  
Report Submitted by: **Clive Rogers, Head of Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
13/10/2021	21/10/2021	04.11.21			15/11/2021	15.12.21		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on how the Council is meeting its statutory duties under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
- 1.2 As Members are aware the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) was passed by Full Council in October 2019. The biodiversity and ecosystem resilience duty under Section 6 of the Act requires that “a public authority must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.”<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 In order to comply with the Environment (Wales) Act the Council has produced a Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 This report gives the overview of annual progress against the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) for 2020/21.
- 2.3 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. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, by 2022, aims to:
  - Reduce overall resource use; reuse where possible and recycle everything recyclable.
  - Increase biodiversity and ecosystems understanding in the council staff and councillors through appropriate channels including Service Area Environment Champions and the Councillor Nature Champion role.

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

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

2.4 The three delivery mechanisms, for implementing activities, are Service Area Action Plans; Environment Champions network and advice from the Natural Environment team. However, Covid-19 has restricted activities since March 2020. As a result, there is a cross over in reporting.

## 2.5 **Summary of Progress**

Progress in 2020/21 by Service Area against the delivery mechanisms and activity plan for 2021/22 is shown in Appendix 2 (2020/21 Progress and 2021/22 Activity Plan).

### **Area of activities 2020/21**

#### Governance & Partnerships:

- PSB is overseeing the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Blaenau Gwent
- Significant progress with climate change work, including the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly, where key recommendations were made around nature and green space, particularly its protection and improvement.

#### Commercial Services:

- Further development to streamline processes and reduce the use of paper
- Communication to be electronic. However, it was impacted by Covid19, therefore a delay to completely paperless regarding staff communication
- Introduction on new Hybrid mail system

#### Social Services:

- Adult services have prioritised supporting the delivery of essential services and a number of non-regulated services as a result of Covid-19
- Made progress with the garden at one of the establishments, including bird boxes and wild flowers

#### Regeneration & Community Services:

- The Resilient Greater Gwent (RGG) has several work streams delivering on maintaining & enhancing biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience

- a) Blaenau Gwent Urban Hedgehog project was launched in October 2020. This was to give away 60 hedgehog packs to Blaenau Gwent Residents. Schools and community groups. It was received well as initially there were over 400 people interested in participating. In May 2021 Tai Calon further supported by giving away another 40 packs to Tai Calon residents. The RGG looked at our approach, with partners implementing similar schemes across the whole of Gwent.
- Supported the Local Nature Partnership
  - a) Working with the Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen Local Nature Partnership Coordinator, several projects have been developed that has directly benefited community groups. For example, hedgerow management at Beaufort Hill Ponds and Woodlands, Hedgerow planting at Cwmtillery and grass cutting equipment and training provided to Sirhowy Woodlands community group.
  - b) Supported the Local Nature Partnership Coordinator with making changes to the grass cutting regimes on verges and meadows. Working with Alun Watkins in Neighbourhood Services. For example, A4046- Cwm bypass junction, A467-Llanhilleth Park Traffic lights, a relaxed mowing regime was implemented in the grounds of Rhos Y Fedwen Primary school. In the first year of doing so, a bee orchid was recorded for the first time.
- Supported community groups running events, but with restrictions, and assisted with promotional material for a virtual Wales Nature Week in June 2020

#### Education:

- Engagement with schools via educational sessions, SLA with Natural Environment Team and eco-councils had to be adapted because of Covid-19. A blended delivery style of online engagement and outdoor classroom.
    - a) 17 schools are signed up to the SLA. The Urban Hedgehog project was also delivered to eight Blaenau Gwent schools (Beaufort Hill Primary, Coed-Y-Garn Primary, Deighton Primary, Rhos y Fedwen, Sofrydd, St Illtyds, St Joseph's RC Primary and Willowtown Primary). The eight schools expressed an interested in participating in a national trial project to become Hedgehog Friendly School. All eight schools were successful in being selected to take part.
- 2.6 There have been four quarterly Environment Champions meetings, with ten champions in the network representing all Service Areas and Councillors. Meetings were held virtually via Microsoft Teams and at Parc Bryn Bach. Topics included resource use, developing a youth Nature Ambassadors across the school network, developing an educational action plan/policy and urban wildlife.

- 2.7 From the review of progress, the Forward Plan (2019-22) has not been changed. Minor amendments have been made to accurately reflect the Service Area structure, recognising that Organisational Development sits within Commercial Services.
- 2.8 The annual report and Forward Plan do not cover statutory duties included in the Rights of Way, Planning or Active Travel Acts but is connected to these through the Welsh government's commitment to sustainable development as the best way to improve the well-being of Wales now and for future generations.
- 3. Options for Recommendation**
- 3.1 **Options Appraisal**
- **Option 1: Preferred option** Members to approve the annual report 2020/21 and activity plan recommended for 2021/22 to meet the Section 6 Duty.
- 3.2 • **Option 2:** Members to comment on the annual report 2020/21 / the activity plan for 2021/22 and suggest areas of improvements to be included.
- 3.3 *Approval of the annual report*  
Goes beyond the minimum to show a proactive approach to meeting the duty; embeds the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems into business planning and enables an efficient mechanism for reporting and meeting the requirement to report to Welsh Government.
- 4. Evidence of how does this topic support the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 **Corporate Plan Priority:**  
Continued efforts to meet the aims of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) primarily contributes to meeting the following priority:
- 4.2 Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities  
- To improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors.
- 4.3 **Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**  
Continued efforts to meet the aims of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) meets all of the well-being plan objectives:
- The best start in life for everyone
  - Safe and friendly communities
  - To look after and protect the environment

- To forge new pathways to prosperity
  - To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places that they live, learn, work and play
- 4.4 Benefits provided by resilient ecosystems across the well-being goals are shown in appendix 7.2 of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan 2019-2022 (Appendix 1).
- 4.5 **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**
- 4.6 Continued efforts to meet the aims of the Forward Plan directly contributes to actions needed for the 'resilient Wales' goal:  
 "A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change)"
- 4.7 By implementing the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 the Local Authority will maximise its contributions to the Well-being Goals.

## 5. Implications Against Each Option

### 5.1 *Impact on Budget*

There has been a cost neutral impact on budgets, 2020/21 from implementing the Forward Plan. Officer time was funded through existing revenue budgets as shown in Appendix 3 (Impact on Budget).

Actions in 2021/22 will have a cost neutral impact on budgets. Officer time will be funded through existing revenue budgets. Additional external revenue and capital funding to deliver further biodiversity and ecosystem resilience related schemes of work as shown in Appendix 3 (Impact on Budget).

### 5.2 *Risk*

The main risk is that failure to meet the aims of the plan will result in the Authority failing to meet its statutory duty and miss out on funding opportunities for delivery of the council corporate objectives and Blaenau Gwent well-being plan.

### 5.3 *Legal*

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

### 5.4 *Human Resources*

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

## 6. Supporting Evidence

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

Is gathered quarterly through business plan reporting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

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

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

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

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

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

### 6.8 **Equalities Impact Assessment**

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

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

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

## **7. Monitoring Arrangements**

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

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

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

### **Glossary**

- 9.1 Biodiversity - means 'biological diversity' which refers to all the variety of life on Earth (plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms) as well as to the communities that they form and the habitats in which they live.
- 9.2 Ecosystem - dynamic network of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.
- 9.3 Ecosystem Resilience - is the ability of an ecosystem to maintain its normal patterns of nutrient cycling and biomass production after being subjected to damage caused by an ecological disturbance, for example extreme weather events caused by climate change, outbreak of disease or human exploitation.

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**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council**

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

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



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

## Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary .....	3
2. Introduction to the Forward Plan .....	4
3. Forward Plan .....	5
3.1 Aims .....	5
3.2 Forward Plan timeline .....	6
3.3 Forward Plan responsibilities .....	6
4. Service Area Action Plans.....	7
4.1 Governance & Partnerships.....	7
4.2 Resources .....	7
4.3 Commercial Services.....	8
4.4 Organisational Development.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.4 Social Services .....	9
4.5 Regeneration & Community Services .....	10
4.6 Education .....	11
5. Reporting .....	12
5.1 Mid-year 2019-20 summary .....	12
5.2 Reporting schedule.....	12
6. References .....	13
7. Appendices .....	14
7.2 Link to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 .....	14
7.3 Benefits provided by resilient ecosystems.....	15
7.4 Sustainable Development Five Ways of Working.....	16
7.5 Link to the Environment (Wales) 2016 Act Ecosystem Approach .....	17
7.6 Link to Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales.....	18
7.7 Service Area Action Plan interview template .....	19

## 1. Executive Summary

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



Councillor N. J. Daniels, Leader of the council

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

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

The Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Forward Plan:

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

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

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

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

## 2. Introduction to the Forward Plan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 3. Forward Plan

#### 3.1 Aims

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

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

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



### 3.2 Forward Plan timeline

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

2019-20

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

2020-21

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

2021-22

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

2022-23

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

### 3.3 Forward Plan responsibilities

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

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

## 4 Service Area Action Plans

### 4.1 Governance & Partnerships

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

### 4.2 Resources

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

### 4.3 Commercial Services

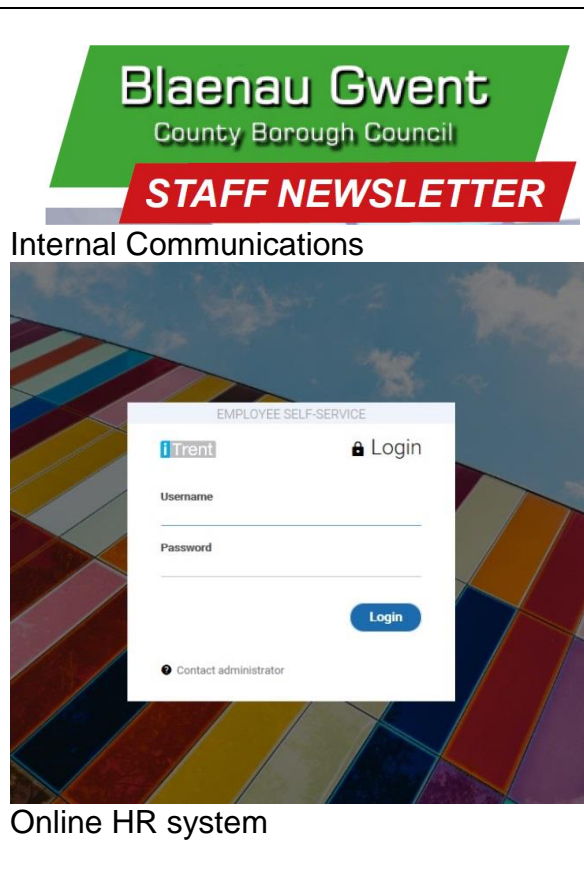
#### Commercial Services

Summary of functions:

- Customer service
- Communications
- Organisational Development
- Procurement

Opportunities:

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



The image shows a staff newsletter header for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. Below the header, it says 'Internal Communications'. The main content is a screenshot of an 'EMPLOYEE SELF-SERVICE' login page for iTrent. The login page has fields for 'Username' and 'Password', a 'Login' button, and a link to 'Contact administrator'.

Objective 1:

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



## 4.4 Social Services

### Social Services

#### Summary of functions:

- Adult Social Services
- Child Social Services

#### Opportunities:

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



Photo: Getty Images

#### Objective 1:

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


#### Objective 2:

Encourage nature friendly management at our Provider Services outside spaces


#### Objective 3:

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

## 4.5 Regeneration & Community Services

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

## 4.6 Education

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

## 5 Reporting

### 5.1 Mid-year 2019-20 summary

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

### 5.2 Reporting schedule

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

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

## 6 References

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018-22:

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

(accessed 13/09/19)

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Well-being Objectives 2017:

[http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Council/Policies\\_Strategies\\_Plans/Wellbeing\\_Objectives\\_-\\_June\\_2017-WF3.pdf](http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Council/Policies_Strategies_Plans/Wellbeing_Objectives_-_June_2017-WF3.pdf) (accessed 13/09/19)

Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan 2018-23:

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

Environment (Wales) Act 2016:

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

Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales 2015:

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

State of Natural Resources Report 2016:

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

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

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

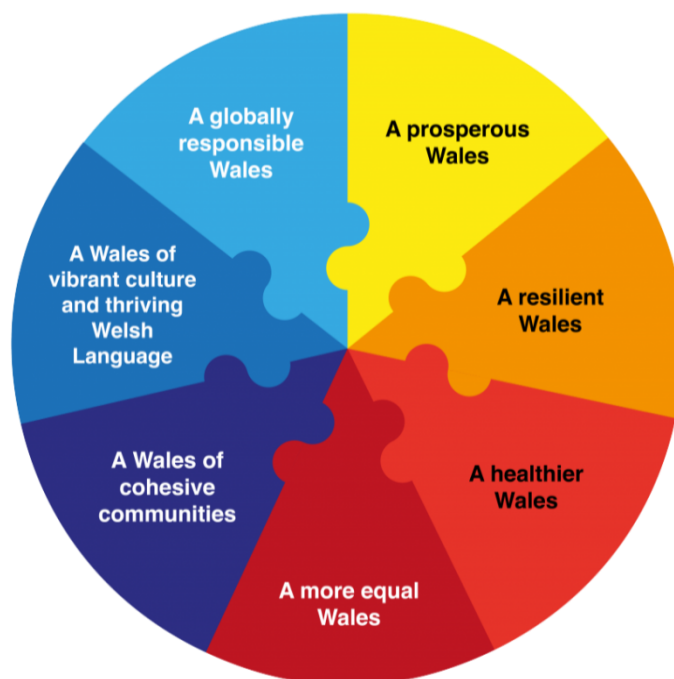


## 7 Appendices

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

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

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



The 'resilient Wales' goal is the top commitment to biodiversity:

***“A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change)”***

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

### 7.3 Benefits provided by resilient ecosystems

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

Source: State of Natural Resources Report, 2016

## 7.4 Sustainable Development Five Ways of Working

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





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

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

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

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

### Ecosystem Approach Principles

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

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

## 7.6 Link to Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales

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

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

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

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

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

## 7.7 Service Area Action Plan interview template

### Generating Service Area Action Plans

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

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

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Service Area</b>	

### Questions

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

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

Others:

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

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

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

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

### **Further information**

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 enhances the previous NERC<sup>2</sup> Act 2006 duty to require all public authorities, when carrying out their functions in Wales, to seek to “maintain and enhance biodiversity” where it is within the proper exercise of their functions. In doing so, public authorities must also seek to “promote the resilience of ecosystems”.

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

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

### **Contacts:**

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

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

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<sup>2</sup> NERC – Natural Environment and Rural Communities

## Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) 2020/21 annual report

### Section 2.5. Appendix 2.

#### 2020/21 Progress and 2021/22 Activity Plan

Service Area	Business Plan linked Objectives	Progress 2020/21	Areas of Focus and Opportunity 2021/22	Environment Champion/s	Assessment Red – Amber – Green
<b>Governance &amp; Partnerships</b>	<p>1. Support the integration of Forward Plan objectives into council Corporate Business Plans and provide quarterly reporting</p> <p>2. Provide a link to Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and Public Service Board</p>	<p>1. Fully integrated into processes during 20/21 and being utilised also for the Annual Report on Council Performance.</p> <p>On-going projects continue, despite COVID-19 and the PSB is overseeing the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>Significant progress with climate change work, including the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly, where key recommendations were made around nature and green space, particularly its protection and improvement.</p>	<p>1. Further strengthen relevant duties for Biodiversity and Ecosystem throughout organisational processes.</p> <p>Strengthen local and regional partnership working on environmental issues in-line with Gwent PSB changes, with a strong local focus on the Green Infrastructure Plan</p> <p>Build on the delivery of community led projects benefiting from participatory budgeting in the borough.</p> <p>Ensure key stakeholders are able to consider and participated in consultation on</p>	Yes – One (Governance)	Green

		<p>Furthermore, a number of environment community based projects have been funded by 20/21 participatory budgeting programme in Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>Biodiversity and Ecosystem a key part of development of the Gwent Well-being Assessment for the newly formed Gwent PSB. Considered locality issues e.g. Blaenau Gwent and will be available for formal consultation early in 2022.</p>	the well-being assessment, which will shape the new PSB well-being plan for 2022/23.		
<b>Resources</b>	None set	-	Set objectives with Section 6 duty leads	Yes – One (Accounting)	Amber
<b>Commercial Services</b>	Organisational Development (OD): 1. Take further steps towards implementation of a “paperless office” via the further development of the iTrent system and the roll-out of the self service functions	<p>New Agile Working Operating Model: Further reduction in the use of paper Less commuting but also less business travel overall Closure of a building</p> <p>Occupational Health- Fully remote service</p> <p>ITrent: Further development to streamline processes and reduce use of paper i.e.</p>	<p>Include section in Staff Newsletter</p> <p>Further digitalisation of the remaining filing.</p> <p>Tendering for a permanent Hybrid mail solution which will give the service area full functionality and the ability to send out secure emails to staff instead of paper letters.</p> <p>Making more use of staff email addresses since COVID</p>	Yes – Two (OD; Business Support)	Green

		<p>recruitment and other forms Majority of correspondence now within the system to auto populate</p> <p>It was agreed (prior to the pandemic) that all communication being electronic, however it was impacted by Covid 19 do there has been a delay to going completely paperless on staff communication.</p> <p>Introduction of the new Hybrid mail system but does not allow all functionality of going completely paperless with staff communication.</p>	<p>Decarbonisation Agenda: One of OD's actions is to explore how staff can be encouraged to switch to ULEV. This will be considered through the review our car loan scheme next year.</p>		
<b>Social Services</b>	<p>1. Environment Act leads to attend Provider Managers meeting annually</p> <p>2. Encourage nature friendly management at our Provider Services outside spaces</p> <p>3. Engage our citizens and staff with the environment through involvement in</p>	<p>Unfortunately, Community Options closed in March 2020 and staff were redeployed to essential services and as a result limited progress has been made within Social Services – Adult services has prioritised supporting the delivery of essential services and a number of non-regulated services have focussed of supporting citizens in their own homes and in the</p>	<p>In 2021 staff member Steven Spear has attended environment champion meetings, Steven has worked with the group in helping with the new sensory garden at Bryn Bach Park. Steven will continue to work with environment champions and continue the upkeep of our gardens and also the planting of wild flowers and bird boxes in our community centres.</p>	<p>Yes – Two (Adult; Child)</p>	<p>Amber</p>



	environmental projects within our Provider Services	community who are assessed as being in critical need. However recently we have made some progress with the garden at one of our establishments, including bird boxes and wild flowers.			
<b>Regeneration &amp; Community Services</b>	<p>1. Work towards the Local Development Plan (LDP) aims</p> <p>2. Maintain and enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience on council owned land, particularly with regard to Section 7 priority species and habitats in partnership with community groups, Gwent Wildlife Trust and others.</p> <p>3. Ensure that the Council Embraces the Well-being of Future Generations Act across the service functions and contribute to improving educational standards in relation to biodiversity.</p>	<p>1. Supported the inclusion of ecosystem resilience in the Local Development Plan 2018-2033 and reference up to date policies from the Environment Act including Natural Resources Policy and Area Statements.</p> <p>Changes to Edition 10 (2018) of Planning Policy Wales highlighted by Chief Planner 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. PPW 11 was issued February 2021.</p> <p>2. The Resilient Greater Gwent has several work streams delivering on maintaining &amp; enhancing biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience.</p> <p>3. Due to covid 19 (March 2020) and changes to staffing, engagement</p>	<p>1. Support LDP Allocation master planning</p> <p>2. Support Local Nature Reserves and community groups via collaborative management plans.</p> <p>3. Programme of environmental education to be developed to deliver the Schools SLA from April 2021.</p> <p>4. Support the Blaenau Gwent &amp; Torfaen Local Nature Partnership Nature Recovery Action Plan. Bring to council for scrutiny and approval.</p> <p>To support and assist with promotion materials for Wales Nature Week 2021.</p> <p>Discuss and develop BGCBC becoming Bee Friendly (WG scheme)</p>	Yes – Two (Regeneration; Natural Environment)	Green



	<p>4. Support the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) in its work as a strategic partnership of organisations and individuals directing and delivering nature conservation in both Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent boroughs, at local and wider landscape scales.</p>	<p>wasn't able to take place at its full level of delivery. January 2021 the role of the Biodiversity officer to be filled.</p> <p>4. Supported the Local Nature Partnership (Appendix 2a, Local Nature Partnership progress 2020-21).</p> <p>Supported community groups running events and assisted with promotion materials for Wales Nature Week in June 2020 (Appendix 2b, Nature Week Events 2020).</p>			
<b>Education</b>	<p>1. Engage schools and students via educational sessions and eco-councils and embed sustainability</p> <p>2. Environment Act leads to attend a Head Teachers meeting annually</p> <p>3. Encourage nature friendly management on school grounds</p>	<p>1. A Bio-diversity SLA is in place between Natural Environment team and schools; engaging with 17 schools providing indoor and outdoor learning sessions linked to the natural environment. Adaptation required for Covid-19 restrictions. Blended delivery style of online engagement and outdoor classroom. The SLA review process has commenced, the aim of</p>	<p>1. Adaptation required for Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>Schools built as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme built to excellent Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standard.</p> <p>Further development and implementation of the Ecology and Education Action plan, in line with the following key themes:</p>	Yes – One (Education transformation)	Green

	<p>4. Engage young people with the environment through the youth service</p>	<p>which, is to extend provision throughout the school estate.</p> <p>2. Update provided in newsletter. An Engagement Plan and regular meetings are in place between the Natural Environment team and Education, which includes the development of a School Engagement and Communication plan.</p> <p>3. Via School Eco Councils and SLA with Natural Environment Team. In addition, projects and priorities will be developed and agreed as part of the joint action planning process with Education</p> <p>4. Ongoing, this work will also form part of the action planning process (referenced above).</p> <p>Schools built as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme built to excellent Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of Education (including schools and Youth Service) business (i.e. procurement, planning, projects, programmes etc.) and grounds (i.e. maintenance, management, development etc.) – creation of a Education Ecology Policy</li> <li>• Engagement – children, young people, partners and schools</li> <li>• Links to the curriculum and future employment opportunities</li> <li>• Connection to nature and wellbeing</li> <li>• Training, awareness and communication</li> </ul>		
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		Method (BREEAM) standard. In addition, remodelling and maintenance projects factor in ecological and environmental enhancement considerations.			
<b>Councillors</b>	N/A	N/A	Update briefing on Activity Plan and funding outputs. Virtual or in person.	Yes – Nature Champion Cllr Lee Parsons	Green

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## Appendix 2a

### Local Nature Partnership 2020/21 Progress Summary

#### Aims for the 2020/21:

1. To support the regional LNP Cymru project
2. Contribute to Area Statement and local NRAP development as required
3. To deliver Partnership projects, including Local Places for Nature

<b>Key figures (Q1)</b>	
Number of LNP meetings held	2
Number of steering group meetings held	0
Number of recipients on email distribution list	173
Number of people engaged through social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram)	489
Enquiries	34
Talks / presentations	2
Site visits	24
LNP Projects developed & cost	7
Local Places for Nature programmes	4

#### Key work:

**Talks / presentations** – Wales Biodiversity Partnership conference workshop on nature and wellbeing; LNP Cymru meeting

**Site visits** – advice and support for local authorities, Community Councils, residents, community groups on enhancing sites for biodiversity

**LNP projects developed** – pond restoration at Cwmcelyn, Beaufort Hill and Tredegar Park; hedgerow management at Beaufort Hill; hedgerow planting at Cwmtillery; Torfaen Urban Hedgehog Project; wildlife cameras for households / community groups;

**Local Places for Nature projects** – two main themes for 2020 / 21 were boundary features (hedgerows and stone walling) and changes to grass cutting regimes on verges and



meadows. Progress has been made across both county boroughs in identifying additional sites for changes in management to enhance biodiversity.

### **Looking forward:**

2021/22

- Complete delivery of 100 hedgehog packs in Torfaen
- Develop and deliver plans for Local Places for Nature 2021/22 – expansion of changes to grass cutting regimes and urban tree planting, including orchards, hedgerows and street trees



PARTNERIAETHAU NATUR LLEOL LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIPS CYMRU

Image © Rose Revera

# Wales Nature Week

30 May – 7 June  
#wnw2020 #NatureNeighbours

This year, Wales Nature Week is all about nature in our gardens- and we need your help! We want you to share your encounters with the amazing variety of birds, native plants, bees and bugs that share your garden.

@LNPCymru @WBP\_wildlife

Keep an eye on our social media channels for more details of the following:

**National Garden Bioblitz**      **Nature facts**      **Live moth trap reveal**

**Big Nature Pub Quiz**      **Thanks to volunteers day**      **Many more local activities!**

**Armchair birding**      **Nature Wellbeing day**

**WYTHNOS NATUR CYMRU WALES NATURE WEEK**

30 MAI/MAY - 7 MEHEFIN/JUNE 2020

Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Local Nature Partnership

#WalesNatureWeek2020  
#WNW2020  
#WildlifeWhereWeLive  
@BGandTorfaenLNP

30th May	31st May	1st June	2nd June	3rd June	4th June	5th June	6th June	7th June
Nature in our Gardens	Nature in our Gardens	Pollinators Day	Nocturnal animals		Quiz day	Homes for Wildlife Day	Wellbeing Day	Bird Day
Garden Bio-Blitz	Challenge: Nature Bingo	Challenge: Create a butterfly feeder	Challenge: Night Time Movers	Challenge: Make a Nature Video	Challenge: Wildlife Quiz	Challenge: Make a home for wildlife	Challenge: Sit, Spot and Notice- Creative writing	Challenge: Armchair Naturalist- Birding
Challenge: Nature Safari		Ask an expert: Liam Olds, Buglife LIVE on twitter @nptwildlife	Facebook LIVE! The Great Moth Trap reveal with Barry Stewart: NPT Facebook	Ask an expert: Mark Barber, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation @nptwildlife	The Big Nature Pub quiz with wildlife enthusiasts (YouTube) 7pm	Volunteer for Nature- to celebrate National Volunteer Week/World Environment Day	Challenge: Nature Art	





**Blaenau Gwent CBC** @BlaenauGwentCBC · 29 May 2020

This Saturday is the start of a series of garden events and nature activities you can join in from home to celebrate Wales Nature Week

Read more - [crowd.in/2KW1jC](https://crowd.in/2KW1jC)

[#WNW2020](#) [#nature](#) [#biodiversity](#) [#blaenaugwent](#)



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**Nadine Morgan** 🌸 😊 🌍 🌊 ☀️ @BGEco\_Education · 1 Jun 2020

Its Day 3 of [#WalesNatureWeek2020](#) [#WNW2020](#) here is today's challenge- have fun! Share your creations [#WildlifeWhereWeLive](#)

[@BGTorfaenLNP](#) [@WBP\\_wildlife](#) [@LNPCymru](#) 🦋🦋🦋🦋

**create a Butterfly Feeding Station** / **wnewch orsaf fwydo pilli pa**

Butterflies are a wonderful sight in spring and summer. / **ie'n hyfryd gweld pilli pala yn y gwanwyn a'r haf.**

Encourage butterflies to your garden or window box by creating a DIY butterfly feeding station. They are so simple to make and many can be made using up-cycled or recycled materials. / **ant mor syml i'w gwneud a gellir gwneud llawer ohonynt yn defnyddio deud neu ailgylchu neu ailgylchu.**

I would love to see what you find share your discoveries @BGEco\_Education / **sdem wrth ein bodd gweld yr hyn a welwch @BGEco\_Education**

[@BGTorfaenLNP](#) [#WildlifeWhereWeLive](#) / **@BGTorfaenLNP #BywydGwylltBieRydymYnByw**

**WYTHNOS NATUR CYMRU**  
**WALES NATURE WEEK**  
30 MAI/MAY - 7 MEHEFIN/JUNE 2020

**WYTHNOS NATUR CYMRU**  
**WALES NATURE WEEK**  
30 MAI/MAY - 7 MEHEFIN/JUNE 2020

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 **BGandTorfaenLNP** @BGTorfaenLNP · 29 May 2020

There's a jam packed week of nature activities starting tomorrow - watch this space! [#WNW2020](#)

 **Nadine Morgan** 🌸 😊 🌿 🐦 🐛 @BGEco\_Education · 29 May 2020

[#WalesNatureWeek2020](#) [#WNW2020](#) [#WildlifeWhereWeLive](#)  
 Here are the planned activities from @BGTorfaenLNP with live Q&A from experts coming from other areas in Wales. [#LNPCymru](#) @NptWildlife  
 To find out more: [biodiversitywales.org.uk/Wales-Nature-W...](http://biodiversitywales.org.uk/Wales-Nature-W...)

[@WBP\\_wildlife](#) [@loloWilliams2](#) [@LNPCymru](#) 🐾 🌱 🐛



**WT ITHNUS NATURE CYMRU WALES NATURE WEEK**  
 30 MAY/MAY - 7 MEHEFIN/JUNE 2020

30th May	31st May	1st June	2nd June	3rd June	4th June	5th June	6th June	7th June
Nature in our Gardens	Nature in our Gardens	Pollinators Day	Nocturnal animals	Nocturnal animals	Quiz day	Homes for Wildlife Day	Wellbeing Day	Bird Day
Garden Bio-Bitz	Challenge: Create a Nature Bingo	Challenge: Create a butterfly feeder	Challenge: Night Time Mowers	Challenge: Make a Nature Video	Challenge: Wildlife Quiz	Challenge: Make a home for wildlife	Challenge: Sit, Spot and Notice: Creative writing	Challenge: Armchair Naturalist Birding
Challenge: Nature Safari	Ask an expert: Liam Olds, Bug life LIVE on Twitter @Briptwildlife	Facebook LIVE: The Great Moth Trap reveal with Barry Stewart: NPT	Facebook LIVE: The Great Moth Trap reveal with Barry Stewart: NPT	Ask an expert: Mark Barber, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation: NPT @Briptwildlife	The Big Nature Pub quiz with wildlife enthusiasts (YouTube) 7pm	Volunteer for nature - to celebrate National Volunteer Week/World Environment Day	Challenge: Nature Art	

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 **Nadine Morgan** 🌸 😊 🌿 🐦 🐛 @BGEco\_Education · 1 Jun 2020

[#WNW2020](#) [#WalesNatureWeek2020](#)

Butterfly

The Orange Tip Butterfly can be seen on the wing from April to June. The female which doesn't have the orange tips, lays its eggs on cuckoo flower, also known as lady's smock or may flower.

[#WildlifeWhereWeLive](#) [@BGTorfaenLNP](#)



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**BGandTorfaenLNP** @BGTorfaenLNP · 30 May 2020

We'd love to know what you find in your garden - don't forget to record your garden wildlife with [@SEWBRc](#) [#WNN2020](#) [#wildlifewherewelive](#)

**SEWBRc** @SEWBRc · 30 May 2020

Another way to send in your [#WalesGardenBioBlitz](#) records is [sewbrecord.org.uk](http://sewbrecord.org.uk). Here's a series of video guides on how to get started: [youtube.com/playlist?list=...](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=...)

[#WNN2020](#)



2

3

**BGandTorfaenLNP** @BGTorfaenLNP · 5 Jun 2020

Today's [#WalesNatureWeek2020](#) activity is to make a home for wildlife in your garden. Don't forget to send us a photo or video of what you make - we'd love to see [@BGeco\\_Education](#) [@LNPCymru](#) [@WBP\\_wildlife](#)



**Make a Home for Wildlife** / **Gwneud Cartref i Bywyd Gwylid**

home with these simples makes: / home by reusing an old plastic flower pot or clean plastic bottle. Fill your cych goch gwta drwy aildefnyddio hen bot blodau plastig neu botel plastig llwyr. Add straw and sticks. / e phapur newydd wedi'i rôllo ian, gwellt a brigau.

a hotel by constructing a container and filling with hollow bamboo canes, s gwenynen unig drwy wneud cynhwysydd a'i lenwi gyda fflin bambw gwag. cken wire to ensure the materials do not fall out. / In o'i ffaen i sicrhau nad yw'r deunyddiau yn syrthio allan.

edgehog hideaway by using old brick and a piece of wood for the rood. Ens in syml i ddraenogod drwy ddefnyddio hen fricsen a darn o bren . Dylai'r fy n. /


[@BGeco\\_Education](#) [@BGandTorfaenLNP](#) [#WildlifeWhereWeLive](#) / [@BGeco\\_Education](#) [@BGandTorfaenLNP](#) [#BywydGwylidDdeffyd](#)

**WYTHNOS NATUR CYMRU** / **WYTHNOS NATUR CYMRU**


**WALES NATURE WEEK** / **WALES NATURE WEEK**

3

4

 For [#WalesNatureWeek2020](#) task today we're inviting you to be an armchair naturalist, look out of your window and see what birds are nearby. Maybe make a list and share it with us [@BGEco\\_Education](#) [@LNPCymru](#) [@WBP\\_wildlife](#)



  3  7 

 **BGandTorfaenLNP** [@BGTorfaenLNP](#) · 6 Jun 2020 ...  
It's Saturday - take a little time to relax, sit somewhere and notice nature for [#WalesNatureWeek2020](#) Be inspired to write about what you encounter [@BGEco\\_Education](#) [@LNPCymru](#) [@WBP\\_wildlife](#)



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### Appendix 3: Impact on budget

Additional external revenue and capital funding to deliver further biodiversity and ecosystem resilience related schemes of work were secured and delivered as follows:

Source – Project	Forward Plan Aims met	Amount	Schemes of Work
ENRaW* - Resilient Greater Gwent	<p>Council owned land</p> <p>Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working</p> <p>Working in partnership</p>	<£77,000	<p>Invasive Non Native Species work</p> <p>Urban biodiversity</p> <p>NRAP delivery</p> <p>Sustainable Communities</p> <p>BGCBC owned Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) surveys x5 (GWT and Buglife)</p> <p>Actions across LNRs</p>
ENRaW* - LNP Cymru	<p>Support the LNP</p> <p>Council owned land</p> <p>Working in partnership</p>	£61,000	<p>Priority habitat work: hedgerows, meadows</p> <p>Verge &amp; grass management</p>
ENRaW* - Gwent Green Grid	<p>Council owned land</p> <p>Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working</p> <p>Working in partnership</p>	£60,000	<p>Woodland management</p> <p>Access improvements</p>
Planning - Biodiversity S106 payments	<p>Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working</p>	£0	N/A

Actions in 2021/22 will have a cost neutral impact on budgets. Officer time will be funded through existing revenue budgets. Additional external revenue and capital funding to deliver further biodiversity and ecosystem resilience related schemes of work have been secured as follows:

<b>Source</b>	<b>Aims to be met</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Schemes of Work</b>
ENRaW* - Resilient Greater Gwent	<p>Council owned land</p> <p>Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working</p> <p>Working in partnership</p>	<£77,000	<p>Invasive Non Native Species work</p> <p>BGCBC owned Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) surveys x5 (GWT and Buglife)</p> <p>Urban biodiversity</p> <p>NRAP Delivery</p> <p>Sustainable Communities</p> <p>Action across LNRs</p>
ENRaW* - LNP Cymru	<p>Support the LNP</p> <p>Council owned land</p> <p>Working in partnership</p>	£97,500	<p>Priority habitat work: hedgerows, meadows</p> <p>Verge &amp; grass management</p>
ENRaW* - Gwent Green Grid	<p>Council owned land</p> <p>Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working</p> <p>Working in partnership</p>	£60,000	<p>Woodland management</p> <p>Access improvements</p>

Planning - Biodiversity S106 payments	Embody the challenge of integrating legislation and five ways of working	£0	N/A
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\*ENRaW – Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being grant from Welsh Government

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# Agenda Item 7

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
Report Subject: **Civil Parking Enforcement – Service Update**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Joanna Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**  
Report Submitted by: **Head of Community Services, Clive Rogers**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
26/10/21	28/10/21	04.11.21			15/11/21			

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Scrutiny Committee with an update on Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since the last update of Autumn 2020. The time period of this report is 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

## 2. Scope and Background

### Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)

- 2.1 Blaenau Gwent CBC has had the powers to enforce its own Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) since 1st July 2019. Enforcement proper commenced on the 10th September 2019, whereby any Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued carried a financial penalty.
- 2.2 Civil Parking Enforcement gives the Council the powers to tackle wider transport and environmental issues such as traffic congestion and road safety, and safeguards the interests of residents, blue badge holders, transport operators and local businesses. It also allows the Council to target enforcement in key areas such as town centres and other areas where parking contraventions create potential risks to pedestrians and other road users, such as parking on School Keep Clear markings and double yellow lines in the immediate vicinity of schools. This is in line with the Council's priorities including Healthy and Safe Communities and Managing our Highways Network and Infrastructure.

The introduction of CPE has allowed the Council to successfully monitor and target areas where complaints of illegal and dangerous parking are received. However, the Council is currently seeing an increase in demand for parking enforcement from residents, businesses and the Police, and our current resource provision cannot meet the demand.

- 2.3 Caerphilly CBC (CCBC) is continuing to provide enforcement resource via a Service Level Agreement. This provides Blaenau Gwent CBC with two part-time civil parking enforcement officers.

2.4 Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC (RCTCBC) provides a PCN processing service, under the name of the South Wales Parking Group. RCTCBC provides the ongoing processing service and is the first point of contact for anyone wishing to pay or challenge a PCN.

## 2.5 Agreed Business Case Model

The approved business case model and associated financial modelling considered the following items: -

- Size of population within the five main towns
- Number of enforceable traffic regulation orders within the five main towns
- The cost of deployment of Civil Enforcement Officers for a total of 52hrs per week @£17.50/hr (6 day a week operation)
- Issue of 1.28 Parking Charge Notices(PCN) per hour
- **3500 PCNs issued annually**
- Projections based on the band 2 level of PCN set at £70/£50 in the Traffic Management Act 2004
- **A 75% collection rate of PCNs.**
- £5.25 administrative charge per PCN
- 3% inflation over a 5-year term
- 0.2 FTE Internal Parking Management
- 0.2 FTE Internal Administration Staff

### Capital set up costs

TRO review	£40k
TRO remedial work	£190k
New TRO	£5k
Misc.	£28k

### Annual Operational costs

Enforcement resource	
@52 hrs per week including CCBC management	£59k
Back Offices Licences (2 No.)	£3k
PCN administrative fee (approx 3500@£5)	£17.5k

Surplus (Deficit), after 5 years if capital set up costs included (£232k)

Average annual operational surplus/(deficit) over 5 years £32k

2.6 Since enforcement proper commenced on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the following information is to be noted by Committee:

- **A total of 3777 PCN's have been issued since CPE began in September 2019**
- **1029 PCN's have been issued between 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021**

- **95% collection rate of PCN's (this figure relates to the percentage of PCN's paid)  
This is an improvement on last year's collection rate (88 %)**

2.7 Between 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 1029 PCNs were issued, which is lower than the business case model. This is due to Covid restrictions rather than an increase in compliance with our TROs. Details on factors impacting number of PCNs is provided in Section 2.9 of this report.

However, notwithstanding the effects of Covid, the CPE operation is performing in line with the agreed business case model.

The number of PCN's issued during this period has been sub-divided into geographical areas as detailed in table 1 below.

**Table 1:**

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number of PCN's Issued</u>
ABERTILLERY	218
BLAINA & NANTYGLO	5
BRYNMAWR & BEAUFORT	244
EBBW VALE*	406
TREDEGAR	145
<b>Total</b>	<b>1029</b>

\* Note The Ebbw Vale total includes 212 PCNs issued at The Works

## 2.8 Financial Update

For the financial year 2020/21 a positive variance of £11,466.66 was recorded. This was due to a Welsh Government Covid Grant of £27,000, which was received to off-set payments lost during the redeployment of enforcement officers during the national lockdown between March 2020 and July 2020.

For financial year 2021/22 (April 2021 to Sept 2021) an adverse variance of -£8042.89 is recorded.

Budget monitoring will continue to be undertaken by officers going forward.

Table 2 below shows the income and expenditure so far for 2021/22, which has been based on monthly pay-over reports received from RCTCBC and invoices from CCBC.

**Table 2:**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of PCNs Issued</b>	<b>PCN Payments In (£)</b>	<b>Payments Out (£) (RCTCBC &amp; CCBC)</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Apr-21	52	1390	3711.1	-2321.1
May-21	77	2175	3839.35	-1664.35
Jun-21	85	1971	3880.39	-1909.39
Jul-21	114	3448	4029.16	-581.16
Aug-21	110	3345	4008.64	-663.64
Sep-21	107	3090	3993.25	-903.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>15419</b>	<b>23461.89</b>	<b>-8042.89</b>

## 2.9 Factors Impacting PCNs

A combination of factors has affected the CPE provision during this time period. The contributing factors are as follows:

**Lockdown restrictions:** The national and regional lockdown restrictions of Autumn and Winter 2020 adversely impacted on the CPE service as fewer cars were observed in town centres and schools were closed for a number of months.

**Staff sickness:** Interim periods of sickness during the reporting period.

## 2.10 Type of Contraventions

There are over 35 different on-street and off-street parking contraventions in the Blaenau Gwent Enforcement Policy. The most common type of contravention within the reporting period is Code 30 Overstay, which is where a car exceeds the allowed time in a limited waiting bay. A total of 451 PCNs were issued against this code, almost 50 per cent of the total PCNs issued. Contravention Code 01, Waiting Prohibited (parking on single or double yellow lines), was the second most common contravention with 417 PCNs issued against this code. Table 3 below lists the number of PCN's issued against contravention code for the reporting time period.

**Table 3:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Type of Contravention</b>	<b>No. of PCNs issued</b>
<b>1</b>	Waiting Prohibited	417
<b>2</b>	Loading Restricted	2
<b>12</b>	No Resident Permit	14
<b>22</b>	No Return	6
<b>23</b>	Prohibited Vehicle Class	0
<b>24</b>	Out of Marked Bay	0
<b>25</b>	Loading Area	17
<b>26</b>	Double Parked	1
<b>27</b>	Dropped Footway	45
<b>30</b>	<b>Overstay</b>	<b>451</b>
<b>40</b>	No/Invalid Blue Badge	73
<b>45</b>	Taxi Rank	0
<b>47</b>	Bus Stop Clearway	1
<b>48</b>	Outside School	0
<b>99</b>	Pedestrian Crossing	2

### 2.11 Update on the Traffic Regulation Order Review

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are the legal orders that govern the regulations along streets and in car parks (on-street and off-street respectively). In Blaenau Gwent these have been consolidated into two single orders –on-street parking and off-street parking.

2.12 Following on from the implementation of these orders, the Council has received a significant number of requests from Members, Town Centre business forums and the general public to review existing parking restrictions at various locations throughout the county borough. Due to the significant level of requests received the Council has had to prioritise this work, with our town centres and strategic routes being considered first.

Work is ongoing to review the current TROs and make changes where it is deemed appropriate. This work is currently being progressed. Five schemes are programmed for completion by the end of this financial year, with procurement for each scheme imminent (2021/22). Table 4 provides a list of the five schemes below.

**Table 4:**

<b>Schemes ready for Procurement and Delivery by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022</b>
Bethcar Street, Ebbw Vale
Tillery Street, Abertillery
Church Street, Abertillery
Rees Street, Ebbw Vale
Lime Avenue, Ebbw Vale

Tredegar Town Centre was part of the original TRO review, but this area is now being looked at by Regeneration with a study being commissioned to look at the pedestrianisation of Commercial Street.

The TRO review for Blaina has been put on hold due to budget constraints, but will be looked at in the next financial year (2022/23)

A full list of the TRO review areas is attached as Appendix 1.

### **2.13 CEO's Safety & Welfare**

On occasion, CEOs have been the target of abuse, threats and intimidating behaviour whilst on patrol. All incidents of threats and physical abuse have been reported to the Police.

### **2.14 Update on Pavement Parking**

The Welsh Government is proposing to give Local Authorities the power to fine people who are parked on pavements.

Pavement parking is where one or more wheels of a stationary motor vehicle are on the pavement (also known as the footway). Pavement parking obstructs pedestrians and is a serious and widespread problem across Wales. It puts people in danger when they are forced to walk in the carriageway where they may come into conflict with moving traffic. It is a particular problem for disabled people as well as anyone with a child or a pushchair

Although there is no specific offence of parking on pavements in Wales (as in most of England), causing unnecessary obstruction of any part of the highway is an existing criminal offence. The police have powers to enforce against vehicles obstructing the highway, which includes the pavement, under a number of statutes and regulations. However, these powers are little used, mainly due to a lack of resources, but also because of the burden of proof necessary to achieve a criminal conviction for obstruction. As a result, little enforcement against pavement parking currently takes place in Wales.

There will be places, for example narrow residential streets with no off-street parking, where some parking on pavements will need to be tolerated. Local authorities should indicate those locations where pavement parking is permitted through Traffic Regulation Orders.

Clear, workable and detailed guidance will need to be produced by Welsh Government, in partnership with local government and other stakeholders, to guide local authorities in the execution of their new powers. This should be achieved by amending the existing statutory and operational guidance on civil parking enforcement. Changes will be needed to the Highway Code to make it clear to drivers that they will be subject to penalties issued by local authorities if they park on pavements in Wales. Local authorities will need to extend their existing enforcement operations to discharge their new powers and some additional resources may be required, but this will depend largely on the extent to which enforcement is proactive, rather than by complaint, which will be a matter for local policies.

The aim is to commence civil enforcement of pavement parking in Wales by July 2022. However, the Council is still awaiting operational guidance from Welsh Government.

### **3. Options for recommendation**

#### **3.1 Option A**

Members accept the latest annual progress update relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019 and the current business case model.

#### **3.2 Option B**

Members accept the update on progress relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019, but present alternative business case model.

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

4.1 The report has been developed to provide an update on progress of the current civil parking enforcement service, which is a statutory responsibility of Blaenau Gwent CBC. Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities, and their economic development and regeneration are key priorities within the Corporate Plan. Good accessibility and connectivity are critical in allowing our residents to achieve these, and the management and efficiency of the core highway network is key for this.

From an environmentally smart perspective, residents may consider using active travel (walking and cycling for purposeful journeys) as an alternative to the car when collecting their child/grandchild from school or nursery, or when visiting the shops/pharmacy/Post Office, if they believe there is a risk of being issued a PCN if parked in contravention of a TRO. This will help increase the amount of exercise residents participate in, which should help improve their health and wellbeing. In addition, using active travel to replace car journeys will help to reduce the amount of carbon emissions and support the Council's Decarbonisation Plan 2020 – 2030.

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

**Option A** - Members accept the latest annual progress update relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019 and the current business case model.

**Option B** - Members accept the update on progress relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019, but present alternative business case model.

If it is proposed that the existing business model is changed, by way of additional CPE operational resources, this will potentially increase the revenue costs for delivering the service. For the service to remain financially positive this would require the serving of additional PCN's to cover these additional costs.

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

##### **Funding**

**Option A:** Members accept the latest annual progress update relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019 and the current business case model.

In line with the agreed business model the CPE enforcement service will potentially remain cost neutral to the authority (small surplus).

**Option B** - Members accept the update on progress relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019, but present alternative business case model.

If it is proposed that the existing business case model is changed, by way of providing additional CPE operational resources, this will increase the revenue costs for delivering the service. For the service to remain financially positive this would require the serving of additional PCN's to cover these additional costs.

## **5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions**

**Option A:** Members accept the latest annual progress update relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019 and the current business case model.

**Option B:** Members accept the update on progress relating to Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since its introduction in 2019, but present alternative business case model.

Alternative member priorities and options would require changes to the current business case model and the current service level agreement with Caerphilly CBC. Whereby any increase in CPE enforcement hours would need to be off-set by increasing the number of PCN's issued in order to deliver a sustainable revenue budget going forward. Any resource changes would need to be agreed with Caerphilly CBC and the existing service level agreement will need to be amended accordingly.

## **5.3 Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **5.4 Human Resources**

There are no staffing implications associated with this report. Any changes to the current CPE staffing/ enforcement hours would however need to be suitably resourced.

## **6. Supporting Evidence**

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

Performance is currently monitored in the following ways:

- Monthly Pay-Over Reports from RCT CBC
- Imperial 360 Database Access
- Quarterly Meetings Held with Caerphilly CBC

### **6.2 Expected Outcome for the Public**

Improved and consistent levels of service delivery across civil parking enforcement.

### **6.3 Involvement (Consultation, Engagement, Participation)**

Informal discussions are held with neighbouring authorities to ensure that BGCBC's delivery of civil parking enforcement is consistent with other local authorities. Where relevant, consultation, engagement and involvement with the public, members and interested parties will be carried out as part of any traffic order review consultation process.



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

The ability for the Council to operate a Civil Parking Enforcement function is critical for the safe and efficient management of the Borough's highway network.

#### **6.5 Preventative Focus**

The CPE service provides appropriately trained and qualified staff to ensure key services are efficiently and effectively delivered in line with the Corporate Plan 2018 to 2022 and any other relevant statutory or legislative requirements.

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

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 wherever and whenever possible look to work with local communities and businesses to maximise economic and regeneration benefits associated with both revenue & capital services and projects.

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

CPE will wherever and whenever possible look to work with others service areas. For example, with the Education Department to provide parking enforcement at schools to supplement road safety initiatives.

#### **6.8 EQIA (screening and indemnifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

An EQIA is not relevant to the content of this report.

### **7. Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The ongoing management of the Civil Parking Enforcement function is undertaken by the Community Services department.

### **8. Background Documents / Electronic Link**

8.1 Appendix 1 – List of traffic order review requests

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**BGCBC CPE Traffic Orders  
Review Schedule  
21/10/21**



No. -	Member	Ward	Street/ Location	Description of Traffic Order	Change Required	Reason for Change	Notes	Comments	Status
1	Julie Holt	Abertillery	Tillery Street (Nos 14 - 27)	No Waiting at Any Time	Removal of double yellows	Lack of residents' parking. Residents from opposite side of the street take up all the spaces ad spaces behind the houses.	Please refer to DRG NO: 0001, please can you mark up any changes if required. 28 04 2020 - Email rec'd 24 03 20 - Removed Draft for Comment, added map title No. - to title frame - TRO DRG No. - 0001 issued. Awaiting confirmation to progress detail design DRG/BQ	Drawings and BoQ complete, next stage invite tenders	Live - TRO DRG Approved - Awaiting confirmation to start detail design drawing March 2021
2	Nigel Daniels	Abertillery	Alma Street	No Waiting at Any Time	Introduce single yellow lines along a section to provide parking for residents after 6pm	Lack of parking at Alma Street for residents.	IC & MH to undertake a site visit, awaiting confirmation of extents. 28 04 20 - DRG No. - 0002 - IC & MH to undertake site visit.		Site survey required
3	Nigel Daniels	Abertillery	Church Street	Limited Waiting Mon - Sat 9 am - 6pm, Disabled Persons Parking, loading only	Rationalise parking bays to maximise parking for shoppers	Lack of parking at Church Street for shoppers.	Awaiting Detailed design from Capita and updated maps for map book. March 2021	Drawings and BoQ complete, next stage invite tenders	Live
4	Lisa Winnet	Blaina	Abertillery Road	No Waiting at Any Time	Removal of double yellows	To provide extra parking by the plumbing shop			Site survey required
5	Lisa Winnet	Blaina	Cwmcelyn Road	No Waiting at Any Time	Removal of double yellows	To provide extra parking by the plumbing shop and reduce number of cars racing the road			Site survey required
6	Lisa Winnet	Blaina	High Street	No Waiting at Any Time	Removal of double yellows	To provide extra parking by the plumbing shop and reduce number of cars racing the road	IC & MH to undertake a site visit, awaiting confirmation of extents. 28 04 20 - DRG No. - 0006 - IC & MH to undertake site visit.	Consultation Drgs completed, no funding/resource to progress	
7	Lisa Winnet	Blaina	Railway Terrace	No Waiting at Any Time	Introduction of Resident Permit Parking	Requested by local residents		Would not consider Residents Parking	N/A
8	Garth Collier	Blaina	Abertillery Road	No Waiting at Any Time	Remove DYL on west side	No longer necessary on western side		Site Visit Required	
9	Garth Collier	Blaina	Cwmcelyn Road	No Waiting at Any Time	South Side Part Only	To allow better flow of traffic		Site Visit Required	
10	Garth Collier	Blaina	High Street	No Waiting at Any Time	Open to advice from officers	As change is required	IC & MH to undertake a site visit, awaiting confirmation of what is required. 28 04 20 - DRG No. - 0006 - IC & MH to undertake site visit.	Consultation Drgs completed No funding to progress	
11	Garth Collier	Blaina	Hope Street	No Waiting at Any Time	Remove short section near Llys-y-Capel rear car park	Not needed now road is one-way	IC & MH to undertake a site visit, awaiting confirmation of extents. 28 04 20 - DRG No. - 0006 - Email 31 03 2020 rec'd from IC - remove Hope Street Cross Street from review.		Closed/complete
12	Garth Collier	Blaina	Surgery Road	No Waiting at Any Time	Remove section at Park Terrace	No longer required		Site Visit Required	
13	Derrick Bevan	Cwm	Marine Street (from junction with Aubrey Terrace)	Limited Waiting Mon - Sat 8 am - 6pm	Revocation	Since Cwm By-Pass was built, this restriction isn't required.		Site Visit Required	
14	Keith Pritchard	EVS	Rees Street	Single Yellow Lines	Revocation	They don't serve any purpose		Drawing and Bill of Quantities Complete	
15	Jonathan Millard	EVS	Church Crescent Outside Christ Church	Double yellow lines	Two parking bays 2hr time limits	Allow public to access amenities and businesses in the area		Site Visit Required	Site survey required
16	Jonathan Millard	EVS	Church Street	1 hour restriction	Resident permits	The area is predominantly residential, ratio of 3/1 residential and although some residents have off road parking to the rear of the properties many do not. To be fair to residents this should be introduced for them similar to king street, Brynmawr. I canvassed the area last night, speaking to businesses and residents and the majority said that permits were the way for residents, and shouldn't be penalised for living in a mixed use area.		Site Visit Required	
17	Jonathan Millard	EVS	Alexandra Street	Double yellow	Single yellow 9 - 5pm	Would allow access for delivery etc,		Site Visit Required	
18	Jonathan Millard	EVS	Holland street north entrance	Double Yellows	Move to 15ft of junction, remove others	Not required, in my opinion		Site Visit Required	
19	Jonathan Millard	EVS	Hills of bottom road , Tylwyn	Double yellow	Moved to 15 ft of junction	To short		Site Visit Required	
					1. Removal of time restrictions 2. increase time	Will help the hospital in regards to visitors for		Drawing And BoQ complete, next stage	

20	Jonathan Millard	EVS	Lime Avenue Hospital to thales/regain/ mill lane	Time Restricted bays		appointments and businesses in the area, meetings/appointment typically are 1.5hrs 30 minutes is to short to do anything really and the bays are to small for deliveries.		invite tenders	
21	Keith Pritchard	EVS	Steelworks Road B4485 Junction with Eastville Road	No Waiting at Any Time	Extension of DYL by 10m into Eastville Road	Cars parking too close to junction causing restrictions to visibility			
22	Keith Pritchard	EVS	Alexandra Street	No Waiting at Any Time	Revocation	The DYL serve no purpose and limits number of parking spaces			
23	Keith Pritchard	EVS	Drysiog Street Pen - Y - Bryn Junction	No Waiting at Limited Times	Change to Double Yellow Lines	Cars parking too close to junction causing restrictions to visibility			
24	Lee Parsons	Llanhilleth	Blaencuffin Road, Llanhilleth NP13 2RN	No Parking 7am-7pm.	Traffic Restrictions lifted of No Parking from 7am-7pm from numbers 1-10 and number 17-19 inclusive	Request from residents of limited parking in area.			
25	Lee Parsons	Llanhilleth	Commercial Road Llanhilleth NP13 2JA	No Parking at any time Double Yellow Lines	Change to Single Yellow Line	Request from retailers! Safety issues of speeding cars if no cars are present.			
26	Phillip Edwards	Ebbw Vale North	Bethcar Street (outside Morgan's Bar)	Loading Only Bay	Change to 30 minutes limited waiting	Greater turnover of vehicles		Drawings and BoQ complete, next stage invite tenders	
27	Phillip Edwards	Ebbw Vale North	Bethcar Street (outside Roberts Estate Agents)	Loading Only Bay	Change to 30 minutes limited waiting	Greater turnover of vehicles	Please refer to DRG NO: 0010, please can you mark up any changes if required. 28 04 2020 - Email rec'd 24 04 20 - Removed Draft for Comment, added map title No. - to title frame - TRO DRG No. - 0010 issued. Awaiting confirmation to progress detail design DRG/BQ.	Drawings and BoQ complete, next stage invite tenders	
28	Phillip Edwards	Ebbw Vale North	Bethcar Street (outside Davies Carpets)	Disabled Persons Parking Bays x 2	Change to 30 minutes limited waiting	Greater turnover of vehicles		Drawings and BoQ complete, next stage invite tenders	
29	Phillip Edwards	Ebbw Vale North	Bethcar Street (outside Greggs)	Disabled Persons Parking Bays x 1 Loading Bay x 2	Change to 30 minutes limited waiting	Greater turnover of vehicles	Please refer to DRG NO: 0010, please can you mark up any changes if required. 28 04 2020 - Email rec'd 24 04 20 - Removed Draft for Comment, added map title No. - to title frame - TRO DRG No. - 0010 issued. Awaiting confirmation to progress detail design DRG/BQ.	Drawings and BoQ complete, next stage invite tenders	
30	Gareth Davies	Rassau	Honeyfield Road (67 - 69)	None	Prohibition of Waiting	Road safety/visibility for drivers at roundabout heading towards Garnlydan/Reservoir Road			
31	Wayne Hodgins	Brynmawr	Staleybridge Terrace	Removal of DPPP	Revoke Traffic Order	No longer required		DPPP revoked	Complete
32	Resident	Abertillery	Vivian Street	Removal of DPPP	Revoke Traffic Order	No longer required			
33	Resident	Brynmawr	Glamorgan Street	Removal of DPPP	Revoke Traffic Order	No longer required			
34	Resident	Sofrydd	Rectory Road	Removal of DPPP	Revoke Traffic Order	No longer required			
35	Tredegar Members	Tredegar	Tredegar Town Centre	Limited Waiting Traffic Orders Varying	Review Tro's introduce time waiting Bays	Improve Town Centre Parking	28 04 2020 - Email rec'd 25 03 20, DRG No. - 0011 prepared and issued Draft for Comment.	On Hold/ Due to Regen study	
36	John Mason	Nantyglo	King St, Queen St to Parrot Row	Prohibition of waiting, Limited Waiting	To Consider areas of restriction to be removed	To create additional on street parking	Queen Street only considered, changes made where possible		Queen St review only and complete
37	Nigel Daniels	Abertillery	King St, King Street	Previous restriction revoked	I introduce 1 hour waiting with no return within 2 hours	To ensure on street parking I not sterilized near businesses		Reduce waiting time 30 minutes waiting no return with in 1 hour	Scheme Complete
38	Resident	Beaufort	Beaufort Hill	Prohibition of waiting of waiting 8am - 6pm	Consider revoking TRO	Restriction has not been enforced and is no longer relevant	Removal of DYL	Site Visit Required	
39	Resident	Abertillery	Portland Street	Prohibition of Waiting	Part removal of yellow lines	To create additional on street parking	Removal of DYL	Site Visit Required	
40	Councillor S. Thomas	Ashvale	Tredegar	Prohibition of Waiting	Amending yellow lines to create parking	Removing some yellow lines will create parking with no road safety implication	Removal of DYL	Site Visit Required	
41	Resident	Abertillery	Portland Street	Prohibition of waiting	Consider revoking TRO where appropriate	To try to create on street parking	Removal of DYL	Site Visit Required	
42	Cllr G Thomas	Beaufort	Big Lane	Prohibition of Waiting	New Request	To prevent Obstructive Parking	Introduce DYL	Site Visit Required	
43				prohibition of waiting	Part removal of yellow lines	To try to create on street parking			
44	Resident	Tredegar	Gelli Road	prohibition of waiting	Introduce DYL	To prevent Obstructive Parking	introduce DYL	Site Visit required	
45	Cllr Trollope	Tredegar	Lay By Opposite Barclays Bank, Queen Victoria Street	Double Yellows	1 hour / No return within 1 hour	To try to create on street parking		On hold due to Regen Study	
46	Nick Smith/ Residents	Nantyglo	Barleyfield Way	Prohibition of Left Turn	Prohibition of left turn	To restrict left turn movements when exiting Industrial estate	There is currently a Prohibition of Driving Order on Limestone Road which is not enforced by the Police	Not Practical to consider and would not be supported by the Police	
47	Ebbw Vale RFC	Ebbw Vale	Station Approach/Pontygod	Prohibition of Waiting Order	Introduce DYL	To prevent Obstructive Parking		Site Visit Required	
48	Nick Smith/ Residents	Brynmawr	Gurnos Est	Prohibition of Waiting Order	Introduce DYL	To prevent Obstructive Parking		Site Visit Required	



49	Nick Smith/ Residents	Nantyglo	Brynawelon	One Way TRO	Introduce one way system	To improve Capacity / vehicle flow		Site Visit Required	
50	Residents	Blaina	Brynteg / Abertillery Road	Prohibition of Waiting Order	Introduce DYL	To prevent obstructive parking at Jct		Site Visit Required	
51	Residents	Beaufort	Wesley Pl / Park Pl	Prohibition of Waiting Order	Introduce DYL	To prevent obstructive parking at Jct		Site Visit Required	
52	Resident / Cllr Hodgins	Brynmawr	Greenland Road Car Park				Introduce Sign and Lining		Completed
53	Cllr G areth Davies	Rassau	Un named road from A4281 to Rassau	Prohibition of driving or sign saying no access to Ind Est		Sign would be more appropriate		Site Visit Required	
54	Resident	Ebbw Vale	Fair View (side Rd to No.12 Bank Lane /Gwent Shopping Centre/Commercial Street (rear of Car Parks	Revoke POW Order	Revocation Order	Create additional parking		Site Visit Required	
55	CPE Team	Tredeggar	44 Holland Street	Control of use Order	Control of use Order	Introduction of Electric Charging Points		Out for Statutory Consultation	
56	Resident	Ebbw Vale	6 Coronation St	Revoke DPPP	Revocation Order	Create additional parking		Site required and consult with Terri Lovell	
57	Cllr Collier	Blaina	Jct of Bryn Deri with Tredeggar Road	Revoke DPPP	Revocation Order	Create additional parking		Site visit required and consult with Terri Lovell	
58	Member of Public	Ebbw Vale	Jct of Parkville / Park Hill	Prohibition of Waiting Order	Introduce DYL	Prevent Obstructive Parking		Site Visit Required	
59	Resident	Tredeggar	George Street	Prohibition of Waiting Order	introduce DYL	Prevent Obstructive Parking on Jct		Site Visit Required	
60	Cllr Hodgins	Brynmawr	Bailey Street	Removal of DPPP	Revocation Order	Create additional parking	Consultation Completed 15th April 2021	Revocation	Closed/ Complete
61	Cllr Hodgins	Brynmawr	Waun Fawr	Removal of DPPP	Revocation Order	Create additional parking	Consultation Completed 15th April 2021	Revocation	Closed / Complete
62	Social Services	Nantyglo	8 Rassau Road	Introduce DPPP	TRO procedures	Provide accessibility for resident	Consultation Completed 15th April 2021	No Longer required	
63	Via Contact Centre	Ebbw Vale	17 Clydach Avenue	Introduce DPPP	TRO procedures	Provide accessibility for resident	Consultation Completed 15th April 2021	No longer Required	
64	Via Contact Centre	Ebbw Vale	144 Arail Street	Introduce DPPP	TRO procedures	Provide accessibility for resident	Consultation Completed 15th April 2021		Closed/compet
65	Via Contact Centre	Sixbells	G.O. Car Park	Introduce DPPP	TRO procedures	Provide accessibility for resident	Consultation Completed 15th April 2021		Closed/Compete
66	Community Services	Ebbw Vale	Merthyr Road	Amendment Order required	TRO procedures	Car Park will be for Permit Holders only with drop off bay for Railway	Amendment required for Consolidation Order	Public Objection to scheme	
67	S Hughes Brynbach Park	Tredeggar	Penybont Llwyn Helyg Jct	Introduce Prohibition of waiting Order	TRO procedures	To prevent Obstructive Parking	Requested Consultation Plan From Capita	No Funding to progress with scheme	
68	Cllr T. Smith	Tredeggar	Lower Coedcae Jct	Introduce Prohibition of waiting Order	TRO procedures	To prevent Obstructive Parking		Public Objection to scheme	
69	Cllr J Mason	Nantyglo	Stayley Bridge Tce	Introduce Prohibition of waiting Order	TRO procedures	To prevent Obstructive Parking		Public Objection to scheme	
70	Cllr Hodgins	Brynmawr	Stonebridge Road	Revocation of DPPP	TRO procedures	DPPP no longer required	Consultation completed 15th April 2021	No Objections Received	completed
71	Cllr G areth Davies	Rassau	Newchurch Road	Introduce Prohibition of waiting Order	TRO procedures	To prevent Obstructive Parking		Site Visit Required	
72	Resident	Ebbw Vale	Taxi Rank	Introduce Prohibition of waiting Order			Prohibition of Waiting near Jct to Bowling Green	Site Visit Required	
73	Sarah Williams Regen	Ebbw Vale	Taxi Rank	No Stopping Except Electric Vehicle Taxis	TRO procedures	Introduction of Electric Charging Points	2 EV Spaces 2hrs waiting no return within 2 hrs	Consultation Imminent	
74	Sarah Williams Regen	Brynmawr	Taxi Rank	No Stopping Except Electric Vehicle Taxis	TRO procedures	Introduction of Electric Charging Points	2 EV Spaces 2hrs waiting no return within 2 hrs	Consultation Imminent	
75	Sarah Williams Regen	Abertillery/Tredeggar	Carmel St and GSC	No Stopping Except Electric Vehicle Taxis	TRO procedures	Introduction of Electric Charging Points	2 EV Spaces 2hrs waiting no return within 2 hrs (Taxi Rank)	Consultation Concludes 4th Nov 2021	
76	Sarah Jones resident	Ebbw Vale	Heol Cai Ffwnais	Introduce Prohibition of waiting Order	TRO procedures	Prevent obstructive Parking	Prohibition of Waiting at Junction	Site Visit Required	
77	Cllr P. Baldwin	Nantyglo	6 Spring Bank	Intoduction of DPPP	TRO procedures	Provide accessibility for resident	Provision of DPPP - No funding to progress	Cllr Baldwin Requested as an Officer of Tai Colon no funding to progress	
78	Dave Watkins	Cwmtillery	Lakes Access Rd	Highway Gating Order	TRO procedures	Prevent Anti Social Behaviour	Gating Order - Objections received from residents and Emergency Services	Consultation Concluded 7th October	
79	Cllr J. Hill	Brynmawr	Catholic Lane	Prohibition of Driving Order	TRO procedures	To Prevent Obstructive Parking			
80	Cllr J. Collins	Llanhilleth	High Street	Revocation of a length of DYL	TRO procedures	To Create Additional on-street Parking	Revocation Order	DYL have been removed but TRO requiresAmendment	
81	Cllr T. Smith	Tredeggar	Waundeg	Introduction of Unsuitable for HGV's		To prevent HGV's Entering residential area	Not TRO	Requested Sign	
82	Cllr G. Thomas	Beaufort Ward	Llangynidr Rd			Advanced Cycle / Pedestrian Warning Sign	Not TRO		

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# Agenda Item 8

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny**  
Date of meeting: **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
Report Subject: **Update Report Fly Grazing Horses**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanna Wilkins / Executive Member Environment**  
Report Submitted by: **Matthew Stent – Service Manager [Neighbourhood Services]**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
19/10/21	27/10/21	04.11.21			15/11/21	15.12.21		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the issue of fly grazing horses within the County Borough. This report will outline changes to the current Policy and set out the legislative and policy framework from which officers operate to resolve incidents.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The illegal fly grazing of horses has been a recurring issue within the County Borough for many years. It appears that some horse owners lack short or long term grazing land for their animals and therefore often utilise primarily Local Authority land on which to keep them or allow them to stray freely throughout the Borough.
- 2.2 Historically, the Local Authority could utilise its animal impounding team to remove horses, which were often the source of complaints either because of their persistent or recurring nature or because of the welfare concerns around the animals themselves. However, since the termination of this service, Officers have had to rely on informal action and legislative powers to ensure horses are removed.
- 2.3 There are a number of legal avenues available to the Authority to deal with the issue of fly grazing by horses which will be covered in the body of the report, however in 2014 Welsh Government introduced the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 (the 2014 Act), which was specifically created to deal with fly grazing horses in what was seen as a National problem. Following the introduction of the 2014 Act, the Authority adopted a common policy in 2014, which is appended to this report, with Powys County Council, on how it implements and enforces the powers within the 2014 Act.
- 2.4 Exercising the powers contained in the 2014 Act is discretionary and while the powers can be used to remove horses from both public and private land, the Authority is not under a duty to discharge these powers if a request from a private land owner is made. When Local Authorities exercise these powers,

costs incurred by land owners in the removal and storage of seized horses must be paid by the horse's legal owners before any retained horses are released.

- 2.5 The responsibility for the removal of horses from Local Authority land rests with the relevant portfolio land holder [not Community Services], with The New Enforcement Service providing support where it is needed to ensure the legal provisions of the Act are discharged appropriately where that is necessary. In many instances of fly grazing in the County Borough, it is the Estates Section supporting the portfolio holder that leads in securing the removal of fly grazing horses. This is often achieved through informal means such as speaking directly to horse owners if known or by placing notices on the land stipulating that removal of the horses by the Authority will take place within a specified timescale if they remain.
- 2.6 The Policy, however, did not encompass horses straying on the Highway and / or public spaces. Recent events and an increase in reports of this nature has seen the Department look to be more proactive and it recommends an amendment to the current Policy. [Policy attached as appendix 1 – amendment highlighted in red].
- 2.7 Community Services do not have a specific budget for action taken under the 2014 Act. The Policy adopted by the Authority places the financial cost of any removal, storage and disposal of horses on the relevant land owner while The Enforcement Service ensure the legal process is followed correctly and all relevant documentation completed, served and saved appropriately. This is also the case should the Authority seek to utilise these powers to remove horses from its own land, with the relevant land portfolio holder within the Authority bearing the costs of removal, storage and disposal of any horses seized. However, recent cases of straying horse on the Highway and public spaces means this cost is likely to be borne by Community Services, for which there is no identifiable budget [providing the animals are not reclaimed].
- 2.8 As the Authority does not retain the man power, plant and storage facilities to remove horses it would have to use a private contractor to conduct this work. A quotation has been received (appended to this report – Appendix 2) which sets out the costs involved with this work.

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

- 3.1 Option 1 [**preferred option**] - That Members support the Policy amendment and the existing process for the removal of horses set out in the report with the associated use of contractors and the costs associated with this.
- 3.2 Option 2 - That Members make recommendations for changes to the current process.

### 4 **Recommendation(s)/Endorsements by other Groups**

- 4.1 Corporate Leadership Team and Regeneration & Community Services Leadership Team have considered this report.



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

5.1 Well-being Plan, Objective 2 – Blaenau Gwent wants safe and friendly communities. The removal of illegal fly grazing horses from Local Authority and private land and straying animals from the highway / public spaces prevents damage being caused by this act of trespass and ensures members of the public feel safe by the removal of large, often untethered animals from land which can be open to public access.

5.2 Corporate Plan – Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities Priority objective – While there is significant cost associated with individual operations in the removal of horses, it is felt that by dealing proactively with problematic locations where recurrent offending behaviour often occurs that the message will be sent out to irresponsible horse owners that the Authority will not tolerate the act of fly grazing with the result that fewer incidents will occur.

6. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

6.2 Community Services do not hold a specific budget for implementing its powers under the 2014 Act. Requests to utilise these powers formally are rare, but if it was necessary then, as previously, the work would be undertaken by colleagues from Powys C.C (who deal with other Animal Health, Welfare & Licensing issues for the Authority) at extra cost to the current Service Level Agreement. If the extra costs could not be managed within existing budgets, then this would be reported to CLT accordingly.

6.3 Where the removal of horses is carried out on Local Authority land then the relevant land portfolio holder would have to fund the contractor costs associated with the removal, storage and disposal of any seized animals. Obviously regular use of the seizure powers could put considerable strain on existing budgets, but discussion with relevant portfolio holders has shown that limited use of these powers would need to be managed within existing budgets. It is anticipated that once the Authority starts exercising the powers contained in the 2014 Act to remove horses from its own land that along with relevant media releases, the number of incidents will start to decline and the use of these powers will become less necessary.

7. **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

7.1 Reputational risk- Illegal fly grazing does generate a number of complaints from Members and the public. Fly grazing itself often results in damage to Local Authority land, concerns about the welfare of the animals themselves and public safety concerns about large untethered animals roaming freely. Failing to tackle the problem proactively could lead to significant reputational damage to the Authority.

8. **Legal**

8.1 Discussion with the Legal Section has identified the 2014 Act to be the most appropriate legal sanction to deal with fly grazing horses as it provides a reasonably quick and defined process by which to remove the animals. The

policy appended to this report sets out how this is done. The Authority's Constitution determines that policy on this matter is set by the Executive, while operational matters are delegated to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community Services.

9. **Human Resources**

9.1 There is significant staffing resource required across Service areas in dealing with complaints, visiting sites, identifying owners, posting notices and arranging seizure operations.

10. **Supporting Evidence**

10.1 **Performance Information and Data**

11 **Expected outcome for the public**

11.1 Improved proactive response to service requests in relation to fly grazing incidents.

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

12.1 Relevant internal colleagues in Cleansing, Legal and Estates have been consulted on the content of this report.

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

13.1 The process outlined in this report is necessary to ensure long-term improvements in response to misuse of the Authority's land for fly grazing and to create safer public open spaces.

14 **Preventative focus**

14.1 The process will help to change cultural attitudes to fly grazing by ensuring offending behaviour is actioned by the removal of horses with horses retained and disposed of unless costs are paid.

15 **Collaboration / partnership working**

15.1 The process will utilise private contractors to provide removal, storage and disposal of relevant animals.

16 **Integration (across service areas)**

16.1 The scheme contributes to relevant well-being and environment Agendas.

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

17.1 The proposals will no adverse effects against the protected characteristics.

18 **Monitoring Arrangements**

18.1 The scheme will be monitored by Community Services Managers and by way of relevant reports to the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services, CLT and Scrutiny Committee, as necessary.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Policy Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014

Appendix 2 – Contractor Schedule of Costs (Exempt Item)



### ENFORCEMENT POLICY – CONTROL OF HORSES (WALES) Act 2014

#### Introduction

On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014 the National Assembly for Wales introduced the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014.

The aim of the Act was to provide a further tool for Local Authorities to use to combat fly grazing, straying and abandonment of horses and ponies. The Act provides Local Authorities in Wales with consistent legal powers to seize, impound, sell, re-home, return, dispose of and destroy horses by humane means after certain notifications and time limits, when the horses are found causing nuisance by fly grazing, straying or have been abandoned in a local authority area.

The powers within the Act will enable the Local Authority to act when notified of horses on land in its area without lawful authority. The Authority will be able to dispose of the horses, if after 7 days, beginning on the relevant day, the owner of the horse(s) or a person acting on behalf of the owner has not contacted the local authority. The Authority may also dispose of those horses where the owner has contacted the Authority but has not paid or disputed the reasonable costs incurred in connection with seizure and impounding.

The relevant day will either be when the Notice was given to the owner or when the notice was displayed (whichever is applicable).

#### Requests for LA to use Powers under the Act

This Policy has been agreed by Powys County Council and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Where complaints are received about horses straying on the highway or a public place, the Authority will look to instigate its powers under the Act to seize and impound the horses if the local authority has reasonable grounds for believing that the horses are there without lawful authority.

Where an individual or organisation requests that the Authority use its powers under the Act: we will consider using our powers under the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 if a formal written request is received from the Land owner/occupier or commoners associated and on the basis that it would be cost neutral to the Local Authorities other than officer time and travel. The applicant will need to supply the Local Authority with an Operational Plan detailing how s/he will address each of the following points along with the costs for the same: -

- i. The gather of all equines from the common/private land to a suitable handling facility, which must include a race handling system.

- ii. Details of the provision of veterinary support to be provided to deal with any horses that have welfare issues.
- iii. Details of the facility where the equines will be held for a minimum of 7days, although the preferred period would be at least 10 days.
- iv. Details of who will be responsible for the welfare of the horses during the period that they are held, to include details of feeding/watering and bedding to be provided etc.
- v. Details of how and when the applicant is going to allow public viewing of horses for potential owners to claim them.
- vi. How the applicant proposes to dispose of the horses:
  - a. Details of the veterinary surgeon who will be in attendance to determine fitness to travel or monitor humane destruction.
  - b. Sale.
  - c. Re-homing (details of National Equine Welfare Council affiliated members being used and numbers of horses being re-homed by each).
  - d. Destruction (details of numbers and who will humanely destroy, when destruction will take place, where destruction will take place and where carcasses will be disposed of). Note; where the proposal is for the destruction of horses this would require agreement by the Authority's Executive Committee prior to any involvement by Animal Health Officers.

Applicants will need to be able to satisfy the Authority that all the necessary arrangements can be put in place prior to any assistance being agreed.

Once a written plan has been submitted and been approved, local authority Animal Health Officers would be present when the animals are gathered. Animal Health Officers would seize and scan each horse for a micro-chip and where chipped make the necessary enquiries to determine the registered owner etc. Animal Health Officers would photograph and catalogue the horses and arrange for the required Notices to be displayed (and monitored on a daily basis) in the locality where the horses were seized and for the required notification to be made to the police. Animal Health Officers would then be present on the public viewing to determine if the claimed owner had a legal right to the return of any claimed horse(s), and present again at the dispersal of any unclaimed horses. Finally, Animal Health Officers would ensure that the required public register is maintained.

In addition to the above Animal Health Officers may also submit a funding bid to Welsh Government to offset the costs to the applicants and Local Authority. However no guarantees can be given that such a bid would be successful.

## **UPDATE REPORT ON FLY GRAZING HORSES – APPENDIX 2 – EXEMPT INFORMATION**

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended) – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

(Appendix 2 circulated under separate cover to Members)

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# Agenda Item 9

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
Report Subject: **Animal Health, Welfare & Licensing Service Collaboration – Powys CC Partnership – Activities & Update report – October 2021**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanna Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**  
Report Submitted by: **David Thompson – Service Manager – Public Protection**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
26/10/21	28/10/21	04.11.21			15/11/21	15.12.21		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To provide an update on the Animal Health, Welfare & Licensing work undertaken between by Powys CC on behalf of Blaenau Gwent.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 In 2012, the Authority entered into a Service Level agreement for the delivery of Animal Health, Welfare & Licensing Services. This agreement was entered into against the backdrop of significant financial challenges and a strong Welsh Government collaboration agenda.
  - 2.2 Blaenau Gwent has a comparatively small number of relevant premises and risks, compared to other local authorities. Prior to the commencement of the collaboration, the level of resource committed to this field of work was very small, and as such, at the periphery of other mainstream services in the department. This left the service without a broad base of core knowledge and without resilience.
  - 2.3 Situated on our northern boundary, and given the large size and rural nature of the county, Animal Health & Welfare is a major issue in Powys and this has meant that the service has developed into one of the leads in Wales in this field. The Authority continues to be comparatively well resourced to deliver these services with significant expertise and resilience built in. Powys has contingency plans in place to deal with an outbreak of any notifiable animal disease and the service demonstrates a robust response to those perpetrating breaches of the law and will take legal action when necessary. However, where appropriate, Officers will educate and advise the farming community before taking stronger action. The philosophy is to assist businesses to get it right in order to preserve a strong level playing field, whilst being prepared to take legal action against those that deliberately flout the law and who potentially put the whole industry at risk. This was the reason for setting up the partnership in 2012 and this has led to a number of key successes for Blaenau Gwent.

- 2.4 The functions undertaken by Powys within Blaenau Gwent include the following:
- i. Programmed Animal Health and Welfare premises inspections on agricultural holdings, licensed or licensable animal establishment premises and any resulting enforcement work as may be necessary.
  - ii. Responding to all complaints/enquiries relating to Animal Health and Welfare issues relating to agricultural holdings, licensed or licensable animal establishment premises.
  - iii. Undertake all animal licensing functions (e.g. pet shop licensing, dog breeding establishment licences, etc.)
  - iv. All data entry, record keeping and reporting that is required of Blaenau Gwent Council for Animal Health and Welfare for the areas listed above, including animal movements.
  - v. Leading in the investigation of all notifiable diseases for Animal Health – providing Blaenau Gwent with an expert resource to call upon in the event of outbreaks – e.g. the foot and mouth outbreak in 2001.
- 2.5 **Appendix 1** – outlines the total number of premises in Blaenau Gwent covered by these arrangements - by type.
- 2.6 **Fly Grazing Horses/Straying Livestock.** As previously (including since the discontinuation of the Authority’s own impounding service a few years ago) these specific issues continue to be dealt with by Blaenau Gwent Council Officers, however Powys Animal Health Officers regularly provide advice on relevant legislation on request.
- 2.7 **Other complaints.** Persons making animal welfare complaints relating to companion animals and/or horses (not connected with licensed/licensable premises) are advised to contact the RSPCA or another suitable animal welfare organisation/charity. The SLA with Powys does not cover this work.
- 2.8 Since the commencement of the partnership (2012), Powys Animal Health Officers have undertaken the following work on behalf of Blaenau Gwent CBC.
- 352 - Inspections of agricultural holdings/records;
  - 290 - Animal Health Complaints investigated;
  - 27 – Business Advice Provided to farmers;
  - 149 - inspections of licenced premises;
  - 210 - Companion Animal Complaints investigated – related to a licensed or licensable establishment;



- 85 - Companion Animal Enquires – related to a licensed or licensable establishment and or other enquiries signed posted to the RSPCA;
  - 185 – Companion Animal Visits – these relate to a licensed or licensable establishment
  - 80 – FOI Requests for information
- 2.9 **Recent activities** – Levels of compliance at agricultural premises are now generally good compared to the earlier years of the partnership (see section 6 below) although the service continues to proactively undertake statutory inspections and respond to complaints of welfare problems along with APHA (Animal & Plant Health Agency) veterinary surgeons, where appropriate. At present, one farmer has been subject to several joint inspections and steps are being taken help the farmer more easily comply with animal welfare and record keeping regulations (see section 6, below).
- 2.10 During the pandemic it was necessary to reduce the number of routine inspections to animal health and licensed premises. All none urgent and planned licensed premise welfare inspections were cancelled to safeguard the public and members of staff from possible sources of Covid infection. Any reports of non-compliance or animal welfare issues continued to be investigated and actioned as normal.
- 2.11 **Illegal Dog Breeding.** The pandemic has also seen a significant increase in illegal dog breeding locally, regionally and nationally as part of serious organised crime activity and Blaenau Gwent (via Powys Officers for Animal Health and BG Trading Standards Officers for consumer protection legislation) is actively participating in multi-agency activities and intelligence gathering involving the Police and the Welsh Trading Standards Regional Investigation Team. Operation Brutus, is one such local investigation with Powys Officers and the Police executing a warrant in relation to large scale illegal dog breeding and other offences. When the warrant was executed, 90 dogs were seized from the property, including 30 puppies all of which were taken into the care of the RSPCA. The Authority charged the defendant with the operation of an unlicensed dog breeding establishment and the RSPCA charged with a number of animal welfare offences relating to the dogs seized. This case is currently in the court system.
- 2.12 Appendices 2 to 4 Outline the Service Plans and activities for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 (up to 19<sup>h</sup> October 2021) respectively.
- 2.13 Section 6, below, also outlines a summary of some key operations completed and ongoing since the start of the partnership.

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

3.1 Option 1 - That Members consider the content of the report and support the work of the service going forward.

3.2 Option 2 - That Members consider the content of the report and make any recommendations for consideration by Executive Committee.

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

4.1 The services outlined in this report are statutory duties and support the Corporate Plan key objectives relating to Strong & Environmentally smart Communities, Economic Development & Regeneration and an Efficient Council (specifically to be a strong and effective partner and collaborate where possible to deliver financial benefits and resilience).

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

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

5.1.1 The annual cost of the service is outlined in the attached schedule. Legal Services have advised that these costs are commercially sensitive and so this information is exempt. The costs equate to 0.5 FTE Animal Health Officer. The service costs represent excellent value, have not increased for several years and the SLA is now due for review.

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

5.2.1 see paragraph 5.4.1, below.

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

5.3.1 The service operates within the boundaries of all relevant legislation. Where cases are considered for prosecution, Powys Officers will refer cases back to Blaenau Gwent Public Protection Officers and solicitors for a decision.

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

5.4.1 Powys CC, as a large rural Authority, is staffed to deliver Animal Health, Welfare & Licensing services with significant expertise and resilience built in. Blaenau Gwent has no in-house experience and expertise to deliver the services currently provided by Powys. Direct delivery would require recruitment and training, significantly increase costs for the Authority and provide less resilience.

### 6. **Supporting Evidence**

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

6.1.1 For a small Authority, Blaenau Gwent has a considerable number of significant Animal Health issues to deal with since the collaboration began in 2012. A Summary of the key operations is as follows:

- i **2013** – Search Warrants executed at numerous premises in relation to alleged illegal dog breeding (4 premises searched, insufficient evidence found to support allegation.)
- ii **2013** – Farmer 1 successfully prosecuted for sheep carcasses (49) at Abergavenny Magistrates Court – Fined
- iii **2014** – Search Warrant executed at sanctuary premises in relation to illegal dog breeding, illegal animal boarding and animal welfare (joint operation with RSPCA); insufficient evidence found to support allegations.
- iv **2014** – Joint Operation with CCBC and BG Officers and trusted horse charities to remove illegally grazing horses from Manmoel Common (49 horses seized and re-homed). This planned operation received Welsh Government grant funding support without which it could not go ahead.
- v **2014** – Farmer 2 prosecuted at Abergavenny Magistrates Court for Animal By-products, Animal Welfare and other offences (119 offences) – Fined a total of £5,000 and costs awarded of £2,043.
- vi **2014** – Search Warrants executed at several premises in Blaina relating to 2 individuals and alleged illegal dog breeding and Animal Welfare offences. Insufficient evidence found to support allegations.
- vii **2014** – Farmer 3 - Simple caution issued in relation to horses without passports.
- viii **2014** – Farmer 4 – prosecuted at Bridgend Magistrates Court for Animal By-products, Animal Welfare, Sheep Records and Movement Offences (112 offences) – sentenced to 12 weeks in prison, suspended for 12 months, costs £7,356 and banned from keeping livestock.
- ix **2015** – Farmer 4 – related to the above matter – contempt of court prosecution – sent to prison for 6 weeks. Operation followed to round up, care for and dispose of the farmer’s livestock as per court sentence.
- x **2015** – Farmer 2 – Operation to excavate 24 buried cattle carcasses and have them removed from site for incineration.
- xi **2017** – Farmer 2 – Conditional Simple Caution given in relation to continuing offences (see sub paragraph v, above) and Sheep records and movement offences – conditional on the farmer disposing of all livestock and giving an undertaking not to keep livestock in future.
- xii **2020** – Operation Brutus. Joint operation – Powys Officers and the Police executed a warrant to enter premises in relation to large scale illegal dog breeding and other offences. The case is currently in the court system (due

to delays relating to Covid-19 and other legal arguments). The defendant has put forward a defence alleging they were subject to modern slavery, the result of which is the matter has been referred to the National Crime Agency (NCA) for their consideration. The court process is currently on hold pending a report from the NCA.

- xiii **2021** – Investigation currently underway in relation to a problematic farmer in the Abertillery area in connection with record keeping and animal welfare matters. Several joint on-farm inspections have taken place with vets from APHA and steps are being taken to reduce current stock numbers to a level that the farmer can more easily manage.
- xiv **Ongoing.** Joint working with the Police and Welsh Trading Standards Regional Investigation Team (RIT) is on-going to identify and investigate alleged illegal dog breeding within the Authority. A number of potential targets are linked to Organised Crime Groups both in and outside Blaenau Gwent which are best suited to a Regional Investigation and further action is being considered by the RIT.
- xv **Ongoing.** Trading Standards Wales is now in year two of its project looking at Licensed Dog Breeding in Wales. The project is being led by Monmouthshire County Council who have been successful in obtaining funding from Welsh Government to fund 8 licensing officer posts which were filled in the week beginning 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Those officers are currently undergoing intensive training and will eventually be available to assist Welsh local authorities by way of providing a reserve of licensing expertise and assistance with licensing inspections on request. In order to permit the latter, each local authority requesting assistance will be required to authorise the officers to work in their respective authority.

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

6.2.1 Improved compliance with Animal Health, Welfare and licensing rules.

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

6.3.1 Consultation and engagement with key stakeholders is undertaken as necessary in accordance with the Authority's enforcement policy.

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

6.4.1 This is an ongoing collaboration/partnership agreement that has worked successfully since 2012, tackling key animal health problems in Blaenau Gwent.

## 6.5 ***Preventative focus***

6.5.1 The work programmed work undertaken as part of this partnership has a preventative focus aimed at promoting animal health and welfare.

- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
- 6.6.1 This is an ongoing collaboration/partnership agreement that has worked successfully since 2012, tackling key animal health problems in Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
- 6.7.1 Powys CC 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.
- 6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**  
*Not applicable.*
- 6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**  
N/A – this is an activities/performance report – no decisions are being taken.
- 6.9b. **Equality Impact Assessment**  
No equality issues relating to this report
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 Reports to DMT/CLT Executive, as necessary

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

Contact points for Powys Animal Health Officers:-

Gavin Jones – Senior Enforcement Officer

[gavin.jones@powys.gov.uk](mailto:gavin.jones@powys.gov.uk)

Tel: 01874 612260

Jennifer Schwank – Enforcement Officer

[jennifer.morgan@powys.gov.uk](mailto:jennifer.morgan@powys.gov.uk)

Tel: 01874 612052

[trading.standards@powys.gov.uk](mailto:trading.standards@powys.gov.uk)

#### List of Appendices

1. Total Number of Premises Covered by the SLA – 2021/22
2. Activities report – 2019/20
3. Activities report – 2020/21 – impacted by Covid 19
4. Activities report – 21/22 up to 19 Oct 2021
5. Service Level Agreement Cost (Exempt item)

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**Appendix 1 – Total Number of Premises Covered by the SLA – as at 2021/22**

1	Agricultural Premises*	
	- High Risk	1
	- Medium Risk	12
	- Low Risk	74
	- <b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>
	<p>* All agricultural inspections are risk based. Risk ratings are determined via a nationally agreed risk assessment matrix and takes account of the business' compliance history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High Risk – annual inspection</li> <li>- Medium risk – Inspection every 2 years</li> <li>- Low risk – up to 5 years.</li> </ul>	
2	Licensed/Licensable Premises	
	- Pet Shop	4
	- Dog Breeder	0
	- Animal Home Boarder	4
	- Animal Boarding Establishment (i.e. Cattery or Kennels)	0
	- Horse Riding Establishment	0
	- Dangerous Wild Animals	0
	- Zoos	1

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**BLAENAU GWENT**

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**ANIMAL HEALTH, WELFARE AND LICENCING  
ACTIVITIES**

–

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

**ACTIVITY PLANNED FOR FY 2019/20**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Primary visits to Licenced Pet Shops	5	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Welfare visits to Licenced Pet Shops	5	Unannounced Welfare Inspection of premises.
Primary visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders	4	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Welfare visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders	4	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Primary and Welfare Inspection to Zoo	2	1 x Primary Inspection and 1 x Welfare Inspection
Companion Animal Complaints & Enquiries	-	Action all welfare complaints within 1 working day. All other complaints/enquiries to be actioned within 3 working days.
Primary – Planned Farm inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 5 10	Conduct any necessary unplanned inspections as a result of complaints received.
Newly identified/re-opened premises	2	Each newly identified or re-opened AH premise is to be risked rated by means of either of the following: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Primary AH Inspection of the premises; or</li> <li>• By use of an alternative enforcement business questionnaire being sent to the premises</li> </ul>
Breach Report Investigations	-	Breach reports to be investigated within 3 months of receipt
Alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks	-	Alternative enforcement checks to be completed within 3 months of receipt
FSA Slaughterhouse referral investigations	-	Referrals to be investigated within 3 months of receipt
Freedom of Information Requests	-	Action all FOI requests within appointed timescale.

**Activity Report: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Visits to Licenced Pet Shops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	6 5	1 Pet shop ceased trading during year. Plus an addition 7 non-primary welfare inspections.
Visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	4 4	1 new premise licensed since beginning of FY
Inspection to Zoo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	0 1	Plus an additional welfare inspection. Note that planned primary inspection due in March was cancelled due to Covid 19.
Companion Animal Complaints received	36	
Companion Animal Enquiries received	8	
Animal Health Complaints received.	50	
Primary – Planned Farm inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 2 6	Shortfall of planned inspections have been addressed when alternative inspections are taken into account.
Unplanned/Non-primary Farm Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 0 3	
Primary alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 2 14	

Non-Primary alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks	23	
Newly identified/re-opened premises identified for inspection in this FY	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruten now closed.</li> <li>• JC Merrick – closed - principal holding in Monmouthshire.</li> </ul>
Newly identified/re-opened premises identified since beginning of FY	5	
Premises closed.	22	
Breach Report Investigations	1	
Enforcement Action Taken		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prosecutions</li> <li>• Simple Cautions</li> <li>• Written warnings</li> <li>• Verbal warnings</li> <li>• Oral Advice</li> </ul>	1 0 2 0 6	
Freedom of Information Requests	20	
Data returns for AHPA	5	Complete and submit data returns for AHPA in respect of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 x Sheep Scab Returns; and</li> <li>• 2 x Prosecution Returns</li> <li>• 1 x WATO Return</li> </ul>
Intelligence Reports submitted	38	

**Notes:**

All planned routine inspections have been achieved except for the Primary Zoo Inspection. The latter was not completed due to initial delays with AHPA in arranging Zoo Inspector availability, with the visited planned for the end of March having to then be cancelled due to the Covid 19 outbreak.

[Redacted] continue to take up a disproportionate amount of time between Complaints received, Enquires received and Operation Flush.

Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 Powys has received 38 complaints relating to animal health, welfare and licensing, 61% of which related to [Redacted], they also account for 50% of Companion Animal enquires received.

**BLAENAU GWENT**

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**ANIMAL HEALTH, WELFARE AND LICENCING  
ACTIVITIES**

–

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

**ACTIVITY PLANNED FOR FY 2020/21 – Note that a plan was not submitted due to the Covid Pandemic**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Primary visits to Licenced Pet Shops	4	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Welfare visits to Licenced Pet Shops	4	Unannounced Welfare Inspection of premises.
Primary visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders	4	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Welfare visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders	4	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Primary and Welfare Inspection to Zoo	1	1 x Primary Inspection and 1 x Welfare Inspection
Companion Animal Complaints & Enquiries		Action all welfare complaints within 1 working day. All other complaints/enquiries to be actioned within 3 working days.
Primary – Planned Farm inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 7 14	Conduct any necessary unplanned inspections as a result of complaints received.
Newly identified/re-opened premises	6	Each newly identified or re-opened AH premise is to be risked rated by means of either of the following: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Primary AH Inspection of the premises; or</li> <li>• By use of an alternative enforcement business questionnaire being sent to the premises</li> </ul>
Breach Report Investigations		Breach reports to be investigated within 3 months of receipt
Alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks		Alternative enforcement checks to be completed within 3 months of receipt
FSA Slaughterhouse referral investigations		Referrals to be investigated within 3 months of receipt
Freedom of Information Requests		Action all FOI requests within appointed timescale.

**Activity Report: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Visits to Licenced Pet Shops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	5 0	Welfare inspections were not undertaken due to the Covid pandemic to safeguard staff and licensee`s.
Visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	2 0	2 Premises closed due to the Covid pandemic.  Welfare inspections were not undertaken due to the Covid pandemic to safeguard staff and licensee`s.
Inspection to Zoo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	1 1	
Companion Animal Complaints received	38	
Companion Animal Enquiries received	12	
Animal Health Complaints received.	40	
Primary – Planned Farm inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 0 0	Inspections were not undertaken due to the Covid pandemic to safeguard staff and individual farmers.
Unplanned/Non-primary Farm Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 2 3	
Primary alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 0 0	

Non-Primary alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks	0	
Newly identified/re-opened premises identified for inspection in this FY	5	
Newly identified/re-opened premises identified since beginning of FY	6	Unable to run report from data base – software issue
Premises closed.	0	
Breach Report Investigations	0	
Enforcement Action Taken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prosecutions</li> <li>• Simple Cautions</li> <li>• Written warnings</li> <li>• Verbal warnings</li> <li>• Oral Advice</li> </ul>	1 0 1 3 0	Prosecution – Op Brutus
Business Advice provided	4	
Bovine Tb Referrals	2	
Freedom of Information Requests	17	
Data returns for AHPA	5	Complete and submit data returns for AHPA in respect of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 x Sheep Scab Returns; and</li> <li>• 2 x Prosecution Returns</li> <li>• 1 x WATO Return</li> </ul>
Intelligence Reports submitted	39	
Total Nos of AH premises:- H – 0 M – 12 L - 75		

**Notes:**

All planned routine inspections have been achieved except for the Primary Zoo Inspection. The latter was not completed due to initial delays with AHPA in arranging Zoo Inspector availability, with the visited planned for the end of March having to then be cancelled due to the Covid 19 outbreak. The planned inspection took place on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and the report is awaited.

[Redacted] continue to take up a disproportionate amount of time between Complaints (42%) received, enquires received and Operation Flush.



Work is ongoing in relation to illegal dog breeding activities with the support of the Police and Trading Standards Wales Regional Investigation Team. A large number of potential targets are known to the police and active in OCG`s working across several Local Authority areas.

Appendix 3

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**BLAENAU GWENT**

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**ANIMAL HEALTH, WELFARE AND LICENCING  
ACTIVITIES**

–

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

## ACTIVITY PLANNED FOR FY 2021/22

Activity	No.	Remarks
Primary visits to Licenced Pet Shops	5	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Welfare visits to Licenced Pet Shops	5	Unannounced Welfare Inspection of premises.
Primary visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders	4	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Welfare visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders	4	Announced Primary Licencing Inspection
Primary and Welfare Inspection to Zoo	1	1 x Primary Inspection and 1 x Welfare Inspection
Companion Animal Complaints & Enquiries		Action all welfare complaints within 1 working day. All other complaints/enquiries to be actioned within 3 working days.
Primary – Planned Farm inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 9 12	Conduct any necessary unplanned inspections as a result of complaints received.
Newly identified/re-opened premises		Each newly identified or re-opened AH premise is to be risked rated by means of either of the following: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Primary AH Inspection of the premises; or</li> <li>• By use of an alternative enforcement business questionnaire being sent to the premises</li> </ul>
Breach Report Investigations		Breach reports to be investigated within 3 months of receipt
Alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks		Alternative enforcement checks to be completed within 3 months of receipt
FSA Slaughterhouse referral investigations		Referrals to be investigated within 3 months of receipt
Freedom of Information Requests		Action all FOI requests within appointed timescale.

**Activity Report: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Visits to Licenced Pet Shops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	1 5	1 pet shop closed during year.
Visits to Licenced Animal Home Boarders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	4 2	2 Premises closed due to the Covid pandemic.
Inspection to Zoo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary</li> <li>• Welfare</li> </ul>	1 1	
Companion Animal Complaints received	26	
Companion Animal Enquiries received	13	
Animal Health Complaints received.	36	
Primary – Planned Farm inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	1 0 1	
Unplanned/Non-primary Farm Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	3 0 0	Multiple visits required to newly high risk rated premises – part of an ongoing investigation.
Primary alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Risk</li> <li>• Medium Risk</li> <li>• Low Risk</li> </ul>	0 0 0	

Non-Primary alternative Inspections – RP05 Record Checks	0	
Newly identified/re-opened premises identified for inspection in this FY	6	
Newly identified/re-opened premises identified since beginning of FY	4	
Premises closed.	2	
Breach Report Investigations	0	
Enforcement Action Taken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prosecutions</li> <li>• Simple Cautions</li> <li>• Written warnings</li> <li>• Verbal warnings</li> <li>• Oral Advice</li> </ul>	1 0 0 0 0	Prosecution – Op Brutus [Redacted] – currently under investigation
Business Advice provided	1	
Bovine Tb Referrals	0	
Freedom of Information Requests	5	
Data returns for AHPA	0	Complete and submit data returns for AHPA in respect of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 x Sheep Scab Returns; and</li> <li>• 2 x Prosecution Returns</li> <li>• 1 x WATO Return</li> </ul>
Intelligence Reports submitted	59	Levels of intelligence are already 20 higher than the whole of the preceding year.
Total Nos of AH premises:- H – 1 M – 12 L - 74		

**Notes:**

Work continues on all planned routine inspections and all targets are expected to be met. The Primary Zoo Inspection was completed on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and the report is awaited from the Zoo Inspectors.

Work is ongoing in relation to illegal dog breeding activities with the support of the Police and Trading Standards Wales Regional Investigation Team. A large number of potential targets are known to the police and active in OCG's working across several Local Authority areas.

**ANIMAL HEALTH, WELFARE & LICENSING SERVICE  
COLLABORATION – POWYS CC PARTNERSHIP –  
ACTIVITIES & UPDATE REPORT – OCTOBER 2021 –  
APPENDIX 5 – EXEMPT INFORMATION**

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended) – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

(Appendix 5 circulated under separate cover to Members)

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# Agenda Item 10

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
Report Subject: **Active Travel and Safe Routes in Communities 2021/22**  
Portfolio Holder: **Executive Member for Environment – Councillor Joanne Wilkins**  
Report Submitted by: **Clive Rogers, Head of Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
26/10/21	28/10/21	04.11.21			15/11/21			

## 1. Purpose of the Report

To provide an update to Scrutiny Committee on Active Travel and Safe Routes in the Community (SRiC) works for the Financial Year 2021/22.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Active Travel (Wales) Act was introduced in 2013 to help encourage 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.

Examples of purposeful journeys are listed below:

- a parent or guardian walking to school to pick their child up
- a person cycling to their local train/bus station to commute to work
- a person walking or cycling to their local pharmacy to collect a prescription.
- A person walking to local shops for shopping activities

## 2.2 Funding

Since the Active Travel (Wales) Act was introduced, funding has been made available by Welsh Government for local authorities to invest in its Active Travel networks. For the Financial Year 2021/22, this Authority, Blaenau Gwent CBC, successfully applied for funding for the following schemes to enhance its 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 Bedwellty 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 total amount of funding received for this financial year is £429,000.

### 2.3 **Resources:**

- 2.3.1 Where possible, in-house officers are working on the delivery of each of the schemes, with officer time funded from the grant and added to the Authority's income generation.
- 2.3.2 The Authority's Engagement Team has helped develop the community and statutory consultation for the Active Travel Network Maps, which contain both existing and future routes. Much of this year's consultation has been undertaken online via CommonPlace, a website developed by Welsh Government to allow local residents and employees within the borough to have their say on existing and future Active Travel routes. A link to the CommonPlace website can be found in Section 7 of this report.
- 2.3.3 Network events were held earlier in the year to promote Active Travel and encourage local residents to use CommonPlace to have their input on existing and future Active Travel routes.
- 2.3.4 The charity, Sustrans, has been commissioned to undertake auditing of the existing ATNM routes and mapping of the potential future routes prior to statutory consultation, which is now live. Following the statutory consultation, which is currently ongoing and due to end on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2021, Sustrans will review comments received and produce a report and a map showing the existing and future proposed routes. These routes will be mapped on Data Map Wales and will be made accessible to the public.
- 2.3.5 Sustrans works closely with Transport for Wales (TfW), which is the administrative body for the Active Travel Fund programme.
- 2.3.6 See Section 7.1 of this report for a register of Active Travel schemes for this financial year and the associated funding and risk rating for delivery.

### 2.4 **Update on Safe Routes in Communities**

- 2.4.1 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).

- 2.4.2 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.
- 2.4.3 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 Glanhowy School, Tredegar.

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

- 3.1 **Option A:** Members accept the report on Active Travel and Safe Routes in Communities
- 3.2 **Option B:** Members accept the report on Active Travel and Safe Routes in Communities and provide suggestions for future Active Travel and SRiC schemes.

### 4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

Both Active Travel and Safe Routes in Communities aim to encourage people to walk and cycle for purposeful journeys, which in turn benefits their health, as they become more active; and the environment, as there is less reliance on private car journeys.

Active Travel is directly linked to the Blaenau Gwent Well-Being Plan which aims to improve the wellbeing of future generations. In addition, using active travel to replace car journeys will help to reduce the amount of carbon emissions and support the Authority's Decarbonisation Plan to become carbon neutral by 2030.

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

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

All works identified will be funded by Active Travel.

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

There is risk that of some of the schemes will be undeliverable within the financial year due to land ownership and resource availability under the Active Travel Programme for 21/22. If schemes are not delivered, then there is risk that the funding for the financial year will be lost.

The following risks have been identified:

**5.2.1 Ebbw Vale Town Centre Sustainable Link**

The Authority's framework consultant, Capita, recently advised that it cannot undertake the WelTAG Stage 2 report for the Ebbw Vale Town Centre Sustainable Link due to resource availability. This potentially puts the programme at risk as we will now need to procure the report rather than go directly to Capita. We will continue to seek other avenues of delivering the WelTAG Stage 2 report.

**5.2.2 The Dingle, Brynmawr**

In order to progress this scheme, Welsh Government needs to acquire the lorry yard located on Intermediate Road, Brynmawr under the HoV road scheme. We have been advised that it is unlikely the land will be acquired this financial year and therefore, any progression with this scheme will be delayed until at least 2022/23.

**5.2.3 Heathfield, Tredegar**

Outline proposals to provide a safe Active Travel route along Heathfield bridge (near Pochin Crescent), Tredegar, have shown there is a possible land dispute that needs to be resolved prior to delivery of a suitable scheme. Due to the very tight timescales it is going to be difficult to undertake a design this financial year due to uncertainty over land ownership.

**5.2.4 Mitigation Measures**

One of the mitigating actions is to consider using the funding to improve other areas that require active travel improvements where land ownership and resource are not issues. We are currently looking at ways of improving other routes within Blaenau Gwent to enable us to spend the funding allocated for The Dingle, Brynmawr. Options are currently being discussed with Sustrans and will be subject to approval from TfW.

**5.3 Legal**

Legal has not been consulted for this report.

**5.4 Human Resources**

In order to deliver the Active Travel schemes, in-house resources and external consultants are required.

In-house resources include:

- Engineers to develop feasibility and engineering solutions and oversee site works for minor works (highways, structures, civil engineering).
- Assistance to lead on land acquisition of private land.
- Community Engagement Officer to prepare engagement material, capture consultation data and report on what locals have said about Active Travel in their area.

- Active Travel Officer to manage projects, project governance, liaise with TfW and Sustrans and ensure all financial claims and future bids are in place.

External resources include:

- Sustrans
- Consultants where required

## 6. **Performance Information and Data**

N/A

### 6.1 **Expected outcome for the public**

That existing Active Travel routes will be improved to meet current standards per current Active Travel guidance and future routes will be finalised through the consultation process so that works to plan and implement these routes can start.

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

During this financial year we have carried out consultation with Transport for Wales (TfW) and Sustrans for guidance on how to deliver the schemes. We have carried out community consultation through CommonPlace to gauge what the local community would like to see be improved and implemented in terms of existing and future routes, and also determine what barriers the local community considers there are to Active Travel (condition of pavements, traffic speeds) to see if these could be removed or mitigated to help improve people's perception of walking and cycling for purposeful journeys.

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

Consultation with the public for future routes.

### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

N/A

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

Collaboration with Sustrans (Sustainable Transport consultants), who advise TfW and assist a number of neighbouring authorities.

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

Active Travel is integrated across Infrastructure Services and Community Engagement.

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

Active Travel sets out to encourage walking and cycling for purposeful journeys, thereby reducing reliance on car journeys.

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

N/A

6.9b. **Equality Impact Assessment**  
N/A

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Under Active Travel, there are quarterly reviews with TfW.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Please see table below which shows a register of the Active Travel schemes for 2021/22.

<b>Active Travel Fund</b>				
	Description	Value £	Delivery mechanism	Progress RAG
1	Minor Works – small scale schemes of localised improvements such as drop kerbs, lighting, signage, path widening etc	80,000	In house	Ongoing
2	Heathfield bridge improvements – Feasibility & Design	100,000	In house – feasibility and design	Land Ownership Issues (internal), design resources
3	Dingle Brynmawr (NCN 46)- Wider active travel enhancements links to Brynmawr Comprehensive school /intermediate road. (This is part of the land acquisition by Welsh Government under the HOV road scheme).	64,000	In house	Land Ownership Issues - WG
4	Active Travel Network Map and Commonplace – Public engagement / consultation	10,000	BG engagement Team / Sustrans (mapping)	
5	Ebbw Vale Town Centre / Station Square Link – Feasibility – WELTAG business case and options appraisal (Framework consultant is unable to undertake these works this year).	110,000	External Consultants	Resource Availability
6	Glyncoed Ebbw Vale – Upgrading Existing Footpath	35,000	In-house feasibility and design	
7	Upgrading Existing Routes (dropped kerbs)	30,000	In-house - Installation	

Commonplace link:

<https://blaenaugwentAT.commonplace.is/>

# Agenda Item 11

*Executive Committee and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

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

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**  
Date of meeting: **15<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme: 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022**  
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanna Wilkins, Executive Member  
Environment**  
Report Submitted by: **Cllr Mandy Moore, Chair of the Community  
Services Scrutiny Committee**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
x	x	04.11.21			15.11.21			

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To present to Members the Community Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 for discussion and agreement.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Scrutiny Work Programmes are key aspects of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and support the requirements of the Constitution.
  - 2.2 The topics set out in the Forward Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's revised Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
  - 2.3 Effective work programmes are essential to ensure that the work of scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
  - 2.4 The Committee's Forward Work Programme was agreed in June 2021, recognising the fluidity of the document to enable the Committee to respond to urgent and emerging issues, and included timescales when reports will be considered by the Committee. The work programme is managed and implemented by the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer under the direction of the Chair and Committee.
  - 2.5 The forward work programme for the forthcoming meeting will be presented to Committee on a 6 weekly cycle in order that Members can consider the programme of work; request information is included within the reports, as appropriate and / or make amendments to the work programme.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** The Scrutiny Committee consider the Forward Work Programme for the meeting 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022, and

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

3.2 **Option 2:** The Scrutiny Committee agree the Forward Programme for the meeting 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021, as presented.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme – Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022



## Community Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Dates	Scrutiny Topic	Purpose	Lead Officer	Executive / Council
<b>Monday</b> <b>17<sup>th</sup> January 2022</b>  <b>Deadline:</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2022	NO ITEMS IDENTIFIED			
<b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b>				
	Pest Control – Annual Performance Report	<b>Information</b> To receive the annual report for Members’ information.	Andrew Long	Executive Information

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