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Blaenau Gwent

Our Ref./Ein Cyf.

Your Ref./Eich Cyf.

Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Gwasanaethau Democraidaidd

THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

Dydd Mercher, 9 Mawrth 2022 Dydd Mercher, 9 Mawrth 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

PWYLLGOR GWAITH

A meeting of the Pwyllgor Gwaith will be held in Ystafell y Weithrediaeth, Canolfan Ddinesig, Glynebwy on Dydd Mercher, 16eg Mawrth, 2022 at 2.00 pm.

Yours faithfully

Damien McCann
Interim Chief Executive

AGENDA

Pages

1. CYFIEITHU AR Y PRYD

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

2. YMDDIHEURIADAU

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau

3. DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU

Derbyn datganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

COFNODION

4. PWYLLGOR GWEITHREDOL 5 - 20

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

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

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 2ND MARCH, 2022

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

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

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

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

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

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

**WITH: Managing Director
Corporate Director Education
Corporate Director Social Services
Chief Officer Customer and Commercial
Chief Officer Resources
Head of Regeneration
Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance
Press Officer**

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>An apology for absence was received from Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.</p>
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>The following declarations of interest was reported:-</p> <p>Councillor J. Wilkins (Business Owner) <u>Item No. 9 - Business Rates Relief –</u> <u>Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/2023</u></p>
	<p><u>MINUTES</u></p>
No. 4	<p><u>SPECIAL EXECUTIVE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th February, 2022.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>

	<u>GENERAL MATTERS</u>															
No. 5	<p><u>CONFERENCES/COURSES AND INVITATIONS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Conferences/Courses and Invitation report.</p> <p><u>2022 Royal Garden Parties, London</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that Councillor C. Meredith be approved to attend.</p>															
	<u>DECISION ITEMS – CORPORATE SERVICES</u>															
No. 6	<p><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 2ND MARCH, 2022</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Leader of the Council.</p> <p>The Leader reported that there would be additional monitoring reports to be added to the agenda which would be accepted in order to conclude any business.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Forward Work Programme be accepted and the Forward Work Programme as presented for the Special Executive on 16th March, 2022 be agreed (Option 1).</p>															
No. 7	<p><u>GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>The following grants to organisation which had been received since the publication of the report:-</p> <p><u>ABERTILLERY</u></p> <p><u>Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor L. Parsons</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Friends of St. Illtyds</td> <td>£166.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Knit & Natter</td> <td>£100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Brynithel Activities Group</td> <td>£250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td>Brynithel Bowls Club</td> <td>£100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.</td> <td>Groundwork Wales</td> <td>£100</td> </tr> </table>	1.	Friends of St. Illtyds	£166.75	2.	Knit & Natter	£100	3.	Brynithel Activities Group	£250	4.	Brynithel Bowls Club	£100	5.	Groundwork Wales	£100
1.	Friends of St. Illtyds	£166.75														
2.	Knit & Natter	£100														
3.	Brynithel Activities Group	£250														
4.	Brynithel Bowls Club	£100														
5.	Groundwork Wales	£100														

BRYNMAWR

Brynmawr Ward - Councillor W. Hodgins

1.	BGfm	£250
2.	Libanus Church	£300
3.	Brynmawr Business Forum	£150
4.	G – Expressions	£144.85

Brynmawr Ward - Councillor L. Elias

1.	Libanus Church	£150
2.	Brynmawr Musical Theatre Company	£54.85

EBBW VALE

Badminton Ward - Councillor C. Meredith

1.	Tredvale Camera Club	£150
2.	Chair of the Councils Charity Appeal	£100
3.	Raglan Terrace WOAP	£150
4.	Ebbw Vale Childrens Contact Centre	£100
5.	St. Davids Church	£113.07

Rassau Ward - Councillor D. Wilkshire

1.	Ysybty Tri Chwm	£150
2.	Rassau & Beaufort Bowls	£68.34
3.	Rassau OAP	£68.34
4.	Puddleducks	£68.34
5.	Beaufort RFC	£68.34
6.	Rhos y Fedwen	£68.34
7.	Beaufort Male Voice Choir	£68.34
8.	Rock Chapel	£68.34
9.	Ebbw Vale Netball	£68.40

NANTYGLO & BLAINA

Nantyglo Ward – Councillor P. Baldwin

1.	Katie Treharne	£200
2.	Nantyglo RFC	£150
3.	Wesleyan Chapel	£100
4.	Hooks & Pins	£100
5.	St Anne's Church Holy Trinity	£100
6.	Winchestown OAP's	£100
7.	Hermon Cemetary Trust	£600
8.	Nantyglo Community Shop	£250
9.	Nantyglo Football Club	£200
10.	BGfm	£150
11.	Friends of Parc Nant Y Waun	£100
12.	1 st Blaina Scout Group	£100
13.	Nantyglo OAP's	£100
14.	Nantyglo Community House	£184.10

Blaina Ward - Councillor J. P. Morgan

1.	Nantyglo FC	£250
2.	Aberystroth Archaeology	£100
3.	BGfm	£144.10
4.	Ystuth Ladies Hut	£200
5.	Blaina Mens Bowls	£500
6.	Cwmcelyn Methodist Church	£100
7.	Blaina Scouts	£100
8.	Coedcae Interact	£100
9.	Blaina Community Centre	£200
10.	Chair of the Councils Charity Appeal	£50

TREDEGAR

Sirhowy Ward - Councillors T. Smith & M. Cross

1.	Trefil RFC	£200
2.	Tredegar Orpheus Male Voice Choir	£100
3.	2167 Squadron Air Training Corps	£100
4.	Tredegar Angling Club	£50
5.	Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum	£100
6.	Tredegar Ironsides RFC	£200
7.	Gwent Area Ass. Welsh Pony and Cob Society	£50

8.	Sirhowy Valley Woodlands	£50
9.	Nantylwch Community Centre	£350
10.	Sirhowy Community Centre	£350
11.	Ystrad Deri Community Centre	£350
12.	Horeb Chapel	£50
13.	Sardis Chapel	£50
14.	St George's Church	£100
15.	Silurian Amateur Boxing Club	£50
16.	Tredegear Junior Netball Club	£50
17.	Tredegear Operatic Society	£200
18.	Tredegear Twinning Association	£100
19.	Glanhowy Primary (Autism)	£100
20.	Ebenezer Welsh Congregational Church	£100
21.	Immaculate Conception Church	£50
22.	Tredegear Women's Institute	£50
23.	Cymru Creations	£169.70
24.	Valleys Life Afterstroke	£50
25.	Brynbach Running Club	£100
26.	Oak Football Club	£50
27.	Siloam Chapel	£50
28.	Bedwellty Park Men's Bowls	£250
29.	Sirhowy Angling Club	£100
30.	Noh's Ark Appeal	£50
31.	Tredegear RFC	£100
32.	Tredegear Mayors Appeal	£100
33.	Moose International	£50

Sirhowy Ward - Councillor B. Thomas

1.	Kids R Us	£100
2.	Tredegear Operatic Society	£200
3.	Royal British Legion Ebbw Vale Branch	£200
4.	Friends of Ebbw Vale Hospital	£200
5.	St Johns Ambulance Tredegear	£100
6.	Immaculate Conception Church	£217.85

RESOLVED accordingly.

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

No. 8

BLAENAU GWENT COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.

The Managing Director spoke to the report which sought agreement from the Executive on the approach to be adopted to monitor the Recovery from the Covid 19 Pandemic across Council Services and the wider community.

The Managing Director referred to the emergency response situation which had been in place across the Authority over the last 2 years and advised that this work would now come to an end and the Council had identified a recovery phase. The Managing Director advised that the recovery work would be integrated into the Councils governance arrangements using the Business Planning and Performance Management processes. There would also be a set of measures developed which would be used to measure recovery at a strategic level.

The Managing Director added that the Recovery Plan and approach to be undertaken was supported by Scrutiny and it was welcomed that a great deal of the focus would be around the economy on how the Council would support businesses and individuals.

The Leader advised that respective Executive Members had been fully involved in the various strands of the work undertaken and recovery themes. All of which had been reported via the Scrutiny and Executive Committees.

The Executive Member – Economic Development & Regeneration wished to thank the staff across the Council for their work which had been undertaken in response to the pandemic. In terms of the Economic Development and Regeneration Portfolio, the Executive Member noted the monies received from Welsh Government for businesses, however it was felt that it was how it had distributed via the Regeneration and Resources Teams which had allowed the Council to support businesses in the way it had during the pandemic. The Executive Member felt that a fantastic job had been carried out and the Council could now grow from this where it could have been devastation.

	<p>The Executive Member also expressed thanks to the all local governments in their efforts to support businesses across the country.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the approach set out to manage recovery from the Covid 19 Pandemic across Council Services and the wider community be agreed to be taken forward (Option 1).</p>
<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>BUSINESS RATES RELIEF – RETAIL, LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY RATES RELIEF – 2022/2023</u></p> <p>Councillor J. Wilkins declared an interest in this item and did not take part in discussions or the vote.</p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources advised that the report had been presented to the Executive to consider and adopt the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/23 scheme, as a section 47 discretionary rate relief for 2022/23 on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources spoke to the report and highlighted the key points as contained in the report. The Chief Officer added that approximately 300 businesses across Blaenau Gwent would benefit from the scheme, however in order for assistance to be given to ratepayers, the Council must resolve to adopt the Welsh Government prescribed scheme as a discretionary rate relief scheme in line with s47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief – 2022/23 scheme be adopted on behalf of the Council, to supplement the Council’s discretionary rate relief scheme (Option 2).</p>

DECISION ITEMS –
REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

No. 10 **ANEURIN BEVAN DESTINATION STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.

The Head of Regeneration advised that the report sought endorsement of the Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy and provided a summary of the Strategy's content along with the Themes around which a range of projects for tourism and economic regeneration.

The Head of Regeneration noted the work which had been undertaken collaboratively in relation to tourism and economic development and outlined the projects which had been identified. It was reported that the Strategy tied into and complements the Blaenau Gwent Destination Management Plan and would provide a framework for delivering local projects under the strategic umbrella of the Management Plan. The Head of Regeneration added that once approval had been received it would enable officers to further develop the projects, including feasibility work and establish updated costs.

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration advised that Strategy had been worked towards for a while and had now started to fit into the Council's Placemaking Plans with there being more impact in Tredegar at the moment. However, the Executive Member stated that Nye Bevan was a representative of Blaenau Gwent and therefore the Council should look at the Strategy across all towns. The Executive Member continued that the Strategy was not just about Nye Bevan and felt it was important that the Council looked at other aspects, including our industrial heritage and the Chartists which a massive part in our history. The Executive Member also referred to the sporting hero's which could also be considered and felt that there was an opportunity to develop many heritage aspects from our history across the Borough in all our communities in line with the Councils Placemaking Plans.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Aneurin Bevan Strategy be agreed (Option 1).

No. 11 **LEVELLING UP FUNDING (LUF) BID REQUEST**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.

The Head of Regeneration advised that the report sought approval for the Authority to submit Levelling Up Funding (LUF) bids during the second call in line with the UK Govt LUF timetable. The Head of Regeneration gave an overview of the Levelling Up Funding and the bidding process. The Head of Regeneration also highlighted the work undertaken by the Regeneration Team along with the projects identified that met the criteria and hoped that one of the projects could be taken forward.

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration stated that one of biggest challenges around the Levelling Up Funding and the Community Renewal funding was timing and although the pandemic had interrupted work, the Department had been put under significant pressure to put projects forward with the funds available. The Executive Member added that this was Phase 1 and it was hoped that as funding become available including European funding the Council could bid for more projects.

The Executive Member concluded that the projects being explored are long standing issues for the Borough which included the Ebbw Vale Car Park and Brynmawr Bus Station. These are big projects that met the criteria for Levelling Up funding and the Executive Member felt that these were projects that would benefit the whole Borough.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and it was agreed that applications be prepared be for the next Levelling Up Fund round of bidding for the schemes as identified in the report (Option 1).

DECISION ITEMS – EDUCATION MATTERS

No. 12 **BLAENAU GWENT DRAFT 10-YEAR WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTATION REPORT / DRAFFT ADRODDIAD YMGYNGHORI CYNLLUN STRATEGOL CYMRAEG MEWN ADDYSG 10-MLYNEDD BLAENAU GWENT**

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

The Corporate Director Education outlined the report which provided an overview of the draft Blaenau Gwent 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, providing views, comments and responses in line with the consultation process. The Corporate Director noted the consultation responses and pointed out that a number of respondents referenced the positive progress made to date, whilst also recognising the commitment of the Council to develop both Welsh Education and the Welsh language. All responses would be considered, which included areas whereby consultees had suggested that the draft plan could be strengthened. The Corporate Director advised that the document has been updated accordingly to reflect the consultation.

The Corporate Director advised that the draft plan had been submitted to Welsh Government following the consultation in line with their clear guidelines on 31st January, 2022, however it was informed that the document would be subject to Executive approval and the final version would be submitted in March 2022 once agreed by the Executive. It was noted that this was a course of action taken in a number of authorities.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Draft 10-Year WESP agreed (Option 1).

No. 13 **REVISIONS TO THE SOUTH EAST WALES EDUCATION
ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE COLLABORATION AND MEMBERS
AGREEMENT (CAMA)**

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

The Corporate Director Education advised that the purpose of the report was to provide the Executive with the opportunity to update the South East Wales Education Achievement Service Collaboration and Members Agreement (the CAMA). It was added that the proposal outlined within the report would provide a suitable and necessary level of support to the Education Achievement Service (EAS) should the need to make significant staffing changes, with consequential restricting costs, that impact on their ability to operate as an on-going concern.

The Corporate Director Education highlighted the key points of the report and noted that the EAS working with Directors proposed that the five controlling authorities formalised an agreement, similar to the home authorities Joint Services Protocol, to underwrite certain severance costs (i.e. redundancy payments and any employer capital pension costs) arising through the EAS having to take appropriate action to achieve a balance budget. The Corporate Director noted that this would be achieved through:-

- The home authorities underwriting those severance costs incurred within the EAS, which arise through actions required to meet a balance budget. Home authorities would underwrite those costs, pro rata to their current core contribution percentages, subject to the Company first contributing 50% of its retained balances towards the total cost.

The Corporate Director further referred the Executive to the impact on the budget which detailed a scenario exposure presented for each local authority based on respective contributions to the EAS.

The Executive Member for Education highlighted that the risk to the Authority was low in terms of the financial commitment being requested.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the revised form of wording in the report be agreed. It also be agreed that the EAS be allowed to retain at fifty percent of their balances to protect their liquidity.

	<p><u>MONITORING ITEM – CORPORATE SERVICES MATTERS</u></p>
No. 14	<p><u>FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTERS 1 AND 2 (APRIL 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 2021)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Performance and Democratic.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 2)</p>
	<p><u>MONITORING ITEM – REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS</u></p>
No. 15	<p><u>ASPIRE SHARED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.</p> <p>The Head of Regeneration advised that the report outlined the performance of the Aspire programme and associated external business engagement. It also provided performance information on the BGCBC internal apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>The Head of Regeneration advised how well the programme had progressed and added that the Aspire Programme had won a number of awards. It had been recognised alongside other apprenticeships in getting young people into work. The Head of Regeneration further highlight key points from the report and advised that if individuals had not gone into employment they had gone on to study in higher education. It was hoped that the Aspire Programme could be continued and hoped to have discussions with City Capital Region and suggested that there may be opportunities to link with Hive.</p>

	<p>The Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration felt that the Aspire Programme was a fantastic achievement to set up and seeing it grow had been a pleasure. The Executive Member welcomed the interest which had been shown from Merthyr Tydfil Council and Coleg Gwent and felt that the Aspire Programme could go up against any apprenticeships in the Country as it was excellent. It identified opportunities for the Local Authority and local business who had benefited from the apprenticeships which had been undertaken.</p> <p>The Executive Member also wished to pay tribute to Mark Langshaw who had been a champion of the Aspire Programme from the start and it was hoped that Welsh Government would look to continue the funding to ensure the good work could be carried on into the future.</p> <p>The Leader welcomed the report and felt it was something for this Authority to be proud of with political support of the Executive Member for Economic Development & Regeneration.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 2)</p>
	<p><u>MONITORING ITEMS – EDUCATION MATTERS</u></p>
<p>No. 16</p>	<p><u>21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS BAND B PROGRESS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1).</p>
<p>No. 17</p>	<p><u>EDUCATION DIRECTORATE – RECOVERY AND RENEWAL PLAN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted along with the associated documentation and proposed course of action (Option 1).</p>

No. 18	<p><u>CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION SERVICES SPRING AND SUMMER TERMS REPORT 2021</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information detailed within the Corporate Director of Education’s Spring/Summer terms 2021 report and contribute to the continuous self-assessment of effectiveness. (Option 1)</p>
No. 19	<p><u>BLAENAU GWENT EDUCATION SCHOOLS ICT STRATEGY AND PROJECT UPDATE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information therein be noted (Option 1)</p>
	<p><u>MONITORING ITEMS – SOCIAL SERVICES MATTERS</u></p>
No. 20	<p><u>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2021/2022 (QUARTERS 1 AND 2)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Social Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1).</p>
No. 21	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATION – 1ST APRIL TO 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2021</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Social Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1).</p>

DECISION ITEM –
REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

No. 22 **TRANSFORMING TOWNS**
EMPTY PROPERTY MANAGEMENT FUND

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.

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 Paragraphs 12 and 14, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).

Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services and an overview was provided to the Executive by the Head of the Regeneration.

The Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration welcomed the report and felt it was an important change in how the Local Authority dealt with empty properties. The Executive Member felt it presented a real opportunity across our towns to make buildings available and enhance our town centres.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information which contained details relating to an individual and the business/financial affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted (Option 2).

Agenda Item 5

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16 March 2022**
Report Subject: **EAS Business Plan 2022-2025**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr J. Collins, Executive Member for Education**
Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Corporate Director of Education**
Report Written by: **Debbie Hartevelde, Managing Director, EAS**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
√	24.02.22	01.03.22			15.03.22	16.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

This report asks for Members to consider the full contents of the draft EAS Business Plan 2022-2025, as part of the regional consultation process. Through this activity Members will ensure that the plan enables appropriate support for schools and settings in Blaenau Gwent.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The EAS delivers, through an agreed Business Plan, a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each LA. This plan supports the role LAs have in delivering their statutory function, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes.
- 2.2 Joint Executive Group (JEG) Members agreed that the EAS should move to a 3-year Business Plan model with a detailed annual update for Members to agree as per the requirements within the Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA). Prior to the consultation version of the Business Plan being completed a series of 'Visioning Sessions' have been held with all key partners invited to attend.
- 2.3 As an organisation, the EAS have reviewed how we have written the Business Plan and communicated this to our partners. The EAS and LAs decided it was timely to review and adapt this process and to make it more accessible to a wider audience. It was determined to use the 'Theory of Change' approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South-East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved. This Business Plan spans a three-year period and will receive annual reviews each year.
- 2.4 However, this plan also considers how schools and educational settings continue to face the challenges of the pandemic. The EAS will remain sensitive and responsive to the needs of the workforce and will continue to be a highly supportive, reflective, and responsive organisation.

- 2.5 The EAS will build upon what has worked well during this period, particularly the aspects of our role that have been successful within the virtual environment. The support that the EAS will offer will fully align to the expectations set by local authorities, Welsh Government (WG) and links to emerging research. The pandemic has reminded us that positive change is and has been possible. Schools, settings and the EAS have seized opportunities to explore innovative ways of working and delivering meaningful learning experiences through a creative blended learning approach. These experiences should be built upon to avoid a 'snap back,' keeping the positive learning that has been developed during this time.
- 2.6 Members are asked to take the opportunity to comment on the contents of the Business Plan as part of the consultation process and provide a written response as appropriate
3. **Options for Recommendation**
- 3.1 This report has been approved by Education DMT, CLT for submission to Education and Learning Scrutiny and Executive Committees.
- 3.2 This report will be considered by the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee on 15th March 2022, and any feedback will be presented verbally to the Executive Committee.
- 3.3 **Option 1:**
For Members to receive the report for information and accept the Business Plan
- Option 2:**
For Members to consider the plan and offer further comment for consideration by the EAS; this can be done via a written response back to the EAS. Written feedback on the draft Business Plan should be provided to the EAS Managing Director following the Education and Learning Scrutiny meeting and Executive Committee. This can take the form of the notes from the Member meetings. This feedback will be taken into consideration in the final version of the Business Plan.
4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 **Statutory Responsibility**
- 4.1.1 The EAS is required to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan.
- 4.1.2 **Corporate Plan Education Aims**
- Minimise the impact of COVID-19 on learner development and progress, including improving the digital competency of all learners and staff in the wider Blaenau Gwent school community.
 - Ensure high quality leadership and teaching that secures good progress for all learners, particularly the vulnerable and those who are eFSM.
 - Improve wellbeing for learners at all stages of development.
 - Secure strong progress in skills, particularly in English and Mathematics at Key Stages 3 and 4.

- Support schools who are identified as causing concern through regional protocols to secure improvement, in conjunction with the EAS.

4.1.3 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

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

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.1 Section 4 of the Business Plan details the EAS activities for 2022-2023 and Section 5 details the governance and financial arrangements. Indicative LA Core Contributions have been added into this section. The EAS is subject to a robust governance model that is underpinned by the Articles of Association and a Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA). These governance documents essentially link the five Local Authorities to the EAS both operationally and through the commissioning of regional school improvement services.

5.1.2 The delegation rate to schools increased to 95.5% in 2021/22, whilst the EAS staff profile has reduced by 53.1% since 2012.

The local authority's indicative core contribution for 2022/23 is as follows: Blaenau-Gwent's contribution for 2022/23 is £350,046, compared with £351,806 in 2021/22, £358,985 in 2020/21 and £364,452 in 2019/20.

5.1.3 At the time of writing this report, there is uncertainty with regards to the regional grant funding from WG for 2021/2022. As a result of the pandemic, it is likely that there will be reductions in the regional grant profile. When the grant position has been confirmed the EAS detailed delivery plan will be updated accordingly.

5.2 **Risks**

5.2.1 In writing this plan a number of assumptions have been made. If these are not in place, then they become a risk to the successful delivery of this plan. The EAS risk register will be reviewed and refined following the agreement of the final EAS Business Plan. These are:

- Operate with integrity, honesty and objectivity.
- Partners understand our role in the education system.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of the much wider system.
- Schools / education settings positively engage with us.
- Schools / education settings use funding effectively.
- We have the capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the conditions in a school / education setting can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.

- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

5.2.2 These risks are mitigated through the identification of priorities as seen in the priority areas above and within the detailed EAS Business Plan, Blaenau Gwent LA Plans and the Education Strategic Plan.

5.2.3 Blaenau Gwent will have its own risks linked to the delivery of the strategic objectives within their corporate plans.

5.3 **Legal**

The EAS is required to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan.

5.4 **Human Resources**

None for this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

6.1.1 Please note that a mid-year evaluation of the current revised COVID Business Plan (2021/22) has been submitted to each of the EAS governance groups and has been available for local authorities to share as appropriate within their own democratic processes. Within the context of evolving accountability arrangements and the COVID-19 Pandemic, school and aggregate LA performance data has not been available for presentation to this committee. A separate paper detailing the implications of this has been provided to local authorities.

6.1.2 The delivery model for the Business Plan is on a regional basis, the needs of each school and trends within Blaenau Gwent will continue to be met through bespoke work with each school, both virtually and when safe to do so physically.

6.1.3 The EAS will offer an evolving Professional Learning Offer (PLO) to all schools and settings across the region, in order to meet development needs as we emerge from the pandemic. We will continue to fund schools (grant permitting) to deliver a large proportion of the professional learning activity, where appropriate virtually.

6.1.4 All schools will continue to be provided with a bespoke support package that compliments the priorities identified within their own School Development Plans (SDPs) in line with the levels of support they require. There is a degree of flexibility within the deployment model to allow for in-year changes in circumstances and to allow for changes in light of the pandemic.

6.1.5 The centralised model of service delivery that has been adopted across the South East Wales region has enabled efficiencies to be realised, economies of scale to be secured, particularly in relation to avoiding duplication of functions and the ability to secure a range of educational expertise within the region.

6.1.6 The talent and expertise that resides in schools within and beyond the region is incentivised and used effectively to support professional learning and school improvement activity. There has been inevitable fragility in the ability of schools to

offer support beyond their own settings because of the pandemic, this situation will be managed with sensitivity and will be constantly reviewed.

- 6.1.7 For sustained school improvement to happen, it is essential that all partners work together more closely than ever recognising that each partner (school, LA and EAS) has its role to play in providing support to secure improvements.
- 6.1.8 The Business Plan is in the consultation process. The draft business plan was created following feedback provided in a broad range of 'Visioning Sessions'. These virtual and physical meetings were offered to a range of stakeholder groups including, headteachers, governors and elected members. Feedback has been incorporated within the plan. The final version of the Business Plan will be supported by a range of supporting documents:
- Detailed Business Plan 2022–2023
 - Regional Grant Mapping Overview 2022–2023 (to follow once detailed received from WG)
 - Regional Self-Evaluation Report (Executive Summary)
 - EAS Risk Register (Executive Summary)
 - Regional Professional Learning Offer 2022–2023
 - Local Authority Strategic Education Plans
- 6.1.9 **South East Wales Vision 2025**
All young people are confident, ambitious, resilient and have a love of lifelong learning and realise their full potential. (*The SE Wales vision/purpose statement is currently under development*)
- 6.1.10 **EAS Vision 2025**
Working in partnership with LAs supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive as effective learning organisations. (*There is an existing vision/purpose statement that is currently under development with all stakeholders*).
- 6.1.11 **What will the EAS do to Achieve our Vision?**
All schools will be able to access a universal offer of professional learning support in each of the following areas: School Improvement, Leadership and Teaching, Curriculum for Wales, Health Wellbeing and Equity and School Governors, which are intrinsically linked. As well as a holistic professional learning offer, this will include a set number of days to work with their School Improvement Partner (SIP) and a professional dialogue with the EAS and LA to agree and or amend improvement priorities and support requirements as part of an annual professional discussion. In addition to the universal offer, schools will be able to access specific and targeted support as determined through ongoing professional discussion with their SIP and in line with their school improvement priorities. This professional learning support may be related to a task and finish activity, an option for further work with their SIP or an option for peer working. Bespoke support will also be available for schools who require more intensive support. This could include more support from the SIP or the use of a Learning Network School to School Partnership.

School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and settings aligned to need. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.
--

Leadership and teaching Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.	Curriculum for Wales Professional learning and support for Curriculum for Wales.	Health, Wellbeing and Equity Professional learning and support for health, wellbeing, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning and support for Governors.		

- 6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***
High Quality education is a fundamental pre-requisite of ensuring future local and national prosperity through the provision of an informed and well-educated workforce and society. The Local Authority’s statutory role to monitor and evaluate school performance and the quality of provision, coupled with its statutory powers of intervention in schools causing concern is fundamental to ensuring that all schools provide high quality education provision.
- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
Involvement of partners is fundamental to securing and sustaining school improvement. The statutory framework advocates this and the work of the Local authority, its commissioned school improvement service (EAS) and schools evidences the positive impact of working in this way.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
The EAS Business Plan that is being consulted upon for 2022/25 aligns to the strategic priorities within Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
A key element of the Council’s work is to monitor settings and ensure appropriate support to secure continuing high standards. Estyn Inspection reports reflect the extent to which settings and Local Authorities has been effective in achieving this.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
Educational improvement in Blaenau Gwent is delivered on a regional basis through the South East Wales Consortium in collaboration with Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Blaenau-Gwent Councils.
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
The Estyn Inspection Framework is aimed at promoting high standards and high-quality education provision. This aim is fundamental to the Council’s well-being objectives and is fundamental to the joint work between Education and Social Services Directorates.
- 6.8 ***EqIA***
Not required for this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The EAS is required to submit to the Business Plan to Welsh Government, this plan covers the period 2022-2025. As noted above, the EAS will be sensitive and responsive to changing priorities as a result of the pandemic and may need to change direction and repurpose priorities as required. The support will be made available to all schools and settings, there is an understanding that schools and settings are likely to be facing continuing challenges. It will be the decision of leaders to determine the most appropriate type and timing of at any of the support on offer in line with their priorities.
- 7.2 The progress on the implementation and impact of the Business Plan will be reported formally at a mid-year basis to the Joint Executive Group and Company Board. These reports, as in previous years, will be suitable for scrutiny activity at local authority and national level. In addition, the progress made towards the implementation of key actions will be reported at each meeting of the Joint Executive Group and Company Board.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 - Education Achievement Service: Regional Business Plan 2022-2025 (Consultation Version – Accessible)

Appendix 2 – Education Achievement Service: Regional Business Plan 2022-2025 (including Annual Plan 2022-2023)

Appendix 3 – Education Achievement Service – Integrated Impact Assessment

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EAS

Education Achievement Service
for South East Wales
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru



Education Achievement Service Regional Business Plan

April 2022 - March 2025

(Consultation Version - Accessible)



The final version of the Business Plan will be available in both English and Welsh.

The final version of the Business Plan 2022-2025 will be presented for agreement to the Regional Joint Executive Group and then to each LA Cabinet / Executive. The plan will then be submitted to Welsh Government.

<p>Cllr J Wilkins Chair of Education Achievement Service Company Board</p>	
<p>Cllr J Collins Chair of Joint Executive Group</p>	
<p>Ms D Hartevelde Managing Director, Education Achievement Service</p>	
<p>Mrs K Cole Lead Director on behalf of South East Wales Directors Group</p>	

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Section 1: Regional Context

Key regional facts and figures

- The number of pupils of compulsory school age within the region in 2021 was 73,324. This represents 19.3% of all pupils in Wales.
- There are 237 maintained schools in the region (which includes 4 pupil referral units), 15.8% of all maintained schools in Wales (EAS figure correct from September 2021, Wales figure from Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), 2021).
- There are 21 Welsh medium primary schools, 3 Welsh medium secondary, 17 Roman Catholic and 11 Church in Wales schools within the region
- The percentage of pupils of compulsory school age who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) is 24.8%. This level of eligibility is the second highest of the four regional consortia with Central South Consortium highest with 25.1% (PLASC, 2021).
- In the region, 10% of people aged three and over say that they can speak Welsh compared to the Wales average of 19% (2011 Census, ONS).
- The percentage of pupils aged 5 or over from an ethnic minority background is 11.8%.
- Based on local authority reported numbers (March 2021), 847 children in the region are looked after (LAC) by a local authority and attend a school in the region. An additional 54 Looked After Children are educated in schools in England. (This data is no longer collected in PLASC).

Overview of regional school governors (As at 02/12/2021)

Local Authority	Number of school governors
Blaenau Gwent	324
Caerphilly	114
Monmouthshire	449
Newport	798
Torfaen -	415
EAS	3100

Overview of school numbers in the region Jan 2022

Blaenau Gwent (31.4% FSM)

- 3 Non-maintained Nursery Settings
- 19 Primary (1 Welsh medium, 3 Roman Catholic, 1 Church in Wales)
- 2 Secondary
- 2 Special
- 2 3-16

Caerphilly (24.9% FSM)

14	Non-maintained Nursery Settings
63	Primary (11 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
6	Infant
4	Junior
11	Secondary (1 Welsh medium)
1	Special
1	Pupil Referral Unit
1	3-18

Monmouthshire (16.6% FSM)

26	Non-maintained Nursery Settings
30	Primary (2 Welsh medium, 6 Church in Wales, 2 Roman Catholic)
4	Secondary
1	Pupil Referral Service

Newport (23.1% FSM)

23	Non-maintained Nursery Settings
1	Nursery
44	Primary (4 Welsh medium, 2 Church in Wales, 6 Roman Catholic)
9	Secondary (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
2	Special
1	Pupil Referral Unit

Torfaen (30.0% FSM)

15	Non-maintained Nursery Settings
25	Primary (3 Welsh medium, 2 Church in Wales, 3 Roman Catholic)
6	Secondary (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)
1	Special
1	Pupil Referral Service

Overview of regional school / PRU staffing

Local Authority	Number of Teaching Staff	Number of Support Staff
Blaenau Gwent	502	552
Caerphilly	1,580	1,416
Monmouthshire	661	626
Newport	1,508	1,346
Torfaen	761	739
EAS	5,012	4,679

Section 2: Introduction

As an organisation we have reviewed how we have written the Business Plan and communicated this to our partners. We decided it was timely to review and adapt this process and to make it more accessible to a wider audience. We have used the 'Theory of Change' approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved. This Business Plan spans a three-year period and will receive annual reviews each year.

However, this plan also considers how schools and educational settings continue to face the challenges of the pandemic. The EAS will remain sensitive and responsive to the needs of the workforce and will continue to be a highly supportive, reflective, and responsive organisation.

The EAS will build upon what has worked well during this period, particularly the aspects of our role that have been successful within the virtual environment. The support that the EAS will offer will fully align to the expectations set by local authorities, Welsh Government (WG) and links to emerging research. The pandemic has reminded us that positive change is and has been possible. Schools, settings and the EAS have seized opportunities to explore innovative ways of working and delivering meaningful learning experiences through a creative blended learning approach. These experiences should be built upon to avoid a 'snap back,' keeping the positive learning that has been developed during this time.

Stats and Stories from 2020-2021

- Nearly all (98%) agreed or strongly agreed (46%) that the blended learning masterclass has directly brought about advances in knowledge, skills and/or practice. It has prompted reflection on beliefs and attitudes regarding professional practice.
- Over 90% of leaders agree that the EAS provides high quality professional learning that supports for Leadership and Teaching, access to inspirational guest speakers , digital support and access to an equitable national leadership offer.
- Nearly all schools are Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Aware
- Over 100 School Improvement Partners (SIP) from both within and beyond the region are current serving Headteachers who are contributing to the self-improving system and the Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) agenda.
- Sharing of best practice events highlighting key learning and good practice during the pandemic involving international speakers.
- Strong Learning Network school to school provision has been secured for schools who require high levels of support. This support is holistic and addresses leadership and improving the quality of teaching.
- The development of a growing bank of case studies evidencing examples of school improvement and turnaround leadership.
- Enhanced schools' ability to network and share practice. Curriculum for Wales (CfW) Teaching and Learning Development Group has over 380 members and the Progression and Assessment Development Group has 340 members.

- 150 schools have accessed the CfW professional learning (PL) programme to support senior leaders and headteachers.
- Over the last 3 years 59 people in the EAS region have successfully met National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). The average pass rate over the last three years is 76%.
- 2020/ 2021 58 Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) achieved the status, a 98% pass rate, building capacity in schools
- Governing Body meetings moved online from the end of March 2020. In the subsequent 18 months over 1800 meetings were clerked, an average of 31 each week in term time.
- We have able to connect with more governors than ever across the region, offering a virtual Professional Learning (training) programme from Summer 2020. Since then, we have delivered over 130 virtual events for governors, with over 2000 individual attendances.
- Since Autumn 2019 across the EAS over 500 participants have accessed the Middle Leadership Development Programme. Nearly 900 evaluative comments have been received about the PL experience.

We will continue to research, refine, respond and reflect to school needs. Our established networks will continue to be the mechanism of communicating with schools and settings. The Supporting our Schools website will continue to be the 'go to place' for all resoures and guidance materials.

The EAS understands the need to over communicate with clarity to provide reassurance regarding advice, guidance, support and expectations. As a result, the EAS will work with local authorities to minimise any unnecessary bureaucracy for schools and settings to ensure they are able to focus on their important priorities and their support for learners.

The timing, delivery and focus of the support will be carefully considered in respect of the challenges that are likely to continue.

Section 3: Our Approach

The Theory of Change approach

This approach begins with asking why we are doing what we do in the EAS (our vision) and reinforces the need for the development of a collective regional vision, so that we are all clear about what we are trying to achieve and each other's respective roles in this. The EAS will work collaboratively with local authority partners, wider partners and schools and educational settings to implement the Business Plan.

Why? What are we aiming to achieve?

South East Wales Vision 2025

**SE Wales
Vision**

All young people are confident, ambitious, resilient and have a love of lifelong learning and realise their full potential.
The SE Wales Vision is currently under development

In working towards the SE Wales Vision, a strong commitment of partnership working is critical. It is important to recognise that each local authority, school and educational setting will have their own strategic priorities that support the realisation of the regional vision. These will be documented in LA Strategic Plans and School Development Plans.

EAS Vision 2025

EAS Vision

Supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive ad effective learning organisations.
There is an existing vision that is currently under development with all stakeholders

In working towards the EAS Vision, it is critical that the EAS Business Plan reflects regional and local needs.

Wales has an ambition that all schools develop as learning organisations, in keeping with OECD principles. Schools that are learning organisations have the capacity to adapt more quickly and explore new approaches, with a means to improving learning and outcomes for all their learners.

What? What will the EAS do to achieve our vision?

All schools will be able to access a universal offer of professional learning support in each of the following areas: School Improvement, Leadership and Teaching, Curriculum for Wales, Health Wellbeing and Equity and School Governors which are intrinsically linked. As well as a holistic professional learning offer, this will include a set number of days to work with their School Improvement Partner (SIP) and a professional dialogue with the EAS and LA to agree and or amend improvement priorities and support requirements as part of an annual professional discussion.

In addition to the universal offer, schools will be able to access specific and targeted support as determined through ongoing professional discussion with their SIP and in line with their school improvement priorities. This professional learning support may be related to a task and finish activity, an option for further work with their SIP or an option for peer working.

Bespoke support will also be available for schools who require more intensive support. This could include more support from the SIP or the use of a Learning Network School to School Partnership.

Activities:

School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and education settings which is aligned to their needs. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.

Leadership and Teaching

Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.

Curriculum for Wales

Professional learning and support for curriculum for Wales.

Health, Wellbeing and Equity

Professional learning and support to improve health and wellbeing, with a practical focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning support.

These activities will be explained in more detail later in the document.

What are the foundations that enable activities to take place?

The EAS needs to have the following elements in place to enable the activities above. These are the foundations of the organisation:

- We are passionately committed to Wales, helping our staff, schools and education settings succeed.
- Agile, timely and responsive.
- Sensitive, flexible, and empathetic to system needs.
- The way we work is informed, drawing on research from a global perspective.
- Welcome challenge and review.
- Effective systems and processes for self-evaluation, risk, and financial management.
- The operation of a clear and effective governance model.
- Positive relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders.
- Adherence to all legislative requirements.
- Communicate clearly.
- Support the wellbeing and professional learning of staff.
- Work is well-planned and managed to deliver the best for schools and education settings.
- Draw upon expertise to improve our delivery.

What will be the impact?

If schools and educational settings have the capacity to secure improvement and engage with the support available from the EAS this is the expected impact:

Impact:

The EAS provides support to enable leaders, governors and education practitioners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to positively impact practice, providing improved learner outcomes.

Professional learning is of high quality and appropriate to (individual) needs.

Support is aligned to needs, enabling schools and education settings to make progress.

The broad range of collaborative networks and activity support the development of a self-improving system.

How will we capture our work and share information with our partners?

There are many ways of capturing and sharing what the EAS does which are exemplified in this model as outputs.

Outputs:

Governance reports
Policies and processes
External research and review
PL resources and guidance

EAS Website
Case studies
Supporting Our Schools Site

Impact capture reports
Meeting minutes
Partnership documentation

Assumptions

In writing this plan we have made the following assumptions. If these are not in place, then they become a risk to the successful delivery of this plan.

- Operate with integrity, honesty and objectivity.
- Partners understand our role in the education system.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of the much wider system.
- Schools / education settings positively engage with us.
- Schools / education settings use funding effectively.
- We have the capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the conditions in a school / education setting can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

SE Wales Vision	<p>All young people are confident, ambitious, resilient and have a love of lifelong learning and realise their full potential. <i>The SE Wales Vision is currently under development</i></p>		
EAS Vision	<p>Supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive ad effective learning organisations. <i>There is an existing vision that is currently under development with all stakeholders</i></p>		
Impact	<p>The EAS provides support to enable leaders, governors and education practitioners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to positively impact practice, providing improved learner outcomes.</p>		
	<p>Professional learning is of high quality and appropriate to (individual) needs.</p>	<p>Support is aligned to needs, enabling schools and education settings to make progress.</p>	<p>The broad range of collaborative networks and activity support the development of a self-improving system.</p>
Outputs	<p>Governance reports Policies and processes External research and review PL resources and guidance</p>	<p>EAS Website Case studies Supporting Our Schools Site</p>	<p>Impact capture reports Meeting minutes Partnership documentation</p>
Activities	<p>School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and education settings which is aligned to their needs. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.</p>		
	<p>Leadership and Teaching Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.</p>	<p>Curriculum for Wales Professional learning and support for curriculum for Wales.</p>	<p>Health, Wellbeing and Equity Professional learning and support to improve health and wellbeing, with a practical focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.</p>
	<p>Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning support.</p>		

Business Plan 2022-2025

Assumptions

- We are able to operate with integrity, honesty and objectivity.
- Partners understand our role in the education system.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of a much wider system.
- Schools/education settings positively engage with us.
- Schools / education settings use funding effectively.
- We have the capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the conditions in schools/education settings can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

Foundations

- We are passionately committed to Wales – helping our staff, schools and education settings succeed.
- We are an agile, timely and responsive organisation.
- We are sensitive, flexible, and empathetic to system needs.
- The way we work is informed, drawing on research from a global perspective.
- We welcome challenge and review and draw on expertise to improve our delivery.
- We have effective systems and processes for self-evaluation, risk and financial management.
- We operate a clear and effective governance model.
- We have positive relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders.
- We adhere to all legislative requirements.
- We communicate clearly.
- We support the wellbeing and professional learning of staff.
- Our work is well planned and managed to deliver the best for our schools and education settings.

Section 4: EAS Business Plan Activities 2022-2023

The support across all areas is interrelated and should not be viewed in isolation.

<p>School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and educational settings aligned to need. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.</p>
<p>Universal Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate professional discussions to identify support aligned to improvement priorities and resource allocation, highlighting good practice to share more widely. Undertake supported self-evaluation activities alongside leaders, focusing on the progress of learners including vulnerable groups. Provide professional learning for improvement and self-evaluation processes, including supporting the roll out of the National Resource for Evaluation and Improvement. Provide opportunities for peer working. Work with local authorities to complement existing education HR services and continue to develop a consistent approach to school improvement related HR matters across the region. Provide recruitment support for the appointment of Headteachers. Provide support as a panel member for Headteacher Performance Management.
<p>Targeted Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional support to undertake self-evaluation activities alongside leaders. Facilitate professional learning or support for specific areas identified by the school or educational setting. Facilitate opportunities for peer-to-peer networks. Support recruitment at key senior leadership positions. Support targeted professional learning for Governing Bodies. School Improvement Partners provide enhanced support for new and acting Headteachers.
<p>Bespoke Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support. Broker EAS school to school intensive support to undertake professional learning and supported self-evaluation activities alongside leaders. Working in close partnership with LAs and other partners to monitor the progress schools and or educational settings are making against their identified priorities. Review the impact of support and amend as needed via the Team Around the School and Multi-Agency processes.

<p>Leadership and Teaching: Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.</p>
<p>Universal Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable the entire workforce to access professional learning that supports the development of secure high quality teaching and learning and the realisation of the curriculum for Wales. Provide support for the leadership of teaching in the development of a whole school teaching and learning strategy, underpinned by the National Professional Teaching and Leading Assisting Teaching Standards. Provide practical examples of teaching and learning approaches used successfully in a variety of settings and schools. Provide a National Professional Learning offer for statutory induction, including support for Newly Qualified Teachers, School based Induction Mentors, External Verifiers. Provide a progressive pathway of professional learning to support the role of Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants. Support leaders to develop their schools as effective learning organisations. Continue to offer a national professional leadership development programme, including coaching and mentoring for leaders at all levels.

- Identify and develop a sustainable supply of diverse, high-quality, agile leaders to innovate and lead effective 21st century schools.
- Continue to work in partnership with Initial Teacher Education partners in securing high quality teacher education.

Targeted Provision

- Targeted support for the development of whole school teaching and leadership. This may include specific targeted support over a limited time period to include a particular aspect of leadership and/or teaching e.g. targeted support to support assessment across a whole school, support for a group of leaders, Schools as Learning Organisations development.
- Provide a comprehensive package of national and regional professional learning for School Improvement Partners to support them in their system leadership role.

Bespoke Provision

- Intensive and bespoke support exploring all aspects/ relevant needs of teaching and leadership and how the entire workforce supports the improvement journey.

Curriculum for Wales: Professional learning and support for Curriculum for Wales.

Universal Provision

- Provide access to access to national professional learning programmes to realise the Curriculum for Wales.
- Provide access for the entire workforce to collaborative networks of support for Curriculum for Wales and Areas of Learning and Experience (and subject disciplines).
- Provide access to strategic support and professional learning for the development of approaches to bilingualism and the Welsh language.
- Provide access to professional learning to support the development of subject knowledge across the curriculum.
- Provide access to professional learning and guidance to support curriculum design (including progression and assessment), working with a range of international experts.
- Provide access to professional learning for skills development across the curriculum as a feature of high-quality curriculum design.

Targeted Provision

- The School Improvement Partner will work alongside the school or education setting to broker targeted support to meet identified professional learning requirements.

Bespoke Provision

- Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support.
- Broker EAS school to school intensive support to undertake professional learning in Areas of Learning and Experiences (AoLEs) / subject disciplines
- Delivery of specific professional learning activity at a school or cluster level.

Health Wellbeing and Equity: Professional learning and support for health, wellbeing, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Universal Provision

- Support to build the capacity within schools and educational setting to create an effective whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Provide strategic support for the development of approaches to the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning.
- Support to develop strategic approaches to developing UNCRC and Human Rights.
- Support the development of a tiered approach to the provision and teaching for disadvantaged and vulnerable learners.
- Support the development of provision for learners whose circumstances have changed during the pandemic.

- Support for the development of language, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development in early years for those adversely affected by Covid.
- Offer a tiered approach to the professional learning programme: Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY).
- Support for the development of strategic approaches to embedding Diversity.
- Work in partnership with local authorities with Inclusions Leads and Looked After Children Education (LACEs) to analyse and use attendance and exclusions data for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.
- Provide guidance and support for the effective use of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG).
- Deliver the National Programme on Teaching and Learning (Mike Gershon).
- Provide support and guidance for schools to become Family and Community Friendly.

Targeted Provision

- Deliver the Vulnerable Learner Lead Programme.
- Deliver the Wellbeing Lead Professional Learning Programme.
- Provide 'WELL' Toolkit to support schools to review their tiered approach to Wellbeing.
- Continue leadership support for key roles, to include: More Able and Talented (MAT) Lead, Family and Community Engagement (FaCE), Seren Leads.

Bespoke Provision

- Seren Network (secondary only).
- Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support.
- Provide Wellbeing Coaching on a need's basis.

School Governors: A broad range of professional learning and support for school governors.

Universal Provision

- Provide a professional learning programme for Governors, including Welsh Government mandated training, the core role of the governor and support for understanding the role of the governing body and their contribution to school development priorities.
- Provide all governing bodies and individual governors with advice, support and guidance in relation to their roles and responsibilities.
- Provide networking opportunities for groups of governors, to discuss best practice, identify common issues and explore solutions.
- Offer all governing bodies a clerking service through the optional adoption of a Service Level Agreement.
- Continue to provide a range of specialist HR professional learning for governors.

Targeted Provision

- Deliver optional programmes to further develop governors' skills and knowledge, enabling them to deepen their understanding of their role, to effectively support and challenge their schools.
- Provide these programmes as part of a targeted Governor Pathway, aimed at specific groups of governors.
- Provide targeted networking opportunities for specific groups of governors, to address specific issues.

Bespoke Provision

- Provide additional specific professional learning for individual governing bodies, clusters of governing bodies or individual governors.
- Broker support for newly appointed Chairs of Governors, who would benefit from the support of an experienced mentor.
- Provide opportunities for more experienced chairs of governors to further develop their skills and knowledge of governance.

EAS Foundations:

Business delivery

- A clear EAS vision is articulated to schools and partners.
- Review and refine the hybrid working model and develop a balanced approach to Professional Learning delivery that incorporates the benefits of the virtual environment alongside face-to-face delivery where appropriate.
- Embed the EAS evaluation model, continuing to welcome external challenge and support, including engagement with research partners to evaluate current programmes and inform future developments.
- Use the Investors in People (IIP) development programme to support service improvements.
- Continue to develop and refine the broad range of ICT systems that support the business model and review the systems that enable the delivery of support for governors.
- Develop an effective communications strategy that meaningfully engage with all key stakeholders
- Continue to engage with other consortia and middle-tier organisations, such as Estyn, to realise efficiencies in programme development and delivery.
- Support and advise local authorities, as appropriate, in the delivery of their statutory functions for the regional Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs) and the development of individual Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP).

Staff Development

- To maintain high levels of staff morale and wellbeing in the context of reduced funding and workforce planning.
- Implement new performance management processes to reflect individual and service needs.
- Continue to develop collaborative ways in which the EAS team contribute to decision-making processes and are recognised more systematically for their successes.
- Provide all staff with the professional learning opportunities that enable them to undertake their role and develop professionally and personally ensuring all mandatory professional learning is undertaken.
- Recruit, develop and retain a skilled, professional, well informed, and motivated workforce that represents the values and vision of the EAS.

Funding and Resources

- Work with key partners to secure a more sustainable deliverable funding model, aligned with workforce planning.
- Secure an updated Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA) with local authority partners, that recognises change management funding.

Section 5: Delivery arrangements and resources for 2022-2023

Governance

The EAS is subject to a robust governance model that is underpinned by the Articles of Association and a Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA).

Consortium funding

The EAS is funded on an annual basis from three sources: Local authority core contributions, regional school improvement grants and a service level agreement for governor support services. A spending plan accompanies this Business Plan which is intrinsically linked to all actions contained within it. A detailed overview of the regional distribution of all grants is available for all schools to view and compare allocations and rates of delegation through the regional grant monitoring tool.

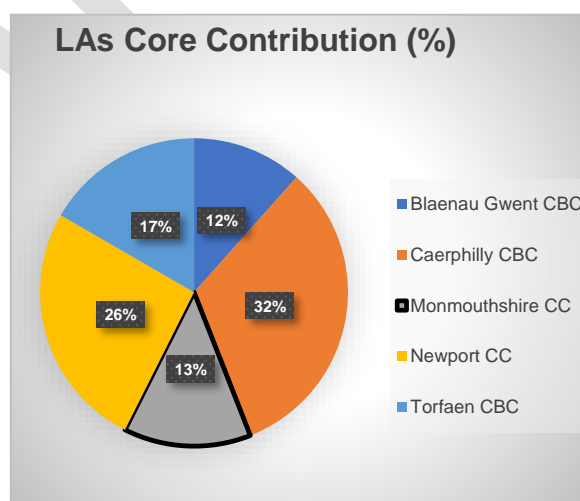
The delegation rate to schools increased to 95.5% in 2021/22, whilst the EAS staff profile has reduced by 53.1% since 2012.

As recipients of public funding, it is important that budgets are allocated and spent wisely. The EAS will continually strive to provide value for money through the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes.

Local authority contributions 2022-2023

Local authority funding for consortium working is underpinned by the National Model for Regional Working, published by the Welsh Government in 2014. The model recommended a core funding allocation of £3.6m for the EAS. The local authorities' indicative figures for 2022-2023 are as follows:

Local Authority (to be agreed)	£
Blaenau Gwent CBC	£350,046
Caerphilly CBC	£980,663
Monmouthshire CC	£403,815
Newport CC	£783,291
Torfaen CBC	£503,498
Total	£3,021,313



In terms of the above £0.99m of this figure is used to secure capacity within the EAS team from current serving headteachers and schools and £0.18m of this figure is used to secure service level agreements and venue costs sourced through local authorities.

Regional school improvement grants

The Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA) details the procedure to be followed for all regional school improvement grants received into the region from Welsh Government. Before the grant can be accepted approval to funding distribution is required from the local authority Chief Education Officers / Directors of Education with a follow up ratification from JEG members.

Grant Name (To be updated when information on grants is received from Welsh Government)	Grant Total	Amount delegated to schools	Delegation* Rate	Regionally Retained
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Indicative Calculation 2022-2023

	£	£		£
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)				
- Education Improvement Grant	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
- Professional Learning for Teachers	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
- Other grant initiatives	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
PDG (Lead Regional PDG Adviser)	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Seren Pre 16	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Seren Post 16	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Total	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

*Delegation: This refers to funding which gives freedom of choice to a school in how it is used. It must however be spent in accordance with, and in the spirit of, the core purpose of the grant and the individual school development plan.

Governor Support Service Level Agreement

The EAS has responsibility for providing a Governor Support Service to all schools in the region. The service provides support to school governing bodies, headteachers, and individual governors. This includes advice, guidance, training, and an optional clerking service to support governing bodies to deliver their responsibilities.

The optional clerking service is provided through a service level agreement with an option to buy into a clerking service and then additionally a statutory committee clerking service, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). From 2020 to 2022, 99% of schools opted into the SLA clerking service, with 51% of schools choosing the additional statutory committee service. From April 2022 the service is being offered on a 3-year basis, which aligns with the revised Business Plan approach. The indicative funding for 2022/23 is £0.364m.

Section 6: Additional supporting documents

This Business Plan is supported by the following documents:

- Local Authority Strategic Education Plans
- Detailed Business Plan 2022–2023
- Regional Grant Mapping Overview 2022–2023 (to follow once detailed received from WG)
- Regional Self-Evaluation Report (Executive Summary)
- EAS Risk Register (Executive Summary)
- Regional Professional Learning Offer 2022–2023

DRAFT



EAS

Education Achievement Service
for South East Wales
Gwasanaeth Cyflawni Addysg
i Dde Ddwyrain Cymru



Education Achievement Service

Regional Business Plan

April 2022 - March 2025 (Including Annual Plan
2022-2023)



The final version of the Business Plan 2022-2025 will be presented for agreement to the Regional Joint Executive Group and then to each LA Cabinet / Executive. The plan will then be submitted to Welsh Government.

<p>Cllr J Wilkins Chair of Education Achievement Service Company Board</p>	
<p>Cllr J Collins Chair of Joint Executive Group</p>	
<p>Ms D Harteveld Managing Director, Education Achievement Service</p>	
<p>Mrs K Cole Lead Director on behalf of South East Wales Directors Group</p>	

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Forward

DRAFT

Section 1: Regional Context

The number of pupils of compulsory school age within the region in 2021 was **73,324**

This represents **19.3%** of all pupils in Wales.

There are **237** maintained schools in the region (which includes 4 pupil referral units), **15.8%** of all maintained schools in Wales.

(EAS figure correct from September 2021, Wales figure from Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), 2021)

There are **21** Welsh medium primary schools, **3** Welsh medium secondary, **17** Roman Catholic and **11** Church in Wales schools within the region.

Based on local authority reported numbers (March 2021), **847** children in the region are looked after (LAC) by a local authority and attend a school in the region.

An additional **54** Looked After Children are educated in schools in England.

(This data is no longer collected in PLASC)

The percentage of pupils of compulsory school age who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) is **24.8%**.

This level of eligibility is the second highest of the four regional consortia with Central South Consortium highest with **25.1%**

(PLASC, 2021)

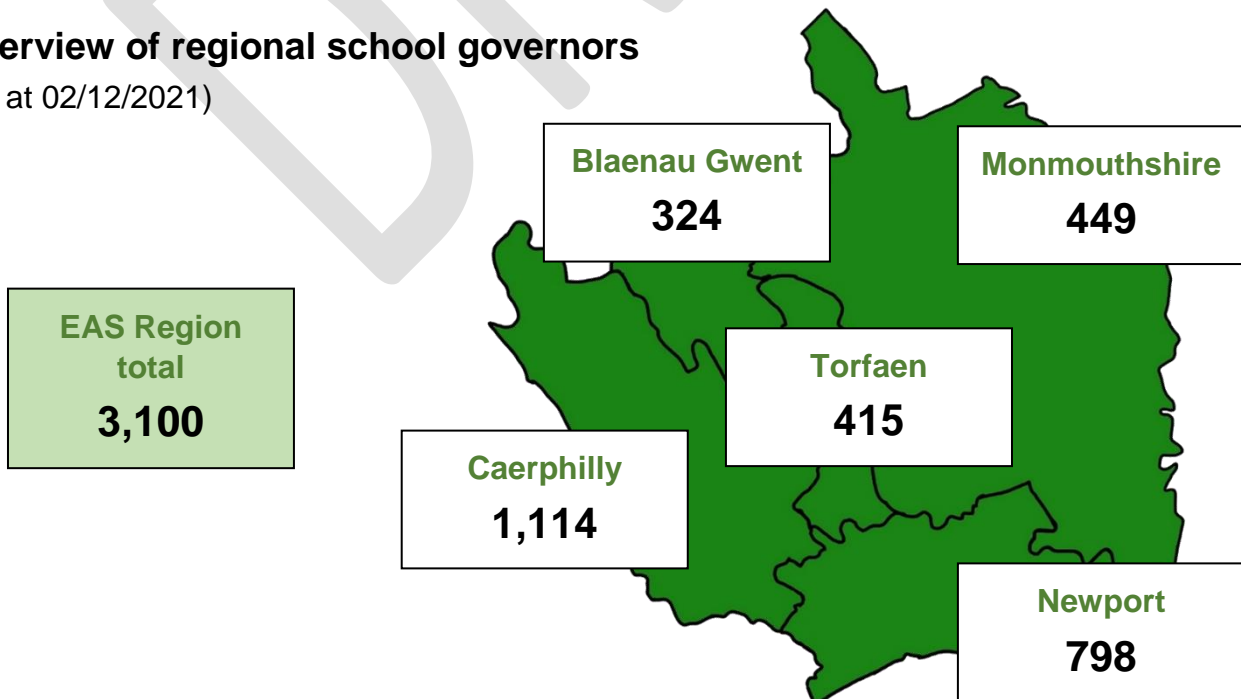
In the region, **10%** of people aged three and over say that they can speak Welsh compared to the Wales average of 19%

(2011 Census, ONS)

The percentage of pupils aged 5 or over from an ethnic minority background is **11.8%**

Overview of regional school governors

(As at 02/12/2021)



Overview of school numbers in the region

January 2022



Blaenau Gwent		Caerphilly		Monmouthshire	
31.4% FSM	School numbers (January 2022)	24.9% FSM	School numbers (January 2022)	16.6% FSM	School numbers (January 2022)
3	Non-maintained nursery settings	14	Non-maintained nursery settings	26	Non-maintained nursery settings
19	Primary (1 Welsh medium, 3 Roman Catholic, 1 Church in Wales)	63	Primary (11 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)	30	Primary (2 Welsh medium, 2 Roman Catholic, 6 Church in Wales)
2	Secondary	6	Infant	4	Secondary
2	Special	4	Junior	1	Pupil referral service
2	3-16	11	Secondary (1 Welsh medium)		
		1	Special		
		1	Pupil referral unit		
		1	3-18		
Regional school / PRU staffing		Regional school / PRU staffing		Regional school / PRU staffing	
Teaching staff	Support staff	Teaching staff	Support staff	Teaching staff	Support staff
502	552	1,580	1,416	661	626



Newport		Torfaen		EAS Region	
23.1% FSM	School numbers (January 2022)	30.0% FSM	School numbers (January 2022)	24.8% FSM	School numbers (January 2022)
23	Non-maintained nursery settings	15	Non-maintained nursery settings	81	Non-maintained nursery settings
1	Nursery		Primary (3 Welsh medium, 3 Roman Catholic, 2 Church in Wales)	1	Nursery
44	Primary (4 Welsh medium, 6 Roman Catholic, 2 Church in Wales)	25	Secondary (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)	181	Primary (21 Welsh medium, 15 Roman Catholic, 11 Church in Wales)
9	Secondary (1 Welsh medium, 1 Roman Catholic)	1	Special	6	Infant
2	Special	1	Pupil referral service	4	Junior
1	Pupil referral unit			32	Secondary (3 Welsh medium, 2 Roman Catholic)
Regional school / PRU staffing		Regional school / PRU staffing		Regional school / PRU staffing	
Teaching staff	Support staff	Teaching staff	Support staff	Teaching staff	Support staff
1,508	1,346	761	739	5,012	4,679
				6	Special
				2	Pupil referral service
				2	Pupil referral unit
				2	3-16
				1	3-18

Section 2: Introduction

As an organisation we have reviewed how we have written the Business Plan and communicated this to our partners. We decided it was timely to review and adapt this process and to make it more accessible to a wider audience. We have used a new approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved. This Business Plan spans a three-year period and will receive annual reviews each year.

However, this plan also considers how schools and educational settings continue to face the challenges of the pandemic. The evidence suggests that the pandemic has affected some groups of learners more than others:

- Vulnerable or disadvantaged learners, and learners with ALN have not necessarily had access to the support they need; some may have faced challenges with distance learning, and some with readjusting to face-to-face learning. We need also to support those learners whose circumstances have changed during the pandemic, who may not have previously fallen into this category;
- Learners in Early Years education are at a critical stage for language, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. Pupils risk missing key developmental milestones, which could impact on their emotional wellbeing, communication and learning development. They may have specific challenges in finding a sense of belonging in their schools or settings, or in being away from their families;
- Learners in post-16 and transition and those moving into post-16 provision will be concerned with progressing to their next steps, as well as their longer-term employability and skills. These learners will have experienced particular pressures and uncertainty, and their confidence maybe affected;
- Specific challenges for Welsh immersion learners in English-speaking households, and learners transitioning from Year 6 to Year 7.

The EAS will remain sensitive and responsive to the needs of the workforce and will continue to be a highly supportive, reflective, and responsive organisation.

The EAS will build upon what has worked well during this period, particularly the aspects of our role that have been successful within the virtual environment. The support that the EAS will offer will fully align to the expectations set by local authorities, Welsh Government (WG) and links to emerging research. The pandemic has reminded us that positive change is and has been possible. Schools, settings and the EAS have seized opportunities to explore innovative ways of working and delivering meaningful learning experiences through a creative blended learning approach. These experiences should be built upon to avoid a 'snap back,' keeping the positive learning that has been developed during this time.

Self-Evaluation: Progress in Key Areas in 2020-2021

ADs to update

Add next steps – strategic against each area

Leadership and Teaching: Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.
Next Steps:

Leadership and Teaching: Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.
Next Steps:

Leadership and Teaching: Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.
Next Steps:

Leadership and Teaching: Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.
Next Steps:

ACE
 Nearly all schools are Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Aware

Over **90%** of leaders agree that the EAS provides high quality professional learning that supports for Leadership and Teaching, access to inspirational guest speakers, digital support and access to an equitable national leadership offer.

NPQH
 Over the last 3 years 59 people in the EAS region have successfully met NPQH. The average pass rate over the last three years is 76%.

We have connected with more governors than ever across the region, offering a virtual PL programme from Summer 2020. Since then, we have delivered over **130** virtual events for governors, with over **2000** individual attendances.

Governing Body meetings moved online from the end of March 2020. In the subsequent 18 months over **1800** meetings were clerked, an average of 31 each week in term time.

HLTA
 In 2020/2021 58 HLTAs achieved the status, a 98% pass rate, building capacity in schools

The development of a growing bank of case studies evidencing examples of school improvement and turnaround leadership.

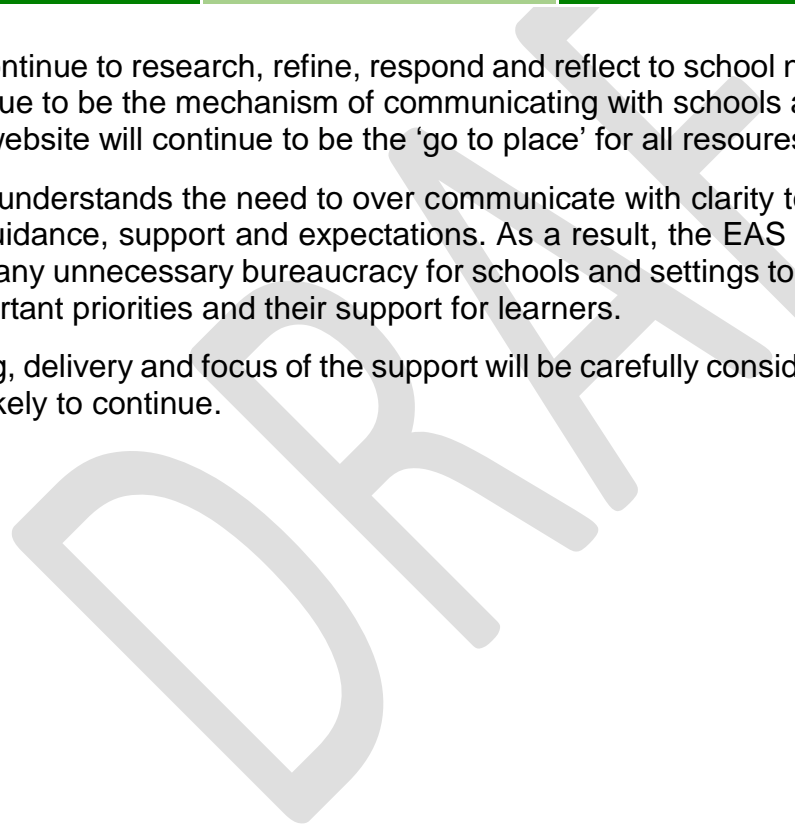
98%
 Nearly all (98%) agreed or strongly agreed (46%) that the blended learning masterclass has directly brought about advances in knowledge, skills and/or practice. It has prompted reflection on beliefs and

<p>Over 500</p> <p>Since Autumn 2019 across the EAS over 500 participants have accessed the Middle Leadership Development Programme.</p> <p>Nearly 900 evaluative comments have been received about the Professional Learning experience.</p>	<p>Strong Learning Network school to school provision has been secured for schools who require high levels of support. This support is holistic and addresses leadership and improving the quality of teaching.</p>	<p>Sharing of best practice events highlighting key learning and good practice during the pandemic involving international speakers.</p>	<p>attitudes regarding professional practice.</p>
<p>Enhanced schools' ability to network and share practice. CfW Teaching and Learning Development Group has over 380 members and the Progression and Assessment Development Group has 340 members.</p>	<p>150 schools have accessed the Curriculum for Wales (CfW) Professional Learning programme to support senior leaders and headteachers</p>	<p>Over 100 School Improvement Partners (SIPs) from both within and beyond the region are current serving Headteachers who are contributing to the self-improving system and the Schools as Learning Organisations agenda.</p>	

We will continue to research, refine, respond and reflect to school needs. Our established networks will continue to be the mechanism of communicating with schools and settings. The Supporting our Schools website will continue to be the 'go to place' for all resources and guidance materials.

The EAS understands the need to over communicate with clarity to provide reassurance regarding advice, guidance, support and expectations. As a result, the EAS will work with local authorities to minimise any unnecessary bureaucracy for schools and settings to ensure they are able to focus on their important priorities and their support for learners.

The timing, delivery and focus of the support will be carefully considered in respect of the challenges that are likely to continue.



Section 3: Our Approach

The Theory of Change approach

This approach begins with asking why we are doing what we do in the EAS (our vision) and reinforces the need for the development of a collective regional vision, so that we are all clear about what we are trying to achieve and each other's respective roles in this. The EAS will work collaboratively with local authority partners, wider partners and schools and educational settings to implement the Business Plan.

Why? What are we aiming to achieve?

South East Wales Vision 2025

SE Wales Vision	All young people are confident, ambitious, resilient and have a love of lifelong learning and realise their full potential. <i>The SE Wales Vision is currently under development</i>
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In working towards the SE Wales Vision, a strong commitment of partnership working is critical. It is important to recognise that each local authority, school and educational setting will have their own strategic priorities that support the realisation of the regional vision. These will be documented in LA Strategic Plans and School Development Plans.

EAS Vision 2025

EAS Vision	Supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive as effective learning organisations. <i>There is an existing vision that is currently under development with all Stakeholders</i>
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In working towards the EAS Vision, it is critical that the EAS Business Plan reflects regional and local needs.

Wales has an ambition that all schools develop as learning organisations, in keeping with OECD principles. Schools that are learning organisations have the capacity to adapt more quickly and explore new approaches, with a means to improving learning and outcomes for all their learners.

What? What will the EAS do to achieve our vision?

All schools will be able to access a universal offer of professional learning support in each of the following areas: School Improvement, Leadership and Teaching, Curriculum for Wales, Health Wellbeing and Equity and School Governors which are intrinsically linked. As well as a holistic professional learning offer, this will include a set number of days to work with their School Improvement Partner (SIP) and a professional dialogue with the EAS and LA to agree and or amend improvement priorities and support requirements as part of an annual professional discussion.

In addition to the universal offer, schools will be able to access specific and targeted support as determined through ongoing professional discussion with their SIP and in line with their school improvement priorities. This professional learning support may be related to a task and finish activity, an option for further work with their SIP or an option for peer working.

Bespoke support will also be available for schools who require more intensive support. This could include more support from the SIP or the use of a Learning Network School to School Partnership.

Activities	School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and education settings which is aligned to their needs. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.		
	Leadership and teaching Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.	Curriculum for Wales Professional learning and support for Curriculum for Wales.	Health, Wellbeing and Equity Professional learning and support to improve health and wellbeing, with a particular focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
	Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning and support.		

These activities will be explained in more detail later in the document.

What are the foundations that enable activities to take place?

The EAS needs to have the following elements in place to enable the activities above. These are the foundations of the organisation:

- We are passionately committed to Wales, helping our staff, schools and education settings succeed.
- Agile, timely and responsive.
- Sensitive, flexible, and empathetic to system needs.
- The way we work is informed, drawing on research from a global perspective.
- Welcome challenge and review.
- Effective systems and processes for self-evaluation, risk, and financial management.
- The operation of a clear and effective governance model.
- Positive relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders.
- Adherence to all legislative requirements.
- Communicate clearly.
- Support the wellbeing and professional learning of staff.
- Work is well-planned and managed to deliver the best for schools and education settings.
- Draw upon expertise to improve our delivery.

What will be the impact?

If schools and educational settings have the capacity to secure improvement and engage with the support available from the EAS this is the expected impact:

Impact	The EAS provides support to enable leaders, governors and education practitioners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to positively impact practice, providing improved learner outcomes.		
	Professional learning is of high quality and appropriate to (individual) needs.	Support is aligned to needs, enabling schools and education settings to make progress.	The broad range of collaborative networks and activity support the development of a self-improving system.

How will we capture our work and share information with our partners?

There are many ways of capturing and sharing what the EAS does which are exemplified in this model as outputs.

Outputs	Governance reports	EAS Website	Impact capture reports
	Policies and processes	Case studies	Meeting minutes
	External research and review	Supporting Our Schools Site	Partnership documentation
	PL resources and guidance		

Assumptions

In writing this plan we have made the following assumptions. If these are not in place, then they become a risk to the successful delivery of this plan.

- Operate with integrity, honesty and objectivity.
- Partners understand our role in the education system.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of the much wider system.
- Schools / education settings positively engage with us.
- Schools / education settings use funding effectively.
- We have the capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the conditions in a school / education setting can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self-evaluation.

SE Wales Vision	<p>All young people are confident, ambitious, resilient and have a love of lifelong learning and realise their full potential. <i>The SE Wales Vision is currently under development</i></p>		
EAS Vision	<p>Supporting and enabling schools and education settings to thrive as effective learning organisations. <i>There is an existing vision that is currently under development with all Stakeholders</i></p>		
Impact	<p>The EAS provides support to enable leaders, governors and education practitioners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to positively impact practice, providing improved learner outcomes.</p>		
	<p>Professional learning is of high quality and appropriate to (individual) needs.</p>	<p>Support is aligned to needs, enabling schools and education settings to make progress.</p>	<p>The broad range of collaborative networks and activity support the development of a self-improving system.</p>
	<p>The EAS provides support to enable leaders, governors and education practitioners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to positively impact practice, providing improved learner outcomes.</p>		
Outputs	<p>Governance reports Policies and processes External research and review PL resources and guidance</p>	<p>EAS Website Case studies Supporting Our Schools Site</p>	<p>Impact capture reports Meeting minutes Partnership documentation</p>
Activities	<p>School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and education settings which is aligned to their needs. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.</p>		
	<p>Leadership and teaching Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.</p>	<p>Curriculum for Wales Professional learning and support for Curriculum for Wales.</p>	<p>Health, Wellbeing and Equity Professional learning and support to improve health and wellbeing, with a particular focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.</p>
	<p>Governors: Provide a broad range of professional learning and support.</p>		

Business Plan 2022-2025



Assumptions

- We are able to operate with integrity, honesty and objectivity.
- Partners understand our role in the education system.
- Professional learning has a positive impact on practice and behaviour.
- We are one part of the much wider system.
- Schools / education settings positively engage with us.
- Schools / education settings use funding effectively.
- We have the capacity and resources to undertake our activity effectively.
- When the conditions in a school / education setting can secure improvement, readiness for support results in positive change.
- Our partners provide us with timely and appropriate information.
- We work with schools / education settings to ensure priorities for improvement are based on robust, accurate self evaluation.

Foundations

- We are passionately committed to Wales – helping our staff, schools and education settings succeed.
- We are an agile, timely and responsive organisation.
- We are sensitive, flexible, and empathetic to system needs.
- The way we work is informed, drawing on research from a global perspective.
- We welcome challenge and review and draw on expertise to improve our delivery.
- We have effective systems and processes for self-evaluation, risk, and financial management.
- We operate a clear and effective governance model.
- We have positive relationships with a range of partners and stakeholders.
- We adhere to all legislative requirements.
- We communicate clearly.
- We support the wellbeing and professional learning of staff.
- Our work is well-planned and managed to deliver the best for our schools and education settings.

Section 4: EAS Business Plan Activities 2022-2023

The support across all areas is interrelated and should not be viewed in isolation.

School Improvement: Bespoke support to schools and educational settings aligned to need. Create and facilitate collaborative networks of professional practice.

Universal Provision

- Facilitate professional discussions to identify support aligned to improvement priorities and resource allocation, highlighting good practice to share more widely.
- Undertake supported self-evaluation activities alongside leaders, focusing on the progress of learners including vulnerable groups.
- Provide professional learning for improvement and self-evaluation processes, including supporting the roll out of the National Resource for Evaluation and Improvement.
- Provide opportunities for peer working.
- Work with local authorities to complement existing education HR services and continue to develop a consistent approach to school improvement related HR matters across the region.
- Provide recruitment support for the appointment of Headteachers.
- Provide support as a panel member for Headteacher Performance Management.

Targeted Provision

- Provide additional support to undertake self-evaluation activities alongside leaders.
- Facilitate professional learning or support for specific areas identified by the school or educational setting.
- Facilitate opportunities for peer-to-peer networks.
- Support recruitment at key senior leadership positions.
- Support targeted professional learning for Governing Bodies.
- School Improvement Partners provide enhanced support for new and acting Headteachers.

Bespoke Provision

- Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support.
- Broker EAS school to school intensive support to undertake professional learning and supported self-evaluation activities alongside leaders.
- Working in close partnership with LAs and other partners to monitor the progress schools and or educational settings are making against their identified priorities. Review the impact of support and amend as needed via the Team Around the School and Multi-Agency processes.

Leadership and Teaching: Professional learning and support for the development of leadership and teaching across the entire workforce.

Universal Provision

- Enable the entire workforce to access professional learning that supports the development of secure high quality teaching and learning and the realisation of the curriculum for Wales.
- Provide support for the leadership of teaching in the development of a whole school teaching and learning strategy, underpinned by the National Professional Teaching and Leading Assisting Teaching Standards.
- Provide practical examples of teaching and learning approaches used successfully in a variety of settings and schools.
- Provide a National Professional Learning offer for statutory induction, including support for Newly Qualified Teachers, School based Induction Mentors, External Verifiers.
- Provide a progressive pathway of professional learning to support the role of Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants.
- Support leaders to develop their schools as effective learning organisations.
- Continue to offer a national professional leadership development programme, including coaching and mentoring for leaders at all levels.

- Identify and develop a sustainable supply of diverse, high-quality, agile leaders to innovate and lead effective 21st century schools.
- Continue to work in partnership with Initial Teacher Education partners in securing high quality teacher education.

Targeted Provision

- Targeted support for the development of whole school teaching and leadership. This may include specific targeted support over a limited time period to include a particular aspect of leadership and/or teaching e.g. targeted support to support assessment across a whole school, support for a group of leaders, Schools as Learning Organisations development.
- Provide a comprehensive package of national and regional professional learning for School Improvement Partners to support them in their system leadership role.

Bespoke Provision

- Intensive and bespoke support exploring all aspects/ relevant needs of teaching and leadership and how the entire workforce supports the improvement journey.

Curriculum for Wales: Professional learning and support for Curriculum for Wales.

Universal Provision

- Provide access to access to national professional learning programmes to realise the Curriculum for Wales.
- Provide access for the entire workforce to collaborative networks of support for Curriculum for Wales and Areas of Learning and Experience (and subject disciplines).
- Provide access to strategic support and professional learning for the development of approaches to bilingualism and the Welsh language.
- Provide access to professional learning to support the development of subject knowledge across the curriculum.
- Provide access to professional learning and guidance to support curriculum design (including progression and assessment), working with a range of international experts.
- Provide access to professional learning for skills development across the curriculum as a feature of high-quality curriculum design.

Targeted Provision

- The School Improvement Partner will work alongside the school or education setting to broker targeted support to meet identified professional learning requirements.

Bespoke Provision

- Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support.
- Broker EAS school to school intensive support to undertake professional learning in Areas of Learning and Experiences (AoLEs) / subject disciplines
- Delivery of specific professional learning activity at a school or cluster level.

Health Wellbeing and Equity: Professional learning and support for health, wellbeing, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Universal Provision

- Support to build the capacity within schools and educational setting to create an effective whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Provide strategic support for the development of approaches to the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning.
- Support to develop strategic approaches to developing UNCRC and Human Rights.
- Support the development of a tiered approach to the provision and teaching for disadvantaged and vulnerable learners.
- Support the development of provision for learners whose circumstances have changed during the pandemic.

- Support for the development of language, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development in early years for those adversely affected by Covid.
- Offer a tiered approach to the professional learning programme: Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY).
- Support for the development of strategic approaches to embedding Diversity.
- Work in partnership with local authorities with Inclusions Leads and Looked After Children Education (LACEs) to analyse and use attendance and exclusions data for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.
- Provide guidance and support for the effective use of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG).
- Deliver the National Programme on Teaching and Learning (Mike Gershon).
- Provide support and guidance for schools to become Family and Community Friendly.

Targeted Provision

- Deliver the Vulnerable Learner Lead Programme.
- Deliver the Wellbeing Lead Professional Learning Programme.
- Provide 'WELL' Toolkit to support schools to review their tiered approach to Wellbeing.
- Continue leadership support for key roles, to include: More Able and Talented (MAT) Lead, Family and Community Engagement (FaCE), Seren Leads.

Bespoke Provision

- Seren Network (secondary only).
- Allocate additional EAS support for schools and educational settings requiring higher levels of support.
- Provide Wellbeing Coaching on a need's basis.

School Governors: A broad range of professional learning and support for school governors.

Universal Provision

- Provide a professional learning programme for Governors, including Welsh Government mandated training, the core role of the governor and support for understanding the role of the governing body and their contribution to school development priorities.
- Provide all governing bodies and individual governors with advice, support and guidance in relation to their roles and responsibilities.
- Provide networking opportunities for groups of governors, to discuss best practice, identify common issues and explore solutions.
- Offer all governing bodies a clerking service through the optional adoption of a Service Level Agreement.
- Continue to provide a range of specialist HR professional learning for governors.

Targeted Provision

- Deliver optional programmes to further develop governors' skills and knowledge, enabling them to deepen their understanding of their role, to effectively support and challenge their schools.
- Provide these programmes as part of a targeted Governor Pathway, aimed at specific groups of governors.
- Provide targeted networking opportunities for specific groups of governors, to address specific issues.

Bespoke Provision

- Provide additional specific professional learning for individual governing bodies, clusters of governing bodies or individual governors.
- Broker support for newly appointed Chairs of Governors, who would benefit from the support of an experienced mentor.
- Provide opportunities for more experienced chairs of governors to further develop their skills and knowledge of governance.

EAS Foundations:

Business delivery

- A clear EAS vision is articulated to schools and partners.
- Review and refine the hybrid working model and develop a balanced approach to Professional Learning delivery that incorporates the benefits of the virtual environment alongside face-to-face delivery where appropriate.
- Embed the EAS evaluation model, continuing to welcome external challenge and support, including engagement with research partners to evaluate current programmes and inform future developments.
- Use the Investors in People (IIP) development programme to support service improvements.
- Continue to develop and refine the broad range of ICT systems that support the business model and review the systems that enable the delivery of support for governors.
- Develop an effective communications strategy that meaningfully engage with all key stakeholders
- Continue to engage with other consortia and middle-tier organisations, such as Estyn, to realise efficiencies in programme development and delivery.
- Support and advise local authorities, as appropriate, in the delivery of their statutory functions for the regional Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs) and the development of individual Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP).

Staff Development

- To maintain high levels of staff morale and wellbeing in the context of reduced funding and workforce planning.
- Implement new performance management processes to reflect individual and service needs.
- Continue to develop collaborative ways in which the EAS team contribute to decision-making processes and are recognised more systematically for their successes.
- Provide all staff with the professional learning opportunities that enable them to undertake their role and develop professionally and personally ensuring all mandatory professional learning is undertaken.
- Recruit, develop and retain a skilled, professional, well informed, and motivated workforce that represents the values and vision of the EAS.

Funding and Resources

- Work with key partners to secure a more sustainable deliverable funding model, aligned with workforce planning.
- Secure an updated Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA) with local authority partners, that recognises change management funding.

Section 5: Delivery arrangements and resources for 2022-2023

Governance

The EAS is subject to a robust governance model that is underpinned by the Articles of Association and a Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA).

Consortium funding

The EAS is funded on an annual basis from three sources: Local authority core contributions, regional school improvement grants and a service level agreement for governor support services. A spending plan accompanies this Business Plan which is intrinsically linked to all actions contained within it. A detailed overview of the regional distribution of all grants is available for all schools to view and compare allocations and rates of delegation through the regional grant monitoring tool.

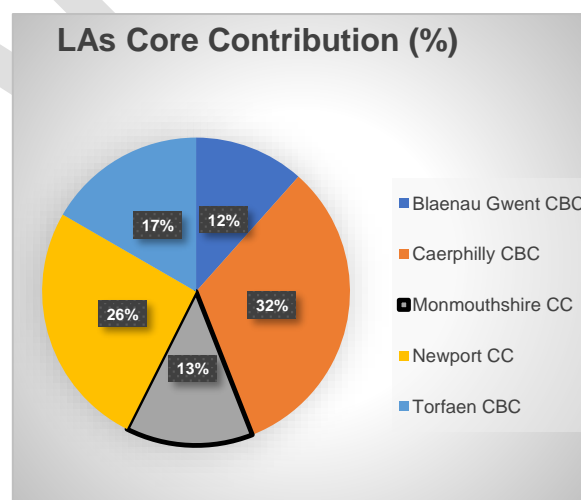
The delegation rate to schools increased to 95.5% in 2021/22, whilst the EAS staff profile has reduced by 53.1% since 2012.

As recipients of public funding, it is important that budgets are allocated and spent wisely. The EAS will continually strive to provide value for money through the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes.

Local authority contributions 2022-2023

Local authority funding for consortium working is underpinned by the National Model for Regional Working, published by the Welsh Government in 2014. The model recommended a core funding allocation of £3.6m for the EAS. The local authorities' indicative figures for 2022-2023 are as follows:

Local Authority (to be agreed)	£
Blaenau Gwent CBC	£350,046
Caerphilly CBC	£980,663
Monmouthshire CC	£403,815
Newport CC	£783,291
Torfaen CBC	£503,498
Total	£3,021,313



In terms of the above £0.99m of this figure is used to secure capacity within the EAS team from current serving headteachers and schools and £0.18m of this figure is used to secure service level agreements and venue costs sourced through local authorities.

Regional school improvement grants

The Collaboration and Members Agreement (CAMA) details the procedure to be followed for all regional school improvement grants received into the region from Welsh Government. Before the grant can be accepted approval to funding distribution is required from the local authority Chief Education Officers / Directors of Education with a follow up ratification from JEG members.

Grant Name (To be updated when information on grants is received from Welsh Government)	Grant Total	Amount delegated to schools	Delegation* Rate	Regionally Retained
	Indicative Calculation 2022-2023			
	£	£		£
Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)				
- Education Improvement Grant	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
- Professional Learning for Teachers	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
- Other grant initiatives	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
PDG (Lead Regional PDG Adviser)	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Seren Pre 16	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Seren Post 16	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Total	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

*Delegation: This refers to funding which gives freedom of choice to a school in how it is used. It must however be spent in accordance with, and in the spirit of, the core purpose of the grant and the individual school development plan.

Governor Support Service Level Agreement

The EAS has responsibility for providing a Governor Support Service to all schools in the region. The service provides support to school governing bodies, headteachers, and individual governors. This includes advice, guidance, training, and an optional clerking service to support governing bodies to deliver their responsibilities.

The optional clerking service is provided through a service level agreement with an option to buy into a clerking service and then additionally a statutory committee clerking service, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). From 2020 to 2022, 99% of schools opted into the SLA clerking service, with 51% of schools choosing the additional statutory committee service. From April 2022 the service is being offered on a 3-year basis, which aligns with the revised Business Plan approach. The indicative funding for 2022/23 is £0.364m.

Section 6: Additional supporting documents

This Business Plan is supported by the following documents:

- Local Authority Strategic Education Plans
- Regional Grant Mapping Overview 2022–2023 (to follow once detailed received from WG)
- EAS Risk Register (Executive Summary)
- Regional Professional Learning Offer 2022–2023

DRAFT

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EAS - Integrated Impact Assessment

This Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment (FEIA) has been designed to assist to help support the EAS in making informed and effective decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Welsh Language Standards (Wales) 2015
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

PLEASE NOTE: Section 3 *Socio-economic Duty* only needs to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions.

1. Proposal Details

Lead Officer	SMT Approval	Service Area & Department	Date
Edward Pryce	Geraint Willington	EAS Wide	13/1/2022

Is this proposal a... (please tick relevant box)

Policy	Strategy / Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Practice	Procedure	Restructure	Project
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What is the proposal to be assessed? *Provide brief details of the proposal and provide a link to any relevant report or documents.*

The EAS is required by Welsh Government to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan on an annual basis. The EAS then delivers, through this plan, a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each LA. This plan supports the role LAs have in delivering their statutory function, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes.

As an organisation we have reviewed how we have written the Business Plan and communicated this to our partners. We have used the 'Theory of Change' approach to help us articulate the changes and impact we want to make as the regional school improvement service for South-East Wales and the connections and actions needed that will allow that change and impact to be successfully achieved. This Business Plan spans a three-year period and will receive annual reviews each year.

The proposal is for each Local Authority cabinet to approve the business plan (which commences 1 April 2022, following consultation from January to early March) prior to submission to Welsh Government.

2. Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

(The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups). Please note that an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the protected characteristics and how?	If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Age <i>(people of all ages)</i>	Positive		The EAS Business Plan delivers school improvement services to all schools and settings. There is no direct work with the public and no direct support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), as this remains within the remit of the Local Authority. Descriptions of the range of support and professional learning programmes, including elements on wellbeing and support for schools in developing and inclusive curriculum for all are included.
Disability <i>(people with disabilities/ long term conditions)</i>	Positive		The EAS Business Plan delivers school improvement services to all schools and settings. There is no direct work with the public and no direct support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), as this remains within the remit of the Local Authority. Descriptions of the range of support and professional learning programmes, including elements on wellbeing and support for schools in developing and inclusive curriculum for all are included.

<p>Gender Reassignment <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.</p>
<p>Marriage or Civil Partnership <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.</p>
<p>Race <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>		<p>The EAS Business Plan delivers school improvement services to all schools and settings. There is no direct work with the public and no direct support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), as this remains within the remit of the Local Authority. Descriptions of the range of support and professional learning programmes, including elements on wellbeing and support for schools in developing and inclusive curriculum for all are included.</p>

<p>Religion or Belief <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.</p>
<p>Sex <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual)</i></p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>The business plan would have no tangible direct impact on these groups. If there was any impact it would be positive in terms of support for schools in terms of developing an inclusive approach through our professional learning.</p>

3. Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)

(The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services)

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

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

<p>Socio-economic Disadvantage</p>	<p>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral</p>	<p>If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?</p>	<p>What evidence has been used to support this view?</p>
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	impacts on the following and how?		
Low Income / Income Poverty <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	Section not applicable, as this Business Plan is not a strategic decision. However the plan describes a range of support for schools related to reducing socio-economic impact, particularly for learners who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) or those who are looked after (LAC/CLA)		
Low and/or No Wealth <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>			
Material Deprivation <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>			
Area Deprivation <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport)</i>			
Socio-economic Background <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>			
Socio-economic Disadvantage <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or</i>			

vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)			
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4. Well-being Objectives
(How does your proposal deliver against regional Councils' Well-being Objectives? Which in turn support the national well-being goals for Wales as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Are there any impacts (positive, negative or neutral? If there are negative impacts how have these been mitigated?)

Improving education opportunities for all	<p>The EAS delivers, through an agreed Business Plan, a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each LA. This plan supports the role LAs have in delivering their statutory function, addressing their individual improvement priorities and promoting improved pupil outcomes. Plan priorities include:</p> <p>Ensuring that the wellbeing of practitioners and learners in schools and settings remains paramount. Regional professional learning will be provided to support the social and emotional needs of the workforce and learners.</p> <p>Continuing to provide support to school leaders on the identification and support for specific groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners including those who have been disproportionality affected by school closures.</p>
Enabling employment	Improved educational outcomes are linked to improved employment prospects.
Housing objectives	n/a
Transport / environment impact	n/a
Healthy lifestyle / sustainable development principle within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	n/a
Wellbeing objectives	n/a

5. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – The Five Ways of Working (ICLIP)
(Also known as the sustainable development principles. The Act requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)

Ways of Working	How have you used the Sustainable Development Principles in forming the proposal?
Long Term	<p>Consider the long-term impact of the proposal on the ability of communities to secure their well-being.</p> <p>This is a three-year business plan with one-year updates as stipulated by Welsh Government. The plan however supports the development of a self-improving school system and all Welsh Government long term strategic objectives in relation to school improvement. Longer term projections are not possible due to significant proportions of EAS work being funded by Welsh Government Regional grants for schools which are only known on a one year basis.</p>
Prevention	<p>Consider how the proposal is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse</p> <p>The plan is designed to support the development and growth of schools, as part of a self improving system.</p>
Integration	<p>Consider how your proposal will impact on other services provided in our communities (these might be Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups)</p> <p>This Business Plan has been completed in consultation and collaboration with all five Local Authorities, and been informed by a broad ranging consultation exercise. Individual councils will need to consider how the business plan links to other council services</p>
Collaboration	<p>Consider how you are working with Council services or services delivered by other organisations or groups in our communities.</p> <p>This Business Plan has been completed in consultation and collaboration with all five Local Authorities, and been informed by a broad ranging consultation exercise. Individual councils will need to consider how the business plan links to other council services.</p>
Involvement	<p>Consider how you involve people who have an interest in this proposal and ensure that they represent the diversity of our communities.</p> <p>This Business Plan has been completed in consultation and collaboration with all five Local Authorities, and been informed by a broad ranging consultation exercise across all stakeholder groups.</p>

6. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Wellbeing Goals	Does the proposal maximise council's contribution to the Well-being Goals and how?
<p>A Prosperous Wales <i>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work</i></p>	<p>Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people generates wealth and provides jobs The plan will deliver a wide range of school improvement services to all schools (all key stages, including all through schools and special schools), pupil referral units and funded non-maintained nursery settings on behalf of each LA. This will contribute, through schools and partners in the Local Authority to a skilled and well-educated population.</p> <p>High quality education is a fundamental of ensuring future local and national prosperity through the provision of an informed and well-educated workforce and society. The Local Authority's statutory role to support, monitor and evaluate school performance and the quality of provision is essential.</p>
<p>A Resilient Wales <i>A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for climate change)</i></p>	<p>Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change) n/a</p>
<p>A Healthier Wales <i>A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood</i></p>	<p>People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and health impacts are understood The EAS has placed wellbeing at the forefront of its work and will continue to provide a range of professional learning to schools and settings that has provided support to the social and emotional needs of the workforce and learners.</p>
<p>A More Equal Wales <i>A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances)</i></p>	<p>People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances. This includes the protected characteristics listed in Q2 above. Also consider the cumulative impacts. The plan supports the development of strategies in schools that support equity and equality, including continuing to provide support to school leaders on the identification and support for specific groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners including those who have been disproportionality affected by school closures.</p>

Well-being Goals	Does the proposal maximise our contribution to the Well-being Goal and how?
A Wales of Cohesive Communities <i>Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities</i>	Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected. n/a
A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language <i>A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation</i>	Culture, heritage and the Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to participate in sport, art and recreation. All schools are required to promote Welsh culture and heritage through the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and to ensure that pupils are able to learn and practice the Welsh Language. Support for both is a key strand of the business plan.
A Globally Responsible Wales <i>A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being</i>	Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental well-being. Ensuring high quality education is fundamental to securing the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of future generations. The Business Plan focuses support for all schools appropriately schools. The school curriculum includes focus on social, environmental and cultural well-being, and these aspects are support as part of the plan.

7. Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards

(The Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Councils to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact a proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and ensuring the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language). Whilst not bound by this standard the EAS Welsh Language Policy explains how this duty is complied with to the same level.

Requirement	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts on the following and how?	If there are negative impacts how will these be mitigated?	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Links with Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy and Local Authority's Welsh Language Strategies	The EAS has an updated (September 2021) Welsh Language Policy in place and Welsh language support for schools development of the language is included in the plan.	Positive	EAS Welsh Language Policy (Sept 2021) EAS Welsh Language Strategy included within the Business Plan (2022-2025)
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards	Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy	Positive	Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work / community	Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy. All materials for schools are bilingual.	Positive	Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language e.g. staff, residents and visitors	Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy. All materials for schools are bilingual, and all schools / governors have opportunity for a response by a Welsh speaking member of staff where requested.	Positive	Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey

<p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language</p>	<p>Promoted through the EAS Welsh Language Policy. All materials for schools are bilingual, and all schools / governors have opportunity for a response by a Welsh speaking member of staff where requested.</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Compliance with the policy Section within the EAS Annual Headteacher / other staff stakeholder survey</p>
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7a. Having considered the impacts above, how has the proposal been developed so that there are positive effects, or increased positive effects on (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

The EAS Welsh Language Policy (Updated September 2021) describes in full the ways in which the EAS complies with the Welsh Language Measure (2015), including accesses to all materials bilingually, actively promotes the use of the language and offers an ever a range of services and support through the medium of Welsh for those who require them.

8. Data and Information
(What data or other evidence has been used to inform the development of the proposal? Evidence may include the outcome of previous consultations, existing databases, pilot projects, review of customer complaints and compliments and or other service user feedback, national and regional data, academic publications and consultants' reports etc.)

<p>Data/evidence <i>(Please provide link to report if appropriate)</i></p>	<p>Key relevant findings</p>	<p>How has the data/evidence informed this proposal?</p>
<p>What data / evidence was used? Provide links to any reports if appropriate e.g. Household Survey 2017</p> <p>Please note that a mid-year evaluation of the current revised Covid Business Plan (2020/21) has been submitted to each of the EAS governance groups and has been available for local authorities to share as appropriate within their own democratic processes.</p>	<p>What were the key findings? What did the data / evidence used tell you?</p> <p>A full analysis of feedback from consultations will be incorporated into the final plan.</p>	<p>How has the data / evidence available helped inform the proposal? Did it support the proposal and how? If the data / evidence didn't support the proposal why was this?</p> <p>The plan has also been informed by a broad range of visioning sessions available for all stakeholders and is informed by a range of stakeholder surveys whose outcomes have been analysed across 2021-2022.</p>

Were there any gaps identified in the evidence and data used to develop this proposal and how will these gaps be filled?
Details of further consultation can be included in Section 9.

Are there any gaps in the existing data and how will you go about filling these gaps?

No

9. Consultation

(In some instances, there is a legal requirement to consult. In others, even where there is no legal obligation, there may be a legitimate expectation from people that a consultation will take place.)

Briefly describe any recent or planned consultations paying particular attention to evidencing the Gunning Principles.

The Business Plan has been through a consultation process. The Consultees are noted below:

- EAS staff
- Directors of Education (within South East Wales) and Diocesan Directors
- Regional Joint Executive Group
- EAS Company Board
- EAS Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
- Individual local authority education scrutiny committees
- All Headteachers from within the region
- All Chairs of Governors from within the region
- School Councils from within the region
- All school based Professional Learning Leads
- EAS Supporting School Trade Union Group (SSTU Group)

When were they consulted did the consultation take place at the formative stage and was adequate time given for consultees to consider and respond?

From October – December 2021

Was sufficient information provided to consultees to allow them to make an informed decision on the proposal?

The full draft Business Plan was shared with all consultees.

What were the key findings?

All feedback has been considered and where appropriate incorporated into the final Business Plan.

How have the consultation findings been taken into account?

All feedback has been considered and where appropriate incorporated into the final Business Plan.

10. Monitoring and Review

<p>How will the implementation and the impact of the proposal be monitored, including implementation of any amendments?</p>	<p>For example, what monitoring will be used? How frequent? There are many ways of capturing and sharing what the EAS does which are exemplified in this model as outputs. The progress on the implementation and impact of the Business Plan will be reported to the Joint Executive Group and Company Board. These reports, as in previous years, will be suitable for scrutiny activity at local authority and national level. In addition, the progress made towards the implementation of key actions will be reported at each meeting of the Joint Executive Group and Company Board. This approach will be aligned to the national changes in the accountability system.</p>
<p>What are the practical arrangements for monitoring?</p>	<p>Bi-monthly meetings of EAS Joint Executive Group, Company Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, all of whom have council representatives. All groups are chaired by an elected member.</p>
<p>How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?</p>	<p>In the same way that this business plan has been informed by previous business plans. Through a comprehensive evaluation and subsequent consultation process.</p>
<p>When is the proposal due to be reviewed?</p>	<p>Bi-monthly internally to governance groups.</p>
<p>Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?</p>	<p>Overall EAS Managing Director supported by broader Senior Leadership Team</p>

11. Recommendation and Reasoning

<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implement proposal with no amendments</p>
<p>Implement proposal taking account of the mitigating actions outlined</p>
<p>Reject the proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality, poverty and socio-economic disadvantage</p>

12. Reason(s) for Recommendation

(Provide below a summary of the Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment.)

The EAS is required to submit an annual overarching regional Business Plan on an annual basis. The proposal is for cabinet to approve the business plan (which commenced on 1 April 2022, following consultation from January to early March) prior to submission to Welsh Government.

The plan provides support for school improvement services directly to schools across the region. The plan does not include changes to the services, or delivery methods for any particular group or groups. It is therefore at least neutral in its impact with many positive benefits, particularly in relation to wellbeing goals and support for disadvantaged learners.

13. Version Control

(The IIA should be used in the early stages of the proposal development process. The IIA can be strengthened as time progresses to help shape the proposal. The Version Control section will act as an audit trail to evidence how the IIA has been developed over time)

Version No.	Author	Brief description of the amendments/update	Revision Date
1	Edward Pryce		13/1/2022

Integrated Impact Assessment Author

Name:	Edward Pryce
Job Title:	Assistant Director – Policy and Strategy
Date:	13/1/2022

EAS SMT Approval

Name:	Geraint Willington		
Job Title:	Director		
Signature:		Date:	13/1/2022

Agenda Item 6

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **Wednesday 16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2023/24**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Joanne Collins, Executive Member Education**
Report Submitted by: **Corporate Director of Education – Lynn Phillips**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
✓	17.02.22	01.03.22			15.03.22	16.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to outline the outcome of the annual consultation process, in line with the revised draft of the Blaenau Gwent Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2023/24. Executive Committee are asked to provide their views and comments on the document in preparation for the 2023/24 admission round, prior to its determination and publication on the 15th April 2022.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Welsh Government's School Admissions Code (2013) dictates that Councils must review their admissions policies annually for consultation and publication by April 15th in the academic year preceding the admissions round. Blaenau Gwent School Admissions Policy outlines the arrangements, criteria and relevant legislation that underpin school admission processes and methodology, and has been drafted in line with the aforementioned Code, along with the Admissions Appeals Code (2013). The Admissions Authority must ensure that the following information is provided during the consultation process:

- 2.2
- i) The admission numbers for each school
 - ii) Application procedures and the timetable for the admission process
 - iii) The criteria to be applied to applications in the event that there are more applications than places for a school
 - iv) Arrangements for waiting lists and how they operate
 - v) Arrangements for the processing of late applications
 - vi) Details of how parents will be notified of a decision on their application, as well as appeal procedures should their application be unsuccessful

- 2.3 The primary changes (detailed in red within **Appendix 1**) to the policy document for the 2023/24 academic session are as follows:

- Updated consultation and application details;
- A review of the nursery, primary and secondary admission numbers in line with the annual capacity review process, which considers changes to the configuration of teaching and learning environments.

This process is carried out in line with the Welsh Government Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales Guidance (2011). The final agreed capacity calculations are then used to inform admission numbers detailed with the policy document;

- A review of the dates for the admission round(s), associated processing and offer deadlines;
- A review of the admissions appeals for primary and secondary school places. This is due to the Welsh Government introducing legislation which temporarily relaxed the requirements relating to admission appeals, in order to allow appeals to take place despite the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus pandemic;
- Changes to terminology in line with ALN reform;
- A section was added to the policy, highlighting the arrangements for:
 - Children of UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants
 - Children housed via domestic violence services
 - Gypsy and traveller children
- Cylch Meithrin Brynithel have been added to the policy in line with their early year's education provider status; and,
- Updates as requested by consultees (detailed below).

2.4 The draft Blaenau Gwent Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education (2023/24, please refer to **Appendix 1** for the policy document), was distributed to relevant consultees as outlined within Welsh Government's School Admissions Code (2013, pages 6-7) and detailed on page 2 of the appended policy consultation document. The consultation period commenced on Monday 21st January 2022 and concluded on Friday 11th February 2022. During the consultation period, 3 responses were received as follows:

- Glanhwy Primary School made a request for the Nursery intake timings to reduce to support and improve early language skills. The Admissions Authority explained to the consultee that the policy is developed in line with the framework detailed within the Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013) paragraph 2.57 that states that Local authorities in Wales are under a duty to secure sufficient provision of nursery places for their area for children in the term following their third birthday. Therefore, there is limited flexibility in terms of what can be changed in respect of the nursery intake.
- St Mary's R.C. Primary School requested that the policy was updated to reflect the changes they have made in offering full-time nursery places to all pupils e.g. both rising 3's and nursery pupils – the policy was amended on Page 4 to reflect this.
- Cwm Primary School asked that the processes around statemented pupils are reviewed – the policy reflects the process, but was strengthened to include more information on excepted pupil status.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 This report will be considered by the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 15th March 2022, and any feedback will be provided verbally to the Executive Committee.

- 3.2 **Option 1:** Members to consider and agree the policy document; or,
- Option 2:** Members to consider the policy document and provide comments relating to improvements that can be made in consideration of the publication date (15th April 2021).
4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 In accordance with the Welsh Government's School Admissions and Admission Appeals Code (2013), there is a statutory requirement upon the Council to determine and publish their admissions arrangements annually by the 15th April, the year preceding the admissions round to which they apply.
- 4.2 Education is a priority in the Council's Corporate Plan of which the planning of school places, is an essential component.
5. **Implications Against Each Option**
- 5.1 **Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)**
There are no direct budget implications associated with this report.
- 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**
There is a risk that Council will not be compliant with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013), if the policy is not approved and published by the 15th April 2022. The timeline for approval take account of the publication requirements and dates.
- 5.3 **Legal**
The Council are legally required to prepare, implement and update accessibility strategies for all schools for which they are the responsible body.
- 5.4 **Human Resources**
There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.
- 5.4.1 The Schools Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2022/23 has been developed by the Education Transformation team, who oversee implementation and reviews of the policy within Blaenau Gwent.
- 5.4.2 The Corporate Director, supported by Wider Corporate Leadership Team, will have a key role in ensuring the key staff-related actions are effectively delivered.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**
Please refer to **Appendix 2**, for a summary of the 2021/22 Admissions Round. The Council are presently implementing the 2022/23 policy.

- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
The public can expect a fair and equitable admissions process for all pupils in accessing education, and where possible place allocation in line with parent/pupil preference.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
Stakeholders and end user needs and engagement are of paramount importance and a key focus of both the policy development, and ongoing admissions process. The Policy is subject to consultation on an annual basis, in line with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013). In addition, the admission arrangements and forms are developed in consultation with key stakeholders including: schools, partners, governing bodies, parents etc.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
The admissions process contributes to effective pupil place planning and management, ensuring that there are sufficient pupil places and promoting access to education for all Blaenau Gwent pupils.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
The admissions process prevents oversubscription of schools and inequality in line with access to education.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
The Admissions Authority works with other internal admission authorities i.e. the faith and foundation schools, along with external admission authorities within the region and partners such as Social Services, to ensure that there are sufficient arrangements and pupil places for Blaenau Gwent Schools. Also, supporting effective appeal, capacity assessment, childcare offer and other associated processes. The Blaenau Gwent Admission Forum which is comprised of school, council, governor and other service representatives; oversee application of the policy, procedures and compliance with the Welsh Government School Admissions and Admission Appeals Codes (2013).
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
The Blaenau Gwent School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education is aligned to early year's education, pupil place planning, school organisation, the work of social services, planning in line with housing developments etc. Service integration is essential to ensure effective policy implementation, whilst also securing appropriate access to education for current and prospective pupils. The Admissions process is monitored and assured by the Admissions Forum, works in accordance with ALN and Managed Move Panels and associated process. Work with Social Services, Health & Safety, Early Years, Health, Occupational etc. is ongoing to ensure effective transition processes are in place.
- 6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**
Any physical works planned and undertaken within education settings are planned in order to take account of decarbonisation and reducing carbon

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

6.9a Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment

A Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment has been carried out in line with the final draft of the policy prior to approval, with the impact overall being neutral.

6.9b. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Screening Assessment (EQIA) has been completed in line with the policy, which determined that there is no negative impact upon the protected characteristics. The policy promotes equality of opportunity for all, with regards to accessing education.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 The Admissions Authority monitors the development and delivery admission round(s) and processes on a weekly basis; reporting the Blaenau Gwent Admissions Forum quarterly, providing monthly data analysis and undertaking annual appraisals in line with the delivery of the admission arrangements, which are reported via Councils political processes.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Draft Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education (2023/24)

Appendix 2 – Annual Admissions Analysis 2021/22

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2023/24

Blaenau Gwent Admission Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education



Consultation Process

In accordance with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013) Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council consults upon its admission arrangements on an annual basis, attempting where possible to mirror the admission round timescales of neighbouring admission authorities. The coordinated admission arrangements will determine the date at which application forms are sent to parents as well as the publication of an agreed closing date (For more information please refer to page 13).

Consultation will commence on Friday 21st January 2022 and conclude at 5 pm on Friday 11th February 2022. The admission arrangements will then be published on 15th April 2022, the year preceding the 2023/2024 admissions round. The Local Authority will ensure that the following information is provided during the consultation process:

- i) Admission numbers for each school
- ii) Application procedures and the timetable for the admission process
- iii) The criteria to be applied to applications in the event that there are more applications than places for a School
- iv) Arrangements for waiting lists and how they operate
- v) Arrangements for the processing of late applications
- vi) Details of how parents will be notified of a decision on their application, as well as appeal procedures should their application be unsuccessful.

The Local Authority will consult with the following parties on its admission arrangements:

Headteachers of relevant Schools:	All headteachers of community Schools in Blaenau Gwent
Governing body of relevant Schools:	All governing bodies of community Schools in Blaenau Gwent
All neighbouring Local Authorities within the area:	Caerphilly County Borough Council Torfaen County Borough Council Monmouthshire County Borough Council Newport City Council
Admission Authorities for all other schools in the area:	All headteachers of voluntary aided schools in Blaenau Gwent All governing bodies of voluntary aided schools in Blaenau Gwent Brynmawr Foundation School All Saints RC Primary School St Marys Church in Wales Primary School St Marys RC Primary School St Joseph's RC Primary School

Blaenau Gwent Proposed Admission Policy for Statutory Education 2023/24

1. Introduction/ Purpose

There is a requirement upon Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council as a directive from Welsh Government, to develop, review and consult upon the Blaenau Gwent School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education, on an annual basis. The purpose of the policy in question is to guide and inform the statutory admissions function within Blaenau Gwent, ensuring equality of opportunity for all current and prospective pupils. ***Please note that the following non-maintained schools and non-maintained early year's education providers are responsible for the development of and governed by their own individual Admissions Policies:**

- Acorns Nursery
- All Saints Roman Catholic Primary School
- Brynmawr Foundation School
- **Cylch Meithrin Brynithel**
- Mrs Tiggywinkles Day Nursery
- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School
- St Mary's Church in Wales Primary School
- St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

The Blaenau Gwent Admissions Policy for Nursery (non-statutory) and Statutory Education has been updated in line with confirmed admission numbers and the dates from the 2022/23 admission round. All other content remains the same. The policy is fully compliant with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013) and School Admissions Appeal Code (2013). This document outlines requirements associated with and guidance relating to pupil admissions and in-year transfers/admissions for nursery, primary, and secondary school place allocation within Blaenau Gwent.

The Welsh Minister for Education and Skills in 2013 outlined the following key considerations in relation to how pupil place allocation in respect of admissions should ensure equality of opportunity:

"The process of starting or transferring between schools can be a time of uncertainty or anxiety; therefore, it is essential that the principles of fairness and openness are applied to all aspects of school admissions. A properly functioning admissions system, that reflects this, can play a vital part in helping to minimise concerns. It is crucial in delivering equality of opportunity."

Minister for Education and Skills (2013)

2. Admission Types

2.1 Nursery Education

The Council provides free part-time nursery education to every child and every child is entitled to a 'rising 3' place from the start of the term following their third birthday, at either school nursery provision or a quality assured early years' education provider.

- Nursery places are in the main offered on a part time basis (am and/or pm sessions which vary in each school throughout the year). Children start attending nursery classes at the age of 3 or 4 years.
- There are three intakes for rising 3 pupils per year as follows:
 - **January**
 - **April**
 - **September**

*Please note that the specific dates for intake change on an annual basis linked to school term dates. These dates are communicated within the Starting Schools Booklet and on nursery application forms, in line with the admission rounds for nursery, reception and secondary school places.

- Some governing bodies offer full-time provision, which is funded directly from the school budget. The nursery entitlement within Blaenau Gwent is part-time which equates to 12.5 hours per/week (2.5 hours per/day), other than the following nursery provisions, which offer:
 - **Blaen y Cwm Primary School - full time rising 3 and nursery places**
 - **Coed y Garn Primary School - full time rising 3 and nursery places**
 - **Rhos y Fedwen Primary School - full time rising 3 and nursery places**
 - **St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School – part-time rising 3 places and full-time nursery places**
 - **St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School - part-time rising 3 places and full-time nursery places**
 - **Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg – full time rising 3 and nursery places**
- The regulations pertaining to nursery education are specific and confirm that: **attending a nursery class does NOT give a child priority for a place in the reception year group. A separate application is required for this purpose.**

2.2 Admission to Primary Education

Children are eligible for admission to school at the start of the school year in which their fifth birthday falls (i.e. 1st September to 31st August inclusive).

It is against the law to prevent your child from accessing education at the start of the school year in which their fifth birthday falls.

The Council must provide education places for the admission of all children in the September following their fifth birthday; however, parents/ guardians or carers have the right to:

- a. request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until the term after the child's fifth birthday; or,
- b. request that their child takes up the place part-time until the term after their fifth birthday.

2.2.1 Allocation of Primary School Places at Abertillery Learning Community

In the case of Abertillery Learning Community Primary Phase, the admission authority (Blaenau Gwent Council) is responsible for placing pupils at the Learning Community. These pupils are then allocated a site within the Learning Community by Abertillery Learning Community Leadership team and Governing Body in line with the following criteria:

1. Siblings in the campus already
2. Catchment area
3. Ensuring each session stays within the agreed teacher to learner ratio

Once the site has been confirmed the notification process is then administered by the admissions authority. This process has been established in accordance with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013) point 2.51 which states:

“Where split site schools are in operation, the admission authority **should** in most cases, apply the admission arrangements as if the school were a single unit. They **should** make it clear to parents that admission applications are made to the school as a whole and not to a particular site. The site that children attend is a matter for the internal organisation of the school. Appeals **cannot** be made against the site allocated”.

The Council's School Organisation Policy (2015), advocates having the right schools, of the right size, in the right places. All school organisation proposals are assessed in line with the Council's admissions and pupil place planning arrangements, to ensure that there is sufficient capacity within Blaenau Gwent Schools to accommodate local pupils.

2.3 Admission to Secondary School

Children/ young people transfer from primary school to secondary school at the beginning of the school year, following their eleventh birthday.

2.3.1 Allocation of Secondary School Places 3-16 at Middle Schools

In the case of both Ebbw Fawr Learning Community and Abertillery Learning Community, **pupils who are on roll in Year 6** at the primary phase will automatically transfer to/ be allocated a place at the secondary phase. In this instance a separate admission application is **not** required. ***Please note all other secondary settings require an application to be made in order for a place to be allocated. When making an application for an alternative secondary school automatic place allocation will be removed from the secondary phase.**

2.4 In-Year Transfers (admission that is requested outside of the normal admission round)

In-year transfer/ admission refers to applications made in-year (during and not prior to the academic year commencing), and outside of the normal admission round, i.e. pupils moving into the borough, wishing to change schools etc. All In-year transfers are dealt with in date order of receipt. Where there are a greater number of applications received than the number of places available, the Council will apply their oversubscription criteria (see page 12) in order to determine place allocation and/or refusal.

Applications are processed within 7-15 working days of receipt, confirmation of a place is proved by the Council, and confirmation of a start date is provided by the school. Where possible the start date provided by the school is within 10 days of place allocation being confirmed.

In the following circumstances pupil allocation will be managed differently to that of a standard transfer request:

- **Complex Admissions** – an admission is considered to be complex, if the needs of the pupil fall outside of the standard admission and hard to place procedures (detailed below). In this case a working group co-ordinated by the Admissions Officer, will be convened in order to address the complex nature of the placement, ensuring that all of the pupils needs can be addressed within an appropriate education setting.
- **Hard to place pupils**– applicants who are considered hard to place, fall into one or more of the categories presented below. The 14 categories cover circumstances and/or needs which would deem or contribute to a learner being considered as hard to place:

- Children who were permanently excluded from their last maintained school placement and are able / ready to integrate to an alternative school;
- Children returning from the criminal justice system (secure estate);
- Child victims of serious crimes (child cruelty, kidnapping, sexual or violent crime, FGM);
- Children who are CLA;
- Children who have been out of education for longer than two months;
- Children with below 50% attendance;
- Children with disabilities or medical conditions which have already impacted on their attendance or participation at school;
- Children of carers, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, children whose parents offend, asylum seekers and refugees who have been in the UK less than two years and need a supported entry to school;
- Homeless children who have been placed in temporary housing;
- Children who are in a refuge due to domestic violence;
- Children of UK service personnel where a change of location ordered by the service leads to a need for a change of school and will have experienced multiple moves;
- Children who have received 10 day exclusions in the last twelve months; and/or,
- Children on the child protection register.

It may not be possible to process complex and hard to place admissions within the target timeframe outlined above. In such cases, the applicant would be informed of any increases to the processing timescales with regards to their application, and the process through which the application will be managed. The Additional Learning Needs Panel, Managed Move Panel, and/ or the Complex Admissions Working Group; would be responsible for managing applications as outlined above (please refer to section 2.6 below for further information on the panel's).

As part of the transfer allocation process, the Council will contact the child or young person's current school to obtain information in order to support and ensure a smooth transition. This information will then be shared with the recipient school in order to make sure that they are equipped to meet the pupils' educational, learning and any other identified needs upon transfer.

It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian or carer to notify the Admissions Officer if they no longer wish to transfer their child to the newly allocated school, as confirmed within the offer letter.

***Please note:**

The admissions authority does not encourage transfers from one local school to another, due to the potential disruption that it causes to all

parties. However, it does recognise that this process may be required in putting the needs of the child and/ or young person first.

Previous research has determined that the transfer process can impinge upon a pupil's educational achievement and success, unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as the transfer being in the best interest of the child/ young person. Transfers are also dependent (as with general admissions), upon place availability at the preferred school. Parents will be encouraged to discuss at length their reasons for wanting to change schools with the school and admissions authority.

Parents should also consider prior to making a transfer request, differences in curriculum offer available at the child's current school and requested recipient school, i.e. the schools may not offer the same subjects at GCSE level.

2.5 Requests for Admission Outside of Chronological Year Group

It is the Council's policy that children are admitted into their chronological year group. It is only in exceptional circumstances that the Council will support admission into a year group that is not within the chronological year. For example, where there is an appropriate evidence base that suggests the chronological year group is not able to meet the needs of the child e.g. on medical grounds, due to ill health, additional learning needs and/ or if a pupil is new to the UK. Evidence of the placement being 'essential' will be required should a placement of this nature be requested.

Applicants submitting requests for admission into a year group that is not the chronological year for the child/ young person, will be given the opportunity to share their reasons for the application with the Council. The headteacher of the preferred school will be consulted during the processing of the application, and their views considered as part of the decision making process.

Parents, guardians or carers who have been refused a place at the preferred school will have a statutory right of appeal against the decision that has been made; however, there is no right of appeal against a decision to refuse a place into a non-chronological year group.

2.6 Managed Moves, Resource Bases, Special School and Complex Placements

The Council has a protocol in place which ensures that children and young people who may benefit from what is called a 'managed move' are able to move schools in an organised and coordinated way, ensuring that their needs are appropriately met. This protocol is called the Managed Move protocol and implemented via the **Additional Learning Needs Panel**. Where appropriate the Admissions Officer will consider the individual circumstances in line with the Welsh Government Admissions Code (2013), and if the school is over subscribed, utilise and implement 'excepted pupil' status (for more information

please see the aforementioned Welsh Government School Admissions Code, 2013, page 27), in order to admit the pupil.

The Council has a number of Resource Base provisions throughout Blaenau Gwent to meet the needs of pupils with complex needs, social emotional and behavioural needs (SEBD) or autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) needs that cannot be met within a mainstream environment.

The Council also has two special schools:

- Pen-Y-Cwm Special School, which caters for children and young people with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties throughout the 3-19 age range.
- River Centre 3-16 Learning Community which caters for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

All placements into resource base and special school provision are agreed and managed by the Additional Learning Needs Panel, which is comprised of representatives from:

- School Admissions;
- the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) team;
- the Education Welfare Service
- Educational Psychology Service; and,
- Headteachers/ Senior Leaders and school ALNCOs as well as other professionals/officers as and when required.

Decisions are made based upon strict criteria to ensure placements are appropriate. Processes are managed by the ALN team to ensure that pupils with additional learning needs are admitted in a timely manner, whilst ensuring that all of their identified needs can be met by the recipient school. All processes are carried out in consultation with the Admissions Officer in order to inform the allocation and planning of school places.

Where an application is received for a pupil in receipt of either a Statement of Educational Need or an Individual Development Plan (IDP), the application is shared with the ALN team, who then consider the associated placement requirements.

The Welsh Government admission code states there are certain categories of children where schools **must** admit and without delay as follows:

Children with Statements of SEN

In general, the admission of children with statements of SEN is covered by the Education Act 1996. Guidance on the admission of children with statements is provided in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales. Consequently, the admissions provisions in the 1998 Act do not generally apply to children with statements of SEN. Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires a maintained school that is named in a statement of SEN to admit the child. Schools cannot refuse to admit even if by doing so they would exceed their admission number.

If a LA has provided a statement for a child with SEN it is responsible for ensuring that the special educational provision is made for the child. The LA may identify a particular school which it considers to be suitable for the child's needs, and name the school in the statement. Admission authorities must be mindful of their duties with regards to Equalities Legislation and guidance on improving the accessibility of schools. If the parent of a child with a statement of SEN wishes to appeal against the school named in the statement, or the fact that no school has been named, the appeal is to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales, not to the admission appeal panel.

In certain cases, pupils may be granted excepted pupil status in compliance with the School Admissions Code, which determines that:

Where certain types of children ("excepted pupils") cannot be provided with education at the school in another infant class in which the limit is not exceeded without relevant measures being taken which would prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources, those children are not to be counted for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not the limit of 30 pupils is exceeded. Excepted children are:

- *Children whose statements of SEN specify that they should be educated at the school concerned, and who were admitted to the school outside a normal admission round.*
- *Children who are looked after by local authorities (looked after children), or who have ceased to be looked after (previously looked after children) as a result of being adopted or being placed with a family or given a special guardian and are admitted to the school outside a normal admission round.*
- *Children initially refused admission to a school, but subsequently offered a place outside a normal admission round by direction of an admission appeal panel, or because the person responsible for making the original decision recognises that an error was made in implementing the school's admission arrangements.*
- *Children admitted outside the normal admission round who:*
 - *the maintaining local authority confirmed cannot gain a place at any other suitable school within a reasonable distance of their home because they have moved into the area outside a normal admission round, or*
- *Children who were admitted to the school outside the normal admission round after which the school has arranged its classes, and after the first day of the school year, the effect of which would mean that the school would have to take a relevant measure if such children were not excepted pupils.*
- *Children of armed forces personnel who are admitted outside the normal admission round.*
- *Children whose twin or other sibling from a multiple birth are admitted as non-excepted pupils, as the final pupil(s) allocated a place before the admission number is reached.*
- *Children who are registered pupils at special schools, but who receive part of their education at a mainstream school.*

- *Children with SEN who are normally educated in a special unit in a mainstream school, who receive part of their lessons in a non-special class*

*Excepted pupils will remain so, once admitted, for the remainder of their time in an infant class or until class numbers fall back and they can be organised to comply with the infant class size limit. For example, because a non-excepted child leaves the class, an additional infant class is created, or an additional teacher is appointed, then that child ceases to be an excepted pupil. Classes **must** be organised so as to comply with the limit wherever possible.*

A complex admission is characterised by the child or young person's needs and or circumstances, being unable to be met within the normal admissions round and general admissions arrangements. Cases characterised as complex often require careful consideration and involvement from a wider network of partners, in order to ensure that the child's educational needs can be met within an appropriate school setting/ placement. Where there is a complex admissions case outside of the remit of the Managed Move protocol and ALN Panel processes, the Admissions Officer will coordinate the development of a working group aligned to the needs of the pupil, in considering the prospective pupil's circumstances and ensuring appropriate school placement. Complex admissions will be managed and processed in accordance with the School Admissions Code (2013). Where appropriate Welsh Government advice may be sought in line with the decision making process.

3. School Admission Criteria

The determination of school admissions differs between Local Authority maintained and non-maintained schools. The faith schools, foundation school, and non-maintained early year's education providers within Blaenau Gwent, maintain their own policies and criteria. These differ to the standardised criteria of the Council. The faith and foundation schools are also responsible for administering their own transfer and appeal procedures. **Applications for pupil places at these schools need to be made directly to the preferred school.** Applications for pupils where a faith or the foundation school is a first preference, should only be submitted to the Councils' Education Transformation team in respect of second and third preference schools that are maintained by Blaenau Gwent. ***Please note that the Council are unable to allocate pupil places within the following non-maintained faith and foundation schools and non-maintained early year's education providers:**

- Acorns Nursery
- All Saints Roman Catholic Primary School
- Brynmawr Foundation School
- **Cylch Meithrin Brynithel**
- Mrs Tiggywinkles Day Nursery
- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School
- St Mary's Church in Wales Primary School

- St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

Additionally, the Council cannot allocate pupil places within schools outside of Blaenau Gwent. Out of county school admissions and placements are managed by the admission authority of the Borough within which they reside, and/ or the schools themselves, when they are not maintained by the Council.

The Council works jointly with the faith, foundation schools and non-maintained early year's education providers; to ensure that all pupils applying either via the schools/settings directly or the Councils processes are allocated a place. Joint monitoring also takes place around transfers and appeals.

Each school has a limit to the number of children that it can accommodate per year group. This limit is called the published admission number (please refer to **Appendix 1** of this document for more information). The admission number takes into account the physical space within the school building relevant to each age group, as determined by the Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales Guidance (2011). There are two figures derived from this formula for primary school admissions, the admission number for nursery and the admission number for reception. The nursery area includes the available space for all pupils who are eligible to attend nursery, which includes rising threes (as detailed within the nursery section above). For those schools that run both morning and afternoon sessions, the admission number is applied to each session, and so can be doubled. For secondary the figure derived indicates the admission number for all year groups. Schools are asked on an annual basis each autumn-term, to confirm their sessional plans etc. for the admission round and capacity calculations, which are then presented within the admissions policy, two years preceding the academic year to which it applies. Schools will then be bound by the admission numbers for primary and secondary school places. In the case of non-statutory nursery admissions, the capacity calculation is advisory based on the guidance detailed above.

In the event of school reorganisation taking place, the admission arrangements will be determined and confirmed as part of the statutory consultation and transition process.

4. How to apply for a School Place in Blaenau Gwent (excluding the Faith and Foundation Schools and non-maintained early year's education providers)

Parents/carers are required to make an application for a school place. Completed forms with supporting evidence are to be returned by the closing date as detailed in Section 6 (below). In order to process an application linked to allocation of a school place, only **one** of the following types of evidence within each category below will be required for submission with the application form:

- **Proof of Residency (copies of one of the following)**
 - Valid driving licence including paper licence

- Council tax bill (for the 2021/22 year)
- Recent child benefit / child tax credit notification, naming the child for whom the application has been made
- Utility bills (within the last three months)
- NHS Medical card
- Proof of Date of birth (**copies of one of the following**)
 - Child's birth certificate
 - NHS medical card
 - Valid passport which displays your child date of birth

Applications to the Council should be made online via the following link:

<https://citizenportal.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/CitizenPortal/en>

In making an online application, applicants will receive immediate confirmation that their application has been submitted, then confirmation of pupil placement will be sent on the offer date. Alternatively, parents can request an application pack from the Admissions team on (01495) 355340 or via the following email address: schooladmissions@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

As previously outlined the faith and foundation schools within Blaenau Gwent have additional criteria linked to their independent status, which needs to be fulfilled in line with the child securing a place. Applications to non-maintained early year's education providers are dealt with directly by the providers concerned.

Where a parent/ guardian or carer does not provide the relevant evidence, the application will be treated as **incomplete** until such time all supporting evidence is received. Consequently, should the supporting information be received after the closing date of the relevant admissions round, then this will render the application **as a 'late' submission**. If the information is not provided upon initial request, the Council will then attempt to chase the parent/ guardian or carer for the information a further **three times only**.

In the case of a double allocation as a result of an administrative error, the Council would need to ensure that adequate places are available and follow the School Admissions Code and oversubscription criteria, in order to meet the 1st preference requested.

In instances where fraud is suspected, or accusations of fraudulent claims have been made, an investigation will take place. Places may be withdrawn if it is discovered that parents/ guardians or carers have knowingly provided false information in order to obtain the advantage of a particular school place.

Information provided within the application in respect of additional learning needs, will require further consultation with the SEN team. This will ensure effective, suitable provision and placement in line with additional educational needs and/ or a successful transition for the pupil.

5. Oversubscription Nursery, Primary and Secondary Criteria for the Normal Round of Admissions

The admissions authority will consider each individual application received by the published closing date. If the number of applications for an individual school is greater than the admission number, the allocation of places will be carried out using the following criteria, which are listed in order of priority below:

i) Children Looked After

Priority to be given to children looked after/previously looked after (children under Local Authority care); following consultation on the appropriateness of the named school.

Children in care means children who are in care of a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 Children Act 1989.

ii) Catchment School

Children who live in the catchment area of the school on or before the published closing date.

iii) Social/Medical

Children who the Authority accepts have an exceptional medical or social need for a place at one specific school. Applications will only be considered under this category if they are supported by a medical consultant's report. The information must specify the medical advantage of the child attending the preferred school. Please note that reports from family doctors are NOT accepted for this purpose.

iv) Brother or Sister

Children who will have a brother or sister at the school to which the parent is applying, after the date of admission, will be given a higher priority than those who do not. Please note however, that having a sibling at the school does not guarantee admission for any other children in the family. Where there is more than one such case, priority will be given to those children closest in age to the sibling already attending the preferred school as of the admission date. Brothers and sisters whether half, full, step or foster will be considered relevant where living in the same household.

v) Distance

Children living closest to the preferred school measured by the shortest recognised permitted walking route between the pupils' front door of the home and school gate using a digital mapping system.

It should be noted that a child with a statement of special educational need or equivalent (i.e. individual development plan) which names a specific school, will be admitted in accordance with Section 343 of the Education Act 1996.

6. Deciding Factors associated with prioritising Admissions

In the event of oversubscription and/or the requirement to prioritise admission based on distance, places will be allocated on the basis of distance between the shortest recognised walking route between the pupils' front door of the home and the main school gate. Distance is calculated using a digital mapping system. Children living closest to the school are given the highest priority.

7. Shared residency

In the event that the residency of a child is shared between two parents, the address where the child concerned resides for the majority of the school week will be used for allocation purposes. This is the address that should be declared on the application.

However, if the residency with both parents during the school week is equal, the address for where the child benefit is paid will be used for allocation purposes.

8. Person making the application form

Only persons holding parental responsibility for the named child are able to make an application and they will be required to make a declaration to this effect as part of the application process. Ordinarily it is expected that this person resides at the same address as the child and is referred to as the parent for admission purposes.

Where parental responsibility is equally shared, the Council will ask the child's parents to determine which parent should submit the application.

It is expected that parents will also agree on school preferences for a child before an application is made. The Council is not in a position to intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.

If parents cannot agree and neither has obtained a court order stating who should be making the application/what the preference should be, the Council will accept an application from the parent in receipt of Child Benefit for the child.

9. Multiple births

In the case of multiple births relating to a single family, if only one place is available at the school and the second child who qualifies for a place is a

sibling, the school will exceed their published admission number to accommodate both pupils.

10. **Timeframe for Processing Admissions as Part of the 2023/24 Admission Round**

Nursery

For places to be allocated in spring summer and autumn term of 2023;

Admission round commences on	5 th September 2022
Closing date for applications	5pm on 14 th October 2022
Offer date	21 st November 2022

Reception

Admission round commences on	9 th January 2023
Closing date for applications	5pm on 27 th February 2022
Offer date	24 th April 2022

Secondary

Admission round commences on	26 th September 2022
Closing date for applications	5pm on 21 st November 2022
Offer date	1 st March 2023

11. **Arrangements with Neighbouring Admissions Authorities and Neighbouring Local Authorities**

If you are a Blaenau Gwent resident and wish to apply to schools which are situated in Merthyr, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Caerphilly or Powys you are required to apply to Blaenau Gwent, either on line or via paper copy and we will liaise with the relevant Authority.

12. **Late Applications**

Applications received '**after the closing date**' will be classed as late. These will be considered as a secondary priority to applications received on time. Incomplete applications and those without relevant supporting evidence will also be considered as late, if the information requested is not received by the closing date for admission round to which the application relates.

Late applicants are unlikely to be offered a place at their preferred school, due to places being allocated to on-time applicants, particularly where there are high levels of demand.

13. **Change of Preferences**

Should a parent/guardian or carer wish to change their preference, they will need to do so in writing. Letters expressing a change of preference are to be

directed to the admission authority. Any request of a change in preference received after the closing date will be treated as a late application.

14. Waiting Lists

Following the allocation of places during the normal admission round, children will remain on the waiting list for their preferred school until 30th September the following academic year. Thereafter, parents/ guardians or carers will be required to make a new application for admission. If additional places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria. **Waiting lists do not give priority to children based on the date the application was added to the list.**

15. Children of UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants (including diplomats).

Families of UK personnel and other Crown Servants are subject to frequent movement within the UK and from abroad, often at relatively short notice. School places should be allocated to children and their families in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence(MOD) or Foreign or Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a return date and confirmation of the new address wherever possible.

16. Children Housed via Domestic Violence Services and Organisations

Children temporarily housed under the protection of approved Domestic Violence agencies will be admitted as a priority to the catchment school if the application form is accompanied by an official letter from the relevant agency.

17. Gypsy and Traveller Children

The Council is obliged, by statute, to ensure that all children of compulsory school age receive education that is appropriate to their age, abilities and any special educational needs, and promotes high standards in the provision of education and the welfare of children. These obligations apply to all children whether they are permanent residents in the area.

18. Notifying Parents, Guardians or Carers of the Outcome of the Application

The Council will inform parents/ guardians or carers of the outcome of their application on the published offer date (please refer to pages 13 and 14 for more information). If the application is rejected, parents will receive written confirmation informing them of the outcome and will also be provided with the 'Appeals Guidance for Parents' document, which provides details of the appeals procedure. As part of the refusal letter the Council will allocate a place at the 2nd or 3rd preference school, if a 2nd and/or 3rd preference has been indicated within the application. A place will be allocated at the next nearest available school, should all preferences be unavailable or if an alternative preference has not been specified.

19. Admission Appeals for Primary and Secondary School Places

The Council endeavours to fulfil parental preference wherever possible; however, where there are more applications than places available at a school it is not always possible to fulfil parent preference.

The 1996 Education Act provides parents with an opportunity to appeal against the decision of a Local Authority in the matter of **statutory** school admissions - ***please note appeals cannot be made for non-statutory nursery admissions**. The appeal will be heard before and considered by an independent appeal panel.

Post receipt of the offer letter detailing the outcome of an application, should a parent/ guardian or carer wish to appeal against the decision of the admissions authority, they will need to complete the form issued with the letter and return it to the:

Head of Law and Standards,
General Offices,
Steelworks Road,
Ebbw Vale,
Blaenau Gwent.
NP23 6DN

Parents will have 10 working days to submit an appeal and their appeal will be heard within 30 school days from the specific closing date indicated within the refusal letter.

The Minister has given his approval for officials to issue instructions for amendments regulations that will extend the temporary amendments for another year. This means the following temporary arrangements will be in force until 30 September 2022.

- Put beyond doubt that appeals do not have to take place face-to-face and expressly provide the flexibility to meet virtually or by telephone.
- Disapply the normal requirements relating to the venue for admission appeals where they are happening remotely or on paper instead of in person.
- Relax the rules with regard to what happens if one of the members of a panel of three withdraws (temporarily or permanently) to make it permissible for the panel to continue with and conclude the appeal as a panel of two.

The new amendment regulations are expected to be laid to the Senedd in early September. All going well, the amendments regulations will come into force from 29 September 2021, a day before the current amendments regulations are due to cease. This will ensure a smooth continuation of the temporary arrangements.

Once the new regulations come into force, updated guidance will be published to support admission authorities and local authorities in carrying out admission appeals over the year.

The regulations aim to support continuity within the appeals process, allowing appeal panels to complete applications received during the admission round.

20. Home to School and Post 16 Transports

Blaenau Gwent Council will provide free transport for children attending their nearest suitable school, where the distance from home to school is over the specified walking distance detailed below:

- more than 1.5 miles from home for children aged under 8 years but of statutory school age; and,
- more than 2 miles from home for children aged 8 years and over.

Distances are measured by using the Council's Digital Information Mapping System, to determine the shortest available safe walking route between the home address and the main gate of the school to be attended.

Parents are able to choose an English-medium, Welsh-medium or a denominational school for their child. The child will qualify for home to school transport to the appropriate catchment area of the school. When the catchment area school is full and unable to admit a pupil, free transport will be provided to the next nearest available school that has room to take the child, as long as the home is 1.5 miles or more away from the school for pupils under the age of 8 years, or 2 miles for pupils aged 8 and over.

The provision of free school transport will be arranged to coincide with the start and end of the normal school day and shall be provided during the school term time. Home to School transport is not provided for breakfast clubs, after school clubs or summer schools. Transport will be provided from pick-up points at approved bus stops on the nearest public transport route to the learner's home, where possible.

21. Post 16 Travel

All students living in Blaenau Gwent will be provided with a discounted bus ticket or travel grant to the Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone, Ebbw Vale Campus as their designated Post 16 provider; or, the nearest institution where their course is available depending on the following criteria:

- students must be between the ages of 16 to 19 (under 19 prior to the 1st September of the commencement of their course) to qualify;
- students shall reside in the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent;
- students must reside 2 miles or over (nearest walking distance) from their nearest college campus; and, the students should attend a full time course which requires attendance of 16 or more hours per week or a minimum 4 days attendance per week at the institution.

Students and pupils aged 19 or over at the commencement of the course are not eligible for travel assistance from the Council and in these circumstances they are advised to contact their respective college for details of any available transport provision.

All transport for Post 16 pupils including those with additional learning needs is agreed on a case by case basis by the SEN team in consultation with the Transport Officer. The Council may provide transport up to a maximum of three years.

22. Travel Grant

The Council's present policy is to provide travel assistance to those who meet the criteria up to a maximum of £150 per academic session. This will be paid termly as follows: £50 autumn, £50 spring and £50 summer.

23. Welsh Medium / Faith Education

Pupils who wish to undertake their Post 16 studies via the medium of Welsh or attend a Faith school are required to travel further distances for their education, with no direct public service bus routes. These students have the opportunity to utilise the existing contract bus provision in lieu of the Travel Grant, if appropriate.

All awarded transport will be reviewed periodically. For more detailed information on home to school and post 16 transport, along with details on how to apply, please refer to the Blaenau Gwent Home to School and Post 16 Transport Policy (2021/22) via the following link: <https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/schools-learning/school-transport/>

Appendix 1 – Published Admission Numbers

***Please note in order to apply for a place in one of the following schools/early years' education providers, an application will need to be made directly to the school of your choice:**

- Acorns Nursery
- All Saints Roman Catholic Primary School
- Brynmawr Foundation School
- **Cylch Meithrin Brynithel**
- Mrs Tiggywinkles Day Nursery
- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School
- St Mary's Church in Wales Primary School
- St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

Published Admission Numbers for 2022/23

School *The school highlighted in red are responsible for their own admission arrangements and as such, applications need to be submitted directly to the school.	Nursery Admission Number	Session	Statutory Admission Number (Reception or Year 7)
All Saints R.C. Primary School	30	am	26
Beaufort Hill Primary School	30	am	30
Blaen y Cwm Primary School	26	full-time	38
Brynbach Primary School	30	am	30
Coed y Garn Primary School	30	full-time	30
Cwm Primary School	52	am	30
	52	pm	
Deighton Primary School	30	am	30
	30	pm	
Georgetown Primary School	30	am	60
	30	pm	
Glanhowy Primary School	65	am	42
	65	pm	
Glyncoed Primary School	52	am	45
	52	pm	
Rhos y Fedwen Primary School	26	full-time	25

St. Illtyd's Primary School	30	am	30
St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School	41	full-time	15
St. Mary's Church-in-Wales Primary School	30	am	30
St. Mary's R.C Primary School	53	full-time	30
Sofrydd Primary School	19	am	23
	19	pm	
Willowtown Primary School	30	am	60
	30	pm	
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg	60	full-time	30
Ystruth Primary School	37	am	42
	37	pm	

	Nursery Admission Number	Session	Statutory Admission Number (Reception or Year 7)
<u>Secondary School</u>			
Brynmawr Foundation School			151
Tredegar Comprehensive School			152
<u>Middle School</u>			
Abertillery Learning Community – Primary Phase	141	-	140
Abertillery Learning Community – Secondary Phase			150
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community - Primary Phase	58	am	40
Ebbw Fawr Learning Community - Secondary Phase			238

Appendix 2 - Blaenau Gwent Schools Catchment Area Overview Map



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Analysis:

School Admissions – 2021/22 Admissions Round Analysis

The Admissions team have successfully implemented the School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2021/22, which is evidenced by the following assessment:

- 100% of applications were processed within 48 hours and 100% of standard in-year transfer requests were processed within 15 days of receipt in accordance with the WG School Admissions Code (2013) and Blaenau Gwent's School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2020/21.
- Transfer rates have remained steady over the last 4 academic sessions, from 343 in 2017/18 and then a slight increase of 355 in 2018/19. The rate of 229 in 2019/2020 - Figures were much lower due to the pandemic. The transfer rates increased slightly in 2020/2021 to 295 with the primary reason for in-year transfer being inward migration of families into the Blaenau Gwent area.
- Complex transfers were received on a weekly basis and referred to the SEN team for consideration at ALN Panel.
- The admissions officer has attended all ALN Panel meetings and/ or liaised directly with the SEN team on pupil placement.
- No appeals were held for the reception or secondary admission rounds during the summer period 2021.
- The numbers of in-time applications received for pupils who applied for a school place during the 2021/22 admission round, increased for nursery, reception and secondary when compared to 2020/21. Please refer to Figure 1 below for the in-time percentage comparisons:

Figure 1: In-time Application (%)

Percentage of In-time Applications 2019/20	Percentage of In-time Applications 2020/21	Percentage of In-time Applications 2021/22
Nursery – 51%	Nursery – 60%	Nursery – 71%
Reception – 74%	Reception – 75%	Reception – 83%
Secondary – 89%	Secondary – 79%	Secondary – 80%

- The Council were able to sustain 100% of parental first preferences for a 4-year period in respect of both nursery and secondary place allocation, and 99% of first preferences were met for the reception year group, however, for the 2021/2022 academic year 100% of first preferences have now been met (please refer to **Figure 2** below). This is attributable to the effective monitoring and management of school capacities and pupil places along with the continued achievement of surplus place reduction, whereby school admission numbers for primary schools with a high surplus have been reduced over the last year and in turn the admission number has also been reduced.
- First preferences met for late applications are also extremely high due to effective pupil place management processes

Figure 2: First Preferences Met %

% of First Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2018/19	% of First Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2019/20	% of First Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2020/21	% of First Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2021/22
Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 100%
Reception – 99%	Reception – 99%	Reception – 99%	Reception – 100%
Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%
% of First Preferences Met for Late Applications 2018/19	% of First Preferences Met for Late Applications 2019/20	% of First Preferences Met for Late Applications 2020/21	% of First Preferences Met for Late Applications 2021/22
Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 99%	Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 100%
Reception – 96%	Reception – 99%	Reception – 100%	Reception – 100%
Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 99%

The Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013) dictates that Councils must review their admissions policies annually for consultation and publication by April 15th in the academic year preceding the admissions round. Blaenau Gwent School Admissions Policy outlines the arrangements, criteria and relevant legislation that underpin school admission processes and methodology. The primary changes to the policy document for the 2021/22 academic session were as follows:

- A review of the nursery, primary and secondary admission numbers in line with the annual capacity review. This is an annual process which reviews changes to school plans and physical space within the school, which affect the provision of teaching and learning. This is carried out in line with the Welsh Government Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales Guidance (2011). The final agreed capacity calculations are then used to inform admission numbers.
- A review of the dates for the admission round(s), associated processing and offer deadlines.

The Admissions Policy for 2022/23 was consulted upon and published in line with the Welsh Government's deadline (April 2021).

We went fully online for the 2021/2022 admission rounds using AVABUS (My council services) – with parents being fully supported by the team in their application process and submission.

The Admissions Forum met three times over the last year (September 2020 – August 2021).

The Forum has sustained a good level of attendance at each meeting. The Forum has worked closely with the Education Transformation team in order to:

- improve school and Council awareness and partnership approaches in respect of the implementation and monitoring of the admissions round;
- improve tracking processes from live birth to secondary education (whilst ensuring alignment with Inclusion);
- address issues i.e. ensure that when in-year transfers are allocated a place a start date is offered within 10 days; and,
- explore a wider ranging data set i.e. Flying Start, placement outside of the chronological year group, home tuition and attendance data etc. Ensuring that there is a holistic approach to the management of pupil places.

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Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Disabled Adaptations – Policy Amendment Proposal to remove means-test**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. J. Wilkins, Executive Member for Environment**
Report Submitted by: **Mark Congreve & David Thompson – 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)
8/2/22	10/2/22	01.03.22			28/2/22	16/3/22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek members' views relating to a proposed policy amendment that will remove the current means test for grants for disabled adaptations in Blaenau Gwent.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Minister for Housing & Local Government has written to local government advising the removal of the means-test for small and medium disabled adaptations (see Appendix 1). This decision by Welsh Government was made following a report by the Wales Audit Office and research by the Wales Centre for Public Policy. To mitigate against the likely additional costs of this change, Welsh Government has provided some additional annual capital funding.

- 2.2 In general, Welsh Government classifies adaptations as follows:

- i. Small – e.g. Grab rails, hand rails, key safes etc
- ii. Medium – e.g. Stair-lifts, Bathroom adaptations.
- iii. Large – Through-floor lift, significant changes to internal arrangements, building an extension.

For full definitions, see Appendix 2.

- 2.3 **Current Position in Blaenau Gwent.** The Authority has an excellent delivery record in relation to adaptations for the disabled.

- 2.3.1 **Small Adaptations.** There is no policy change needed here as small works have never been subject to a means-test and are delivered in partnership with Care & Repair under long-standing arrangements utilising funding from Social Services, the Council's ENABLE fund and direct funding from Welsh Government. Current Volume – circa 700-1,000 cases per annum.

- 2.3.2 **Medium Adaptations.** These are delivered directly by way of mandatory means tested Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) (funded via Council Capital programme), and in partnership with Care & Repair (for Over 60s on qualifying benefits – via the Council's ENABLE fund. Current volumes – 54-60 cases per annum.

2.3.3 **Large Adaptations.** These are delivered directly by way of mandatory means tested DFGs (funded via Council Capital programme). Currently 1-2 cases per annum.

2.4 DFGs are mandatory in that they are delivered in accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996 and, under this legislation, the means test is a legal requirement along with a statutory maximum DFG of £36,000. However, Welsh Government is now advising local government to utilise discretionally powers under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 to remove the means-test element and additional capital funding has been provided to mitigate the likely pressures.

2.9 **Means-test for Large Adaptations.** Whilst the Ministers guidance is to discontinue the means test for small and medium adaptations, further analysis has shown that over the last 3 years, the number for large-scale adaptations has been low (2 cases), both of which have been subject to means-test with a nil contribution. A further look back – to (2017/18) also shows only 2 cases where there were means-tested contributions (total £3K) towards large-scale works. As such, for consistency, Officers are also suggesting the removal of the means-test for large scale adaptations in Blaenau Gwent. However, the statutory maximum DFG would still apply (£36k). The means-test for DFGs for children (which are mostly medium or large scale) was discontinued under Welsh legislation several years ago (circa 2007-8).

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1** – That Executive Committee approve the proposed policy amendment that will remove the current means test for grants for disabled adaptations in Blaenau Gwent from April 1st 2022.

3.2 **Option 2** – That Executive Committee does not approve the policy amendment and leave the current policy unchanged.

3.3 Community Services Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 28th February 2022 and agreed by majority vote to support Option 1, above. Corporate Leadership Team has considered this report.

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

4.1 The report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective / objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

Helping people and communities to be healthier and resilient - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.

- 4.2 Local Authorities have statutory duties under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 to deliver mandatory grants and can also offer discretionary assistance through the use of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

What are the likely additional costs? Officers have reviewed relevant service statistics and concluded as follows:

	Table 1 – Estimated average additional costs	Annual £ (est)	Annual £ (est)	Annual £ (est)
1	Additional annual capital costs required due to the removal of the means test (Loss of current contributions)	5,500	5,500	5,500
2	Annual reduction in grants being cancelled (those who apply for financial assistance but drop out once they find that they need to make a contribution).	42,000	42,000	42,000
3	Potential Annual increase in applications from people who would not necessarily have applied for financial assistance due to the means test process being in place. (estimates at 10%, 20%, & 30%)	(10%) 40,300	(20%) 80,600	(30%) 121,000
	Total	87,800	128,100	168,500

- 5.1.1 The table above shows that with a loss of income and new commitments due to grant applications continuing that would have otherwise been cancelled, the Council will need, on average, to fund an additional £47,500 worth of works. What is not clear is the level of unseen demand from those that would not have otherwise applied. Officers have inserted indicative figures for a demand increase of between 10 and 30% (an additional £40k-121k). This will need to be monitored.

- 5.1.2 **Capital Budget Availability.** Under the current approved capital programme up to end March 2024, the DFG allocation is set to reduce from £468k in 21/22 to £200k per annum for 2022/23 and 2025/26.

- 5.1.3 Officers have undertaken an analysis of the current and future budget as a result of the proposals in this report. (For full details, see Appendix 3). The analysis shows that a projected increase in demand of between 10% and 30% is manageable with current budget levels in 2022/23 – (at the end of which favourable variances could be carried forward). However, the budget may come under pressure in 2023/24 leading to a potential adverse variance of between £82k and £243k or higher if demand increases above 30%.

5.1.4 WG has provided additional funding (£46,387 per annum until end 2023/24) as part of the ENABLE scheme to help the Authority mitigate budgetary pressures resulting from the policy change.

5.1.5 To mitigate any ensuing budget pressures in the future, the Authority could consider increasing its capital allocations accordingly and/or make representations to Welsh Government for additional funding (e.g. additional ENABLE funding).

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.2.1 The key risk is an increase in demand leading to delivery challenges and other potential budgetary pressures. This is covered elsewhere in the report.

5.3 ***Legal***

5.3.1 DFGs are mandatory in that they are delivered in accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996 and, under this legislation, the means test is a legal requirement along with a statutory maximum DFG of £36,000. However, Welsh Government is now advising local government to utilise discretionally powers under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 to remove the means-test element and additional capital funding has been provided to mitigate the likely pressures.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

5.4.1 Whilst the removal of the means test will reduce workload pressures in Resources especially, an increase in demand for service will impact Public Protection, Social Services & Business Support. This will need to be monitored with pressures reported accordingly. The majority of Public Protection costs relating to the delivery of this service are recharged to the relevant capital budget.

6. ***Supporting Evidence***

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

See Appendices

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

6.2.1 In 2019 in Wales 22% of the population were disabled (StatsWales, 2019), with the disabled population projected to increase significantly by 2035 (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018). This policy change will help to improve health outcomes and subsequently save money in health and social care by enabling more independent living for longer. Service delivery times could also increase given the reduction in administration processes. Conversely, there is also a risk that waiting lists could significantly increase as demand increases and staffing levels and/or budget availability restricts timely delivery.

6.2.2 Transitional Arrangements. Subject to approval, all on-going applications will be re-assessed accordingly against the new policy. A review of any recent applications aborted due to the means-test will also take place with a view to re-establishing need.

- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
Relevant internal colleagues (Public Protection, Legal and Accountancy, Social Services, Revenues and Benefits) have been consulted on the content of this report. Care & Repair has also been consulted.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
6.4.1 Removal of the means test is a necessary first step in responding to the request from the Minister to adapt policy to ensure that the needs of services users to live independently are met in the short, medium and long term.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
6.5.1 Investment in aids and adaptations maximises the opportunity for people to remain safely in their home for longer and to prevent or minimise care costs, hospital admissions, and a deterioration in independence and quality of life.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
6.6.1 There is currently a Service Level Agreement in place with Care and Repair to deliver grants for people 60+ by utilising the Enable funding to their core client group.
6.6.2 The DFG process involves close partnership working with Public Protection, Social Services, Revenues and Benefits and Business Support on a weekly basis. This will continue if the means test is removed.
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
6.7.1 The removal of the means test will have an impact on working practices within social services and revenues and benefits. It will also contribute to the well-being and regeneration agendas.
- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
6.8.1 All approved contractors will be encouraged to evaluate & to utilise local suppliers, and therefore avoid lengthy distances to source materials which can decrease emissions by reducing fuel usage.
6.8.2 Contractors will also be requested to reuse materials in the first instance as this extends lifetime value of the product. However, when reusing or recycling is not an option, the negative impact on the environment can be lessened by responsible waste management, therefore this will be a requirement for all contractors when carrying out grant aided works.
- 6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***
It could be argued that the DFG means test could be seen as the primary source of inequality in the system and the merits of universal provision as opposed to assessing ability to pay, therefore by removing the means test would make a significant contribution towards achieving equality of outcome.
- 6.9b. ***Equality Impact Assessment***
An initial Equalities Impact Assessment Screening has been carried out and from this no negative impacts were identified. This is not surprising as the

intention of the amended policy is to offer additional assistance and support to older and disabled people by removing the means test for all adaptations.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The impact of the removal of the means test will be monitored by the Managers and by way of relevant reports to the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services, CLT and Scrutiny & Executive Committees, as necessary.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter
- Appendix 2 – Housing Adaptations Service Standards – Definitions of different types of Housing Adaptations
- Appendix 3 – Capital Budget Forecast – 2022/23 & 2023/24

- Web link – Statement by the Minister for Housing and Local Government - <https://gov.wales/written-statement-removing-means-test-small-and-medium-disabled-facilities-grants>
- Web-link – [Regulatory Reform \(Housing Assistance\)\(England & Wales\) Order 2002](#)
- Web link - [Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)



Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives
cc.WLGA

10 March 2021

Dear Colleagues

Removing the means test on small and medium Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)

We know that reducing barriers so disabled people can maintain their independence, safety and good health allows them to continue to live at home with dignity, and it also reduces pressures on our health and social care services. From April 2021 it will be simpler for disabled people to get help with small and medium sized adaptations to their homes as we take measures to remove the means test from small and medium Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG).

DFGs are the main source of help for disabled people in the great majority of households in Wales, those which are owner occupied or in the private rented sector. This is the main way in which those disabled people get help with the most common types of adaptations, such as stair lifts, ramps and downstairs toilet and washing facilities. We must do everything we can to remove barriers so disabled people can maintain their independence, safety and good health. This not only allows them to continue to live at home with dignity, it reduces pressures on our health and social care services.

Our most recent data shows us that small and medium sized adaptations made up the vast majority of DFGs – 1,507 small and 2,214 medium adaptations, compared with just 269 large adaptations. If the requirement to conduct a means test is removed, independent research calculates the cost to local government in Wales would be an additional £238,000, whilst each local authority would save £6,000-£10,000 in annual administration costs. This research by the Wales Centre for Public Policy has been published on their website today.

Local authorities are under statutory duties to provide DFGs to eligible disabled people and this will not change. However, they can use of powers under the Regulatory Reform Order 2002 to make grants without applying a means test. For this reason, I am increasing the Enable grant to local authorities from April 2021 by £400,000, to £4.4 million. This additional grant can be used to meet the capital pressures and address any potential bottlenecks as a result of increased demand. I feel confident that working together with local authorities we can continue to improve access to adaptations for those who need them, as well as reduce waiting times.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales

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

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

The adaptations themselves should continue to be funded from the capital the Welsh Government distributes to local government to meet the cost of DFGs.

We will monitor the impact of this policy over an initial three year period. We will need to collect information about the numbers of applications for DFGs, completion rates and waiting times. We will report on progress annually.

It will be a condition of the Enable grant that local authorities do not means test small and medium DFGs. I expect local authorities to comply for the benefit of disabled people who live in their areas. If, in due course, we find we need to, we do have the option of legislating in the next Senedd.

In relation to the small number of large adaptations carried out each year, I wish to highlight the amended the guidance for the Integrated Care Fund (ICF) capital programme for 2021/22 which I issued in January. Large adaptations are usually only required in complex cases, such as families with disabled children and adults with life-limiting diseases. Resolving the financial issues can be very time consuming, leading to significant and unnecessary continuing distress. Under the amended ICF guidance, Regional Partnership Boards are now able to use their discretion to meet the additional costs of adaptations which cost more than £36,000. I will be monitoring how much use is made of this flexibility over the coming year.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Housing Adaptations Steering Group, including local authority housing officials and the WLGA, for their work in bringing us to a point where we can take such an important step to improving the lives of disabled people in Wales.

Yours sincerely



Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government

Attached: revised Housing Adaptations Service Standards

Housing Adaptations Service Standards

Figure 2 - Definitions of different types of Housing Adaptations

Category	Nature of Work Required	Example of Work	Funding Source
<p>Small Adaptions adaptations are inexpensive items, which can be provided very quickly. It would generally fit into the description of 'immediate falls prevention' or 'urgent for hospital discharge' and can be assessed and installed within days or the same day if urgent. It can be identified by a number of health/ social services/ other appropriately trained staff e.g. RSL staff, Care and Repair Staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor home modification required • Not a specialised solution • No building/planning approval required • Adjustable / Flexible • Simple & Intuitive • Minimal maintenance and/or servicing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grab rails • Stair rails • Small ramps • Accessible taps • Key safes • Mop stick hand rails • Outdoor rails • External / staircase lights • Additional electrical sockets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENABLE • RRAP • RSL Funds • LA own funds • Self-funded
<p>Medium Adaptations anything which is not classed as small or large.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major home modification may be required, but building/planning approval not required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk in shower • Stair lifts • Large ramps • A combination of adaptations installed as one job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENABLE • RSL Funds • LA own funds • Physical Adaptation Grants (PAG) • Disabled Facility Grant (DFG)s • Self-funded
<p>Large Adaptations these are works which will require specialist assessments, statutory approvals and major adaptations to a property such as extensions and through floor lifts. An Occupational Therapists assessment will be required and planning permission may be needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major home modification / structural change required • Specialised / Innovative solutions required • Building / planning approval required • Fixed / permanent / long term • Complex / unfamiliar / requires training & supervision • Solution requires expertise for installation and maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building an extension to provide a downstairs bedroom and/or bathroom • Through floor lift • Significant internal structural modifications e.g. relocate bathroom or kitchen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Facilities Grant • Physical Adaptations Grants • RSL Funds • LA own funds • Self-funded

Appendix 3 - Capital Budget Forecast 2022/23 & 2023/24

<u>10%</u>	<u>22/23</u>
Capital B/Fwd	190,162
Repayments Bfwd	191,428
Capital Programme	200,000
Repayments in year (est)	29,439
ENABLE (less Small adaps)	82,800
ENABLE (WG mitigation)	46,387
Total Funding	740,216
Forecast Salary Costs	133,798
Forecast DFGs (current policy)	282,195
ENABLE (current Policy)	82,800
Removal of Means test (existing demand)	47,500
Total Forecast Expenditure (existing demand)	546,293
Total Carried forward	193,923
Forecast Additonal demand (+10%)	40,300
Total Carried forward (10% Additonal demand)	153,623
<u>10%</u>	<u>23/24</u>
Capital B/Fwd	0
Repayments Bfwd	153,623
Capital Programme	200,000
Repayments in year (est)	27,378
ENABLE current (less Small adaps element)	82,800
ENABLE (WG mitigation)	46,387
Total Funding	510,188
Forecast Salary Costs	139,849
Forecast DFGs (current policy)	282,195
ENABLE (current Policy)	82,800
Removal of Means test (existing demand)	47,500
Forecast Additonal demand continuation (+10%)	40,300
Total Forecast Expenditure	592,644
Total Carried forward	-82,456

<u>20%</u>	<u>22/23</u>
Capital B/Fwd	190,162
Repayments Bfwd	191,428
Capital Programme	200,000
Repayments in year (est)	29,439
ENABLE (less Small adaps)	82,800
ENABLE (WG mitigation)	46,387
Total Funding	740,216
Forecast Salary & other Costs	133,798
Forecast DFGs (current policy)	282,195
ENABLE (current Policy)	82,800
Removal of Means test (existing demand)	47,500
Total Forecast Expenditure (existing demand)	546,293
	193,923
Forecast Additonal demand (+20%)	80,600
Total Carried forward (20% Additonal demand)	113,323
<u>20%</u>	<u>23/24</u>
Capital B/Fwd	0
Repayments Bfwd	113,323
Capital Programme	200,000
Repayments in year (est)	27,378
ENABLE current (less Small adaps element)	82,800
ENABLE (WG mitigation)	46,387
Total Funding	469,888
Forecast Salary Costs	139,849
Forecast DFGs (current policy)	282,195
ENABLE (current Policy)	82,800
Removal of Means test (existing demand)	47,500
Forecast Additonal demand continuation (+20%)	80,600
Total Forecast Expenditure	632,944
Total Carried forward	-163,056

<u>30%</u>	<u>22/23</u>
Capital B/Fwd	190,162
Repayments Bfwd	191,428
Capital Programme	200,000
Repayments in year (est)	29,439
ENABLE (less Small adaps)	82,800
ENABLE (WG mitigation)	46,387
Total Funding	740,216
Forecast Salary & other Costs	133,798
Forecast DFGs (current policy)	282,195
ENABLE (current Policy)	82,800
Removal of Means test (existing demand)	47,500
Total Forecast Expenditure (existing demand)	546,293
	193,923
Forecast Additonal demand (+30%)	121,000
Total Carried forward (30% Additonal demand)	72,923
<u>30%</u>	<u>23/24</u>
Capital B/Fwd	0
Repayments Bfwd	72,923
Capital Programme	200,000
Repayments in year (est)	27,378
ENABLE current (less Small adaps element)	82,800
ENABLE (WG mitigation)	46,387
Total Funding	429,488
Forecast Salary Costs	139,849
Forecast DFGs (current policy)	282,195
ENABLE (current Policy)	82,800
Removal of Means test (existing demand)	47,500
Forecast Additonal demand continuation (+30%)	121,000
Total Forecast Expenditure	673,344
Total Carried forward	-243,856

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Agenda Item 8

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 14.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 11.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Acquisition of Highways Assets at Six Bells Abertillery**
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)
09.03.22	10.03.22	11.03.22				16/03/2022		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Committee with options for the proposed acquisition of highways assets at Six Bells Abertillery.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Council has been approached by a consortium of residents at High Street, Six Bells, Abertillery, requesting the Council consider becoming the freehold owner of land currently within their ownership.

- 2.2 The land in question (see plan appendix 1) was purchased by the consortium from the National Health Service (NHS) in December 2019 to protect the interests of local residents and property owners.

- 2.3 The group would now like to offer the freehold interest for the highways assets at no charge to the Council, to include the following;

1. The lane at the rear of High Street Six Bells
2. Road and lane between High Street and New High Street Six Bells (including the turning area)
3. Pathway from New High Street and Graig Road Six Bells

A detailed site plan is attached at appendix 2

- 2.4 Officers have investigated this request and can confirm that the areas as identified in 2.3 above have already been formally adopted and are currently managed and maintained at the expense of the Council.

- 2.5 Other than any costs for legal fees (for which the group would be prepared to contribute) officers can see no apparent reason why these highways assets could not be formally transferred under freehold to Council ownership as maintenance costs are already being funded directly by the council.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1**

Do nothing

The highways assets will remain in the ownership of the consortium and the Council will continue to fund future maintenance costs.

3.2 **Option 2 (Preferred Option)**

The Council agree to the request and make the necessary arrangements to complete and transfer the freehold interest to the Council.

3.4 **Recommendation**

3.4.1 It is recommended that:

Option 2 is approved and the freehold transfer to the Council is completed through appropriate consultation with the group and the Council's estates section.

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

4.1 **Corporate Priorities**

4.1.1 This report supports the key priorities identified in the Corporate Plan namely – "Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities" in line with the Council's Highways Maintenance Plan (HMP).

4.1.2 This report supports the Corporate Priority to "reinvestment in highways and improvements to the residential network".

4.2 **Well-being plan**

4.2.1 This report supports the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan 2018-2023 by ensuring that having a "Street Scene and Landscape" that is well maintained enhances the perception of the area and can contribute to Blaenau Gwent being a better place to live, visit, invest in and work.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1.1 Option 1

- The consortium could look to sell off the land to a private interest.
- Access to local residential areas could be restricted if an order to extinguish public highway by the landowner was agreed by statutory power.
- An agreement with the landowner would be required if the highway boundary needed to be adjusted.

5.1.2 Option 2

- Should option 2 not be supported then an opportunity may be lost to receive the land/assets and freehold ownership of the land at no cost to the council.
- In the event of a highway status being brought to an end under statutory procedures the land will remain with the Highway Authority to allow development to take place.

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

5.2.1 **Revenue/Capital Costs**

5.2.1.1 The estimated costs associated with the proposed option will be as follows:

- Legal fee Council – (to be undertaken in-house by Estates)
- Legal Fees Consortium – estimated at £2,500

It is proposed at this point that Blaenau Gwent CBC will fund the costs, however, the consortium have offered to make a financial contribution to these costs.

5.2.1.2 The ongoing maintenance costs for the asset following freehold transfer will continue to be the responsibility of the council.

5.3 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.3.1 The risks associated with this report are as follows;

- An opportunity to fully acquire and improve the quality of the highway network will be lost.

5.4 ***Legal***

5.4.1 There will be a requirement to legally transfer the proposed highways assets to the council. The Council's Property Solicitor will be required to liaise with the Consortium's legal representative, review the draft documentation and complete the transfer to the Council.

5.5 ***Human Resources***

5.5.1 There are no direct staffing implications associated with this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

N/A

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

6.2.1 The local community will have surety of access to residential properties for the foreseeable future.

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

6.3.1 Officers have undertaken consultation with local ward members and the local resident consortium concerned who are in full agreement with the transfer proposal.

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

6.4.1 Protecting the residential highway network in Blaenau Gwent is key to ensure sustainability for the future, bringing these highways assets into Council ownership will protect the highway infrastructure and assist in meeting the service requirements of the future.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

6.5.1 Accepting this land from the consortium will prevent the land being sold off to any private concern, thus making a prudent decision to act now rather than later when there may be purchase costs associated with any transfer.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
N/A

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

6.7.1 The highways maintenance team works closely with a number of services in the delivery of maintenance programmes including; education, regeneration and the council's engineering section.

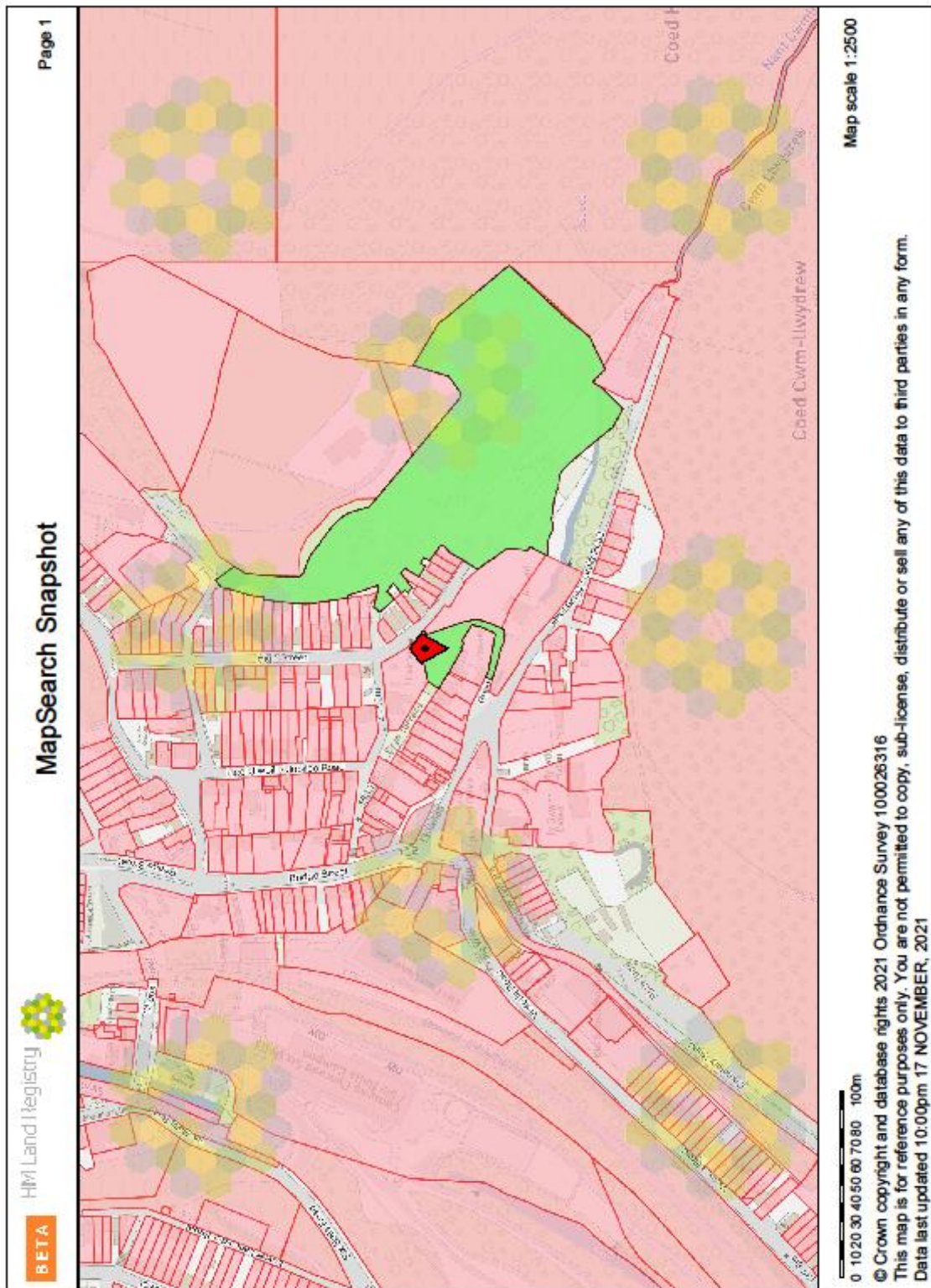
6.8 ***Equal (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***
An EQIA is not relevant to the content of this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

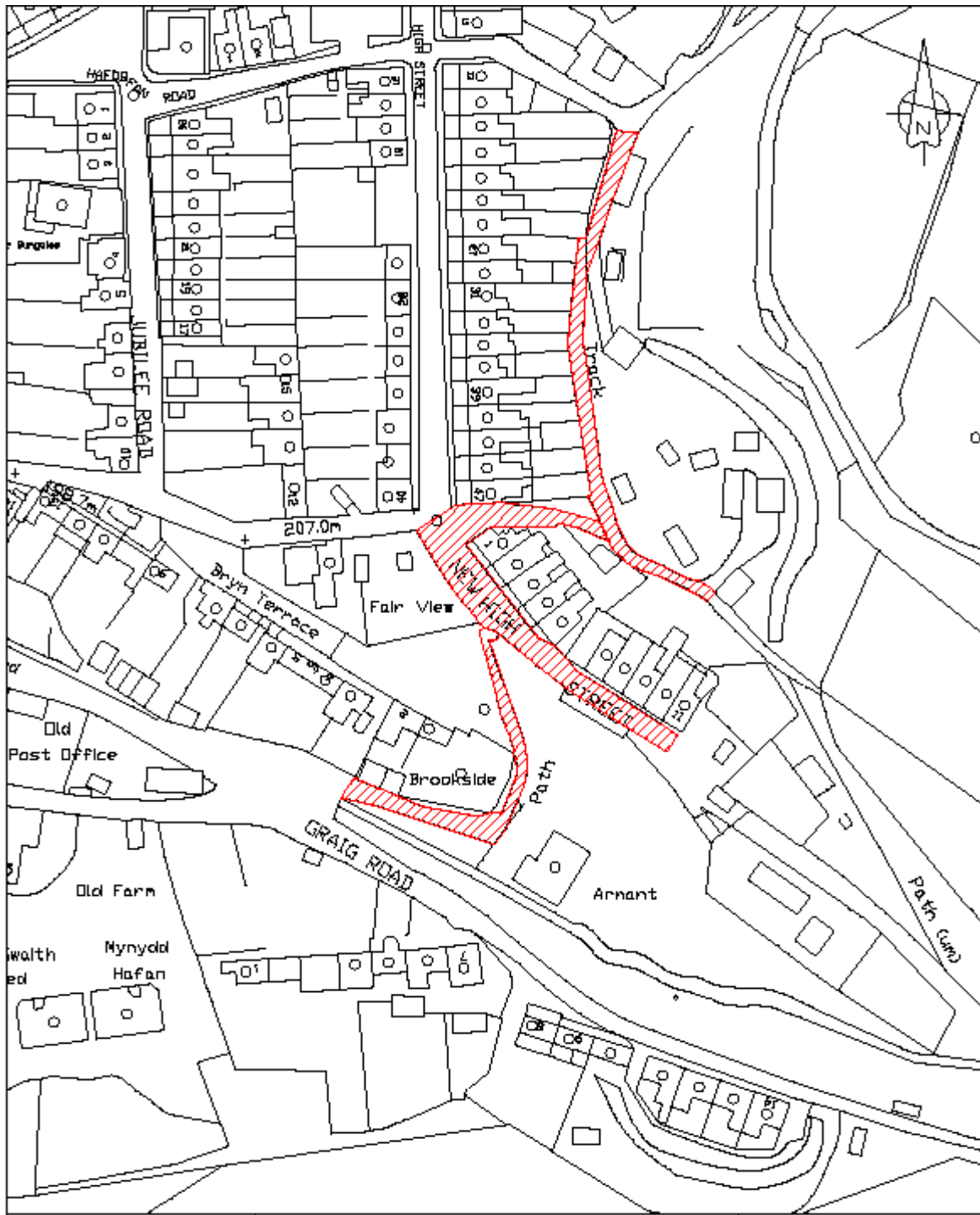
7.1.1 The works will be initiated and monitored in line with any legal requirements and progress can be reported if necessary through scrutiny and executive committees.


Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Land purchased by the Six Bells Resident Consortium
Appendix 2 – Extent of land to be gifted to the council



Land highlighted in green on plan above has been purchased by the consortium from the NHS.



 <p>Blaenau Gwent COUNCIL</p> <p>C. ROGERS B.Sc. (Hons), C.Eng., M.I.C.E., G.M.S., Dip.M. CHIEF TECHNICAL OFFICER ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE CMVC CENTRE MUNICIPAL OFFICES EBBVALE NP23 5XB</p>	Site Location Plan				<u>Co-ordinates:</u>	
					E: 322217	
					N: 203035	
Drawn DR Mar 21		Checked DR Mar 21		Scale: NTS		
Traced		Print		DRG. No. T82028 - 6 - 113		

Land hatched in red on above plan is being offered to the council at no charge.

Agenda Item 9

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Revenue Budget Monitoring -2021/2022, Forecast Outturn To 31 March 2022 (As at 31st December 2021)**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**
Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	24/02/2022	01.03.22			07/03/22	16/03/22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide members with the forecast financial outturn position across all portfolios for the financial year 2021/2022 (as forecast at 31st December 2022).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:
- Forecast financial position to the end of March 2022 across all portfolios
 - Forecast outturn for Fees & Charges
- 2.2 This report will inform the quarterly financial reporting framework to Members.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members to consider and provide appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report.

3.2 Option 2

Members do not accept the report.

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

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

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget**

- 5.1.1 The overall forecast outturn as at December 2021, is a favourable variance of £4.65m, after the application of Welsh Government Hardship Funding. There has been an increase in the favourable variance of £1.835m since the September 2021 forecast position (£2.814m).
- 5.1.2 The forecast overall financial position across all portfolios at 31st December 2021 (and before the inclusion of Covid-19 related expenditure) is shown in the table below:

Table 1 – Portfolio Summary

Portfolio/ Committee	2021/2022 Revised Revenue Budget	2021/2022 Forecast Outturn @ 31 Dec 2021	Favourable/ (Adverse) To 31 March 2022	Append ref:
	£m	£m	£m	
Underspending Portfolios				
Corporate Services & Financial Management & Strategy	18.425	17.111	1.314	1a
Education & Leisure	63.863	63.697	0.166	1c
Social Services	46.329	43.059	3.270	1b
Planning	1.274	1.241	0.033	1f
Licensing	0.106	0.090	0.016	1f
Sub Total (1)	129.997	125.198	4.799	
Overspending Portfolios				
Economy	1.551	1.568	(0.017)	1d
Environment	26.484	26.617	(0.133)	1e

Sub Total (2)	28.035	28.121	(0.150)	
Total	<u>158.032</u>	<u>153.319</u>	<u>4.649</u>	
Covid-19 Costs				
Social Services		2.610	(2.610)	
Education		0.418	(0.418)	
Environment		2.008	(2.008)	
Sub Total – Covid19 spend		<u>5.036</u>	<u>(5.036)</u>	
WG Hardship funding			<u>2.426</u>	
WG SS Hardship funding			<u>2.610</u>	
Revised Total			<u>4.649</u>	

5.1.3 The forecast includes actual and estimated funding from the Hardship fund for April to December 2021 of £5.036m. Claims have been submitted, in line with the set of principles issues by Welsh Government, for quarters 1 to 3 loss of income and £130,000 is included in the forecast for Social Services.

5.1.4 It has been confirmed that Welsh Government Hardship Funding will continue to March 2022.

5.1.5 **PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS**

5.1.6 Within the total forecast favourable variance of £4.65m, the cross cutting budgets within Corporate Services account for 19% (£0.865m) of this forecast. The breakdown is as follows:-

- Commercial & Contract Management - £0.5m
- Pay award contingency - £0.12m
- Contingency – Community Care - £0.25m

5.1.7 Portfolio summary pages can be found in Appendix 1.

5.1.8 Details of the variances greater than £50,000 within the Portfolios are included in the Portfolio Analysis section below.

5.1.9 Action plans to address cost pressures are attached at Appendix 3. A breakdown of the adverse variances contained within the action plans is summarised below:-

Table 3 – Significant Adverse Variances

Social Services	Legal Fees	£363,000
Education	Departmental Budget	£95,000
Environment	Waste Collection Services	£306,000
Total		£764,000

5.1.10 **Portfolio Analysis**

5.1.11 **Corporate Services – £1,313,874 favourable variance**

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

5.1.13 ***Cross Cutting Budgets - £865,247***

5.1.14 Commercial & Contract Management (Budget £496,410) – This budget was created to fund contract price increases during the year, that cannot be managed within portfolio budgets. However, no requests for funding have been received to date, therefore this budget is showing a favourable variance of £496,410.

5.1.15 Contingency – Pay Award / Community Care (Budget £1.2m) - This budget has been established to cover a potential pay award for 2021/2022 of up to 2.0% for Council staff and increased costs within Community Care. The forecast includes a commitment of a 1.75% pay award for staff (£831,863). Local authority employers are currently considering a way forward with trade unions. At present this budget is showing a £368,838 favourable position.

5.1.16 ***Departmental Budgets - £216,232***

5.1.17 The forecast favourable variance mainly relates to reduced employee related expenditure due to delays in filling vacant posts, maternity leave, staff on temporary reduced hours and the utilisation of one-off grant funding. In addition, there is an increased level of income provided by Welsh Government for an administration grant for providing COVID-19 related support.

5.1.18 ***Council Tax Reduction Scheme - £163,687***

The forecast favourable variances relate to a reduction in the number of claimants since the start of the financial year, with the number of claimants now at pre pandemic levels. This is probably as a consequence of claimants returning to work following the end of furlough and COVID Lockdowns.

5.1.19 **Social Services – £3,270,472 favourable variance**

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

5.1.21 ***Children's Services – Favourable Variance of £1.09m***

5.1.22 There is only one main adverse variance, Legal Fees of £363,000 which is mainly due to the continuing cost pressure as a result of using an external law firm resulting from court proceedings in relation to Children Looked After.

5.1.23 A cost pressure of £350,000 was awarded in 2021/2022 to partially address the cost pressure.

5.1.24 This adverse variance has been completely offset mainly by two underspending areas:

- Residential Placements showing a favourable variance of £852,000 mainly due to the application of Sustainability Grant Funding and
- Social worker Teams of £586,000 mainly due to vacant posts resulting from the issues experienced with recruitment and retention.

5.1.25 ***Adult Services – Favourable Variance of £2m***

5.1.26 The overall favourable variance of £2m, is mainly due to the application of Sustainability Grant, ICF, Home First and Social Services Recovery Grant. This has enabled a number of established posts to be funded from grant. In addition, there are a number of vacant posts and a reduction in staffing cover costs within Provider Services (as Day Services provision is not fully operational as yet). There has been a reduction in the number of placements and packages of care since the pre-Covid-19 period. The service is experiencing an increase in demand and referrals, however, current staff capacity is having an impact on the placement process.

5.1.27 ***Support Service and Management Costs - £177,000 favourable variance***

The overall favourable variance of £177,000 is mainly due to grant funding of established posts and a number of vacant posts.

5.1.28 **Education and Leisure – £165,956 favourable variance**

5.1.29 There favourable variance is due to:-

- Strategic Management - £190,000 favourable variance – relating to lower pension contributions to the local government pension scheme for school based staff (£111,000) and charging the costs of the Statutory Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Officer, to the ALN specific grant (£79,000).
- LEA Budget Supporting SEN £62,000 favourable variance, relating to income arising from the secondment of the Principal School Psychologist.

5.1.30 There is one main adverse variance:-

- Departmental budget - £95,000 adverse variance – relating to staffing costs for specific areas of work until March 2022 and maternity cover arrangements.

5.1.31 **Environment Portfolio – £133,162 adverse variance**

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

5.1.33 **Recycling Collection - £305,740 adverse variance**

One primary driver for the adverse variance relates to the ongoing cost of receptacles and food waste bags. External funding for the purchase of food waste bags has ceased and therefore this now presents a cost pressure within this budget. The budget for receptacles is not sufficient to meet demand for replacement receptacles and food waste bags as requested by households and in addition new receptacles will need to be provided to the new development/builds that is ongoing within Blaenau Gwent. The second primary driver for the adverse variance relates to agency staff costs. This adverse variance is being reviewed as potentially some costs could be recovered from the Hardship Fund.

5.1.34 **Recycling Disposal - £123,430 favourable variance**

The cost per tonne has increased for paper, steel, plastics, cardboard and aluminium and therefore the income and forecast income has increased for these recyclates, mitigating the adverse variance.

5.1.35 **Fees & Charges**

5.1.36 The 2021/2022 portfolio estimates include income budgets in relation to fees & charges (excluding Council Tax) of £15m across all portfolios. Attached at Appendix 2 is an analysis of income received against budget for the financial year for individual portfolios, and current forecast indicates an adverse variance against this target of £1.1m, primarily relating to lost income: -

- charges for Community Care & CHC income - £1.3m (This shortfall is offset by the overall underspend within the Social Services Portfolio).

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

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

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

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

- 5.2.3 There is a risk that Action Plans will not address the cost pressures identified.
- 5.2.4 Action Plans have been developed, identifying actions to mitigate the forecast cost pressures. The Action Plans will be monitored as part of the Budget Monitoring and Reporting Framework and the impact reported to the Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee, Executive Committee and the Cost Pressure Sub Group.
- 5.2.5 There is a risk that Covid-19 will continue into the medium/long term, impacting on Council services and budgets. This risk can be mitigated by the continuation of processes that the Council has introduced since March 2020 eg prioritising services, redeployment of staff, home working.
- 5.2.6 There is a risk that Welsh Government will not provide Hardship funding/loss of income funding for all cost pressures identified. This risk has been mitigated through a continuing dialogue and lobbying with Welsh Government, through the WLGA and the continuing development of action plans by budget holders. The Hardship Fund will not continue into 2022/2023 and this risk has been mitigated by additional resources provided by Welsh Government through the Revenue Support Grant.
- 5.2.7 There is a risk of increase costs for food, fuel and other essential goods and services as a result of the ongoing situation regarding the U.K. Exiting the E.U.
- 5.2.8 The UK Exiting the EU has been added as an organisational risk to the corporate risk register, whilst a separate, more detailed high level action plan has been developed and is being monitored by the Core Planning Group.
- 5.3 Legal
N/A
- 5.4 Human Resources
N/A
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**
- 6.1.1 A summary page for each portfolio is contained in Appendices 1a to 1g.
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
- 6.2.1 The report details the financial implications for the Council in providing services to the communities of Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
- 6.3.1 CLT have considered the forecast financial position for 2021/2022 (as 31st December 2021).

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

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

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

6.5 **Preventative focus**

6.5.1 Budget holders will continue to develop and monitor Action Plans for those services reporting forecast adverse variances which should address the cost pressure during the year

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

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

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

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

6.8.1 The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and the Bridging the Gap programme includes a Strategic Business Review, Low Carbon.

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***
N/A

6.9b **EqlA**

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

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

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

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Portfolio Summaries

Appendix 2 – Fees and Charges

Appendix 3 – Action Plan

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 21
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER RECHARGEABLE SERVICES</u>				
Corporate Services Department	(184,150)	(294,498)	110,348	203,605
Resources Department	1,500	(104,384)	105,884	104,006
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(182,650)</u>	<u>(398,882)</u>	<u>216,232</u>	<u>307,611</u>
<u>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</u>				
Archives	151,640	142,789	8,851	8,851
Festival Park	94,680	99,631	(4,951)	(4,951)
Housing Benefit	(117,130)	(115,965)	(1,165)	(1,203)
ICT Service	0	0	0	0
Cross Cutting	(50,000)	(50,000)	0	0
Community Hubs	121,990	121,990	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>201,180</u>	<u>198,445</u>	<u>2,735</u>	<u>2,697</u>
<u>LEGAL & CORPORATE COMPLIANCE SERVICES</u>				
Registration of Electors	17,170	20,469	(3,299)	(329)
Conducting Elections	0	(379)	379	0
Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	51,370	57,792	(6,422)	(10)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>68,540</u>	<u>77,882</u>	<u>(9,342)</u>	<u>(339)</u>
<u>GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES</u>				
Corporate Management (inc Audit Fees)	107,370	106,428	942	942
Democratic Representation and Management	1,267,800	1,254,774	13,026	8,630
CCTV Cameras	79,000	79,000	0	11,752
Civil Contingencies	101,040	90,531	10,509	12,182
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>1,555,210</u>	<u>1,530,733</u>	<u>24,477</u>	<u>33,506</u>
<u>RESOURCES SERVICES</u>				
Corporate Management	348,810	349,380	(570)	(648)
Non Distributed Costs	1,039,730	1,033,300	6,430	6,430
Apprenticeship Levy	351,400	344,435	6,965	(10,572)
Council Tax Collection	(1,315,620)	(1,348,899)	33,279	36,123
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	9,908,050	9,744,363	163,687	8,754
N.N.D.R. Collection	(107,040)	(111,778)	4,738	4,828
Grants and Subscriptions	57,270	57,270	0	0
Cross Cutting Budget	2,189,110	1,323,863	865,247	865,247
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>12,471,710</u>	<u>11,391,934</u>	<u>1,079,776</u>	<u>910,162</u>
<u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u>				
Corporate Recharges	4,310,790	4,310,794	(4)	(4)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>4,310,790</u>	<u>4,310,794</u>	<u>(4)</u>	<u>(4)</u>
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	0	0	0
CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>18,424,780</u>	<u>17,110,906</u>	<u>1,313,874</u>	<u>1,253,633</u>

SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 21
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
<u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u>				
Children's Services - Commissioning and Social Work	3,727,710	3,386,643	341,067	180,972
Looked After Children	7,433,140	6,749,344	683,796	551,242
Family Support Services	188,600	188,563	37	(11,003)
Youth Justice	232,920	228,118	4,802	4,802
Other Children's and Family Services	2,335,130	2,272,762	62,368	42,902
Older People Aged 65 or Over	6,517,430	5,905,052	612,378	411,650
Adults Aged Under 65 with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment	41,800	31,809	9,991	18,223
Adults Aged Under 65 with Learning Disabilities	3,313,890	3,149,753	164,137	141,058
Adults Aged Under 65 with Mental Health Needs	531,730	538,528	(6,798)	9,416
Other Adult Services	398,250	379,854	18,396	1,095
Community Care	15,515,320	14,312,368	1,202,952	82,296
Support Service and Management Costs	881,130	706,163	174,967	68,998
Corporate Recharges	5,212,400	5,210,020	2,380	2,373
Overall Portfolio Total	46,329,450	43,058,978	3,270,472	1,504,024
Social Services COVID-19 Costs	0	2,609,571	(2,609,571)	(1,487,239)
Revised Overall Portfolio Total	46,329,450	45,668,549	660,901	16,785

EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 21
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
SCHOOLS BUDGET				
Individual Schools Budget	46,522,380	46,522,380	0	0
Education Improvement Grant	257,360	259,978	(2,618)	(4,042)
Other Costs	722,410	712,107	10,303	(487)
Supporting Special Education Needs	1,679,830	1,733,286	(53,456)	(77,156)
Schools Budget Total Expenditure	49,181,980	49,227,751	(45,771)	(81,685)
LEA BUDGET				
Strategic Management	2,432,410	2,242,244	190,166	188,752
Assuring Access to Schools	2,317,310	2,324,163	(6,853)	854
Facilitating School Improvement	419,760	393,971	25,789	11,945
Supporting Special Education Needs	342,470	297,066	45,404	31,707
LEA Budget Total Expenditure	5,511,950	5,257,444	254,506	233,258
OTHER EDUCATION SERVICES				
Further Education and Training	133,290	121,816	11,474	11,474
Youth Service	311,437	297,578	13,859	13,340
Other Expenditure	141,030	102,603	38,427	16,282
Education Departmental Budget	64,323	159,387	(95,064)	(17,362)
Other Education Services Total Expenditure	650,080	681,384	(31,304)	23,734
CORPORATE CHARGES				
Corporate Support Recharges	4,360,220	4,360,220	0	0
Corporate Charges Total Expenditure	4,360,220	4,360,220	0	0
Total Expenditure	59,704,230	59,526,799	177,431	175,307
LEISURE TRUSTS				
LEISURE TRUSTS				
Aneurin Leisure Trust	2,789,760	2,798,092	(8,332)	(8,332)
Awen Leisure Trust	205,000	200,507	4,493	4,493
Sub Total	2,994,760	2,998,599	(3,839)	(3,839)
RETAINED SERVICES				
Corporate Recharges	1,164,340	1,171,976	(7,636)	(1,466)
General Reserve Funding Re: Staff Support	0	0	0	0
Sub Total	1,164,340	1,171,976	(7,636)	(1,466)
LEISURE TRUSTS TOTAL EXPENDITURE	4,159,100	4,170,575	(11,475)	(5,305)
Overall Portfolio Total	63,863,330	63,697,374	165,956	170,002
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	418,474	(418,474)	(277,007)
Revised Overall Portfolio Total	63,863,330	64,115,848	(252,518)	(107,005)

ECONOMY PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at September 21
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Economic Strategy and Development - Departmental Budget	1,504	2,045	(541)	(541)
Estates Management - Rechargeable	(1)	(1,045)	1,044	1,044
<i>Sub Total</i>	1,503	1,000	503	503
<u>ECONOMY SERVICES</u>				
Affordable Housing	0	0	0	0
Aspire	0	0	0	0
Community Benefits Investment	0	0	0	0
CSCS	(10,200)	810	(11,010)	(11,010)
Destination Management	16,473	16,473	0	0
DRivE	0	0	0	0
Financial Support to Business	4,276	4,276	0	0
General Offices	(53,783)	(53,783)	0	0
Industrial Land	7,195	7,006	189	189
Inspire	0	0	0	0
Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	(694,037)	(694,037)	0	0
Pentagon	0	0	0	0
Regeneration Projects	4,998	4,998	0	0
Resilient Project	0	0	0	0
Estates Management Non Rechargeable	(94,780)	(87,707)	(7,073)	(7,071)
<i>Sub Total</i>	(819,858)	(801,964)	(17,894)	(17,892)
Corporate Recharges	2,369,375	2,369,375	0	0
Funding from General Reserves	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	1,551,020	1,568,411	(17,391)	(17,389)

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at September 2021
	£	£	£	£
SUMMARY				
<u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Environment Department - Corporate	0	(37,069)	37,069	37,983
Environmental Services Division	(629)	(31,198)	30,569	25,279
Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	9,940	9,940	0	0
Sub Total	9,311	(58,327)	67,638	63,262
<u>WASTE SERVICES</u>				
Waste Services Team	0	0	0	0
Sub Total	0	0	0	0
<u>WASTE COLLECTION</u>				
Household and Trade Waste Collectio	616,930	616,418	512	(2,237)
Recycling Collection	2,088,970	2,394,710	(305,740)	(137,059)
Bulky Waste Collection	(2,440)	(9,058)	6,618	10,428
Sub Total	2,703,460	3,002,070	(298,610)	(128,868)
<u>WASTE TRANSFER</u>				
Civic Amenity Sites	252,950	327,353	(74,403)	(60,904)
HWRC Roseheyworth	302,750	246,165	56,585	55,069
Transfer Station	630,940	569,272	61,668	1,146
Sub Total	1,186,640	1,142,790	43,850	(4,689)
<u>WASTE DISPOSAL</u>				
Disposal Of Waste	1,028,490	1,043,423	(14,933)	(47,997)
Recycling Disposal	31,250	(92,180)	123,430	(23,635)
Trade Waste Collection, Transfer & Di	(24,930)	(35,669)	10,739	(9,043)
Sub Total	1,034,810	915,574	119,236	(80,675)
<u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u>				
County Borough Cleansing	1,094,140	1,094,161	(21)	338
Cemeteries / Crematorium	(279,475)	(272,922)	(6,553)	(7,474)
Grounds Maintenance	959,000	945,552	13,448	17
Countryside Recreation Sites	36,690	35,212	1,478	1,478
General Entertainment	2,440	2,430	10	10
Sub Total	1,812,795	1,804,433	8,362	(5,631)
<u>FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</u>				

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at September 2021
	£	£	£	£
Corporate Landlord	1,586,172	1,588,969	(2,797)	35,637
Corporate Property	11,720	11,720	0	(2)
Building Cleaning	120,860	120,860	0	4
Catering Account	158,300	158,300	0	0
Appetite For Life	43,710	43,710	0	0
School Breakfast Club	394,180	394,180	0	0
Sub Total	2,314,942	2,317,739	(2,797)	35,639
<u>HIGHWAYS & ROADS SERVICES</u>				
Highways - Street Care Team	0	131	(131)	315
Non Operational Land	1,460	1,460	0	0
Licensing (Highway Permits)	(51,190)	(39,013)	(12,177)	0
Shopping Arcade, Abertillery	2,780	2,780	0	0
Road and Street Works Acts	(16,260)	(16,260)	0	0
Multi-Storey Car Parks	254,488	254,488	0	0
On Street Parking	1,100	1,100	0	0
Surface Car Parks	31,790	31,790	0	0
Public Transport Co-Ordination	910	910	0	0
Bridges	77,590	77,590	0	0
Structural Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	173,668	187,732	(14,064)	0
Environmental Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	19,440	19,440	0	0
Safety Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	40,668	40,668	0	12
Routine Repairs (Principal and Other Roads)	869,431	882,194	(12,763)	3,710
Street Lighting	1,191,780	1,191,780	0	0
Winter Maintenance	390,020	434,519	(44,499)	0
Sub Total	2,987,675	3,071,309	(83,634)	4,037

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at September 2021
	£	£	£	£
<u>TRANSPORT SERVICES</u>				
Traffic Orders	(22,475)	(63,723)	41,248	0
Highways Adoptions	(9,750)	(9,750)	0	0
Traffic / Accident Research	15,690	15,690	0	0
Traffic Management	6,760	6,760	0	0
Civil Parking Enforcement	0	0	0	0
Road Safety Education	18,330	18,330	0	0
Crossing Patrols	151,540	150,708	832	1,536
Concessionary fares and Support to Operators	281,050	281,050	0	0
Local Transport Plans	2,620	2,620	0	0
Home to School Transport	0	0	0	0
Transport and Heavy Plant	79,780	79,780	0	0
Sub Total	523,545	481,465	42,080	1,536
<u>CULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
General Administration and Markets	(25,962)	(9,783)	(16,179)	0
Countryside Programme and Manage	1,710	1,710	0	0
Landscaping and Afforestation	20,290	20,290	0	0
Reservoirs, Tips, Quarries and Mines	10,130	10,130	0	0
Flood Defence And Land Drainage	55,380	55,380	0	0
ENRaW	0	0	0	0
City Deal	97,200	97,200	0	0
Sub Total	158,748	174,927	(16,179)	0
COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	12,731,926	12,851,980	(120,054)	(115,389)
<u>PUBLIC PROTECTION</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Environmental Health	(2,728)	15,950	(18,678)	(11,912)
Sub Total	(2,728)	15,950	(18,678)	(11,912)
<u>CARAVAN SITES</u>				
Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(42,710)	(23,112)	(19,598)	144
Sub Total	(42,710)	(23,112)	(19,598)	144
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</u>				
Food Safety	6,270	6,596	(326)	1,831
Control of Pollution	9,390	10,102	(712)	707
Dog Wardens	1,470	1,470	0	0
Animal Health and Welfare	23,360	20,378	2,982	3,333
Pest Control	62,000	60,003	1,997	1,997
Littering and Dog Control Orders	0	307	(307)	(1,305)

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at September 2021
	£	£	£	£
Health and Safety at Work (Commerci	1,510	(810)	2,320	1,753
Sub Total	104,000	98,046	5,954	8,316
<u>HOUSING SERVICES</u>				
Homelessness	244,680	244,680	0	0
20 Church Street	15,800	11,870	3,930	13,604
General Properties	(8,160)	(7,416)	(744)	(744)
Housing Access	50,960	46,178	4,782	968
Works in Default	(250)	(1,840)	1,590	1,590
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,040	1,040	0	0
Sub Total	304,070	294,512	9,558	15,418
<u>TRADING STANDARDS</u>				
Trading Standards	(1,643)	(7,397)	5,754	6,455
Inspection and Enforcement	4,350	448	3,902	(165)
Sub Total	2,707	(6,949)	9,656	6,290
PUBLIC PROTECTION TOTAL EXPENDITURE	365,339	378,447	(13,108)	18,256
<u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u>				
Fire Service	3,481,840	3,481,840	0	0
Coroner's Court	120,830	120,830	0	0
Corporate Recharges	9,783,955	9,783,955	0	0
CORPORATE CHARGES TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13,386,625	13,386,625	0	0
Overall Portfolio Total	26,483,890	26,617,052	(133,162)	(97,133)
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	2,007,833	(2,007,833)	(1,791,230)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	26,483,890	28,624,885	(2,140,995)	(1,888,363)

PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Item	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2022	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Outturn Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at Sept 21
	£	£	£	£
PLANNING COMMITTEE SUMMARY				
<u>BUILDING CONTROL</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Building Control	(1,000)	-999	(1)	0
<u>BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES</u>				
Building Regulations	10,840	10,840	0	0
Dangerous Structures	22,640	20,806	1,834	1,732
<i>Building Control Total Expenditure</i>	<u>32,480</u>	<u>30,647</u>	<u>1,833</u>	<u>1,732</u>
<u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Development Management	(1,000)	(7,198)	6,198	(988)
<u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES</u>				
Dealing with Applications	(202,530)	(235,492)	32,962	0
Planning Appeals	3,250	10,754	(7,504)	(4)
Enforcement	(10)	224	(234)	(16)
<i>Development Management Total Expenditure</i>	<u>(200,290)</u>	<u>(231,712)</u>	<u>31,422</u>	<u>(1,008)</u>
<u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u>				
<u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u>				
Development Plans	132,000	131,998	2	2
<u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS SERVICES</u>				
Development Plans	34,760	34,762	(2)	(2)
<i>Development Plans Total Expenditure</i>	<u>166,760</u>	<u>166,760</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Corporate Recharges	1,275,250	1,275,250	0	0
Funding from General Reserves	0	0	0	0
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Planning Committee Total Expenditure	<u>1,274,200</u>	<u>1,240,945</u>	<u>33,255</u>	<u>724</u>
LICENSING COMMITTEE SUMMARY				
Licensing	68,010	51,663	16,347	(22,463)
Internal Recharges	38,490	38,492	(2)	(0)
Funding from General Reserves	0	0	0	0
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Licensing Committee Total Expenditure	<u>106,500</u>	<u>90,154</u>	<u>16,346</u>	<u>(22,464)</u>

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Fees and Charges Forecast 2021/2022 (As at December 2021)

Appendix 2

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	WG Hardship Grant	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£	£
Fees & Charges							
Corporate Services	Communications	Advertising	Fees & Charges	3,000		697	(2,303)
Corporate Services	Business Support	External Printing and photocopying charges.	Fees & Charges	8,000		90	(7,910)
Corporate Services	Legal Fees	Legal Charges	Fees & Charges	14,330		7,917	(6,413)
Corporate Services	Corporate Support	Land Charges	Fixed - Set Locally	32,150		38,631	6,481
Economy	General Offices	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	41,969		90,119	48,150
Economy	Departmental	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	SLA	69,087		43,350	(25,737)
Environment	Household and Trade Waste Collection		Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Environment	Recycling Collection	Recycling Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Environment	Trade Waste	Trade Waste Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	140,590		143,831	3,241
Environment	Bulky Waste Collection	Bulky Waste Collection	Fees & Charges	71,690		79,445	7,755
Environment	Recycling Disposal	Sale of Recyclate Materials	Fees & Charges	629,720		714,244	84,524
Environment	County Borough Cleansing	C&CR - External Cleansing Works	Fees & Charges	220		0	(220)
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Burial Fees	Fees & Charges	495,080		492,858	(2,222)
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	General Properties	Fees & Charges	2,680		3,000	320
Social Services	Meals On Wheels	Sale of Meals	Fees & Charges	175,280	0	154,759	(20,521)
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Income from Letting of Playing Fields, Ground Rent & Way Leaves	Fees & Charges	76,395		105,793	29,398
Environment	General Properties	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	8,164		7,416	(748)
Environment	Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	Rental	Fees & Charges	113,947		117,510	3,563
Environment	Dog Wardens	Byelaw Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	2,030		2,030	0
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Civic Centre - Rental of Land	Miscellaneous	828		367	(461)
Environment	School Catering Service	Sale of Meals	Fees & Charges	861,898		876,021	14,123
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Administration charges for administering Appointeeships	Fees & Charges	26,030		18,544	(7,486)
Infrastructure	Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	Fees & Charges	418,938		468,711	49,773
Infrastructure	FEP - Increase in Income	Fees	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Infrastructure	Licensing (Highway Permits)	Skips & Scaffolding Permits	Fees & Charges	51,342		39,426	(11,916)
Infrastructure	General Administration and Markets	Rental income	Fees & Charges	30,351		11,693	(18,658)
Infrastructure	Traffic Orders	Income from contractors, Welsh Water etc. for road works	Fees & Charges	24,810		66,058	41,248
Infrastructure	Road and Street Works Acts	Inspection fees, section 74's, FPN, coring, Dropped kerbs etc.	Fees & Charges	51,814		33,730	(18,084)
Infrastructure	Highways Adoptions	Highway Searches	Fees & Charges	9,754		9,754	0
Infrastructure	Multi-storey Carparks	Charge to Coleg Gwent	Fees & Charges	30,000		30,000	0
Infrastructure	Civil Parking Enforcement	FPN's	Fees & Charges	105,000		105,000	0
Infrastructure	Public Transport Co-Ordination	Charge to bus companies for use of Brynmawr Bus Station	Fees & Charges	234		234	0
Licensing	Hackney Carriages	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	46,030		44,574	(1,456)
Licensing	Private Hire Vehicles	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	1,830		2,029	199
Licensing	Scrap Metal	Sale of Scrap Metal	Fees & Charges	600		0	(600)
Planning	Enforcement	Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	610		0	(610)
Planning	Development Plans	Heritage Officer Income	Fees & Charges	0		0	0
Social Services	Other Children's and Family Services	Training Fees (Early Years tied in with expenditure which is set	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	0
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Cwrt Mytton, Home Care, Extra Care & Joint Day Care Unit)	Fees & Charges	594,380	23,880	400,974	(169,526)
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Augusta, Supported Living Bungalows & Community Options)	Fees & Charges	340,460	102,720	69,498	(168,242)
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Mental Health Needs	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Vision House & Ysbyty'r Tri Chwm)	Fees & Charges	25,420	4,135	900	(20,385)
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	Fees & Charges in respect of Piper Alarms (IAA)	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	0
		Sub - Total		4,504,661	130,735	4,179,202	(194,724)

Fees and Charges Forecast 2021/2022 (As at December 2021)

Appendix 2

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	WG Hardship Grant	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£	£
Fees & Charges - Set Nationally							
Corporate Services	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Fixed - Set Nationally	94,770		83,878	(10,892)
Environment	Food Safety	Hygiene ratings & Health Certificates	Fixed - Set Nationally	2,120		4,739	2,619
Environment	Control of Pollution	Environmental Permits	Fixed - Set Nationally	16,890		10,378	(6,512)
Environment	Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	Petroleum + Tattoo Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		1,200	1,200
Environment	Trading Standards	Explosives Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	790		749	(41)
Licensing	Licence Fees	Various (Gambling, Premises/ Clubs & Street Trading)	Fixed - Set Nationally	56,900		60,934	4,034
Planning	Dealing with Applications	Planning Application Fees	Fees & Charges	213,360		253,318	39,958
Planning	Building Regulations	Building Regulation Fees	Fixed - Set Nationally	95,620		97,499	1,879
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	CHC Income (Home Care)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		51,597	51,597
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	CHC Income (Augusta House; Supported Living Bungalows; Community Options)	Fixed - Set Nationally	50,000		38,201	(11,799)
Social Services	Community Care	Fees & Charges in respect of Care	Fixed - Set Nationally	3,493,660		2,972,762	(520,898)
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Sale of Property (Cwrw Mytton)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		16,180	16,180
Social Services	Community Care	Sale of Property	Fixed - Set Nationally	292,340		308,688	16,348
Social Services	Community Care	CHC Income	Fixed - Set Nationally	378,650		0	(378,650)
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	CHC Income (Adult Service Managers)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0		0	0
		Sub - Total		4,695,100	0	3,900,123	(794,977)
Fees & Charges - In Line with Local Agreements							
Economy	Industrial Land	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,750		2,770	20
Economy	Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	Rental income for industrial units	Fixed - Set Locally	708,195		816,213	108,018
Economy	Estates - Non Rechargeable	Ground Rent	Fixed - Set Locally	142,268		120,000	(22,268)
Economy	Financial Support to Business	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,650		2,650	0
Economy	CSCS	Charges for Construction Skills Certificates	Fixed - Set Locally	10,200		947	(9,253)
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Little Stars Nursery - Rent (Recovery of costs)	Miscellaneous	8,496		13,287	4,791
Education	Inter Authority Recoupment	Charges to other Local Authorities for SEN placements within Blaenau Gwent Schools	Fixed - Set Locally	729,110		768,617	39,507
		Sub - Total		1,603,669	0	1,724,484	120,815
		Total - Fees & Charges		10,803,430	130,735	9,803,809	(868,886)
SLA							
Aneurin Leisure Trust	SLA Income	Provision of Support Services	SLA	243,600		209,210	(34,390)
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	SLA	SLA	168,220		156,902	(11,318)
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	181,840		181,840	0
Corporate Services	Organisational Development, Payroll & Health & Safety	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	313,350		313,350	0
Corporate Services	Legal Fees & GDPR	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	41,160		41,160	0
Corporate Services	Communications	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	3,190		3,190	0
Corporate Services	Performance (SIMS Support)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	75,750		75,750	0
Corporate Services	Business Support (Courier)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	5,660		5,660	0
Financial Management and Strategy	Creditors Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	6,350		6,350	0
Corporate Services	ICT	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	0		0	0
Environment	School Catering	SLA with Schools (excludes Corporate Landlord)	SLA	1,138,600		1,145,038	6,438
Environment	Cleaning Services	SLA with Schools	SLA	1,091,389		1,091,389	0
Infrastructure	CPM - Schools Biodiversity SLA	SLA with Schools	SLA	14,280		14,280	0
Infrastructure	Winter Maintenance	SLA with LA's for salt Storage	SLA	13,000		13,000	0
		Sub - Total		3,296,389	0	3,257,119	(39,270)

Fees and Charges Forecast 2021/2022 (As at December 2021)

Appendix 2

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2021/2022	WG Hardship Grant	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)
				£	£	£	£
Court Fees/Fixed Penalty Notices/Fines							
Corporate Services	Corporate Services and Strategy	Legal income and land charges. Advertising.	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	10,000		3,148	(6,852)
Education	Welfare Service	Fixed Penalty Notices	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	2,150		2,150	0
Environment	Littering and Dog Control Orders	Income in relation to FPNs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	50,000		23,008	(26,992)
Corporate Services	Payroll Division	Attachment Orders	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,020		272	(748)
Financial Management and Strategy	Council Tax Collection	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	162,680		75,643	(87,037)
Financial Management and Strategy	NNDR	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,800		979	(821)
Corporate Services	Housing Benefits Account	Admin Penalties	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	25,000		0	(25,000)
		Sub - Total		252,650	0	105,200	(147,450)
Consortium Arrangements							
Economy	General Offices	Annual Service & Rental Charge to Torfaen CBC in relation to Archives	Consortium Arrangements	77,967		64,910	(13,057)
Environment	Disposal Of Waste	Contribution from SVWS	Consortium Arrangements	110,000		110,000	0
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Crematorium Income - Reallocation of surplus at year end	Consortium Arrangements	131,925		137,537	5,612
Environment	20 Church Street	Housing Advice Centre Contribution	Consortium Arrangements	12,210		13,550	1,340
Environment	Housing Access	Income from Housing Associations in relation to Administration of the Common Housing Register	Consortium Arrangements	110,763		118,126	7,363
Environment	Environmental Health	Public Protection Collaboration with Torfaen CC	Consortium Arrangements	0		0	0
		Sub - Total		442,865	0	444,123	1,258
Miscellaneous							
Education	Supporting Special Educational Needs	Internal Income - Recovery of pupil lead funding from schools.	Internal Income	102,000		102,000	0
Corporate Services	Corporate Procurement Division	Rebates - Energy & Randstad	Miscellaneous	95,700		73,816	(21,884)
Corporate Services	Corporate Procurement Division	Purchase Card Income	Miscellaneous	5,140		0	(5,140)
Infrastructure	L&A - Invasive Weeds	Contribution from Caerphilly for Treatment of Knotweed	Miscellaneous	10,000		1,200	(8,800)
		Sub - Total		212,840	0	177,016	(35,824)
		TOTAL		15,008,174	130,735	13,787,267	(1,090,172)

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Action Plan

Social Services

2021/22 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 December 2021)

Appendix 3a

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at Dec 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at Sept 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at June 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at Outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Looked After Children	(362,739)	(362,739)	(362,739)	(718,039)	<p>Legal Services</p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an ongoing pressure in this area due to the use of a private law firm for all our court proceedings, and our inability to recruit and retain legal staff specialising in children's law. This has resulted in our need to outsource to an external provider. It is anticipated that the Legal budget will be significantly overspent again this year. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A long term solution will need to be identified in conjunction with Legal Services to mitigate this cost pressure for future years and a collaborative arrangement for legal services is being considered with a neighbouring council. 		Tanya Evans/ Andrea Jones

Action Plan

Social Services

2021/22 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 30 December 2021)

Appendix 3a

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at Dec 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at Sept 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at June 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at Outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This cost pressure is currently being offset by favourable variances within other social services budgets. <p><u>Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An agreement has been reached with Caerphilly County Borough Council to provide Children's Legal Services for Blaenau Gwent. This agreement will hopefully commence from the 1st April 2022 which will substantially reduce the current overspend for legal services within Children's Services. 		

Action Plan

Education

2021/22 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2021)

Appendix 3b

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at December 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at September 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at Outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Departmental Budget	(95,064)	(17,362)	91,990	<p>Departmental budget</p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional staff support for the Welfare Service and a seconded member of staff from the Resources Department, both to the end of this financial year only. • <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This cost pressure is currently being offset by favourable variances within other Education Portfolio budgets. • The potential to offset costs against specific grants will be reviewed in the final quarter of the financial year. 		Lynn Phillips

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2021)

Appendix 3c

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at Dec 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at Sept 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at June 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
Waste Services	(305,740)	(137,059)	(138,485)	(86,180)	<p><u>Recycling Collection</u></p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u> This is mainly due to the cost of receptacles and food waste bags. External funding for the purchase of food waste bags has ceased and therefore this now presents a cost pressure within this budget. In addition, the forecast also includes the cost of receptacles and food waste bags for new developments/builds that will be required towards the end of the financial year. It is also due to agency staff costs, which are being investigated as some could potentially be funded through the hardship fund.</p> <p><u>Actions</u> The budget for receptacles is not sufficient to meet demand and consequently, a budget pressure has been awarded for 2022/2023 as part of the budget setting process, which should mitigate the cost pressure in future years.</p>		C Rogers / M Stent
	(14,933)	(47,995)	(60,449)	(2,643)	<p><u>Disposal of Waste</u></p> <p><u>Reason for Adverse variance</u> This is mainly due to an increase in residual waste tonnages.</p> <p><u>Actions</u> The adverse variance has reduced due to Welsh Government Hardship Funding. Also the disposal of leachate at Silent Valley forecast costs are over the budget. However, this is</p>		

Action Plan

Environment

2020/21 Forecast Adverse Variances (as at 31st December 2021)

Appendix 3c

Service Area	2021/2022 Variance at Dec 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at Sept 2021 Forecast £	2021/2022 Variance at June 2021 Forecast £	2020/2021 Variance at outturn £	Action Required & Timescale	Financial Impact £	Responsible Officer
	123,430	(23,630)	(136,432)	(216,372)	<p>based on last year's outturn only, there is the possibility that the forecast could change in the last quarter.</p> <p>Recycling Disposal</p> <p><u>Reason for variance</u> The cost per tonne has increased for paper, steel, plastics, cardboard and aluminium and therefore the income and the forecast income has increased for these recyclates, reducing the adverse variance.</p> <p>A cost pressure has been awarded as for 2022/2023 as part of the budget setting process to mitigate this cost pressure in future years.</p>		

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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: Executive Committee
Date of meeting: 16th March 2022
Report Subject: Capital Budget Monitoring, Forecast for 2021/2022 Financial Year (as at 31 December 2021)
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services
Report Submitted by: Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	24/02/22				07/03/22	16/03/22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of each Portfolio's actual and forecast capital expenditure against funding approvals for the 2021/2022 financial year, as at 31st December 2021

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:

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

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

2.2

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

Members of the Executive Committee accept the report and

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

3.2 Option 2

Do not accept the report.

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

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

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

5.1.1 The overall financial position as forecast at 31st December 2021 indicates an adverse variance of £227,852 against a total in year capital budget of £20.1m.

The overall position across all Portfolios is shown below: -

Total Approvals Q3 (Dec 2021)	Future funding	In year funding	Actual Expenditure to 31/12/2021 (Month 9)	Forecast Expenditure 2021/2022	Forecast Variance underspent / (overspent)
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
65,670	45,551	20,119	7,177	20,347	(228)

5.1.2 This report has identified significant overspends on the following projects:

- **Household Waste recycling Centre - £42,752**
The overspend relates to increased costs due to the Covid-19 pandemic & future proofing of the site. Discussions are ongoing with WRAP Cymru & Welsh Government regarding funding the additional expenditure.
- **Lime Avenue Business Park –£185,096**
The latest anticipated final account advises of a loss & expenses claim for items in relation to unforeseen issues caused by Covid-19 pandemic of £185,096, a reduction of £49,614 when compared to the Quarter 2 forecast of £234,710. Officers are in dialogue with Welsh Government & WEFO project officials to pursue additional funding to mitigate the overspend.

Discussions with funding bodies are currently positive, therefore, it is not proposed that funding for these schemes be built in from the Capital contingency at this stage.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

5.2.1 Expenditure against external funding approvals needs to be maximised in order to avoid loss of funding. If significant delays in capital expenditure are anticipated or contract costs rise due to the impact of Covid-19 and inflation pressures, liaison with funding bodies will be required at the earliest opportunity in order to secure approval for funding re-profile.

- 5.2.2 If funding re-profile cannot be agreed and capital schemes are not kept within budget, then capital reserves may be committed beyond affordable levels, with the consequence that projects that have not yet commenced may be deferred or not undertaken, so impacting upon future Capital Programmes.
- 5.2.3 If capital schemes do not achieve the required level of expenditure within the correct financial year and further peaks of the Covid-19 pandemic results in projects facing significant delay, funding may be lost to the Authority and be detrimental to the Authority's chances of securing future funding.
- 5.2.4 The aforementioned risks are mitigated as far as possible through close working relationship with Budget Holders, Technical Services and external funding bodies such as Welsh Government. This ensures that where possible, funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise
- 5.2.5 Where overall funding approvals are likely to be exceeded and additional compensatory funding sources cannot be identified, budget holders will initially report the consequences to the Corporate Leadership Team, including proposals to defer/delete other approved schemes.
- 5.2.6 There is a potential risk of increase in Constructions costs & services following the ongoing situation regarding the UK's Exit from the European Union.
- 5.2.7 The UK's Exit from the EU has been added as an organisational risk to the corporate risk register, whilst a separate, more detailed high level action plan has been developed and is being monitored by the Core Planning Group.

5.3 **Legal**
N/A

5.4 **Human Resources**
N/A

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

- 6.1.2 The Capital Expenditure Report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 6.1.3 Appendix 2 provides information of funding changes since the second quarter report.

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

- 6.2.1 The report details the financial implications for the Council in providing capital investment for the communities of Blaenau Gwent.
- 6.2.2 All forecast overspends and underspends are managed in order that secured funding approvals are not lost and to mitigate any potential adverse impact upon future Capital investment in Blaenau Gwent.

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

6.3.1 The Capital Programme is developed to support the Council's strategic priorities and is considered and agreed by full Council. Joint Budget Scrutiny and Executive Committees consider the budget monitoring reports on a quarterly basis and provide challenge as appropriate.

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

6.4.1 It is essential that all forecast overspends and underspends are managed in order that secured funding approvals are not lost and to mitigate any potential adverse impact upon the future capital programme.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

6.5.1 The Capital Services Team will continue their close working relationship with budget holders and external funding bodies to ensure that funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured in future financial years.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

6.6.1 The Capital Services Team works closely with budget holders in producing the financial forecast and with external funding bodies to ensure that where possible funding is maximised or funding amendments are secured should the need arise.

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

N/A

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

6.8.1 The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. The Capital Programme currently contains schemes which promote the reduction of carbon emissions such as ReFIT, Electric Vehicle Charge Points, Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID and the purchase of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles. New Council buildings should be designed to the latest energy efficiency standards.

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

N/A

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

N/A

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Capital Programme Expenditure – Quarter 3

Appendix 2 – Funding Changes – Quarter 3

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<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure To: December 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Corporate Services Portfolio	2,478,798	841,687	1,637,111	216,655	625,032	841,687	0
Social Services Portfolio	5,936,837	1,925,744	4,011,093	678,379	1,247,365	1,925,744	0
Economy Portfolio	15,729,036	4,414,715	11,314,321	1,893,747	2,706,064	4,599,811	(185,096)
Education and Active Living	28,870,311	3,182,006	25,688,305	1,339,484	1,842,522	3,182,006	0
Environment Portfolio	5,863,489	3,954,574	1,908,915	1,042,398	2,954,932	3,997,330	(42,756)
Infrastructure Portfolio	4,838,879	4,044,634	794,245	1,740,544	2,304,090	4,044,634	0
All Portfolios	1,952,775	1,755,628	197,147	266,508	1,489,120	1,755,628	0
Total Capital Funding	65,670,125	20,118,988	45,551,137	7,177,715	13,169,125	20,346,840	(227,852)

End of Report

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Corporate Services Portfolio								
Corporate Services								
101385	Workplace Transformation	67,586	21,484	46,102	21,484	0	21,484	0
327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Wo	264,131	11,772	252,359	4,508	7,264	11,772	0
327103	Civic Centre Decommissioning	650,000	70,350	579,650	56,768	13,582	70,350	0
327104	Democratic & Community Hubs	180,000	180,000	0	129,256	50,744	180,000	0
327106	ICT Roadmap	952,000	193,000	759,000	1,839	191,161	193,000	0
327107	Data Centre Move	362,000	362,000	0	0	362,000	362,000	0
328090	CCTV Upgrade	3,081	3,081	0	2,800	281	3,081	0
Corporate Services		2,478,798	841,687	1,637,111	216,655	625,032	841,687	0
Corporate Services Portfolio		2,478,798	841,687	1,637,111	216,655	625,032	841,687	0

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Social Services Portfolio								
Childrens Services								
323152	Beaufort Road - Extension Training Flat	81,490	81,490	0	13,082	68,408	81,490	0
323153	Beaufort Road - Outdoor spaces and Exiti	560	560	0	560	0	560	0
324719	Flying Start - Cwm 2	30,000	30,000	0	0	30,000	30,000	0
324721	Flying Start - Ebbw Vale North	265,473	265,473	0	238,277	27,196	265,473	0
324724	Flying Start - Sirhowy Primary	18,500	18,500	0	0	18,500	18,500	0
324728	Flying Start - Blaina ICC	235,000	235,000	0	0	235,000	235,000	0
324733	Flying Start Abertillery	12,000	12,000	0	0	12,000	12,000	0
324734	Flying Start Garnlydan Hub	24,500	24,500	0	5,761	18,739	24,500	0
324735	Flying Start Brynithel FS Centre	20,000	20,000	0	10,734	9,266	20,000	0
324736	Flying Start Additional Works	73,700	73,700	0	27,602	46,098	73,700	0
324737	Flying Start Capital (Covid-funding)	36,000	36,000	0	0	36,000	36,000	0
324738	FS Covid Recovery - Cwm Dev. Garden S	115,000	115,000	0	0	115,000	115,000	0
324739	FS Covid Recovery - Scout Hall	50,000	50,000	0	0	50,000	50,000	0
324771	Childcare Offer - Badminton Scheme	1,500,000	50,000	1,450,000	0	50,000	50,000	0
324772	Childcare Offer - Blaina ICC Scheme	1,108,728	1,611	1,107,117	1,611	0	1,611	0
324773	Childcare Offer - Swfryd Scheme	734,965	3,849	731,116	3,849	0	3,849	0
324774	Childcare Offer - Small Grants Scheme	50,000	50,000	0	9,940	40,060	50,000	0
324775	Childcare Offer - Brynmawr	532,230	0	532,230	0	0	0	0
Childrens Services		4,888,146	1,067,683	3,820,463	311,415	756,268	1,067,683	0

Adult Services

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<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
323003	Health & Safety	57,483	0	57,483	0	0	0	0
323005	Tackling Food Poverty - WLGA	41,158	1,560	39,598	1,560	0	1,560	0
323006	Cwrt Mytton Replacement Boilers	50,000	50,000	0	22,521	27,479	50,000	0
323120	Disabled equipment	279,750	279,750	0	279,750	0	279,750	0
323141	ICF - Further Enhanced Digital & Mobile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
323144	ICF Main Capital Programme	85,862	0	85,862	0	0	0	0
323147	Intermediate Care Fund	3,133	0	3,133	0	0	0	0
323148	ICF - Digital & Mobile Assistive Technol	39,614	39,614	0	39,614	0	39,614	0
323149	Better Care Capital Project	21,809	17,255	4,554	17,255	0	17,255	0
323151	Augusta House - Enablement Pods	469,882	469,882	0	6,265	463,617	469,882	0
	Adult Services	1,048,691	858,061	190,630	366,964	491,097	858,061	0
	Social Services Portfolio	5,936,837	1,925,744	4,011,093	678,379	1,247,365	1,925,744	0

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Economy Portfolio								
Tredegar Regeneration								
326163	Tredegar HLF	674,415	674,415	0	150,291	524,124	674,415	0
	Tredegar Regeneration	674,415	674,415	0	150,291	524,124	674,415	0
Ebbw Vale Town Centre								
326191	TRI - Urban Centre Commercial Property I	265,315	265,315	0	197,117	68,198	265,315	0
326192	TRI- Urban Centre Residential Property E	123,024	123,024	0	0	123,024	123,024	0
	Ebbw Vale Town Centre	388,339	388,339	0	197,117	191,222	388,339	0
Valleys Regional Park								
326200	VRP Ebbw Fach Trail	899	0	899	0	0	0	0
326205	VRP - Discovery Gateway	30,180	30,180	0	8,606	21,574	30,180	0
326206	Local Places for Nature Capital Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
326207	Parc Bryn Bach - Co Working Space	116,661	116,661	0	56,486	60,175	116,661	0
	Valleys Regional Park	147,740	146,841	899	65,092	81,749	146,841	0
The Works Site								
325097	Big Arch	1,027,603	0	1,027,603	0	0	0	0
325103	Learning Works	37,985	0	37,985	0	0	0	0
325220	Site Investigation Works	19,001	0	19,001	0	0	0	0
325225	Ebbw Valley Railway - Northern Extension	2,441	2,136	305	2,136	0	2,136	0

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<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	The Works Site	1,087,030	2,136	1,084,894	2,136	0	2,136	0
	Other Regeneration							
326006	Tech Valley s Initiative	465,776	0	465,776	0	0	0	0
326180	Lime Avenue Business Park	530,810	530,810	0	598,725	117,181	715,906	(185,096)
326181	Lime Avenue Employment park	2,495,101	0	2,495,101	0	0	0	0
326183	Regain 2	5,555,153	366,629	5,188,524	355,370	11,259	366,629	0
326184	Brexit Schemes	419,465	0	419,465	0	0	0	0
326193	TRI - Town Centre COVID-19 recovery ad:	529,818	37,530	492,288	37,300	230	37,530	0
326194	TT - Trinity Chapel & Abertillery Librar	1,002,388	0	1,002,388	0	0	0	0
326225	Heat Networks Project	17,385	0	17,385	0	0	0	0
326226	Electric Vehicle Chargepoints	20,085	763	19,322	763	0	763	0
326227	Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID	500,000	500,000	0	10,100	489,900	500,000	0
326252	Constrained Units - Roseheyworth	6,665	0	6,665	0	0	0	0
326265	Victoria Business Park - Development	39,251	0	39,251	0	0	0	0
326266	Brynmawr Retail Development	759,224	759,224	0	11,296	747,928	759,224	0
326267	Blaenau Gwent Digital	138,049	138,049	0	101,831	36,218	138,049	0
326268	Covid Recovery for Town Centres	367,464	285,101	82,363	285,101	0	285,101	0
326269	HiVE – Hi Value Engineering Centre - Mor	360,000	360,000	0	76,924	283,076	360,000	0
326271	Land Release Fund - Pithead Baths	224,878	224,878	0	1,700	223,178	224,878	0
	Other Regeneration	13,431,512	3,202,984	10,228,528	1,479,110	1,908,970	3,388,080	(185,096)
	Economy Portfolio	15,729,036	4,414,715	11,314,321	1,893,747	2,706,064	4,599,811	(185,096)

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Education and Active Living								
Education Services								
324125	Education Minor Works	48,497	748	47,749	688	60	748	0
324138	Education Capital Maintenance	73,003	42,217	30,786	42,217	0	42,217	0
324139	Education Capital Maintenance 20/21	103,743	0	103,743	0	0	0	0
324142	Georgetown Windows & Boiler Replaceme	6,206	0	6,206	0	0	0	0
324143	Rhos-y-fedwyn - Refurbishment	3,945	0	3,945	0	0	0	0
324144	St Marys - Refurbishment	200,000	24,473	175,527	24,473	0	24,473	0
324145	Tredegar Comp - Food & Technology	30,070	0	30,070	0	0	0	0
324146	Deighton - Kitchen	639	0	639	0	0	0	0
324147	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Services and Ac	3,450	0	3,450	0	0	0	0
324148	Coed y Garn Roof & Remedial Works	26,638	16,775	9,863	16,775	0	16,775	0
324149	Brynbach Primary Disabled Adaptations	70,000	9,939	60,061	9,939	0	9,939	0
324150	Ebbw Fawr - Developing 3/4 classrooms, t	100,000	0	100,000	0	0	0	0
324151	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Electrical Supply	17,842	17,842	0	17,482	360	17,842	0
324152	Brynmawr Canopy	100,000	100,000	0	24,720	75,280	100,000	0
324155	Brynmawr Comp Lift	110,000	0	110,000	0	0	0	0
324156	River Centre Boiler	70,000	0	70,000	0	0	0	0
324157	Tredegar Comprehensive Kitchen Electric	1,455	1,455	0	1,455	0	1,455	0
324158	Beaufort Hill Kitchen	93,771	93,771	0	93,771	1	93,771	0
324159	Glyncoed Highways Works	60,000	60,000	0	48,909	11,091	60,000	0
324161	Pen Y Cwm – Refurbishment Works	150,000	150,000	0	108,449	41,551	150,000	0
324162	St Mary s CIW Fire Alarm	30,000	30,000	0	20,709	9,291	30,000	0

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324164	Improving Ventilation in Education Setti	43,058	43,058	0	0	43,058	43,058	0
324165	Education Capital Maintenance 2021/22	954,248	954,248	0	0	954,248	954,248	0
324201	Class Size - Willowtown	69,557	0	69,557	0	0	0	0
324203	Period Poverty	5,028	0	5,028	0	0	0	0
324205	St. Marys CIW MUGA	11,450	11,450	0	0	11,450	11,450	0
324519	Digital 2030 Capital Grant - Post 16	4,621	0	4,621	0	0	0	0
324530	ALN	22,299	505	21,794	0	505	505	0
324532	Ebbw Fawr ASD	3,890	0	3,890	0	0	0	0
324560	Schools IT Infrastructure	49,929	49,929	0	44,577	5,352	49,929	0
324561	IT Upgrades - Schools	21,318	21,318	0	21,318	0	21,318	0
324580	Brynmaur 3G Pitch	962,480	962,480	0	573,177	389,303	962,480	0
324590	Tredeggar Comp 3G Pitch	79,359	0	79,359	0	0	0	0
324743	21st Century Schools Six Bells Project	50,295	50,295	0	9,262	41,033	50,295	0
324750	Band B - Welsh Medium New Build	5,962,761	150,000	5,812,761	112,827	37,173	150,000	0
324751	Band B - New Primary Ebbw Fawr Valley	8,702,596	105,000	8,597,596	74,825	30,175	105,000	0
324752	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Brynmaur	3,190,237	20,000	3,170,237	4,273	15,727	20,000	0
324753	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Abertillery	3,198,691	15,000	3,183,691	707	14,293	15,000	0
324754	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Tredegar	3,197,459	15,000	3,182,459	332	14,668	15,000	0
324755	Band B - Welsh Medium Remodelling Bro	901,556	130,455	771,101	87,550	42,905	130,455	0
	Education Services	28,730,091	3,075,958	25,654,133	1,338,437	1,737,521	3,075,958	0
	Active Living Services							
329089	Abertillery LC Demolition	1,048	1,048	0	1,048	1	1,048	0

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<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
329092	ALC - Changing Room Refurbishment	20,000	0	20,000	0	0	0	0
329095	AWPOG - Play Equipment	106,733	105,000	1,733	0	105,000	105,000	0
332368	Play Area Schemes - Boroughwide	12,439	0	12,439	0	0	0	0
	Active Living Services	140,220	106,048	34,172	1,048	105,001	106,048	0
	Education and Active Living	28,870,311	3,182,006	25,688,305	1,339,484	1,842,522	3,182,006	0

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Environment Portfolio								
Environmental Services								
327018	RCAF Long Term Organics Procurement	26,512	0	26,512	0	0	0	0
327039	Kerbside Collections	2,052	0	2,052	0	0	0	0
327042	Collaborative Change Programme 18-19	88,436	88,436	0	88,436	0	88,436	0
327043	Household Waste Recycling Centre	120,042	120,042	0	104,449	58,345	162,794	(42,752)
327044	AHP Waste Collections	52,380	52,380	0	0	52,380	52,380	0
327045	BRC Decommissioning Project	191,777	0	191,777	0	0	0	0
327046	Repair Cafe	1,066	0	1,066	0	0	0	0
327061	CATS	80,000	0	80,000	0	0	0	0
327065	Re:Fit	2,088,980	2,088,980	0	1,350	2,087,630	2,088,980	0
327067	Market Hall - Asbestos Removal	18,606	0	18,606	0	0	0	0
327068	Cemeteries Investment Programme	196,071	196,071	0	175,734	20,337	196,071	0
327069	Green Recovery	10,010	10,010	0	10,006	4	10,010	0
327070	WRAP Cymru Capital Funding	3,787	0	3,787	0	0	0	0
327071	Education Centre	200,000	200,000	0	920	199,080	200,000	0
327073	Kerbside Recycling Lorry	165,566	165,566	0	165,566	0	165,566	0
327074	New Vale HWRC Refurbishment Works	256,526	256,526	0	11,087	245,439	256,526	0
327076	Ultra Low Emission Vehicles	92,920	92,920	0	36,000	56,920	92,920	0
327080	Cemetery Capacity - Cefn Golau Tredegar	527,028	0	527,028	0	0	0	0
327081	Cemetery Capacity - Dukestown Tredegar	227,500	8,666	218,834	8,666	0	8,666	0
327082	Cemetery Capacity - Brynmawr	142,000	8,666	133,334	8,666	0	8,666	0
327083	Cemetery Capacity - Brynithel Abertiller	105,000	8,666	96,334	8,666	0	8,666	0

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Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
327090	Fly Tipping CCTV	14,000	14,000	0	14,004	0	14,004	(4)
327110	Allotment Support Grant	25,599	25,599	0	4,504	21,095	25,599	0
	Environmental Services	4,635,858	3,336,528	1,299,330	638,052	2,741,232	3,379,284	(42,756)
	Housing Environmental Health							
328221	Remediation of Contaminated Land/Dereli	154,269	2,470	151,799	2,470	0	2,470	0
350510	Improvement grants - new scheme	747,755	469,000	278,755	315,398	153,602	469,000	0
350550	Support for Independent Living	151,154	131,053	20,101	70,954	60,099	131,053	0
350560	Empty Property Grants	174,453	15,523	158,930	15,523	0	15,523	0
	Housing Environmental Health	1,227,631	618,046	609,585	404,346	213,700	618,046	0
	Environment Portfolio	5,863,489	3,954,574	1,908,915	1,042,398	2,954,932	3,997,330	(42,756)

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/9

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: December 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
Infrastructure Portfolio								
Engineering Services								
328040	Cwm By Pass	13,970	0	13,970	0	0	0	0
328149	SRIC - Tredegar Footway Improvements	25,000	25,000	0	0	25,000	25,000	0
328310	Local Transport Fund	9,625	9,625	0	9,625	0	9,625	0
328312	Local Transport Fund 2020/21	174,702	174,702	0	174,702	0	174,702	0
328314	Local Transport Network Fund	2,319	2,319	0	2,319	0	2,319	0
328315	Local Transport Fund - Project Retention	16,020	0	16,020	0	0	0	0
328318	Active Travel Fund	399,000	399,000	0	57,757	341,243	399,000	0
328323	Resilient Roads Fund	300,000	300,000	0	9,213	290,787	300,000	0
328340	LTF Metro Plus	222,734	222,734	0	222,734	0	222,734	0
328342	LTF Bedwellty Pits	990,000	990,000	0	36,721	953,279	990,000	0
328344	LTF Bus Stop Infrastructure	405,000	405,000	0	15,261	389,739	405,000	0
Engineering Services		2,558,370	2,528,380	29,990	528,332	2,000,048	2,528,380	0
Highways Network Management								
328063	Bridge Strengthening Works	1,857	0	1,857	0	0	0	0
328095	Ebbw Vale Railway study Phase 3	2,668	2,668	0	2,668	0	2,668	0
328269	Highways PB Imp. Works.	20,946	0	20,946	0	0	0	0
328270	Highways Improvement Works	1,692,700	1,075,654	617,046	1,075,654	0	1,075,654	0
328334	LGBI - Trinant Hall	59,747	45,805	13,942	45,805	0	45,805	0
328404	Flood Damage - Emergency Repairs	12,593	12,593	0	6,653	5,940	12,593	0
328405	Aberbeeg Road Repairs	110,498	34	110,464	34	0	34	0

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Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports		Capital Programme Funding Estimates						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/9</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
328406	Small Scale Works Grant	229,500	229,500	0	77,541	151,959	229,500	0
328408	Cwmcelyn Pond Sediment Removal	150,000	150,000	0	3,856	146,144	150,000	0
	Highways Network Management	2,280,509	1,516,254	764,255	1,212,212	304,042	1,516,254	0
	Infrastructure Portfolio	4,838,879	4,044,634	794,245	1,740,544	2,304,090	4,044,634	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/9

Capital Programme Funding Estimates

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
All Portfolios								
All Portfolios								
300300	City Deal	1,220,900	1,220,900	0	0	1,220,900	1,220,900	0
303990	OS Capital Admin/Design & Supervision	524,000	524,000	0	255,780	268,220	524,000	0
321112	Disabled Access - Special Programme	10,911	10,728	183	10,728	0	10,728	0
324672	The Company Shop - Tred	196,964	0	196,964	0	0	0	0
All Portfolios		1,952,775	1,755,628	197,147	266,508	1,489,120	1,755,628	0
All Portfolios		1,952,775	1,755,628	197,147	266,508	1,489,120	1,755,628	0

Capital Programme - 2021/22 Funding Estimates
Capital Report 2021/22

Management Reports		Capital Programme Funding Estimates						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2022/9</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: December 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	Total Capital Funding	65,670,125	20,118,988	45,551,137	7,177,715	13,169,125	20,346,840	(227,852)

End of Report

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Information on Capital Funding Changes 2021/22
New Approvals and/or material Funding Changes in Quarter Three

APPENDIX 2

Portfolio	Cost Centre	Scheme	Amount (£)	Funding Body	Type	Additional Information
Corporate Services						
	327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Works	-50,000	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Transfer to projects as agreed by Budget Holder.
Social Services						
	324770	Childcare Offer - Sixbells Scheme	-1,482,230	Welsh Government	Childcare Offer	
	324772	Childcare Offer - Blaina ICC Scheme	700,000	Welsh Government	Childcare Offer	
	324773	Childcare Offer - Swfryd Scheme	250,000	Welsh Government	Childcare Offer	
	324775	Childcare Offer - Brynmawr	532,230	Welsh Government	Childcare Offer	
	323151	Augusta House - Enablement Pods	104,521	ABHB	ICF	Additional Approval
	323152	Beaufort Road - Extension Training Flat	69,380	ABHB	ICF	Additional Approval
	323005	Tackling Food Poverty - WLGA	28,507	Welsh Local Government Association		New Approval for 2021/22
Economy						
	325097	Big Arch	8,452	Blaenau Gwent	RCCO	Contribution from Revenue Budget to fund project to completion.
	326184	Brexit Schemes	50,000	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Transfer to projects as agreed by Budget Holder.
	326269	HiVE – Hi Value Engineering Centre	162,000	Welsh Government	Economy, Skills and Natural Resources	New Approval for 2021/22
	326227	Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID	500,000	Welsh Government	Decarbonisation and Energy,	New Approval for 2021/22
	326271	Land Release Fund - Pithead Baths	224,878	Welsh Government	Land Building Development Fund	New Approval for 2021/22
	326194	TT - Trinity Chapel & Abertillery Library	1,002,388	Welsh Government	Transforming Towns	New Approval for 2021/22
Education, Active Living and Learning						
	324165	Education Capital Maintenance 2021/22	954,248	Welsh Government	21st Century Schools Programme	New Approval for 2021/22
Environment						
Infrastructure						
	328408	Cwmcelyn Pond Sediment Removal	150,000	Welsh Government	Natural Flood Management Programme	New Approval for 2021/22
All Portfolios						

It should be noted that the funding changes detailed above will not balance to total funding changes between Q2 to Q3

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Agenda Item 11

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22
Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Use of General and Earmarked Reserves 2021/2022**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr N Daniels, Leader & Executive Member for Corporate Services**
Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	24/02/22	01.03.22			07/03/22	16/03/22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report to the members of the Executive Committee the forecast reserves position for 2021/2022 as at Quarter 3 (31 December 2021).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 There are a number of statutory requirements concerning Local Authority Reserves, including:

- The Local Government Act 1972;
- The Local Government Finance Act 1988;
- The Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- The Local Government Act 2003; and
- The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

- 2.2 The CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) issued Bulletin 99: Local Authority Reserves and Balances in July 2014. This provides non-statutory guidance on relevant issues including:

- Proper accounting treatment; and
- Principles to assess the adequacy of reserves.

- 2.3 To ensure compliance with CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Panel Bulletin 99 and identified best practice, the Council revised its protocol for managing reserves, with effect from April 2015.

- 2.4 One aspect of the revised protocol concerns the enhancement of Elected Member engagement and scrutiny. To this end quarterly reports are prepared and presented to Executive and Joint Budget Scrutiny Committee during the financial year. These detail actual and forecast use of general and earmarked reserves, changes to the requirement to hold specific reserves and the level of reserve balances.

- 2.5 In order to adopt a long-term approach to the need to provide services to the citizens of Blaenau Gwent, the protocol was amended and agreed by Council in March 2016 to include a target level for general reserves. This was set as 4% of the last reported actual net revenue expenditure (as included in the Revenue Outturn return).

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 That the Executive Committee considers the forecast use of general and earmarked reserves for 2021/2022 and:

- consider the impact of the £4.649m favourable variance for 2021/2022 would have on the budgeted contribution to the General Reserve;
- note the forecast increase of the General Reserve in 2021/2022 to £12.402m, being 9.39% of net revenue expenditure, above the 4% target level;
- Consider the need for ongoing prudent financial management to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the financial resilience of the Council; and
- continue to challenge budget overspends and implement appropriate service Action Plans, where required.

3.2 Maintenance of general reserves at an adequate level is crucial to the Council being able to meet future liabilities arising from risks for which specific provision has not been made.

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

4.1 **National Well-being Goals**

The management of earmarked and general reserves (in recognition of the need to plan for known or predicted future obligations, unexpected events or emergencies), allows the Authority to deliver services in pursuance of its obligations under the national well-being goals.

4.2 **Corporate Priorities**

This report supports the Council Corporate Plan 2020/22 proposed outcome statement “An ambitious and Innovative Council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities”.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Financial Impact**

5.1.1 Section 6 provides an overall summary of the forecast financial position in relation to the balances in general and earmarked reserves at 31 March 2022.

5.1.2 The general reserve opening balance of £7.553m represents 5.72% of net revenue expenditure, which is above the 4% target level of £5.284m. Table 1 at 6.1.3 (below) shows the forecast position for the general reserve at year-end 2021/2022 to be an increase of £4.849m, to £12.402m. This balance would represent 9.39% of net revenue expenditure £7.118m above the 4% target level of £5.284m, indicating further progress towards strengthening the

financial resilience of the Council and providing a buffer to deal with unexpected future issues.

5.1.3 The forecast increase in general reserves is a result of:

- currently forecast net portfolio underspends of £4.649m and;
- an agreed budget contribution in 2021/22 of £0.200m to support medium term financial planning and strengthen the Council's financial resilience

5.1.4 Table 2 at 6.1.6 (below) shows the forecast level of specific/earmarked reserves at 31 March 2022 to be £21.065m, an in year increase of £0.284m.

5.1.5 Table 3 at 6.1.8 (below) shows the forecast level of specific/earmarked reserves per reserve category at 31 March 2022. Further details of earmarked reserve movements are included in Appendix 1.

5.1.6 Significant elements of these earmarked sums relate to grant funding held in respect of specific projects or services that will be utilised in delivering the relevant service outcomes. In future years, it is probable that there will be restrictions on public spending in order to mitigate the extraordinary levels of borrowing incurred by Central Government in dealing with Covid-19. It would therefore be prudent to retain appropriate levels of earmarked and general reserves to assist with a funding situation potentially similar to that experienced during the last decade.

5.2 Risk

5.2.1 The Council must ensure an appropriate level and use of reserves to support its financial sustainability and to meet future liabilities arising from risks for which a specific provision has not been made.

5.2.2 The 2021/2022 budget includes a planned increase in the general reserve of £0.2m and in earmarked reserves of £1.054m. Additional increases to the general reserve of £0.2m per annum are planned for the life of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy. However potential ongoing cost pressures and reductions in income associated with the response to Covid-19 may adversely impact on the Council's ability to maintain and increase the level of reserves.

5.2.3 Failure to comply with the requirements set out in CIPFA LAAP Bulletin 99: *Local Authority Reserves and Balances*, which include the implementation of a clear protocol for the establishment, use, control and review of reserves, could result in adverse comments by regulators.

5.2.4 A protocol for the management of reserves was adopted in April 2015 to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with CIPFA LAAP Bulletin 99 and identified best practice.

5.2.5

In the short-term, the level and adequacy of reserves are regularly reviewed and monitored through regular outturn/ forecast reporting. In the medium term, reserves are assessed as part of the budget-setting process and the Medium Term Financial Strategy, which includes provision for an increase in reserves of £0.2m per annum over the life of the Strategy.

5.2.6

There is a risk that failure to maintain reserves at an appropriate level will attract adverse criticism from regulators. This risk can be mitigated by application of the Council's Reserves Policy including increases to the General Reserve if required.

5.3 Legal

5.3.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.

5.3.2 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a duty on chief finance officers' to report on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves when the authority is considering its budget requirement.

5.3.3 Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the chief finance officer to report to all the authority's councillors if there is or is likely to be unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. This would include situations where reserves have become seriously depleted and it is forecast that the authority will not have the resources to meet its expenditure in a particular financial year.

5.4 Personnel

There are no direct personnel/staffing implications arising out of this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

6.1.1 The level of the Council's general reserve disclosed in the statutory accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2021 was £7.553m equating to 5.72% of net revenue expenditure (as reported in the 2020/2021 Revenue Outturn forms). The current 4% target level of general reserves is £5.284m.

6.1.2 The revenue budget forecast year-end position for 2021/2022 (as at end of Quarter 3) indicates a surplus of £4.649m.

6.1.3 Therefore, the potential impact on the forecast outturn position for the general reserve at 31 March 2022 would be as follows:

Table 1: General Reserve	£000
--------------------------	------

Balance at 31 March 2021	7,553
Budgeted Contribution to General Reserve	200
Contribution to the Reserve: Net Portfolio Underspends	4,649
Forecast Balance at 31 March 2022	12,402

- 6.1.4 Appendix 1 gives details of the total earmarked reserves held at the start of the 2021/2022 financial year (£20.781m) with actual reserve movements to the end of quarter 3 (31 December 2022) and forecast movements to 31 March 2022.
- 6.1.5 The level of earmarked reserves has been determined in accordance with the agreed reserves protocol. The level of earmarked reserves available to the Authority is forecast to increase by £0.284m in 2021/2022.
- 6.1.6 The current summary forecast outturn position for earmarked reserves at 31 March 2022 is as follows:

Table 2: Earmarked Reserves	£000
Balance at 31 March 2021	20,781
Budgeted Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	1,054
Reserve Adjustments	247
Actual Expenditure to Q3	(424)
Forecast Expenditure to Q4	(593)
Provisional Balance at 31 March 2022	21,065

- 6.1.7 For those reserves that have been utilised to fund actual expenditure to 31 December 2022 (£0.424m), details of the expenditure funded have been provided in Appendix 2. Details of increases in earmarked reserves (£0.247m) have been provided in Appendix 3.
- 6.1.8 The current summary forecast outturn position for the categories of specific/earmarked reserves at 31 March 2022 is as follows:

Table 3: Summary of Provisional Earmarked Reserve Balances at 31 March 2022	£000
Earmarked for Capital Purposes	745
Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves	13,335
Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves	5,136
Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied	1,849
Provisional Balance at 31 March 2022	21,065

6.1.9 The reserve categories are summarised as follows:

- Earmarked for Capital Purposes are to meet expenditure or liabilities arising on Capital schemes;
- Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves can be applied to fund revenue expenditure on specific schemes or services. These are retained at the discretion of the Council for known or potential liabilities and projects;
- Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves represent sums held by the Council but cannot be applied generally or specifically to fund services.
- Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied have yet to be applied to the specific scheme or service to which they relate, and cannot be applied to fund items other than those for which they were received.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

6.2

6.2.1 The management of earmarked and general reserves (in recognition of the need to plan for known or predicted future obligations, unexpected events or emergencies), helps demonstrate stewardship of the Authority's resources and its ability to provide services to the local community.

6.3 **Involvement** (*consultation, engagement, participation*)
Not applicable.

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

6.4.1 Stewardship of the Authority's resources allows for the provision of services to the local community in the short and long term.

6.5 **Preventative focus**
Not applicable.

6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

Not applicable.

6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

Not applicable.

6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

Not applicable.

6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**

A Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment has not been completed for the Authority's forecast use of reserves, as it provides details of the Authority's transactions for the financial year and position at the year-end.

This information can be utilised in making decisions that might help to reduce the inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage.

6.9b **Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report provides an estimated outturn position in relation to the Authority's reserve balances for the financial year, on an objective basis in accordance with relevant accounting standards, codes, concepts, principles, guidance and legislation.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 In the short-term, the level and adequacy of reserves are regularly reviewed and monitored through regular outturn/forecast reports.

7.2 There are legal requirements in respect of the reporting of reserves when setting the annual budget and the statutory outturn position is considered by the Authority's external auditors in their audit of the annual Statement of Accounts.

7.3 In the medium term, reserves are assessed as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Earmarked Reserves Movements 2021-2022

Appendix 2 – Expenditure Funded by Earmarked Reserves 2021-2022

Appendix 3 – Increases to Earmarked Reserves 2021-2022

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Appendix 1: Earmarked Reserves Movements 2021-2022

Name of Reserve	Balance Brought Fwd 1 April 2021	Reserve Adjustments		Total Reserve Adjustments	Actual Expenditure	Forecast Expenditure	Balance Carried Fwd 31 March 2022
		Increases	Decreases				
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Earmarked for Capital Purposes							
Deminimis Capital Works	86,098.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	86,098.46
Facilities	118,769.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118,769.00
Energy Centre	107,217.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	107,217.22
Industrial Units	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(50,000.00)	0.00
IT Infrastructure	225,811.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	225,811.79
Road Maintenance	229,715.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(229,715.00)	0.00
WRAP Regional Vehicles	206,579.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	206,579.85
Total Earmarked for Capital Purposes:	1,024,191.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(279,715.00)	744,476.32
Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves							
Budget Contingency Fund / Invest to Save	64,351.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	64,351.89
Business Support Hybrid Model	53,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	53,000.00
Corporate Landlord Building Rationalisation	73,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	73,000.00
COVID19 Response & Recovery	2,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(11,367.00)	0.00	1,988,633.00
Customer Services	95,892.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(4,601.00)	91,291.05
Discretionary Housing Payments	67,482.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	67,482.87
Displaced Expenditure - Social Services	87,230.00	87,656.00	0.00	87,656.00	(53,169.00)	(34,061.00)	87,656.00
Downsizing & Redundancy & Transitional Costs	183,038.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	183,038.71
Election Costs	36,228.83	140,000.00	0.00	140,000.00	0.00	0.00	176,228.83
Financial Planning / Resilience	2,500,000.00	1,054,000.00	0.00	1,054,000.00	0.00	0.00	3,554,000.00
Future Interest Rate	244,055.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	244,055.89
General/ Voluntary Sector Grants	27,680.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27,680.00
ICT	1,438,352.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	(91,564.00)	(99,561.00)	1,247,227.18
Individual Schools Budget (ISB)	168,491.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	168,491.81
Insurance Liabilities	2,851,230.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,851,230.80
Local / Strategic Development Plans	143,512.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	143,512.54
Match Funding Regeneration Projects	60,129.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	60,129.22
Members Local Grants	54,192.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(31,634.00)	22,558.28
Payroll Project Management	23,529.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,529.97
PRC Funding	293,219.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	293,219.00
Re-fit Loan Repayments	18,750.39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(18,750.39)	0.00
Specialist Commercial Advice (Silent Valley)	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(15,000.00)	85,000.00
Social Services - Legal Costs	400,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	400,000.00
Stock Conditions Survey	12,137.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,137.34
Strategic Business Reviews	193,061.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	193,061.27
Superannuation	600,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	600,000.00

Appendix 1: Earmarked Reserves Movements 2021-2022

Name of Reserve	Balance Brought Fwd 1 April 2021	Reserve Adjustments		Total Reserve Adjustments	Actual Expenditure	Forecast Expenditure	Balance Carried Fwd 31 March 2022
		Increases	Decreases				
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Taxation	133,913.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	(3,320.00)	0.00	130,593.08
Technology Park Feasibility Study	26,017.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	26,017.00
Test, Trace, Protect Service	77,944.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	(77,944.86)	0.00	0.00
Transport Oncost	147,470.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	147,470.00
Waste Services	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00
Winter Maintenace	200,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200,000.00
Total Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves:	12,493,911.98	1,281,656.00	0.00	1,281,656.00	(237,364.86)	(203,607.39)	13,334,595.73
Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves							
Building Control Fees	75,868.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	(38,461.00)	(19,101.00)	18,306.68
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	136,361.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	136,361.00
Deposits and Bonds	3,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,200.00
Land & Property Charges (Social Services)	161,954.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	161,954.55
LMS Balances	3,681,671.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,681,671.49
Section 106 Agreements	191,988.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	191,988.51
W Adoption Collaboration	708,973.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	708,973.95
Social Services - Gwent Regional Development (SP)	43,330.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	(17,143.83)	0.00	26,186.77
Workforce Development Collaboration	207,516.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	207,516.16
Total Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves:	5,210,864.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	(55,604.83)	(19,101.00)	5,136,159.11
Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied							
All Age School Forum	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100,000.00
Aneurin Bevan Health Board - Education	18,225.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18,225.89
Community Safety & CCTV	45,895.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	(11,663.00)	0.00	34,232.66
Contribution to Crematorium Infrastructure Works	63,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63,000.00
Early Action Together Programme	31,903.29	0.00	0.00	0.00	(19,378.74)	(12,524.55)	0.00
Early Years Grant	279,057.24	19,220.59	0.00	19,220.59	0.00	(73,324.00)	224,953.83
Education - Gypsy Travellers	21,028.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	21,028.42
Flood Risk Management	132,729.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	132,729.00
Homelessness Transitional Funding	55,463.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(4,467.85)	50,995.72
Individual Electoral Register	103,745.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	103,745.13
LEA / ALN Grant	168,729.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	168,729.16
Participatory Budget	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(100,000.00)	0.00	0.00
Period Poverty	12,796.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,796.05
Planning WAG Grant - Planning Committee	2,103.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,103.66
Regen General Contributions Unapplied (Town Centre Management)	65,621.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	65,621.25
Rights of Way Diversions	20,255.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,255.00
Scrutiny Development	7,867.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,867.15

Appendix 1: Earmarked Reserves Movements 2021-2022

Name of Reserve	Balance Brought Fwd 1 April 2021	Reserve Adjustments		Total Reserve Adjustments	Actual Expenditure	Forecast Expenditure	Balance Carried Fwd 31 March 2022
		Increases	Decreases				
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Small & Rural Schools Grant	35,904.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	35,904.00
SMIFFs	166,685.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	166,685.84
Syrian Resettlement Programme	173,520.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	173,520.88
Tai Calon Highways Maintenance (Commuted Sums)	374,876.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	374,876.00
Youth Service	72,360.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	72,360.34
Total Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied:	2,051,767.53	19,220.59	0.00	19,220.59	(131,041.74)	(90,316.40)	1,849,629.98
Total:	20,780,735.77	1,300,876.59	0.00	1,300,876.59	(424,011.43)	(592,739.79)	21,064,861.14

Earmarked for Capital Purposes	Revenue reserves established to meet expenditure or liabilities arising on Capital schemes.
Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves	Reserves that can be applied to fund revenue expenditure on specific schemes or services. These reserves are retained at the discretion of the Council for known or potential liabilities and projects.
Non-Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves	Reserves which represent sums that are held by the Council but cannot be applied generally or specifically to fund services. These includes amounts restricted by statutory provision and balances relating to other individuals or entities, such as the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal or Schools.
Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied	Grants or contributions received by the Council that should not have to be repaid to the awarding body but have yet to be applied to the specific scheme or service to which they relate. These reserves cannot be applied to fund items other than those for which they were received.

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Appendix 2: Expenditure Funded by Earmarked Reserves, 2021-2022

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Actual Expenditure to Q3</u>	<u>Purpose of Expenditure</u>
	£	
COVID19 Response & Recovery	11,367.00	Payment to Recruitment agency.
Displaced Expenditure - Social Services	53,169.00	Lateral flow testing and mental health professional training.
ICT	91,564.00	Network equipment costs in relation to ICT Equipment Refresh Programme.
Taxation	3,320.00	Tax Consultancy.
Test, Trace, Protect Service	77,944.86	Underspend from 2020/2021 to fund additional EHO's required in 2021/2022.
Building Control Fees	38,461.00	Additional staffing costs to cover sickness.
Social Services - Gwent Regional Development (SP)	17,143.83	Regional costs incurred - Wider Gwent Development for SP (Supporting People).
Community Safety & CCTV	11,663.00	This reserve covers the shortfall in funding from the PCC grant which pays towards the salary of the Community Safety Officer.
Early Action Together Programme	19,378.74	Employee Costs.
Participatory Budget	100,000.00	Grants to local businesses that they had to bid for in relation to community well-being projects.
Total to Qtr 3:	424,011.43	

Appendix 3: Increases to Earmarked Reserves, 2021-2022

<u>Name of Reserve</u>	<u>Amount to Q3</u>	<u>Source of Increase</u>
	£	
Displaced Expenditure - Social Services	(87,656.00)	Underspends on various social services schemes/grants to fund expenditure in 2022/2023.
Election Costs	(140,000.00)	Funding for May 2022 elections from current years underspend as agreed by Council on 25 November 2021.
Early Years Grant	(19,220.59)	Grant underspend.
Total to Qtr 3:	(246,876.59)	

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Agenda Item 12

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**

Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**

Report Subject: **Bridging The Gap (BTG) Programme 2021/2022 – Progress Update October to December 2021**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

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

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	24/02/2022	01.03.22			07/03/2022	16/03/2022		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the progress made with the Strategic Business Reviews during the period October to December 2021, the latest assessment of the financial achievement for the current financial year and the latest estimated achievement between 2022/23 and 2026/27.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 In recognising the challenges that the Council faces in the short, medium and long term, a programme of Strategic Business Reviews have been developed to deal with the potential funding gaps identified in the MTFS (Table 1) and to improve the financial resilience of the Council.
- 2.2 In agreeing the budget for 2021/2022 the estimated achievement of BtG was £755,000 contributing to a surplus budget of £1.3m.
- 2.3 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) currently identifies budget gaps for 2022/23 to 2026/27 as:-

Table 1: Budget Gaps (surplus) per MTFS (February 2022)

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Budget Gap / (Surplus) Prior to BtG Opportunities	148	1,224	3,071	6,683	10,297

- 2.4 The latest assessment of the potential achievement of the BtG programme (as per the MTFs) is estimated to be £6.7m between 2022/2023 and 2026/2027. Table 2 provides the annual assessment of achievement.

Table 2: Latest Estimated Achievement of BtG

	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	Total £'000
Estimated Achievement:	2,588	1,180	1,262	846	846	6,722

- 2.5 For 2022/2023 onwards the forecast budget gaps / (Surplus) based upon the estimated achievement above are:-

Table 3: Budget Gaps / (Surplus) following application of BtG Opportunities

	2022/2023 £000s	2023/2024 £000s	2024/2025 £000s	2025/2026 £000s	2026/27 £000s
Remaining Budget Gap / (Surplus)	(2,440)	(2,544)	(1,959)	807	3,575

- 2.5 The Council's Corporate Leadership Team, supported by officers from all services are continuing to identify / develop additional BtG proposals to close the future years' budget gaps.
- 2.6 The budget gaps identified within the report are based upon the Medium Term Financial Strategy assumptions included within the 2022/2023 Budget Report. These assumptions include:
- An increase in funding from Welsh Government of 3% for 2022/2023, 2% for 2023/2024 and cash flat thereafter
 - Pay awards & price inflation of 2% per annum
 - Annual cost pressures £2m per annum (from 2023/24).
- 2.7 Variations to/from these assumptions will impact the budget gaps.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1 – (Recommended Option)**

Members of the Executive Committee consider the report and provide appropriate challenge to the Bridging the Gap programme.

3.2 **Option 2**

Members of the Executive Committee Scrutiny Committee do not accept the report.

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

4.1 The Bridging the Gap programme supports the achievement of the Outcome Statement of an ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities, supporting:

- The financial resilience of the Council
- Developing a more commercial organisation to generate income and deliver cost reductions to make local services sustainable and raise money to re-invest in our priorities

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.2 **Financial Year 2021/2022 – Forecast Out-turn**

5.1.3 Table 4 identifies the Strategic Business Reviews, the estimated achievement and the forecast actual achievement to be delivered in 2021/2022.

Table 4: Strategic Business Reviews Forecast Out-turn 2021/2022

Strategic Business Review	Estimated Achievement 2021/2022 £'000	Forecast Achievement 2021/2022 £'000	(Adverse) / Favourable Variance £'000
Industrial Units	0	108	108
Commercial Waste	0	0	0
Income Recovery	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	0	0	0
Commercial Activity	0	0	0
Third Party Spend	490	490	0
Assets & Property	35	180	145
Review of MRP	0	0	0
Future Workplace & Service Delivery	0	0	0
Growth Strategy	230	230	0
Low Carbon	0	0	0
TOTAL	755	1,038	253

5.1.4 Overall, the forecast achievement is expected to exceed the estimated achievement of £0.75m by £0.25m for the current financial year. This is due to:

- the successful outcome of the appeals on the rateable values of the Council's property and assets, with the Council receiving a rates rebate, relating to previous years' charges, totalling £160,000. Further appeals are anticipated during the current financial year.
- Rental income on the Industrial Units portfolio exceeding the income budget by £108,000.

- 5.1.5 A number of Strategic Business Reviews have no financial achievement for 2021/2022, due to the impact the Covid-19 pandemic is having on the Council's ability to progress the Reviews including:
- Fees and Charges due the economic impact of the pandemic on the residents and local businesses
 - Commercial Waste, there was a delay in implementing the new service change due to closure of businesses within the borough as a result of the national lockdown in March 2020.
- 5.1.6 A progress update on the individual business reviews is attached at Appendix 1.
- 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**
- 5.2.1 Current assessment of achievement against the Strategic Business reviews do not identify sufficient financial benefits to Bridge the funding Gap identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy in the medium to long term. Additional / alternative proposals will therefore be required to ensure that the Council can set a balanced budget.
- 5.3 **Legal**
- 5.3.1 The Council must set a balanced budget on an annual basis and the Bridging the Gap programme will support this requirement.
- 5.4 **Human Resources**
- 5.4.1 The Strategic Business Review, Future Place and Service Delivery, will have an impact on staff as it will result in a variation to Terms and Conditions.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**
- 6.1.1 The scope and outcome, including key activities for each of the Strategic Business Reviews is attached at Appendix 1.
- 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**
- 6.2.1 The Bridging the Gap Programme supports the Council in the development of its annual budgets which in turn will allow the Council to deliver services to the public.
- 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
- 6.3.1 Officers & Members of the Council are involved in the development of the Bridging the Gap Strategic Business Reviews.
- 6.3.2 The proposals have/will be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

- 6.4.1 The Bridging the Gap programme supports the Council's medium term financial planning in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
- 6.5.1 Included within the Bridging the Gap programme is a proposal focussing on an evaluation of the long term impact of prevention and early intervention on reducing the requirement for high cost services and better outcomes for our most vulnerable residents.
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
- 6.6.1 Achievement of the Bridging the Gap proposals will require cross Council working and collaboration / partnerships with other stakeholders.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
- 6.7.1 Bridging the Gap proposals have been developed across the Council and are crosscutting in nature.
- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
- 6.8.1 The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and the Bridging the Gap programme includes the strategic business review, Low Carbon.
- 6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***
N/A
- 6.9b ***EqlA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***
- 6.8.1 Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken on the opportunities taken forward as part of the Bridging the Gap proposals.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 Progress against predicted delivery of Bridging the Gap proposals form part of the budget monitoring arrangements and is monitored and reviewed by the Strategic Commercial and Commissioning Board, Scrutiny Committee & Executive.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1*

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Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio Holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022			
Industrial Portfolio	Ellie Fry	<p>To review the Council's Industrial Unit Portfolio to identify areas for improvement and opportunities to maximise income.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a long term sustainable income source for the Council. Explore and develop new income streams. Reduce reactive maintenance liabilities. Improve quality of portfolio to further support economic development. Get greater visibility of income and expenditure to support invest/divest decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed agents to undertake high value RR's. Appointed agents to manage service charge (SC) program Planned 1st phase of Capex/revenue investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up new accountancy structure Implement SC to pilot estate Completed handover of Lime Avenue units to portfolio Handover of BoxHyb units Completion of first lettings at Lime Av. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of rent review program Review of 1st phase SC program Begin targeted investment program on portfolio Recruitment of key estates role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further role out of SC. Continued investment in portfolio. Completion of 						
			Financial Management:-		Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)							
			Estimated Financial Achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 of the high value rent reviews are underway and initial valuations are showing a very positive reply due to positive market conditions. On target to roll out service charge program to pilot estate by end Q2. We have completed the letting of 5 of the 9 Lime Av hybrid units with a further 2 under offer and with solicitors. There has been strong interest in the remaining 2 which I would anticipate being let by the end of Q3. Awaiting rent review results to update figures. 							
			2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025					
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000								
0	0	100	0	50								
Risk Management:-												
Risks / Issues					Mitigating Actions							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departure of Team Manager Estates & Asset Management Lack of resource (legal, estates, tech services) Negative PR associated with actions End of year accounts affect finance resources required to manage portfolio budgets Covid-19 related rent arrears 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members briefings to forewarn about PR issues Recruitment underway for estates & legal role Communications Officer in post to support PR going forward Regular credit reviews to keep onto of debt and appropriate action being taken. 							
Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022			
Commercial Waste	Richard Crook	<p>To roll out a new Commercial Waste service borough wide. A successful capital bid secured £250,000 for Blaenau Gwent's Commercial Waste Service.</p> <p>During the financial year 2019/2020, the Trade Waste Service underwent a full revamp with a revised implementation date of 1st April 2021.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of Service [May 2021] Liaise with customers re. any teething issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidation of the new service Monthly budget monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin proactive marketing of new service to attract more customers, annual review of pricing strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of online contracts and Duty of Cares Implementation of revised pricing schedule 						
			Financial Management:-		Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)							
			Estimated Financial Achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Service was launched on Tuesday 4th May following delay [this was to allow businesses to reopen after relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions around non-essential businesses]. New Service continues to be consolidated, initial issues with vehicles, rounds and customer's containment requirements have settled. Budget being monitored with Portfolio Accountant 							
			2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025					
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000								
0	0	0	64	96								
Risk Management:-												
Risks / Issues					Mitigating Actions							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 3rd Covid-19 wave could see the reintroduction of restrictions meaning some customers would have to close and therefore suspend their service requirements. 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some customers would continue to operate, therefore minimising losses. 							

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables																										
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022																										
Income Recovery	Rhian Hayden	To review current income recovery activities to ensure best / efficient practices in place. Intended outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income recovery policies are appropriate and include early intervention actions agreed Fees & charges are implemented payment in advance of service delivery (where appropriate) thereby avoiding costs of issuing invoices easy access to various payment methods use of technology is maximised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current arrears levels Update debt analysis Implement agreed fees & charges for 2021/22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor debt levels & ongoing recovery rates Revisit recommendations of CIPFA review Identify services where payment in advance can be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor debt levels & ongoing recovery rates Consult with service areas identified where payment in advance could be implemented Recommend pilot scheme – attending community organised sessions, providing advice as appropriate (subject to lifting of restrictions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor debt levels & ongoing recovery rates Work with services where payment in advance can be implemented Review outcomes from the pilot scheme and continue attending community organised sessions (providing advice as appropriate) 																													
			Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)																													
Estimated Financial Achievement																																			
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025																															
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000																															
54	0	0	0	0																															
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Income Recovery review has been impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. 2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant numbers of Blaenau Gwent residents have been affected by the economic impact of the pandemic and throughout 2020/21 the Council saw increasing daily contacts from residents indicating they were having difficulty paying their bills (including Council Tax, NNDR & other Council liabilities e.g. Industrial Unit rentals) – alternative payment arrangement have been agreed and are being monitored including payment holidays, smaller instalment payments over a longer period of time. Where appropriate individuals have been encouraged to apply for Council Tax Reduction Scheme (eligible applications have increased significantly compared to previous years) and signposted to other advice organisations. Limited formal recovery action has been undertaken (this is consistent with the agreed approach across all Welsh LA's) Unfortunately the planned attendance at community organised sessions to provide advice to the public was suspended in line with the government's coronavirus restrictions. Whilst many Direct Debits were cancelled there has been an increased take up overall from those who would previously have paid by cash or cheque (a consequence of the national lockdowns & restrictions) The Council Tax portal is now online with approximately 950 registering to use the service – when registered Council Tax payers are able to receive / view their accounts on line, make payments, set up a direct debit. There is also the ability to report change of circumstances via the my Council Services app. The overall impact of the above is a £1.3m increase in the level of arrears as at 31 March 2021 when compared to 2020:-																																
			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Arrears as at 31 March 2020 £000's</th> <th>Arrears as at 31 March 2021 £000's</th> <th>Increase / (Decrease) £000's</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Council Tax</td> <td>5,046</td> <td>7,069</td> <td>2,023</td> <td>Reduced collection rates have been identified across Wales, WG have acknowledged this pressure on LA budgets and provided a grant at the end of 2020/21 to help mitigate some of this (for BG this was £587k).</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sundry Accounts</td> <td>5,714</td> <td>5,191</td> <td>(523)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>HB Overpayments</td> <td>1,561</td> <td>1,372</td> <td>(189)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>12,321</td> <td>13,632</td> <td>1,311</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>									Arrears as at 31 March 2020 £000's	Arrears as at 31 March 2021 £000's	Increase / (Decrease) £000's		Council Tax	5,046	7,069	2,023	Reduced collection rates have been identified across Wales, WG have acknowledged this pressure on LA budgets and provided a grant at the end of 2020/21 to help mitigate some of this (for BG this was £587k).	Sundry Accounts	5,714	5,191	(523)		HB Overpayments	1,561	1,372	(189)		Total	12,321	13,632	1,311	
	Arrears as at 31 March 2020 £000's	Arrears as at 31 March 2021 £000's	Increase / (Decrease) £000's																																
Council Tax	5,046	7,069	2,023	Reduced collection rates have been identified across Wales, WG have acknowledged this pressure on LA budgets and provided a grant at the end of 2020/21 to help mitigate some of this (for BG this was £587k).																															
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HB Overpayments	1,561	1,372	(189)																																
Total	12,321	13,632	1,311																																
			2021/22 – Quarter 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current debt analysis continues CT arrears reduced by £1.1m up to Quarter 3 WG to provide £19.3m funding to LA's for loss of CT collection, distribution method still to be decided Recommendations of CIPFA being reviewed. 																																
Risk Management:-																																			
Risks / Issues				Mitigating Actions																															
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic impact of Covid 19 may have medium / long term implications 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor arrears levels & compliance with agreed payment arrangements 																															

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Fees and Charges	Rhian Hayden	<p>To review and develop an approach to the setting of fees and charges that reflects full cost recovery, and identifies further opportunities for raising income from discretionary services. Options to stretch targets on those budget lines that over achieving will be explored in future years.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <p>Fees and Charges are set at an appropriate level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review baseline income for 2020/21 - to assess underlying issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor Q1 forecast position Develop a priority matrix to determine which areas have potential to develop into full cost recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options appraisals for individual areas in line with agreed priority list Re-establish the Officer Working Group and commence review of Fees & Charges Register for 2022/2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options appraisals for individual areas in line with agreed priority list Complete Review of Fees & Charges Register for 2022/23 and report to Council 		
			Financial Management:-				Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)	
Estimated Financial Achievement			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees & Charges Register reviewed and updated during the quarter. Report to Council on 3 March to approve charges for 2022/2023. 					
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025
£'000	£'000	£'000					£'000	£'000
121	0	100	100	100				
Risk Management:-								
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political agreement to move to full cost recovery Reduced demand for Service as a consequence of Loss of custom with increased charges 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued monitoring of income collected through fees & charges Fees & Charges are set in consultation with relevant stakeholders 					

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Commercial activity, investment and new income	Richard Crook	<p>This strategic review will focus on identifying additional commercial opportunities to supplement the current activities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees and charges Developing the Industrial Portfolio Current income from traded or shared services Property Investment inside the Borough and out of the Borough Investment in energy and low carbon activities Disposals or development of assets and property <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing for Exec around Wind Turbine opportunity Planning Feasibility work being undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of planning application for Turbine Review Investment Framework inc advice around ROI Identify Investment funds in MTFS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement exercise for Turbine Market review of potential property investments Finalise funding arrangement for the Turbine Review Gov Tech Opportunity Review Industrial estate Energy Challenge Consider LUF investment Complete SV Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign off Commercial arrangements with SV for the Turbine Report and agree on SV Options Agree Investment Fund in MTFS 		
			Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)		
Estimated Financial Achievement								
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025
£'000	£'000	£'000					£'000	£'000
0	0	0	50	50				
Risk Management:-								
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions					
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 					

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder		Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Third party expenditure – commissioning, procurement and contract management	Bernadette Elias	<p>The Council commissions, procures and manages contracts with a wide range of third party suppliers across all its services spending circa. £80m +. This strategic business review seeks to identify for efficiencies and improved outcomes where possible.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <p>Through a combination of re-negotiated contract terms, consolidation of contracts competitive tendering and effective contract management, we are seeking to maximise cashable and non-cashable benefits comprising cost reductions, cost avoidance, efficiency savings (through alternative payment methodologies) and social and environmental benefits through the inclusion of community benefits and social value contract clauses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCCB Check and Challenge process agreed for Contracts above £75,000; • Operational Board Terms of Reference (TOR) reviewed to provide Check & Challenge for Below £75,000 contracts; • 2021/22 procurement programme has identified circa 320 recurring and/or planned contracts; • Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 1 activities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Quarter 1 Outcomes; • Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 2 activities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Quarter 2 Outcomes; • Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 3 activities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Quarter 3 Outcomes; • Contracts prioritised by renewal date and value; Procurement officers assigned service areas / categories and commenced Quarter 4 activities; • Collate and Report 2022/23 Forward Procurement Programme;
			Financial Management:-			
Estimated Financial Achievement			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)			
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement officers are actively engaging with service areas to deliver the 2021/22 procurement programme; • BtG commercial opportunities considered as part of each sourcing exercise; • All sourcing exercises above the tendering threshold (£75k) are subject to competitive tendering in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR); • Pre-procurement and contract award reports are submitted to commercial board to ensure effective check & challenge; • All above tender threshold procurements afford bidders the ability to either transact via purchase card and/or to offer early settlement discounts; • The Corporate Purchase Card programme continues to expand as an alternative payment methodology. The programme affords suppliers better cash flow and includes an annual 1% rebate which contributes to the BtG savings target. In summary we currently have 55 cards in the programme and a year to date spend of £1,993413.57 as compared with a spend of £1,446021.07 for the same period in 2020/21; • The Council either leads and/or participates in a number of collaborative procurement arrangements which includes management fees and/or spend rebates. 		
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000			
550	490	250	250	250		
Risk Management:-						
Risks / Issues				Mitigating Actions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract are awarded at a local level without due consideration to the wider organisational objectives. • Commissioning and procurement activities fail to realise the intended outcomes. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCCB established to provide robust governance around the Council's 3rd Party spend and wider commercial activities. • Client and procurement officers will continue to challenge all existing contracts to determine commercial effectiveness. • Procurement officers will continuously monitor in-year spend to identify further commercial opportunities. 		

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022		Quarter 2 2021/2022		Quarter 3 2021/2022		Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Assets and Property	Richard Crook	<p>The Council has a range of property assets. This review will ascertain their value to the Council and identify how best to maximise these assets to strengthen our balance sheet. This review would include buildings and green spaces and will align with the growth strategy.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-operational buildings identified and programme of disposals agreed. Rating Agents appointed to review rates liability and identify potential savings. Leased in properties identified and discussions with service users ongoing. Area review of land holdings discussed and criteria for review agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target date to discuss rating appeals in respect of Abertillery properties set with VOA Ongoing inspections and appeals by Rating Agents Area Review Criteria and process agreed with Members Lease renewal terms agreed for 20 Church Street – Housing office Obtain external valuations of staff tenanted residential property Ongoing discussions with Landlords agent in respect of re-gearing Anvil Court lease Bring Bridge Street Health Centre lease to an end pending Social Services vacating team to Anvil Court. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal programme – Blaina toilets informal tender for sale Discussions/negotiations with staff on residential tenanted properties for subsequent sale as per non-operational disposal list Ongoing rating discussions and appeals between retained rating agents and VOA Rating review of Civic Centre once decommissioning is finalised Ongoing discussions with Landlords agent in respect of re-gearing Anvil Court lease Area Review Criteria and process agreed with Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal programme reviewed Ongoing review of rating liabilities Ongoing discussions with Landlords agent in respect of re-gearing Anvil Court lease 					
			Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)					
Estimated Financial Achievement			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In year savings achieved through back dated NNDR rebates against the 2021/22 target to date total £180,000. Application for 3 months' rates relief on the basement, ground, fourth and fifth floors of the Civic Centre has been submitted. Agreements and actual savings yet to be determined. Community Asset transfer agreed for Queen Street Primary. Legal completion pending (Budget savings applied to previous year). Abertillery Toilets sold, further sales being considered for 2021/22 from non-operational list. 								
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025							
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000							
85	35	50	0	0							
Risk Management:-											
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex legal issues delaying/preventing sale Departmental or Ward member opposition to sales Operational issues with sale to retained land Level of rates reduction/liability may be challenged. Reduction in rental levels on lease renewal may be unsatisfactory Property Solicitor is about to commence maternity leave, potential difficulty in backfilling the post which could mean a delay in undertaking property transactions. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure adequate legal support to review documents/legal title in advance of sale Communication and consultation with stakeholders and area review criteria agreed in advance Provide option appraisal for alternatives to sale Specialist Rating Adviser appointed Property Advisor appointed to renegotiate lease terms/rental in respect of Anvil Court 								

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables		
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022		
Review of the MRP Policy	Rhian Hayden	<p>To undertake a review of the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to determine options available for consideration when determining the optimum MRP strategy</p> <p>Intended outcome Identification of optimum MRP Strategy for Blaenau Gwent CBC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of current MRP policy Review of current methodology applied for supported & unsupported borrowing Identification of options to provide optimum MRP Strategy / comparison of MRP charges for options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to Council recommending change to MRP (subject to outcome of findings during Quarter1) Review & update of current asset lives in readiness for policy change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review & update of current asset lives in readiness for policy change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review & update of current asset lives in readiness for policy change 		
Financial Management:-			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)					
Estimated Financial Achievement			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current MRP policy has been reviewed Alternative options for making prudent MRP have been identified & assessment of each option has been undertaken Proposals to amend MRP Policy considered & supported by Corporate Overview Scrutiny & Executive Committees during July 2021 Report has been provided to Audit Wales for their views Proposals to be considered by Council in September 2021 (rearranged due to number of agenda items on July Council agenda) MRP Policy agreed by Council on 25 November 2021. Initial discussions have taken place with Technical Services regarding the review of Asset Lives. 					
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023					2023/2024	2024/2025
£'000	£'000	£'000					£'000	£'000
0	0	1,335 *					0	0
<i>*Subject to approval of a change in Policy by Council</i>								
Risk Management:-								
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions					
MRP Policy not compliant with guidance			Proposals will be developed with due regard to WG guidance					

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022

Future work place and service delivery	Michelle Morris	<p>This is a new Strategic Business Review that merges the previous business review on customer experience and the business review on workplace transformation.</p> <p>The impact of the pandemic has force the organisation to think radically about how and where it will deliver services to the communities in Blaenau Gwent. This Programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Operating Model; Community Hubs to improve customer access to council services; Democratic Hub at the General Offices for formal Council business; Permanent vacation of Civic Centre and move to Agile Working Model based on remaining office accommodation; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Programme Governance Open new Democratic Hub and pilot agile meeting model Open new Community Hubs Commence project to decommission Civic Centre Agree new Agile Working Policy Commence leadership development to support new working arrangements Complete consultation with all staff moving to home or agile working and agree variation to contracts Complete Communication Plan to support change programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence full Council Diary using new agile meeting arrangements (in line with relaxation of covid restrictions) Continue to develop the Community Hubs to broaden the services delivered - Phase 2 completed Design and procurement of Anvil Court refurbishment – in progress Commenced return to the office (in line with WG Guidance) Revision to the application of the Mileage Allowance – Completed Continued to progress decant of Civic Centre Records Management progressing well with disposal and retention in line with policy Leadership Development - Commenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete establishment of new Democratic Hub Continue to develop the Community Hubs – Phase 3 Complete decant from Civic Centre Progress with the refurbishment of Anvil Court in line with agreed plan Masterplan for the redevelopment of the site completed and agreed Complete Leadership Seminars to support move to new working arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Centre decanted and decommissioned, tender returned and awaiting award of contract Community Hubs & Democratic operating BAU – within Covid restrictions Progress with the refurbishment of Anvil Court in line with agreed plan Achieve full financial savings to support 2022/23 Revenue Budget

Financial Management:-					Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)	
Estimated Financial Achievement						
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025		
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
50	0	400	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme on-target for Quarter 2 deliverables; Democratic Hub now operational; Community Hubs now in Phase 3 of delivery; Change in Out of Hours service delivery to a local provider – completed; Leadership support in progress to assist in moving to new agile working model; 	

Risk Management:-						
Risks / Issues				Mitigating Actions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays to the final decommissioning of civic centre due to the need to relocate IT Servers to new host and the impact of global supplies shortage Risk of increased costs from procurement activity due to pressures within the economy and the increasing price of goods and services Impact on staff well-being from the return to the workplace 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk being managed and removal of servers prioritised for January 2022 Tenders being developed for issuing early in 2022 Continue to comply with Covid restrictions in the workplace, ensure risk assessments are in place, leadership development and support to ensure managers understand their role in supporting staff, provision of support via occupational health 		

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Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Growth Strategy	Richard Crook	<p>Our Growth Strategy involves a programme of housing development that will see an impact on our revenue streams through increase Council Tax. This will contribute to the MTFS and is a critical element of building strong communities.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring back into use 5-10% of vacant properties per annum (circa 40) To support the delivery of circa 400 new houses by 2023 To increase the economic competitiveness of Blaenau Gwent in the 2022 UKCI To secure £548,000 pa into the local economy with 100 households attracted/retained in BG To implement water and wind turbines to generate 3.6 mW and £2.5m of investment To have commenced an investment portfolio for BG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote housing sites for private development Continue to administer loans and grants for vacant properties (post covid) Work through planning process on housing sites SAB issues - address (Davies, Works) Delivery programme for EV School site, to inform build out rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint new vacant property officer Begin 'investment portfolio' with Industrial Units review Silent Valley wind turbine scoping and planning Lovell's site 65% built 50% sold Persimmon site starts build SUDs scheme approved for Davies site Stage 2 decision on Ashvale Planning/SABS Northgate Delivery programme Northgate Development brief Civic Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal launch Energy Prospectus linked to COP26 CCR approval for Tredegar? Completion of Golwg Y Bryn Completion of Greenacres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Financial Management:-					Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)
Estimated Financial Achievement					21/22 Q1 and Q2 updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golwg Y Bryn - £16.8 million Lovell development of 100 homes (70 open market, 30 affordable). During Q1 12 OM and 9 SR units completed, which brings the number of units to date to 77 completed, 68 of which are open market. The development will be completed during Q2. Max Council Tax return associated with the development £142k. Carn Y Cefn – £29million Persimmon development of 277 homes (222 private, 55 affordable). The development is onsite, show home will open Q3, first homes occupied Q2 22/23. Annual build target 30 units (up to 50 depending on sales demand). 5 phase development. Max Council Tax return associated with the development £316k. Northgate – 56 homes (51 open market, 5 affordable). Anticipated start on site Q3 21/22. The first homes will be completed Q1/Q2 2022/23. Annual build rate 25 – 30 per/annum, 2 year build programme. Max Council Tax return associated with the development £108k. Ashvale – Circa 70 homes (63 open market, 7 affordable). Dependent on CCR funding (determination Q3) and subject to contract Max Council Tax return associated with the development £120k. *max CT return does not make consideration to any applied discounts, working assumption is 80% paying full CT tax and relates to open market homes (not social rent)
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
184	230	300	100	100	

- Civic Centre framework being prepared by the Urbanists to inform the development brief to be developed in Q3
- Nantyglo School Site; members briefing to be scheduled for Q3 to outline a proposed development programme to bring forward the site.
- 12 'Empty Property Grants' received approval in Q1, which amount to the value of £287,963.44 and 1 property was completed and brought back into use.
- 2 Houses to Homes applications were approved and amounted to a total of £50,000.

Risk Management:-

Risks / Issues	Mitigating Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SABS decisions causing delays on development • Internal staff resources e.g. planning to make determination on applications • Escalating material costs associated with development • Increasing house prices/demand – potential stall to the upward trend • Supply outstrips demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing discussions with the SAB approving body and developers • Contingency with funding applications • Positive uplift in Social Housing Grant to assist development where appropriate • Monitoring activity and close liaison with developers • Development programme considered alongside wider policy docs and strategies e.g. LDP/Empty Property

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Low Carbon	Michelle Morris	Develop a Low Carbon Plan which sets out an ambitious vision and targets for BG to become a Low Carbon Borough and supports the corporate objectives of being a more Efficient Council and Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities. <u>Intended outcome</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readiness Assessment (RA) – Transport (Direct) complete • Response to BG Climate Assembly findings complete • Agree high level timeline for RA for all Transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report to Scrutiny Committee • Monitor/Progress delivery of actions from RA – Transport (Direct) • Complete 2nd RA • Council Report Template updated to ensure CC impact taken into account in all reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 3rd RA • Annual Report to Council • Monitor/Progress delivery of actions from completed RA • First annual report to WG completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 4th RA • All Transitions to be completed to inform high level action plan • Monitor/Progress delivery of actions from completed RA • Annual Progress Report to be reported to Council

Financial Management:-					Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)
Estimated Financial Achievement					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter 3 actions on target
2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
138	0	200	200	200	

Risks / Issues		Mitigating Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New investment may be required to ensure that actions can be progressed to support transition to carbon neutral • Need to ensure that policy development/service re-design is under-pinned by the principles of achieving carbon neutral council • Capital Programme needs to support delivery through investment in the right designs and technology e.g. carbon neutral buildings 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RA need to identify funding gaps/opportunities or where we need to change funding model to support this work • All Committee Reports to identify impact on carbon emissions to ensure that the organisation builds a more sustainable future • All investment decisions need to include impact on carbon emissions and ensure the Council only invests in low carbon or carbon free solutions

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Use of external grants	Bernadette Elias	<p>Scope of the Review This strategic business review is concerned with deployment of additional grant funding that is available to the council and its partners. It is estimated that the organisation receives approximately £22m additional funding to support our priorities. This review will explore how the grants are utilised across the council to deliver outcomes for our residents.</p> <p>This review will also consider the impact of the removal of these grants and the risk placed on core funding.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better organisational oversight of how grants support our corporate priority areas. Clearer lines of accountability with identified leads to ensure delivery of intended outcomes and management of risk to core funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start Review and update of the grants register with resource colleagues Initial scoping for review of Regeneration grants with service and finance colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated grants register on SCCB agenda and presented quarterly to keep organisational oversight Finalise and agree scope for Regen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings from review of Regen presented to SCCB Quarterly reporting of grants register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly reporting of grants register Focus of next phase of review agreed
		<p>Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating of the Grants Register is still work in progress due to other priority work. anticipated this work will now progress during quarter 4 An initial meeting has taken place with Regeneration Service area to scope out the work. Next phase is to finalise the scope and progress activity during quarter 4 				
Risk Management:-						
Risks / Issues			Mitigating Actions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 						

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Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022

Developing our customer experience and digital ambitions	Bernadette Elias	<p>This review supports the customer focus and use of technology themes in the Commercial strategy</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Customer Service experience for residents of the borough Creation of Community Hub model Delivery of 12-month Digital programme set out for Council Collaboration with NPT and Torfaen on Digital projects – best practice to be shared across Council Development of Leadership & Development opportunities Links into ICT investment roadmap 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Centre review commenced focussing on Customer Service delivery Working with community services, mapping process and understanding customer experience Development and introduction of service level standards, Review of answerphone message Review of out of hours' service Community Hubs model preparation and development <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital programme to support the new operating model Progression of externally supported digital projects, Adult Social Care, GovPay, Tech Valley and Democracy Planning for Leadership & Development opportunities to raise awareness and scope of digital Digital apprentice role developed 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development of Contact Centre review – focus on training / skills gap to support improved service delivery Local out of hours' service delivery from July 2021 Community hubs implementation <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital programme to support the new operating model, hybrid democratic meeting arrangements, service move to digital offer where this focus is most needed Leadership and Development awareness sessions– in progress Findings of Digital projects delivered with other Local Authorities, sharing learning Digital apprentice role recruited 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community hubs implementation and review to inform next phase of development Scoping of Customer Service Standards development <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> digital programme to support the new operating model, hybrid democratic meeting arrangements, service move to digital offer where this focus is most needed Leadership and Development awareness sessions– in progress Developing the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience 	<p>Customer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further development of Community Hubs model Scoping of Working towards excellence in Customer Service delivery – charter mark for Customer Services across the Council <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> digital programme to support the new operating model, hybrid democratic meeting arrangements, service move to digital offer where this focus is most needed Leadership and Development awareness sessions– in progress Developing the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience
	Financial Management:-		Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes and financial)			
Estimated Financial Achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community hubs delivery model continued in Q3 – next phase of delivery being developed Creation of Winter Support Scheme and delivery of the scheme, supporting residents to claim £200 payment towards fuel bills. Supporting residents affected by the £20 Universal Credit uplift and reduction in income Continuation and supporting residents to access the Self Isolation Payment Scheme Training plan developed for Customer Service teams to access various course including Welsh language training and BSL training – especially needed to support residents within communities in the Community Hubs Participation in benchmarking exercise within Call Centre Management framework, findings to be available in Q4 Monitoring of out of hours' service to enhance customer service experience Commencement of Customer Service strategy – supporting the ambition of the Local Authority around customer service delivery Development of plan to support residents around Digital from a Customer Service delivery perspective Supporting the Maximum Digital Living Standards and National Indicator for Wales – Welsh Government tackling digital inequalities focussing on ICT divide, Digital divide, Digital poverty and skills, commenced late Q3 to continue in Q4 <p>Digital / Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Digital programme update provided to CLT in quarter 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five key work streams continued in Q3: - 				

1. Transformation and digital projects: –
 - supporting the new operating model
 - supporting internal and external projects including planning and street cleansing colleagues, also participation in the closure of Tech Valley project, with presentation planned to Tech Valley Board in Q4
2. Corporate Digital project activity: –
 - supporting the digital road map,
 - supporting the New Operating Model, including maximisation of Office 365 across the local Authority
3. Development of a strategic programme for service: -
 - Digital Maturity Assessment undertaken in conjunction with WLGA findings to be developed in Q4.
 - Participation in Centre for Digital Public Services Landscape review working groups
4. Leadership and skills development programme, linking to strategic approach.
 - Creation of digital champions network across the Local Authority who will test and support the development of new solutions in addition to supporting their future development
 - Further expansion of the Digital Apprentice role and supporting learning opportunities
5. Governance: –
 - Commencement of the development of a digital strategy to be finalised late Q4 which will set the ambition and future digital agenda for the Local Authority.
 - Creation and development of a Transformation and Digital board, nominations from service areas received with initial kick off session planned for late Q4 – intention of which will be an internal officer network where service areas can highlight the need for transformation and digital improvements.

£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
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Risk Management:-

Risks / Issues	Mitigating Actions
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Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables	Key Activities / Deliverables
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Prevention and early intervention services	Damien McCann / Lynn Phillips	<p>This review will focus on an evaluation of the long term impact of prevention and early intervention on reducing the requirement for high cost services and better outcomes for our most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>Approach potentially involves children and young people transitioning to adulthood to maximise the preventative benefits. Links to NEETs, Recovery/Renewal and Adult Social Care.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning meeting to take place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed at CLT meeting and agreed this was a corporate issue rather than for Social Services and Education only. • Have discussed potential to hold a workshop on prevention and early intervention corporately to share examples and generate ideas across the Council • Briefing Paper to SCCB Board for discussion regarding seeking external consultancy support. 		

Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes)

- CLT have had initial update and requested further information on overall strategic approach etc
- CLT agreed the corporate nature of this strand of work
- Lead Officers met to discuss next steps
- Discussed a Children's Services Invest to Save Project being badged under the Bridging the gap proposals
- Brief to be determined in Spring term and commissioned work underway by Summer 2022.

Risk Management:-	
Risks / Issues	Mitigating Actions
•	• • • •

Review Title	Lead Officer/ Portfolio holder	Scope and Outcome	Key Activities / Deliverables			
			Quarter 1 2021/2022	Quarter 2 2021/2022	Quarter 3 2021/2022	Quarter 4 2021/2022
Using data and behaviour insight to help deliver better services	Bernadette Elias	<p>Becoming a 21st Century Council means using data and insight to drive decision making. This Strategic Business Review will identify opportunities for the sharing and use of data to design services around the customer.</p> <p>Intended outcome</p> <p>The insight from quantitative and qualitative data is recognised as a valuable asset across the organisation.</p> <p>Data is used insightfully and routinely in service re design, analytics and performance monitoring to support better outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build the data work streams supporting recovery Audit Wales data review- initial findings and scoping for next phase workshop. Nesta data maturity assessment framework. Behavioural science- early scoping of potential leadership session on applying the MINDSET methodology to service delivery Programme of WLGA funded sessions on user experience, content design and service re design delivered Cardiff University data science academy- summer MSc placement. Expression of interest and proposal submitted Assessment of Well Being planning for next round of Well Being plans in progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit Wales data review, next phases and findings Revisit Data application to BTgap reviews eg work done previously on income and debt testing Nesta data maturity assessment against a recovery theme-economic recovery Show and tell from digital projects Developing the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience. applying service re design to a prioritised programme of service areas including supporting the New Operating Model (NOM). Consideration of applying MINDSET to a pilot programme of service areas, potentially including the NOM Cardiff university placement progression Assessment of Well Being development through the regional sub group of GSWAG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the organisational approach Service re- design linked to the commercial strategy ambitions, digital programme and customer experience Testing Nesta data maturity assessment against a recovery theme Cardiff university MSc final product delivery Assessment of Well Being development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardiff university MSc --- exploring ways to use the product Assessment of Well Being mature product Development of a research and data programme for the organisational to include external opportunities, behavioural science potential and learning from Nesta assessment, intelligence hub and service re design work
			Quarterly progress update against deliverables (Project outcomes)			

- Recovery themes developed and supported with performance and data insight, including development of a set of performance indicators. Report to be presented to Corporate Overview in February 2022.
- Audit Wales Review on Data – AW are content with outcomes from Part 1 and no risks or concerns were identified. For part 2 AW are happy to work with to provide support and challenge as we start to further develop our thinking in this area and how we develop a Data Strategy/Action Plan.
- Data insight including user research used to inform digital transformation projects with services supporting agile delivery.
- Cardiff University data science academy student placements progressing.
- Draft Assessment of Well being developed and will be used to inform the next Well Being Plan.
- The Performance Team and Social Services are using monies from WG to support the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being Act Performance Framework. The Council is looking at the IAA/IA service to undertake a review of the Directorates' current effectiveness in its use of performance data and to support any future re modelling of services with a view of service improvement. Documentation has been provided to the reviewers, Oxford Brookes University, and interviews are ongoing. Additional support is planned for mid-2022, once the directorate has submitted their annual data return to WG.

- Data has been submitted on the Decarbonisation agenda and work is ongoing to incorporate this into the Council's performance framework. Data collection, reporting and analysis is being looked at for a seamless approach for future returns.

Risk Management:-

Risks / Issues	Mitigating Actions
•	•

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Agenda Item 13

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Contract Extension – Pest Control Treatment Service to 31 December 2023**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor J 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)
25.1.22	27.1.22	01.03.22			28.2.22	16.3.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Executive Committee on the pest control treatment service currently provided by Rentokil.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Local Authorities are not under a statutory duty to provide a Pest Control treatment service. However, historically, it was common place for local councils to provide treatment services as part of their wider public health role either directly or indirectly by way of arrangements with specialist service providers. The availability of timely treatment services enables earlier eradication and prevention of pest problems and reduces the need for enforcement action by Environmental Health, which in many cases is a statutory duty.
- 2.2 In 2016/17, following the discontinuation of the service a couple of years earlier, the decision was taken by the Authority to reintroduce a Pest Control Service, further to complaints about rats relating to refuse accumulations in local neighbourhoods resulting from problems associated with changes to household waste and recycling arrangements. After due consideration, agreement was received to tender for a private company to deliver the service on behalf of the Authority, to minimise set-up and delivery and administrative costs and to enable expedient implementation and service resilience.
- 2.3 For 2019/20, the service was re-tendered in accordance with procurement rules. The tender specification was unchanged from the initial tender in 2016 to include concessions for the chargeable services reflecting the high levels of deprivation in Blaenau Gwent. Mitie were again awarded the contract for 12 months with an option to extend for a further 12 months. During 2019, Mitie Pest Control were taken over by Rentokil. As such, since 1st October 2019, Rentokil has delivered the Blaenau Gwent contract.
- 2.4 Following the takeover of the contract by Rentokil in 2019, and given the low take up of concessions, Officers and Rentokil representatives agreed to restructure the contract costs and paid for service costs to enable a revised

contract price of £59,793 per annum (with concession costs being invoiced on a pay as you go basis). As part of this agreement, the contract was extended until March 2022, with an option to extend it again until March 2023. Based on demand for concessions and in year invoices received, the predicted annual costs are full year cost for 2021/22 is £61,000, which will be met within existing budgets.

- 2.5 Recent meetings with Rentokil have taken place to discuss the status of the service and volume data. In general, the service is operating generally satisfactorily in that our constituents are receiving timely visits for requests for treatment services, especially rats. However, discussion took place in relation to a number of queries relating to garden inspection chamber lifts, volume data queries and re-visits and other service standards. It was noted that the number of paid for services has reduced and this is being looked into. Contingencies are also being put in place to prevent and or deal with telephone line outages. Discussion also took place in relation to improving customer satisfaction survey methods. It was noted that, as an Authority, we had received very few complaints about the service. Monthly meetings will take place going forward to discuss queries and enable specific case conferences, as necessary.
- 2.6 In accordance with Procurement advice, and after discussion with the Executive Member - Environment, the Authority is extending the contract until 31st March 2023, when it will be reviewed and retendered, as necessary, in accordance with Corporate Procurement rules.
- 2.7 **Current Service** (see Appendix 1). The current contract is for free rat infestation treatments for all residential properties. Other treatments, including mice, bedbugs, cockroaches and fleas, are available at a charge (direct to Rentokil) of £58.70. However, residents who are on the following benefits (Universal credit, Income support, Council tax reduction, Working or child tax income credit, Job seekers allowance (income based)) currently receive a 50% concession for the treatment of mice, bedbugs, cockroaches and fleas.
- 2.8 Appendix 2 outlines the service demand data currently available for 2020/21 and 2021/22 up to 31st December 2021. Based on the current data, completed rat treatments are set to remain about the same in 21/22 (estimated 1,700) compared to the 1,729 completed in 20/21. Chargeable services have reduced significantly according to the numbers and discussions are taking place with Rentokil as to the reasons for this. As stated above, there are a number of queries with regard to the data and these are being investigated.
- 2.9 **Impact of Covid 19 on Service Delivery**- Rentokil have reported last year that the Covid 19 pandemic had no significant impact on their ability to deliver the service required by the current contract, with the company introducing appropriate risk mitigation measures to ensure that pest control visits could be conducted safely.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 Option 1 - That Executive Committee comments on the service performance and notes the continuation of the contract with Rentokil until 31st March 2023 when it will be reviewed and retendered, as necessary, in accordance with Corporate Procurement rules.
- 3.2 Option 2 – The Executive Committee consider the report and suggests further recommendations for improvement.
- 3.3 Community Services Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 28th February 2022 and, by majority vote, supported Option 1, above. Corporate Leadership Team and Regeneration has considered this report.

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

- 4.1 Well-being Plan, Objective 2 – Blaenau Gwent wants safe and friendly communities. The use of a free pest control service to target rats helps to create clean and safe environments. By providing this service, the Authority is taking positive steps to try to create a clean and safe environment.
- 4.2 Corporate Plan – Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities Priority objective - To re-invest in environmental services to address the issues created by fly-tipping, dog fouling, littering, grass cutting, street cleansing and pest control. The provision of a free pest control service for rats will assist in achieving this goal.
- 4.3 While the Local Authority is not under a statutory duty to provide a pest control treatment service, by providing a free treatment for rat infestations the Authority can respond to service demands and concerns by the community about pest infestations that may present a risk to public health and take steps to achieving the goals set out in the Wellbeing and Corporate Plan.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

As outlined above, the current budget for this contract is £62,000. The cost of the current contract is currently £59,793 per annum with additional charges for concessionary treatments. The current estimates for full year costs for 2021/22 is £61,000, which will be met within existing budgets.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

With the ongoing service delivered by Rentokil, risks are low. Reputational risks have reduced with the Authority providing a free service for rat treatments.

5.3 **Legal**

There is no legal duty to provide a pest control treatment service however the benefits that it provides have been highlighted.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no staffing/workforce implications in relation to this report. The free treatment of rats has prevented the increase and spread of rodent problems. Without this service there would be increased demand/pressure on Environmental Health to investigate complaints and take statutory enforcement action on property owners and occupiers due to rodent problems. This would require an increased staffing resource.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

See above and Appendix 2

Sewer Baiting. The Authority had in place arrangements with Caerphilly CBC to enable sewer baiting to reduce/control the general rodent population within the drainage network. This work is funded by Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water (approx. £5k per annum). Many of these treatments are undertaken at the request of Environmental Health at specific locations in Blaenau Gwent as a result of complaints about rodent activity in the general environment in areas where it is not possible to safely and legally bait above ground. Unfortunately, CCBC recently informed us that due to Covid and other internal problems, they have not been able to undertake this work so far in this financial year. As such, Officers have prioritised where the work that is needed most following discussions with CCBC, BG officers are putting arrangements in place to undertake this work for the next 3 months – to be reviewed in late May 2022.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

Improved public health through the free treatment of rat infestations in domestic premises and the prevention of the spread of infestations to third party land.

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

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

The service outlined in this report is necessary to ensure long-term improvements in public health and to reduce the likelihood of the spread of disease.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

By proactively treating pest infestations in specific locations the Authority is preventing further spread and proliferation of infestations to other areas of the County Borough.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The scheme is run in partnership with a private sector service provider and Dwr Cymru/CCBC for man-hole sewer baiting.

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

The scheme contributes to relevant well-being and environment agendas.

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

Not applicable. This is an activities report relating to an existing contract.

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

This is an activities report relating to an existing contract. There is no decision to be taken but the existing positive SED impacts relating to Living Standards and Health.

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

The service has no adverse effects against the protected characteristics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The service will be monitored by Public Protection 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 – Pest Control - Current Service Offer

Appendix 2 – Pest Control Treatment Data 20/21 and Q1-3 21/22

Appendix 3 – SED & EIA Screening Assessment

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Pest Control

Blaenau Gwent CBC provides a domestic pest control service in partnership with Rentokil Pest Control.

The service offers free treatments for rat infestations at domestic properties within Blaenau Gwent.

Rentokil Pest Control also offer other pest control treatments at domestic properties for which there is a charge (payment is by credit or debit card over the phone directly to Rentokil Pest Control). These services are-

- Mice £57.60
- Bedbugs £57.60
- Cockroaches £57.60
- Fleas £57.60
- Black garden ants £57.60
- Cluster fly £57.60
- House crickets, firebrats & silverfish £57.60
- Textile moth £57.60
- Wasps nests £57.60

*All the above prices are inclusive of VAT

Residents of Blaenau Gwent who are on the following benefits will receive a 50% concession for the treatment of mice, bedbugs, cockroaches and fleas as long they reside at the domestic premise where the treatment takes place:

- Universal credit
- Income support
- Council tax reduction
- Working or child tax income credit
- Job seekers allowance (income based)

(You will be asked to provide proof of benefit receipt during the pest control operative's initial visit before treatment can begin. Please note that no services other than rat treatments will be undertaken without pre-payment.)

The pest control service operates from Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5pm. (Please note the service does not operate on public holidays)

To arrange for a pest control visit from Rentokil please contact them directly on-

- Telephone- 01454 771515

Rentokil also offers pest control services to commercial and industrial premises. For prices on these treatments please contact Rentokil Pest Control directly.

For information about pests visit the [British Pest Control Association website](#).

END

Appendix 2 Pest Control 2021/2022

Pest Control	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual Total to date	
Total number of all pest control service requests received by Rentokil	419	391	484	TBA	1294	
Total Rat Treatments carried out	416	389	484	TBA	1289	
Total Number of visits Including revisits)	516	468	593	TBA	1577	
Chargeable Pest Control Service Requests Received By Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual Total to date	
Wasps/Bees	2	0	0	TBA	2	
Fleas	1	0	0	TBA	1	
Mice	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Cockroaches	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Ants	0	1	0	TBA	1	
Bedbugs	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Other	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Total	3	1	0	TBA	4	
No. of concessions granted per chargeable service	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual Total to date	
Wasps	1	0	0	TBA	1	
Fleas	1	0	0	TBA	1	
Mice	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Cockroaches	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Ants	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Bedbugs	0	0	0	TBA	0	
Other	0	0	0	TBA	0	

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Appendix 2 Pest Control 2020/21

Pest Control	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	2019/20
Total number of all pest control service requests received by Rentokil	506	450	381	482	1819	1342
Total Rat Treatments carried out	479	398	372	480	1729	1185
Total Number of visits Including revisits)	537	529	501	551	2118	2319
Chargeable Pest Control Service Requests Received By Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	2019/20
Wasps/Bees	21	31	1	0	53	78
Fleas	2	3	3	2	10	15
Mice	0	1	3	0	4	9
Cockroaches	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ants	2	7	0	0	9	4
Bedbugs	1	0	0	0	1	4
Other	1	0	2	0	3	9
Total	27	42	6	2	80	119
No. of concessions granted per chargeable service	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	2019/20
Wasps	15	22	0	0	37	35
Fleas	2	3	3	0	8	1
Mice	0	1	2	0	3	0
Cockroaches	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ants	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bedbugs	1	0	0	0	1	1
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

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Appendix 3 - Integrated Impact Screening Template – January 2022.

The purpose of undertaking an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is to consider the impact of proposed strategies, policies, or service reviews and developments against the full range of our statutory obligations:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)
- Welsh Language Act

IAs are an important tool that can be used to improve equality and diversity; sustainable development and the use of the Welsh language by ensuring impacts are considered collectively and not in isolation.

IAs need to be completed as early as possible during any policy development or service review process. The IIA screening template has been designed to help you consider whether a policy, for example, has a positive or negative impact on specific groups of people. It also aims to help assess whether there are any negative impacts and whether their significance is low or high. If negative impacts with a high significance are identified, then a full Integrated Impact Assessment is required to identify how these impacts can be minimised by introducing any mitigating measures or options.

The IIA Screening Template consists of 2 parts:

- Part I: Screening exercise to identify positive or negative impacts
- Part II: Integrated Impact Assessment required – Guidance note

Finally, the outcome of your IIA Screening Exercise needs to be briefly noted in Section 6.9b of the Corporate Report template and attached as an appendix to your report. Similarly, if a full IIA is undertaken then the key findings need to be summarised in section 6.9b of the Corporate Report template, along with the outcome of the assessment, and the full IIA needs to be attached as an appendix to your report.

PART 1: SCREENING EXERCISE TO IDENTIFY POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE IMPACTS

Description of Assessment *(Briefly provide details of the policy development or service review being assessed and the option being presented)*

Activities Report – Pest Control Treatment Service to 31 December 2021 (Info Pack report) – No Options for consideration.

Responsible Directorate *(Please specify)* - **Regeneration & Community Services**

Responsible Officer *(Please specify)* – **David Thompson – Service Manager – Public Protection**

Assessment Date *(Please specify)* – **January 2022**

Staff Involved in Assessment *(Please specify)* - **David Thompson – Service Manager – Public Protection**

<p>Does this 'Option' have a <u>positive or a negative impact</u> on any of the following protected characteristics?</p> <p><i>Please complete as applicable</i></p>		<p>Please describe what the impact will be?</p>	<p>What is the significance of the impact?</p> <p><i>For example, a 'high' negative impact would have a significant disproportionate impact on a specific group</i></p>	<p>Negative impacts identified</p> <p><i>If 'low' please explain the reason for this significance rating.</i></p> <p><i>If 'high' please state 'Integrated Impact Assessment' required and refer to Part II</i></p>	
<p>Race <i>(people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds)</i></p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>→</p>	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/>High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Low</p>	<p>No Changes/Options presented. The report is on activities relating to an existing Pest Control Treatment Service Contract.</p>
<p>Disability <i>(people with disabilities/ long term conditions)</i></p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>→</p>	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/>High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Low</p>	<p>See above - No Change/Impact</p>
<p>Sex <i>(women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender)</i></p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>→</p>	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/>High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>High</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Low</p>	<p>See above - No Change/Impact</p>

Does this 'Option' have a <u>positive or a negative impact</u> on any of the following protected characteristics? <i>Please complete as applicable</i>			Please describe what the impact will be?	What is the significance of the impact? <i>For example, a 'high' negative impact would have a significant disproportionate impact on a specific group</i>	Negative impacts identified <i>If 'low' please explain the reason for this significance rating. If 'high' please state 'Integrated Impact Assessment' required and refer to Part II</i>	
Age <i>(people of all ages)</i>	Positive <input type="checkbox"/>	Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	→	<u>Positive</u> <u>Negative</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	See above - No Change/Impact
Sexual Orientation <i>(lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, other)</i>	Positive <input type="checkbox"/>	Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	→	<u>Positive</u> <u>Negative</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	See above - No Change/Impact
Religion and Belief <i>(people with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Positive <input type="checkbox"/>	Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	→	<u>Positive</u> <u>Negative</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	See above - No Change/Impact

<p>Does this ‘Option’ have a <u>positive or a negative impact</u> on any of the following protected characteristics?</p> <p><i>Please complete as applicable</i></p>			<p>Please describe what the impact will be?</p>	<p>What is the significance of the impact?</p> <p><i>For example, a ‘high’ negative impact would have a significant disproportionate impact on a specific group</i></p>	<p>Negative impacts identified</p> <p><i>If ‘low’ please explain the reason for this significance rating.</i></p> <p><i>If ‘high’ please state ‘Integrated Impact Assessment’ required and refer to Part II</i></p>
<p>Gender <i>(anybody who’s gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth)</i></p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	→	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p>	<p>See above - No Change/Impact</p>
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i></p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	→	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p>	<p>See above - No Change/Impact</p>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity <i>(women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)</i></p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	→	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p>	<p>See above - No Change/Impact</p>

Socio-economic Duty (Strategic Decisions Only)

The [Socio-economic Duty](#) provides a framework in order to ensure tackling inequality is at the forefront of decision making. The duty requires the Council, when making strategic decisions, to consider how decisions can help reduce inequality of outcomes.

The duty defines **socio-economic disadvantage** as “living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others living in the same society”.

The duty generally defines **strategic decisions** as “decisions which effect how the Council fulfils its intended statutory purpose over a significant period of time and not routine day-to-day decisions”. Examples of strategic decisions includes those which are statutory; happen over a significant time; not routine; have strategic intent; strategies or the setting of strategic objectives; service delivery and improvement plans; medium to long-term plans etc.

Does this ‘Option’ have a positive or a negative impact on any of the following themes? <i>Please complete as applicable</i>			Please describe what the impact will be?	What is the significance of the impact? <i>For example, a ‘high’ negative impact would have a significant disproportionate impact on a specific group</i>	Negative impacts identified <i>If ‘low’ please explain the reason for this significance rating. If ‘high’ please state ‘Integrated Impact Assessment’ required and refer to Part II</i>
SED-Education The capability to be knowledgeable	Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> 	→	<u>Positive</u> <u>Negative</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No Changes/Options presented. The report is on activities relating to an existing Pest Control Treatment Service Contract.

Does this 'Option' have a <u>positive or a negative impact</u> on any of the following themes? <i>Please complete as applicable</i>			Please describe what the impact will be?	What is the significance of the impact? <i>For example, a 'high' negative impact would have a significant disproportionate impact on a specific group</i>	Negative impacts identified <i>If 'low' please explain the reason for this significance rating. If 'high' please state 'Integrated Impact Assessment' required and refer to Part II</i>
SED-Work The capability to work in just and favourable conditions	Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	→	<u>Positive</u> <u>Negative</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	See above - No Change/Impact
SED-Living Standards The capability to enjoy a comfortable standard of living	Positive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	→	<u>Positive</u> By removing public health pests from residential premises <u>Negative</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	See above - No negative Change/Impact
SED-Health The capability to be healthy, physically, and mentally	Positive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/>	→	<u>Positive</u> The service removes public health pests that spread disease and adversely affect mental health <u>Negative</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low	See above - No negative Change/Impact

<p>SED-Justice & Security The capability to avoid premature mortality</p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>→</p>	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/>High <input type="checkbox"/>Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>High <input type="checkbox"/>Low</p>	<p>See above - No Change/Impact</p>
<p>Does this 'Option' have a <u>positive or a negative impact</u> on any of the following themes?</p> <p><i>Please complete as applicable</i></p>			<p>Please describe what the impact will be?</p>	<p>What is the significance of the impact?</p> <p><i>For example, a 'high' negative impact would have a significant disproportionate impact on a specific group</i></p>	<p>Negative impacts identified</p> <p><i>If 'low' please explain the reason for this significance rating.</i></p> <p><i>If 'high' please state 'Integrated Impact Assessment' required and refer to Part II</i></p>
<p>SED-Participation The capability to participate in decision making and in communities, accessing services</p>	<p>Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>→</p>	<p><u>Positive</u></p> <p><u>Negative</u></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/>High <input type="checkbox"/>Low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>High <input type="checkbox"/>Low</p>	<p>See above - No Change/Impact</p>

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Agenda Item 14

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Fly Tipping Enforcement Activity 2021/22**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanne Wilkins [Executive Member, Environment]**
Report Submitted by: **Andrew Long Team Manager Frontline Enforcement Service**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	10.02.22	01.03.22			28.02.22	16.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Authority's enforcement activities in relation to fly tipping and other waste regulation offences and the level of fly tipping activity within Blaenau Gwent for the year 2021/22.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Authority has taken a robust and proactive approach to fly-tipping enforcement for over 15 years and the report will outline current issues and trends, local enforcement arrangements and outcomes, and how the Authority compares to other Welsh Authorities in these respects. The report also outlines the main offences relating to fly-tipping and the typical legal sanctions available.
- 2.2 Up until September 2021 Fly Tipping was regulated by Environmental Health in accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Investigations into incidents of fly-tipping are conducted by two Enforcement Officers who also undertake other duties including stray dog collection and dealing with abandoned vehicles. These Enforcement Officers were appointed primarily on the basis of their practical enforcement experience, either being ex-Police Officers or having specialists' skills in surveillance and investigation techniques.
- 2.3 Since September 2021 a new Frontline Enforcement Team has been created embedded with the Community Services Section. This team has brought together the waste regulation work of the Enforcement Wardens (formerly Waste Wardens) who deal with domestic recycling compliance and the fly tipping work of the Enforcement Officers. Bringing these two areas of work together has enabled a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to dealing with illegal accumulations of waste, both in town centres and in more rural and semi-rural settings.

2.4 There are a number of legal sanctions available to the Authority to deal with waste offences and most of these are contained within the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The key powers and sanctions used by the Authority are set out below.

- Section 33. 1(a) Environmental Protection Act 1990 – This creates the offence of illegally depositing controlled waste - offenders can be prosecuted or receive a fixed penalty notice for £400
- Section 34. 2 (A) Environmental Protection Act 1990 – This creates the offence for householders of failing to carry out appropriate measures to ensure their waste is transferred to an authorised person- offenders can be prosecuted or issued with a fixed penalty notice for £300.
- Section 34. 1 Environmental Protection Act 1990 – This creates the offence for commercial operators of failing to transfer waste to an authorised person and failing to retain written records of that transfer- offenders can be prosecuted or issued with a fixed penalty notice for £300
- Section 46 Environmental Protection Act 1990 – This creates the offence for householders of failing to comply with the requirements imposed by the Local Authority in relation to the placement and storage of household waste, including recyclate material- offenders can be prosecuted or issued with a fixed penalty notice for £100.

2.5 For lower level, first time offences, a fixed penalty notice is normally the initial sanction that is imposed for the above offences and failure to pay this fixed penalty results in prosecution for the original offence.

2.6 Since September 2021 the Frontline Enforcement Team have expanded the use of Section 46 powers to deal with long term problems associated with householders disposing of their waste at unofficial waste collection points. These collection points often contain mixtures of residual and recyclate material meaning that home owners are often using them avoid the Authority's domestic waste collection rules. By utilising the powers in Section 46 to require householders to place their waste out for a collection at a specific location and time/date, there has been a significant reduction in these illegal accumulations of waste particularly in urban settings.

2.7 In November 2020 a closer working relationship was established between Environmental Health and Cleansing so that cleansing operatives were the first responders in relation to complaints about fly tipping. Training was given to specific operatives to enable them to gather and retain evidence that might be present and a procedure put in place to enable this evidence to be presented to Enforcement Officers for further investigation where appropriate. This process has had a number of benefits. It has freed Enforcement Officer time to enable them to focus on criminal investigations, it has removed the need for multiple attendance by Local Authority officers

to fly tipping incidents and it has reduced the time needed to clear illegal waste deposits. This process is working well with multiple referrals coming through to the Frontline Enforcement Team on a monthly basis.

2.8 Tied in with this referral work and following discussion with the Authority's Legal Section, the Frontline Enforcement Team are now expanding the use of fly tipping fixed penalty notices to capture those offences where a lower level of evidence may be available. This expanded use of fly tipping fixed penalty notices will ensure greater numbers of notices are issued going into the future.

2.9 In June 2021 the Cleansing Section secured funding from Keep Wales Tidy for the procurement of CCTV surveillance equipment. The Frontline Team has now taken delivery of the majority of this equipment and is starting to deploy it to our frequent areas of fly tipping.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Community Services Scrutiny Committee supported Option 1 on 28th February 2022.

3.2 **Option 1 [Preferred]** – Support the continuing waste regulation work and development of the Frontline Enforcement Service as outlined above.

Option 2 – Recommend changes to the waste regulation work carried out by the Frontline Enforcement Service.

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

4.1 This proposal supports the amendments made to the Outcome Statements within the Corporate Plan in its review in October 2019.
Corporate Plan 2020/22 Outcome Statements:

- Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities
- Support a fairer sustainable economy and community
- To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities
- An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Service can continue to be run within existing budget under option 1.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Failure to enforce against waste regulation offences may give rise to an increase in offending behaviour with a significant decline in environmental quality and reputational loss to the Authority.

5.3 ***Legal***

In terms of the preferred option the Council has the necessary powers to enforce the activity identified in the report and the services cover a range of statutory functions.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The Frontline Enforcement Service is currently subject to a 6 month review following its establishment in September 2021.

6. ***Supporting Evidence***

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Since the 1st April 2021 to 14th February 2022, when this report was produced, the following waste regulation actions have been taken by the Authority.

- 65 files of recovered evidence received from Cleansing for further investigation by enforcement officers
- 11 fly tipping £400 fixed penalty notices issued. Further notices will be issued before the Scrutiny meeting on the 28th February 2022 and an updated figure will be provided then.
- 5 householder duty of care £300 fixed penalty notices issued
- 2 commercial duty of care £300 fixed penalty notices issued
- 10 warning letters issued to suspected fly tippers
- 2 prosecution files in preparation for 7 waste regulation offences
- 77 incidents of fly tipping on private land investigated
- 525 Enforcement Warden enquiries received
- 424 town centre fly tipping complaints investigated
- 79 1st stage warning letters issued for misplacing domestic waste at unofficial waste collection points
- 5 Section 46 notices issued for misplacing domestic waste at unofficial waste collection points
- 1 fixed penalty notices issued for misplacing domestic waste at unofficial waste collection points

6.2 Historically Blaenau Gwent has always been in the top half of the performance table for waste regulation enforcement outcomes for all Welsh Authorities. There was very little enforcement action taken during 2020/21 due to a diversion of staff resources to deal with Test Track and Protect and business regulation work associated with the Covid 19 pandemic. However, looking at the specific enforcement actions of prosecutions and fixed penalty notices for the last comparative year of 2019/20, Blaenau Gwent were eighth out of the 22 Local Authorities. The 18 fixed penalty notices issued for various waste regulation offences so far

this year would have resulted in prosecutions prior to 2017, when fixed penalty notices for fly tipping were introduced. On that basis 2021/22 has been the most successful year for Blaenau Gwent since this data has been collated.

- 6.3 It is intended that through the creation of the Frontline Enforcement Team, the expanded use of fly tipping fixed penalty notices and the other measures outlined in paragraphs 2.6 to 2.9, the figure for enforcement outcomes for 2022/23 will far exceed any historical annual activity.
- 6.4 Further comparative information on enforcement outcomes across Wales can be found on the following link [Number of fly-tipping enforcement actions by type \(gov.wales\)](#)
- 6.5 In relation to the number of fly tipping incidents recorded, Blaenau Gwent sits twelfth out of the 22 Local Authorities with 1661 incidents recorded in 2020/21. The highest number recorded was Cardiff with 6896 and the lowest Ceredigion with 134. In relation to neighbouring Authorities, Blaenau Gwent sits in the middle of the 5 within the Greater Gwent area, with Caerphilly and Newport both recording significantly higher numbers (2751 and 4060 respectively) and Torfaen and Monmouth significantly lower (857 and 749 respectively). Of course population rates vary across Authorities, but Merthyr Tydfil, an Authority with similar demographics and population to Blaenau Gwent recorded a higher number of incidents, 2096, across the same period. Table 1 below sets out the number of fly tipping incidents recorded across the County Borough in the last 5 years, with the 2021/22 full year figure extrapolated based on the first 3 quarters data. Further information on fly tipping incidents across Wales can be found on the following link [Recorded fly-tipping incidents by local authority \(gov.wales\)](#)

Table 1

Fly Tipping Incidents Recorded in Blaenau Gwent CBC

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of Fly Tipping Incidents	995	1167	1327	1661	1298

- 6.6 **Expected outcome for the public**
Improved cleanliness and speed of addressing issues for the public and greater use of criminal sanctions for individuals committing waste crime.
- 6.7 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**
The quality of the environment is a priority of the community which has been demonstrated in many surveys and aspects of community.

- 6.8 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
The creation of the Single Enforcement team will allow a planned approach to enforcement work with cohesive approach to waste regulation work across the Authority.
- 6.9 ***Preventative focus***
The Frontline Enforcement service will be utilising CCTV, proactively carrying commercial waste disposal checks and proactively targeting known unofficial domestic waste collection locations to reduce and prevent negative behaviours in the Community.
- 6.10 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
The role out of the new services has, and will continue to require collaboration across Council Services and will involve working with partners such as Keep Wales Tidy, the Police and the Community.
- 6.11 ***Integration (across service areas)***
The new Service in itself has integrated the Enforcement Warden function and elements of Public Protection Enforcement Activity.
- 6.12 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
The Council is committed to becoming a net zero Council by 2030 and the activity carried out within this service supports this aspiration.
- 6.13a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***
- 6.13b. ***Equality Impact***
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 It is proposed that annual reporting of waste regulation performance will be presented to Scrutiny.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Number of fly tipping enforcement outcomes
[Number of fly-tipping enforcement actions by type \(gov.wales\)](#)
Number of Fly Tipping Incidents
[Recorded fly-tipping incidents by local authority \(gov.wales\)](#)

Agenda Item 15

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 07.03.22
Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 08.03.22

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Corporate Safeguarding Policy & Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**
Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director of Social Services**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	X	01.03.22				16.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

To update the Executive Committee on the developments in respect of the Audit Wales (AW) recommendations, regarding the development of a Corporate Safeguarding Policy (*appendix 1*) and a Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework (*appendix 2*).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 AW undertook a review of corporate arrangements for safeguarding children in 2014 and in addition made recommendations within the Auditor General's report *Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh councils* (July 2015).
- 2.2 AW undertook a further review during June 2019 to seek assurance that the Council had acted upon their previous national and local recommendations.
- 2.3 The Council was asked to complete a self-assessment and provide documentation to support its self-assessment. AW then interviewed key officers and the lead member for Corporate safeguarding.
- 2.4 AW sought to answer the question can the council provide assurance that it had addressed the recommendations and proposals for improvement contained in the Auditor General's national and local reports published in 2014–15.
- 2.5 AW's conclusion was that the Council had made limited progress in addressing the previous recommendations and proposals for improvement, and safeguarding arrangements were not consistent enough to provide assurance across all areas.
- 2.6 The AW recommendations were formulated into an Action Plan which was then passed to the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group (CSLG) for their oversight and management.

- 2.7 Following the retirement of the Service Manager with responsibility for chairing the CSLG meetings, the CSLG meetings were re-established in early February 2020. The CSLG reviewed the terms of reference for these meetings and revisited the core membership from across the Council.
- 2.8 Terms of Reference were drafted and agreed (*appendix 5*) and an initial work plan was formulated that prioritised:
- Updating the Corporate Safeguarding Policy which included the Education Safeguarding Policy;
 - Undertaking a review of the current corporate safeguarding training plan;
 - Draft a proposal for a new corporate safeguarding training framework commensurate to role and responsibilities.
- 2.9 Within the reviewed corporate safeguarding training framework would be a proposal that there would be mandatory safeguarding training requirements.
- 2.10 That the Corporate Safeguarding Leads would adopt the role of Designated Safeguarding Person (*appendix 3*).
- 2.11 That the CSGL meeting would undertake an annual self-assessment (*appendix 4*) of its corporate safeguarding arrangements and performance.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 That Executive Committee consider the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework; and

Option 1

- Agree the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy;
- Agree with the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework and its implementation plan.

Option 2

- Make recommendations for amendments to the Corporate Safeguarding Policy;
- Make recommendations for amendments to the Corporate Safeguarding Training.

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

The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the councils Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Plan;
- Corporate Risk Register and Directorate Risk Register;
- Safe Reduction of Looked after Children Strategy;

- Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 *Impact on Budget*

The training framework recommends mandatory safeguarding training for all Council employees and Members, Tier 1 training has been developed by Social Care Wales and can be accessed via the All Wales Platform and accessed on line. We will be able to accurately record all staff and members who undertake the training electronically. There will be some employees who will not be able to access electronic training and will therefore require face to face training. Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Workforce Development team will commission and record all those who attend 'Face to face' training at a small cost to Directorates.

Tier 2 and 3 training is currently being developed by Social Care Wales for release later this year, we are proposing that mandatory training commensurate to role and responsibility will be provided to those requiring a greater understanding of safeguarding at these levels.

In order to deliver on the proposed safeguarding training framework, there will need to be a Council wide commitment and Council wide investment into the proposed programme. This means ensuring that all staff across the Council are given sufficient time to undertake the mandatory training for Tier 1, 2 and 3 commensurate to their role/responsibility.

5.2 *Risk*

As part of the AW Action Plan safeguarding needs to be reflected in the corporate risk register.

5.3 *Legal*

There are no legal implications.

5.4 *Human Resources*

Mandatory safeguarding training will require staff time out of their daily work to either access electronically or by 'face to face' which may impact on service delivery.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

The Action Plan in response to the AW recommendations was amended to allow for the timescales for the completion of the actions to be extended due to the global Coronavirus pandemic.

6.2 *Expected outcome for the public*

Those children who are assessed to be at risk of harm are protected and safeguarded and that the Local Authority adheres to legislations regarding statutory intervention.

- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
The Corporate Safeguarding Leads meeting is in place to ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any emerging issues or trends within safeguarding.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
Implementation of the recommendations of the AW Corporate Safeguarding review will ensure that the Council is appropriately safeguarding children to the best of its ability moving forward.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information and progress on the AW Action Plan to the Corporate Leadership Team to ensure risk are identified and acted on.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
The updated Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures that each department has identified Safeguarding Leads and that these leads meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority.
- 6.7 ***EqIA***
There is no need to submit an impact assessment.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The implementation of the management response and action plan will be monitored quarterly by the Corporate Leadership Team and reported to the Corporate Overview and / or Joint Education and Learning Safeguarding Scrutiny Committees.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1: Corporate Safeguarding Policy
- Appendix 2: Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework
- Appendix 3: Designated Person Roles & responsibility
- Appendix 4: Corporate Safeguarding self-assessment template
- Appendix 5: Terms of Reference

**Blaenau Gwent County
Borough Council**

**Safeguarding Children
and
Adults at risk**

Version number:	1	Date Written:	
		Date Approved:	
Status:		Date of Issue:	
		Review Date:	
Approved by:			
Author:			
Supporting documents:			
Equality Impact Assessment	Approved by:		
	Date:		
Change history	Dates reviewed:	Outcome of review:	

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1. Corporate Policy Statement:

- 1.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone living within the Borough is safe and protected and that our statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk are effectively met.
- 1.2 Safeguarding children and adults from abuse is everybody's business. We all share a responsibility, both corporately and individually, to ensure that all children and adults are treated with respect and protected from others who may abuse them. All Council employees and volunteers (referred to as practitioners in this policy), Elected Members and contractors who come into contact with children or adults at risk in the course of their duties are expected to understand their responsibility and wherever necessary, to take action to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- 1.3 As part of the Council's commitment to safeguarding, we work proactively with our partners under the auspices of Gwent Safeguarding to ensure that statutory guidance is followed, awareness and good practice is promoted and the children and adult's workforce practices safely and effectively. Helpful guidance on professional conduct and safe working practice can be found in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 This policy covers all practitioners, Elected Members, and contractors. Individual departments may have their own supplementary structured guidance to inform their staff. The Education Directorate Local Government Education Services (LGES) Safeguarding Policy covers **all** Educational settings within Blaenau Gwent.
- 1.5 While practitioners, Elected Members and contractors are likely to have varied levels of contact with children, young people and adults at risk as part of their duties, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns. It is important to remember that:

IT IS NOT the responsibility of any practitioner, Elected Member or provider of services to determine whether abuse or neglect is actually taking place.

HOWEVER,

IT IS the responsibility of the practitioner, Elected Member or contractor to take the actions set out in this policy if they are concerned that abuse or neglect may be taking place.

2. What is safeguarding?

2.1 Safeguarding means preventing and protecting children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.

2.2 The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 defines abuse and neglect as:

‘Abuse’ means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place.

‘Financial abuse’ includes:

- Having money or other property stolen;
- Being defrauded;
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property;
- Having money or other property misused.

‘Neglect’ means a failure to meet a person’s basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person’s well-being for example, impairment of the person’s health or, in the case of a child, an impairment of the child’s development.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

Safeguarding Children and Young People

2.3 For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’ throughout this document. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under current legislation.

Safeguarding Adults at risk

2.4 For the purposes of this policy, an adult at risk is anyone over 18 years of age who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV)

- 2.5 The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve arrangements for the prevention of gender based violence, abuse and sexual violence. The protection of victims and support for people affected is underpinned by the 'Ask and Act' duty placed on public service staff to ask potential victims about the possibility that they may be experiencing VAWDASV and act so as to reduce suffering and harm.

Counter-terrorism and risk of radicalisation

- 2.6 Local authorities have a duty to identify vulnerable individuals and families at risk of radicalisation from all forms of extremism. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and its guidance, identifies that children and adults may be vulnerable to ideologies that place them, their families and the general public in danger should they be enticed to act upon extremist beliefs. Identifying individuals at risk and determining what action is necessary to support them is complemented by the 'Channel' multi-agency intervention process which deters continued involvement.

Modern Day Slavery

- 2.7 Modern slavery describes forced labour practices with the perpetrator – the slave master - trapping and controlling the victim. The most common form of modern slavery is sexual exploitation. Labour exploitation is the second most common form of slavery occurring most frequently in the agricultural, food, hospitality and construction sectors. Victims may be vulnerable UK or foreign citizens. Police, Local Authorities, the National Crime Agency and the Gang Masters Labour and Abuse Authority who encounter a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking have a duty to notify the Home Office under Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- 2.8 Modern slavery is a hidden, pervasive crime targeted towards those individuals most vulnerable. The Council and BAWSO are first responding organisations to cases of slavery. Contact details for BAWSO are included in Appendix 6.

Spotting the signs of harm, abuse or neglect

- 2.9 Some signs of abuse or neglect are easy to spot, while others are not. The signs of harm, abuse or neglect are not always obvious. The Wales Safeguarding Procedures include information to help practitioners recognise the signs of harm, abuse or neglect.

Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse, Neglect and Harm in a Child <https://www.safeguarding.wales/chi/cp/c1p.p2.html>

Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse and Neglect in an Adult at risk <https://www.safeguarding.wales/adu/ap/a1p.p2.html>

3. Responsibilities for Safeguarding:

- 3.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk of harm.
- 3.2 The Council ensures that everyone working with or on behalf of children and adults at risk are competent to do so.
- 3.3 The Council promotes safer recruitment policy and practice and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are undertaken for employees and volunteers in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements and provisions contained within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Checks are also undertaken to ensure that staff are registered with relevant professional and other bodies wherever appropriate e.g. Social Care Wales and Education Workforce Council
- 3.4 Safeguarding responsibilities for all practitioners are emphasised from the point of recruitment and throughout their employment. There are clear lines of accountability, responsibility and support regarding safeguarding throughout the authority and these are achieved via relevant staff guidance, code of conduct (including disciplinary procedures) and specific policies and procedures which all staff must adhere to.
- 3.5 The Council has a range of policies and procedures available to promote and support staff to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk. These include the Whistleblowing Policy which provides guidance for staff to report concerns or suspicions about conduct or practice. The Whistleblowing Policy can be found in the Organisational Development (Policies and Procedures) section of the Council's Intranet <http://intranet/media/160180/Whistleblowing-Policy-September-2019.pdf>
- 3.6 The Council also hosts safeguarding information pages on the Council website in order to provide information to the general public. The Council intranet site has direct links to Gwent Safeguarding and the Welsh Safeguarding Procedures.
- 3.7 All practitioners will be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities as part of their induction to their employment. More specialist single agency and multi-agency training opportunities are available for practitioners who routinely work with children or adults at risk at levels appropriate to their role and responsibilities. The Blaenau Gwent corporate safeguarding training framework sets out the training expectations and all practitioners must ensure that they undertake training in line with the expectations within this document.

- 3.8 Elected Members have a responsibility to be aware of and support the Council's safeguarding responsibilities and to scrutinise how these are carried out in the planning and delivery of services.
- 3.9 The Council undertakes to ensure that through procurement processes, services commissioned and contracted on its behalf have safeguarding responsibilities built into contracts and that appropriate policies and staff training are in place. This includes an expectation that any person or organisation using Council resources or premises adhere to the Council's safeguarding standards.
- 3.10 The Council expects all practitioners to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of any child or adult at risk involved in any activity or interaction for which they are responsible. Guidance on professional conduct and safe working practice can be found in Appendix 2.
- 3.11 Any person responsible for, or working with, children or adult at risk in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, is considered both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care. This includes a duty to behave in a manner that does not threaten, harm or put people at risk of harm from others.
- 3.12 All practitioners have a responsibility to conduct themselves in their private lives in a manner that does not compromise their position in the workplace or call into question their suitability to work with children or adults at risk.
- 3.13 All practitioners must:
- Be alert to the possibility of harm, abuse and neglect
 - Participate in relevant safeguarding training and multi-agency working to safeguard children and adults at risk
 - Be familiar with local procedures and protocols for safeguarding children and adults at risk and follow the Council's Code of Conduct and any other Professional Codes
 - Report any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or adults at risk. Please refer to Appendix 3; 'How to make a report'
- 3.14 All practitioners working for or on behalf of the Council have a duty to report any concerns they may have for the welfare and/or protection of children and adults at risk. The duty to report is a legal requirement and may have serious consequences for any employee who fails to report appropriately. The process to follow to make reports is contained in Appendix 3
- 3.15 Each directorate has a Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for safeguarding. The Lead provides advice and guidance and is responsible for ensuring procedures are followed regarding safeguarding concerns about a child or adult at risk including professional concerns. The Leads' responsibilities are detailed in Appendix 1.

- 3.16 Professional advice can also be sought from, and reports made to, the Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service.
- 3.17 For information, advice or assistance, or to report concerns in relation to:
- A person aged 18 or over, please contact Adult Services IAA service
 - A child or young person, under the age of 18, please contact the Children's Services IAA service

Telephone: 01495 315700

Email the Duty to Report form or the MARF (see appendix 3) to:

Adults: DutyTeamAdults@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Children: Duty.Team@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

4. Governance Arrangements for Safeguarding within the Local Authority

- 4.1 The Local Authority is required to provide a clear governance structure and clarity on roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- 4.2 The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that national policies and procedures aimed at keeping children and adults who may have needs for care and support safe from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm remain relevant and fit for purpose. If issues or concerns about the national safeguarding policies are identified, then these will be escalated to the Regional Safeguarding Board and communicated to Welsh Government and the National Independent Safeguarding Board.
- 4.3 The Local Authority must have proper safeguards in place to protect children and adults at risk. Ensuring they are kept under review as to the usefulness and effectiveness is one of the core responsibilities of the Director of Social Services.
- 4.4 The lead member for safeguarding who is currently the Executive Member for Social Services is responsible for providing political scrutiny to the local authority to ensure it fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding.
- 4.5 Each Directorate is responsible for nominating a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead plus a Deputy Safeguarding Lead. The roles and responsibilities of the Managing Director, Lead Member for Safeguarding, Directors and Strategic Safeguarding Leads are clarified under Appendix 1.
- 4.6 Gwent Safeguarding brought together the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board. The aim is that

“All Children and Young People in South East Wales are protected from abuse and neglect live in safe homes and communities and are supported to achieve their full potential” and to protect adults in Gwent from becoming *“adults at risk”* and to protect adults who have been abused or neglected or are at risk of it.

- 4.7 Each Authority in the South East Wales Region is required to have a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Network Group which sits under Gwent Safeguarding. The purpose of the Group is to ensure the Local Safeguarding Agenda within each Authority is progressed. The Service Manager with responsibility for Safeguarding, chairs this Local Group and representatives from the Education Department, Schools, Health, the Youth Service, Probation, Families First, Police, Youth Offending Service, Adult Services and the voluntary sector sit on this Group. There are a number of other joint sub groups that sit under and report to Gwent Safeguarding.
- 4.8 Social Services are inspected by the CIW. Their Inspection criteria includes safeguarding of children. Social Services have mechanisms in place to evidence the work undertaken in relation to this area of work which is presented to the CIW in the Directors Annual Report to them.
- 4.9 The Education Department are inspected by Estyn. Part of their inspection criteria includes safeguarding. This includes practice relating to safeguarding within schools and other education settings plus how safeguarding is managed corporately
- 4.10 Everyone shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children and Adults at Risk irrespective of their individual role within the Council.
- 4.11 Our priority is for all practitioners to be responsible for implementing this Policy and reporting concerns if they become aware of the following situations:
- Any allegation or concern about actual or suspected situations of abuse, involving a child or adult at risk.
 - Any allegation or concern about actual or suspected practitioner misconduct, and/or criminal activity involving the abuse of a child or adult at risk.

5. Appendices:

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Appendix 1

Governance Arrangements for Safeguarding within the Local Authority

Managing Director

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>Ensure safeguarding of children and adults at risk is effective across the Local Authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All serious Safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Director of Social Services via email with the Managing Director cc'd in. • The Director of Social Services will, in consultation with the Managing Director, agree an appropriate response to serious Safeguarding concerns raised. • The Managing Director will have monthly one to one meetings with all Directors who can raise general Safeguarding issues specific to their Directorate. • Safeguarding is a standing item on the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) agenda and shall actively promote and develop good practice in the safeguarding arrangements in use across the council. • The Managing Director sits on the Local Service Board, where strategic partnership work takes place. • The Risk Register of the Council which includes safeguarding is reviewed regularly at CLT meetings which are chaired by the Managing Director. • The Managing Director can meet with the Lead Member for Safeguarding at any time to discuss immediate or general concerns. • The Managing Director can raise safeguarding issues with the Leader of the Council at their one to one meetings. • The Managing Director has access to any papers produced by the Director of Social Services, including reports submitted to Gwent Safeguarding Gwent Safeguarding and Social Services Scrutiny Committee. • The Managing Director will receive updates on an exception basis on the activity of the Gwent Safeguarding Board at G7 meetings when necessary. These meetings consist of the five Chief Executives and Leaders of the South East Wales Region, the Chair of the ABUHB,

	<p>the Police Commissioner and the CEO of the Fire Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Managing Director will have sight of the quarterly Safeguarding Reports presented to Social Services and Education Joint Scrutiny Committee.
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Lead Member for Safeguarding

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>The Lead Member for Safeguarding is responsible for providing political scrutiny to the local authority to ensure it fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lead Member will scrutinise the quarterly performance information provided by Social Services and provide any necessary challenge. • The Lead Member will receive monthly briefings from the Director of Social Services on all aspects of Social Services including safeguarding. • The Director will inform the Lead Member of any sensitive cases that may be considered for a Child Practice Review or may become a matter of public interest. • The Lead Member will raise safeguarding issues within Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive Committee when necessary. • The Lead Member will attend the Local Safeguarding Network Group as a 'participant observer'. • Where urgent Safeguarding issues arise across the Directorate these will be shared immediately with the Lead Member by the Director of Social Services.

Director of Social Services

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>Oversee and report to Councillors and the Managing Director on the operation, monitoring and improvement of safeguarding systems across the Local Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director will be the point of contact within the Authority for all other Directors to report serious safeguarding concerns which develop within their own service areas. • The Director of Social Services will take responsibility for reporting these concerns immediately to the Managing Director and agreeing an appropriate response. • The Director will take responsibility for reporting serious Safeguarding concerns as necessary to the Lead Member for safeguarding and the Lead Member for the Directorate involved as appropriate. • The Director will meet monthly on a one to one basis with the Managing Director where general Safeguarding concerns can be raised. • The Director will review the Social Services Risk Register on a quarterly basis and inform the Managing Director and Lead member for safeguarding of any changes. • The Director will brief the Lead Member for Safeguarding on safeguarding activity within Social Services during formal briefing sessions. • Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be provided with performance management information which will include Safeguarding information. • The Director will present a Safeguarding report jointly with the Director of Education to Scrutiny Committee. • The Director will inform the Managing Director and Lead Member of significant Safeguarding matters arising from CIW Inspections • The Director will designate the Head of Children’s Services as Strategic Safeguarding Lead. • The Director will have monthly one to one sessions with the Heads of Children’s and Adults Services with Safeguarding as a standing agenda item. • The Director is responsible for providing an Annual Report to CIW and the Council on the progress and performance of Social Services which includes safeguarding.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure representation either locally or regionally on all regional and national reviews of policies, guidance and protocols required by the Safeguarding Board.• To ensure that any request for additional regional guidance is agreed by the Safeguarding Boards and based on a clear rationale for how it will assist practitioners to achieve better safeguarding and / or child protection outcomes• To ensure that there is full consultation across partner agencies and practitioners regarding the development or review of documents, and to ensure that whenever possible children, young people, parents and carers participate in consultation processes• To ensure any new policies agreed regionally are shared widely both within and across all partners.• To support effectiveness of the Safeguarding Boards through the use of appropriate tools.• To ensure adherence to all Welsh Government reporting frameworks• To oversee the production of annual reports and plans• Ensuring local authority participation in the local safeguarding networks via the local authority safeguarding leads• To contribute to and participate in annual development days for each statutory board
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Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Social Services

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>To support the Director to monitor and improve Safeguarding systems across the Local Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) will in their monthly one to one meetings with the Director raise relevant Safeguarding issues. • The SSL Lead will bring to the Directors immediate attention serious Safeguarding concerns as they arise. • The SSL will ensure the Director receives copies of the minutes of the Local Safeguarding Network which sits under Gwent Safeguarding. • The SSL has a seat on the Gwent Safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring Blaenau Gwent is represented on the sub groups of this Board. • The SSL is responsible for ensuring Policies and Procedures are in place and accessible to staff in relation to managing Safeguarding issues. • The SSL is responsible for scrutinizing performance information relating to Safeguarding and putting corrective measures in place to improve performance when necessary. • The SSL will brief the Director on progress of action plans resulting from Child Practice Reviews within Blaenau Gwent. • The SSL will keep a Deputy Safeguarding Lead Officer briefed to deputise in their absence.

Director of Education

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>The Director is responsible for ensuring systems are in place to ensure children and adults are safeguarded, staff are appropriately trained and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse safeguarding issues and prompt action when required within the Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director will report any serious safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director will agree an appropriate response. • The Director will keep briefed their Lead member for Education on general performance issues relating to Safeguarding within their service area. • The Director will present a Safeguarding report jointly with the Director of Social Services to Scrutiny Committee. • The Director will in Corporate Leadership Team meetings review the Corporate risk register which includes Safeguarding. • The Director will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL). • The Director will have monthly one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document. • The Director shares with Corporate Leadership Team, strategic information regarding safeguarding allegation/concerns about Practitioners and those in a position of trust within education, on a monthly basis.

Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Education

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>To support the Director in ensuring systems are in place to safeguard children and adults at risk. Staff are appropriately trained and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse safeguarding issues for prompt action when required across the Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding. • The SSL will sit on the Local Safeguarding Network which sits under Gwent Safeguarding. • The SSL will, in their monthly meetings with the Director, raise any general Safeguarding issues. • The SSL will monitor Safeguarding performance information via their one to one meetings with the Safeguarding in Education Manager, whose role is to work directly with Head Teachers and Governing Bodies to implement the Welsh Assembly Government's circular 265/2020, "Keeping Learners Safe". • The SSL will monitor Safeguarding performance. Information to be monitored will include; training of practitioners across the Directorate, safe recruitment of practitioners, ensuring Policies and Procedures are in place and accessible to practitioners. • The SSL will ensure Safeguarding performance information is regularly presented to the Directorate Management Team • The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead who will deputise in their absence.

Safeguarding in Education Manager

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>To support the Director, the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Education, Head Teachers and Governing Bodies to ensure systems are in place to safeguard Children. That staff are appropriately trained, and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse Safeguarding issues to prompt action when required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will receive their one to one supervision from the Deputy Safeguarding Lead in Social Services. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will meet with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Education to discuss relevant Safeguarding issues across the Directorate. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will report safeguarding information to the Education Directorate Management Team and contribute to the termly Safeguarding Report to be presented to Scrutiny Committee. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will sit on the Local Safeguarding Network and other relevant Sub Groups of Gwent Safeguarding. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will attend regional and national Safeguarding in Education meetings. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager is responsible for supporting schools and the Local Authority to ensure compliance with the Welsh Government circular 265/2020 <i>“Keeping Learners Safe”</i>. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager, covers the responsibilities laid out in WG circular no 009/2014, <i>“Safeguarding children in Education: - Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff”</i>. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will coordinate and manage Safeguarding performance information held on the Safeguarding matrix • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will contribute to the Education self-evaluation process

Director of Regeneration & Community Services

Chief Officer Resources

Chief Officer Commercial

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>To ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Director/Chief Officer will report any serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc in the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director agree an appropriate response.• The Director/Chief Officer will in Corporate Leadership Team Meetings review the Corporate Risk Register which includes Safeguarding.• The Director/Chief Officer will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL).• The Director/Chief Officer will have one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document.

Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for the:

- **Director of Regeneration & Community Services**
- **Chief Officer Resources**
- **Chief Officer Commercial**

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>The Strategic leads will support Gwent Safeguarding Board by delivering on the statutory function to engage with people (children and young people, parents and carers, adults at risk, the general public and professionals) to promote and raise awareness of safeguarding issues across the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Designated Strategic Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding • The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead will ensure all staff members have been briefed and are aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. • To co-ordinate and facilitate engagement opportunities for staff which may include a wide variety of methods and mechanisms • To co-ordinate, develop and review relevant leaflets and other material to ensure the communication of key safeguarding messages • To develop links with communication, participation and engagement officers throughout the Council. • The SSL will ensure all new staff as part of their induction are made aware of their Safeguarding responsibilities in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. • The SSL will ensure those staff who have an interface with Children and Families receive the appropriate training in Safeguarding commensurate with their role. • The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to deputise in their absence. • The SSL will report serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director/Chief Officer of their service area, who will in turn email the Director of Social Services and cc the Managing Director. • The SSL will in their one to one sessions with the Director/Chief Officer discuss general Safeguarding issues relevant to the Directorate. • The SSL will respond to requests for information to contribute to the termly Safeguarding reports which will be presented to Scrutiny Committee. • The SSL can and should contact the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Social Services if they need advice/support in relation to Safeguarding matters.

Appendix 2

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Corporate Safeguarding Policy
Professional Conduct and Safe Working Practice

This document provides a description of the professional standards of practice that are required from all Council staff, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors when undertaking their day to day duties. For Elected Members and officers, it must be read in conjunction with the Council's 'Code of Conduct for Employees' and the 'Social Media Policy'.

[http://intranet/organisational-development-\(hr\)/policies-procedures/policies-managers-guides.aspx](http://intranet/organisational-development-(hr)/policies-procedures/policies-managers-guides.aspx)

http://intranet/media/95636/INFOSEC-DOC-SMPLY-001_BG_Social_Media_Policy_v2_2.pdf

Any breach of the following conditions will result in an investigation and possible disciplinary action which could, if serious, result in dismissal and the possibility of criminal investigation if there is evidence of illegal activity.

You MUST:

Set a good example in terms of behaviour to ensure that children and adults are safeguarded and protected.

Keep yourself safe through adherence to any agreed plan of intervention/care plan where applicable, through relevant risk assessments including Health & Safety and checking the Employee Protection Register database and through compliance with the Council's Policy for Lone Working.

Be open and transparent when meeting and/or working with children and adults at risk and where not required to do so as part of your role and function, you should try to avoid any situation where you may be alone with a child or adult at risk out of sight or sound of another officer or colleague.

Respect an individual's rights to privacy, equality and dignity and a safe and positive environment.

Prioritise the welfare and safety of the child or adult at risk before concerns about performance and service delivery.

Ensure you are familiar with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

All Departments must identify a Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DOS). You must take responsibility to identify the Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DOS) for your respective Service area.

Ensure you access the appropriate safeguarding training relevant to your role and responsibility.

Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to any concerns you may have in respect of a child or adult at risk.

Follow the required process for reporting incidents and concerns.

Advise line managers of any issues in your private life that may have safeguarding implications in your work.

If the child or adult at risk does not want a practitioner to disclose, the practitioner has an overriding duty to report to their manager but must also tell the person that they are doing so.

Adults at risk have the right to give or withhold their consent to a report to adult services being made. Unless the adult at risk has been assessed not to have the mental capacity to make this decision, their decision must be respected unless there are reasons for it being overridden.

The reasons for overriding the decision include when a crime has been committed and when there are risks to other people, including children. In these circumstances the report should proceed.

If an adult at risk does not have the mental capacity to make this decision, a Best Interest Decision must be made that reflects the best interests of the person and the wider public interest.

Use the internet and social media responsibly.

Maintain confidentiality.

You MUST NOT:

Use force, threats or inappropriate language.

Make suggestive sexual comments or behave in a sexualised manner.

Touch inappropriately or allow inappropriate touching in any way.

Use any behaviour management methods that are not authorised by Council policy and procedure.

Ignore allegations made by a child or adult. All allegations must be reported to Social Services and/or the Police.

Undertake tasks of a personal nature for a child or adult which they could do for themselves.

Invite a child or adult at risk to be alone with you where this is not part of your role and function.

Breach confidentiality or share sensitive information relating to an individual inappropriately.

NB: this is by no means an exhaustive list and all actions must be determined by application of professional judgement and decision making.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Corporate Safeguarding Policy

How to make a report?

LISTEN

If you are concerned because of something a child or adult at risk is saying, you should not attempt to take any action directly but **you should:**

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully, do not directly question him or her, instead use open questions; what, where, when, who?
- Never stop them talking if they are freely recalling significant events
- Tell them what you will do next and who you will inform (see below)
- Never promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record what was said, when and where it happened and who else was present

SHARE

Any safeguarding concerns should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the respective service area. With the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead the decision to report a concern to Social Services will be made and responsibility for reporting will be agreed i.e. the staff member or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make the report.

Should the concerns relate to a professional, the same procedure will apply.

Reports in relation to a concern about a child, young person or adult should be made to Social Services as soon as possible and certainly **within 24 hours**.

Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service can be contacted on **01495 315700**.

Outside office hours, reports should be made to the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team or if there is immediate risk, to the Police.

The Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on: **0800 328 4432**

Elected Members, practitioners and providers should be aware that they **cannot remain anonymous** when making a report.

The Duty Worker taking the report should be given as much information as possible if it is available to the reporter. This will include the following:

- Full name of the subject of the concern
- Their date of birth or age
- Their address
- The nature of the concern
- Who may be responsible
- Their name and relationship (if any)
- What happened
- When and where
- What has been done in response
- Whether or not the Police have been informed
- The names and relationship of those with caring responsibility
- The names and ages of any other adults living in the household
- The names of any professionals known to be involved e.g. school, GP
- Any information affecting the potential safety of staff
- The allocated social worker or team if known/if applicable

RECORD

All telephone reports should be confirmed in writing within two working days.

For children a Multi-Agency Report Form (MARF) should be used:
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>

For an Adult report a Duty to Report form should be used:
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>

LISTEN, SHARE, RECORD

Appendix 4

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Corporate Safeguarding Policy
Useful Contacts

Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service can be contacted on 01495 315700.:

- **Legislation:** [SS&WB \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)
- <https://safeguarding.wales/>

Gwent Safeguarding:

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>

Services for people from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) backgrounds:

- <https://bawso.org.uk/>

Domestic Abuse:

- <https://gov.wales/live-fear-free>
- info@phoenixdas.co.uk

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Policies and Statutory Guidance:

PLEASE REFER TO THE CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING ON THE INTRANET FOR THE MOST ACCURATE AND UP TO DATE INFORMATION.



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Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework

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a better place to live and work

Introduction

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone living within the Borough is safe and protected and that the statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk are effectively met.

The following framework sets out Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's (BGCBC) requirements in respect of safeguarding training for all Council employees, elected Members and volunteers (practitioners). Safeguarding training is mandatory and means all staff should at least receive Tier 1 training every 3 years. The framework is based on a tiered approach, which links to the role of the practitioner and the contact that they may or may not have with children, young people and adults at risk.

The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy states that all education and council practitioners, elected members and contractors who come into contact with children or adults at risk in the course of their duties are expected to understand their responsibility and wherever necessary, to take action to safeguard and promote their welfare.

All practitioners working for, or on behalf of the Council have a 'duty to report' any concerns they may have for the welfare and/or protection of children and adults at risk. The duty to report is a legal requirement under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

It is the responsibility of the service area to identify the tier of training the individual employee/volunteer is required to undertake and this should be clearly defined and recorded within the Service area.

The training tiers are dependent upon whether a practitioner's role brings them into contact with children or adults when carrying out their duties. There is no single definition of what constitutes contact with children and professional judgement must be exercised. As a guide, any practitioner who is regularly and directly communicating and/or interacting with children and adults would be considered as meeting this criterion. The safeguarding course titles can be found at Appendix 1.

TIER ONE

On commencing employment with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, all practitioners are required to have 'Basic Safeguarding Awareness' training. This is an hour briefing which is delivered by accessing the electronic Tier 1 training developed by Social Care Wales online through the All Wales Platform and will be centrally recorded. If you are unable to access electronic

training then please ask your manager/supervisor who can refer you to 'face to face' training if required.. The Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this is completed as part of induction.

If the role of the practitioner means they do not come into contact with children, young people or adults when carrying out their duties, they are required to undertake a refresher of this briefing every 3 years.

For such employees, there will be no requirement to undertake Tier 2 or 3 training.

The All Wales platform should enable staff to be notified when refresher training is required and will record when refresher training has been undertaken. Attendance sheets for the refresher training will be completed by the relevant manager should 'face to face' training be required.

The refresher briefing can be delivered as part of team meetings, supervision or via groups as agreed within the individual service area.

Attendance sheets for training should clearly identify the name of the course and whether it is the practitioners initial or refresher training and include-

- Service area
- Employee Number
- Name
- Course title
- Date of the training

Induction

Basic Safeguarding Awareness

1-hour briefing

RERESHER EVERY 3 YEARS

- Understand the importance of safeguarding
- Be able to identify different forms of abuse and recognise possible indicators
- Know what to do if you have a concern regarding abuse
- Be aware of the Blaenau Gwent Corporate Safeguarding Policy

TIER TWO

Within 6 months of commencing employment and completion of Tier 1 Basic Safeguarding Awareness, those practitioners whose role will bring them into contact with children, young people and adults must complete the half day 'Understanding Safeguarding: Children and Adults' training. This Tier 2 half day course should be repeated every 3 years. There is no need to repeat Tier 1.

Each Service area will facilitate 'Understanding Safeguarding Children and Adults' course on a regular basis, the frequency of which will be determined by the Service area, but must be at least every 3 years. Social Care Wales are currently reviewing Tier 2 and Tier 3 training and will be releasing updates later in 2022.

Understanding Safeguarding Children and Adults

1/2 day

REFRESHER EVERY 3 YEARS

- Know own role in relation to safeguarding adults, children and young people from harm, abuse and neglect
- Understand how individuals are protected from harm, abuse and neglect
- Know how to recognise different types of harm, abuse and neglect
- Understand the safeguarding requirements of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

TIER 3

Practitioners employed by Education and Social Services will have specific training requirements due to their professional roles and responsibilities. There will also be staff in service areas who have responsibility for making reports due to safeguarding matters being raised with them by employees in their teams. These are likely to be Team Managers and Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP's) who require a higher level of training in order to support them in respect of making safeguarding reports and offering safeguarding advice. For such employees, after completing Tier 1 as part of the Induction process, Tier 3 courses should be completed within 6 months, with no requirement to repeat Tier 1 or complete Tier 2.

If an existing employee is promoted to a Team Manager role where they would be required to offer Safeguarding advice and/or make reports, they should then complete Tier 3 training as part of their induction to the new role. Further, if an employee is identified as a DSP, they must complete Tier 3 training within 3 months of taking on board this responsibility.

For employees identified by service areas who fit this criteria, the requirement is to undertake the following training:

- 1 Day training course 'Safeguarding Children: Recognition, Referral and the Child Protection Process' which is facilitated by the Gwent Safeguarding Board and
- 1 Day training course 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk: Awareness Raising' which is facilitated by Workforce Development.

Both training courses should be repeated every 3 years.

Children specific- via Gwent Safeguarding Board

**Safeguarding Children: Recognition,
Referral and the Child Protection
Process**

1 day

REFRESHER EVERY 3 YEARS

- To be aware of the key legislation and policies for working together to safeguard children
- To have an awareness of what is meant by child abuse, neglect and learn about possible signs, symptoms and indicators
- To demonstrate an understanding of your safeguarding roles and responsibilities
- Know how to report concerns

Link to Gwent Safeguarding training- <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>

Adult specific- Via Workforce Development

Safeguarding Adults at Risk Awareness Raising

1 day

REFRESHER EVERY 3 YEARS

- To raise awareness of: The Wales Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures. The types and indicators of abuse. The responsibility to report adult abuse.
- Participants to be able to: Identify who may be an adult at risk. Describe types of abuse and ways of recognising types of abuse. Understand roles and responsibilities in reporting abuse. Understand how to respond to disclosures or concerns of abuse.

Compliance with Safeguarding Training

Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP's) have responsibility for ensuring that service areas are compliant with the requirements of training. Key activity data on the compliance of safeguarding training in each Service area will be reported to the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group.

Individual service areas should make an informed decision based on the workforce within their area to determine which tier of training is relevant to which practitioner. The rationale for this decision should be clearly recorded. Support in making these decisions can be offered by the safeguarding managers in Social Services.

Education Practitioners - School based practitioners

There is a requirement for all school based practitioners to undertake training on a 3 yearly basis. Practitioners include head teachers, teachers, teaching assistants, lunch time supervisors, caretakers, crossing patrol, breakfast club staff and Governors.

The model of training delivery will be a whole school approach. A 'train the trainer' safeguarding package will be delivered to all head teachers, who will then facilitate safeguarding training within their school on a 3 yearly rolling programme.

The safeguarding in education manager will support and monitor the completion of this training.

In addition, head teachers must ensure that all practitioners are made fully aware of the School's Safeguarding Policy and how to access it and that safeguarding is on the agenda for staff meetings on a regular basis. Head teachers must ensure that all school staff are aware of the Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs) within the school and how to report any concerns regarding pupils or practitioners.

DSP meetings are held on a regular basis to provide additional and updated information on aspects of safeguarding.

Social Services- Children and Adults

Those staff employed within Social Services will have specific training requirements due to their professional registration requirements for Social Care Wales.

Specific training for Children's and Adults Social Workers is as follows:

Safeguarding Adults (workforce development courses):

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk - Awareness Raising: aimed at all staff that have direct contact with adults.

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk - Awareness Raising - Half Day Refresher. It is recommended that those working with adults attend refresher training every three years.
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk – Advanced: designed to aid social workers, registered managers and staff from partner organisations.

Safeguarding Children (Gwent Safeguarding)

- Basic Awareness to Safeguarding Children – Everybody’s Business <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQ8djE-yadA>
- Introduction to Safeguarding (Adults and Children)
- Safeguarding Children: Recognition, Referral and the Child Protection Process
- Other specialist courses are available via Gwent Safeguarding

In addition, Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW’s) have a clear framework which sets out the requirements of training within the first 3 years of practice.

The framework consists of:

- Induction to professional social work
- Growing in competence and confidence
- Mentoring and training
- ‘Consolidation of Practice’ Programme and renewal of registration

Prior to commencing the ‘Consolidation of Practice’, Social Workers must complete 4 mandatory full day courses on the following:

- Adult Safeguarding
- Children’s Safeguarding.
- Domestic Abuse
- Substance Misuse

The Continuing Professional Education and Learning (CPEL) framework for experienced Social Workers is as follows:

- Experienced Practitioner Programme
- Senior Practitioner Programme
- Consultant Social Worker Programme

Other leadership courses for Social Workers include:

Team Manager Development Programme – TMDP

Middle Management Development Programme – MMDP

Other Training is available via:

- Social Services internal training
- Social Services, Workforce Development Services - <http://socialservicesblaenau-gwent.caerphilly.gov.uk/index.aspx>
- Gwent Safeguarding - <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>
- Gwent Safeguarding Media Clips - <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Resource-Hub/Media-Clips/Gwent-Safeguarding-Media-Clips/Gwent-Safeguarding-Media-Clips.aspx>
- Resources from Social Care Wales - <https://socialcare.wales/learning-and-development/safeguarding>

Appendix 1 **Safeguarding course titles**

The safeguarding course titles are as follows:

Tier 1 – Induction- Basic Safeguarding Awareness

Tier 1 - Refresher- Basic Safeguarding Awareness

Tier 2 – Half Day Understanding Safeguarding- Children and Adults

Tier 2 - Half Day Refresher- Understanding Safeguarding- Children and Adults

Tier 3- 1 Day Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Tier 3- 1 Day refresher- Safeguarding Adults at risk

Tier 3- 1 Day Safeguarding children- Recognition, referral and child protection process

Tier 3 -1 Day Refresher Safeguarding children- Recognition, referral and child protection process

Safeguarding Training



Tier 1 SWAY
Corporate safeguarding



Tier 2
Understanding Safe

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Designated Safeguarding Person – role and responsibilities

Every service within the Council is required to nominate a Designated Safeguarding Person to support the workforce with their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. These DSPs may be in addition to the role of the Strategic Safeguarding Leads within each Directorate.

DSP Responsibilities:

- Be familiar with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and safeguarding process and procedure.
- Ensure all practitioners (staff and volunteers) are aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and know how to access a copy of it.
- Ensure all practitioners within their service area know who the DSP is and how to contact them.
- Attend relevant training
- Ensure staff within their service area attend training at levels appropriate to their roles and functions and maintain management information in relation to attendance on training.
- Ensure safeguarding responsibilities are highlighted through staff induction processes, team meetings, supervision sessions and staff briefings.

advice and support for practitioners within their service area on safeguarding matters.

- Support practitioners to, or take the lead on reporting safeguarding concerns to Social Services as appropriate.

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BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL.

Introduction

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone living within the Borough is safe and protected and that our statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk are effectively met.

The following self-assessment is set out in sections related to different standards underpinning safeguarding and requires each service area to think about their own practices and procedures within their relevant setting. It is designed to give an understanding of safeguarding in a particular service area/establishment and how these might be developed. In addition, the self-assessment provides Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council with an overview of safeguarding practices across the county.

The self-assessment will enable service areas to ensure that they are exercising their functions under current legislation (Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014) and will be used as an audit tool to ensure that service areas have the following in place:

1. Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting **citizen's** welfare
2. The agency fulfils its obligations under Safeguarding legislation
3. A clear statement of the service areas responsibilities towards safeguarding is available for all practitioners
4. A clear line of accountability within the service area for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of citizens
Service development that takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of citizens
5. Practitioner training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of citizens for all practitioners working with or, depending on the services areas primary functions, in contact with all citizens
6. Safe recruitment processes and procedures
7. Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of all citizens
8. Effective Information Sharing processes and procedures

Guidance for the completion of the Audit Tool

The audit tool is a self-assessment tool that covers nine key areas. Within each of these areas there are a number of standards that the service area should meet. To complete the tool, **evidence** should be given that would demonstrate how the service area meets each of the standards. Think carefully about the practices and procedures in the relevant service area and RAG rate as outlined below.

Self-assessment rating

The traffic light system relates to how a service area assesses itself against achieving the minimum standard. If your service area assesses itself as red or amber, areas for development need to be recorded along with a timescale for completion on a separate Action Plan. It is worth noting that the scope of this model of audit tool does not allow the demonstration of exceeding the minimum requirements. A score of 'green' therefore is understood to mean that it meets the required minimum standard.

Green

Means everything is in place, up to date, and meets the required minimum standard

Amber

Means that something requires review or improvement

Red

Means something needs to be developed as a matter of urgency

Once completed, the form should be returned to Chair of the Blaenau Gwent Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group to consider ongoing support and inform any wider safeguarding issues for the Local Authority. The information will also feed into the **Corporate Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee**. Support and advice can be provided where appropriate with any issues raised that require action planning. The Audit will be repeated **every 3 years**.

DETAILS OF COMPLETION

ORGANISATION / SERVICE AREA / ESTABLISHMENT NAME	
PERSON COMPLETING THIS AUDIT	
ROLE/POSITION	
DATE COMPLETED	
DATE RETURNED TO LA	
Please list ALL the individual services / organisations / establishments that you are responsible for and reporting on in this audit. Where relevant be specific in your audit regarding which service is being commented upon. (

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	EVIDENCE	RAG RATING	FURTHER ACTIONS REQ'D
STANDARD 1.			
Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)			

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) fulfil an essential role in developing and implementing policies that help to protect children and adults at risk from all forms of abuse and create a safe environment. Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) take responsibility in their setting for managing issues and concerns about adults and children at risk.

1.1 There is a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for Safeguarding and all practitioners know who that person is.			
1.2 All practitioners know who to contact in the absence of the DSO and the role is promoted and understood within the service area			
1.3 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is clearly set out in the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the DSO is fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities			
1.4 The DSO is adequately trained and supported to fulfil their roles.	Provide details of safeguarding courses attended with dates:		
1.5 Senior Management are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all citizens, promoting the role of the DSO			

and supporting the DSO in undertaking the responsibilities associated with the role			
STANDARD 2. Policies and Procedures			
2.1 The setting has formally adopted the Blaenau Gwent Corporate Safeguarding Policy.	Give Date when adopted:		
2.2 The LA policy has been communicated to all practitioners and is implemented in the setting/organisation.			
2.3 The setting has its own written safeguarding policies and procedures which are reviewed regularly (at least every 3 years) and which clearly includes a statement about the service areas responsibility to all citizens	List any relevant policies with dates including date of reviews and of next review:		
2.4 All practitioners are made aware of all safeguarding policies and procedures and how these are applied within the setting			

2.5 Everyone using the service is made aware of all safeguarding policies and procedures and how these are applied within the setting			
2.6 The setting is confident that every service you commission delivers a safeguarding standard consistent with our service.			
STANDARD 3. Accountability			
3.1 All practitioners understand to whom they are directly accountable with regards to the well-being of children and adults at risk, and the level of accountability they have.	Is this discussed at team meetings and staff appraisals? How is this recorded?		
3.2 All Job Descriptions are explicit and recognise responsibilities regarding safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and adults at risk.			
3.3 All Strategic planning for the delivery of services takes into account the need to safeguard citizens at risk and promote their welfare and this is clearly stated in strategy planning to ensure this is a priority (including consultation with citizens and complaints policy)			

STANDARD 4: Listening and Responding			
4.1 Children and adults at risk are encouraged to express their wishes and feelings including any concerns they might have over harm and abuse			
4.2 Appropriate decisions are made in order to protect children, young people and adults at risk from harm			
4.3 Children, young people and adults at risk feel safe in your setting and that their well-being is promoted.			
4.4 The setting reflects on what has gone well and areas for improvement, and ensures that new learning is embedded.	How is this achieved?		
STANDARD 5: Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of all citizens			
5.1 Practitioners participate in multi-agency meetings and forums to consider the needs of and provide support for individual children and their families and adults at risk , as well as share information for assessment purposes	List the relevant meetings your setting is involved:		

<p>5.2 Practitioners are able to recognise when children and adults at risk need additional support and are able to make the appropriate reports e.g. referrals to other single agencies, referral to Families First and Supporting Family Change, reports to Adult or Children's Services . Training and guidance for practitioners covers how to make a report.</p>	<p>Provide numbers of reports made to e.g. adult/children's services</p>		
<p>5.3 Any decisions made or actions taken in relation to the protection or safeguarding of individuals are recorded appropriately and maintained confidentially.</p>			
<p>5.4 Arrangements are in place to ensure that personal and confidential information is appropriately shared across settings / services.</p>	<p>Is information securely available across varying levels of need? How do you know this is being complied with?</p>		

5.5 Staff are supported to participate in Child and Adult Practice Reviews (CPR's and APR's) where appropriate			
STANDARD 6: Training for practitioners on safeguarding and promoting wellbeing			
6.1. All practitioners receive appropriate training (at the relevant levels) to enable them to discharge their safeguarding duties			
6.2 Practitioners have a clear training pathway in relation to their role and responsibilities			
6.3 There is a record kept of all adult/child protection and safeguarding training and this is updated as appropriate.			
6.4 Arrangements are in place to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of training and the identification of adult/child protection and safeguarding training.			
6.5 Recommendations from APR's and CPR's are shared with practitioners as appropriate e.g. newsletters, email etc.			

<p>6.6 There is guidance that practitioners are given supervision/support to consider safeguarding issues which is monitored by senior management with the availability of further support if required</p>			
<p>6.7 Senior Managers are aware of updates /changes in legislation, policy and practice to embed in service area</p>			
<p>STANDARD 7: Safe Recruitment</p>			
<p>7.1. All practitioners have the relevant DBS checks prior to employment if they are engaged in regulated activity and the DBS is recorded and updated in line with policy</p>			
<p>7.2. All practitioners who have contact with children, young people and adults at risk are selected in accordance with the Safe Recruitment Policy and have appropriate checks in line with current legislation and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - References are always taken up prior to appointment. - Identity and qualifications are verified. - Professional registration is in place 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face to face interviews are carried out. - Previous employment history is checked. - Any anomalies or discrepancies are followed up. - Necessary checks are carried out before the employee takes up the post (e.g. DBS if they are engaged in regulated activity). 			
7.3 Appropriate risk assessments are used consistently if required			
7.4 Those people involved in recruitment within the setting have undertaken appropriate training	Provide details of any training undertaken:		
There is a safe recruitment policy in place			
STANDARD 8: Handling Allegations Against Practitioners			

8.1 There is a named senior officer with responsibility in respect of allegations against practitioners, including attendance at any required meetings e.g. professional strategy meetings			
8.2 There is a written procedure in place for handling allegations against practitioners			
8.3 Incidents and allegations of professional abuse are recorded appropriately and maintained confidentially.	Provide numbers of professional concerns and any issues referred:		
8.4 All practitioners are fully aware of their duty to report any professional concerns and how and who to report them to. This is embedded in induction and training			
STANDARD 9: Safeguarding in the Building			
9.1 Do you know and monitor public access points in the building(s) so that you know if people are entering or leaving the building?			

9.2 Are Parents / Carers / Visitors monitored whilst they are in the building including signing in and out procedures if appropriate? Are badges issued to visitors?			
9.3 Does the setting have policies and procedures in place to maintain safeguarding when other people/vehicles not involved with your organisation use/visit the premises at the same time as your organisation?			
9.4 Are safeguarding issues reported to the relevant lead officer and the building's management, as appropriate?			
9.5 Do you risk assess for safeguarding and general safety when using premises other than your own and have a reporting system in place for issues identified?			
STANDARD 10: Keeping Safe Online			
10.1 Children, young people or adults at risk who have access to the internet via any means in the setting can do so safely.	Provide details of any keeping safe online awareness activity that is undertaken within your setting:		
10.2 Does the setting have and implement a policy for the safe use of internet access by service users, staff and volunteers?	Tell us where this policy is available:		

STANDARD 11: Information Sharing			
11.2 How is guidance and training regarding information sharing made available to practitioners (both at induction and existing staff), including how practitioners know who to seek advice from regarding information sharing			
11.3 Consent to share information and when consent is not required is covered in training and all guidance. Issues of consent and information sharing is covered in supervision/appraisals			
11.4 Operationally, practitioners share information when they have concerns and this is recorded and retained appropriately			

Designated Safeguarding Officer Summary Report

Describe any key challenges and successes that you have experienced over the last year. Relate this both to your individual role and to the wider setting.

Please identify what support might be helpful to you in your role as Designated Safeguarding Lead or to assist with the development of safeguarding within your setting.

Action Plan

INSERT YOUR COMPLETED / UPDATED ACTION PLAN FROM YOUR PREVIOUS AUDIT

Ensure that any actions from your previous action plan that have not been completed are incorporated into your current plan as below.

No	Standard Identified	RAG Rating	Action Needed / Evidence of Completion	Timescale / Date of completion	Lead Officer and Contact Details

Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group (CSLG)

Terms of Reference

Purpose/role of the Group:

To oversee the timely implementation of the WAO review of safeguarding recommendations as outlined in the agreed action plan

To ensure the corporate safeguarding policy is fit for purpose and responsive to emerging safeguarding issues

To lead on the development and implementation of a corporate safeguarding professional learning offer

To monitor compliance of the implementation of the learning offer at a Directorate and Council level

To offer peer challenge to individual Directorate on safeguarding matters

To share professional knowledge and experiences

To monitor risks in relation to safeguarding matters, taking a preventative approach to risk mitigation

To undertake the lead on other safeguarding work streams as allocated by CLT

Membership:

Directorate Safeguarding Leads – or appointed Deputies

Co-opted members – Safeguarding Manager, Safeguarding in Education Manager and Professional Lead for Community Safety

The membership of the group will commit to:

Attending all scheduled meetings and if necessary send a representative

Forwarding any agenda items to the CSLG Coordinator 10 working days prior to the meeting (exceptions will be made if urgent items need to be heard)

Accountability:

The group is accountable to the Chief Officer for Safeguarding – Damien McCann.

Minutes of the meetings will be reported to CLT within 10 working days of the meeting taking place

Review:

The group will undertake an annual self-assessment of its work to determine progress and impact.

The annual self-assessment will take after the Q4 reporting period

Meetings:

Meetings will be aligned to Scrutiny reporting of Safeguarding matters with a minimum of 4 meetings a year timetabled

The venue for the CSLG meetings will be The Integrated Children's Centre, Blaina

The Chair of the CSLG for 2020- 2021 will be Alison Ramshaw, Service Manager, Children's Services

The position of Chair of the CSLG will be for a period of 12months

The Vice Chair of the CSLG for 2020 – 2021 will be Clive Rogers, Environment

The position of Vice Chair of the CSLG will be for a period of 12 months

The meetings will be convened and clerked by a CSLG Coordinator from Business Support

Agendas and papers for the meeting will be shared 5 working days before the meeting

Full copies of the minutes, including any attachments will be provided to all CSLG members no later than 5 working days following each meeting

Non-members will be invited to the group meetings as certain topics arise

Bespoke pieces of work may be discharged through any agreed sub groups who will report back to the CSLG

Sharing of information and resources (including confidential materials)

A secure porthole will be established on an agreed drive to which all members will have access. This drive will hold papers for the meetings and will enable the safe sharing of confidential information