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

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

11th January 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

**CABINET**

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held Virtually via MS Teams (if you would like to view this meeting please contact deb.jones@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) on Wednesday, 18th January, 2023 at 10.00 am.

Yours faithfully

Damien McCann  
Interim Chief Executive

**AGENDA**

**Pages**

1. **SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION**

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

2. **APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn cyfathrebu gyda chi yn eich dewis iaith, dim ond i chi rhoi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English and we will communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

To receive any declarations of interest or dispensations.

**DECISION SHEET**

4. **CABINET** 5 - 12

To receive the decisions of the Cabinet meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2022.

**GENERAL MATTERS**

5. **CONFERENCES, COURSE, EVENT INVITATIONS** 13 - 14

To consider.

**CORPORATE AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**

6. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 1ST MARCH 2023** 15 - 18

To receive.

7. **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - 2022/2023, FORECAST OUTTURN TO 31ST MARCH 2023 (AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022)** 19 - 46

To consider the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

8. **CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, FORECAST FOR 2022/2023 FINANCIAL YEAR (AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2022)** 47 - 70

To consider the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

9. **REVIEW OF THE FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT** 71 - 78

To consider the report of the Service Manager Performance and Democratic.

10. **WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2021-2026** 79 - 96

To consider the report of the Head of Organisational Development.

## **PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO**

11. **WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING STRATEGY REVIEW** 97 - 126

To consider the report of the Service Manager Neighbourhood Services.

## **PEOPLE AND SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

12. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2022/2023 (QUARTERS 1 AND 2).** 127 - 162

To consider the report of the Interim Corporate Director of Social Services.

## **PEOPLE AND EDUCATION PORTFOLIO**

13. **CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION SERVICES - QUARTER 1 AND 2 2022** 163 - 192

To consider the report of the Corporate Director Education.

14. **IMPROVING SCHOOLS PROGRAMME** 193 - 220

To consider the report of the Corporate Director Education.

To: Councillor S. Thomas  
Councillor H. Cunningham  
Councillor J. C. Morgan  
Councillor H. Trollope  
Councillor S. Edmunds

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 CABINET**

**SUBJECT: CABINET – 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2022**

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

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**PRESENT: Leader/  
Cabinet Member - Corporate Overview & Performance  
Councillor S. Thomas (CHAIR)**

**Deputy Leader/  
Cabinet Member – Place & Environment  
Councillor H. Cunningham**

**Cabinet Member – Place & Regeneration  
Councillor J.C. Morgan**

**Cabinet Member – People & Education  
Councillor S. Edmunds**

**Cabinet Member – People & Social Services  
Councillor H. Trollope**

**WITH:**  
Interim Chief Executive  
Corporate Director Education  
Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services  
Interim Corporate Director Social Services  
Chief Officer Resources  
Chief Officer Customer & Commercial  
Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance  
Head of Governance and Partnerships  
Team Manager Development Plans

## DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
No. 1	<b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b>  It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.
No. 2	<b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b>  No apologies for absence had been received.
No. 3	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b>  No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.
	<b><u>DECISIONS</u></b>
No. 4	<b><u>CABINET</u></b>  To consider the decisions of the Cabinet Meeting held on 26 <sup>th</sup> October, 2022.  RESOLVED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.
No. 5	<b><u>SPECIAL CABINET</u></b>  To consider the decisions of the Special Cabinet Meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup> November, 2022.  RESOLVED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

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**CORPORATE AND PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO**

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**No. 6** **THE CALCULATION OF THE COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR THE YEAR 2023/24**

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

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Cabinet approved the Council Tax base calculation for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 1 tables 1 to 6, and that the council tax base for tax setting purposes be 20,806.70.

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**No. 7** **GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS**

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

The following grants to organisation were received further to the publication of the report:-

**ABERTILLERY**

**Abertillery & Six Bells Ward - Councillor K. Chaplin**

1. Chillax £132

**Abertillery & Six Bells Ward – Councillor R. Leadbeater**

1.	Old Tylerian RFC	£100
2.	Abertillery Excelsiors Junior FC	£100
3.	Abertillery Excelsiors AFC	£100
4.	Abertillery BG RFC	£100
5.	Six Bells Tennis Club	£100
6.	Abertillery Seniors Netball Club	£100
7.	Six Bells Bowls Club	£100
8.	Adam Street Allotments	£100
9.	Pant y Pwdyn Allotments	£100
10.	Bethan Copner (The Scout Association)	£100
11.	Ebenezer Baptist Church	£100
12.	Zion Miners Chapel	£100
13.	Abertillery Rock and Blues	£100

**Abertillery & Six Bells Ward - Councillor J. Holt**

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- 
- |    |                      |     |
|----|----------------------|-----|
| 1. | Six Bells Bowls Club | £50 |
|----|----------------------|-----|

**Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor N. Parsons**

- |    |                            |      |
|----|----------------------------|------|
| 1. | Brynithel Activities Group | £300 |
|----|----------------------------|------|

**Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor H. Cunningham**

- |    |                                      |      |
|----|--------------------------------------|------|
| 1. | Soffryd Community Centre             | £250 |
| 2. | Brynithel Welfare & Community Centre | £250 |

**BRYNMAWR**

**Brynmawr Ward - Councillor J. Hill**

- |    |                                    |      |
|----|------------------------------------|------|
| 1. | Brynmawr Historical Society        | £150 |
| 2. | Brynmawr & District Museum Society | £150 |
| 3. | Brynmawr Town Centre Partnership   | £150 |

**EBBW VALE**

**Beaufort Ward - Councillor C. Smith**

- |    |                          |      |
|----|--------------------------|------|
| 1. | Glyncoed Community Group | £300 |
|----|--------------------------|------|

**Beaufort Ward - Councillor G. Thomas**

- |    |                           |      |
|----|---------------------------|------|
| 1. | Badminton OAP's           | £100 |
| 2. | Beaufort Christmas Lights | £150 |
| 3. | Beaufort Hearts           | £100 |
| 4. | Ffinn Dance               | £100 |
| 5. | Beaufort Male Choir       | £100 |

**TREDEGAR**

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**Georgetown & Central & West Ward –**  
**Councillor S. Thomas & H. Trollope & E. Jones &**  
**J. Thomas & J. Morgan**

1.	Cymru Creations	£200
2.	2167 Air Force Cadets	£200
3.	Bedwellty Park Bowls Club	£200
4.	Chloe's Community Kitchen	£200
5.	Gymfinity	£200
6.	Kids r Us	£200
7.	Mother & Toddler Group Tredegar Central Baptist	£200
8.	St. Georges Church	£200
9.	Silurian Amateur Boxing Club	£200
10.	Tredegar Business Forum	£200
11.	Tredegar Central Baptist Church	£200
12.	Tredegar Methodist Church	£200
13.	Tredegar Netball	£200
14.	Tredegar Orpheus Choir	£200
15.	Tredegar Town AFC	£200
16.	Tredegar Women & Girls AFC	£200
17.	Tredvale Camera Club	£200
18.	Stocktonville Senior Citizens	£200
19.	Royal British Legion Tredegar Branch	£200
20.	Tredegar Angling Club	£200
21.	Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum	£200
22.	St Johns Ambulance Tredegar	£200
23.	Tredegar Ironsides RFC	£200
24.	Southend Allotments	£200
25.	Southend Bee Keepers	£200
26.	Sirhowy Valley Woodlands	£200
27.	St Georges Court Tenants & Residents Association	£200

28.	Saron Church	£200
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	<p>29. Friends of Bedwellty Park £200</p> <p>30. Tredegar Methodist Church £200</p> <p>31. Planet Fitness £200</p> <p>32. Tredegar Miners Memorial Gates £200</p> <p>33. FC Tredegar Under 13's £100</p> <p>34. FC Tredegar Under 14's £100</p> <p>35. FC Tredegar Under 10 Tigers £100</p> <p>36. Tredegar Ironsides Junior RFC £200</p> <p>37. Tredegar Town AFC Juniors £100</p> <p>38. Trinity Church £200</p> <p>39. Moose International £312.50</p> <p>40. Bethel Baptist Church £200</p> <p>41. Georgetown Community Centre £200</p> <p><b><u>Sirhowy Ward –</u></b>  <b><u>Councillors M. Cross &amp; T. Smith &amp; D. Rowberry</u></b></p> <p>1. Royal British Legion – Tredegar Branch £27.50</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p> <p>FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	
<b>No. 8</b>	<p><b><u>GRANTS WORKING GROUP</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Grants Working Group held on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2022.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p>	
<b>No. 9</b>	<p><b><u>POSITION STATEMENT SHARED RESOURCE SERVICE (SRS)</u></b></p>	

	<p>Consideration was given to the joint report from the Chief Officer Commercial and Customer and the Chief Operating Officer, SRS Shared Resource Service.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the position statement be approved against the objectives set out in the Business Case and annual updates as part of the ongoing partnership with SRS be received (Option 1).</p>
	<p><b><u>PLACE AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO</u></b></p>
<p><b>No. 10</b></p>	<p><b><u>TREDEGAR PLACEMAKING PLAN</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and agreed the Tredegar Placemaking Plan, its vision and core ambitions for the future. This would enable the Authority to finalise the draft of the delivery plan and steps towards implementation of the projects that would be contained within it (Option 2).</p>
<p><b>No. 11</b></p>	<p><b><u>LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR)</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the detail contained within the annual monitoring report and agreed the content before publication (Option 1).</p>

	<b><u>PEOPLE AND EDUCATION PORTFOLIO</u></b>
<b>No. 12</b>	<b><u>ANEURIN LEISURE TRUST PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING</u></b>  <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>The Leader advised that the Partnership Scrutiny Committee had considered the report on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 and supported Option 2, namely Members are requested to consider the information detailed within the report and make appropriate recommendations prior to final approval. The Scrutiny Committee recommended that Cabinet consider the request that in future monitoring reports, as well as the 6 monthly monitoring information, an overview was provided of future financial planning.</p> <p>This recommendation was supported by the Leader and Cabinet Members.</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p> <p>FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and Option 2 be endorsed, namely that the information detailed within the report together the Scrutiny Committee recommendation be approved.</p>

# Agenda Item 5

*Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

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

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **January 2023**

Report Subject: **Conferences, Courses, Events and Invitations**

Portfolio Holder: **General Matters**

Report Submitted by: **Democratic Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
X	x	X				Jan 2023		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

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

## 2. Scope of the Report

### 2.1 His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent's Awards Ceremony 2023 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2023

To approve the attendance of Councillor D. Bevan, Armed Forces Champion.

## 3. Options for Consideration

### 3.1 To seek approval for attendance for the events outlined in the report.

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# Agenda Item 6

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 04.02.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

Portfolio Holder: **All Portfolio Holders**

Report Submitted by: **Scrutiny and Democratic Officer**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance and Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
X	x	03.01.23				18.01.23		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 To present the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Cabinet Work Programme is a key aspect of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and supports the requirements of the Constitution.
  - 2.2 The topics set out in the Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
  - 2.3 All Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet Forward Work Programmes have been aligned to the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.
  - 2.4 As the document is fluid there is flexibility to allow for regular review between the Chair and the Committee.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
  - 3.1 **Option 1**  
To agree the Forward Work Programme as presented for the Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
  - 3.2 **Option 2**  
To suggest any amendments prior to agreeing the Forward Work Programme.

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## Cabinet Forward Work Programme

**Cabinet Meeting Date:** Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023

**Report Submission Deadline Date to Liz Thomas:** Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023

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

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
<b>Portfolio:</b> Leader / Corporate Overview and Performance				
Grants to Organisations	<b>Approval</b> To agree the Grants to Organisations.	Rhian Daly	N/A	N/A
Procurement Strategy	<b>Decision</b> To approve the strategy.	Bernadette Elias	Corporate Overview and Performance - 02.02.23	N/A
<b>Portfolio:</b> Place and Regeneration				
Brynmawr Placemaking Plan	<b>Decision</b> To approve the proposals for placemaking in Brynmawr.	Ellie Fry	Place Scrutiny Committee – 31.01.23	N/A
<b>Portfolio:</b> People and Education				
School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education Statutory deadline for the policy to be published by 15 <sup>th</sup> April	<b>Pre-Decision</b> To approve the School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2023/24.	Lynn Phillips	People - 28.02.23	N/A
<b>Joint Portfolio:</b> People and Education & People and Social Services				
Safeguarding Performance Information Social Services and Education	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> To provide members with Safeguarding Performance and Self-Evaluation information and to influence areas of focus.	Tanya Evans/ Lynn Phillips	People – 28.02.23	N/A
<b>Portfolio:</b> People and Social Services				
Regional Partnership Board	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to be informed of the decisions taken by the Regional Partnership Board	Tanya Evans	Partnership – 07.02.23	N/A

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Scrutiny Meeting Date	Council Meeting Date
<b>Joint Portfolio:</b> Place and Environment and Place and Regeneration				
Community Services and Regeneration Directorate Performance report	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> Members to monitor the performance of the Directorate.	Clive Rogers Ellie Fry Dave Thompson	Places Scrutiny Committee – 31.01.23	N/A

# Agenda Item 7

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 04.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Revenue Budget Monitoring - 2022/2023, Forecast  
Outturn to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 (as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022)**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Thomas – Leader of the Council / Cabinet Member  
Corporate Overview & Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	x	03.01.23			15/12/22	18.01.23		

## 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 2022/2023 (as forecast at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022).

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:
- Forecast financial position to the end of March 2023 across all portfolios
  - Forecast outturn for Fees & Charges
  - Forecast of Reserves to be applied during the period
- 2.2 This report forms part of the Council's 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.
- Note the forecast application of reserves

### 3.2 Option 2

Members do not accept the report.

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

4.1 This report supports the Council Corporate Plan high level priority “An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place”.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

5.1.1 The overall forecast outturn across all portfolios as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022, is an adverse variance of £1.110m. Net transfers from specific reserves (of £0.791m) results in an overall adverse variance of £0.43m.

5.1.2 The forecast overall financial position across all portfolios at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 is shown in the table below:

Table 1 – Portfolio Summary

<b>Portfolio/ Committee</b>	<b>2022/2023 Revised Revenue Budget</b>	<b>2022/2023 Forecast Outturn @ 30 Sept 2022</b>	<b>Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance</b>	<b>Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance (after Net transfers from Specific Reserves) £m</b>	<b>Append ref:</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>		
Corporate Services & Financial Management & Strategy	17.92	17.72	0.20	0.58	1a
Social Services	49.94	50.61	(0.67)	(0.38)	1b
Education & Leisure	68.31	68.52	(0.21)	(0.21)	1c
Economy	1.79	1.77	0.02	0.02	1d
Environment	29.66	30.22	(0.56)	(0.44)	1e
Planning	1.44	1.43	0.01	0.01	1f

Licensing	0.13	0.14	(0.01)	(0.01)	1f
<b>Total</b>	<b>169.19</b>	<b>170.41</b>	<b>(1.11)</b>	<b>(0.43)</b>	

5.1.3 The forecast includes a number of assumptions, the main ones being:

- 20% uplift to Home to School contractors will continue to March 2023
- The impact of inflation on prices will continue to March 2023

In also includes the agreed pay award of £1,925 on all pay points from 1 April 2022 for NJC & JNC officers.

5.1.4 To minimise the forecast overspend the council has implemented a freeze on non-essential recruitment and spend.

### **Use of Reserves**

5.1.5 Any adverse variance against the revenue budget will impact on the overall level of the Council's general and specific reserves.

5.1.6 The current forecast assumes a net transfer from specific reserves totalling £0.791m and includes:

- £234,960 from the Supporting Additional Capacity Reserve (which includes additional resources for areas such as Health & Safety, Civil Contingencies, Payroll, Decarbonisation and Digital)
- £110,329 from the Election Reserve to cover the cost of the May 2022 Local Elections
- £32,180 from the Community Safety & CCTV Reserve (to support a new Policy Officer for CCTV until the SLA with Caerphilly CBC is established)
- £56,298 from the Infrastructure Staffing Reserve (to support new Welsh Government Legislation requirements)
- £48,455 from the Homelessness Transitional Funding Reserve (to fund a specialist EHO for empty properties)
- £287,535 from Social Services (relating to displaced expenditure and cost of living increase in excess of grant allocation in relation to Early Years Childcare)

5.1.7 Appendix 2 provides an analysis of all forecast use of specific reserves. The balance (£0.43m) will require a contribution from the Council's general reserve.

### 5.1.8 **Portfolio Analysis**

5.1.9 An analysis of significant adverse variances per Portfolio are detailed below.

### 5.1.10 **Corporate Services – Council Tax Collection (£0.324m adverse variance)**

5.1.11 There is currently a cost pressure on Council Tax Collection, due to forecasted increase in the provision for bad debts (at this point in time).

This cost pressure has been offset by a budget virement from the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). The underspend on CTRS has arisen due to:-

- The budget incorporated an assumed increase on Council Tax Levels of 4% (in line with the MTFS assumptions) however the actual average Council Tax increase agreed by Council was approx.1% (in respect of Police & Community Councils precepts) and
- The number of claimants claiming CTRS reducing back to pre covid levels (although this will need to be monitored during the year as the Cost of Living Crisis could attract more claimants).

Date	Number of Cases
01/09/22	8,531
01/09/21	8,980
01/09/20	9,318
01/09/19	8,796

5.1.12 **Education – Home to School Transport (£0.507m adverse variance)**

5.1.13 The 20% temporary uplift currently being awarded to contractors as a result of the fuel crisis is currently forecast to cost £0.5m for the full financial year. However, during October / November a fairly consistent reduction in fuel prices has been seen and if this continues there is a potential for this increase to be removed from January 2023 reducing this cost pressure by the end of the financial year.

It was agreed that the cost pressure would be funded (if necessary) from the inflation and service cost pressure reserve, funding from this specific reserve has not been applied at this stage with directorate underspends funding approx. 50% of this pressure to date.

5.1.14 **Environment – Catering (£0.46m adverse variance)**

5.1.15 The cost of living crisis is having a significant impact on the cost of provisions for the school meals services, with forecast costs increasing by £965,406, (83%) when compared to 2021/2022.

The Council's largest food supplier is indicating significant cost increases in products e.g. some commodities have increased by as much as 54%, this coupled with increased fuel costs is impacting upon overall costs. This variance does not take account of the anticipated increase in uptake from September when Universal Free School Meals (UFSM's) is rolled out to Nursery and Infant children. It has been assumed that this will be fully funded by Welsh Government.

5.1.16 **Social Services (0.669m adverse variance)**

5.1.17 The forecast is made up of the following variances:-

5.1.18 **Children's Services - Legal Fees (£0.42m adverse variance)**

The 2022/23 forecast for Legal Fees is currently £1.2m this represents an increase of £437K since Quarter 1. Delay in receiving invoices from the external Legal team combined with the assumption that the alternative provider would result in reduced costs led to an underestimate at Quarter 1.

Costs are expected to reduce from 2023/24 following the resolution of current caseload of the external provider with new cases being managed by the new provider.

5.1.19 **Children's Homes (Residential Placements) (£0.25m adverse variance)**

The 2022/23 forecast adverse variance has increased as a result of one child transferring to secure accommodation and one new placement.

5.1.20 **Adults Services**

Whilst Adult Services is reporting a favourable variance overall there is a £282k pressure within Cwrt Mytton and Supported Living Bungalows resulting from the difficulties in recruitment and retention of staff and the need to utilise agency staff to deliver this provision.

5.1.21 **Fees & Charges**

5.1.22 The 2022/2023 portfolio estimates include income budgets in relation to fees & charges (excluding Council Tax) of £14m across all portfolios. Attached at Appendix 3 is an analysis of income against budget for the financial year for individual portfolios. The forecast provisional outturn is reporting an adverse variance of £0.71m, primarily relating to lost income: -

- Sale of properties £0.277m and Fees and charges in respect of Care (internal provision) £0.326m.
- Sale of Meals in respect of School Catering £0.119m (confirmation of grant funding is awaited)

5.1.23 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 are being 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 Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and the Cost of Living Working 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 2022/23 (as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022).

### 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 will produce Action Plans to 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 of Living Working Group for scrutiny, challenge and monitoring.

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



6.5 ***Preventative focus***

- 6.5.1 Existing, new and emerging cost pressures are considered as part of the annual budget setting process and additional funding awarded where it is likely that the cost pressure will continue into future years.

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.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***

N/A

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 Financial reporting to Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny and the Cabinet 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 of Living Working Group, on a quarterly basis.

**Background Documents / Electronic Links**

Appendix 1a – Corporate Services Portfolio

Appendix 1b – Social Services Portfolio

Appendix 1c – Education Portfolio

Appendix 1d – Economy Portfolio

Appendix 1e – Environment Portfolio

Appendix 1f – Planning and Licensing Committees

Appendix 2 – Summary of Reserve Movements 2022-23

Appendix 3 – Fees and Charges

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## CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER RECHARGEABLE SERVICES</u></b>				
Corporate Services Department	(95,990)	(38,811)	(57,179)	(263,390)
Resources Department	0	59,614	(59,614)	(100,595)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>(95,990)</b>	<b>20,803</b>	<b>(116,793)</b>	<b>(363,985)</b>
<b><u>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Archives	148,670	153,844	(5,174)	(5,174)
Festival Park	102,570	108,557	(5,987)	(5,987)
Housing Benefit	(116,270)	(101,377)	(14,893)	(15,704)
ICT Service	0	23,414	(23,414)	0
Cross Cutting	(59,310)	(59,310)	0	0
Community Hubs	196,320	203,167	(6,847)	(8,291)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>271,980</b>	<b>328,295</b>	<b>(56,315)</b>	<b>(35,156)</b>
<b><u>LEGAL &amp; CORPORATE COMPLIANCE SERVICES</u></b>				
Registration of Electors	17,860	17,778	82	0
Conducting Elections	0	0	0	0
Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	48,100	76,374	(28,274)	(16,072)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>65,960</b>	<b>94,152</b>	<b>(28,192)</b>	<b>(16,072)</b>
<b><u>GOVERNANCE &amp; PARTNERSHIP SERVICES</u></b>				
Corporate Management (inc Audit Fees)	109,510	109,522	(12)	(12)
Democratic Representation and Management	1,323,130	1,292,457	30,673	34,333
CCTV Cameras	208,680	220,250	(11,570)	(9)
Civil Contingencies	106,890	97,472	9,418	2,617
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,748,210</b>	<b>1,719,701</b>	<b>28,509</b>	<b>36,929</b>
<b><u>RESOURCES SERVICES</u></b>				
Corporate Management	355,790	349,410	6,380	6,165
Non Distributed Costs	940,920	930,874	10,046	10,046
Apprenticeship Levy	358,430	356,550	1,880	4,215
Council Tax Collection	(1,165,020)	(1,141,247)	(23,773)	(4,602)
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	10,004,370	9,837,104	167,266	167,266
N.N.D.R. Collection	(106,820)	(108,576)	1,756	4,636
Grants and Subscriptions	88,410	88,410	0	0
Cross Cutting Budget	1,085,640	501,840	583,800	583,800
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>11,561,720</b>	<b>10,814,365</b>	<b>747,355</b>	<b>771,527</b>
<b><u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u></b>				
Corporate Recharges	4,366,000	4,366,000	0	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4,366,000</b>	<b>4,366,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CORPORATE SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>17,917,880</b>	<b>17,343,316</b>	<b>574,564</b>	<b>393,243</b>

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## SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Children's Services - Commissioning and Social Work	3,939,340	4,074,375	(135,035)	(115,316)
Looked After Children	7,501,660	8,062,920	(561,260)	166,098
Family Support Services	192,370	198,478	(6,108)	(15,461)
Youth Justice	237,580	250,930	(13,350)	(13,350)
Other Children's and Family Services	2,417,850	2,386,886	30,964	23,356
Older People Aged 65 or Over	7,154,970	7,090,061	64,909	28,153
Adults Aged Under 65 with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment	18,290	18,210	80	80
Adults Aged Under 65 with Learning Disabilities	3,684,090	3,755,969	(71,879)	(10,596)
Adults Aged Under 65 with Mental Health Needs	571,660	582,873	(11,213)	(40,974)
Other Adult Services	463,570	502,482	(38,912)	(34,269)
Community Care	17,338,860	17,002,627	336,233	322,786
Support Service and Management Costs	934,170	910,567	23,603	(15,324)
Corporate Recharges	5,487,140	5,487,135	5	0
Social Services COVID-19 Costs	0		0	17,268
<b>SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>49,941,550</b>	<b>50,323,512</b>	<b>(381,962)</b>	<b>312,452</b>

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## EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b>SCHOOLS BUDGET</b>				
Individual Schools Budget	50,430,260	50,430,260	0	0
Education Improvement Grant	267,730	267,730	0	15
Other Costs	725,420	736,864	(11,444)	(11,444)
Supporting Special Education Needs	1,730,430	1,583,211	147,219	131,172
<b>Schools Budget Total Expenditure</b>	<b>53,153,840</b>	<b>53,018,065</b>	<b>135,775</b>	<b>119,743</b>
<b>LEA BUDGET</b>				
Strategic Management	2,264,410	2,265,610	(1,200)	(11,200)
Assuring Access to Schools	2,439,820	2,925,714	(485,894)	(478,426)
Facilitating School Improvement	396,350	398,131	(1,781)	1,219
Supporting Special Education Needs	380,730	296,112	84,618	60,744
<b>LEA Budget Total Expenditure</b>	<b>5,481,310</b>	<b>5,885,567</b>	<b>(404,257)</b>	<b>(427,663)</b>
<b>OTHER EDUCATION SERVICES</b>				
Further Education and Training	135,960	144,996	(9,036)	47,061
Youth Service	345,390	370,218	(24,828)	(19,888)
Other Expenditure	143,850	123,075	20,775	14,231
Education Departmental Budget	195,970	133,430	62,540	41,950
<b>Other Education Services Total Expenditure</b>	<b>821,170</b>	<b>771,719</b>	<b>49,451</b>	<b>83,354</b>
<b>CORPORATE CHARGES</b>				
Corporate Support Recharges	4,671,690	4,671,689	1	0
Reserve Funding - Cost of Living & Service Pressures	0	0	0	0
<b>Corporate Charges Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,671,690</b>	<b>4,671,689</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Education Total Expenditure</b>	<b>64,128,010</b>	<b>64,347,040</b>	<b>(219,030)</b>	<b>(224,566)</b>
<b>LEISURE TRUSTS</b>				
<b>LEISURE TRUSTS</b>				
Aneurin Leisure Trust	2,875,550	2,884,833	(9,283)	(4,235)
Awen Leisure Trust	198,900	201,045	(2,145)	(6,825)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,074,450</b>	<b>3,085,878</b>	<b>(11,428)</b>	<b>(11,060)</b>
<b>RETAINED SERVICES</b>				
Corporate Recharges	1,102,170	1,085,228	16,942	19,223
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,102,170</b>	<b>1,085,228</b>	<b>16,942</b>	<b>19,223</b>
<b>Lesire Trusts Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,176,620</b>	<b>4,171,106</b>	<b>5,514</b>	<b>8,163</b>
<b>EDUCATION PORTFOLIO TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>68,304,630</b>	<b>68,518,146</b>	<b>(213,516)</b>	<b>-216,403</b>

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## ECONOMY PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Economic Strategy and Development - Departmental Budget	92,940	92,948	(8)	(21)
Estates Management - Rechargeable	12,030	125,166	(113,136)	(137,733)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>104,970</b>	<b>218,114</b>	<b>(113,144)</b>	<b>(137,754)</b>
<b><u>ECONOMY SERVICES</u></b>				
Affordable Housing	0	0	0	0
Aspire	0	0	0	0
Community Benefits Investment	0	0	0	0
CSCS	(10,200)	(513)	(9,687)	(9,776)
Destination Management	10,200	10,202	(2)	(2)
DRivE	0	1	(1)	0
Financial Support to Business	4,410	4,410	0	1
General Offices	(24,360)	(63,105)	38,745	1
Industrial Land	7,390	7,390	0	0
Inspire	0	0	0	0
Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	(793,750)	(876,237)	82,487	87,041
Pentagon	0	0	0	0
Regeneration Projects	5,100	6,179	(1,079)	(1,079)
Resilient Project	0	0	0	0
Estates Management Non Rechargeable	(96,590)	(120,403)	23,813	3
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>(897,800)</b>	<b>(1,032,076)</b>	<b>134,276</b>	<b>76,189</b>
Corporate Recharges	2,583,380	2,583,380	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,790,550</b>	<b>1,769,418</b>	<b>21,132</b>	<b>(61,565)</b>

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## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b>SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Environment Department - Corporate Division	179	(40,914)	41,093	40,669
Environmental Services Division	17,100	10,447	6,653	1,017
Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	78,740	78,740	0	(1)
Enforcement	25,280	19,420	5,860	6,096
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>121,299</b>	<b>67,693</b>	<b>53,606</b>	<b>47,781</b>
<b><u>WASTE SERVICES</u></b>	<b>6,358,698</b>	<b>6,364,470</b>	<b>(5,772)</b>	<b>218,604</b>
<b><u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u></b>				
County Borough Cleansing	1,190,016	1,201,523	(11,507)	(52,434)
Cemeteries / Crematorium	(159,578)	(125,979)	(33,599)	(52,291)
Grounds Maintenance	1,065,642	1,007,945	57,697	3,857
Countryside Recreation Sites	37,419	37,419	0	0
General Entertainment	2,489	3,879	(1,390)	(1,390)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2,135,988</b>	<b>2,124,787</b>	<b>11,201</b>	<b>(102,258)</b>
<b><u>FACILITIES MANAGEMENT</u></b>				
Corporate Landlord	1,731,203	1,722,414	8,789	2,477
Corporate Property	30,073	30,073	0	4,906
Building Cleaning	317,924	338,661	(20,737)	1,630
Catering Account	311,105	768,652	(457,547)	(536,429)
Appetite For Life	44,585	44,585	0	0
School Breakfast Club	438,639	438,639	0	(23,300)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2,873,529</b>	<b>3,343,024</b>	<b>(469,495)</b>	<b>(550,716)</b>
<b><u>HIGHWAYS &amp; ROADS SERVICES</u></b>				
Highways - Street Care Team	9,010	2,534	6,476	6,790
Non Operational Land	1,490	0	1,490	1,490
Licensing (Highway Permits)	(52,211)	(52,211)	0	0
Shopping Arcade, Abertillery	2,834	2,834	0	0
Road and Street Works Acts	(16,589)	(16,589)	0	0
Multi-Storey Car Parks	277,154	277,154	0	0
On Street Parking	1,122	1,122	0	0
Surface Car Parks	32,421	32,421	0	0
Public Transport Co-Ordination	924	924	0	0
Bridges	79,145	79,145	0	0
Structural Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	184,190	186,206	(2,016)	(7,010)
Environmental Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	19,831	19,831	0	0
Safety Maintenance (Principal and Other Roads)	73,349	73,366	(17)	(194)
Routine Repairs (Principal and Other Roads)	879,831	888,146	(8,315)	(26,474)
Street Lighting	1,260,143	1,260,143	0	2
Winter Maintenance	402,162	402,162	0	(2,070)
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,154,806</b>	<b>3,157,188</b>	<b>(2,382)</b>	<b>(27,466)</b>

## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b><u>TRANSPORT SERVICES</u></b>				
Traffic Orders	(16,841)	(42,546)	25,705	0
Highways Adoptions	(9,950)	(8,550)	(1,400)	0
Traffic / Accident Research	16,001	16,001	0	0
Traffic Management	6,895	6,895	0	0
Civil Parking Enforcement	2,100	(3,290)	5,390	(18,532)
Road Safety Education	22,943	24,625	(1,682)	(217)
Crossing Patrols	177,838	177,192	646	(946)
Concessionary fares and Support to Operators	284,395	274,212	10,183	18,543
Local Transport Plans	2,680	2,680	0	0
Home to School Transport	0	0	0	0
Transport and Heavy Plant	139,656	139,656	0	(2)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>625,717</u>	<u>586,875</u>	<u>38,842</u>	<u>(1,154)</u>
<b><u>CULTURAL &amp; ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
General Administration and Markets	(25,868)	(14,340)	(11,528)	(16,761)
Countryside Programme and Management	1,718	2,168	(450)	0
Landscaping and Afforestation	20,716	18,910	1,806	0
Reservoirs, Tips, Quarries and Mines	10,333	35,333	(25,000)	0
Flood Defence And Land Drainage	56,488	27,687	28,801	0
ENRaW	0	0	0	0
City Deal	99,144	99,144	0	0
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>162,531</u>	<u>168,902</u>	<u>(6,371)</u>	<u>(16,761)</u>
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u><u>15,432,568</u></u>	<u><u>15,812,939</u></u>	<u><u>(380,371)</u></u>	<u><u>(431,970)</u></u>

## ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b><u>PUBLIC PROTECTION</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Environmental Health	29,691	69,203	(39,512)	(9,958)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>29,691</u>	<u>69,203</u>	<u>(39,512)</u>	<u>(9,958)</u>
<b><u>CARAVAN SITES</u></b>				
Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	(41,092)	(35,548)	(5,544)	(12,784)
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>(41,092)</u>	<u>(35,548)</u>	<u>(5,544)</u>	<u>(12,784)</u>
<b><u>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</u></b>				
Food Safety	6,395	5,302	1,093	7,243
Control of Pollution	9,578	16,358	(6,780)	(6,844)
Dog Wardens	0	0	0	(1,843)
Animal Health and Welfare	23,827	23,827	0	23,827
Pest Control	63,240	59,973	3,267	(5,893)
Littering and Dog Control Orders	0	0	0	0
Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	1,540	(2,859)	4,399	4,405
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>104,580</u>	<u>102,601</u>	<u>1,979</u>	<u>20,895</u>
<b><u>HOUSING SERVICES</u></b>				
Homelessness	275,616	299,278	(23,662)	36,606
20 Church Street	16,116	16,410	(294)	0
General Properties	(8,160)	(6,642)	(1,518)	(1,518)
Housing Access	69,258	57,078	12,180	3,240
Works in Default	(255)	(287)	32	32
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,061	0	1,061	1,061
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>353,636</u>	<u>365,837</u>	<u>(12,201)</u>	<u>39,421</u>
<b><u>TRADING STANDARDS</u></b>				
Trading Standards	16,012	22,774	(6,762)	12,147
Inspection and Enforcement	4,437	1,330	3,107	3,107
<i>Sub Total</i>	<u>20,449</u>	<u>24,104</u>	<u>(3,655)</u>	<u>15,254</u>
<b>PUBLIC PROTECTION TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>467,264</u>	<u>526,197</u>	<u>(58,933)</u>	<u>52,828</u>
<b><u>CORPORATE CHARGES</u></b>				
Fire Service	3,551,477	3,547,672	3,805	3,805
Coroner's Court	125,123	125,123	0	0
Corporate Recharges	10,080,865	10,080,865	0	0
<b>CORPORATE CHARGES TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>13,757,465</u>	<u>13,753,660</u>	<u>3,805</u>	<u>3,805</u>
<b>Overall Portfolio Total</b>	<u>29,657,297</u>	<u>30,092,796</u>	<u>(435,499)</u>	<u>(375,337)</u>
Covid-19 Related Expenditure	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>29,657,297</u>	<u>30,092,796</u>	<u>(435,499)</u>	<u>(375,337)</u>

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## PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE SUMMARY</b>				
<b><u>BUILDING CONTROL</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Building Control	10,240	10,238	2	3
<b><u>BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES</u></b>				
Building Regulations	19,220	19,219	1	1
Dangerous Structures	23,100	23,099	1	1
<i>Building Control Total Expenditure</i>	<i>52,560</i>	<i>52,556</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Management	16,890	9,425	7,465	15
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES</u></b>				
Dealing with Applications	(202,311)	(202,313)	2	1
Planning Appeals	3,319	3,320	(1)	(1)
Enforcement	(10)	9	(19)	(10)
<i>Development Management Total Expenditure</i>	<i>(182,112)</i>	<i>(189,559)</i>	<i>7,447</i>	<i>5</i>
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS</u></b>				
<b><u>DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Plans	5,084	4,824	260	(3)
<b><u>DEVELOPMENT PLANS SERVICES</u></b>				
Development Plans	100,460	100,460	0	0
<i>Development Plans Total Expenditure</i>	<i>105,544</i>	<i>105,284</i>	<i>260</i>	<i>(3)</i>
Corporate Recharges	1,465,230	1,465,230	0	0
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,441,222</b>	<b>1,433,511</b>	<b>7,711</b>	<b>7</b>

**PLANNING COMMITTEE AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Item	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Total Forecast Expenditure to March 2023	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 22
	£	£	£	£
<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE SUMMARY</b>				
Licensing	83,592	84,900	(1,308)	(2,387)
Internal Recharges	51,166	51,166	(0)	0
<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>134,758</b>	<b>136,067</b>	<b>(1,309)</b>	<b>(2,387)</b>



## Summary of Reserve Movements 2022-2023

Name of Reserve	Balance B.Fwd	Risk Assessed				Balance C.Fwd	Utilised march provisional out turn		Other Not Included in Management		Balance
		Increase	Decrease	Adjustment	Forecast Expenditure		As per Management A/c's		A/c's		
							Actual Expenditure	Anticipated Expenditure	Actual Expenditure	Anticipated Expenditure	
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>Earmarked for Capital Purposes</b>											
Capital Inflation & Service Cost Pressure	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000,000.00
Corporate Landlord	150,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	150,000.00
Deminimus Capital Works	101,575.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	101,575.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	101,575.46
Facilities	118,769.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118,769.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	118,769.00
Energy Centre	270,383.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	270,383.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	270,383.20
Industrial Units	240,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	240,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	240,000.00
IT Infrastructure	225,811.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	225,811.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	225,811.79
New Operating Model	492,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	492,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	492,000.00
The Hive	419,715.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	419,715.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	419,715.00
WRAP Regional Vehicles	253,359.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	253,359.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	253,359.85
<b>Total Earmarked for Capital Purposes:</b>	<b>3,271,614.30</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>3,271,614.30</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>3,271,614.30</b>
<b>Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves</b>											
Budget Contingency Fund / Invest to Save	64,351.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	64,351.89	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	53,000.00	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	73,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	73,000.00
Covid19 Response & Recovery	1,526,920.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,526,920.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,526,920.00
Customer Services	95,892.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	95,892.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	95,892.05
Discretionary Housing Payments	111,865.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	111,865.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	111,865.87
Displaced Expenditure - Social Services	201,700.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	201,700.52	(119,219.00)	0.00	0.00	(10,000.00)	72,481.52
Downsizing & Redundancy	183,038.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	183,038.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	183,038.71
Election Costs	176,228.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	176,228.83	(110,329.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	65,899.83
Financial Planning / Resilience	3,554,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,554,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,554,000.00
Future Interest Rate	644,055.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	644,055.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	644,055.89
General/ Voluntary Sector Grants	27,680.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27,680.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27,680.00
ICT	1,388,225.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,388,225.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,388,225.46
ISB Reserve	117,469.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	117,469.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	117,469.81
Inflation & Service Cost Pressure	1,361,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,361,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,361,000.00
Insurance Liabilities	3,198,250.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,198,250.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,198,250.21
Invest to Save	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000,000.00
Local / Strategic Development Plans	143,512.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	143,512.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	143,512.54
Match Funding Regeneration Projects	114,386.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	114,386.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	114,386.57
Members Local Grants	22,468.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	22,468.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	22,468.79
Payroll Project Management	23,529.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,529.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,529.97
PRC Funding	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100,000.00
Rail Loan Interest	38,188.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	38,188.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	38,188.00
Re-fit Loan Repayments	263,878.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	263,878.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	263,878.66
Specialist Commercial Advice (Silent Valley)	72,816.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	72,816.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	72,816.50
Social Services - Legal Costs	400,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	400,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	400,000.00
Social Services - RIF (ICF)	600,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	600,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	600,000.00
Stock Conditions Survey	12,137.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,137.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,137.34
Strategic Business Reviews	168,553.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	168,553.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	168,553.27
Superannuation	600,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	600,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	600,000.00
Supporting Additional Capacity	369,300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	369,300.00	(93,728.75)	(141,231.25)	0.00	0.00	134,340.00
Taxation	133,913.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	133,913.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	133,913.08
Technology Park Feasibility Study	26,017.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	26,017.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	26,017.00
Test, Trace, Protect Service	4,514.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,514.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	(4,514.40)	0.00
Transport Oncost	147,470.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	147,470.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	147,470.00
Waste Services Reserve	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	120,000.00
Winter Maintenance	200,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200,000.00

Name of Reserve	Balance B.Fwd	Risk Assessed				Balance C.Fwd	Utilised march provisional out turn		Other Not Included in Management		Balance
		Increase	Decrease	Adjustment	Forecast Expenditure		As per Management A/c's		A/c's		
							Actual Expenditure	Anticipated Expenditure	Actual Expenditure	Anticipated Expenditure	
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>Total Usable Earmarked Revenue Reserves:</b>	<b>17,337,365.36</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>17,337,365.36</b>	<b>(323,276.75)</b>	<b>(141,231.25)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>(14,514.40)</b>	<b>16,858,342.96</b>
<b>Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves</b>											
Building Control Fees	38,239.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	38,239.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	38,239.34
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	670,361.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	670,361.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	670,361.00
Deposits and Bonds	3,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,200.00
Land & Property Charges	117,199.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	117,199.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	117,199.90
LMS Balances	6,213,861.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,213,861.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,213,861.65
Section 106 Agreements	191,988.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	191,988.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	191,988.51
SEW Adoption Collaboration	712,028.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	712,028.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	(28,000.00)	684,028.21
Social Services - Gwent Regional Development (SP)	40,110.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40,110.30	(2,438.00)	0.00	0.00	(5,365.15)	32,307.15
Workforce Development Collaboration	340,124.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	340,124.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(90,124.00)	250,000.00
<b>Total Unusable Earmarked Revenue Reserves:</b>	<b>8,327,112.91</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>8,327,112.91</b>	<b>(2,438.00)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>(123,489.15)</b>	<b>8,201,185.76</b>
<b>Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied</b>											
All Age School Forum	131,659.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	131,659.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	131,659.01
Aneurin Bevan Health Board - Education	18,225.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18,225.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18,225.89
Community Safety & CCTV	71,606.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	71,606.15	0.00	(32,180.00)	0.00	0.00	39,426.15
Contribution to Crematorium Infrastructure Works	63,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	63,000.00
Discretionary Cost of Living Scheme	897,428.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	897,428.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	897,428.00
Early Action Together Programme	3,196.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,196.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,196.38
Early Years Grant	298,277.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	298,277.83	0.00	(165,878.42)	0.00	0.00	132,399.41
Education - Gypsy Travellers	40,804.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40,804.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40,804.42
Flood Risk Management	132,729.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	132,729.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	132,729.00
Head 4 Arts	71,062.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	71,062.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	71,062.00
Homelessness Transitional Funding	140,917.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	140,917.78	(307.95)	(48,147.05)	0.00	0.00	92,462.78
Individual Electoral Register	46,494.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	46,494.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	46,494.30
Infrastructure Staffing	186,600.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	186,600.00	(28,149.00)	(28,149.00)	0.00	0.00	130,302.00
LEA / ALN Grant	141,379.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	141,379.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	141,379.16
Participatory Budget	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Period Poverty	77,687.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	77,687.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	77,687.05
Planning WAG Grant - Planning Committee	2,103.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,103.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,103.66
Regen General Contributions Unapplied (Town Centre Management)	51,172.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	51,172.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	51,172.25
Rights of Way Diversions	20,255.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,255.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,255.00
Scrutiny Development	7,867.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,867.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,867.15
Small & Rural Schools Grant	7,601.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,601.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,601.00
SMIFFs	2,688.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,688.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,688.84
Syrian Resettlement Programme	184,530.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	184,530.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	184,530.38
Tai Calon Highways Maintenance (Commuted Sums)	396,058.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	396,058.80	(21,183.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	374,875.80
Youth Service	256,433.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	256,433.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	256,433.34
<b>Total Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied:</b>	<b>3,249,777.39</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>3,249,777.39</b>	<b>(49,639.95)</b>	<b>(274,354.47)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2,925,782.97</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>32,185,869.96</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>32,185,869.96</b>	<b>(375,354.70)</b>	<b>(415,585.72)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>(138,003.55)</b>	<b>31,256,925.99</b>
							TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE

## Fees and Charges Forecast 2022/2023 (As at September 2022)

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 2022
				£	£	£	£
<b>Fees &amp; Charges</b>							
Corporate Services	Communications	Advertising	Fees & Charges	3,000	2,082	(918)	(918)
Corporate Services	Business Support	External Printing and photocopying charges.	Fees & Charges	8,160	3,237	(4,923)	(4,923)
Corporate Services	Legal Fees	Legal Charges	Fees & Charges	14,330	3,156	(11,174)	(11,174)
Corporate Services	Corporate Support	Land Charges	Fixed - Set Locally	32,150	44,493	12,343	12,343
Economy	General Offices	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	810	33,078	32,268	7,503
Economy	Departmental	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	SLA				
				70,469	38,000	(32,469)	0
Environment	Household & Trade Waste Collection	Trade Waste Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	0
Environment	Enforcement Team		Fees & Charges	2,030	17,657	15,627	0
Environment	Recycling Collection	Recycling Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	93,856
Environment	Trade Waste	Trade Waste Collection & Disposal Income - Commercial Customers	Fees & Charges	298,818	298,818	0	(80,112)
Environment	Bulky Waste Collection	Bulky Waste Collection	Fees & Charges	71,690	68,210	(3,480)	(6,394)
Environment	Recycling Disposal	Sale of Recyclate Materials	Fees & Charges	879,384	862,445	(16,939)	(16,939)
Environment	County Borough Cleansing	C&CR - External Cleansing Works	Fees & Charges	220	366	146	8,401
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Burial Fees	Fees & Charges	494,814	455,419	(39,395)	(39,395)
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	General Properties	Fees & Charges	3,000	3,000	0	0
Social Services	Meals On Wheels	Sale of Meals	Fees & Charges	175,280	154,889	(20,391)	(10,391)
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	Income from Letting of Playing Fields, Ground Rent & Way Leaves	Fees & Charges	76,395	130,994	54,599	54,599
Environment	General Properties	Rental Income	Fees & Charges	8,160	6,642	(1,518)	(1,518)
Environment	Cwmcrachen Caravan Site	Rental	Fees & Charges	113,948	115,683	1,735	3,425
Environment	Dog Wardens - now in	Byelaw Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	0
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Civic Centre - Rental of Land	Miscellaneous	184	309	125	125
Environment	School Catering Service	Sale of Meals	Fees & Charges	954,054	834,679	(119,375)	(112,214)
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Administration charges for administering Appointeeships	Fees & Charges	26,030	26,945	915	(7,882)
Infrastructure	Technical Services - Engineering & Property Management	Reimbursement of staff costs and receipts for external works	Fees & Charges	427,317	326,059	(101,258)	0
Infrastructure	FEP - Increase in Income	Fees	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure	Licensing (Highway Permits)	Skips & Scaffolding Permits	Fees & Charges	52,369	52,369	0	0
Infrastructure	General Administration and Markets	Rental income	Fees & Charges	30,351	14,340	(16,011)	0
Infrastructure	Traffic Orders	Income from contractors, Welsh Water etc. for road works	Fees & Charges	25,307	51,012	25,705	0
Infrastructure	Road and Street Works Acts	Inspection fees, section 74's, FPN, coring, Dropped kerbs etc.	Fees & Charges	52,850	52,850	0	0
Infrastructure	Highways Adoptions	Highway Searches	Fees & Charges	9,950	8,550	(1,400)	0
Infrastructure	Multi-storey Carparks	Charge to Coleg Gwent	Fees & Charges	30,000	30,000	0	0
Infrastructure	Civil Parking Enforcement	FPN's	Fees & Charges	105,000	89,942	(15,058)	(44,880)
Infrastructure	Public Transport Co-Ordination	Charge to bus companies for use of Brynmawr Bus Station	Fees & Charges	234	234	0	0
Licensing	Hackney Carriages	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	46,931	41,299	(5,631)	(7,267)
Licensing	Private Hire Vehicles	Licence Fees	Fees & Charges	1,830	3,337	1,507	2,392
Licensing	Scrap Metal	Sale of Scrap Metal	Fees & Charges	600	3,102	2,502	2,483
Planning	Enforcement	Enforcement Fees	Fees & Charges	610	0	(610)	(610)
Planning	Development Plans	Heritage Officer Income	Fees & Charges	0	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	598,350	562,346	(36,004)	5,584
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	Fees & Charges in respect of Care (Augusta, Supported Living Bungalows & Community Options)	Fees & Charges	341,150	75,094	(266,056)	(268,042)
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	1,174	(24,246)	(24,246)
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	Fees & Charges in respect of Piper Alarms (IAA)	Fees & Charges	0	0	0	0
			<b>Sub - Total</b>	<b>4,981,195</b>	<b>4,411,810</b>	<b>(569,385)</b>	<b>(446,195)</b>

## Fees and Charges Forecast 2022/2023 (As at September 2022)

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 2022	
				£	£	£	£	
<b>Fees &amp; Charges - Set Nationally</b>								
Corporate Services	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths	Fixed - Set Nationally	94,770	86,095	(8,675)	(8,675)	
Environment	Food Safety	Hygiene ratings & Health Certificates	Fixed - Set Nationally	2,162	13,414	11,252	11,252	
Environment	Control of Pollution	Environmental Permits	Fixed - Set Nationally	17,228	10,378	(6,850)	(6,850)	
Environment	Health and Safety at Work (Commercial Prem.)	Petroleum + Tattoo Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	2,865	2,865	2,565	
Environment	Trading Standards	Explosives Licences	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	0	0	0	
Licensing	Licence Fees	Various (Gambling, Premises/ Clubs & Street Trading)	Fixed - Set Nationally	56,968	56,278	(690)	(687)	
Planning	Dealing with Applications	Planning Application Fees	Fees & Charges	213,360	216,878	3,518	0	
Planning	Building Regulations	Building Regulation Fees	Fixed - Set Nationally	95,620	95,620	0	0	
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	CHC Income (Home Care)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	19,671	19,671	44,671	
Social Services	Adults aged under 65 with Learning Disabilities	CHC Income (Augusta House; Supported Living Bungalows; Community Options)	Fixed - Set Nationally	50,000	109,500	59,500	23,288	
Social Services	Community Care	Fees & Charges in respect of Care	Fixed - Set Nationally	2,896,975	2,973,192	76,217	(39,397)	
Social Services	Older People aged 65 or over	Sale of Property (Cwrt Mytton)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	0	0	44,671	
Social Services	Community Care	Sale of Property	Fixed - Set Nationally	292,340	15,730	(276,610)	(288,599)	
Social Services	Community Care	CHC Income	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	0	0	(690)	
Social Services	Support Service and Management Costs	CHC Income (Adult Service Managers)	Fixed - Set Nationally	0	0	0	0	
				<b>Sub - Total</b>	<b>3,719,423</b>	<b>3,599,621</b>	<b>(119,802)</b>	<b>(218,451)</b>
<b>Fees &amp; Charges - In Line with Local Agreements</b>								
Economy	Industrial Land	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,750	2,750	0	0	
Economy	Nursery Units/Misc. Industrial Premises	Rental income for industrial units	Fixed - Set Locally	808,200	890,726	82,526	87,080	
Economy	Estates - Non Rechargeable	Ground Rent	Fixed - Set Locally	145,110	118,200	(26,910)	(26,910)	
Economy	Financial Support to Business	Ground rent and commercial bookings	Fixed - Set Locally	2,650	2,650	0	0	
Economy	CSCS	Charges for Construction Skills Certificates	Fixed - Set Locally	10,200	524	(9,676)	(9,766)	
Environment	Corporate Landlord	Little Stars Nursery - Rent (Recovery of costs)	Miscellaneous	8,839	13,287	4,448	4,448	
Education	Inter Authority Recoupment	Charges to other Local Authorities for SEN placements within Blaenau Gwent Schools	Fixed - Set Locally	301,930	369,150	67,220	67,220	
				<b>Sub - Total</b>	<b>1,279,679</b>	<b>1,397,287</b>	<b>117,608</b>	<b>122,072</b>
				<b>TOTAL - FEES &amp; CHARGES</b>	<b>9,980,297</b>	<b>9,408,718</b>	<b>(571,579)</b>	<b>(542,573)</b>
<b>SLA</b>								
Aneurin Leisure Trust	SLA Income	Provision of Support Services	SLA	213,410	213,410	0	0	
Environment	Grounds Maintenance	SLA	SLA	168,220	162,671	(5,549)	(472)	
Financial Management and Strategy	Accountancy Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	185,480	185,480	0	0	
Corporate Services	Organisational Development, Payroll & Health & Safety	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	319,620	319,620	0	0	
Corporate Services	Legal Fees & GDPR	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	41,980	41,980	0	0	
Corporate Services	Communications	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	3,250	3,250	0	0	
Corporate Services	Performance (SIMS Support)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	77,270	77,270	0	0	
Corporate Services	Business Support (Courier)	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	5,770	5,770	0	0	
Financial Management and Strategy	Creditors Division	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	6,480	6,480	0	0	
Corporate Services	ICT	Support Services SLA with Schools	SLA	0	0	0	0	
Environment	School Catering	SLA with Schools (excludes Corporate Landlord)	SLA	1,179,391	1,179,391	0	0	
Environment	Cleaning Services	SLA with Schools	SLA	1,124,130	1,124,130	0	0	
Infrastructure	CPM - Schools Biodiversity SLA	SLA with Schools	SLA	14,566	20,625	6,059	8,634	
Infrastructure	Winter Maintenance	SLA with LA's for salt Storage	SLA	13,260	13,260	0	0	
				<b>Sub - Total</b>	<b>3,352,827</b>	<b>3,353,337</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>8,162</b>

## Fees and Charges Forecast 2022/2023 (As at September 2022)

Portfolio	Service	Description of Income	Income Source	Revised Estimate 2022/2023	Forecast	Variance Favourable / (Adverse)	Variance Favourable / (Adverse) as at June 2022
				£	£	£	£
<b>Court Fees/Fixed Penalty Notices/Fines</b>							
Corporate Services	Corporate Services and Strategy	Legal income and land charges. Advertising	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	10,000	2,640	(7,360)	(7,360)
Education	Welfare Service	Fixed Penalty Notices	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	2,190	1,928	(262)	(263)
Environment	Littering and Dog Control Orders -	Income in relation to FPNs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	0	0	0	0
Corporate Services	Payroll Division	Attachment Orders	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,020	343	(677)	(677)
Financial Management and Strategy	Council Tax Collection	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	162,680	162,680	0	0
Financial Management and Strategy	NNDR	Court Costs	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	1,800	0	(1,800)	(1,800)
Corporate Services	Housing Benefits Account	Admin Penalties	Court Fees/FPN/Fines/Legal	25,000	0	(25,000)	(25,000)
			<b>Sub - Total</b>	<b>202,690</b>	<b>167,591</b>	<b>(35,099)</b>	<b>(35,100)</b>
<b>Consortium Arrangements</b>							
Economy	General Offices	Annual Service & Rental Charge to Torfaen CBC in relation to Archives	Consortium Arrangements	49,970	71,981	22,011	0
Environment	Disposal Of Waste	Contribution from SVWS	Consortium Arrangements	110,000	0	(110,000)	(110,000)
Environment	Cemeteries / Crematorium	Crematorium Income - Reallocation of surplus at year end	Consortium Arrangements	41,925	41,925	0	0
Environment	20 Church Street	Housing Advice Centre Contribution	Consortium Arrangements	12,454	13,550	1,096	1,096
Environment	Housing Access	Income from Housing Associations in relation to Administration of the Common Housing Register	Consortium Arrangements	110,760	128,392	17,632	10,083
Environment	Environmental Health	Public Protection Collaboration with Torfaen CC	Consortium Arrangements	0	0	0	0
			<b>Sub - Total</b>	<b>325,109</b>	<b>255,848</b>	<b>(69,261)</b>	<b>(98,821)</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>							
Education	Supporting Special Educational Needs	Internal Income - Recovery of pupil lead funding from schools.	Internal Income	104,040	69,296	(34,744)	(34,744)
Corporate Services	Cross Cutting	Rebates - Energy & Randstad	Miscellaneous	32,500	32,500	0	0
Corporate Services	Cross Cutting	Purchase Card Income	Miscellaneous	26,810	26,810	0	0
Infrastructure	L&A - Invasive Weeds	Contribution from Caerphilly for Treatment of Knotweed	Miscellaneous	10,200	10,200	0	0
			<b>Sub - Total</b>	<b>173,550</b>	<b>138,806</b>	<b>(34,744)</b>	<b>(34,744)</b>
			<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>14,034,473</b>	<b>13,324,300</b>	<b>(710,173)</b>	<b>(703,076)</b>

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# Agenda Item 8

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 04.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Capital Budget Monitoring, Forecast for 2022/2023  
Financial Year (As at 30 September 2022)**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Thomas – Leader and Cabinet Member Corporate  
Overview & Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Rhian Hayden – Chief Officer Resources**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	24/11/2022	03.01.23			15/12/22	18/01/22		

## 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 2022/2023 financial year, as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 This report provides details on the following:
- Forecast financial position to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 across all portfolios
  - Details of any significant adverse and/or favourable variances

This report forms part of the councils financial reporting framework.

2.2

## 3. Options for Recommendation

### 3.1 Option 1 (Recommended Option)

To 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 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 2022/27 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 quality services at the right time and in the right place"

The Capital programme allows the council to invest in connectivity, Community & Decarbonisation measures, to aid us in “Responding to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities”.

## 5. Implications Against Each Option

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

5.1.1 The current capital programme is approximately £136m and is funded by: -

WG Grant -£108m  
 Other grant funding - £6m  
 Council Resources – £22m

It is forecast that expenditure of £68.7m will be incurred on capital projects / schemes during 2022/23, with the remainder allocated for use in future years.

The overall financial position as forecast at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 indicates a minor overspend of £0.015m against a total in year capital budget of £68.7m.

The overall position across all Portfolios is shown below: -

Total Approvals Q1 (Sept 2022)	Future funding	In year funding	Forecast Expenditure to 31/03/2023	Actual Expenditure to 30/09/2022 (Month 6)	Forecast Variance underspent / (overspent)
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
136,000	66,946	69,054	68,720	11.563	(16)

5.1.2 The overspend relates to two schemes:-

- Innovation for Decarbonisation – WBRID – adverse variance £8,125
- Play Equipment – adverse variance £7,635

Budget holders are reviewing costs and exploring funding options.

5.1.3 There is a high level of uncertainty surrounding the impact inflation will have on construction costs, particularly where contracts have yet to be let / awarded.

5.1.4 Technical Services have been proactive in value engineering such as substitution of materials and methods with less expensive alternatives, without sacrificing functionality to ensure contracts are kept within budget.



5.1.5 Accountancy are working with Budget holders to ensure early identification of projects at risk of exceeding the budget. Where overspends are identified, budget holders will explore options for funding variation or re-profile.

## 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, inflation pressures and the cost of living crisis, liaison with funding bodies will be required at the earliest opportunity in order to secure approval for funding re-profile.

5.2.2 There is a high level of uncertainty surrounding the impact inflation will have on construction costs, particularly where contracts have yet to be let / awarded. For those contracts which have been let and are on site, Technical Services have been proactive in value engineering such as substitution of materials and methods with less expensive alternatives, without sacrificing functionality to ensure contracts are kept within budget. Where budgets are forecast to be exceeded, project officers are either exploring funding variations or re-profile.

5.2.3 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.

5.2.4 If capital schemes do not achieve the required level of expenditure within the correct financial year and further peaks of inflation 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.

5.2.5 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

5.2.6 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.

5.3 **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 first 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.

All forecast overspends and underspends are managed in order that secured funding approvals are not lost and to mitigate any potential adverse impact upon future Capital investment in Blaenau Gwent.

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

The Capital Programme is developed to support the Council's strategic priorities and is considered and agreed by full Council. Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny and Cabinet consider the budget monitoring reports on a quarterly basis and provide challenge as appropriate.

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

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

## 6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Accountancy 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.

Accountancy with Budget holders monitor schemes / projects to ensure early identification of schemes / projects at risk of exceeding the budget. Where potential overspends are identified, budget holders will explore options to mitigate / minimise the forecast overspend.

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

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

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

N/A

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

The Council is committed to the Decarbonisation Plan to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. The Capital Programme currently contains schemes which promote the reduction of carbon emissions such as ReFIT, Electric Vehicle Charge

Points, Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID and the purchase of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles. New Council buildings should be designed to the latest energy efficiency standards.

6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment***  
N/A

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

The Corporate Leadership Team, Corporate Overview & Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet consider the budget monitoring reports on a quarterly basis and provide challenge as appropriate.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 – Funding Estimates Summary
- Appendix 2 – Information on Capital Funding Changes 2022/23

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Management Reports

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6

Capital Programme Funding Estimates Summary

<i>Portfolio</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure To: September 2022</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
Corporate Services Portfolio	2,105,459	722,723	1,382,736	51,644	671,079	722,723	0
Social Services Portfolio	5,525,471	4,216,364	1,309,107	972,374	3,243,990	4,216,364	0
Economy Portfolio	17,021,418	9,039,915	7,981,503	1,734,081	7,313,959	9,048,040	(8,125)
Education and Active Living	32,884,836	15,408,407	17,476,429	1,329,605	14,086,437	15,416,042	(7,635)
Environment Portfolio	4,902,622	910,332	3,992,290	492,221	418,111	910,332	0
Infrastructure Portfolio	69,169,399	38,748,777	30,420,622	6,975,616	31,773,161	38,748,777	0
All Portfolios	4,390,816	7,152	4,383,664	7,152	0	7,152	0
<b>Total Capital Funding</b>	<b>136,000,021</b>	<b>69,053,670</b>	<b>66,946,351</b>	<b>11,562,692</b>	<b>57,506,738</b>	<b>69,069,430</b>	<b>(15,760)</b>

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>In Year Budget</b>	<b>Future Funding</b>	<b>Expenditure to: September 2021</b>	<b>Remaining in Year Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Expenditure</b>	<b>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</b>
<b>Corporate Services Portfolio</b>								
<b>Corporate Services</b>								
327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Wo	303,929	20,419	283,510	20,418	1	20,419	0
327103	Civic Centre Decommissioning	993,507	380,304	613,203	31,225	349,079	380,304	0
327104	Democratic & Community Hubs	44,412	0	44,412	0	0	0	0
327106	ICT Roadmap	763,611	322,000	441,611	0	322,000	322,000	0
<b>Corporate Services</b>		<b>2,105,459</b>	<b>722,723</b>	<b>1,382,736</b>	<b>51,644</b>	<b>671,079</b>	<b>722,723</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Corporate Services Portfolio</b>		<b>2,105,459</b>	<b>722,723</b>	<b>1,382,736</b>	<b>51,644</b>	<b>671,079</b>	<b>722,723</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: September 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Social Services Portfolio</b>								
<b>Childrens Services</b>								
323152	Beaufort Road - Extension Training Flat	38,978	38,978	0	32,827	6,151	38,978	0
324719	Flying Start - Cwm 2	30,000	30,000	0	0	30,000	30,000	0
324721	Flying Start - Ebbw Vale North	2,082	2,082	0	0	2,082	2,082	0
324724	Flying Start - Sirhowy Primary	3,840	3,840	0	90	3,750	3,840	0
324728	Flying Start - Blaina ICC	235,000	235,000	0	0	235,000	235,000	0
324735	Flying Start Brynithel FS Centre	606	606	0	0	606	606	0
324736	Flying Start Additional Works	85,153	85,153	0	24,058	61,095	85,153	0
324737	Flying Start Capital (Covid-funding)	12,863	12,863	0	0	12,863	12,863	0
324738	FS Covid Recovery - Cwm Dev. Garden S	109,150	109,150	0	520	108,630	109,150	0
324739	FS Covid Recovery - Scout Hall	49,671	49,671	0	493	49,178	49,671	0
324771	Childcare Offer - Badminton Scheme	1,500,000	1,500,000	0	0	1,500,000	1,500,000	0
324772	Childcare Offer - Blaina ICC Scheme	1,101,552	428,936	672,616	1,255	427,681	428,936	0
324773	Childcare Offer - Swfryd Scheme	726,632	726,632	0	432,050	294,582	726,632	0
324775	Childcare Offer - Brynmawr	532,230	2,200	530,030	2,200	0	2,200	0
<b>Childrens Services</b>		<b>4,427,757</b>	<b>3,225,111</b>	<b>1,202,646</b>	<b>493,493</b>	<b>2,731,618</b>	<b>3,225,111</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Adult Services</b>								
323003	Health & Safety	35,121	35,121	0	34,590	531	35,121	0
323005	Tackling Food Poverty - WLGA	34,279	4,535	29,744	4,535	0	4,535	0
323120	Disabled equipment	285,000	285,000	0	179,750	105,250	285,000	0
323144	ICF Main Capital Programme	75,789	2,205	73,584	2,205	0	2,205	0

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**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6

**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: September 2022</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
323147	Intermediate Care Fund	3,133	0	3,133	0	0	0	0
323149	Better Care Capital Project	13,862	13,862	0	12,515	1,347	13,862	0
323151	Augusta House - Enablement Pods	463,197	463,197	0	174,378	288,819	463,197	0
323154	WLGA - Care & Support Equipment & Ada	187,333	187,333	0	70,909	116,424	187,333	0
	<b>Adult Services</b>	<b>1,097,714</b>	<b>991,253</b>	<b>106,461</b>	<b>478,882</b>	<b>512,371</b>	<b>991,253</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Social Services Portfolio</b>	<b>5,525,471</b>	<b>4,216,364</b>	<b>1,309,107</b>	<b>972,374</b>	<b>3,243,990</b>	<b>4,216,364</b>	<b>0</b>



**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: September 2022	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Economy Portfolio</b>								
<b>Tredegar Regeneration</b>								
326163	Tredegar HLF	524,123	0	524,123	0	0	0	0
	<b>Tredegar Regeneration</b>	<b>524,123</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>524,123</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Ebbw Vale Town Centre</b>								
326191	TRI - Urban Centre Commercial Property I	505,570	505,570	0	243,424	262,147	505,570	0
	<b>Ebbw Vale Town Centre</b>	<b>505,570</b>	<b>505,570</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>243,424</b>	<b>262,147</b>	<b>505,570</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Valleys Regional Park</b>								
326200	VRP Ebbw Fach Trail	899	0	899	0	0	0	0
326205	VRP - Discovery Gateway	19,778	0	19,778	0	0	0	0
326207	Parc Bryn Bach - Co Working Space	298	0	298	0	0	0	0
	<b>Valleys Regional Park</b>	<b>20,975</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20,975</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>The Works Site</b>								
325097	Big Arch	960,057	960,057	0	797,174	162,883	960,057	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
	<b>The Works Site</b>	<b>1,017,043</b>	<b>960,057</b>	<b>56,986</b>	<b>797,174</b>	<b>162,883</b>	<b>960,057</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other Regeneration</b>								
326006	Tech Valley s Initiative	403,604	0	403,604	0	0	0	0

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: September 2022	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
326180	Lime Avenue Business Park	430,679	11,096	419,583	11,096	0	11,096	0
326181	Lime Avenue Employment park	2,495,101	0	2,495,101	0	0	0	0
326182	Box Works	5,251	5,251	0	5,251	0	5,251	0
326183	Regain 2	5,122,418	5,122,418	0	354,971	4,767,447	5,122,418	0
326184	Brexit Schemes	419,465	0	419,465	0	0	0	0
326193	TRI - Town Centre COVID-19 recovery ad:	488,710	6,225	482,485	6,225	0	6,225	0
326194	TT - Trinity Chapel & Abertillery Librar	1,150,388	1,150,388	0	0	1,150,388	1,150,388	0
326225	Heat Networks Project	17,385	0	17,385	0	0	0	0
326227	Innovation for Decarbonisation - WBRID	201,240	201,240	0	209,365	0	209,365	(8,125)
326251	Constrained Units	190,000	0	190,000	0	0	0	0
326252	Constrained Units - Roseheyworth	6,409	0	6,409	0	0	0	0
326265	Victoria Business Park - Development	8,747	0	8,747	0	0	0	0
326266	Brynmawr Retail Development	747,929	747,929	0	0	747,929	747,929	0
326267	Blaenau Gwent Digital	36,218	20,581	15,637	20,581	0	20,581	0
326268	Covid Recovery for Town Centres	55,902	18,133	37,769	18,133	0	18,133	0
326269	HiVE – Hi Value Engineering Centre - Mor	2,951,095	67,861	2,883,234	67,861	0	67,861	0
326271	Land Release Fund - Pithead Baths	223,166	223,166	0	0	223,166	223,166	0
<b>Other Regeneration</b>		<b>14,953,707</b>	<b>7,574,288</b>	<b>7,379,419</b>	<b>693,483</b>	<b>6,888,930</b>	<b>7,582,413</b>	<b>(8,125)</b>
<b>Economy Portfolio</b>		<b>17,021,418</b>	<b>9,039,915</b>	<b>7,981,503</b>	<b>1,734,081</b>	<b>7,313,959</b>	<b>9,048,040</b>	<b>(8,125)</b>

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**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: September 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Education and Active Living</b>								
<b>Education Services</b>								
324125	Education Minor Works	5,360	5,360	0	4,401	959	5,360	0
324138	Education Capital Maintenance	180,369	180,369	0	180,369	0	180,369	0
324139	Education Capital Maintenance 20/21	52,826	52,825	1	0	52,825	52,825	0
324141	Bryn Bach - Kitchen Rep & Classroom ren	30,000	30,000	0	0	30,000	30,000	0
324142	Georgetown Windows & Boiler Replaceme	6,206	6,206	0	0	6,206	6,206	0
324143	Rhos-y-fedwyn - Refurbishment	3,945	3,945	0	1,053	2,892	3,945	0
324144	St Marys - Refurbishment	187,270	187,270	0	12,979	174,291	187,270	0
324145	Tredegar Comp - Food & Technology	30,070	30,070	0	5,949	24,121	30,070	0
324146	Deighton - Kitchen	57,851	57,851	0	0	57,851	57,851	0
324147	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Services and Ac	3,450	3,450	0	0	3,450	3,450	0
324148	Coed y Garn Roof & Remedial Works	58,261	58,261	0	12,250	46,011	58,261	0
324149	Brynbach Primary Disabled Adaptations	60,061	60,061	0	14,170	45,891	60,061	0
324151	Tredegar Comp Upgrade Electrical Supply	10,625	10,625	0	0	10,625	10,625	0
324152	Brynmawr Refurbishment	81,198	81,198	0	80,221	977	81,198	0
324154	Abertillery Learning Community	193	193	0	0	193	193	0
324156	River Centre Boiler	3,367	3,367	0	0	3,367	3,367	0
324157	Tredegar Comprehensive Kitchen Electric	48,273	48,273	0	0	48,273	48,273	0
324161	Pen Y Cwm – Refurbishment Works	54,133	54,133	0	7,597	46,536	54,133	0
324166	Beaufort Hill Boiler	98,274	98,274	0	411	97,863	98,274	0
324167	Soffryd Boiler	50,000	50,000	0	411	49,589	50,000	0
324168	St Marys Boiler	99,213	99,213	0	822	98,391	99,213	0

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**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
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**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>In Year Budget</b>	<b>Future Funding</b>	<b>Expenditure to: September 2022</b>	<b>Remaining in Year Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Expenditure</b>	<b>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</b>
324170	Deighton Fire Alarm	11,453	11,453	0	0	11,453	11,453	0
324171	Abertillery LC Doors	60,025	60,025	0	49,145	10,880	60,025	0
324172	Brynmawr Foundation Doors	41,982	41,982	0	39,975	2,007	41,982	0
324174	River Centre Windows/Ventilation	95,401	95,401	0	81,929	13,472	95,401	0
324175	River Centre Classroom and Toilets	50,000	50,000	0	12,135	37,865	50,000	0
324179	Ebbw Fawr Internal Remodelling	100,000	100,000	0	27,995	72,005	100,000	0
324180	Tredegarr Urgent Works IT suite staff roo	75,000	75,000	0	6,920	68,080	75,000	0
324182	Brynmawr Running Track	120,000	120,000	0	0	120,000	120,000	0
324183	Swffryd	120,000	120,000	0	0	120,000	120,000	0
324184	Tredegarr Path	35,000	35,000	0	25,682	9,318	35,000	0
324185	Glanhowy Ramp	100,000	100,000	0	0	100,000	100,000	0
324186	Roseheyworth Primary - Reboiling	50,000	50,000	0	210	49,790	50,000	0
324201	Class Size - Willowtown	5,444	5,444	0	0	5,444	5,444	0
324203	Period Poverty	5,028	5,028	0	0	5,028	5,028	0
324206	Georgetown S106	69,557	0	69,557	0	0	0	0
324207	St. Josephs s106	35,000	35,000	0	7,301	27,699	35,000	0
324250	Electrical Upgrade - Blaen y Cwm	101,681	101,681	0	2,384	99,297	101,681	0
324251	Electrical Upgrade - Georgetown	29,652	29,652	0	6,560	23,092	29,652	0
324252	Electrical Upgrade - Glanhowy	9,763	9,763	0	9,763	0	9,763	0
324253	Universal Free School Meals Equipment	757,915	757,915	0	247,329	510,586	757,915	0
324260	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Sofrydd Prima	80,787	80,787	0	98	80,689	80,787	0
324262	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Marys CIW	19,346	19,346	0	5,893	13,453	19,346	0
324263	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Josephs Pr	15,000	15,000	0	86	14,914	15,000	0

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**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: September 2022	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
324519	Digital 2030 Capital Grant - Post 16	4,621	0	4,621	0	0	0	0
324530	ALN	403,998	381,699	22,299	25	381,674	381,699	0
324532	Ebbw Fawr ASD	3,890	0	3,890	0	0	0	0
324560	Schools IT Infrastructure	2,809	2,809	0	2,809	0	2,809	0
324580	Brynmaur 3G Pitch	173,004	173,004	0	138,038	34,966	173,004	0
324743	21st Century Schools Six Bells Project	326,624	326,624	0	887	325,737	326,624	0
324750	Band B - Welsh Medium New Build	9,853,337	5,433,331	4,420,006	22,810	5,410,521	5,433,331	0
324751	Band B - New Primary Ebbw Fawr Valley	8,569,508	4,895,000	3,674,508	4,056	4,890,944	4,895,000	0
324752	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Brynmaur	3,133,817	200,000	2,933,817	0	200,000	200,000	0
324753	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Abertillery	3,197,316	200,000	2,997,316	0	200,000	200,000	0
324754	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Tredegar	3,196,970	200,000	2,996,970	0	200,000	200,000	0
324755	Band B - Welsh Medium Remodelling Bro Morgannwg	751,111	431,058	320,053	183,845	247,213	431,058	0
324756	Band B - Rhosyfedwen	52,678	52,678	0	52,678	0	52,678	0
<b>Education Services</b>		<b>32,778,662</b>	<b>15,335,624</b>	<b>17,443,038</b>	<b>1,249,187</b>	<b>14,086,437</b>	<b>15,335,624</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Active Living Services</b>								
329088	Bryn Bach Park Roof	12,439	0	12,439	0	0	0	0
329089	Abertillery LC Demolition	952	0	952	0	0	0	0
329092	ALC - Changing Room Refurbishment	20,000	0	20,000	0	0	0	0
329095	AWPOG - Play Equipment	49,850	49,850	0	49,850	0	49,850	0
329097	Play Equipment	22,933	22,933	0	30,568	0	30,568	(7,635)
<b>Active Living Services</b>		<b>106,174</b>	<b>72,783</b>	<b>33,391</b>	<b>80,418</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80,418</b>	<b>(7,635)</b>

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**Capital Report 2022/23**

<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: September 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	<b>Education and Active Living</b>	<b>32,884,836</b>	<b>15,408,407</b>	<b>17,476,429</b>	<b>1,329,605</b>	<b>14,086,437</b>	<b>15,416,042</b>	<b>(7,635)</b>

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

**Management Reports**

Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: September 2021	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Environment Portfolio</b>								
<b>Environmental Services</b>								
327039	Kerbside Collections	2,052	0	2,052	0	0	0	0
327044	AHP Waste Collections	52,380	0	52,380	0	0	0	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	2,064,888	1,620	2,063,268	1,620	0	1,620	0
327067	Market Hall - Asbestos Removal	18,606	0	18,606	0	0	0	0
327068	Cemeteries Investment Programme	9,137	0	9,137	0	0	0	0
327070	WRAP Cymru Capital Funding	3,792	0	3,792	0	0	0	0
327071	Education Centre	297,265	297,265	0	196,135	101,130	297,265	0
327074	New Vale HWRC Refurbishment Works	145,439	0	145,439	0	0	0	0
327080	Cemetery Capacity - Cefn Golau Tredegar	527,028	877	526,151	877	0	877	0
327081	Cemetery Capacity - Dukestown Tredegar	218,834	0	218,834	0	0	0	0
327082	Cemetery Capacity - Brynmawr	133,334	0	133,334	0	0	0	0
327083	Cemetery Capacity - Brynithel Abertillery	96,334	0	96,334	0	0	0	0
327090	Fly Tipping CCTV	961	0	961	0	0	0	0
327110	Allotment Support Grant	30,698	25,576	5,122	2,156	23,420	25,576	0
<b>Environmental Services</b>		<b>3,873,591</b>	<b>325,338</b>	<b>3,548,253</b>	<b>200,788</b>	<b>124,550</b>	<b>325,338</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Housing Environmental Health</b>								
328221	Remediation of Contaminated Land/Dereli	102,564	0	102,564	0	0	0	0

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

**Management Reports**

*Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6*

**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>In Year Budget</b>	<b>Future Funding</b>	<b>Expenditure to: September 2021</b>	<b>Remaining in Year Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Expenditure</b>	<b>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</b>
350510	Improvement grants - new scheme	608,254	407,256	200,998	197,246	210,010	407,256	0
350550	Support for Independent Living	159,283	139,186	20,097	55,635	83,551	139,186	0
350560	Empty Property Grants	158,930	38,552	120,378	38,552	0	38,552	0
	<b>Housing Environmental Health</b>	<b>1,029,031</b>	<b>584,994</b>	<b>444,037</b>	<b>291,433</b>	<b>293,561</b>	<b>584,994</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Environment Portfolio</b>	<b>4,902,622</b>	<b>910,332</b>	<b>3,992,290</b>	<b>492,221</b>	<b>418,111</b>	<b>910,332</b>	<b>0</b>



**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

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**Capital Programme Funding Estimates**

Code	Scheme	Total Funding	In Year Budget	Future Funding	Expenditure to: September 2022	Remaining in Year Budget	Forecast Expenditure	Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav
<b>Infrastructure Portfolio</b>								
<b>Engineering Services</b>								
328149	SRIC - Tredegar Footway Improvements	25,000	25,000	0	25,000	0	25,000	0
328280	Coal Tip Safety	200,700	200,700	0	596	200,104	200,700	0
328310	Local Transport Fund	1,925	1,925	0	1,925	0	1,925	0
328315	Local Transport Fund - Project Retention	16,020	0	16,020	0	0	0	0
328318	Active Travel Fund	783,487	783,362	125	29,410	753,952	783,362	0
328323	Resilient Roads Fund	79,001	79,001	0	60,111	18,890	79,001	0
328340	LTF Metro Plus	772,337	772,337	0	82,365	689,972	772,337	0
328344	LTF Bus Stop Infrastructure	387,813	387,813	0	144,931	242,882	387,813	0
328346	Bus Infrastructure Fund	100,000	100,000	0	3,434	96,566	100,000	0
328360	Rail Infrastructure Programme	66,293,022	36,000,000	30,293,022	6,601,832	29,398,168	36,000,000	0
328370	20mph Core Allocation	230,054	230,054	0	0	230,054	230,054	0
<b>Engineering Services</b>		<b>68,889,359</b>	<b>38,580,192</b>	<b>30,309,167</b>	<b>6,949,604</b>	<b>31,630,588</b>	<b>38,580,192</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Highways Network Management</b>								
328063	Bridge Strengthening Works	1,857	0	1,857	0	0	0	0
328270	Highways Improvement Works	165,918	165,918	0	23,345	142,573	165,918	0
328334	LGBI - Trinant Hall	11,402	2,667	8,735	2,667	0	2,667	0
328404	Flood Damage - Emergency Repairs	828	0	828	0	0	0	0
328405	Aberbeeg Road Repairs	100,035	0	100,035	0	0	0	0
<b>Highways Network Management</b>		<b>280,040</b>	<b>168,585</b>	<b>111,455</b>	<b>26,012</b>	<b>142,573</b>	<b>168,585</b>	<b>0</b>

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**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: September 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
	<b>Infrastructure Portfolio</b>	<b>69,169,399</b>	<b>38,748,777</b>	<b>30,420,622</b>	<b>6,975,616</b>	<b>31,773,161</b>	<b>38,748,777</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

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*Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6*

**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: September 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
<b>All Portfolios</b>								
<b>All Portfolios</b>								
300300	City Deal	3,662,700	0	3,662,700	0	0	0	0
303990	OS Capital Admin/Design & Supervision	524,000	0	524,000	0	0	0	0
321112	Disabled Access - Special Programme	7,152	7,152	0	7,152	0	7,152	0
324672	The Company Shop - Tred	196,964	0	196,964	0	0	0	0
<b>All Portfolios</b>		<b>4,390,816</b>	<b>7,152</b>	<b>4,383,664</b>	<b>7,152</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,152</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>All Portfolios</b>		<b>4,390,816</b>	<b>7,152</b>	<b>4,383,664</b>	<b>7,152</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,152</b>	<b>0</b>

**Capital Programme - 2022/23 Funding Estimates**  
**Capital Report 2022/23**

<b>Management Reports</b>		<b>Capital Programme Funding Estimates</b>						
<i>Reporting Year: and Period: 2023/6</i>								

<i>Code</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Total Funding</i>	<i>In Year Budget</i>	<i>Future Funding</i>	<i>Expenditure to: September 2021</i>	<i>Remaining in Year Budget</i>	<i>Forecast Expenditure</i>	<i>Forecast Variance (Adv)/Fav</i>
<b>Total Capital Funding</b>		<b>136,000,021</b>	<b>69,053,670</b>	<b>66,946,351</b>	<b>11,562,692</b>	<b>57,506,738</b>	<b>69,069,430</b>	<b>(15,760)</b>

End of Report

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**Information on Capital Funding Changes 2022/23**  
**New Approvals and/or material Funding Changes in Quarter Two**

**APPENDIX 2**

Portfolio	Cost Centre	Scheme	Amount (£)	Funding Body	Type	Additional Information
<b>Corporate Services</b>						
	327102	Corporate Properties H&S and Capital Wor	-30,000	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Transfer to projects as agreed by Budget Holder.
<b>Economy</b>						
	327050	Pond Road Industrial Units	30,000	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Transfer from Corporate Properties H&S as agreed by Budget Holder.
<b>Education, Active Living and Learning</b>						
	324138	Education Capital Maintenance	136,227	Welsh Government	Education Capital Maintenance	Virement to individual projects
	324139	Education Capital Maintenance 20/21	-136,227	Welsh Government	Education Capital Maintenance	Virement to individual projects
	324253	Universal Free School Meals Equipment	667,974	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	New Approval - Capital Grant funding to support the rollout of universal primary free school meals
	324253	Universal Free School Meals Equipment	-246,633	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual projects
	324250	Electrical Upgrade - Blaen y Cwm	101,681	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual project
	324251	Electrical Upgrade - Georgetown	29,652	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual project
	324252	Electrical Upgrade - Glanhowy	265	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual project
	324260	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-Sofrydd Primary	80,689	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual project
	324262	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Marys CIW primary	19,346	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual project
	324263	Electrical Kitchen Upgrade-St Josephs Primary	15,000	Welsh Government	Universal Free School Meals	Transfer to individual project
	324530	ALN	381,699	Welsh Government		New Approval - Capital Funding Grant to Support Learners with Additional Learning Needs
	324752	Band B - Secondary Remodelling Brynmawr	-45,920	Welsh Government	Sustainable Communities for Learning	Transfer of funding between projects
	324756	Band B - Rhosyfedwen	45,920	Welsh Government	Sustainable Communities for Learning	Transfer of funding between projects
<b>Environment</b>						
	328221	Contaminated Land - Cwmcrachen & Other	-50,000	Blaenau Gwent	Capital Programme	Correction to Capital Programme allocations in previous years

It should be noted that the funding changes detailed above will not balance to total funding changes between Q1 to Q2

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# Agenda Item 9

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 04.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Review of the Finance and Performance Report**

Portfolio Holder: **Leader / Cabinet Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Gemma Wasley, Service Manager Performance and Democratic**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	24/11/22 And Virtual	03.01.23			15/12/22	18/01/22		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
  - 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present to Cabinet a draft finance and performance report for consideration (attached at Appendix 1).
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The Finance and Performance has been developed in order to provide a reporting framework against the Council's Corporate Plan, including areas of progress and where further improvement is needed. All Council business plans are aligned to the delivery of the Corporate Plan.
  - 2.2 The Finance and Performance Report is to be used as a key improvement tool for the Authority.
  - 2.3 With a new Corporate Plan 2022/27 being approved by Council in October provides an opportune time to consider how the Council will report against the Plan.
  - 2.4 The Council's new democratic arrangements also provide an opportunity to review what is reported, when and where. It has been established that the Finance and Performance report should be the main monitoring tool for the Council and for the majority of strategic reporting to be aligned to this.
  - 2.5 Information included within the Finance and Performance report is gathered from a number of different sources including updates from business plans, drawing evidence from strategic reports and data analysis. This provides a detailed view of the activity and performance of the Council.
  - 2.6 The report forms part of an on-going process of development within the Council's Performance Management Framework.
  - 2.7 Appendix 1 provides an example of how the Finance and Performance Report will look moving forward. The information provided within the example

is Blaenau Gwent data and information from 2021/22 and to be used for illustration purposes only.

2.8 The format has been adapted to be more visual and engaging using data and extracts of narrative as part of an infographic format. The narrative provided will be more succinct and will include updates on key strategies and plans, finance and risk.

2.9 The template will also provide an opportunity to develop ‘themed’ pages in order to highlight key activity within a certain area e.g. cost of living, safeguarding etc.

2.10 Key information and data will be included to show progress of:

- The Corporate Plan priorities:
  - Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
  - Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
  - An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
  - Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient
- The sustainable development principles, a requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations Act:
  - Long term
  - Prevention
  - Collaboration
  - Integration
  - Involvement

2.11 The intention is for the Finance and Performance Report to be reported through the democratic processes in April 2023, in order to provide full years’ worth of information. Following this it will be presented on a six-monthly basis.

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

3.1 The reviewed Finance and Performance Report has been approved by CLT at their meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

3.1.1 The Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee recommended that Cabinet approve Option 1 with the proposal that future Finance and Performance reports be presented on a quarterly basis for a trial period.

#### 3.1.2 **Option 1**

Provide suggestions to the content of the Finance and Performance Report in order to make it more efficient and effective as a management tool, noting the inclusion of information as identified at 2.7 to 2.10, prior to approval.



## **Option 2**

Accept the information as presented.

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

- 4.1 The Council has a responsibility to provide performance related information to the public in order to scrutinise the Council's performance and to gauge how well the Council is doing. There is also a requirement for Members to scrutinise the Council's performance. Reporting of such information contributes to the Council's Performance Framework.

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

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

Financial information is a key aspect of the Finance and Performance Report and it will be included in all Finance and Performance Reports split per directorate.

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

Risk information is a key aspect of the Council's performance management framework and updates on the Council's Corporate Risk Register is to be included in all Finance and Performance Reports.

- 5.2.1 The Finance and Performance Report acts as a key monitoring tool for the Council and is considered by external regulators which can have an impact on the reputation of the Council.

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

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

The Council's Self-Assessment report covering 2021/22 highlighted that the Council is experiencing challenges in relation to workforce capacity and work is to be undertaken to support workforce stability, recruitment and retention.

- 5.4.1 An update on the workforce will be included within future Finance and Performance Reports.

### **6. Supporting Evidence**

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

Performance information and data is a key aspect of the Council's Performance Management Framework and will be included within all Finance and Performance Reports to show progress of the Corporate Plan and national data requirements.

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

The information included within the report will provide opportunity for the public to scrutinise the Council's performance and provide accountability across the Council.

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

Services look to involve partners and involve citizens in consultation where possible. This information is included as part of the planning arrangements of the Council and will also be included in the Finance and Performance Report when available.

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

The Finance and Performance Report is reported on regularly and is aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Council aims to work using a preventative approach wherever possible so that problems can be tackled before they are escalated. Preventative actions are included in the Council's business plans.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

There are a number of collaborations that the Council is involved with and, where relevant, information on some of these has been included within the Finance and Performance Report.

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

The Council's business plan includes where an integrated approach to planning and delivery is taking place.

6.8 ***EqlA***

The Finance and Performance Report has no negative impact on the protected characteristics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The report will be monitored quarterly through the Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 – Draft Example Finance and Performance Report

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

**£2064**

The number of Covid-19 support grants awarded to Blaenau Gwent businesses

**92%**

The occupancy level of the Council's property portfolio with **736** jobs supported

**MyST**

The BG My Support Team engages with the whole support network around the child. This include school, youth workers and any community activity.

**650 jobs**

The Council has approved for the Ciner Glass Factory to be developed on the industrial site in Rassau.

**Circa £2M**

The Council has utilised monies to provide ICT facilities across all schools in BG as part of the Hwb Tech initiative

**Community Hubs**

The Community Hub model continues to be strengthened with relevant and focussed support provided to the community in the community.

**October 2022**

Council agree its Corporate Plan 2022/27. A strategic document which clearly sets out the priorities of the Council and how it will target its limited resources

**User Voice**

An important aspect of providing Social Services to service users is that their voice is heard and they are able to shape the services they receive.

For 2021/22 the Council's sickness outturn was 16.74 days on average per full time employee. This is an increase of 5.07 days per employee in comparison to 11.67 days the year before. If the COVID related absence is removed from the 16.74 days, the sickness outturn reduces to 14.20 days – which is still an increase in comparison to last year's 9.98 days (excluding COVID).

The next recycling target for Blaenau Gwent to achieve is 70% and if not met will incur a financial penalty from Welsh Government. Currently the recycling rate has plateaued. Assuming the total municipal waste remains constant, to achieve 70%, the Council would need to reduce residual waste and increase recycling by 1562.44 tonnes. For every 1% increase there would be a need to divert 308.66 tonnes from the residual tonnages to recycling/composting tonnages.

The establishment of a Blaenau Gwent MyST will provide capacity and decrease the overall numbers of children in residential care by 2 children each year over the next 3 years. The current average weekly cost of a Blaenau Gwent child to be in a residential placement is £4,000 a week or £208,000 per year. If the goal is to bring 2 children in residential care back to Blaenau Gwent is achieved, this will save the authority £416,000 per year (and offset the additional cost of the team).

There is an increasing number of pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM) in all areas of Gwent. These numbers have accelerated in the last year, showing increasing inequality in the region. There are noticeable variations in attainment and qualification levels between areas in Gwent. Similarly, there are differences in attainment between less and more disadvantaged groups of children.



**Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent**



**Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities**



**An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place**



**Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient**

Between 2010 to 2021 there was a significant reduction in the numbers of young people becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) in Blaenau Gwent. This reduction was due to the work of the Youth Service's strategic multi-agency Raising Aspirations Group, and implementation of the Early Identification Tool. Continuing work has seen numbers remain low and reach an unverified level of 1.5% (9 young people) for 2021. This equals Blaenau Gwent's lowest level to date and is below the Welsh average of 1.7%.

The total number of adults suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect reported during 2021/22 was 415, an increase from the previous year where the figure was 394. The number of children on the child protection register at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 was 64, an increase of 12 from the previous year.

In both 2019/20 and 2020/21, Blaenau Gwent exceeded the Welsh Government statutory recycling target of 64%, achieving 65.31% and 64.29% respectively.

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 the Council had £28.3M of usable financial reserves. This is the equivalent of 19.4% of the Council's annual spend, the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest of all 22 Welsh local authorities.

# Corporate Plan Priority 1

## Blaenau Gwent Council's Decarbonisation Plan

was adopted in September 2020 at the same time we declared a Climate Emergency. Blaenau Gwent was responsible for the establishment of the first Climate Assembly in Wales, which took place online in March 2021

## The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone's

performance at Key Stage 5 (KS5) for A-level A\*-C and A\*-E grades continue to be strong and in line with the all-Wales means at 99.1%.

## The Energy Prospectus

has been designed to stimulate interest in energy development across the borough that will facilitate a supply of renewable energy to meet the future energy needs of Blaenau Gwent

The Council's **Community Hub model** continues to be strengthened with relevant and focussed support provided to the community in the community. The Hubs proactively look to support those in the community experiencing poverty and the options available to them.

The Council entered into a Joint Venture with the Welsh Government to develop **Hybrid Units** at **Lime Avenue**, creating high quality business space, comprising **3 separate buildings** housing **9 units**.

The Children Looked After (CLA) Reduction Strategy and Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy have supported a **downward trend of Children Looked After**, moving from **200 to 198**

Early intervention for homelessness has meant that **75.2%** of potentially homeless households were **prevented** from becoming **homeless**.

**Key Stage 4** (KS4) results for Summer 2021 **demonstrated progress** in

Capped 9 and Level 2 inclusive scores

**415 adults suspected of being at risk of abuse**

or neglect an increase from the previous year at 394.

**Safeguarding** is recognised corporately as being everybody's responsibility. The Safeguarding Policy has recently been updated.

**32** Children and Young People took part in a **climate change workshop** .....

The Council has successfully raised awareness and understanding of numerous International and National **Equality and Cohesion Campaigns** via social media, as well as delivering on specific Initiatives with staff, communities and stakeholders

What you told us...

*I have learned about the lets go zero campaign walk to school or cycle to save carbon dioxide I learnt that climate change is affecting our Earth*

1015

Covid-19 support grants awarded to businesses, totalling

£146k to support biodiversity projects

1.6%

(9 young people)

NEET

(not in education, employment or training)

Supported 3,521 shielding residents and 1,353 vulnerable residents during the pandemic

33.3%

Pupils eligible for free school meals the highest of all Local Authorities in Wales.

Hwb Tech initiative Circa £2m for Schools ICT facilities

92%

Occupancy of councils property 736 Jobs supported

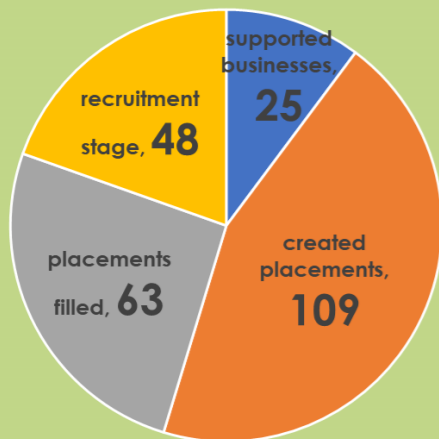
Increase of £828,401 received in our Housing Support Grant allocation

£252,393

awarded to 40 community groups to deliver local projects

Recycling rate was 64.94%

exceeding the national target of 64%



539 reablement packages completed up from 232 in previous year.

86 FOI requests processed

105 Complaints received

64 children on child protection register increase of 12 from previous year.

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# Agenda Item 10

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 09.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 10.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Workforce Strategy 2021-2026**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor S. Thomas - Leader / Cabinet Member  
Corporate Overview and Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Andrea J. Prosser – Head of Organisational Development**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance & Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	01.12.22	09.01.23			15.12.22	18.01.23		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with progress against the Council's Workforce Strategy delivery plan for 2021/22 and seek endorsement of the delivery plan for 2022/23.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Council's Workforce Strategy 2021-26 ('the Strategy') was endorsed at Council on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and is attached at Appendix 1.

- 2.2 The Strategy is a key enabler in delivering the Council's ambition, the New Council Operating Model, and key priorities. It has a focus on the future, integrating the Council's vision, objectives and financial planning arrangements. It links service outcomes with the workforce required to deliver them and an on-going understanding of how the workforce should look in the future through continual review, re-alignment and measurement of how outcomes are achieved. The Strategy aims to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level, and at the right cost.

- 2.3 The five-year Strategy is underpinned by an annual delivery plan that supports its implementation. The delivery plans are developed and prioritised following engagement with key stakeholders including senior management, headteachers and trade union representatives.

- 2.4 The Strategy sets out five priority outcomes for the workforce:

- Healthy culture, effective leadership
- Excellence in management across the Council
- A highly motivated and engaged workforce
- Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery
- Modern 'Employer of Choice'

- 2.5

The delivery plan for 2021/22 focused on the transition from responding to the Covid-19 pandemic to a new future working model - “Agile Services delivered by an Agile Workforce” and set out the key actions under each of the priority outcomes. There has been good progress over the last year in achieving the priorities within the delivery plan given the backdrop of the pandemic and the need to focus resources on getting back to business as usual.

## 2.6

The key actions delivered in 2021/22 are set out in Appendix 2 and include:

- New Council operating model to include agile working for the workforce.
- Agile Working Policy developed in social partnership with the trade unions.
- Agile working hubs identified.
- Workforce engagement to design the agile workspaces.
- Transitional and strategic leadership of an agile workforce development sessions for the wider leadership team.
- Home working allowances and revised mileage policy implemented.
- Recruitment processes refined to support new ways of working.
- Annual workforce profiles published and an internal review of recruitment and retention, diversity and age in the current workforce to support the development of directorate workforce plans.
- External review of communications to include internal communications.
- Health and safety and workforce wellbeing focus to support agile working.
- Weekly Wellbeing bulletins published including a range of provisions for supporting staff wellbeing.
- Care First awareness sessions for managers and Mental Wellbeing sessions for employees.
- Annual review of sickness reported to the Corporate Leadership Team and Scrutiny Committee.
- Draft Leadership Development Model.
- Review of the position and ambition with the HR / Payroll (iTrent) system – identified need for development capacity.
- Medium / long term actions developed as part of corporate decarbonisation plan.

## 2.7

The second-year delivery plan has been developed and builds on the progress of the previous year and takes account of the key national, regional and local drivers, workforce trends and financial challenges that will be facing the Council. In addition, during 2021/22 a new framework for workforce planning was rolled out at a directorate level, key themes and actions from this process have been aligned to the Strategy priority outcomes. These include recruitment and retention, succession and workforce planning and wellbeing. The actions in the delivery plan were discussed and prioritised with the Council’s Corporate Leadership Team. The delivery plan for 2022/23 is attached at Appendix 3.

## 3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 This report and Delivery Plan has been reviewed and prioritised with the Corporate Leadership Team and considered at the Corporate and Performance Scrutiny Committee in December 2022.



3.2 **Option 1:** Cabinet notes the progress against the 2021/22 delivery plan and endorses the 2022/23 delivery plan.

3.3 **Option 2:** Cabinet notes progress against the 2021/22 delivery plan and considers the 2022/23 delivery plan making suggestions/amendments for improvement.

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

The Strategy aligns to the Corporate Plan and supports the delivery of Council priorities. It has been drafted in accordance with, and to comply with key employment legislation such as, the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and to promote and support workforce wellbeing.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget**

There are no direct budget implications with the review and development of the delivery plan. Any financial implications linked to the priorities will be scoped out and considered as part of the implementation of the delivery plan.

5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**

The Strategy is a strategic plan to ensure the Council has a fit for purpose workforce to deliver services in line with Council priorities for the future.

5.3 **Legal**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 **Human Resources**

The workforce is critical and the most important resource the Council has in delivering services to the community. The Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to its workforce and aims to create a good place to work – developing a workforce that feels connected to and can meet the current and future needs of our community is critical in the Council's ability to deliver ambitious outcomes.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

Annual workforce profiles are published for the Council, Directorates and Schools.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The implementation of the Strategy will support enhancing the reputation of the Council as an employer and assists the delivery of key Council services and future challenges.

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

There has been engagement with the Corporate Leadership Team, Elected Members and Trade Unions in the development of the Strategy. The Corporate Leadership Team has shaped and prioritised the year 2 delivery plan in line with Council priorities.

- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**  
The Strategy is a 5-year commitment aiming to create a good place to work.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**  
Not applicable
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**  
Continued collaboration at a local, regional and national level to ensure that delivery actions in the Strategy are modern and in line with any legislative changes.
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**  
The Strategy will continue to promote a 'one Council' approach.
- 6.8 **Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**  
Medium to long term workforce actions have been developed as part of the corporate decarbonisation plan.
- 6.9a **Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment**  
The Council is the largest employer in the County Borough of Blaenau Gwent and the Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to the workforce.
- 6.9b **Equality Impact Assessment**  
The Strategy will actively promote equality of opportunity and diversity in the workforce and as an organisation.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**  
The Strategy has an annual delivery plan and this will be monitored on an annual basis by the Corporate Leadership Team and Corporate and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

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

Appendix 1 – Workforce Strategy 2021 – 2026

Appendix 2 – Workforce Strategy Delivery Plan 2021-22 Headline Achievements

Appendix 3 – Draft Workforce Strategy Delivery Plan 2022-23

# Workforce Strategy 2021 - 2026

*“Agile Services delivered  
by an Agile Workforce”*



## FOREWARD

This Workforce Strategy aims to build on existing good practice and continuing to promote the Council as a good place to work – developing a workforce that feels connected to and can meet the current and future needs of our community. The Council is the major employer in Blaenau Gwent and any action which impacts on the workforce will also directly impact the community and levels of aspiration, income and employment. It provides and commissions some of the most important services to the community, working with a range of other public, private and voluntary organisations in ensuring that public services are delivered to high standards.

The Workforce Strategy demonstrates the Council’s commitment and investment in its workforce and wants staff to feel engaged and motivated so that the best services can be delivered to the residents of Blaenau Gwent.

There are clear drivers for change focussed on agility and sustainability by reducing environmental impact as well as property related costs that can be reinvested into front line services, improve resilience, organisational and individual outcomes, customer focus, and create a better work life and corporate social responsibility.

This is a five-year strategy focussed on the future, integrating the Council’s vision, objectives, financial planning arrangements and improving the Council as an employer. This includes working with services to achieve ambitions for the community and schools to become sector leading.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we live, work and travel. Many of our people have worked away from the office during lockdown. This Strategy will support the workforce to transition from responding to the emergency situation and act as a key lever to facilitate culture change and continue with transformational change and performance improvement.



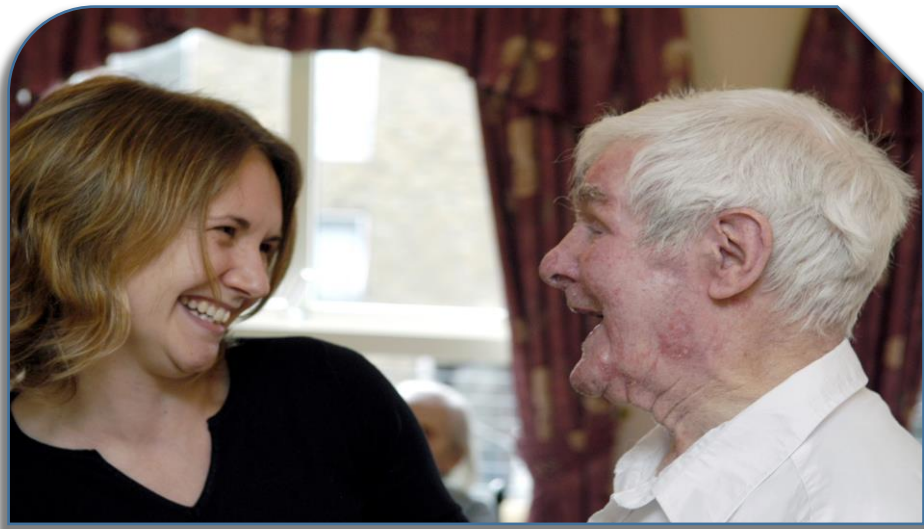
Councillor Nigel Daniels  
Leader of the Council



Michelle Morris  
Managing Director

## AIMS OF THE STRATEGY


- The workforce voice will be heard and have influence in shaping the future of the Council
- The right people with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level and at the right cost
- An agile collaborative workforce delivering high quality services to the residents of Blaenau Gwent
- Safe working situations/environments and promotion of workforce health and well being
- The workforce demonstrates expected behaviours, standards and culture in line with the Council's values
- The workforce will be performance/outcome and results focussed with recognition of effort and accountability
- The workforce has the opportunity to develop and learn
- Promote diversity and equality



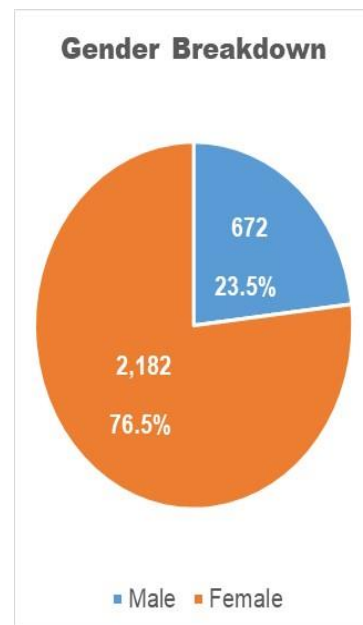
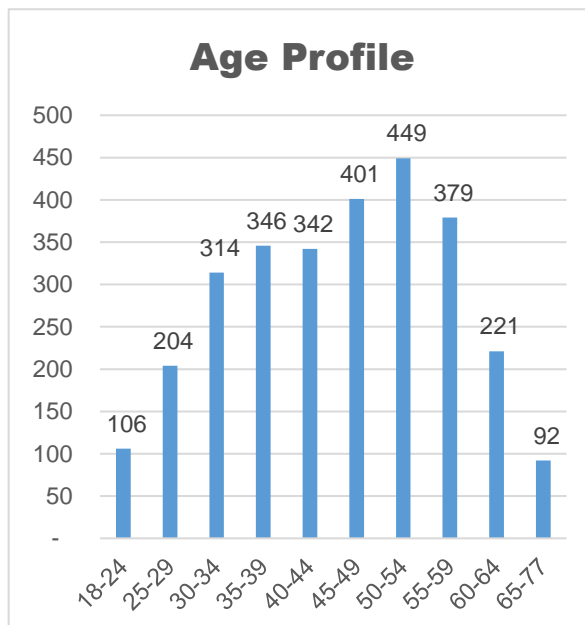
## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Blaenau Gwent serves a population of just under 70,000 with 62.1% of whom are of working age and 24.7% who are economically inactive. It is expected that funding will continue to be a challenge over the next 5 years, while demand for services and demographic pressures continues to increase. The Council has strived to realise efficiencies by for example; the introduction of a Commercial Strategy, financial efficiency, optimising income generation, redesigning services, reviewing service delivering models and reshaping the workforce. 2020/2021 has been a challenging year in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and continuing to deliver services to the residents of Blaenau Gwent.

### What do we currently look like?

<p><b>2,854</b> employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council: <b>1,648</b></li> <li>Schools: <b>1,206</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Low Gender Pay Gap</b> Women's Hourly Rate is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.21% lower (mean)</li> <li>2.84% lower (median)</li> </ul> <p>Gender female bias <b>76.5% to 23.5%</b></p>	<p><b>Low level of diversity in the workforce:</b></p> <p>Ethnic Minority 0.96%</p> <p>Disability 1.38%</p>	<p>High level of sickness <b>11.7</b> days per employee average days lost</p>
<p><b>4</b> Directorates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education</li> <li>Social Services</li> <li>Regeneration &amp; Community Services</li> <li>Corporate Services</li> </ul>	<p>More than half the workforce is <b>over 45</b> and a quarter of the workforce is <b>over 55</b></p>	<p>Response to Pandemic: <b>Approximately 500 staff working from home</b></p>	<p>Staff survey demonstrating a <b>motivated workforce</b></p>
<p>Labour turnover low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council: <b>5.2%</b></li> <li>Schools: <b>3.7%</b></li> </ul>	<p>Largest employer in the area with a population of <b>69,862</b></p>	<p>Council budget <b>£167</b> million</p> <p>In 2019/20 <b>59%</b> of Council spend related to staffing costs</p>	 <p><b>Blaenau Gwent</b> County Borough Council</p>

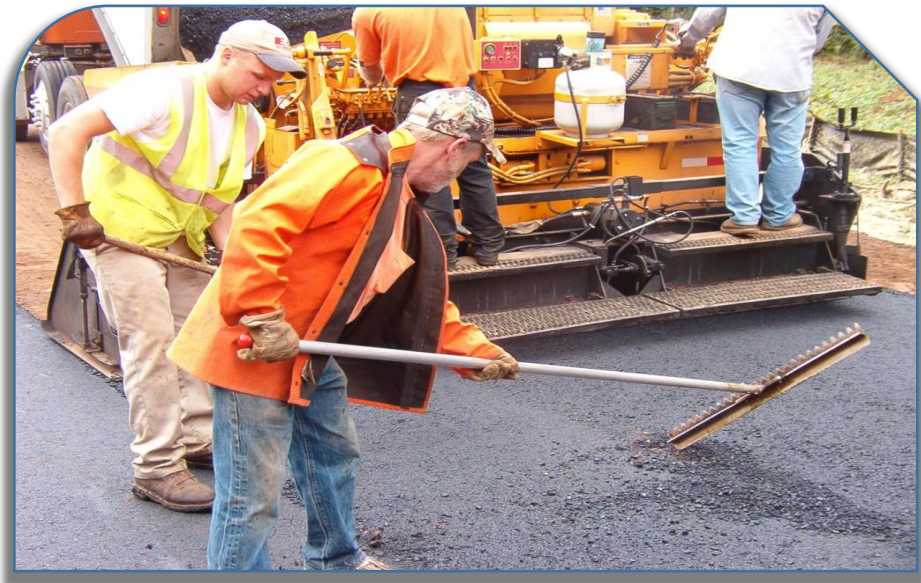
Workforce Profile		
Age Profile	See graphic below	31.3.21
Gender Profile	See graphic below	31.3.21
Turnover (Quarter 4)	4.69% (9% target)	1.4.20 - 31.3.21
Disability (Quarter 4)	1.38%	31.3.21
Ethnic Origin (Quarter 4)	0.96%	31.3.21
Sickness (Quarter 4)	11.67	1.4.20 - 31.3.21



## Workforce Engagement

The Council recognises the critical need to communicate and engage staff in service delivery, transformation, change, new commercial thinking and financial efficiency. This is currently undertaken through a number of methods:

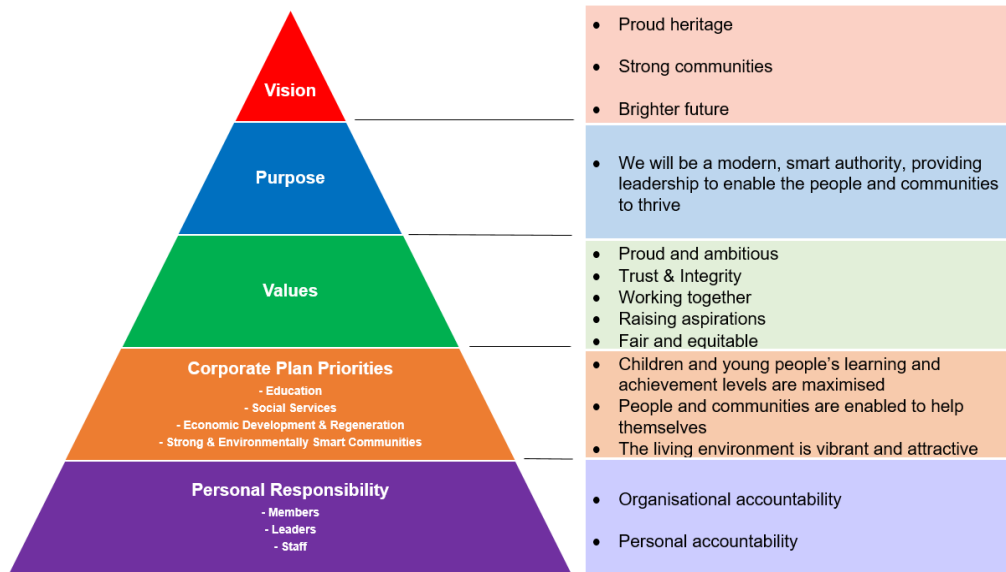
- Regular one to one performance coaching
- Annual performance review
- Team meetings
- Staff meetings
- Management team meetings
- Wider Leadership group
- Regular newsletter from the Managing Director
- Staff newsletter
- Managers brief
- Engagement in financial planning
- A dedicated engagement and consultation framework with trade unions
- Bi-annual staff surveys and pulse surveys



## WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

### The Council's Vision and Organisational Ambition

The Council's primary role is to facilitate the delivery of services that are high quality and the future model of service delivery is aiming to be sustainable, affordable and demonstrate the best value for money maintaining customer focus. The Council wants to be proactive, looking to embrace potential national, regional, partnership and local opportunities over the next few years to better meet the needs of the community. The Council has a clear ambition with a vision for the future articulating the organisational purpose, values and accountability.





## WHAT DOES THE COUNCIL NEED TO LOOK LIKE?

To meet the challenges ahead the Council will not be able continue as it is and will need to prioritise planning and how its budget is spent. The organisation has significantly changed over the past few years and will need to continually change and will look differently in the future in creating agile services delivered by an agile workforce. The following list is not exhaustive but outlines some ambitions:

- Engaged, motivated and resilient – workforce well engaged and resilient to meet challenges
- Customer focus – ensuring the best customer service at all times
- Digitally competent
- Demonstrate leadership – demonstrable, visible, fair and proactive leadership ensuring staff are supported, but where there is poor performance it is identified and managed effectively
- Working in a safe, healthy and supportive environment – enabling staff to perform at their best
- One Council – internal and external collaboration
- Commercially minded, agile and business focussed with delivering services in different ways, tight management of spend, trading where possible, using technology
- Outcome focussed and high performing – identifiable outcomes for our residents with everyone working to 100%
- Council priorities and values – staff are clear about the direction of the organisation and how they contribute and the values that need to be demonstrated



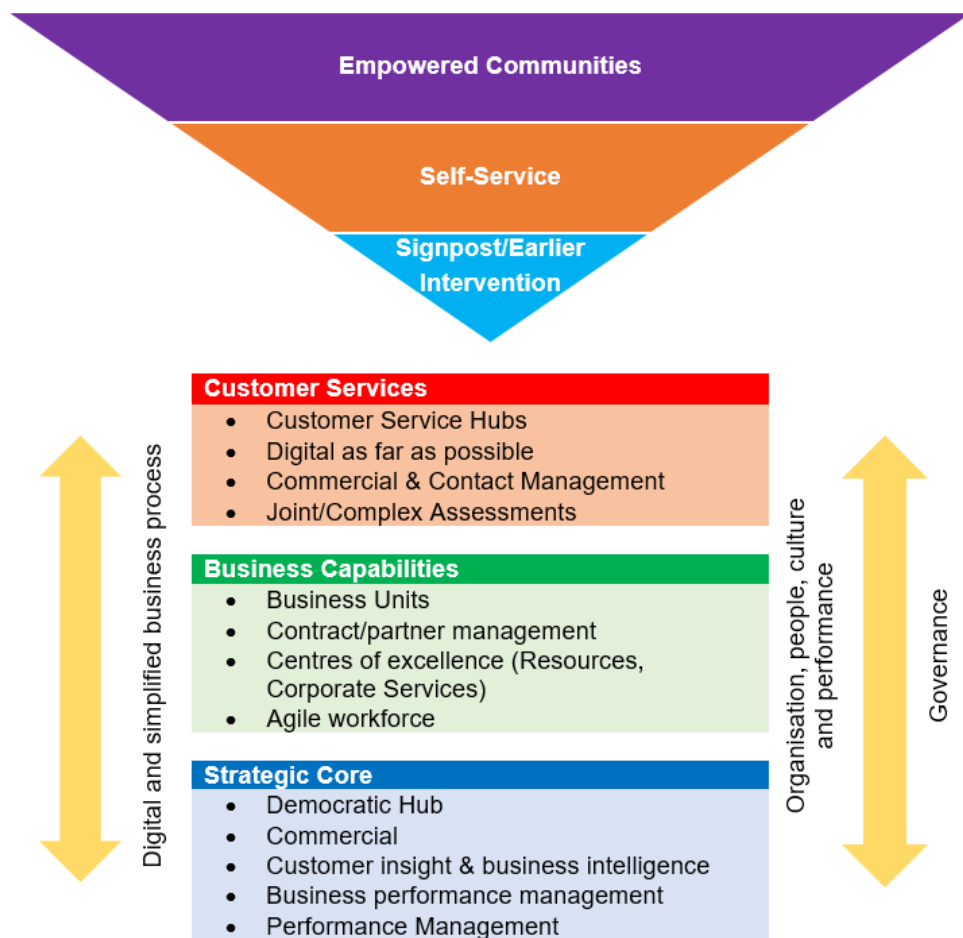
## THE FUTURE SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

The Council’s future delivery model will see the Council’s role focus on community leadership. Building community capacity through empowerment and cross-public sector collaboration. Promotion of early intervention and self service will support the reduction of dependence on the Council. A strong strategic core will enable the delivery of modern customer focussed services.

This will be achieved by:

- Promoting self-assessment and enabling self service
- Designing services around the customer
- Developing strong strategic capability
- Improving business processes and capabilities by taking a commercial approach and optimising the opportunity of digital technology

The following diagram illustrates the future service delivery model:



## HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

### Workforce Strategy Priority Outcomes

#### *Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership*

- Leadership development
- 'Sparkly Leaders' to motivate and develop workforce
- Constructive partnership working with elected leaders to generate and deliver solutions
- Elected Members Development Programme
- Promotion of diversity and equality in everything
- Work in social partnership with trade unions

#### *Excellence in management across the Council*

- Development of managerial skills
- Consistent, robust and easy to follow HR policies
- Positive employee relations
- Commercial and financially astute in all we do
- Performance management and accountability
- Workforce policies and practices embraced, embedded and consistently applied

#### *A highly motivated and engaged workforce*

- Suggestions and feedback are valued – organisational listening and action
- Modern ongoing opportunities to engage
- Equipped to be flexible to respond to future challenges
- Staff empowered to make decisions and participate in service delivery and development

#### *Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery*

- Accurate workforce data, management information
- Optimisation of digital
- Workforce profiling and planning to assess future needs

#### *Modern Employer of Choice*

- Recruitment and retention align to workforce plans
- Reward and recognition align to workforce plans
- Employee engagement levels increase as staff identify the Council as a good place to work
- Career development and talent management
- Workforce health, well being and safety is prioritised



## WORKFORCE STRATEGY: ACTION PLAN 2021/2022

The first action plan of the Workforce Strategy will focus on the transition from responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and transition to a future working model – “**Agile Services delivered by an Agile Workforce**”.

### *Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership*

- Engagement and planning for future working model
- Leadership Development Model
- Transitional Leadership training/development
- Strategic Leadership and Managing an agile workforce training and development

### *Excellence in management across the Council*

- Implementation of key strategies; Commercial, Digital and Communication
- Agile working policy and guidance
- Review of other HR policy to support agility in the workforce

### *Modern Employer of Choice*

- Implementation of the agile and flexible working model
- Review and improvements to recruitment processes
- Increase the offer of the staff benefits scheme
- Implementation of modern agile designed workspace
- Initiatives to increase the diversity in the workforce

### *A highly motivated and engaged workforce*

- Workforce engagement and communication plan and implementation – future Council Operating Model
- Learning and development for the workforce to support delivery of the future working model

### *Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery*

- Development and implementation of digital solutions to support delivery of modern HR/Payroll service
- Review information requirements in line with key strategies e.g. Carbon Neutral ambitions
- Health, Safety and wellbeing to support through continued pandemic and transition to future working model
- Support schools causing concern

**WORKFORCE STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2021/22 PROGRESS**

**'Agile Services delivered by an agile workforce'**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY OUTCOME	ACTIONS	PROGRESS	EVIDENCE	ACTIONS TO CARRY FORWARD TO 2022/23
<p><b>Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement and planning for future working model</li> <li>Leadership Development Model</li> <li>Transitional Leadership training/development</li> <li>Strategic Leadership and Managing an agile workforce training and development</li> <li>Healthy Organisation training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Programme Board with regular position statements and communications to wider workforce</li> <li>Engagement plan for the future working model and regular communications to workforce via the Managing Director/Chief Executive newsletter</li> <li>Transitional Leadership Webinar held March 2021</li> <li>Strategic Leadership of the Agile Workforce series of webinars for wider leadership across the Council held from May 2021 and further in November 2021</li> <li>Workforce engagement webinars to design the agile workspace held summer 2021</li> <li>Draft Leadership Development model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme Board agenda and associated documents</li> <li>Transitional leadership for senior managers</li> <li>Managing an agile workforce – 62% attendance</li> <li>Designing the agile workspace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership Development Model</li> <li>Further development of 'Healthy Organisation'</li> </ul>
<p><b>Excellence in management across the Council</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of key strategies; Commercial, Digital and Communication</li> <li>Agile working policy and guidance</li> <li>Review of other HR policy to support agility in the workforce</li> <li>Review of sickness absence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agile Working Policy developed in social partnership with trade unions and joint agreement</li> <li>Workforce designations with individual consultations and variation of contracts of employment</li> <li>Introduction and payment of appropriate home working allowances</li> <li>Health and Safety assessments and workforce wellbeing focus; Wellbeing Wednesdays and principles of wellbeing to support home working</li> <li>Procedure developed and operational for furniture and equipment to support home working</li> <li>Revised policy on mileage implemented</li> <li>Adverse Weather Guidance reviewed and implemented</li> <li>Recruitment processes refined to support new ways of working</li> <li>Annual review of sickness reported to CLT and Scrutiny</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agile Working Policy in place and live September 2021                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 32% of workforce Agile workers</li> <li>➤ 11% of Workforce Permanent homeworkers</li> <li>➤ 57% of workforce Service Based workers</li> </ul> </li> <li>Payments in line with Agile Working Policy implemented for September 2021</li> <li>Sickness absence review report to Corporate Overview Scrutiny – October 2021</li> <li>Sickness absence statistics reported quarterly to the Corporate Leadership Team and as part of the corporate performance framework to elected members</li> <li>Policies published on the Intranet</li> </ul>	

STRATEGIC PRIORITY OUTCOME	ACTIONS	PROGRESS	EVIDENCE	ACTIONS TO CARRY FORWARD TO 2022/23
<p><b>Modern Employer of Choice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of the agile and flexible working model</li> <li>Review and improvements to recruitment processes</li> <li>Increase the offer of the staff benefits scheme</li> <li>Implementation of modern agile designed workspace</li> <li>Initiatives to increase the diversity in the workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Council operating model implemented to include the introduction of community hubs, democratic hub, and agile working for the workforce</li> <li>Recruitment process reviewed to support agile working</li> <li>Agile Working hubs identified as; General Offices, Anvil Court, Blaina ICC, ViTecc, and Energy Centre</li> <li>Internal review of diversity and age in current workforce.</li> <li>Workspace developed for agile working with desk booking system and regular monitoring if usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community hubs operating in town centres, democratic hub operating in General Offices and agile working policy operational September 2021</li> <li>5 hubs identified and operating agile working</li> <li>Programme Board agenda and associated documents</li> <li>Webinar held to engage staff in designing a modern agile workspace.</li> <li>Plans in place for demolition of the Civic Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions falling out of the internal review of diversity and age in the workforce</li> </ul>
<p><b>A highly motivated and engaged workforce</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce engagement and communication plan and implementation – future Council Operating Model</li> <li>Response and actions further to pulse survey on Wellbeing and Home Working</li> <li>Learning and development for the workforce to support delivery of the future working model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commissioned external review of communications to include internal communications</li> <li>Programme management with regular position statements and workforce communications to include a dedicated workforce engagement plan</li> <li>Regular updates and discussion with the Wider Leadership Team</li> <li>Regular updates in the Managing Director/Chief Executive’s newsletter</li> <li>Weekly Wellbeing bulletins published including a range of provisions for supporting staff wellbeing, including special editions to address key issues and topics.</li> <li>Care first awareness sessions for managers</li> <li>Mental Wellbeing sessions</li> <li>Menopause awareness sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agile working programme management arrangements to include dedicated communication and engagement of the workforce</li> <li>Leadership development webinars as detailed above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning and development for the workforce to be identified as part of the outcome of the review into agile working – Autumn 2022</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and implementation of digital solutions to support delivery of modern HR/Payroll service</li> <li>Review information requirements in line with key strategies e.g., Carbon Neutral ambitions</li> <li>Health, Safety and wellbeing to support through continued pandemic and transition to future working model</li> <li>Support schools causing concern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of position and ambition with the HR / Payroll (iTrent) system – identified need for development capacity.</li> <li>Digital solutions in place during pandemic to carry out DBS’s.</li> <li>Medium to long term action plan developed as part of corporate decarbonisation plan</li> <li>Additional health and safety resource to support services in response to pandemic</li> <li>At least weekly - range of internal communications / guidance for the workforce and leaders during the pandemic.</li> <li>Weekly Wellbeing bulletins published including a range of provisions for supporting staff wellbeing, including special editions to address key issues and topics.</li> <li>Focused OD support for three schools identified as ‘causing concern’</li> <li>Framework developed for a new process of directorate workforce planning to support the delivery of the workforce strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to Chief Officer Commercial &amp; Customer on the position with iTrent and ambitions.</li> <li>Corporate decarbonisation plan and OD action plan</li> <li>Internal communications and weekly wellbeing bulletins</li> <li>One school no longer causing concern</li> <li>Workforce planning template rolled out to directorates for 2022/23</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal position / decision on the development or not of iTrent (HR/Payroll system)</li> <li>Directorate workforce plans and year 2 action plan for delivery of workforce strategy</li> <li>Continued support for schools causing concern.</li> </ul>

**WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23**

<b>Strategic Priority Outcome</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>Healthy Culture, Effective Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Strategy Year 1 - Progress Review</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 December 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Strategy Year 2 - Action Plan</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 December 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Agile Working</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT and Scrutiny Committee	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of leadership delivery model</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior management recruitment</li> </ul>	Head of OD	Leader and Council	31 January 2023
<b>Excellence in management across the Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitation of elected member training specific to workforce policy</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Head of OD and Head of Governance and Partnership	30 September 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New suite of disciplinary policies - Disciplinary training for managers</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Head of OD and CLT	30 November 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable managers in managing workforce attendance and reducing levels of sickness absence</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Head of OD, CLT and Scrutiny	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable managers to achieve high performing teams and respond to instances of poor performance, attendance, and behaviour, strengthening the management of employee relations and casework</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	Head of OD and CLT	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed the principles of working in social partnership</li> </ul>	Chief Officer Commercial & Customer	CLT	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a corporate approach for lone working</li> </ul>	Service Manager Customer Experience and Transformation	CLT	31 March 2023
<b>Modern Employer of Choice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of recruitment and retention</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the implications of 2022/23 pay award on the pay structure from April 2023</li> </ul>	OD Manager Payroll	CLT, Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay Policy 23/24</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Council	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further development of the agile working workspace</li> </ul>	Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services	CLT	31 March 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update HR &amp; Health and Safety policies</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR & Payroll	CLT Scrutiny and Council	Rolling timetable of reviews
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement neuro-diversity guidance</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement an Employer Supported Volunteering Policy</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Council	31 July 2022

**WORKFORCE STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2022/23**

<b>Strategic Priority Outcome</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver initiatives to further promote diversity of the workforce</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver initiatives to support the ageing workforce</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a network of equalities and inclusivity champions, who will act as representatives for all staff with protected characteristics; working in collaboration with the Equalities Team and the Trade Unions to drive the equalities agenda locally</li> <li>• To develop and facilitate targeted events, promotions, and initiatives to celebrate diversity.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to enhance equalities training provision</li> </ul>	Head of Governance & Partnerships	CLT	31 March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decarbonisation - embed the new operating model and assess its impact in terms of decarbonisation.</li> <li>• Decarbonisation - consider how to further reduce commute / travel impact in wider areas of the business e.g., Schools and Social Services.</li> <li>• Decarbonisation - explore how staff can be encouraged to switch to ULEV.</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT / Decarbonisation Board	31 March 2023
<b><i>A highly motivated and engaged workforce</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the internal Communications Plan</li> </ul>	Chief Officer Commercial & Customer	CLT	In line Communication Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of delivery options for workforce development - paper to CLT to include investment</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	February / March 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement of a learner management / experience system to support workforce development and training</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	2022/23
<b><i>Evidence based decision making, planning and delivery</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Directorate Workforce Plans</li> </ul>	Head of OD / CLT	DMT's and CLT	December 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual sickness absence review and reporting</li> </ul>	Head of OD/CLT	CLT, Scrutiny and Cabinet	30 September 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual workforce profiles (data dashboard) - Directorates &amp; Schools to inform workforce planning</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	DMT's / Schools and CLT	31 October 2022 (Schools) 30 May 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly sickness performance data to CLT and Elected Members</li> </ul>	OD Manager HR	CLT and Scrutiny	In line performance framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and implementation of digital solutions to support delivery of modern HR/Payroll service – Paper to CLT to scope and plan including investment</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	February 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal Pay Audit</li> </ul>	Head of OD	CLT	January 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support schools causing concern</li> </ul>	Corporate Director of Education and OD	Education Directorate	2022/23



# Agenda Item 11

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 04.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Waste Management and Recycling Strategy Review**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr H. Cunningham, Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member, Place and Environment**

Report Submitted by: **Matthew Stent, Service Manager, Neighbourhood Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance and Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
15.11.22	23.11.22	03.01.23			13.12.22	18.01.23		

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To provide Members of the Cabinet with an update of the progress made to date and the three-year review of the Waste Management and Recycling Strategy 2018-25 and seek endorsement for the updated Waste Management and Recycling Strategy.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 The production of a Waste Management and Recycling Strategy has been undertaken to ensure the Council achieves the 70% recycling target set for 2024/2025. Blaenau Gwent has made great improvements in its recycling rate and recently released data from Welsh Government shows an achievement of 64.9% in 2021/22.
  - 2.2 The Waste Management and Recycling Strategy was adopted in 2019. As the strategy covers such a significant time period and as external factors such as changes in the financial markets, developments in technology and developments within Blaenau Gwent itself, it was agreed that it would be sensible to undertake a more significant review every three years.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
  - 3.1 Option 1: Members of the Cabinet considers the progress made to date and approves the updated Waste Management and Recycling Strategy.
  - 3.2 Option 2: Members of the Cabinet considers the progress made to date and provides specific comments and/or suggestions prior to approving the updated Waste Management and Recycling Strategy.
  - 3.3 The preferred option of the Chair and Members of the Places Scrutiny Committee is Option 2. The suggestions made were to review the receptacles provided to residents to ensure they are fit for purpose and where appropriate and practical, for litter pickers to separate the waste they collect for recycling.

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

4.1 The Waste Management and Recycling Strategy contributes to the key priority in the Corporate Plan 'Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities.'

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There are financial implications if the authority does not achieve the statutory recycling target of 70% in 2024/25 it could face financial penalties from Welsh Government of £200 per tonne for every tonne under the target. The following table details the approximate fines based on the current 2021/22 Municipal Waste Arisings of 30,866.41 tonnes:

Performance	Tonnes below target of 70%	Potential fine 2024/25
65%	1543.32	£308,664.10
66%	1234.66	£246,931.28
67%	925.99	£185,198.46
68%	617.33	£123,465.64
69%	308.66	£61,732.82

There are potential capital and revenue funding requirements associated with some of the actions as outlined in the activity plan and as such these will be evaluated prior to their implementation. It is the expectation that some actions will need to be delivered within agreed budgets and some actions may be subject to the award of relevant grant funding.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There is a risk that if the authority does not achieve the statutory recycling target of 70% in 2024/25 it could face financial penalties from Welsh Government of £200 per tonne for every tonne under the target. This strategy sets out how Blaenau Gwent aims to meet challenging Welsh Government targets, to avoid possible fines, whilst delivering improved services within existing revenue budgets.

5.3 ***Legal***

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

5.4 ***Human Resources***

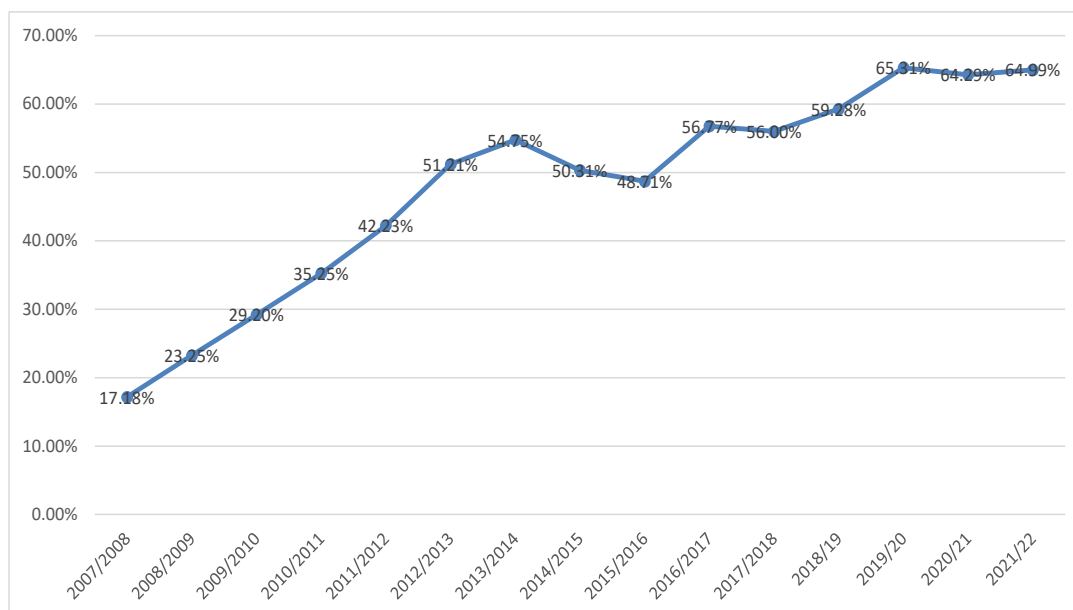
There are no human resource implications associated with the development of this strategy. However, there may be human resource implications

associated with some of the actions as outlined in the activity plan and as such these will be evaluated prior to their implementation.

## 6. Supporting Evidence

### 6.1 Performance Information and Data

Annual performance is shown below. Performance has increased since the introduction of the Strategy in 2018/19 but has plateaued since then. This review sets the direction of travel for the next three years as we work towards 70%.



### Performance in relation to all Welsh Local Authorities 2021-22 (Stats Wales)

	LA	Total (%)
1	Pembrokeshire County Council	74.3%
2	Bridgend CBC	72.6%
3	Vale of Glamorgan Council	70.2%
4	Conwy CBC	70.2%
5	Ceredigion County Council	69.6%
6	Monmouthshire CC	69.5%
7	Wrexham CBC	67.9%
8	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	67.2%
9	Newport City Council	67.1%
10	Merthyr Tydfil CBC	66.8%
11	Powys County Council	66.8%
12	Neath Port Talbot CBC	66.0%
13	City and County of Swansea	65.1%
14	Blaenau Gwent CBC	64.9%
15	Denbighshire County Council	64.8%
16	Gwynedd Council	64.2%
17	Torfaen CBC	62.6%

18	Isle of Anglesey CC	62.3%
19	Carmarthenshire County Council	61.8%
20	Flintshire County Council	60.1%
21	Caerphilly CBC	59.7%
22	Cardiff County Council	58.2%

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

Through the strategy, service users and stakeholders will have a clear understanding of the Council's future plans to meet its aspirations and statutory requirements and how it will work together with residents, partners and neighbours to meet wider goals and agendas.

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

Blaenau Gwent will be part of a programme of public engagement and invest in communications and resources to support this Waste Strategy.

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

This strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent's commitment to protect and sustain the environment and provide all Blaenau Gwent residents, local businesses and visitors with an efficient, smart and modern waste management and recycling service for now and into the future.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Blaenau Gwent will explore opportunities to divert waste from disposal by increasing the levels of re-use, recycling and composting. Ensure that all households have either a regular collection service or a convenient alternative arrangement available to them.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Blaenau Gwent will work together with its residents, contractors, community groups and the third sector to increase the range of materials able to be recycled, maximise recycling and value, and increase the opportunity for re-use.

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

The consolidation of the enforcement activities into one team in Community Services has changed the way we deliver our services in this area with a more joined up and coordinated response.

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

Two of the transition pathways identified within the Decarbonisation plan directly relate to waste:

- Transport direct – transition to ultra-low emission vehicles and the related infrastructure;
- Waste – working towards zero waste and a circular economy.

Ultra-low emission vehicles have been trialled with front line services and will be considered with the fleet replacement programme. However, the proposed new Centre of Operations is integral to Blaenau Gwent achieving a low carbon fleet as we cannot transition to a low emission fleet without the appropriate infrastructure in place to support it. Significant funding will,

however, be required in order to deliver the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles.

**6.9 *Integrated Impact Assessment***

An EqIA has been undertaken on the Waste and Recycling Strategy and no negative impacts against the protected characteristics have been identified

**7. *Monitoring Arrangements***

**7.1 *Annual Review*** - Blaenau Gwent Waste Team regularly review the outputs of the strategy and action plan. Officers and members monitor costs and also progress against waste and recycling targets. Officers will work within Blaenau Gwent's scrutiny process to ensure that members are aware and have the opportunity to examine progress against the Strategy.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 – Waste Management and Recycling Strategy for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council 2018 -25, Interim Review

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V1 INTERIM REVIEW

# **BLAENAU GWENT COUNCIL: WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING STRATEGY 2018-2025**

An inclusive waste management and recycling strategy for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

Publication Date: June 2022



*a better place to live and work*

This document sets out an interim review of the waste management strategy and recycling strategy for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

**Document reference:**

Interim Review Strategy 2018-2025

**Written by:** Waste Team Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council



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# 1.0 Executive Summary

The strategy sets out how Blaenau Gwent will provide residents, local businesses and visitors with an efficient, smart and modern waste management and recycling service for now and into the future. The strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent’s commitment to protect and sustain the environment through its well-being objectives. It also sets out how Blaenau Gwent aims to meet challenging Welsh Government targets, to avoid possible fines, whilst delivering improved services within a revenue budget which is increasingly stretched.

Blaenau Gwent’s vision for its waste and recycling service is

**Working together to build strong and environmentally smart communities.**

Five key objectives, aligned to the Corporate Plan, have been identified to ensure the Council continues to improve services for all stakeholders.

## Objective 1 – Working Together

## Objective 2 – Engagement First

## Objective 3 – Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling

## Objective 4 – Strong Community

## Objective 5 – Fair and Equitable Enforcement

In developing the actions, and changes needed to the service, Blaenau Gwent has considered what its service should look like.

Welsh Government Strategic Target Areas	2024/25 Targets	What Does Good Look Like for Blaenau Gwent Stakeholders
Min. levels of reuse & recycling/composting	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of residents have collections services enabling them to recycle</li> <li>Residents have access to information allowing them to participate in maximising recycling</li> <li>Any waste that is produced is placed in correct recycling containers</li> <li>Council provides collections in the right container at the right place and on time</li> </ul>
Min. proportion of reuse /recycling /composting from source separation (incl. bring banks and HWRCs)	80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council sources economic and environmental solutions for an increased range of materials</li> <li>Residents are informed on the range of materials and bring minimal non-recyclable waste to the HWRCs</li> <li>Residents have places to go where experts can repair broken goods and extend their life</li> <li>Residents have advice on how to upcycle their own goods and textiles</li> </ul>

Max. level of landfill	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum sorting and capture of materials at kerbside and HWRCs</li> <li>• Minimum food waste and information freely available to all residents</li> <li>• Minimum textiles discarded in residual waste – advice freely available to residents</li> </ul>
Max. level of energy from waste	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has in place policies that promote engagement first and fair and equitable enforcement last, giving every resident the opportunity to participate in services in the correct manner to maximise recycling</li> </ul>
Min. levels of preparing for reuse (excluding Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE))	1.0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents have access to and use reuse shops and reuse networks where they can pass on goods to others</li> <li>• Re-use services generate an income for re-investing into the service and into the community</li> <li>• Council works closely with the third sector to create work programmes to improve employability and opportunity for unemployed residents</li> </ul>

The strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent's commitment to protect and sustain the environment and provide all Blaenau Gwent residents and local businesses with a first-class waste management and recycling service.

As the strategy covers such a significant time period it was determined that it would be sensible to undertake a more significant review every three years. This interim review is the scheduled review three years on from the adoption of the strategy.

## 2.0 Introduction

### 2.1 National Context

The waste and recycling strategy was aligned to the latest Welsh Government Strategy 'Towards Zero Waste' which was launched in 2010 and the subsequent targets which are highlighted below:

*Table 1: Headline targets for Municipal Waste from WG – Towards Zero Waste*

Target Year	2010/11	12/13	15/16	19/20	24/25
Min. levels of reuse & recycling/composting (or AD)	40%	52%	58%	64%	70%
Min. proportion of reuse /recycling /composting from source separation *	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Max. level of landfill	-	-	-	10%	5%
Max. level of energy from waste	-	-	42%	36%	30%
Min. levels of preparing for reuse (excluding Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE))	-	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%	1.0%

\*kerbside, bring and/or civic amenity (CA) site

The Welsh Government has since reviewed its Waste Strategy and published 'Beyond Recycling – A strategy to make the circular economy in Wales a reality' in 2021. The Welsh Governments aim is to keep resources in use for as long as possible and avoid waste. They aim to achieve this by:

- Supporting businesses in Wales to reduce their carbon footprint by becoming more resource efficient;
- Providing the tools to enable community action;
- Phasing out unnecessary single-use items, especially plastic;
- Eradicating avoidable food waste;
- Procuring on a basis which prioritises goods and products which are made from remanufactured, refurbished and recycled materials or come from low carbon and sustainable materials like wood;
- Striving to achieve the highest rates of recycling in the world;
- Reducing the environmental impact of the waste collection from our homes and businesses; and
- Taking full responsibility for our waste.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) are being phased in 2024 and these schemes will need to be considered in terms of how they may affect the objectives

of this strategy. Welsh Government have also commissioned a national Waste Composition Analysis exercise in the Spring and Autumn of 2022, the results of which will indicate what materials are still in resident's black bag waste and could be targeted in future campaigns.

## 2.2 Local Context

The global pandemic has certainly affected the delivery of the strategy and in particular has affected the team's ability to engage with the public and other stakeholders. The roll out of the Trade Waste service was disrupted by the many lockdowns and closure of local businesses and also impacted on the planned development of a network of Repair cafes.

Since the adoption of the strategy, Blaenau Gwent has pledged its support to Welsh Government's ambition for the Welsh public sector to be carbon neutral by 2030, and have developed a Decarbonisation plan which sets out how we intend to deliver on this ambition over the next ten years. The plan will also help to ensure that decarbonisation is built into long term plans, including this strategy, to improve well-being in Blaenau Gwent. Two of the transition pathways identified within the Decarbonisation plan directly relate to waste:

- Transport direct – transition to ultra-low emission vehicles and the related infrastructure;
- Waste – working towards zero waste and a circular economy.

Ultra-low emission vehicles have been trialled with front line services and will be considered with the fleet replacement programme. However, the new Centre of Operations is integral to Blaenau Gwent achieving a low carbon fleet as we cannot transition to a low emission fleet without the appropriate infrastructure in place to support it.

The consolidation of the enforcement activities into one team in Community Services has changed the way we deliver our services in this area with a more joined up and coordinated response.

## 3.0 Our Vision and Strategic Objectives

### 3.1 Vision

**Working together to build strong and environmentally smart communities.**

### 3.2 Key Objectives

Five key Objectives have been identified to ensure Blaenau Gwent continues to improve services for customers and other stakeholders.

**Objective 1 – Working Together** - Blaenau Gwent will work together with its residents, contractors, community groups and the third sector to increase the range of materials able to be recycled, maximise recycling and value, and increase the opportunity for re-use.

**Objective 2 – Engagement First** - Blaenau Gwent will be part of a programme of public engagement and invest in communications and resources to support this Waste Strategy.

**Objective 3 – Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling** - Blaenau Gwent will explore opportunities to divert waste from disposal by increasing the levels of re-use, recycling and composting. Ensure that all households have either a regular collection service or a convenient alternative arrangement available to them.

**Objective 4 – Strong Community** - Blaenau Gwent will continually review its services and seek new ways to work with residents and communities to ensure best practice is implemented and services are retained locally where possible.

**Objective 5 – Fair and Equitable Enforcement** - Blaenau Gwent will implement a programme of Enforcement that is both fair and consistent to enable those residents who are not participating in the recycling schemes to participate.

The strategy reflects Blaenau Gwent's commitment to protect and sustain the environment and provide all Blaenau Gwent residents, local businesses and visitors with an efficient, smart and modern waste management and recycling service for now and into the future.

In future we must prevent waste from being generated, where we cannot prevent, we must reduce, repair, re-use, recycle and compost more. Waste must be considered a resource from which as much value as possible should be recovered. Disposal should only ever be the last resort

## 4.0 Delivering the Strategy

### 4.1 Working Together

Blaenau Gwent will work together with its residents, contractors, community groups and the third sector to increase the range of materials able to be recycled, maximise recycling and value, and increase the opportunity for re-use.

Since 2018 we have:

- Constructed and opened a second Recycling Centre at Roseheyworth;
- Worked with Welsh Government to develop an Outline Business Case for a Regional Wood Facility at Silent Valley;
- Successfully secured funding to support the rollout of a Repair Café network across the Borough;
- Developed a regional online Repair Directory for residents to access the nearest repair outlets;
- Constructed our first Reuse Shop at Roseheyworth Recycling Centre which is operated by our contracted partner Wastesavers;
- Successfully secured funding to construct an Education Centre at Roseheyworth Recycling Centre;
- Successfully secured funding to convert a barn at New Vale Recycling Centre to a Reuse shop;
- Appraised options for a new Centre of Operations and selected a preferred site;
- Developed initial designs for the Centre of Operations;
- Trialled an ultra-low emission vehicle for recycling;
- Through our partners Wrap Cymru, participated in a bulk density exercise to inform future fleet development and infrastructure requirements;
- Started to work on the transition of Silent Valley Waste Services coming in house.

### 4.2 Engagement First

Blaenau Gwent will be part of a programme of public engagement and invest in communications and resources to support this Waste Strategy.

Since 2018 we have:

- Delivered a series of roadshows across the Borough to engage with residents about the side waste enforcement policy;
- Delivered the 'Keeping up with the Joneses' campaign through a consistent message and approach;
- Introduced a new Trade Waste service to all customers which is compliant with the latest Welsh Government legislation through a consistent message and approach;
- Developed online communications for reuse shop at Roseheyworth;



### 4.3 Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling

Blaenau Gwent will explore opportunities to divert waste from disposal by increasing the levels of re-use, recycling and composting. Ensure that all households have either a regular collection service or a convenient alternative arrangement available to them.

Since 2018 we have:

- Introduced black bag sorting policy at New Vale recycling centre;
- Introduced a 'No side waste policy' at kerbside for residual waste;
- Maintained all kerbside collections throughout the course of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns;
- Through our partners Wrap Cymru, participated in a plastic film trial;
- Introduced a new larger, weighted reusable cardboard sack for all residents;
- Changed the way we collect tetrapak cartons so these can be processed for recycling;

### 4.4 Strong Community

Blaenau Gwent will continually review its services and seek new ways to work with residents and communities to ensure best practice is implemented and services are retained locally where possible.

Since 2018 we have:

- Introduced a new Trade Waste service to all customers which is compliant with the latest Welsh Government legislation. Bespoke multi-stream collections vehicles have been purchased and a new pricing structure has been developed to ensure the service is sustainable going forward;
- Carried out a route optimisation exercise on all our recycling rounds;
- Introduced in-cab technology across the recycling fleet;
- Reinstated a number of rear lane collections utilising bespoke vehicles

### 4.5 Fair and Equitable Enforcement

Blaenau Gwent will implement a programme of Enforcement that is both fair and consistent to enable those residents who are not participating in the recycling schemes to participate.

Since 2018 we have:

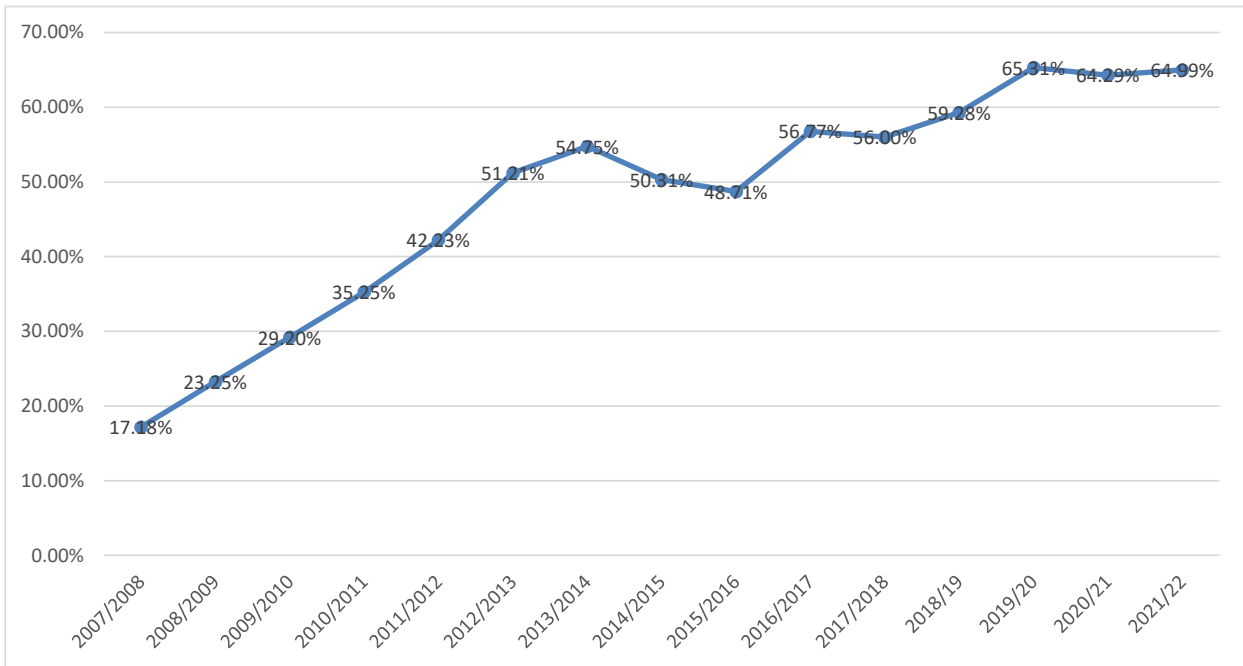
- Introduced a consolidated Enforcement Team in Community Services;
- Introduced a 'No side waste policy' at kerbside for residual waste;
- Delivered the 'Keeping up with the Joneses' campaign;
- Utilised powers under Section 46 of the the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to take enforcement action against residents who are not following Blaenau Gwent policies for recycling;
- Developed a process for the misplacement of waste;
- Worked with residents to phase out communal collection points where this is possible;
- Carried out Commercial Duty of Care checks in Town Centres;

# 5.0 Monitoring

## 5.1 Performance

Annual performance is shown below. Performance has increased since the introduction of the Strategy in 2018/19 but has plateaued since then. This review sets the direction of travel for the next three years as we work towards 70%.

2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
17.18%	23.25%	29.20%	35.25%	42.23%	51.21%	54.75%	50.31%	48.71%	56.77%	56.00%	59.28%	65.31%	64.29%	64.99%



Assuming the total municipal waste remains constant over the next few years, to achieve 70% we would need to reduce our residual and increase our recycling by 1562.44 tonnes. This means that for every 1% increase in our recycling rate would require a swing of 308.66 tonnes

## 5.2 Timeline

Appendix 1 identifies the key actions to deliver Blaenau Gwent’s Objectives. They outline Blaenau Gwent’s commitment to continuous improvement, the delivery of statutory objectives and engagement with its stakeholders throughout the process. The dates indicated are the dates at which Blaenau Gwent will start work on the evaluation and delivery of any specific action.

## 6.0 Investment

There are number of actions, included in Appendix 1 that will require capital investment. For capital spend that continues to move the Council towards a Circular Economy, Blaenau Gwent will prepare capital grant applications justifying how the investment would assist in meeting or exceeding of statutory targets through the identified service change or enhancement.

Other actions will require revenue investment from within a revenue budget which is increasingly stretched. In these circumstances a case by case cost benefit analysis will be carried out to identify how the actions can be delivered though invest to save means.

# Appendix 1: Summary Action Plan and Timeline

These are the proposed key actions – how they will be tactically delivered will be determined at the point each project / change is to be implemented.

	Strategic Objective	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
				70%
<b>HWRC</b>	<b>Strong Community</b> <b>Working Together</b>	Open re-use furniture and large items shop at New Vale. Establish contacts for Repair cafes	Develop network of Repair cafés	
<b>Kerbside Recycling</b>	<b>Engagement First</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	On-going ‘Keeping up with the Joneses’ campaign Promotion of kerbside collected household batteries	On-going ‘Keeping up with the Joneses’ campaign	On-going ‘Keeping up with the Joneses’ campaign
	<b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Market review to identify further opportunities for extending recycling materials including plastic film	Introduce financially viable new materials for recycling	Consolidate extended service to maximise recycling
	<b>Strong Community</b>		Plan for fleet replacement and future proof fleet for new / additional materials and the latest technology	Procure new fleet
<b>Kerbside Residual</b>	<b>Fair and Equitable Enforcement</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Continue with side waste enforcement	Continue with side waste enforcement	Continue with side waste enforcement

	Strategic Objective	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	<b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Review residual collection frequency and containment	Trial reduced residual frequency and/ or reduced containment or number of bags	70% Introduce reduced residual frequency or reduced containment
<b>Waste Transfer Station</b>	<b>Working Together</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Ensure transfer station is compliant and future proofed to incorporate further developments Investigate options available for baling	Investigate options and procure for replacement baling solution	Introduce baling solution
	<b>Working Together</b>	Work with other local authorities to develop a partnership for Regional Wood Facility. Secure funding	Construct Regional Wood Facility	Commission Regional Wood Facility
<b>Trade Waste</b>	<b>Strong Community</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Survey commercial premises to identify any gaps in the market. Trial trade waste recycling service at Roseheyworth Recycling Centre	Grow service - review service to provide access to all local businesses.	Create network of Community Recycling Ambassadors in local businesses
<b>Engagement and Education</b>	<b>Engagement First</b>	Opening of Education Centre. Develop an education programme to be delivered at the centre	Carry out participation and set out study and deliver focussed and targeted communications to maximise recycling	Survey residents to ensure we are delivering what we said we would Create network of Community Recycling Ambassadors in schools and Council Buildings
<b>Communications supporting service changes</b>	<b>Engagement First</b> <b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b>	Promote textiles, domestic batteries and small WEEE collections at kerbside	Social media communications for reuse HWRC site shop and bulky items outlet. Communications for any	Communications for reduced frequency or reduced containment of residual

	Strategic Objective	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
		Analyse results of Waste Composition Analysis	additional kerbside collected materials. Targeted communications campaign based on Waste Composition Analysis results.	70% collections and enhanced recycling
<b>Centre of Operations</b>	<b>Working Together</b> <b>Strong Community</b>	Financial options for new Centre of Operations. Planning permission sought	Construct new Centre of Operations	Transition to new Centre of Operations

## Appendix 2: Current Service

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	
Residual Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collected 3 weekly using 240 litre bins or 4 black bags per household, with no side waste accepted.</li> </ul>
Recyclate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly collection of recyclate for all households in either a Troliboc, 55-litre black boxes with different coloured lids, to distinguish the materials, and hessian reusable sacks.</li> <li>Recyclate collected weekly include food tins and drink cans, empty aerosols, newspapers, magazines and junk mail, catalogues and telephone directories, glass jars and bottles, plastic bottles, mixed plastics, clothes, textiles and paired shoes, small WEEE and domestic batteries.</li> <li>A weekly AHP and nappy collection service is open to all household which provides extra capacity where needed.</li> <li>Provision of two HWRCs - with black bag sorting required.</li> </ul>
Organics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A weekly collection of green waste is operated from March to November each year collected in green hessian sacks.</li> <li>Food Waste is collected source segregated on a weekly basis in 23 litre green caddies. The Authority supplies food liners to residents for this service.</li> </ul>
Trade Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly Residual Waste collections to approximately 300 trade customers.</li> <li>All customers have residual and recycling collection contracts.</li> </ul>
Disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residual Waste is treated at Viridor's Energy from Waste Facility at Trident Park in Cardiff.</li> </ul>
Contractual Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Silent Valley Waste Services Ltd are currently contracted to operate the New Vale and Roseheyworth HWRCs and the Waste Transfer Station on behalf of BG and are the permit holders for all sites.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: Integrated Communication Package – a practical approach

Communications that underpins the strategy to achieve Blaenau Gwent's goals

- There will be a **focus** on – and prioritisation of – those behaviours/actions which will make the greatest contribution to the waste and recycling strategy's overarching objectives.
- Communications and engagement **activity must align with and complement the wider waste strategy**. In particular this means linking with any future service changes as identified in the Action Plan in Appendix 1. The focus will be on delivering excellent service change communications, with additional communications, engagement and behaviour change activity scheduled in around this.
- Adopting a **project-focused** rather than 'always on' communications approach, with two types of communications project: those linked to service change (time-specific and delivered as an integral element of the wider service change), and those not linked to service change (non time-specific and delivered as discrete projects), all of which will have clear objectives and timelines. This means that at any one time there may be **one key communications focus**; it also means that there will be short periods between projects during which there will remain only a low level of communications outputs e.g. the Council's social media accounts.
- Developing communications activities and materials from scratch can be expensive and time-consuming. Where possible, the Council will **make use of existing materials/templates** etc, amending them as necessary to meet its own specific needs. This does not mean that 'one size fits all', only that where possible, the Council will continue to make use of existing materials/templates etc as a starting point, with additional bespoke materials and activities to be developed at a later stage as needed. This approach is **low-cost and low-risk** compared to developing materials from scratch.
- Investigating opportunities to **benefit from the Welsh Government's Behaviour Change Programme** and other national initiatives as they are developed. This is likely to provide multiple opportunities for participation and collaboration.
- Continuing to make the most of **existing networks and partnerships**.
- Using findings from planned trials **target specific audience segments** using the channels and messages that will best work for them. The focus will remain on targeting those segments which will have the **greatest impact – which will also deliver the best value for money**.



# Appendix 4: Well Being Goals

How Blaenau Gwent's Strategic Waste Objectives and Action Plan will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals.

Well-being goals	5 ways of working and how we will deliver	Blaenau Gwent's Strategic Waste Objectives that deliver against well-being goals	How actions beneficially contribute to the national well-being goals
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b>                      An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>Long-term</p>	<p><b>Strong Community</b></p> <p><b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b></p> <p><b>Working Together</b></p>	<p>Services designed so that everyone can participate.</p> <p>Maximise benefits of emerging technologies to recycle more and introduce additional materials.</p> <p>Providing residents with a more suitable HWRC and re-use facilities for the future to achieve 70% recycling rate by 2025.</p> <p>As new materials are included in the recycling services Blaenau Gwent will first seek reprocessing outlets in Wales.</p>
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b>                      A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).</p>	<p>Integration and Collaboration</p>	<p><b>Strong Community</b></p>	<p>Services that are accessible to all residents, local businesses and visitors to Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>Improvements to HWRC will</p>





capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).			<b>Smart Communities</b>
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	Prevention	<p><b>Strong Community</b></p> <p><b>Ambitious Targets to Maximise Recycling</b></p>	A strategy that is aligned to the waste hierarchy through providing opportunities to recycle what is produced and reducing the amount of waste disposed.
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>	Involvement and Collaboration	<p><b>Engagement First</b></p> <p><b>Working Together</b></p>	Engagement - all communications with our community will be provided in English and Welsh.

**The Five Ways of Working**

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

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

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

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

**Prevention** - How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

WRAP's vision is a world in which resources are used sustainably.

Our mission is to accelerate the move to a sustainable resource-efficient economy through re-inventing how we design, produce and sell products; re-thinking how we use and consume products; and re-defining what is possible through re-use and recycling.

Find out more at [www.wrapcymru.org.uk](http://www.wrapcymru.org.uk)



# Agenda Item 12

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 04.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2022/2023 (Quarters 1 and 2).**

Portfolio Holder: **Haydn Trollope, Cabinet Member for People and Social Services**

Report Submitted by: **Tanya Evans, Interim Director of Social Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Officers	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance and Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	People Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
09/12/22	15/12/22	03.01.23			17.1.23	18/01/23		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to present the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services, covering the quarter 1 and 2 period (April to September 2022) attached at Appendix 1.

## 2. Scope and Background

2.1 The performance of the department is monitored throughout the financial year from April to March, with six monthly reports presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee. At the end of the year a comprehensive self-evaluation of performance is undertaken to inform the Statutory Annual Report of the Director of Social Services.

2.2 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions.

## 3. Options for Recommendation

### Option 1

Members are asked to consider the detail contained in the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2022/2023 (quarters 1 and 2) and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate comments and or recommendations for amendment to the report before consideration at Cabinet.

### Option 2

Accept the report as provided.

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

It is a statutory responsibility of the Director of Social Services to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of Social Services and produce an Annual Report. The Annual Report contributes to and forms part of the Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF).

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

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

The Director's Report includes budgetary information and identifies the pressures and budgetary implications for 2022/2023.

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

Social Services maintain a directorate risk register which is aligned to both service level and corporate risk. The risk register is reviewed as part of the business planning process and included within the performance reporting of the Director of Social Services.

### 5.3 **Legal**

There is a statutory requirement, as part of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2015 for the Director of Social Services to produce an annual report following strict guidelines on content.

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no staffing implications related in this report.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### **Performance Information and Data**

6.1 Detail is provided within the Director's Annual Report 2022/2023 (quarters 1 and 2)

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

The key theme of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 is to promote the well-being of people who need care and support. Within the annual report it is highlighted where the Directorate has worked closely with the public to improve service delivery and user outcomes. Reporting provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Directorate and ensure accountability.

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

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 looks to build and strengthen on existing arrangements by involving service users, carers and other key partners where possible in helping shape and influence future design of services.

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

The Annual report enables the department to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future.



6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The work undertaken by the department looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having an active rather than re active approach to service planning can also help with planning resources and not spending as much on services in the future.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Social Services work collaboratively across boundaries to benefit citizens requiring health and social care services across Gwent.

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

The purpose of the SSWBA is to foster integration between Health and Social Services. The report enables the department to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where it needs to be in the future to support a sustainable and viable service.

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

The workforce who delivers the functions of the SSWBA have adopted the agile working policy of the council which will have a positive impact on car emissions as staff are now able to work from home to undertake paperwork and do not have to travel to the office.

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

All service provision and functions that sit under social services are subject to socio economic disadvantages for example, low income, material and area deprivation. All programmes work towards addressing these disadvantages.

6.9b ***Equality Impact Assessment***

The overarching vision is to support the needs of the most vulnerable children and adults in our communities through a range of early intervention, prevention and support mechanisms. With the aim of building resilient individuals, resilient families and resilient communities.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The Annual Report for 2022/2023 (quarters 1 and 2) will be monitored via six monthly monitoring reports to the Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Report of the Director of Social Services

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## **Social Services**

### **Annual Report of the Director of Social Services**

#### **Quarter 1 and 2 (April 2022 to September 2022)**



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## Introduction

Welcome to the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Social Services Report of the Director of Social Services. The Report covers the period April to September 2022. The Report is used to highlight the key areas of progress and improvements that the service has experienced and is developed in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, referred to as 'the Act' throughout this document.

The Act aims to provide the most radical change to the way in which Social Services is provided since 1948. It focuses on improving the well-being of people who come to Social Services for support. It is person centred and focuses on prevention and reducing the need for care and support. It recognises that responsibility lies not only within Social Services Departments, but also within the wider Local Authority and with partners (particularly Health and the Third Sector). The Act shares similar principles with a number of key national/regional strategies that are being implemented throughout the Council, in particular the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The Director of Social Services has a statutory requirement to publish an annual report in relation to the delivery of its functions, to evaluate its performance and also include lessons learned. This Report provides a mid-year review of the activity undertaken to date. A key aspect of the report is showing how the six Quality Standards have been implemented in relation to well-being outcomes.



## Director's Overview

The first 2 quarters of 22/23 has seen a great deal of change for the Council and the Social Services Directorate. The council has a new political administration which in turn has led to a change in the executive member for social services. Councillor Trollope is now our Executive Member bringing his previous years of being executive member of social services with him. We have seen a change in the way scrutiny committees have been designed. Social Services now report to the PEOPLE scrutiny committee to which our Education Directorate also report. Time is being taken to develop a new corporate plan to set the vision and priorities to take us through to 2027.

The change has also extended to the senior leadership of the Social Services Directorate. With myself Tanya Evans taking up the role of Interim Director and Alison Ramshaw stepping up as Interim Head of Children's services. Inevitably this change has caused some ripples due to the back filling arrangements but this has not impacted on service delivery. As a Directorate we have reviewed our Directorate priorities alongside the priorities for both children's and adult services. It is no surprise to see that both areas have very similar priorities in relation to safeguarding, workforce, the preventative agenda and the sustainability of services. With budget pressures looming due to meeting the cost of dealing with the pandemic and the starting of a cost of living crisis we anticipate some difficult time ahead.

The social services workforce has been working as hard as ever in the first 2 quarters of this year and have much to be proud of in relation to what has been achieved. Some of the achievements include

- Successful staff recruitment to areas we have been struggling to recruit to for some time
- The adult services new IAA structure went live in April 22 and is no longer reliant on grant funding
- Cwrt Mytton our residential home for people with dementia has been able to open back up to visitors following the pandemic and have held numerous successful events which have been shared on social media
- The Commissioning Team have continued to support the external sector by passporting the numerous grants received from Welsh Government
- We have opened our new SMART flat and progressing the use of technology to support people in Blaenau Gwent to remain independent and living at home for as long as possible.
- Community Meals take up is increasing including our 'tea time trays'
- We have maintained a strong outcomes based approach to the way in which we deliver practice ensuring we hear about "What Matters" to the people we serve balancing their rights and responsibilities
- Augusta House respite provision has been extended to include Children
- The 14 plus Team won a social care accolade for building brighter futures for children and families
- The child care and play sufficiency assessments have successfully been completed with 5-year action plan in place
- We have seen the launch of our own BG MyST which works intensively with children with complex needs to prevent them entering residential care and working with those in residential care to support their return to foster care or their families.
- The joint Youth Offending Services we have with Caerphilly had a positive inspection

- Our Children Looked After numbers continue to remain stable
- We have successfully placed 6 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children under the National Transfer Scheme

There are many challenges to be faced in Qtr. 3 and 4 of 22/23. We are starting to see a significant rise in the cost of living. If this continues it will naturally have a bigger impact on the people of Blaenau Gwent where deprivation levels are already extremely high. We will also be informed of the budget settlement we will receive from Welsh Government which will no doubt lead to prioritising and re prioritising of the services we deliver. That said we have much to deliver before the end of the financial year which includes

- The opening of the Augusta House reablement PODS which will give people with learning difficulties the opportunity to develop their independence skills in a purpose built supported environment
- We will be using new electric vehicles for Community Meals and home care to support the climate crisis agenda
- We will be Increasing our step up / down (CARIAD beds) including purpose built bariatric facility
- Review of our Community Resource Team structure
- Implementation of the new operating model for the children locality teams
- Looking to purchase our first residential home for children looked after
- Roll out of new flying start areas



**Tanya  
Evans**  
Interim  
Corporate  
Director of  
Social  
Services



**Haydn  
Trollope**  
Cabinet  
Member for  
People and  
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Services

# Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability

The structure of the Social Services Directorate provides clear levels of management and accountability. As a whole, the Council has a clear governance and accountability framework in place which all directorates are signed up to. This framework identifies how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create a 'golden thread'. This framework is complied with by Social Services who also have additional monitoring requirements as part of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The Social Services Directorate is subject to audit, inspection and review by the Care Inspectorate for Wales (CIW). On a quarterly basis the Director of Social Services and/or Heads of Adult and Children's Services meet with CIW to discuss achievements, performance and key challenges. The Directorate has one Cabinet Member who has portfolio responsibility for Social Services as a whole. The Directorate is scrutinised by the People Scrutiny Committee. Regular liaison meetings are held with the Directorate, the Cabinet Member and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

Blaenau Gwent continues to work with a wide range of partners where partnership opportunities provide better outcomes for local residents than the Council could achieve if working on its own. Social Services work in partnership with a variety of stakeholders including staff, residents and businesses. Some Social Services collaboration includes:

- Joint Partnership and Workforce Development Service with Caerphilly;
- South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS);
- South East Wales Emergency Duty Team;
- South East Wales Adult Placement Scheme;
- Gwent Frailty Programme Integrated Health and Social Care Teams;
- South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB);
- Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB);
- Gwent Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Partnership Team;
- South East Wales Improvement Collaboration -4C's (SEWIC);
- Gwent Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team;
- Greater Gwent Regional Partnership Board;
- Gwent Regional Collaborative (RCC) - Supporting People;
- Gwent wide agreement with National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to provide children's advocacy services; and
- Greater Gwent Workforce Development Board.



# How People Are Shaping Our Services

The Social Services Directorate is committed to providing high quality services to its citizens and uses various engagement methodologies in order to understand if the service is making the intended outcomes or if amendments to service delivery need to be considered.

Throughout April to September 2022 a variety of engagement events have taken place and include the following

- Summer of Fun activities
- National Play Day
- Men's Health Week
- Child Safety Week
- Summer Platinum Jubilee events in Cwrt Mytton
- A Gwent regional stakeholder consultation
- National Children's Day - promoting the importance of a healthy childhood and the rights of a child
- National Smile Month

The Social Services Department is committed to providing high quality services to its users; however, despite best intentions, it is recognised that sometimes things can go wrong and the Social Services complaints procedure provides people with the opportunity to voice their concerns when they are dissatisfied with a service. The service uses learning from these complaints to improve services moving forward. The service also welcomes positive feedback and compliments and also uses this information to further improve services.

From 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022 we have received no official complaints. Social Services complaints are dealt with 'informally' where possible as per Welsh Government guidance



# Departmental Priorities 2022/23

## Departmental Priorities

- To recruit and retain an appropriately skilled and qualified workforce to deliver quality services
- To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own well-being.
- To work with people to make sure they have a say in achieving what matters to them.
- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater.
- To work with our partners including Aneurin Bevan Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support.
- To have effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.
- To develop a partnership approach to reducing and alleviating the impacts of poverty.
- To ensure effective forward financial planning arrangements are in place to support the Council's financial resilience.
- Ensure long-term sustainability is at the forefront of our thinking and decision-making.

## Children's Services Priorities

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- Ensure all children are safeguarded
- Ensure we have an appropriately skilled, motivated and supported workforce with clear career development pathways in place that support our service delivery
- Ensure all teams deliver an outcomes based approach to practice and service delivery
- Ensure that we provide / commission modern, flexible, cost effective high quality support services that meet both current and future well-being needs of children
- Ensure that preventative support is available for children and their families, that promote early intervention and prevents needs from escalating.
- Manage the Children's Services budget to ensure expenditure comes within budget
- Ensure the Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2020 – 2025 actions are regularly monitored and reviewed
- Ensure outcomes for children looked after continue to improve through the implementation of the Corporate Parenting action plan
- Review the way in which children's services operates and decide if a change is necessary in order to manage demand and workload.
- Children's Services contributes to meeting the Sustainable Development Principles

## Adult Services Priorities

- Ensure all adults are safeguarded
- Ensure we have an appropriately skilled, motivated and supported workforce with clear career development pathways in place that support our service delivery
- Ensure all teams deliver an outcomes based approach to practice and service delivery
- Ensure that we provide / commission modern, flexible, cost effective high quality support services that meet both current and future well-being needs of vulnerable adults and their unpaid family carers
- Ensure that preventative support is available for adults and their unpaid carers, that promote and maintain personal independence
- Budget
- Undertake a review of the current model of Community Options
- Adult Services contributes to meeting the Sustainable Development Principles

**Quality Standard 1** - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.

### **Children's Services Self-Assessment –**

During quarter 1 2022/23 referrals into the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) service continue to rise. IAA Service continues to approach referrals in an outcomes manner by establishing what matters to the customer.

A meeting has been arranged to discuss how the Family Information Service (FIS) can link into IAA and Families First Community Engagement Officers can support FIS and vice versa. Families First workers will also be linked to the flying start hubs. Flying Start has rolled out into Rassau as phase 1 of the roll out, phase 2 will happen after April 2023.

Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, will undertake an inspection of Blaenau Gwent's Local Government Education Services later in the year. As part of this a number of areas, linked to education and supporting the work of children and young people will also be inspected and this will include Safeguarding Flying Start, Early Years and Play Service.

By end of the period, an Induction Programme was developed and advertised for Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQS) as part of the 2021 and 2022 cohorts. The first sessions started in June 2022 and will continue on a weekly basis. Feedback from the sessions revealed that the cohort of newly qualified social workers found the sessions extremely beneficial and that they felt much more prepared to carry out their roles confidently.

An offer of advocacy has been made to all new Children Looked After and those children on the child protection register. Capacity issues being experienced within the Locality Teams had an impact on the timeliness of referrals, however they have now all been done. As appropriate, cases have been presented to the Complex Needs Panel in order to access the relevant resources required and to ensure a multi-agency input in managing and progressing care plans.

Attendance at mentor's meetings which promote the outcome approach to practice has continued to be good with representation across all service areas. Live cases are discussed and feedback from families and children are included. Monthly reflective practice sessions continue in each of the service areas and refresher training is available to all staff through Workforce Development. New staff have attended training sessions on Collaborative Communication and accessed other learning opportunities available in order to support outcome focused practice, and deliver interventions based on an outcomes/strengths based approach, which has the voices of children and families at the centre of care planning.

**Quality Standard 1** - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.

### **Adult Services Self-Assessment –**

As in Children's Services, new staff into Adult Services have attended training sessions on What Matters and Balancing Rights and Responsibilities. and accessed other learning opportunities available, in order to support outcome focused practice, and deliver interventions based on an outcomes/strengths based approach. Adult Service staff have been undertaking this training collaboratively with colleagues from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) as part of the project facilitated by Social Care Wales (SCW) and there has been a strong emphasis on assessments within our acute and community settings. This work is due to be evaluated by SCW in the Autumn of 2022 and a report produced in relation to good practice.

A new structure for the IAA Team was introduced in April 2022 and performance measure reported during 2022/23 quarters 1 and 2 are already indicating that 77% of new referrals are managed at the front door and 1 in 3 of our referrals being signposted to alternative preventative services. Within IAA a competency framework has been developed for all staff and a 'buddy' system is also in place for staff to further promote learning and development i.e. experienced social care staff supporting newer staff to the team. A full evaluation of the new front door / IAA service will be completed once it has been in operation for 12 months

Across Adult Services we continue to provide opportunities for wider case discussion and problem solving. We have weekly 'fish bowl' meetings which focus on presentation of complex cases, peer support, quality assurance and general opportunities for creative problem solving and case discussions.

Development of additional support for our unpaid family carers remain a priority and we are currently reviewing our capacity and outcomes to provide preventative support to people as part of both our GP engagement service (a partnership arrangement with Care Collective and ABUHB) and our in house support worker model. Outcomes of the review will be analysed in quarter 3.

We continue to offer advocacy support to our most vulnerable adults via our Gwent Advocacy Service.

Despite the ongoing COVID 19 pressures across our Provider Services we are re-establishing our engagement activities at Augusta House, Cwrt Mytton, Community Option and within Home Care, ensuring that outcomes are meeting care and support plans.

**Quality Standard 2** - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support and relevant partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

**Children's Services Self-Assessment** – Work has taken place to ensure that mandatory safeguarding training for foster carers is being delivered on a face-to-face basis rather than virtually. The training needs of foster carers continue to be monitored and promoted during annual reviews, appraisals and supervision sessions, however, due to Covid, there is a backlog of carers who are outstanding the safeguarding training, and this will continue to be monitored throughout the year. Foster Carers are also receiving Circle of Security training and early feedback is that they have found the parenting programme to be very beneficial and are adapting their parenting styles accordingly.

In April 2022, Blaenau Gwent established its own MyST (My Support Team) to provide greater capacity within the service. Since this time, staff from MyST have been attending News and Networking events and meeting Mentors in order to embed the service fully within Blaenau Gwent. Positively, the service is now working with children, under each of the operational teams, suggesting that the service is being utilised by all. A programme of training/reflective sessions for foster carers is being developed which will be delivered by the MyST which is due to commence January 2023. In respect of attendance at previous sessions, there has been some progress made and, from January 2023, an incentive will be offered to foster carers for completing the requirements of the training to increase motivation and compliance.

The MyST service continue to work with a number of young people in residential care on a 'step-down' basis as well as working with a number of young people who are at risk of entering residential care on a preventative basis. In order to improve the service offer discussions have taken place between the MyST and Placement Team in order to work collaboratively and have joint marketing going forward. Challenges remain regarding the availability of step down accommodation whether this is suitable foster care accommodation or the availability of semi-independent accommodation.

It has proven to be extremely difficult to recruit foster carers and interest in fostering at this current time is very low, despite efforts to increase awareness via social media and recruitment activity. There has been one new foster carer approval within the quarter, but unfortunately, there has also been two resignations resulting in an overall decrease in the number of foster carers. This has been despite the close working relationship with the Foster Wales Manager and the promotion of the Foster Wales brand. Unfortunately, within the period, demand for foster placements has increased and there has been a greater reliance on Independent Fostering Agency placements (IFA). By the end of September 2022, there were 26 children placed in IFA placements (an increase of eight since December 2021). It should be noted that the increase in IFAs has mostly been due to place asylum seeking children. We currently have 11 children placed in residential care.

A Worcester University Evaluation of the Disability Service has been undertaken. The Evaluation evidences good use of the disability index and the disability Facebook page and these services continue to be offered within the team. Work is underway in respect of supporting Provider Services, such as the Youth Service, to support young people. This includes the establishment of a sports session and the continuation of the Carers Support Group. The Disability Team now have access to a residential respite provision and within this period, four young people have been accessing this provision. Within the next quarter further communication will take place to understand the strategy for respite services. The work in respect of transition has been very successful with bi-monthly meetings taking place to discuss young people coming up to transition and these are open to both the Disability and the 14+ Teams.

**Quality Standard 2** - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support and relevant partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

**Adult Services Self-Assessment** – In partnership with our Gwent LA partners and ABUHB we have commenced a review of older person's community based services including potential for reviewing our current Gwent Frailty model and ensuring we meet the required standards of the Welsh Government Six Goals for Emergency and Unscheduled Care.

Initial meetings have been held with staff to discuss a review in relation to reablement and DASH. The Home Care Manager has been working closely with the Reablement Service within ABUHB with the outcome of having a more cohesive and sustainable service to meet the outcomes of vulnerable adults / A report on the future modernisation plans for the two services will be developed in quarter 3.

During quarter 2 we have commenced a review of our Community Resource Team and in partnership with our colleagues in ABUHB, we are developing additional capacity to support those people living with dementia who require early intervention reablement support and also those people who are living with sensory loss. We are currently reviewing the job functions of the manager of the Community Resource Team to reflect the modernisation agenda and the revised post will be advertised at the end of the summer.

An Assistive Technology Project Group has been established with representatives from Commissioning, Community Care and Provider Services in order to drive forward the assistive technology agenda. This includes consolidating all of the different workstreams and projects. The group is meeting on a bi-monthly basis. The Project Group is also working with care homes and supported living schemes to test some innovative equipment which has been provided by the Regional Assistive Technology Team. This includes the HUGS, Koms and Magic Tables. Feedback on all items has been extremely positive and case studies are being developed to share the positive outcomes this assistive technology has had on people's lives.

Our Better Care / Single Handed care project continues to promote people's independence and reduce their reliance on staff for manual handling and personal care tasks. The Better Care Team have developed a comprehensive training and support package for all staff across the Blaenau Gwent Health and Social Care community who provide frontline care and the Local Authority has utilised equipment purchased as part of the Welsh Government Promoting Independence Grant to provide the latest equipment (beds / hoists/ standing aids) to support the ethos of single handed care. The team are currently working with a registered social landlord to finalise the development of our latest step up / down facility which will provide much needed temporary assessment accommodation for people who require bariatric equipment.

Stability and sustainability of our domiciliary care and care home market is a significant priority for our teams both due to the impact of COVID 19, early indications of the impact of the rise in fuel and utility costs and severe staffing pressures. Many providers including our own in house services, are reporting high levels of staff vacancies which are impacting on their ability to provide support. Our commissioning team has continued to work with Providers in relation to the introduction to the real living wage and also by scoping the potential support that can be given to our domiciliary care workers to increase wages to compensate them for the increased costs of fuel. The rapidly increasing fuel prices caused concern amongst the domiciliary care market. To address this the Council acted swiftly and provided additional funding to staff to support the increase in fuel costs during quarter 2

In recognition of their work and commitment throughout the pandemic, Welsh Government awarded £1,498 to all eligible care workers. During quarter 2 our Commissioning Team has distributed £2million of Welsh Government funding to our frontline carers.

**Quality Standard 3** - Local Authorities must take appropriate steps to protect and safeguard people who need care and support and carers who need support from abuse and neglect or any other kinds of harm.

**Children's Services Self-Assessment –**

All staff are trained in Collaborative Communication with all new staff entered onto training as part of their induction. Team managers are currently reviewing staff team training and ensuring safeguarding is a priority.

'What Matters' meetings have been implemented and used regularly in practice with multi-agency participation and high scrutiny of the Child Protection plans.

The South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) is supporting the review and implementation of the National Adoption Service 2025 plan in respect of building capacity for access to records, and ensuring that Welsh Government investment monies promote multi agency work. 'Understanding the Child' Days are taking place for all children referred to the service from 18 months old, and transitions continue to follow the good practice guides to ensure all care plans are outcome based. Support workers are in the process of being recruited to support delivery of the objective in respect of trauma nurture timelines and adoption support check ins.

The Supporting Change Team has been working collaboratively with the Youth Service to run a small trauma informed, activity based group for some of the most hard to reach young people open to the team. More recently the team has just concluded a group work project working in partnership the youth service and alongside a targeted group of young girls looking at raising aspirations/self-esteem and self-worth. The project has been very well evaluated and the team are looking into how they can run a second project in the new year.

During this period, a Circle of Security Parenting Programme has been delivered to a small number of parents with young children, in collaboration with the Psychologist and Support Worker. Additionally, Circle of Security has been delivered to a cohort of foster carers, helping to stabilise children in care preventing a risk of breakdown in placement.

There continues to be a slow but steady reduction of Children Looked After, as while new children come into care we are also progressing with discharging Care Orders for children living at home or with kinship carers.

**Quality Standard 3** - Local Authorities must take appropriate steps to protect and safeguard people who need care and support and carers who need support from abuse and neglect or any other kinds of harm.

**Adult Services Self-Assessment –**

The Department recognises the importance of a robust and sustainable Safeguarding Team to ensure we not only meet our legislative requirements, but that we are able to protect our most vulnerable citizens. A new Adults safeguarding team structure has been agreed and a new Safeguarding Manager has been appointed and is due to start in post in early quarter 3.

During quarter 1 and 2 we have continued to see increasing demands place on the Health and Social Care system including at our community and acute hospital sites. We have been working with our Gwent Local Authority colleagues and ABUHB staff to revise current models of support to enable patients who are ready for discharge to either safely return back to their own homes or move to alternative accommodation on a temporary basis whilst waiting for support to enable them to return home. We are using current partnership RIF grant funding to develop a menu of support services including increased step up / down beds, additional care home capacity and additional capacity within our assessment teams to address both the current demand as well as the anticipated pressures for winter 2022/23.

We continue to be a key partner of the Gwent Safeguarding Strategic Board and relevant operational sub groups. As a partner of the Gwent Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard board (DOLS) we are working to prepare for the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards legislation (LPS) and during quarter 2 we have contributed to the consultation on the long-awaited codes of practice. As a partnership we have submitted a Welsh Government regional (Gwent) bid to support our capacity for the development of Liberty Protection Safeguards in order to provide important rights and protections for people who lack the mental capacity to agree to care, support or treatment arrangements, where these arrangements amount to a deprivation of liberty. In addition to this we are currently scoping the development of a senior practitioner post to lead on the development of LPS as well as leading on the oversight of the Continuing Care and Mental Capacity functions.

Following the restructure of our Service Manager portfolios across Adult Service at the end of 2021/22, we now have specific Service Managers aligned to our individual Provider teams. These managers are able to provide specific oversight in relation to the quality of support we are providing, our compliance with relevant mandatory policies and our requirements within the relevant regulatory legislation.



**Quality Standard 4** - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to learn, develop and participate in society.

### **Children's Services Self-Assessment –**

All grants are being monitored effectively and we maximise what grants are available to bring extra revenue and capital into the area.

At the end of academic year 2021-2022, 142 children of statutory school age were looked after by Blaenau Gwent local authority. The majority of children who are looked after by Blaenau Gwent continue to be educated within Blaenau Gwent and attend mainstream schools. A small proportion of our children looked after attend more specialist education settings. Of the 142 children of statutory school age who remained looked after at the end of the school year 2021-2022, there were slightly more children of secondary school age than primary. The overall figure is a decrease when compared with the previous academic year when 154 children of statutory school age were looked after at the end of the year. Almost all learners achieved recognised qualifications at the end of their statutory school studies in 2021-2022 with the majority now engaged in post 16 educational and/ or training opportunities.

During academic year 2021-2022 54% of Personal Education Plans for newly accommodated children were initiated within statutory timescales. A total of 11 plans were not initiated within 10 days. Eight were as a result of delay in the CLA education team being notified at the point that the children became looked after. Three were as a result of the learners being Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children who were not in school at the point of becoming looked after.

A small proportion of children looked after experienced a change of school during the course of the year. This is an increase when compared with the previous year. Consistency of schooling continues to be considered as part of the matching process when a child looked after moves placement and transport is provided where necessary to ensure stability of schooling. When a child does have to move school, processes are in place to ensure that delays in admissions are avoided, wherever possible.

During 2021-2022, incidents of exclusions issued in respect of children looked after have increased. The number of individual children looked after who have received fixed term exclusions during the year has also increased, as has the total number of days lost to exclusions when compared with the previous year. The primary reason why exclusions are issued continues to be for persistent disruptive behaviour. The majority of exclusions continue to be issued in respect of secondary aged pupils. The number of exclusions being issued for primary aged children remains low.

The Welsh Government has continued to provide funding for a set number of children to participate in the Letterbox Club each year. The Letterbox Club encourages reading for pleasure and learning at home. It helps to improve the educational outlook for children who are looked after. Parcels have continued to be distributed to our children on a monthly basis between October and May with an additional festive parcel provided in December. A total of 36 Blaenau Gwent children looked after between the ages of 5 to 13 have received parcels throughout the year.

**Quality Standard 4** - Local Authorities must work with people who need care and support and carers who need support to learn, develop and participate in society.

#### **Adult Services Self-Assessment –**

Post COVID 19 we have during quarter 1 and 2 now been able to re-open our work-based services within our Community Options and Day Activities teams. Students have now returned to placements within our catering enterprise in partnership with Vison 21 and we are also scoping the further development of a Community Café which will be opened in late 2022 as part of our employment and training opportunities for people with a Learning Disability or living with poor mental health.

Our community meals and tea tray options offer continue to grow and we are working in partnership with learners from Abertillery Learning Community to re-brand the service as part of the implementation of our new electric delivery vans in late 2022.

A cultural change is needed to consider assistive technology as a solution that enables people to achieve their outcomes and live independently. This in turn will help to prevent or delay costly health and social care interventions. To promote this opportunity, we are working with our key partners of Tai Calon, ABUHB and Community Housing Cymru to develop a SMART technology flat in a sheltered scheme in Six Bells Abertillery. The development of the smart flat will assist with this solution by further promoting assistive technology to professionals, individuals and their families/carers. The flat is due to open in late 2022.

Provider managers have commenced engagement with Coleg Gwent (Ebbw Vale Campus) Health and Social Care students and will be offering work based placements to approximately 15 students during the 2022/23 academic year. This will enable our tenants / residents to engage with the students and in addition we are planning for students from the Hair and Beauty courses to provide sessions at our Care Homes.

Augusta House has requested registration from our regulator Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to provide respite support to young children in addition to Adults and if agreed, following additional support and training for our staff, we will begin offering respite sessions to children in early quarter 3.

**Quality Standard 5** - Local Authorities must support local people who need care and support and carers who need support to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

**Children's Services Self-Assessment –**

The teams continue to practice in an outcome focused way where we identify family options early in the intervention process, which we prioritise if children have to be admitted into the care of the Local Authority. However, there are situations when appropriate placements are not available locally leading to access to Independent Fostering Agency placements and residential care for young children. Supervision is used consistently to review the plans of Children Looked After (CLA) and consider opportunities for discharging the Care Orders. Poor placement availability is influencing the planning for CLA leading to an increase in use of Independent Fostering Agency's and residential care. Regular review of care planning for these children is a priority and for those with a high level of needs referrals to MyST are considered and prioritised.

The adoption service continues to promote sibling contact and also one off birth parent meetings are increasing, with 9 being held since the implementation of the Good Practice Guide.

Step-down from residential care to foster care is largely dependent on the availability of step-down foster placements. With the demand on placements and the difficulties with recruitment of foster carers it has not been possible to reduce the population of young people in residential care further.

**Quality Standard 5** - Local Authorities must support local people who need care and support and carers who need support to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

**Adult's Services Self-Assessment –**

Covid restrictions have often impacted greatly on our vulnerable adults and we are prioritising support to those who have been lonely and isolated including their carers. Pre-covid family support across our Provider teams has been re-established with families now able to visit their loved ones in a safe way. We have a planned launch of our new social media for Cwrt Mytton to coincide with the relaxation of the Welsh Government care home visiting guidance which will enable us to safely restart community events and visits at the home. The home has a range of events planned for 2022/23 to incorporate a number of national and local celebrations such as summer parties for the Platinum Jubilee.

The Age Cymru floating support services was piloted in 2021/22 and was a success. This service has now continued and has been reconfigured to provide not only floating support, but also a dedicated benefits worker.

**Quality Standard 6** - Local Authorities must work with and support people who need care and support and carers who need to support to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

**Children's Services Self-Assessment –**

During 2019/20 and 2020/21, the Council incurred costs in excess of £2m per annum (£2.5M & £2M respectively) on residential placements for Children Looked After. Costs have been reducing as a result of lower numbers of children requiring residential provision, however, the local authority will always need to provide residential care for some children. To address these high costs, in September 2022 it was agreed to proceed with the development of a business case to deliver local authority residential placements for children looked after; and to enter into a collaborative arrangement with a neighbouring authority in order for them to provide the management, staffing and oversight required to provide quality residential care for our children looked after. This will reduce our reliance on private childcare providers, provide care closer to home and remove the profit element included within the current charges made by private providers. The development of our own children's home will take place over two stages. The first stage will include the acquisition of a suitable property. The grant of 1.2 million has recently been approved, and the process that will need to be followed are progressing such as working with CIW to ensure the home meets the regulatory requirements, following the 'change of use' processes and completing the refurbishment. The second stage will be the refurbishment and a second grant application to meet the costs of this has been submitted.

SEWAS are working with the National Adoption service central team and other regions to ensure marketing is targeted to increase the number of adopters for more complex children. We have been able to provide in house adopters for a number of siblings during quarters 1 and 2 in a timelier manner. At present, the number of children waiting for placements is decreasing as is the rate of referrals from prospective adopters. This could be linked to the cost of living crisis and will need to be monitored more closely moving forward.

During the period, the Placement Team prioritised matching meetings for placements outside of the framework, and consistently delivered monthly foster carer supervisions where this level of involvement has been required with annual appraisals also being maintained.

**Quality Standard 6** - Local Authorities must work with and support people who need care and support and carers who need to support to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

#### **Adult Services Self-Assessment –**

Ty Parc Homelessness Hostel – It has been approved for the existing contract with the current service provider is to be extended for a further 12 months to enable a review to be undertaken on the future services needed to be commissioned which will meet the needs of people who are homeless in Blaenau Gwent. A Gwent regional stakeholder consultation event has been held to inform the future commissioning of Housing Support Grant services and future commissioning priorities will be based on the feedback received.

Initial meetings have been held with TEC Cymru regarding the digital switchover and the possibility of a regional approach to this. TEC Cymru are in discussion with the regional RIF Team about this and will also be willing to help develop a business case for Blaenau Gwent in relation to the impact of the switchover. An exercise is currently being undertaken to determine how many analogue units will need to be updated to digital units on a town by town basis within the borough. This will help to inform the total funding required for the switchover to take place in Blaenau Gwent. It is expected for the financial implications to be significant which is due to take place in 2025. It will be critical that, as a service, we fully understand these implications, so we are able to continue to provide a service that meets the needs of the citizens of Blaenau Gwent.

CARIAD (Collaborative Assessment Reducing Interventions, Admissions and Delayed transfers of care) bariatric flat is due to be completed in September 2022 and will now form part of the Blaenau Gwent CARIAD offer from quarter 3 The coordination and monitoring will be facilitated by our Community Resource Team as part of the review of the functions and to ensure that we have a reablement and promote independence for our most vulnerable people.

As outlined in standard 4 above – our Community Options team are continuing to develop learning and employment opportunities for our vulnerable adults.

Since Covid, Support Providers have been providing a hybrid model of support where support is provided either face to face or virtually. The HSG Contract Monitoring Officers have now returned to onsite visits to monitor the effectiveness of this model to ensure appropriate housing related support is meeting the assessed needs. Three reviews have been undertaken to date whereby both staff and service users are spoken to in order to understand the success of the hybrid model and if it is working better to meet people's needs.

# Departmental Priorities Quarter 1 and 2 – How We Have Performed

Priority Title	Self-Assessment
Ensure all children / adults are safeguarded	Children's Services - Green
	Adult Services - Green
Ensure we have an appropriately skilled, motivated and supported workforce with clear career development pathways in place that support our service delivery	Children's Services – Green
	Adult Services - Green
Ensure all teams deliver an outcomes based approach to practice and service delivery	Children's Services – Green
	Adult Services - Green
Ensure that we provide / commission modern, flexible, cost effective high quality support services that meet both current and future well-being needs of children / vulnerable adults and their unpaid family carers	Children's Services – Green
	Adult Services - Green
Ensure that preventative support is available for children and their families, that promote early intervention and prevents needs from escalating.	Children's Services – Green
Ensure that preventative support is available for adults and their unpaid carers, that promote and maintain personal independence	Adult Services – Green
Manage the Children's Services / Adults Services budget to ensure expenditure comes within budget	Children's Services – Amber
	Adult Services – Amber
Ensure the Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2020 – 2025 actions are regularly monitored and reviewed	Children's Services – Green
Undertake a review of the current model of Community Options	Adult Services – Green
Ensure outcomes for children looked after continue to improve through the implementation of the Corporate Parenting action plan	Children's Services – Green
Review the way in which children's services operates and decide if a change is necessary in order to manage demand and workload.	Children's Services – Green
Children's Services / Adults Services contributes to meeting the Sustainable Development Principles	Children's Services – Green
	Adult Services – Green

# Children's Services Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator Description	Outturn 2019/20	Outturn 2020/21	Outturn 2021/22	Annual Trend	Performance 2022/23		
					Q1	Q2	Quarterly Trend
Number of children on Child Protection Register	61	52	64	↓	77	67	↑
Rate of Children on the Child Protection Register per 10,000 population	45	38	47	↓	57	49	↑
The percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR)	6.1%	5.2%	7.6%	↓	6.5%	2.6%	↑
The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year	295	219	285	↓	271	251	↑
Number of Children Looked After	208	200	198	↑	198	200	↓
Rate of Children Looked After per 10,000 population	153	147	145	↑	145	147	↓
The percentage of Children Looked After who have had three or more placements during the year	11.1%	9%	7.1%	↑	9.1%	13%	↓
Proportion of children's services cases supported by preventative services	54.6%	59.3%	53.7%	↑	53.9%	58.8%	↑
Percentage of referrals signposted to preventative services (children)	15%	10.1%	9.4%	↓	12.1%	15.1%	↑



# Adult Services Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator Description	Outturn 2019/20	Outturn 2020/21	Outturn 2021/22	Annual Trend	Performance 2022/23		
					Q1	Q2	Quarterly Trend
Rate of delayed transfer for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 and over	0.98	N/A*	N/A*		N/A	N/A	
Rate of older people in residential & nursing home care per 1,000 population aged 65 or over	14.64 (204)	11.70 (166)	12.20 (173)	↓	12.06 (171)	11.29 (160)	↑
The number of adults (aged 18+) receiving a service in the community who receive a direct payment	120	111	110	↔	107	111	↑
Percentage of referrals signposted to preventative services (adults)	17.9%	17.6%	11.7%	↓	15.6%	31.3%	↑
Proportion of adult services cases supported by preventative services (New)	33.8%	31.9%	37.4%	↑	35.1%	37.4%	↑
Percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescales	95.3%	62.1%	67.9%	↑	66.7%	67.0%	↔
Percentage of proportionate assessments that led to a more comprehensive assessment for care and support - adults	14.4%	44.5%	52.3%	↓	46.2%	30.1%	↑

## Case Studies

Mum had previously fled a domestic abuse relationship and her mental health had suffered considerably. Mum has depression and social anxiety disorder/social phobia and believed this was a direct result of her past relationship. Mum's anxiety meant she was extremely worried about leaving the house and engaging in groups, socialising or even going to the shop. Mum wanted to go back to work, unfortunately her mental health difficulties caused considerable barriers in achieving this. Mum is also a previous 'child looked after'.

Family Support Workers have supported Mum for the last two years. Initially she attended Elklan programme which is a speech and language course and Baby Massage at a Flying Start Hub. Mum was very anxious before attending the sessions. The Family Support Worker met with Mum before each programme session started to support her engagement. The structure of the session was explained, and the delivery room explored to ensure Mum felt confident in attending. Mum was initially extremely nervous, therefore the Family Support Worker sat with Mum throughout the session, ensuring she felt at ease and comfortable. Support continued each week and Mum completed both Elklan and Massage programmes. Mum then completed numerous groups and accredited courses, serving to continue to build her confidence and qualification portfolio.

### Groups and accreditations completed by Mum:

- Elklan and baby massage
- Confidence building
- Messy Play and Elklan
- Swimming and Elklan
- Confidence building
- Incredible Years
- Tiny Talkers
- Accredited Parenting
- Accredited Elklan Lets Talk with Under 5's
- Accredited Introduction to Teaching Assistant
- Accredited Introduction to Play



Not only has Mum completed numerous courses/groups with Flying Start (which she highly recommends to other parents), she has expressed how the groups have been transformative for her. Mum has come such a long way since first engaging with Flying Start. She appears more confident, will engage in conversations with other parents, appears relaxed in groups and has made the considerable achievements.

**Up to date comment from Mum:** *"I completed some courses with the Flying Start Team. Due to suffering with social anxiety the girls put me at ease, and I really enjoyed going to these courses with other people I didn't know. The girls give me the strength, ambition and willpower to attend college to study Access to Higher Education in Humanities. I have now been offered two places for University in Social Work and Psychology with Developmental Disorders. Without Flying Start I would have never had the courage to do this before and without their help and support I wouldn't be where I am now and of achieved so much"*

## Case Studies

Mr C has a diagnosis of mixed dementia and COPD and has been a long standing patient at Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan after recurring infections which lead to delirium. Mr C was reported to have been found wandering on the ward throughout the night by staff on numerous occasions during his time at the hospital. Mr C wished to return home to his property which is directly next door to his eldest daughter who would provide support daily with meals, cleaning and shopping. Mr C reported what mattered to him was that he could return home and go for his daily walk along the back pathway behind the property with his great grandchildren after school. A multi-disciplinary team meeting was held on the ward with Mr C and family, as Mr C was medically fit for discharge. Family were concerned if Mr C was to leave the property at night if he was suffering with delirium, although it was not certain it would happen again they felt this was a risk to him returning home as the house is situated near a main road.



**WHAT WE INSTALLED** It was agreed a door sensor and care assist could be installed at the property; the daughter would then be able to operate the care assist from her property as it was directly next door. This would then monitor the front door during the night time and alert the daughter if the door was opened. It was agreed the door sensor was to be set active from 21:00 to 07:00. A discharge date was set and the assistive technology support worker and installer agreed to meet with daughter at the property the day of discharge. The Assistive technology support worker and installer met the daughter at the property to fit and demonstrate safe use of the equipment as Mr C was returning home later that day

**HOW HAS THIS HELPED** This case study demonstrates how the use of assistive technology supported a hospital discharge allowing Mr C to return home in a timely manner and also allowed Mr C to remain able to go for his daily walk without depriving him of his liberty and reducing the risk of carer stress, as the daughter also cares for grand children and family members visiting throughout the day.



# How We Do What We Do - Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

A full programme of learning is once again available and based on needs analysis. All statutory, legislative, and registration linked requirements are planned and accounted for. There is provision of developmental opportunities for the workforce and offers that support resilience and well-being. Whilst some barriers to learning may have lessened i.e. pandemic related, the challenges for the workforce to fully embrace learning opportunities remain higher than ever. The crisis in recruitment to the sector forces harsh choices that inevitably impact on workforce capacity available for development above that of meeting the essentials. The first half of the year continued its support for the registration of residential workers ahead of October.

Local Welsh language champions are meeting to contribute to action plans and promote the wide resources and opportunities available as part of 'More Than Just Words'. A regional group for implementing the Welsh Government's Strategy includes a newly revised policy working towards a bilingual health and social care service with five-year plan.

Various initiatives within the organisation are in place to support improving digital confidence and access to digital learning. The authority underpins its approach with the recognition of barriers that exist for parts of the social care workforce.

- Classroom activities using digital devices enabling facilitator and peer support
- Provision of equipment to settings enabling group-based participation in digital learning
- Promotion of digital learning opportunities
- All Wales project on securing an organisational level, fit for purpose, future proof, platform that will meet the needs of the whole sector, communities and volunteers. Funding bid for and secured from the WG Digital Transformation fund 2022/23.
- Using the power of social media to engage and communicate with the sector
- Supporting the design of unbranded resources to enable Wales wide sharing across partners.
- Using blended approaches and in some situations introducing a choice of digital and face to face.
- Positively, the engagement from the workforce with new ways of learning is exceptional and they continue to reward the community with their ongoing resilience and determination.

Additional funding from Social Care Wales has enabled the authority to continue its investment in its 'grow your own' recruitment strategy, particularly for the current hard to recruit roles.

Benefits continue to be realised for and by the workforce through the scale of opportunity possible due to the joint workforce development service model hosted by Blaenau Gwent in partnership with Caerphilly.

## Budget 2022/23 - Quarter 1 & 2 (April 2022 to September 2022)

Budget Area		Budget	Forecast	Variance	
		£	£	£	%
1	Commissioning & Social Work	3,939,340	4,074,375	(135,035)	(3.43)
2	Children Looked After	7,501,660	8,062,920	(561,260)	(7.48)
3	Family Support Services	192,370	198,478	(6,108)	(3.18)
4	Youth Justice	237,580	250,930	(13,350)	(5.62)
5	Other Children's and Family Services	2,417,850	2,386,886	30,964	1.28
6	Older People Aged 65 and Over	7,154,970	7,090,061	64,909	0.91
7	Adults under 65 with Physical Disabilities	18,290	18,210	80	0.44
8	Adults under 65 with Learning Disabilities	3,684,090	3,755,969	(71,879)	(1.95)
9	Adults under 65 with Mental Health Needs	571,660	582,873	(11,213)	(1.96)
10	Other Adult Services	463,570	502,482	(38,912)	(8.39)
11	Community Care	17,338,860	17,002,627	336,233	1.94
12	Support Service & Management Costs	934,170	910,567	23,603	2.53
13	Corporate Recharges	5,487,140	5,487,135	5	0.00
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>49,941,550</b>	<b>50,323,512</b>	<b>(381,962)</b>	

# Social Services Corporate Risks

Risk Description	Quarter 1 & 2 Update (April – September 2022)	Status
<p>CRR 4 - Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent</p>	<p><b><u>Quarter 1 Progress (April – June 2022)</u></b></p> <p>Vacancy rates are improving which was anticipated. Staff turnover is still an issue; this has affected the number of experienced staff in post. There is a robust induction programme for newly qualified staff and for staff that started during COVID. Induction programme covers basic training on all aspects of social work tasks.</p> <p><b><u>Quarter 2 Progress (July – September 2022)</u></b></p> <p>Risk reviewed 16/08/22 by Director of Social Services no change to score.</p> <p>Structural review of Adult Safeguarding team has been completed following resignation of current safeguarding manager. Job Description has been reviewed and advert for new safeguarding manager has gone live. Departmental Management Team is also reviewing the current composition of the service and it is proposed that a new post of senior practitioner (safeguarding) will be established following report to Senior Leadership Team. Work is being scoped to enhance the current links between Adult Safeguarding team and our internal Organisational Department because of recent safeguarding concerns relating to outcomes of professional strategy meetings. An elected member Adult Services Safeguarding briefing has been arranged for quarter 3. Numbers of safeguarding referrals received during quarter 2 have increased from quarter 1 at 157 compared to 139 of which 88 proceeded to an enquiry compared to 57 in previous quarter.</p>	<p>High</p>

Risk Description	Quarter 1 & 2 Update (April – September 2022)	Status
CRR20 - There is a risk that increasingly complex needs and demand for services provided by Social Services and Education, in particular for Looked After Children, will put further significant pressure on the Council's budget.	<p><b><u>Quarter 1 Progress (April – June 2022)</u></b></p> <p>Children Looked After children numbers have remained around the same levels; residential placement numbers are down slightly. Outturn showing small underspend for Quarter 1 which is positive. To remain at current score.</p> <p><b><u>Quarter 2 Progress (July – September 2022)</u></b></p> <p>Change in residential numbers means that there is a forecast overspend. Collaboration for legal services commenced in April 2022. This is a transition year. Rise in referrals into IAA, increase in numbers from the national transfer scheme.</p>	High
Risk Description	Quarter 1 & 2 Update (April – September 2022)	Status
CRR27- There is a risk that identified staffing pressures in social services will result in an inability to deliver services particularly in provider services and domiciliary care.	<p><b><u>Quarter 1 Progress (April – June 2022)</u></b></p> <p>Staffing levels in Supported living bungalows and Cwrt Mytton remain one of the highest internal pressures with senior managers looking to mitigate those pressures on a daily basis. Staffing pressures in Supported Living Team mean the implementation of a number of measures to relieve pressure on this service including offer for overtime, potential implementation of business critical operations only for community options / day services to release staff to support SL team. Both services have a high level of agency support. At present there have been no external domiciliary care providers handing back packages of care. Workforce development plan being finalised which should assist in mitigating the risks.</p> <p><b><u>Quarter 2 Progress (July – September 2022)</u></b></p> <p>Risk reviewed 16/08/22 by Director of Social Services. Risk to be escalated back to the CRR and risk score increased to Critical.</p>	Critical

# Glossary

**ABUHB** – Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

**ACRF** – Annual Council Reporting Framework

**ADSS** - Association of Directors of Social Services

**BG** – Blaenau Gwent

**CCG** – Children & Communities Grant

**CIW** – Care Inspectorate for Wales

**CLA** – Children looked After

**CRT** – Community Resource Team

**DoLS** – Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

**GATA** – Gwent Access to Advocacy

**GP** – General Practitioner

**GWASB** – Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board

**HSG** – Housing Support Grant

**IAA** – Information, Advice and Assistance

**ICF** – Integrated Care Fund

**LA** – Local Authority

**LPS** - Liberty Protection Safeguards

**NYAS** – National Youth Advocacy Service

**PHW** – Public Health Wales

**Quarter 1** – April to June

**Quarter 2** – July to September

**Quarter 3** – October to December

**Quarter 4** – January to March

**RCC** – Regional Collaborative Committee

**RISCA** - Regulation and Inspection Social Care Act

**SEWAS** – South East Wales Adoption Service

**SEWIC** – South East Wales Improvement Collaboration

**SEWSCB** – South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board

**SGO** - Special Guardianship Order

**SLA** – Service Level Agreement

**SPACE** - Single Point of Access for Children’s Emotional Well-being and Mental Health

**SLT** – Senior Leadership Team

**TESSA** - therapeutic educational support services in adoption

**The ‘Act’ or SSWB Act** – Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

**WAST** – Welsh Ambulance Service Trust

**WG** – Welsh Government



## Contact Details

If you require any further information or have any feedback you wish to share, please:

**Write to us:**

Director of Social Services  
Annual Council Reporting Framework  
Social Services Department  
Anvil Court  
Church Street  
Abertillery  
NP13 1DB

**Call us:**

(01495) 311 556

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[info@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:info@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

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[www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

**Blaenau Gwent**

County Borough Council

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# Agenda Item 13

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 04.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Corporate Director of Education Services - Quarter 1 and 2 2022**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Sue Edmunds, Cabinet Member for People and Education**

Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Corporate Director of Education**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance and Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
6/12/22	15.12.22	03.01.23			17.01.23	18.01.23		

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the Corporate Director of Education's Report covering the quarter 1 and 2 period 2022 and is attached as Appendix 1.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 It is a statutory responsibility of the Corporate Director of Education to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of Education and produce updates for Members that forms part of the Annual Council Reporting Framework. The provision of Education is regulated under the Estyn Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework and this report will complement the Directorate's self-evaluation arrangements.

## 3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 The report has been considered by Education's DMT and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

- 3.2 This report will be considered by the People Scrutiny Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and any feedback will be reported verbally to Cabinet.

### 3.3 Option 1

Members are asked to scrutinise the information detailed within the Corporate Director of Education's Report and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness, prior to approval.

### Option 2

Accept the report as provided.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 It is a statutory responsibility of the Corporate Director of Education to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of Education and an annual report will be produced, in line with the Scrutiny and Cabinet Forward Work Programmes.
5. **Implications Against Each Option**
- 5.1 **Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)**  
The attached report identifies the financial and budgetary implications from April 2022 to September 2022.
- 5.2 **Risk including Mitigating Actions**  
The Education service maintains a Directorate Risk Register, which is aligned to both service level and corporate risks. The attached report highlights the main risks currently under consideration and the mitigation. The risk register is reviewed as part of the business planning process and included within the performance reporting of the Education service.
6. **Supporting Evidence**
- 6.1 The detailed performance information is included within Appendix 1. The Education Directorate is working together with key stakeholders on a joint purpose to deliver 'Better Schools, Better Citizens and Better Communities – all through a children and young person centred approach'.
- 6.2 The Education Directorate's priorities outlined in the Education Improvement Plan (EIP) are as follows:
  - **Improving educational standards and wellbeing** for pupils, particularly at KS4;
  - **Securing quality ALN/Inclusion provision**, particularly to support Vulnerable groups of learners and those who are eFSM;
  - **Transforming education** in line with responsive school support services and a school estate that is fit for the 21st Century;
  - **Delivering effective young people and partnership provision**, with a focus on lifelong learning and leisure/recreation provision to meet community need; and,
  - **Enhancing the performance culture for Education and Leisure** that delivers **better educational outcomes and improved value for money**.
- 6.3 Progress against these priorities is included within appendix 1, as well as an overview on key areas of progress and areas where further improvement is required.
- 6.5 **Expected outcome for the public**  
Reporting performance provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Education Directorate and ensure accountability.

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

Pupil voice is a key area for the Education Directorate and examples of this are included within appendix 1, it should be noted that a member of the Youth Forum now sits on the People Scrutiny Committee.

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

The report enables the Education Directorate to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future.

6.8 **Preventative focus**

The work undertaken by the Education Directorate promotes a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. The respective teams have an active rather than re-active approach to service planning can also help with planning resources and ensuring value for money services are delivered.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The performance of the Education Directorate is monitored via the business planning process and reported through the democratic process via various reporting mechanisms including the Finance and Performance Report, the Assessment of Performance and various performance monitoring reports.

**Background Documents /Electronic Links**

- Appendix 1 –Report of the Corporate Director of Education Services

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**Education Directorate**  
**Director of Education Report**  
**Quarter 1 and 2 (April 2022 to September 2022)**



*'The Education Directorate, working together with key stakeholders on a joint purpose to deliver **better schools, better citizens and better communities** – all through a children and young person centred approach'*

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# Introduction

Welcome to the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's report of the Corporate Director of Education. The report is used to highlight the key areas of progress and improvements that the service has experienced. This report provides a mid-year review of the activity undertaken to date in academic year 2022-23.

The Council will continue to work with partners across the Council, for example, Children's Services, Regeneration, Legal, Finance and Organisational Development to focus the work on improving pupil outcomes and supporting school leaders. The Council will also continue to work with partners, such as the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to support school leaders to improve pupil outcomes and wellbeing.

## **Blaenau Gwent Context**

Blaenau Gwent is a place of heritage and dramatic change, with a sense of its past but its eyes firmly on the future. The area is relatively small geographically, being at most 15 miles north to south, and 8 miles east to west. Blaenau Gwent is defined physically by high hillsides dividing the three main valleys. These valleys are home to towns and villages which are largely post-heavy industrial in nature. However, each community proudly maintains its own character and traditions. Although the towns give the county borough a busy, urban feel, Blaenau Gwent is a largely rural area. Wherever you are, beautiful countryside is never far away. Figure BG01 below looks to give a visual representation of Blaenau Gwent, highlighting some of our distinctive local features.

Blaenau Gwent has 25 schools across 31 school sites and their status is detailed below:

- 2 Maintained 3-16 Learning Communities
- 1 Foundation Comprehensive
- 1 Maintained Comprehensive
- 1 x Maintained 3-18 Special School
- 1 x Maintained 3-16 SEBD Special School
- 19 Primaries (of which 4 are voluntary aided / faith schools)

There are currently circa 9,000+ pupils on roll across all Blaenau Gwent schools.

The organisation, End Child Poverty, released new data in October 2020 with findings showing that the highest rates of child poverty in Wales are in Pembrokeshire and Blaenau Gwent. Blaenau Gwent is one of 5 counties in Wales to have seen a rise in the proportion of children living in poverty since 2015. The impact of poverty on children is well documented, with children from low-income families more likely to experience worse physical and mental health; do less well in school; and have fewer opportunities in the future. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) captures the extent of deprivation as a proportion of residents living in each lower super output area (LSOA). The eight considerations of the WIMD are: income; employment; health; education, skills and training; geographical access to services; housing; physical environment; and community safety. Blaenau Gwent has the highest percentage of LSOAs in the most deprived areas across Wales at 10%, for income (19.1%), education (27.7%), and community safety (23.4%). New research from the Education Policy Institute (EPI) released in 2022 into the impact of educational inequalities across England and Wales, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, highlights the relative disadvantage experienced across the County Borough. The impact of poverty on children is well documented, with children from low-income families more likely to experience worse physical and mental health; do less well in school; and have fewer opportunities in the future.



The level of pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM) in Blaenau Gwent, as of PLASC 2022, have seen a significant increase to 33.3% from the pre-Covid level of 25.5%. This represents the highest level of all LAs in Wales by a significant margin, as has been the case every year for at least the past 10 years, excepting 2018-19 where BG had the second highest level. This is reflected in schools where eFSM levels have been highest or 2nd highest in Primary, and highest in Secondary for the past 5 years. Given the evidential relationship between pupil performance and deprivation (using eFSM as a proxy indicator), pupil outcomes in BG would be expected to be among the lowest in Wales, but the LA has high aspirations for our learners.

Overall, the 2019 WIMD figures and high eFSM eligibility reflect very high levels of deprivation within the authority. They indicate significant challenges required to improve educational outcomes to levels within other similar LAs and to consistently match the all-Wales averages. 2018-19 performance figures show that Blaenau Gwent has achieved parity, and indeed, outperformed some LAs in several measures confirming the progress being made within its schools. In Blaenau Gwent, we have high ambitions for all our learners and our socio-economic standing is a challenge that we are working to overcome to the benefit of all our children and young people and we do not accept that poverty is an excuse for poor educational achievement.

# Director's Overview

Blaenau Gwent is a relatively small geographical area, with big ambitions for our schools and learners. We are determined to play our part in Wales being a first class education system with a clear ambition to increase the skills and standards of education across the County Borough. We fully support and are committed to the Welsh Government's national mission for educational transformation, including Curriculum and ALN Reforms. Blaenau Gwent's vision, purpose and strategic priorities are as follows;

## Vision and Purpose

- The **Vision** for the Education Directorate is to realise a **school-led self-improving system**.
- The **Purpose** for the Education Directorate is to create '**Better Schools, Better Citizens and Better Communities**'.
- The **Vision and Purpose** are both driven by a **child centred approach** and placing **children and young people** at the **heart** of all our **work and decisions**.

## Education Improvement Plan (EIP) – 5 Priorities

- **Improving educational standards and wellbeing** for pupils, particularly at KS4;
- **Securing quality ALN/Inclusion provision**, particularly to support Vulnerable groups of learners and those who are eFSM;
- **Transforming education** in line with responsive school support services and a school estate that is fit for the 21st Century;
- **Delivering effective young people and partnership provision**, with a focus on lifelong learning and leisure/recreation provision to meet community need; and,
- **Enhancing the performance culture for Education and Leisure** that delivers **better educational outcomes and improved value for money**.



**Lynn Phillips - Director Education**



**Cllr Sue Edmunds - Cabinet Member Education**

# Local Political Leadership, Governance and Accountability

The structure of the Education Directorate provides clear levels of management and accountability. The Council has a clear governance and accountability framework in place which all directorates are signed up to. This framework identifies how reporting and monitoring works throughout the Council to create a 'golden thread'. This framework is produced corporately, and Education is compliant, the services also have additional regulatory requirements as part of the Estyn Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework.

The Education Directorate is subject to external/internal audit, inspection and regulatory review by Estyn. On a termly basis, the Director of Education and/or Senior Education Managers meet with Estyn to discuss achievements, performance and key challenges. The Directorate has one Cabinet Member who has portfolio responsibility for People - Education (including the Aneurin Leisure Trust). The Directorate is scrutinised by the People Scrutiny Committee. Regular liaison meetings are held with the Directorate, the Cabinet Member and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

## Engagement with Members

Aside from the work programmes for Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council, the Education Directorate also regularly engages with all Elected Members via a series of briefing sessions, aimed at informing Members of key areas of the Directorate to enhance their learning and understanding. The following sessions have taken place or are scheduled as part of the Member Development Programme:

### Induction Programme:

- The Work of the Individual Directorates – Education
- Corporate Parenting/Safeguarding Responsibilities

### Member Development Programme

- Directorate Briefing Session for the People Scrutiny Committee
- Safeguarding Online Course - Mandatory for All Members
- Safeguarding in Education
- Education Transformation
- Youth Service
- Estyn Preparedness
- Working with the EAS
- Post 16 Learner Outcomes
- Aneurin Leisure Trust

### How People Are Shaping Our Services

The Education Directorate is committed to providing high quality services to its citizens and uses various engagement methodologies to understand if the service is making the intended outcomes or if amendments to service delivery need to be considered. Throughout the period a variety of engagement events have taken place:

- Focus group sessions undertaken to understand what C & YP understand about wellbeing and mental health

- VAWSDSV
- 4 Children's Grand Council sessions were run over the last academic year.
- School councils continue to operate across school settings
- 4 LGBTQ+ support groups available within schools to understand C & YP views, it's a place where they can meet discuss, express and offload if needed.
- Focus group carried out with Young Carers to understand the impact of the Young Carers passport.
- A democracy event took place where school from secondary came to understand the democracy journey and how they can be involved. 6 sessions took place throughout the day with 30-32 children attending each session.
- Schools receive weekly bulletins covering strategic and operational developments.
- Schools have received links to surveys for C & YP to have input into programme or policy development.
- Young people from Blaenau Gwent Youth Forum contribute to the scrutiny committee arrangements.
- C & YP from schools attend the Youth Forum which meets every month, there are 8 members of the forum and it focusses on working on priorities that matter to them as well as feeding into policy or consultations. Some of the Youth Forum have now started college, however, were part of the BG Education System.
- Positive Body Image Campaign | [Decide Me - Positive Body Image Campaign | Blaenau Gwent CBC \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](#)
- Let's Go Zero [https://youtube.com/watch?v=KKFGQ\\_q90CM&feature=share&si=EMSlkaIECMiOmarE6JChQQ](https://youtube.com/watch?v=KKFGQ_q90CM&feature=share&si=EMSlkaIECMiOmarE6JChQQ) Regional Mental Health Campaign Development.
- Youth Question time event 22-[Gwent Youth Question Time 2022 | Blaenau Gwent CBC \(blaenau-gwent.gov.uk\)](#)

In September 2022, Blaenau Gwent Council received a letter from Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, stating that the Council will be subject to an Estyn inspection, in line with the Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework, and that the inspection will take place between 28th November to 2nd December 2022.

The inspection is to be carried out in accordance with the inspection framework and the guidance 'for the inspection of Local Government Education Services'.

The three inspection areas of the Local Government Education Services Framework (LGES) inspection framework are:

Inspection Area 1 – Outcomes

- Standards and progress overall
- Standards and progress of specific groups
- Wellbeing and attitudes to learning

Inspection Area 2 – Education Services and Provision

- Support for school improvement
- Support for vulnerable learners

- Other education support services

Inspection Area 3 – Leadership and Management

- Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning
- Professional learning
- Safeguarding arrangements
- Use of resources

Blaenau Gwent's 4 Local Questions for the Inspection

1. How well does the local authority challenge and support non-maintained settings and schools to improve?
2. How well does the local authority tackle inequalities in education experiences and outcomes for children living in poverty?
3. How well does the local authority support schools to promote respectful relationships and address negative behaviour effectively?
4. How well does the local authority ensure that the interests of learners are above all others in its planning for schools and other education provision?

Prior to the core inspection week, Estyn will look to survey local staff, learners, parents and other local citizens with an interest in education services. A preliminary visit will also be held around 2 weeks before the core inspection week to interview key stakeholders.

As per usual practice, the Council is to receive preliminary feedback and findings from the Inspection team on 2nd December 2022. This will be followed up by a final letter which will include findings and any recommendations for improvement. This letter is not expected until February in the New Year.

# Departmental Priorities 2022/27

## Education Directorate Plan

- Improving educational standards and wellbeing for pupils, particularly at KS4;
- Securing quality ALN/Inclusion provision, particularly to support vulnerable groups of learners and those who are eFSM;
- Transforming education in line with responsive school support services and a school estate that is fit for the 21st Century;
- Delivering effective young people and partnership provision, with a focus on lifelong learning and leisure/recreation provision to meet community need; and
  - Enhancing the performance culture for Education and Leisure that delivers better educational outcomes and improved value for money.

## Education Transformation and Business Change – Tier 1

- To ensure an effective Admissions and the Planning of Pupil places process to secure effective access to education, whilst also fulfilling the team's statutory responsibilities and ensuring regulatory compliance;
- To ensure an effective Home to School transport provision is in place statutory responsibilities and ensuring regulatory compliance;
- Delivery of projects to transform the ICT and digitalisation education provision and to ensure strategies and sustainability plans are in place;
- Managing and improving the existing school estate provision Facilities management, Health & Safety, emergency planning;
- Effective delivery of transformation projects to ensure an informed approach to school organisation and the school estate is fit for the future -The Sustainable Community for Learning agenda (21st Century Schools), capacity [reviews](#);
- Development & delivery of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and associated projects;
- Education Transformation to support delivery of the Sustainable Development Principles; and
- Deliver Strong human, financial, risk and performance management within the Education Transformation Team.

## Improvement and Inclusion Plan – Tier 2

- Minimise the impact and recovery from COVID-19 on learner development and progress;
- Improve wellbeing for learners at all stages of development, with a focus on attendance, exclusions and equity;
- Secure strong progress in skills, particularly with reading;
- Support schools to ensure all ALN processes are in place in order to meet statutory requirements;
- Ensure high quality provision is in place to support vulnerable learners in mainstream schools, resource bases and in special schools, including eFSM learners;
- Ensure high quality leadership that secures good progress for all learners;
- Support schools who are identified as causing concern through regional and local protocols to secure improvement;
- Development and management of workforce capacity and capability whilst delivering effective services within financial resources available; and
- Inclusion & Improvement contributes to meeting the Sustainable Development Principles.

## Improvement and Inclusion Plan – Tier 1

- Support schools to ensure pupils with ALN and vulnerable learners make good progress;
- Ensure the ALN and Inclusion service have policies and procedures in place in order to meet statutory requirements, including a review of Resource Bases;
- Ensure the IPS service remains responsive to learners' and schools' needs;
- Development and management of workforce capacity and capability whilst delivering effective services within financial resources available;
- Ensure safeguarding quality assurance processes remain effective and inform the work of the directorate;
- Work in partnership with the EAS to support schools with Curriculum for Wales and skills;
- Ensure school improvement policies and procedures are in place in order to meet statutory requirements;
- Work in partnership with the EAS to support schools with leadership; and
- As appropriate, develop packages of support for schools.

## Young People and Partnership Plan and Aneurin Leisure Trust – Tier 1

- Create and maintain sustainability of the youth service by securing funding and spaces to deliver effective youth services;
- Deliver a wide range of support and provision to young people aged 11-25 based on identified need;
- Implement the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) across the Borough, to ensure young people remain in or enter education, employment or training (reducing NEET figures);
- Ensure consistency and quality in service delivery across the youth service and wider youth support services;
- Ensure the Youth Service and Inclusion Services work collaboratively;
- Manage the Young People and Partnerships service area effectively in terms of staff and financial resources available (both internal and external);
- Post 16 – Ensure Effective Post 16 Partnership arrangements are in place and embedded;
- ALT/Awen/Head 4 Arts: - Ensure Effective Partnership and Commissioning arrangements are in place for Sports and Leisure, Arts and Culture, Adult Community Learning and Libraries; and
- Young People and Partnerships to support delivery of the Sustainable Development Principles.

## Areas of Progress and Improvement

- The Education Directorate received Full Council approval (2020-2021) to establish a new leadership and management structure that includes additional capacity for school improvement and inclusion. Although interim capacity has been affected by staff changes and maternity leave;
- There have been strong appointments made to the Education Directorate's leadership team, including a Head of School Improvement and Inclusion and Service Managers for Education Transformation and Business Change, Young People and Partnerships and the Service Manager – Inclusion;
- The WG ALN National Transformation secondment has concluded, however BG and WG have agreed a collaborative approach for the officer to work part-time via a grant award and part-time for BG's ALN Reform implementation, which provides additional strategic capacity within the SI&I team;
- The Corporate and Education Directorate's response to COVID-19 has been effective and this is discussed in the Estyn Thematic Review, and has been followed up in the Summer Letter (2021) commentary;
- BG knows its schools well overall as identified in the annual regulatory feedback. School inspection and school categorisation profile has improved significantly with no primary schools in follow up and notable practice identified in a number of schools;
- There has been an incremental reduction in Schools Causing Concern from 6 schools in 2019 to only 2 schools in 2022. ALC has been removed from Estyn Significant Improvement category;
- GCSE L2 English, Maths, Science and Capped 9 improved across the board since 2019, the results in 2021-22 were realised through external examinations, but noting the post Centre Determined Grades moderation;
- The 2022 KS4 results were positive and in line with the SDP targets set by the 4 secondary settings. There were improvements in 29 out of 32 key measures. The results are shown in the Performance Data Pack as well as the Main SER for self-evaluation purposes;
- GCSE A\* - A and A\*- C grades improved in English and Maths;
- Planning arrangements for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform are well developed and Phase 1 and Phase 2 summary evaluation implementation documents evidence the progress made across the schools;
- The partnership with Schools, Coleg Gwent and Post 16 providers has strengthened through the establishment of the Post 16 Strategic Partnership Board. A-level A\*- C and A\*- E grades continue to be good with a 97.8% overall pass rate for A\*- E, which is in line with the Welsh average of 98% and the pass rate for grades A\*- C and A\*- A have improved significantly;
- Value-added progress in English and Maths, reading and numeracy for our 7 and 11 year olds improved in 2019-20. BG's schools are working towards the use of progress assessments across the board in 2022 to assess learner progress. This data will only be used to inform self-evaluation and not for accountability purposes;
- The Youth Service exceeded that of the all-Wales means for reach and accredited learning outcomes. The levels of NEETs at 1.6% remain at low levels i.e., 9 young people;
- The School Based Counselling Service provides good support, and this is evidenced through the evaluation reports;



- Strong progress through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme (formerly 21st Century Schools) programme with robust programme management arrangements in place as acknowledged in the WG facilitated Gateway Review. The Band B programme is well underway, an investment of circa £31m into the school estate;
- Good progress against the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP), including WG approval of the BG 10 Year WESP and the new Welsh medium seedling school moving to project implementation stage (full planning approval);
- Headteacher induction and support programme very well received by aspiring and new Headteachers (September 2022);
- Schools are strategically contributing to a full systems approach e.g., self-evaluation work as well as collaborative leadership arrangements and this will continue moving forward through the on-going work of the Headteacher Working Groups (covering Self-Evaluation/Curriculum/ALN Reforms);
- Effective ICT support provided particularly to digitally disadvantaged learners to engage in digital platforms including the co-ordination and distribution of technology. ICT in School Strategy to be finalised in the Spring term;
- Good Early Years provision;
- The Education components of the corporate staff wellbeing survey results were good;
- Overall, the revenue financial position of the Education Directorate and schools has improved significantly with school balances at £4.3m in 2021-22; including redressing the budget deficit in one school i.e., Abertillery Learning Community. The ALC Corporate Group monitors performance and financial sustainability of the setting. The LA has passported an 8.4% uplift to schools via the ISB in 2022-23; and,
- The Council and EAS are evidencing improving value for money returns i.e., improvement in standards overall with less resources.

## **Areas where further improvement is required**

- Higher levels of language acquisition and reading across the board, but particularly in our very young children in early years.
- Improve attainment of eFSM pupils and closing the achievement gap, particularly our more-able pupils throughout education;
- Improve school attendance in both primary and secondary sectors;
- Focus on Schools Causing Concern (SCC), particularly the two schools currently in an Estyn category. It is recognised that in both schools there needs to be pace injected into their improvement journeys. 'One Plan' monitoring in place for both schools;
- Reduce school exclusions and support parents/carers who opt to Elective Home Educate (EHE), with increases linked to COVID. There are 3 schools with identified higher-levels of exclusions that will require targeted interventions;
- Secure external funding for European Social Fund (ESF) programmes e.g. Inspire;
- Pupil progress monitoring at an LA level for self-evaluation purposes; and,
- The revenue financial position of Education is likely to be impacted in the medium to long-term by the continued response to the COVID-19 and the Cost-of-Living crisis. The provisional settlement received from Welsh Government in December 2021 indicates an uplift to funding of 3.5% and 2.4% for 2023/24 and 2024/25 respectively. However, given the current economic and political climate and the Cost-of-Living crisis there is a risk that this could impact on the financial position of the Council and Education and this is currently being reviewed in line with the MTFs.

# Progress against the Priorities

## Improving educational standards and wellbeing for pupils, particularly at KS4

**Self-Assessment** – The Education Directorate knows its schools well overall, and this is evidenced by the regulatory feedback received annually.

School inspection and school categorisation profiling has improved significantly with no primary schools in follow up. There has been a reduction in Schools Causing Concern from 6 schools in 2019 to only 2 schools in 2022. ALC has been formally removed from an Estyn Significant Improvement category and the SWN has been lifted. There is a monitoring visit that took place for BFS in the Summer term and the focus remains on the quality and consistency of T&L. The pace of improvement remains under review. The River Centre has been the subject to an Estyn inspection and the pre-inspection report has been returned to the inspectorate. This setting has gone into an Estyn category following a recent inspection and will be supported via a Multi-Agency approach. The Post Inspection Action Plan has been produced and weekly monitoring is in place.

The Local Authority has requested that EAS support schools on reading skills as a priority following discussions with Joint Headteachers. ALN Reform implementation is on-going with increasing confidence across schools. Education DMT has agreed half-termly monitoring of attendance and exclusions with an attendance campaign planned for the Autumn, in conjunction with Corporate Communications.

2022 results for GCSE L2 English, Maths, Science and Capped 9 improved across the board since 2019, the results in 2021-22 were realised through external examinations, but noting the post Centre Determined Grades moderation. The 2022 KS4 results were in line with the SDP targets set by the 4 secondary settings. The results are shown in the Performance Data Pack for self-evaluation purposes. GCSE A\*/A and A\*-C grades improved in English, Science and Maths. The partnership with Schools, Coleg Gwent and Post 16 providers has strengthened through the establishment of the Post 16 Strategic Partnership Board. A-level A\*-C and A\*-E grades continue to be strong and were in line with the all-Wales means at 98.4% for BG learners at Coleg Gwent settings.

The Youth Service exceeded that of the all-Wales means for reach and accredited learning outcomes. The levels of NEETs at 1.6% are at their lowest levels i.e., 9 young people.

## **Securing quality ALN/Inclusion provision, particularly to support vulnerable groups of learners and those who are eFSM**

### **Self-Assessment –**

The Education Directorate has recently made permanent appointments to the Inclusion team, including the Service Manager for Inclusion.

The Welsh Government ALN National Transformation secondment has concluded; however, it has been agreed between the Council and Welsh Government for the officer to continue to work collaboratively, part time via a grant award and part time for the Council's ALN Reform implementation, which provides additional strategic capacity within the School Improvement and Inclusion Team.

Planning arrangements for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform are well developed and a Phase 1 summary evaluation implementation document evidences the progress made across the school estate.

Data updates including eFSM, attendance and exclusions will be reviewed in the autumn term, however, there are initial indications that the KS4 eFSM gap has reduced.

A review of the ALN/Inclusion Strategy and associated policies has been undertaken taken through the democratic process via People Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet for approval. However, there is a need to engage Headteachers in strategic ALN developments more consistently.

Discussions have been taking place with Headteachers with regards to creating a Vulnerable Learner Panel (VLP), which will undertake school level monitoring to support a reduction in school exclusions and also provide support to parents and carers who opt to elective home educate, which has seen an increase since COVID.

The River Centre is a School Causing Concern and is subject to Statutory Warning Notice (SWN) letter for improvement. This setting has gone into an Estyn category following a recent inspection and will be supported via a Multi-Agency approach. There are very early signs of progress and the primary provision is stable for learners.

## **Transforming education in line with responsive school support services and a school estate that is fit for the 21st Century**

### **Self-Assessment –**

The Council has an enhanced knowledge of school capacity linked to the effective annual monitoring processes that are in place; along with an on-going facilities review/management protocols and effective admissions processes. This is evidenced by the annual review and publication of the school Admissions Policy which has recently been agreed by Cabinet.

Good progress has been made against the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP), including Welsh Government approval of the Blaenau Gwent 10 Year WESP and the new Welsh medium seedling school moving to project implementation stage (full planning approval). The delivery of the WESP targets will be largely delivered through the Welsh medium seedling and immersion proposals. Momentum needs to be maintained with regards to securing additional Welsh-medium education provision for Blaenau Gwent for the Council to deliver on the outcomes of the Blaenau Gwent Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and meet WG deadlines for completion of the 10-year plan.

Surplus places are reducing to the targets set in the School Organisation Policy at 15%. The LA does have some elements of sufficiency of school places emerging that will need to be monitored closely, especially in the secondary/ special school sectors.

Strong progress through the 21st Century Schools programme with robust programme management arrangements in place as acknowledged in the WG facilitated Gateway Review. The Band B programme is well underway an investment of circa £26m into the school estate and this funding opportunity has been identified to target resources for ALN learners. The suitability and condition of the school estate is improving with circa 61% categorised as A/B and the only D category (Glyncoed) forms part of the Band D investment programme.

Education ICT strategic planning processes are strong, with the project team having successfully delivered the ICP and HWB EdTech projects to date. Good progress has been made in line with the development of the Education ICT Strategy, which is scheduled for implementation in Spring 2023.

Medium and long term plans for Pen-y-Cwm are to be developed in line with the increasing demand. The LA will work with the new leadership team to ensure the school's capacity requirements are met.

## **Delivering effective young people and partnership provision, with a focus on lifelong learning and leisure/recreation provision to meet community need**

**Self-Assessment** – The Youth Services provide effective information, support and learning opportunities for young people aged 11-25 and supports young people through earlier transitions from 10 years old, based on a voluntary relationship between the young person and youth worker. In addition, the Youth Service co-ordinates the 11-18 Counselling Service (statutory), the extended 18-25 Counselling Service, Play Therapy Service (year 3 -5) and the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPP), which aims to reduce the numbers of young people who become NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) up to the age of 25 through a partnership approach. The partnership now includes a focus on Youth Homelessness and Wellbeing.

The Youth Service is delivering against its priorities with its latest report demonstrating continued progress. The work of the team is comprehensive and highlights demonstrable progress against the key success criteria. However, there is still work to do in relation to the sustainability of the ESF Programmes e.g., Inspire however, this is potentially being mitigated through the Shared Prosperity Funding.

The relationship with the Leisure Trust has improved significantly and their performance reporting post COVID is strong, particularly the investment in fitness provision realising new memberships. Leisure Trust developments are captured effectively through the Leisure and Libraries Strategic Board and the ALT performance reports e.g., Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS).

Some challenges have been faced within recruitment into the Youth Service, owing to the part time nature of the work and also the requirements for all new staff to be qualified to level 2 and registered with EWC. This has been mitigated by allowing youth support worker roles to be filled without the required qualification but with an agreed timeframe for when the level 2 and 3 qualifications can be achieved.

- In 2021/22, 17% (1961 individual young people) of 11–25-year-olds voluntarily registered with the Youth Service with an additional 9524 contacts made with anonymous (not registered with the service) young people. This is 1% lower than the 2019/20 pre Covid data and shows that the reach has almost returned to pre-pandemic levels, despite still working within restrictions at the beginning of the year.
- In 2020/21, the last available all Wales data, Blaenau Gwent placed 4th (best) across Wales and above the Welsh national average (9%) for population reach and 2nd across the region and 2nd across the family mean.
- The Youth Service 9,524 anonymous contacts during 2120/22 were made through the 11-25 Counselling Service, detached youth work, outreach and out of school activities and events.
- The Youth Service has a well-trained workforce highlighted again in the Youth Work in Wales 2020/2021 Statistical Release where Blaenau Gwent is 3rd (best) in Wales, as having a trained, skilled and qualified workforce. Blaenau Gwent was 1st across the region and 1st across the family mean.
- Current data indicates 1.6% of learners becoming NEET (9 learners) at the end of 2020/2021. The all-Wales figure has not yet been published. However, this is consistently maintaining the lowest number of young people becoming NEET.
- KS5 outcomes continue to improve especially for the higher grades, but remain below the Wales mean average.

## **Enhancing the performance culture for Education and Leisure that delivers better educational outcomes and improved value for money**

**Self-Assessment** – The revenue financial position of the Education Directorate and schools has improved significantly with school provisional balances in a favourable position and a break even budget out turn for the capital budget. This financial position has been achieved by redressing the budget deficit in one school (Abertillery Learning Community). The ALC Corporate Group monitors performance and financial sustainability of the setting.

The LA has passported an 8.4% uplift to schools via the ISB in 2022-23.

The Council's financial position for 2023-24 is anticipated to be difficult, so mitigation through the revenue budget setting process will be crucial for sustainability reasons. Initial proposals for revenue savings to be identified.

Schools are now strategically contributing to a full systems approach and performance culture. Self-evaluation work is embedded as well as collaborative leadership arrangements which will continue through the Headteacher Working Groups (covering Self-Evaluation/Curriculum/ALN Reforms).

The Council's Corporate Risk Register includes one corporate risk with a specific link to the Education Directorate and this is relating to schools in an Estyn category. The Education Directorate Risk Register has 7 risks, with 3 having a high residual status.

The Education Directorate Workforce Plan has been adopted for 2022-26 and is now in the implementation stages.

The Headteacher induction and support programme has been well received by new and aspiring Headteachers.

The Member Development Programme is underway and new Members are engaging and providing very good feedback.

Effective ICT support has been provided to support learners who are digitally disadvantaged to enable them to engage in digital platforms including the coordination and distribution of technology.

Pupil progress monitoring at a LA and school level for self-evaluation purposes is an area for development, therefore, the commissioning of progress and assessment in conjunction with all schools for 2022-23 is under consideration.

# Education Performance Indicators – Key Stage 4

This summary represents KS4 performance in 2022. This data is only used for self-evaluation purposes and not for accountability reasons.

## Blaenau Gwent Performance Summary

- With the suspension of the requirement to report attainment levels on GCSE Results Day, there is insufficient data to analyse the performance of eFSM and non eFSM pupils.
- Of the 7 Performance Indicators reported in 2022, Blaenau Gwent saw an improvement in performance in all indicators, except for Level 1 which declined.

## Capped 9

- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 331.4 in 2019 to 344.2 in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 347.1 in 2019 to 361.0 in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance in all Secondary Schools.

## Literacy Measure

- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 35.8 in 2019 to 38.3 in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 37.5 in 2019 to 40.1 in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance in all Secondary Schools.

## Numeracy Measure

- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 32.7 in 2019 to 35.1 in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 34.3 in 2019 to 36.8 in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance in all Secondary Schools.

## Science Measure

- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 31.5 in 2019 to 36.1 in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 33.0 in 2019 to 37.8 in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance in all Secondary Schools

## Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge

- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 35.8 in 2019 to 37.3 in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 37.5 in 2019 to 39.1 in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance in all Secondary Schools

### **Level 1 Threshold**

- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 92.5% in 2019 to 91.1% in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 96.9% in 2019 to 95.5% in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance in 2 out of 4 Secondary Schools.
- One of the schools where performance declined has a Resource Base. The second school where performance declined went from 100% to 98.6%.

### **5A\*-A Grade GCSEs**

- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 9.9% in 2019 to 14.8% in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 10.4% in 2019 to 15.5% in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance 3 Secondary schools, with a slight decline (-0.1%) in 4th Secondary School.

### **Legacy L2 Inc. E/W & M**

- Despite this indicator being removed from the GCSE suite of performance indicators, all 4 schools calculated the measure.
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 43.0% in 2019 to 49.2% in 2022 (All Schools).
- Blaenau Gwent performance improved from 45.0% in 2019 to 51.6% in 2022 (4 Secondary Schools).
- Improved performance all 4 Secondary schools.



## Budget - Quarter 1 & 2 (April 2022 to September 2022)

Budget Area		Budget	Forecast	Variance	
		£	£	£	%
1	Individual Schools Budget	50,430,260	50,430,260	0	0.00
2	Education Improvement Grant	267,730	267,730	0	0.00
3	Other Costs	725,420	736,864	-11,444	-1.58
4	Supporting SEN - Schools	1,730,430	1,583,211	147,219	8.51
5	Strategic Management	2,264,410	2,265,610	-1,200	-0.05
6	Assuring Access to Schools	2,439,820	2,925,714	-485,894	-19.92
7	Facilitating School Improvement	396,350	398,131	-1,781	-0.45
8	Supporting SEN - LEA	380,730	296,112	84,618	22.23
9	Further Education & Training	135,960	144,996	-9,036	-6.65
10	Youth Service	345,390	370,218	-24,828	-7.19
11	Other Expenditure	143,850	123,075	20,775	14.44
12	Education Departmental Budget	195,970	133,430	62,540	31.91
13	Corporate Recharges	4,671,690	4,671,689	1	0.00
	Leisure	4,176,620	4,171,106	5,514	0.13
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>68,304,630</b>	<b>68,518,146</b>	<b>-213,516</b>	<b>-0.31</b>

# Education Risk Register

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Update	Residual Score
<b>EDDRR7</b> <b>CRR25</b>	The school currently in receipt of Council Intervention fails to make appropriate progress against the Statutory Warning Notice to Improve and their Post Inspection Action Plans.	Continuing the work with Schools Causing Concern (SCC), particularly the two schools currently in an Estyn category. BFS 'One Plan' monitoring and Multi-Agency approach for the River Centre. The River Centre is subject to Statutory Warning Notice (SWN) letter for improvement. This setting has gone into the Estyn category of Special Measures following a recent inspection and will be supported via a Multi-Agency approach similar to the BFS model. The Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) has been produced and returned to Estyn together with a Health and safety response letter with weekly RC PIAP meetings with LA partners to support with and monitor progress against the PIAP in place. The setting has significant shortcomings identified, however, very early-stage progress is being made through the leadership of the Interim Executive Head teacher and the LA appointed Chair of Governors. Planning for further work in the secondary site scheduled to start October 2022.	High
<b>EDDRR8</b>	Failure to minimise the risks associated with pupil regression linked to COVID-19 learning disruption and to maximise learner progression.	<p>The Recovery and Renewal Plan is in place as well as the performance data pack. There has been a reduction in Schools Causing Concern from 6 schools in 2019 to only 2 schools in 2022. ALC has been removed from Estyn Significant Improvement category. KS4 2022 results for GCSE L2 English, Maths, Science and Capped 9 improved across the board since 2019, the results in 2021-22 were realised through external examinations, but noting the post Centre Determined Grades moderation. The 2022 KS4 results were positive and in line with the SDP targets set by the 4 secondary settings. The results are shown in the Performance Data Pack for self-evaluation purposes. GCSE A*/A and A*-C grades improved in English, Science and Maths. The partnership with Schools, Coleg Gwent and Post 16 providers has strengthened through the establishment of the Post 16 Strategic Partnership Board. A-level A*-C and A*-E grades continue to be strong and were in line with the all-Wales means at 98.4% for BG learners at Coleg Gwent settings. Post 16 vocational results to be released in October 2022. BG's schools across the board are working towards the use of progress methods across the board in 2022 to assess learner progress. This data will only be used to inform self-evaluation purposes. Reading and supporting learners entitled to eFSM are LA priorities, however, the attainment gap to non eFSM is closing at KS4.</p> <p>Discussions with headteachers and assessment company about an LA approach to assessment partly funded by the LA, to help identify where pupils currently are and what support they need/next steps. Arrangements to be finalised October 2022</p>	High

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Update	Residual Score
<b>EDDRR9</b>	Dependency on funding around ESF Inspire projects in youth service	Risk reviewed - positive trajectory	<b>High</b>
<b>EDDRR1</b>	Failure of schools in Blaenau Gwent to adapt and change accordingly to the requirements of the new curriculum and national agenda of the Welsh Government as laid out in the National reform agenda document "Education for Wales: Our national Mission"	<p>Schools are strategically contributing to a full systems approach e.g., self-evaluation work as well as collaborative leadership arrangements and this will continue moving forward through the on-going work of the Headteacher Working Groups (covering Self-Evaluation/Curriculum for Wales/ALN Reforms). 2 secondary schools have adopted CfW from September 2022. Phase 1 ALN Reform implementation is effective as discussed in the TCS Evaluative Summary Report and the 4 recommendations are being taken forward for action.</p> <p>WG have provided schools with further support on the implementation of the RSE Curriculum. All schools involved in Professional Discussions in September 2022 show good progress towards/implementation of CfW.</p>	<b>Medium</b>
<b>EDDRR3</b> <b>CRR4</b>	Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate. Safeguarding arrangements are in place for children & young adults in Blaenau Gwent.	<p>Schools are presently updating the Keeping Learners Safe self-evaluation returns for the 2022/23 academic year. The Safeguarding in Education Manager continues to work closely with the setting that was identified as needing specific support in last year's self- evaluation report and progress is being made to address those areas. Quality assurance visits to school's settings have also been undertaken during the period.</p> <p>One school, which is identified as a School Causing Concern, has been inspected with the team identifying safeguarding and health and safety concerns, which encompassed site and building issues. The areas of improvements identified have either been completed or are in train. The Directorate is undertaking a quality assurance review of all health and safety facilities functions to ensure that any further potential risks are identified and appropriately managed.</p> <p>All schools have now registered to use the My Concern System with one school requiring training. Informal feedback received is promising but a more detailed review will be completed at the end of the autumn term.</p> <p>The annual self- evaluation of safeguarding for the 2021/22 academic year has been completed which includes the establishment of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board and the need to progress the Peer-on-Peer Sexual abuse action plan and Respect and Resilience action plan.</p> <p>There remains an invariable link to the risks identified in Social Services.</p>	<b>Medium</b>

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Update	Residual Score
<b>EDDRR4</b>	Failure to create a sustainable and successful Abertillery Learning Community that delivers good outcomes for learners.	The ALC Corporate Group will be considering the commissioning on an independent consultant to review ALC's medium term financial planning arrangements in the Autumn term. The ALC out-turn position for financial year 2021-22 was a surplus circa £240,000, which maintains their positive position for 2 years.	Medium
<b>EDDRR5</b>	Failure to deliver an effective ICT strategy in line with the WG Education Digital Standards, which facilitates and enhances delivery aligned to the Digital Competency Framework and the new Curriculum for Wales.	Draft Strategy to be reviewed and agreed with schools in the Autumn/Spring term	Low
<b>EDDRR10</b> <b>CRR25</b>	Failure of school (RC) to improve following the issue of a pre-warning and statutory warning notice	The River Centre Learning Community has been identified as a School Causing Concern and the LA has used its powers of intervention including appointment of a LA chair of governors as well as additional governors. There is an interim Exec Headteacher in place in collaboration with Ebbw Fawr Learning Community. The RC Learning Community was subject to an Estyn inspection in July 2022. <b>This risk can now be retired as updates are being provided in Corporate Risk CRR25.</b>	High
<b>EDDRR11</b>	Internet connectivity in schools affected by PSBA Websafe Internet Filtering.	The PSBA monitoring is effective at a national, regional and local level and BG's schools and the associated ICT platforms are stable. Likelihood reduced to low but to remain on the Directorate Risk Register to be kept under review.	Low
<b>EDDRR12</b>	Impact on the deliverability 21st Century School Programme	Contract awarded for Glyncoed project, however due to market forces this was 20% higher than originally anticipated, this is therefore having an impact on the current programme and the Council will ultimately deliver less schemes than was originally anticipated within the programme envelope. Representations are being made with Welsh Government.	High

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Update	Residual Score
<b>EDDRR13</b>	Lack of sustainability for open access provision has resulted in a reduction in the support and provision for young people and children in community settings.	The Young People and Partnership FADE is comprehensive and highlights demonstrable progress against the key success criteria. However, there is still work to do in relation to sustainability of the ESF Programmes. Leisure Trust developments are captured effectively through the Leisure and Libraries Strategic Board and the ALT performance reports e.g., Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) return from WG. Provisional NEETs data released at 1.6% so remaining stable and in line with the Wales mean average.	<b>Medium</b>
<b>EDDRR6</b>	If the Directorate does not have the appropriate capacity and capability in the workforce, the result will be an unacceptable impact on the ability to deliver services effectively.	All leadership appointments now made – <b>risk to be deescalated from the Education DRR.</b>	<b>Low</b>

# Glossary

**ALC** – Abertillery Learning Community

**ALN** – Additional Learning Needs

**ALT** – Aneurin Leisure Trust

**BFS** – Brynmawr Foundation School

**CAGs** – Centre Assessed Grades

**CDGs** – Centre Determined Grades

**CLT** – Corporate Leadership Team

**CSSR** – Celebrate, Support, Share and Refine

**EAS** – Education Achievement Service

**eFSM** – eligible for Free School Meals

**EIP** – Education Improvement Plan

**ESF** – European Social Fund

**EWC** – Education Workforce Council

**FADE** – Self Evaluation (Focus, Analysis, Do, Evaluation)

**FWPs** – Forward Work Programmes

**GAVO** – Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations

**I2A** – Inspire to Achieve

**I2W** – Inspire to Work

**KS** – Key Stage

**LA** – Local Authority

**LGES** – Local Government Education Services

**LSOA** – Lower Super Output Area

**NEET** – Not in Education, Employment or Training

**RPIs** – Restricted Physical Interventions

**SCC** – Schools Causing Concern

**SE** – Self-Evaluation

**SEBD** – Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties

**SER** – Self-Evaluation Report

**SDP** – School Development Plan

**SOP** – Strategic Outline Plan

**WBL** – Work Based Learning

**WIMD** – Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

**WG** – Welsh Government

## Contact Details

If you require any further information or have any feedback you wish to share, please:

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[www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

**Blaenau Gwent**

County Borough Council

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# Agenda Item 14

*Cabinet and Council only*

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: 03.01.23

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: 03.01.23

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Report Subject: **Improving Schools Programme**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Edmunds, Cabinet Member People and Education**

Report Submitted by: **Luisa Munro Morris Head of School Improvement and Inclusion and Michelle Jones Strategic Education Improvement Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
✓	22.12.22	03.01.23			17.01.23	18.01.23		

The Education Directorate's purpose is to deliver '**Better Schools, Better Citizens and Better Communities**' / Pwrpas y Gyfarwyddiaeth Addysg yw darparu '**Ysgolion Gwell, Dinasyddion Gwell a Chymunedau Gwell**'

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on the BG Improving Schools Programme, in line with national changes to school evaluation, improvement and accountability.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report covers all schools and settings within the County Borough that have been identified by the Education Directorate, supported by the Education Achievement Service (EAS), and/or Estyn as needing to improve. The Blaenau Gwent Improving Schools Programme operates within the regional arrangements for supporting schools across South East Wales.
- 2.2 During the autumn term 2022 schools have continued to engage in the Professional Discussion with the LA, EAS and other partners. Professional Discussions focus on the school's priorities for improvement, implementation of national reform, the support it requires and identified practice that is worth sharing. This method of engaging with schools is now in its second year. Blaenau Gwent has seen a reduction in schools requiring the high levels of support; presently, there are two schools formally within the Schools Causing Concern category

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

#### 3.1 **Option 1**

Members are asked to consider and accept the information detailed within the report and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate recommendations.

#### 3.2 **Option 2**

Accept the report as provided.

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

4.1 Education remains a priority in the Corporate Plan. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 consolidates, clarifies, and reforms the law in relation to intervention in schools causing concern. The Welsh Government's statutory guidance for schools causing concern (February 2014) details a local authority's powers of intervention in schools causing concern, the grounds on which those powers can be invoked and the procedures governing the intervention process.

4.2 Through our education provision we seek to ensure that provision is appropriate and able to meet the needs of children and young people so that their progress and performance is ambitious and raises aspiration levels.

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

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

The Council allocates approximately £50.4 million to schools via the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) to provide high quality education and to improve pupil outcomes. In addition, Blaenau Gwent continues to make a financial contribution to the regional EAS arrangements of approximately £350,000 from the core Education Directorate Budget, and processes such as monthly LA/EAS Partnership meetings are in place to ensure the LA can hold the EAS to account for the support and challenge they provide to schools and ensure value for money for the Local Authority.

There are financial implications in supporting schools to improve and this is identified in the individual school support plan and is funded from within existing revenue budgets.

#### 5.2 **Risk Including Mitigating Actions**

Risk is associated with ineffective processes to ensure progress against priorities in identified schools. Failure to raise standards features in the corporate risk register of the Council in relation to schools causing concern. This risk is also reflected in the Education Directorate and EAS risk registers. A graduated response is in place to mitigate these risks; this approach is based on an early identification and support model:

**Universal provision:** areas for improvement in relation to individual schools may be raised by a School Improvement Partner (SIP) or an LA Officer, and these are discussed in weekly LA/EAS meetings and more formally in monthly LA/EAS Partnership meetings and appropriate courses of action agreed.

**NB.** Professional Discussions are held with all schools once per year. These are timetabled for the whole year. Within schools where there are emerging risks, these are prioritised early in the academic year.

**Targeted support/provision:** If a school is identified as needing more support by the LA, a 'Team Around the School' approach will be adopted. Key partners are brought together on at least a half-termly basis, to support and challenge a school with specific areas for improvement.

**Specialist support/provision:** A school that has been issued with a statutory warning notice by the LA or has been placed in an Estyn category will receive further bespoke support, in addition to at least half-termly meetings. For example, a school will be supported with creating and delivering against a Post Inspection Action Plan. There are also the Multi-Agency Support for Secondary Schools in Special Measures arrangements in association with Welsh Government. This forum is currently used for Brynmawr Foundation School and will be introduced for the River Centre in the new calendar year.

As a result of the Welsh Government's changes to the accountability framework, which culminated in the suspension of the routine collection of qualitative data, there is a risk associated with making informed judgements on school progress/performance. To partially mitigate this risk, BG's schools have agreed to share Assessment data on reading and wellbeing to support with self-evaluation of these two areas. The LA has partly funded this assessment provision through grant allocation. In addition, schools have shared their KS3 and KS4 data for self-evaluation purposes. This data will not be used to hold schools to account but may be used to support schools for self-evaluation purposes as well as the sharing of good practice.

School attendance and exclusion figures are monitored by DMT on a fortnightly basis. School's safeguarding processes are also closely monitored. The quality assurance arrangements that are in place include the safeguarding matrix, keeping learners safe audit tool and the quality assurance visits which the Safeguarding in Education Manager completes and reports findings through a FADE approach to Education DMT. Holistic support packages are devised via regular intra Council services meetings between OD, finance, health and safety, education, and school governor support services. The quality of provision in schools and leadership is monitored and evaluated in conjunction with the EAS and is in addition to the work the LA undertakes directly with its schools.

### 5.3 **Legal**

The Improving Schools Programme operates within the legal framework of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

### 5.4 **Human Resources**

There are implications arising from the action identified to support those schools identified as a school causing concern and/or in an Estyn category. This information is in the support plan for the school, the Post Inspection Action Plan and the Local Authority Statement of Action. In most cases, a single-plan approach is now in place where the above action plans are incorporated into one working plan, which all stakeholders work with and are held to account.

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

### 6.1.1 **Schools in an Estyn Category**

#### 6.1.2 **Brynmawr Foundation School**

- The school was inspected in October 2019 and placed within the category of schools requiring Special Measures.
- The school continues to be subject to an LA statutory warning notice to improve and intervention is now in place
- Governance and the work of the Governing Body has significantly improved. Governors continue to receive tailored support to develop their effectiveness in the role.
- The school now has an established Senior Leadership Team in place.
- The school continues to access support through the EAS Learning SIP + Network School model, working closely with Cardiff High School, with the Headteacher of Cardiff High School undertaking the role of School Improvement Partner. During the autumn term the school has been supported by the EAS with assisted self-evaluation activities regarding teaching and learning, which concluded that teaching has improved but that in the majority of lessons pupils did not make sufficient progress in learning. There is still too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching.
- The school continues to be part of the Welsh Government's national pilot for multi-agency support for schools in special measures, which involves a range of partners supporting the school and monitoring its progress in a systematic and responsive way. The October meeting focused on leading teaching and learning and the role of leaders in the school with a view to accelerating the pace of improvements.
- Estyn completed its third routine monitoring visit during the late autumn term 2022. Estyn recognised that progress has been made but that learner progress remains variable. Estyn concluded that 'Brynmawr Foundation School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection.
- Since the last monitoring visit, however, senior leaders are beginning to identify the aspects of pupils' skills most in need of improvement. However, this work has not led to sufficient improvements in pupils' knowledge, understanding or skills.

- Overall, teaching has too limited an impact on pupil progress. Estyn identified that in around half of lessons, there remain shortcomings in classroom practice that prevent pupils from making suitable progress.
- There is recognition by the Inspectorate, however, that teachers are beginning to use some worthwhile strategies, but teachers need to refine their use of the strategies and apply them more effectively. Estyn commented that it is important to share with BFS staff some of the positive messages from the visit to give staff the confidence to build on the strategies they are starting to use.
- The Education Directorate is working with the EAS and the school in relation to the pace of progress in improving teaching and learning. The Estyn monitoring feedback report is attached as **Appendix 1**.

### 6.1.3 River Centre

- The Governing Body of the school remains under statutory intervention because of the Statutory Warning Notice to improve dated November 2021.
- Staffing - The Headteacher remains absent from work. The school was previously supported by an Executive Headteacher arrangement. More recently since November 2022 a dedicated Acting Headteacher is now in post to provide consistent support for the school.
- The senior leadership team has been further strengthened through a secondment to the post of Head of Secondary Campus since November 2022.
- The Corporate Director of Education and the Acting Headteacher have engaged with all staff and the Trade Unions via monthly sessions.
- Following an Estyn inspection July 2022, where the school was placed in Special Measures, the Post Inspection Action Plan has been submitted to Estyn and an initial monitoring visit took place on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022 which reviewed the PIAP and the LA Statement of Action. The outcome of this visit was that the PIAP was viewed as appropriate for addressing the setting's recommendations.
- A positive coffee morning was held with parents/ carers and both school and LA representatives on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022.
- The Head of School Improvement and Inclusion has established and chairs a weekly PIAP progress meeting, to which school representatives and LA officers are invited with a view to secure progress against the seven Estyn recommendations. The following are the high-level actions points from this term's activities:
  - Extensive remodelling work to the secondary campus including the provision of CCTV on site. The deadline for this work to be completed is Spring half-term 2023. This is funded by the LA and WG ALN grant circa £250,000.
  - Alternative provision has been put in place for secondary aged pupils.
  - Processes have been introduced to improve staff and family communication, tracking of pupils and record keeping.

- It has been agreed with WG and Estyn that early in 2023 that the River Centre will form part of the Multi-Agency Support for Schools in Special Measures.

#### 6.1.4 **School Inspections**

#### 6.1.5 **Coed-y-Garn Primary School (Appendix 2)**

Coed-y-Garn Primary School was inspected in October 2022. Estyn commented that 'Coed-y-Garn Primary is a warm and inclusive school, which promotes a positive atmosphere and ethos. Pupils enjoy learning and they are enthusiastic during lessons and in activities. This is due to the very strong working relationships that they have with their teachers and other staff. The learning resource base, and its pupils, play a very important part in the school's daily life.'

Estyn have requested that the school prepares a case study for dissemination on Estyn's website in respect of its work in relation to the impact of the teaching and the use of the learning environment to promote authentic learning experiences in the learning resource base. There were four recommendations for improvement that were identified which are:

- R1 Address the issues related to the school site, identified at the time of the inspection
- R2 Challenge all pupils through consistent and effective teaching
- R3 Ensure that teachers provide opportunities for extended independent writing
- R4 Ensure that teachers' feedback moves individual pupils on to the next stage in their learning effectively

The school has drawn up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection. The first recommendation relating to health and safety has been largely addressed and Estyn have replied acknowledging the joint response that is being provided by the school and LA in planning to finalise these site-specific issues.

#### 6.1.6 **Professional Discussions**

Professional discussions take place between the LA, EAS and our schools on an annual basis to discuss school priorities and progress, in line with the School Development Plan (SDP). During the autumn term professional discussions were held in six schools with further visits planned for the Spring term. This included Abertillery Learning Community which was recently removed from an Estyn category and this school will receive a second professional discussion later in the academic year to ensure that the progress made at the setting continues. Of the other professional discussions held during the autumn term, one school has been asked to engage in a Teaching CSSR to provide evidence of improvement in specific aspects of provision identified through work scrutiny in the autumn term. In the new year, if after receiving this report the LA feel the school needs

additional support, the setting will be engaged through the early intervention 'Team Around the School' approach.

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

The regional pilot of new ways of working to reflect the new national arrangements for school evaluation, improvement and accountability has been evolved through the engagement of a variety of stakeholders including schools and members of governing bodies. A range of Council services and external partners are involved in delivering programmes to support schools requiring improvement. Monitoring progress towards school development plans enables effective targeting of support.

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

Monitoring school progress against priorities facilitates support for schools to ensure that they achieve and maintain high quality outcomes in the long term.

The format of this report will be reviewed in the Spring term 2023. The aim of the review is to ensure that the report provides Members with the most relevant information to scrutinise school improvement.

**6.4 Preventative Focus**

Through effective monitoring and evaluation of school performance, early identification of emerging areas for improvement can be achieved with consequent early intervention to secure improvement. The effectiveness of the LA's monitoring, evaluation and intervention programmes ensure that preventative action is taken early in order to minimise the escalation of concerns.

**6.5 Collaboration / partnership working**

The LA collaborates with neighbouring local authorities through the South East Wales Consortium for the provision of School Improvement services through the Education Achievement Service (EAS). The LA also works closely with colleagues in the SEWC region.

The LA also secures a range of pupil support services such as Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Speech and Language, and Ethnic Minority support services through regional collaboration. Within the LA, the school improvement and inclusion leadership teams ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to supporting schools within the Education Directorate and across the Council corporately as a whole.

**6.6 Integration (across service areas)**

The LA commissions its school improvement function on a regional basis.

**6.7 Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

There are no implications arising from this report.

**6.8 Integrated Impact Assessment**

There are no implications arising from this report.

## **7. Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 Monitoring of improvement pathways is an important mechanism for ensuring that Members of the People Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet are sufficiently informed to enable them to hold the authority to account effectively for the quality of education provision and hence pupil progress and outcomes.

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

**Appendix 1 – Brynmawr Foundation School Monitoring report**

**Appendix 2 – Coed-y-Garn Primary School Inspection report**





Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

## **Report following monitoring**

**Level of follow-up: Special measures**

**Brynmawr Foundation School  
Rhydwr  
Intermediate Road  
Brynmawr  
Blaenau Gwent  
NP23 4XT**

**Date of visit: December 2022**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and  
Training in Wales**

## Outcome of visit

Brynmawr Foundation School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection. As a result, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is maintaining the level of follow-up activity.

Estyn will re-visit the school in around four - six months' time to monitor progress against a sample of the recommendations.

Under the provisions of Section 39 (9) of the Education Act 2005, every annual report to parents prepared by the governing body under Section 30 of the Education Act 2002 must include a statement on the progress made in implementing the action plan.

The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (Wales) Regulations 2015 state that an induction period may **not** be served in a school requiring special measures i.e. as described in grounds 6 or 8 in section 2 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (1). The presumption is that schools requiring special measures are not suitable for providing induction for newly qualified teachers, other than in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, schools requiring special measures should not normally appoint a newly qualified teacher (NQT) to their staff.

## Progress since the last inspection

### **R1. Improve pupils' standards across the school, including their literacy and numeracy skills**

Since the last monitoring visit, senior leaders are beginning to identify the aspects of pupils' skills most in need of improvement. However, this work has not led to sufficient improvements in pupils' knowledge, understanding or skills.

In the lessons observed during this visit, around half of pupils recall prior learning suitably. In a few instances they apply this learning well to a range of new and more challenging contexts, for example when applying Pythagoras' Theorem to three-dimensional shapes.

In around half of lessons, pupils' build suitably on their prior knowledge and go on to make appropriate progress in their learning. In a few cases, pupils make good progress, such as when they use a variety of tenses when writing in Spanish. However, around half of pupils make limited progress overall. This is often because they do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their learning or skills independently in a range of contexts.

Many pupils listen well to their teachers. The majority express their ideas suitably when responding to questions or sharing their views. A few provide extended and well-considered verbal responses, using subject-specific terms and justifying their opinions confidently. However, a minority of pupils' verbal responses are too brief, or they do not explain their ideas clearly, often due to their limited vocabulary.

Many pupils locate relevant facts from texts suitably. In a few subject areas, pupils annotate texts appropriately to highlight facts or features of writing. Although a majority of pupils are developing basic inference skills appropriately, they often do not analyse language accurately enough. A minority of pupils use their knowledge to explore themes in a novel, and a few draw links to the social and historical context competently. Overall, however, pupils' use of reading strategies across the curriculum is limited.

In a few subjects, pupils write at suitable length and structure extended pieces of writing appropriately. In these areas, a minority of pupils write confidently for their audience with sound technical accuracy and use a suitably range of vocabulary. However, across the curriculum, only a minority of pupils write independently and at length. Here, many pupils rely too heavily on support or copy work from their teachers, verbatim. Overall, the technical accuracy of pupils' writing remains too variable. For example, there are too many errors in the use of capital letters and punctuation. The handwriting of many pupils, particularly in Key Stage 3, is often ill-formed and difficult to read. This is partly a legacy of school closures owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many pupils use the four number operations suitably and the majority recall basic multiplication facts well. These pupils work suitably with basic fractions, decimals and percentages and solve simple equations successfully. The majority of pupils produce a range of suitably accurate graphs. However, they rarely have sufficient opportunities to analyse these graphs.

## **R2. Improve pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning**

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit

## **R3. Improve the effectiveness of teaching to motivate, engage and challenge pupils to make good progress in lessons**

Senior leaders have continued to promote suitably the helpful teaching guidelines exemplified in the 'Brynmawr Way'. Working with their external partners, leaders have enabled staff to access beneficial professional learning focused particularly on planning, questioning and feedback. Most teachers are enthusiastic about the opportunities they have to strengthen their classroom practice. Around half of them have begun to implement suitably a range of the strategies they have been trained to

deliver, including approaches to plan more effective lessons. As yet, however, the impact of this work on improving pupils' learning and progress remains too variable.

In around half of lessons, teaching enables pupils to make suitable progress. In these cases, teachers build on pupils' prior learning appropriately and provide engaging resources. These teachers provide clear explanations using subject specific vocabulary and question pupils appropriately to assess their basic understanding and progress.

In a few cases, where teaching is more effective, teachers plan challenging work that is matched well to pupils' prior attainment. They model their high expectations and enable pupils to work independently at a suitable pace. As a result, pupils in these classes make secure progress.

In around half of lessons, there are shortcomings in classroom practice that prevent pupils from making suitable progress. Teachers in these lessons do not employ well enough the strategies they discuss in their professional learning sessions. They continue to plan undemanding activities that do not provide pupils with sufficient challenge or help to develop their independence. In general, these teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and this makes the pace of learning too slow.

There are now more opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and speaking skills across the curriculum. However, the impact of this on improving pupils' skills is too variable. This is often because teachers do not help pupils to develop or improve their responses. Opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills, other than through graph work, are underdeveloped.

In the main, teachers offer appropriate verbal feedback. In a few instances, teachers' feedback helps pupils to make improvements to their work. However, staff frequently reward modest pupil responses with overly generous praise. In addition, many teachers do not provide pupils with sufficiently specific guidance as to how they can improve their work or ensure that pupils respond robustly to any feedback. Overall, teachers' feedback has too limited an impact on pupils' progress.

#### **R4. Strengthen leadership at all levels to improve leaders' ability to identify areas for development and to plan effectively for improvement**

Inspectors did not evaluate this recommendation during this visit

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Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Coed -y- Garn Primary School**

**Parrot Row  
Blaina  
NP13 3AH**

**Date of inspection: October 2022**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

**This report is also available in Welsh.**

## About Coed -y- Garn Primary School

Name of provider	Coed -y- Garn Primary School
Local authority	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Language of the provider	English
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	Not applicable
Number of pupils on roll	212
Pupils of statutory school age	164
Number in nursery classes	30
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 21.3%)	33.8%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 22.2%)	21.3%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	2.5%
Date of headteacher appointment	January 2019
Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	03/03/2014
Start date of inspection	17/10/2022

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: [mylocalschool.gov.wales](https://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

## Overview

Coed-y-Garn Primary is a warm and inclusive school, which promotes a positive atmosphere and ethos. Pupils enjoy learning and they are enthusiastic during lessons and in activities. This is due to the very strong working relationships that they have with their teachers and other staff. The learning resource base, and its pupils, play a very important part in the school's daily life.

Learning is particularly successful where the teaching and feedback to pupils are purposeful and challenge pupils to perform at their best. This helps many pupils to make strong progress in developing their listening, speaking, reading and number skills. However, the quality of teaching and feedback is not consistently challenging across the school. Overall, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to use and develop their independent learning skills, especially when writing extended pieces of work.

All staff promote a very positive ethos of support and care for pupils in all areas of the school. This encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own well-being and behaviour extremely well. This contributes to their positive attitudes to learning and their resilience to persevere with tasks. The school helps pupils to build confidence in themselves as individuals, while also developing a strong respect for the feelings of others. Overall, the school environment promotes beneficial learning opportunities, which includes a stimulating woodland area.

Leaders evaluate the school's work to plan for improvements thoroughly. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She has a determination to succeed for the benefit of pupils and the community. The senior leadership team, the staff and the governors share her purposeful vision. They work together well to ensure that the school is inclusive and that it promotes good learning opportunities.

The headteacher shares responsibilities effectively among staff and provides beneficial opportunities for professional learning. This contributes to a positive whole-school ethos, where staff and pupils feel valued for their contributions to school life.



## Recommendations

- R1 Address the issues related to the school site, identified at the time of the inspection
- R2 Challenge all pupils through consistent and effective teaching
- R3 Ensure that teachers provide opportunities for extended independent writing
- R4 Ensure that teachers' feedback moves individual pupils on to the next stage in their learning effectively

## What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the impact of the teaching and the use of the learning environment to promote authentic learning experiences in the learning resource base, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

## Main evaluation

### Learning

Most pupils enter the school with skills that are below the expected level for their age. Most pupils achieve well across all areas of the curriculum, with many of them making effective progress in their speaking, listening, reading and number skills.

Most pupils with additional learning needs achieve well and pupils in the learning resource base (LRB) make very strong gains in their learning. Across the school, pupils needing support access all aspects of the curriculum successfully and they make purposeful progress from their starting points.

Many pupils' speaking and listening skills develop quickly. As they move from nursery to Year 2, they gain confidence and answer questions sensibly while discussing tasks with their peers. For example, Year 2 pupils express their feelings eloquently in the woodland area while roasting marshmallows over the fire pit. From Year 3 onwards, pupils make good progress and develop a wider vocabulary. They listen well to each other and engage in attentive discussions, such as reflecting on the Aberfan disaster. Many pupils in the LRB develop beneficial speaking and listening skills, to access a wide range of interesting and very stimulating activities.

Many pupils make rapid progress in developing their reading skills. Many of the youngest pupils learn the sounds of letters quickly and, by Year 2, many pupils' progress in reading is good. They attempt unfamiliar words using a variety of phonic strategies purposefully. By Year 6, many pupils are competent readers, and they are well equipped to tackle a variety of different texts. For example, they discuss the characteristics of mythical beasts and the dangers involved if they encountered one.

Many pupils make effective progress in their writing considering their starting points. By Year 2, the majority of pupils are beginning to write suitably, using basic punctuation and grammar. As pupils progress from Year 3 to Year 6, many write effectively in a prescriptive set of genres. For example, Year 5 pupils write diary entries on the life of a miner in a coal mine. Many pupils edit their work carefully and use more advanced vocabulary successfully to improve their final drafts. As a result of a lack of opportunity, pupils do not develop their independent extended writing skills sufficiently.

When speaking Welsh, most of the youngest pupils develop basic vocabulary and phrases and respond to commands and greetings appropriately. By Year 2, most pupils use simple phrases occasionally, such as expressing their feelings. Progress for most pupils slows as they get older and by Year 6 pupils demonstrate a limited recall of simple sentence structures and relevant vocabulary. As a result, their Welsh oracy skills are underdeveloped.

Many pupils develop effective mathematical skills. By Year 4, many pupils partition and compare three- and four-digit numbers effectively. Older pupils develop their number skills competently and many use an appropriate range of skills, such as decimals and percentages purposefully. They measure and draw angles accurately and begin to use fractions confidently, for example to share jacket potatoes at

lunchtime. Many pupils transfer their mathematical skills to a variety of contexts well. For instance, they interrogate a set of data to find the mean, median and mode of an Olympic medal table, and they plot co-ordinates in four quadrants to draw different shapes.

Many pupils have good digital skills, which they use across the curriculum successfully. For example, many younger pupils programme robots to travel around a course efficiently. Most older pupils manipulate text effectively, such as creating fact files on important characters from Black History and whilst preparing presentations on renewable energy. Many pupils create and use simple databases and spreadsheets confidently.

Most pupils develop their artistic and creative skills well. This is particularly true of the youngest pupils, who create art and role-play in a wide variety of contexts. For example, reception pupils wash socks enthusiastically before pegging them to dry on a washing line. Additionally, nearly all pupils in the LRB embrace the freedom to experiment and develop their creativity, whilst role playing in the fake mine shaft.

Across the school, most pupils develop their thinking skills well. They use effective strategies to resolve tasks and they persevere diligently when problem-solving. They state coherently that finding challenging tasks difficult is beneficial to their learning.

### **Well-being and attitudes to learning**

Nearly all pupils are happy and demonstrate a positive attitude towards school and their learning. They are ready to participate in lessons and enjoy their learning experiences in a nurturing, caring and purposeful environment.

In classes and around the school the behaviour of nearly all pupils is exemplary and they move between classes and other areas in a polite and controlled way. They are well-mannered and show kindness and respect to all adults and each other. They welcome visitors warmly with a smile and demonstrate positive attitudes to others, for example by holding doors open for adults in the corridors. The elected 'Well-being Warriors' and 'Calm Area Monitors' support this ethos of calmness and help to provide pupils with a sense of ownership and responsibility for their own well-being.

Nearly all pupils feel valued at school and state that inclusion and equity are strong features of the school. Many pupils with additional learning needs and those eligible for free school meals embrace leadership roles and responsibilities willingly and play a successful part in the daily life of the school. Nearly all pupils feel safe in school and know whom to approach if they have any worries. They are confident that staff will address their concerns and this strong emphasis on caring for each other permeates throughout the whole school. Nearly all pupils delight in the welcome that they get every morning during their 'meet and greet' sessions at the door of their classes.

Nearly all pupils can draw on strategies to support their emotional well-being effectively. For example, pupils use their own 'coping wheels' to regulate their feelings purposefully through practices that include meditation, listening to music and drawing. As a result, nearly all pupils develop confidence and resilience, when persevering with their work. Nearly all learners are developing as ethical, informed

citizens through their awareness of fairness, the way they show care towards others, and their knowledge of children's rights. For example, older pupils consider the impact of food miles on their favourite food and the negative impact this has on the environment.

Nearly all pupils are keen to talk about their work and are proud of their achievements. They engage purposefully in lessons and demonstrate an interest in their learning, which includes listening sensibly to the views of others. Pupils who require additional help to manage their feelings respond well to the highly skilled support provided in the school's 'Cwtsh', as and when the need arises in classes.

Pupil voice groups are fully inclusive and well-established. They contribute positively to improvements around the school. For example, representatives of pupil voice groups inform the headteacher about aspects of the school development plan. For example, pupils set targets for the school to develop its grounds and outdoor learning opportunities. Representatives undertake their work proudly and make a valuable contribution to the school's life and work. This includes leading whole school assemblies on matters that are important to them, such as peer support on improving each other's well-being.

Most pupils are developing skills to encourage enterprising and creative collaboration. Older pupils approach and explore problem solving enthusiastically in science and engineering experiments. For example, they apply their knowledge of the position of the sun to place a solar panel accurately to produce energy efficiently on a windowsill.

Most pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating and drinking healthily and sing and sign songs to encourage healthy lifestyles in assemblies. They understand the benefit of physical exercise on their health and well-being, such as running a mile a day is good for their heart health. Additionally, the younger pupils access the school's woodland area passionately and embrace their outdoor learning experiences with joy.

Nearly all pupils demonstrate a firm grasp on how to remain safe in everyday life. This includes road safety and first aid practices. Nearly all pupils know how to stay safe online and remind each other sensibly that they do not share passwords.

Attendance figures for the school dropped significantly after the pandemic. The school has an action plan to improve attendance and the actions have already raised the attendance in this new academic year from 88% to over 90%.

### **Teaching and learning experiences**

Across the school, teachers and support staff develop positive working relationships with pupils and create a supportive and inclusive learning environment. They encourage respect among pupils and each other and have high expectations of behaviour. This contributes positively to the calm and caring ethos of the school.

Staff know the local community and the needs of its children very well and adapt their teaching to develop pupils' learning effectively. The school's provision for personal and social education effectively encourages pupils' understanding of their own well-

being . Staff use a wide range of initiatives and strategies very well to support the mental and physical health of pupils. These have been particularly effective in supporting pupils on the return to school after the pandemic. They have helped pupils to manage their anxieties and emotions by giving them the appropriate vocabulary with which to express their feelings.

Teachers plan interesting activities and tasks that contribute to a purposeful working environment. Staff ensure that pupils feel listened to and can ask questions if they need help with their learning. Support staff work alongside teachers skilfully and contribute effectively to planning and to pupils' learning and well-being.

The school has started to implement a curriculum that is broad and balanced and reflects the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. This includes planned theme weeks and celebratory events that engage pupils' interests well, such as Welsh history week, re-cycling week and fairness week. Teachers in the LRB plan highly effective authentic learning experiences that are integral to the class's theme. This outstanding practice targets pupils' learning very successfully.

Provision to develop pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills is successful across the school. Teachers ensure suitable arrangements to develop pupils' writing skills, however, an over reliance on worksheets limits the opportunities for pupils to write at length independently. The development of pupils' Welsh language skills is adequate. A minority of staff use basic Welsh vocabulary appropriately in the classroom, for example to give instructions to their pupils. However, teachers do not make the most of opportunities to model the language or encourage pupils to speak, ask and answer questions in Welsh.

Provision to develop pupils' mathematics is effective. Opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills authentically across the curriculum are beginning to impact on pupils' understanding of how to use mathematics in real life situations. The planning of opportunities for pupils to develop their digital skills is good. For instance, teachers plan useful activities where pupils interrogate simple databases and spreadsheets and prepare presentations on their personal aspirations.

Through valuable and stimulating learning experiences, the school celebrates the language, culture and heritage of Wales with pride. Each year, the school marks the anniversary of the Aberfan disaster with every class studying a different aspect of the tragedy. For example, Year 3 learned about the Queen visiting the village after the disaster, and they planted a tree in her memory and for all who lost their lives.

The school uses a detailed approach to tracking pupil progress in literacy and numeracy. Teachers and leaders use this and other sources of information to inform their planning and to identify pupils who require targeted intervention well. For example, they use termly benchmarking data for reading to select individuals for specific support.

The teaching is generally good across the school and where it is most effective, teachers challenge pupils to produce their best work in lessons. However, the level of challenge for pupils varies from class-to-class and it is not consistent across the school.

Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback and suggest improvements to their work using newly developed planning sheets. However, the quality of feedback across the school is variable and current approaches do not support pupils well enough to improve their work and develop their skills effectively. For example, teachers do not address spelling, handwriting and basic punctuation errors consistently. Teachers repeat the same feedback often without any impact on the pupils' next pieces of work.

The school collaborates closely with colleagues in the cluster, including the feeder high school, to ensure consistency of approach and to share good practice as well as maximising training opportunities. As a result of this positive provision, pupils are becoming more ambitious and innovative learners, such as through the older pupils' work on Rube Goldberg's designs.

School reports to parents and carers provide suitable information about their child's progress and attitudes to learning. They contain useful targets to highlight the next steps for learning for individual pupils.

### **Care, support and guidance**

The school is a very caring community, and the staff encourage pupils to contribute positively to its supportive and friendly ethos. The beneficial relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils of different ages, are a strong feature of the school. Teachers and support staff understand pupils' needs effectively and they respond with sensitivity to the pupils' emotional and social needs. This supportive and warm atmosphere helps nearly all pupils settle in easily to school life and it contributes significantly to their happiness in school and their overall well-being. These diligent and thoughtful practices encourage pupils to develop resilient attitudes to their learning.

The school operates a comprehensive system to gather information on pupils' progress as they move through the school. Teachers use the tracking process effectively to monitor pupils' achievements and well-being in their classes regularly. As a result, staff have a clear understanding of individual pupils' needs. Where staff identify issues for improvement, the school provides effective support and interventions to improve pupils' learning and their personal and social development. This includes counselling and therapy sessions from external providers and staff's use of the 'Cwtsh' areas, which provide nurturing and calming activities for pupils.

Staff ensure a broad and well-structured range of intervention strategies to improve pupils' basic skills. Most pupils enjoy taking part in these activities and, as a result, nearly all targeted pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. Specific sessions that focus on pupils' well-being and self-esteem are effective and enable pupils to participate in lessons successfully. This helps to support their positive attitudes to learning, improves their social skills and encourages them to share their feelings openly with one another and adults.

The care and support provided by staff in the LRB is outstanding. The school provides personalised learning programmes and authentic learning experiences for pupils attending the LRB, which match their needs exceptionally well. These have a very positive impact on their individual progress and achievements. Staff in the LRB

work effectively with the staff in mainstream classes to facilitate pupils' integration into the daily life of the school.

The school works effectively with external agencies, such as educational psychologists, to provide specialist support and guidance for pupils. This collaboration successfully develops a range of skills and coping mechanisms for pupils with educational, emotional and social needs. It also supports staff to develop their professional practice to better support the specific requirements of pupils with additional needs. As a result of these arrangements, pupils receive caring and inclusive support from nursery to Year 6 and in the LRB.

The school provides an interesting range of visits and visitors to support the curriculum and engage pupils in their learning. This includes trips to a nearby mining museum and engineering sessions to construct model rollercoasters. In addition, studies of global atrocities, such as wars and famines, promote pupils' understanding of the importance of values, such as tolerance, and the right to a life without hunger and thirst. These activities make a positive contribution to pupils' social skills and cultural understanding. Additionally, there are stimulating opportunities provided to celebrate Welsh heritage and culture. These include studying the fate of Dic Penderyn after the Merthyr Risings and Owain Glyndŵr's battles against the English, when attempting to establish an independent Wales.

Teachers provide thought-provoking lessons that explore human rights and make a worthwhile contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. A strong feature of these lessons is that they encourage valuable pupil discussions, which successfully develop pupils' thinking and communication skills. These structured approaches in personal and social lessons include useful opportunities to explore issues of equality, diversity and inclusion from around the world.

The school ensures that persistent absences are monitored thoroughly, and any instances of bullying are addressed promptly by the school. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to learn the importance of staying safe. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding, and all staff understand clearly that pupils' welfare and safety are an integral part of their daily responsibilities. In most respects, the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe meet requirements. However, the inspection team identified issues around the school site that need attention.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher and newly appointed senior leaders focus on placing the school at the centre of its community and promote the well-being of pupils and their families effectively. The governors and staff support this vision and endeavour to implement it purposefully in their daily practices. This includes the staff in the LRB, which staff and pupils embrace as an integral part of the school.

Leaders ensure that a caring and supportive atmosphere is evident across the school. All staff engage willingly with the school's motto, 'Together We Can', which promotes inclusivity successfully amongst the pupils. This has a positive effect on their attitudes to learning and their care for each other. As a result, leaders ensure

that an inclusive and warm ethos exists throughout the school, which the pupils embrace willingly.

Leaders allocate roles of responsibility sensibly and they hold staff to account for the quality and impact of their work purposefully. They use the findings of rigorous performance management practices to improve the provision. Leaders focus on refining the quality of teaching and instilling a common understanding of professional values among staff. As a result, they ensure that most pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.

The processes used by the leadership team to evaluate the effectiveness of provision are robust and based on a wide range of first-hand evidence. Systems to improve quality include detailed scrutiny of pupils' books, monitoring teaching and analysing internal and external data on pupils' progress. Leaders gather the views of other stakeholders about the school to inform their practice well. For example, they consider the views of the local community and act on any findings promptly, such as re-distributing local food bank collections to vulnerable families.

The school's shared leadership responsibilities ensure that leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. The links between the self-evaluation processes and improvement planning is well-established and secure. As a result, leaders prioritise their findings diligently and set purposeful targets to move the school forward.

Leaders embed strong practices to promote a thorough safeguarding culture with staff. Governors ensure that pupils eat and drink healthily and encourage parents to provide nutritious food in pupils' lunch boxes. Leaders work hard to develop effective engagement opportunities with parents and carers. This includes parents and children working together on creative and artistic tasks in classes.

The leadership team ensure that staff make the best use of the premises. This includes utilising outdoor spaces such as the woodland and planting areas. However, resources in the outdoor areas that lead from classrooms are not shared equitably across the school. Leaders allocate resources in the classrooms beneficially and use the pupil development grant wisely to support basic skills across the school. This results in targeted pupils making good progress with their learning.

Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school and their regular input creates systematic improvements throughout the school. They are very supportive of the headteacher and hold her and other senior leaders to account as critical friends. The headteacher informs governors about pupils' learning regularly and advises them realistically on how to improve provision, such as creating the 'Cwtsh' for nurture activities. Governors develop a sound first-hand understanding of the school's activities. Alongside teacher, they undertake learning walks and discuss pupils' work to measure its quality. This promotes a valuable understanding of the school's current practices. Governors monitor the budget carefully and ensure that spending decisions are in line with the school's priorities for improvement, such as investments in digital hardware and outdoor equipment.

Leaders ensure that staff have access to high quality learning opportunities to support their professional development, which link closely to school improvement



priorities. Notable examples are training to develop cross-curricular planning to enhance pupils' learning and emotional coaching sessions to support pupils' well-being.

The school shares effective practices with local schools and this supports the school's capacity for improving assessment practices in line with curriculum reform. It provides valuable opportunities for teachers to compare and share their effectiveness with other professionals. As a result, the culture of continuous professional learning creates useful learning opportunities for pupils, which focus on developing ambitious and enthusiastic learners.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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